

***Towards a theatre of psychagogia: an experimental application of the Sesame approach into psychophysical actor training***



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## **Declaration of Originality**

I, Antonia Batzoglou, understand the Central School of Speech and Drama definition of plagiarism and declare that the submission presented here is my own work. Information derived from published or unpublished work of others has been formally acknowledged.

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## Abstract

This thesis based in practice as research proposes a pedagogical model for supporting the actor's inner psychological process within the area of psychophysical actor training. By invoking Socrates' concept of *psychagogia*, I critically examine key aspects of psychophysical actor training in order to clarify the conceptual and pragmatic meaning of 'psyche' within the psychophysical process. Socrates describes *psychagogia* as the educational art of leading the psyche towards dialectical examination of the good. It is Aristotle, however, who identifies the art of tragedy as the greatest form of *psychagogia*, and it is in this context that the thesis re-introduces *psychagogia* for actor training. My research investigates in practice the application of a modified Sesame Drama and Movement Therapy approach for actors. It entails a series of projects and workshops exploring a pedagogical model based on the Sesame methodology and structure, and using ancient Greek myths as vehicles to encounter conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche. The research addresses the necessity for an embodied experience and awareness of the psyche by confronting creatively its conscious and unconscious aspects. I aim to show how a Sesame Drama and Movement Therapy approach facilitates this process in a safe and reflexive way, raising the actor's awareness of this tacit and intangible inner quality.

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## Introduction

To make theatre means practicing an activity in search of meaning. We can adopt the values of the spirit of time or we can search for our own values. (Barba, 2001: 15)

*Towards a theatre of psychagogia: an experimental application of the Sesame approach into psychophysical actor training* is both a personal journey and a practice as research study. Its research inquiry investigates and ultimately argues for a spiritual cognisance of psyche within psychophysical actor training in terms of the actor's inner exploration of the creative self. The thesis investigates in practice the application of the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement Therapy for awakening the actor's psyche awareness. For this psychological exploration of archetypal situations, this practice as research inquiry employs the ancient Greek myths as vehicles. This thesis includes two DVDs that are integral to the unfolding of my argument both in terms of theory and practice.

This research inquiry has arisen as a response to the encounters between theatre and psychology and between the archetypal and the everyday. The connections between these subjects have taken a strong hold on the way I perceive and practice theatre in my role as a practitioner and researcher. It originated when I was approximately 14 years old. I recall the entries in my diary after watching two contrasting pieces of theatre. I was impressed by one actor in each of the pieces who seemed to enchant me in a way that I could not comprehend. This seminal experience triggered a life-long quest to understand and embody the theatrical and psychological qualities that captivated me. The main questions seemed to be the same eighteen years later undertaking this research at Central School of Speech and Drama. How does an actor communicate feelings, images and thoughts beyond consciousness to the spectator's psyche? How and what is trained within the actors for achieving this engagement?

This connection of theatre and psychology and the archetypal within the personal is embedded within my personal and cultural landscape. I was born in Athens where the ancient city is integrated within its modern actuality. Over the course of the first twenty years of my life experiences, education and personal development, my connection with ancient and archetypal aspects was not only a historical enquiry for knowledge but an everyday living reality. I could see the Parthenon on the Acropolis every day when I was riding my



motorbike to go to the theatre. The architectural paradox of the ancient and the modern in this city reflects the historical and mythological stories of Greek antiquity that consciously or unconsciously penetrate my contemporary being.

Within this landscape, I took two paths; I studied both acting and psychology, trying to find answers to my questions on the nature of acting and the human psyche. My actor training took place at the Greek Art theatre of Karolos Koun, whose motto was 'We are making theatre for our psyche'. In parallel, I studied psychology at the University of Crete where I became fascinated by the concept of the unconscious and the methods of inner exploration from the schools of Depth psychology. Later, I moved in London to complete a master's course in the Sesame Approach of Drama and Movement Therapy. My personal experience reflects the perception that theatre possesses an attitude of curiosity and exploration about the human psyche and it remains one of the few collective activities where a communication of the psyche as an entirety of consciousness and unconsciousness takes place between actors and spectators. In some ways my research journey might reflect Barba's suggestion that 'it can sometimes make sense to confront a theory with a biography' and that we should not ask what the theatre means in general but rather what the theatre means for oneself (Barba, 1995:8). Therefore, I address this perception within the context of theatre pedagogies emphasising the importance of a pedagogy of the psyche in psychophysical actor training. The research question that drove this journey to its actualisation asks what 'psycho' means in psychophysical actor training and how this aspect might be trained. Specifically, in an attempt to answer practical questions about the actor's psychological training, I conducted a practice as research suggesting the application of the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement Therapy with the particular use of ancient Greek myths because of my cultural intimacy with these.

The methodology of a practice as research model has been followed for the completion of this study since my question is of a practical nature that can only be explored through experimentations on the Sesame's application into psychophysical actor training. The suggestion of Sesame's application rose after my personal experiences during the dramatherapy training. In parallel with learning to become a dramatherapist, I found myself growing creatively by gaining confidence, emotional flexibility and awareness. More particularly, the Sesame training offered me a profound awareness of myself without feeling threatened or exposed. I explored ways to express creatively and symbolically through my body, inner feelings and images from my unconscious while I could see my creative potential beyond stereotypes. It is based on this personal experience that I suggested a potential application of the Sesame approach into actor training in answering my questions about the

nature of acting beyond skill-based training. I situated my praxis within the area of psychophysical actor training, drawing parallels with theatre practices that have incorporated in their approaches the actor's psyche. In practice, I explored and experimented with groups of actors in applying different techniques from the Sesame approach. A selection and composition of these explorations is presented by rigorous editing in the DVDs demonstrating the practical element of my argument. Philosophically, I perceive theatre as a social event not merely as entertainment but as *psychagogia* and so I situated my praxis within this conceptual framework.

At this point, I should like to explain *psychagogia* and the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement Therapy so as to establish a clear sense of the direction and purpose of this research. This thesis proposes the application of the Sesame approach as a methodology to facilitate a communication with the actor's psyche and soma through the mediums of drama and movement and not in order to treat the psychopathology of the actor nor to achieve psychological realism in acting.

The Sesame approach of Drama and Movement Therapy, named after the Arabic story of Ali Baba, aims to lead the way into the inner life, to a cave full of unknown treasures, by opening the gates of the unconscious. The inspirer and founder of the Sesame approach Marian Lindkvist was motivated by a vivid dream that pictured patients in a clinic ward being engaged actively with drama<sup>1</sup>. Following her dream, Lindkvist started in 1964 a series of workshops for Occupational Therapists with Dr David Stafford-Clark at the York Clinic, Guy's Hospital, aiming to use drama with the in-patients (Lindkvist, 1998:17). Lindkvist's background in theatre is related to mime and movement and she was part of KATS, a theatre group that was enacting stories and touring to hospitals and institutes. Her personal interest and encounter with Jungian psychology as well as the theories of Laban, Slade and Winnicott informed the theoretical background of Sesame's methodology. These first steps of an investigational practice led later to the formation of the Sesame Drama and Movement Therapy approach, an art psychotherapy recognised by the British Health Professions Council<sup>2</sup>.

The Sesame approach is a creative way of working through rituals, metaphors and symbols

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<sup>1</sup> The dream is described in details in Lindkvist's book (Lindkvist, 1998:16)

<sup>2</sup> From 1975 the Sesame approach was taught as a full-time advanced level course at Kingsway Princeton College recognised by the Department for Education and Science and the Inner London Education Authority. The Sesame training course moved to Central School of Speech and Drama in London in 1986 where it is taught at Masters level from 2005 and recognised by HPC.

that acknowledges the Jungian concept of therapy, considering therapy less a matter of treatment than a development of the hidden creative possibilities within the self (Jung, 1963). The emphasis of the Sesame practice is on the creative and expressive use of the imagination through drama and movement and on the way that the process is being facilitated for the participant. The expressed creativity is not judged, analysed or interpreted verbally and the goal is not an artistic product. The importance lies in symbolism and how symbols address the needs of participants at a deeper level. Imagination and creativity are invoked through the medium of art and play so that archetypal images and symbols are embodied and hence acknowledged in the unconscious psyche.

This acknowledgement and encounter of the unconscious, its creative potential and symbols, are the aspects that I relate with the concept of *psychagogia* and theatre's potential purpose as such. In order to define *psychagogia* and the connection between theatre and therapy, let me start by sharing a story<sup>3</sup> that takes us back to ancient Greece. Miltiades was unwell, both mentally and physically, and so he sought treatment at the Asclepeion at Pergamos. The Asclepeion was a sanctuary of health dedicated to Asclepius, the god of healing where body and mind were treated as inseparable. There Miltiades' therapy consisted of participation in rituals and meditative practices under the supervision of the healers. In the majority of these ancient sanctuaries, theatres stand in or adjacent to them. At Pergamos, an underground passage connected the theatre with the patient's sleeping hall, the *abaton*. When the initial cleansing rituals had taken place, Miltiades with other ambulatory patients followed the underground passage and attended theatre performances of tragedy or comedy to assist in their recovery. Attendance at the theatre could initiate or advance the therapeutic process by enabling the individual to undergo inner rearrangements and enlarge the possibilities of seeing oneself in relationships with the self and the other. After watching the performance, Miltiades and the other patients returned to the *abaton* where they slept, awaiting the nocturnal visit of the healing god Asclepius in human or animalistic form, in their dreams. Modern psychiatrists and psychotherapists agree that 'good therapy and good theatre have in common a set of inner processes' (Simon in Hartigan, 2009:13) and that 'the psychology of drama and the phenomenology of human experience march together. It is deeply grounded in the fact of self-consciousness, the awareness of our existence which involves the ability to stand back and look at life' (Grainger, 2004:6).

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<sup>3</sup> A story based on the historical and architectural facts that Hartigan (2009) presents in her book *Performance and Cure: Drama and Healing in ancient Greece and contemporary America*.

This ability to stand back and attend or reflect on life's experience is the exact meaning of the Greek word "therapy"<sup>4</sup>. Thus, "therapy" not only signifies the treatment of a trauma or problem but the amplification of self-awareness. Theatre then becomes a place for encountering, for waiting upon or reflecting on psychological human situations of archetypal significance. It becomes the place for a dynamic exchange between actors and spectators and, therefore, a meeting place for the unconscious and conscious aspects of human nature. Under this perception theatre, and especially tragedy, is described by Aristotle as the greatest form of *psychagogia*. *Psychagogia* derives from the 'ancient Greek ψυχαγωγός found in the Oxford English Dictionary as psychagogue: '1.conjuring up the dead, (noun) a necromancer, leader of departed souls - said of Hermes' and describing as well: '2.a person who directs the mind; a teacher, an instructor' and '3.a medicine that restores consciousness or revives the body'. Etymologically, the word *psychagogia* is a compound of the words "psyche" and "agogy" meaning leading, guiding (O.E.D.). In modern Greek the term *psychagogia* is translated in English by the words 'recreation, entertainment and amusement' (Collins Greek-English Dictionary, 2003). Although entertainment defines an activity designed to give people pleasure or relaxation, as theatre does, it lacks a main aspect of the word that is lost in translation. Entertainment and amusement meaning an 'action of upholding or maintaining, of occupying (a person's) attention agreeably; interesting employment; of amusing, or a thing done to amuse' (O.E.D) do not reflect any aspect of the words psyche or education.

Within the conceptual framework sketched above, this thesis argues for theatre's purpose as *psychagogia* and it examines what elements of theatre's function may have been lost when theatre is considered merely as a medium for entertainment and, in commercial culture, a commodity. The practical research undertaken investigates the potential of this psychic dynamic communication in Western theatre and furthermore addresses the responsibility of actors and their training within it. In a theatre that engages the whole of the human psyche, the role of the actor is much more than an efficient executor of theatrical forms. In a theatre of *psychagogia*,<sup>5</sup> acting carries an archetypal loading of psychic representation and the actor in this communion is not acting for the spectators but with them. This perception reflects Artaud's manifesto for an active theatre in society and the role of the actor in it as an "athlete of the heart". It seems to me that we are still preoccupied with similar questions around the nature of acting and the actor's training in achieving an emotional openness and

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<sup>4</sup> The word "therapy" comes from the Greek *therapeia*, meaning "a service, an attendance", which, in turn, is related to the Greek verb *therapeuo* meaning "I wait upon."

<sup>5</sup> This reference of theatre is content related and not form based.

expressiveness of the psyche that arises beyond egoistic mannerisms, and so, communicates with the audience's psyche.

### How to follow this study

This study has been carried on following the dynamic model for practice as research designed by Prof. R. Nelson (2010)<sup>6</sup> that suggests examining the academic knowledge within the chosen conceptual framework, critically reflecting on the practitioner's explicit knowledge and finally on the practitioner's tacit knowledge . Therefore, this thesis is written and structured in chapters asking three basic questions in regards to its conceptual content and praxis. Firstly, it answers to "what" is being discussed and examined in theoretical terms about psyche and *psychagogia* as well as "what" has been done or written previously locating its praxis in a lineage of influences; secondly, it responds to "whence" these practical approaches to *psychagogia* and psychophysical actor training originated and "why" they are chosen; and thirdly, to "how" the application of these approaches is being explored by demonstrating the process and the method. More specifically, each chapter answers to these fundamental questions guiding the reader from a conceptual understanding of my argument and research inquiry to a practical demonstration of my explorations. The DVDs of this thesis are imperative for the research's content, capturing moments of insight as well as highlighting reflections around successes and mistakes.

In Chapter 1, I sketch the relationship between theatre and psyche in ancient Greece drawing on Socrates' pedagogical concept of *psychagogia* and its relationship to theatre that Aristotle makes in his *Poetics*. Based on this perception of theatre as a medium to communicate and create movement in the psyche of its audience, I discuss theatre's connection with psychology and therapy. Psyche is discussed and examined in order to clarify its conceptual and pragmatic meaning in philosophical and psychological terms. The critical review of psychophysical actor training approaches that have incorporated psychological or psychotherapeutic practices starts with Stanislavski and continues into subsequent practices. I argue for an appropriate pedagogical approach within psychophysical actor training that prioritises the psyche as the totality of all conscious and unconscious aspects which constitute our being. This pedagogical approach does not treat the component "psycho" only in terms of psychological realism for the dramatic characters

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<sup>6</sup> The model was presented during a lecture at Central School of Speech and Drama (15 February 2010) but it can also be found in Allegue, L. et (2009) *Practice as Research in Performance and Screen*

but rather in terms of a spiritual inner process of self-understanding for the actor. More specifically, the Self is understood through the lens of Jung's analytical psychology that positions it as central to our psyche, decentering the ego and its shallow consciousness. In this entirety, mind and body, the Apollonian and Dionysian aspects of human psyche, the personal and the archetypal, are seen as intertwined.

Chapter 2 emphasises the responsibility and ethos of the actor in becoming a psychagogue within theatre of *psychagogia*. In part 1, entitled *Ethos*, we revisit ancient Greece to examine the qualities of ethos which turned the actor into a *psychagogue*, an alluring persona who guided the spectators' psyche in an inner ethical examination. This exploration underlines the significance of the actor's personal ethos and inner development in becoming 'a maker of ethos' which is the literal meaning of *ethopios* – 'actor' in Greek. In part 2, my experiential understanding of psychophysical actor training and ancient Greek myths is presented in order to define the methodological lenses of this practice as research. This investigation is predicated on my experiences in Greek and Polish schools of actor training, and profoundly underpinned by the completion of my training in the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement therapy. Part 3 presents the applied methodology of the Sesame approach that embraces the theories of Jung. In my practice, I utilise the Sesame approach and structure prioritising the body in the process of inner exploration through movement, play and myth. The body is perceived not only as matter and flesh but rather, as Lopez-Pedrada (2000) describes it, the emotional body that is manifested in our doing and being in the world through images, feelings, sensations and instincts. I also draw significantly on D.R.Johnson's (1992) theories of the dramatherapist's role and facilitation as well as on the use of myths and stories within the Sesame approach as ways to encounter the unconscious.

For this praxis, I connect my experiential and theoretical knowledge of the Greek and Polish psychophysical schools, the Sesame approach and the Greek myths, arguing for an embodied pedagogy of the actor's psyche. The ancient Greek myths offer a rich palette of psychological qualities and possibilities for encountering previously unconscious feelings, thoughts, images and archetypal manifestations which inform the process of self-exploration. Thus, my application of the Sesame approach facilitates for the actor a process of individuation towards a profound understanding or cognisance of their creative self, and the embodiment of myths trains the actor's sensitivity and mythological intelligence. In practical actor training terms, the process facilitates and trains the actor's attentiveness and attunement with her inner process while at the same time maintaining a relationship with the "other" on-stage (other actor) and off-stage (the spectator). The actor, through the guidance

of the facilitator, learns to be focused inwards on her interior world, to be open to express and embody her inner feelings outwardly and then to share them and communicate them forward with the other. By awakening the actor's presence and attitude of psyche during training, these qualities are then embodied and transcended through the art of acting.

Chapter 3 engages with the practical applications towards a theatre of *psychagogia*. It demonstrates how this research inquiry is practically explored through the facilitation of workshops for actors, and setting a constant and open dialogue between the intellectual inquiry and the experiential pragmatics of training and acting. This practice was carried out through a series of workshops, a collaborative project and a performative installation. The analysis of the practice focuses on specific workshops that have been selected and the collaborative project. Their documentation is integrated in the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia* while their detailed session plans are included in the Appendix of this thesis. The performative installation entitled *Magisterium* was part of the Collisions Festival 2010 and it aimed to create a performative space that presented creatively my theoretical and practical approach to the concepts of this study<sup>7</sup>. A presentation of this practice, as a creative offshoot of this thesis, is included in the DVD *Appendix*.

In Chapter 3, in order to structure my analysis, I apply the image of a ladder examining each stage of progression in my practice as a separate step. In evaluating my research, I employ methodological triangulation and use a variety of formatting to display the methods and voices of the critical reflections. I use different ways to document and evidence my practice as research (still photographs, video recordings and drawings) that not only illustrate but support these explorations. The DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia* evidences the main explorations that took place and it is suggested to be viewed in parallel with the reading of Chapter 3. The experiments argue for a pedagogical approach which facilitates the training of the actors' psychic awareness, embracing a Dionysian, embodied process of individuation for the trainee. The DVD *Appendix* demonstrates practical examples of concepts and approaches discussed in this thesis, aiming to support the reader's understanding of these.

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<sup>7</sup> Additionally, *Magisterium* served to collect the audience's views and experiences on what attracts them to theatre. The answers were written in the form of creative recipes for "What makes good theatre?" or scribbled on the blackboards that existed in the space questioning: "What is the purpose of theatre?", "What part of you is satisfied through theatre?", and "What is the magic of theatre?" A slideshow of photos, the visitors' comments and their recipes are available in the DVD *Appendix*, *Magisterium* (tracks slideshow and recipes).

At the end of the thesis, a glossary is provided to give an explanation of terms taken from Sesame practice, Jungian psychology and the Greek language. Also included in the glossary are terms which are used in a particular way to support my thesis. The reader may choose to read the glossary first to familiarise him/herself with the terms used.



## Chapter 1

### Psyche and *Psychagogia*:

#### A critical review within the context of theatre and psychophysical actor training

Life is too rational,  
there is no symbolic experience  
in which I am something else,  
in which I am fulfilling my role  
as one of the actors in the divine drama of life.  
(Jung, 1977:273)

The following chapter engages critically with the received usages of the term “psyche” within the context of theatre and psychophysical actor training. Scouting the origins and sources of the concept of psyche, the term is examined through selected philosophical, religious, psychological and psychoanalytical discourses spanning from ancient Greek times to the present. More specifically in relation to theatre, the research resurrects and re-contextualises the Socratic concept of *psychagogia* as a starting point of reference for the critical endeavour of the development of psychophysical actor training pedagogies. This chapter suggests that since the secularisation and the subjugation of religion, western culture has lost interest in, and concern about, the psyche in its literal meaning as the essence and life force of animated beings beyond the religious meaning of the soul. Based on this view, this chapter discusses the impact of a secular attitude in theatre practices and training pedagogies. This thesis is driven by the intention to magnify the compound of “psycho” in **psychophysical** training, understanding psyche, following the school of analytical psychology of C.G.Jung.

#### Part 1: Psyche and *psychagogia* in ancient Greece

The subject of the human psyche has preoccupied many great thinkers of the Greek antiquity when philosophy and psychology were not distinct discipline in the same sense as

they are perceived in modern times. Some key interpretations are explored in order to critically integrate the ancient understanding of psyche with the socio-political functions of theatre. To start with, we need to remember what the purpose of theatre in ancient Greece was, and to re-contextualise its purpose in relation to psyche and the Socratic pedagogical concept of *psychagogia*.

Aristotle's (384-322BC) *Poetics* is the only complete work of his time that discusses theatre, its dramaturgy and performance. Aristotle acknowledges a psychological function of theatre when he describes it as an act of mimesis of great and complete actions, manifested using poetic language and passions that lead to catharsis through empathy (Αριστοτέλης, 1995: 193 [Aristotle, *Poetics* 1449b25-29]). The purpose of theatre, as Aristotle defines it in the *Poetics*, is to create an action (*praxis*<sup>8</sup>) which does not mean physical activities, events or deeds but rather a motivation from which actions spring in order to shift the mind and the psyche of the spectators (Αριστοτέλης, 1995: 120). Fundamental to Aristotle's philosophy is the theory that sees external movements or actions resembling the movements of the psyche so that action (*praxis*) is the outward expression of an inner state. Butcher (1951) in his critical analysis of Aristotle's theories points out that:

An act viewed merely as an external process or result, one of a series of outward phenomena, is not the true object of aesthetic imitation [referring to mimesis]. The πράξις [*praxis*] that art seeks to reproduce is mainly an inward process, a psychical energy working outwards; deeds, incidents, events, situations being included under it so far as these spring from an inward act of will, or elicit some activity of thought and feeling. (Aristotle /Butcher, 1951:123)

Theatre as an art of mimesis does not imitate real life but rather represents it from a reflective and interpretative view. Aristotle makes it clear that poetry, including all forms of drama and literature, is an imitation not of men but of an action and of life that implies personal agents of intellect/and character. This integration of intellect and character that informs the performance of the action Aristotle refers to as *ethos*. In Aristotle's psychology, character is less fundamental than action. He defines character as 'habitual action' that it is formed and influenced by the parents and the environment and, as the person grows, they begin to understand these actions rationally and become ethically responsible for their

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<sup>8</sup> Aristotle uses the word *praxis* in the meaning of actions that sprung from inner necessity. In order to differentiate from the philosophical usage of the word in English language I use italics when referring to Aristotle's *praxis*.

character<sup>9</sup> (Αριστοτέλης, 1992: 193, [Aristotle, *Poetics* 1450a1-5]). The actor is called to perceive the action of the character they portray, and then re-create it in their own thoughts and feelings as truthfully as possible in order to make the character's actions believable for the spectator. Actors utilise their intellect and personal ethos to understand and portray the actions of the character on stage. In that sense the actor is creating the ethos of the dramatic characters from the basis of their own ethos<sup>10</sup>.

Aristotle states that this kind of mimesis induces motion in the psyche and inspires reflection. Following this conception, theatre was aiming to educate, raise questions and thoughts about ethos and morality, to express ideas and to amuse. For that reason the performance of a dramatic play, especially of tragedy, was called *didaskalia* –meaning instruction- and so the spectators when leaving the theatre gained awareness from witnessing a theatrical piece. In that context theatre was *psychagogia*, a Greek word freely translated as education for the psyche, meaning the education or cultivation of psyche by guiding the spectator toward reflection and critical thinking. Aristotle declares tragedy as the greatest form of *psychagogia* (τά μέγιστα, οἷς ψυχαγωγεί ἡ τραγωδία) and highlights myth as the most important agent through which tragedy serves as *psychagogia* (Aristotle, 1992: 197 [Aristotle, *Poetics* 1450a33]).

As defined in the introduction, *psychagogia* means the guidance of the psyche but the word is translated in English as entertainment and amusement. I argue that by considering modern western theatre as a mere entertainment (the translation of the word *psychagogia* in English) we are ignoring the potential function of theatre as an action or motivation for communication between psyches. *Psychagogia* requires an exchange between the artists and the spectators; it does not suggest a passive amusement that leaves the audience untouched but seeks to cause an intellectual and emotional inner dialogue.

Aristotle's *Poetics* is the first theoretical and critical essay about the art of theatre and therefore cannot be ignored despite the fact that the emphasis lies on theories of dramaturgy and says little about the aesthetics and crafts of performance, acting and training<sup>11</sup>. However, by deepening our understanding of theatre's role in ancient Greek society, we could come closer to the qualities of acting that this kind of theatre requires.

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<sup>9</sup> In chapter 2, I explain in detail the connection of the actor's personal ethos in relation to the art of acting and the embodiment of the dramatic character.

<sup>10</sup> In Greek language the word for actor means the maker of ethos (ἠθοποιός / *ethopoios*)

<sup>11</sup> The art of acting in ancient Greece will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2

Aristotle states that the need for theatre comes from two causes, two instincts intrinsic to human nature: the act of mimesis, and the satisfaction gained from the harmonious and rhythmical mimesis of things (Aristotle, 1922, 1992 [*Poetics*, 1448b 4-5]). The instinct of mimesis has been recognised by scientists and psychologists as the main function of every human newborn to learn and develop. By imitating their parents, the baby will learn to walk, to speak, to eat, to smile and later, by imitating other models, will gradually develop their own personality and self. But mimesis is not simply an act of imitation or interpretation but rather a human capacity of the individual to relate with the world and the other through affinity and reciprocal empathy. Aristotle adds that the action of mimesis offers us also a pleasure; thus the reason is that in contemplating it they find themselves learning or inferring knowledge about themselves by projection and judgment (Αριστοτέλης, 1992: 183).

From a psychological perspective, the faculty of mimesis is doing justice to the relationship of oneself with the other. Saban (2010), a Jungian analyst, argues that ‘translated as imitation, it does not really begin to convey the richness of the term which can be described in a more psychological approach as: the capacity to relate to the external world through patterns of similitude, reciprocity and interplay.’ (Saban, 2010) and he continues explaining that:

[T]he essential psychic movement is one of pathos which one can describe as the way we are touched, stimulated, affected, surprised and in some extent violated by the world. I am less the subject of my life but rather the patient, the self is thought as a realm of openness when the dynamic encounter with the other takes place. (Saban, 2010)

Similarly, during the development of psychoanalysis, Freud was interested in the appeal and projections that theatre stimulates in the audience. The witness of the artistic performance discharges the ego allowing the desires, libido, and fantasies to be acted out as identification or projection of the actions on stage (Πατσαλίδης, 2004). This psychological situation could relate to the Aristotelian catharsis, meaning the purging of the emotions of pity and fear that someone experiences with tragedy. Aristotle asserts that the passions of poetry and especially tragedy should spring from something more than the individual, reflecting universal truth and a great significance for human nature. Tragedy then as *psychagogia* speaks essentially to the mind and the psyche guiding the individual towards self-understanding. In this thesis, I argue that this view of universal truth reflected in the art of theatre and the concept of *psychagogia*, mirrors Jung’s concept of the collective

unconscious and process of individuation that will be discussed thoroughly in the development of my argument.

### The notion of psyche in ancient Greece

A discussion about *psychagogia*, as the art of guiding the psyche, becomes highly problematic if psyche is translated as soul influenced by the religious connotations that the word presupposes. The word “psyche” is derived from ancient Greek and its paradoxical meaning refers both to breath, spirit or mind as well as to the butterfly, the colourful and beautiful ephemeral insect that has been dramatically transformed from a caterpillar. For the ancient Greeks, psyche was a way of referring to life, the vital principle that animates all living things. In modern English the word is translated as ‘soul, mind or spirit as distinguished from the body’, ‘the animating principle of the universe or *anima mundi*’ or ‘the collective mental or psychological characteristics of a nation, people, etc’ (Oxford English Dictionary).

Before Plato, the early Greek philosophers of Orphism addressed immortal substance and divine qualities to the principle of psyche, considering that the secret thoughts, the deep feelings and the imagination constitute aspects of an 'inner' being (Αρβανιτάκης, n.d: 146). For Plato psyche was an idea that produced an eternal entity describing its as complex referring to a tripartite psyche divided into the intellect (*logos*), passion (*thymos*), and desire/appetite (*epithumia*). Aristotle’s naturalistic conception of the psyche returns to its literal meaning as the form of a living body, i.e., a living organism and that the psyche is an organism’s active functioning, all that it characteristically does, which is inseparable from the shape of its body.

Even for the philosophers in antiquity it is difficult to establish a common definition since each one recognises indisputable uncertainties about the nature of psyche and its relation with the body, death and reality. Nevertheless, where all agree and is of great importance to the contemporary conceptual understanding of *psychagogia* is that psyche is creating motion/movement within the living body. The key points of their agreement are summarised by Αρβανιτάκης in his comparative study about psyche: ‘psyche is older and prime to motion, exists before the soma /body and so their relationship is of principal and auxiliary, is responsible for everything, good or bad and is present in everything that moves’ (Αρβανιτάκης: 139 [trans. by the author]). Therefore when Aristotle refers to tragedy as the greatest art of *psychagogia*, he is referring to theatre’s ability to create motion within the psyche and therefore lead the psyche towards distinctive capacities of comprehension and empathy of higher notions and forms that are represented through theatre. Based on the

above, I connect in this thesis the understanding of psyche in *psychagogia* with Jung's analytical studies of psyche and its symbolic importance to human life.

From the poetic and symbolic perspective of Greek mythology, Psyche is a female character with whom Eros falls in love in the story *Psyche and Eros*. Psyche is a young woman of extraordinary inner beauty and Aphrodite, seeking revenge, sends Eros to wound Psyche with his arrows in order to make her fall in love with a monster. However, Eros falls in love with Psyche; he makes her his wife but asks her never to aspire to know his identity. After a series of human weaknesses and mistakes, Psyche loses the trust of her lover and only when she completes three impossible tasks is she reunited with him in Olympus becoming a deity. In reading this myth as an allegory for everyone's love for his/her psyche, I relate it with the impossibility of fully unveiling the whole of human potential. Derrida (1987 in Kamuf 1991) in his reading of *Fable*<sup>12</sup> by Francis Ponge remarks that 'the She in this fable I shall call Psyche from the fable of *Eros (Cupid) and Psyche*' and he points out that in French the word psyche also refers to an old-fashioned kind of round mirror set on a pivot (1991:204). By this reading, Derrida wishes to underline the play in language between irony and allegory, the psyche as soul and round mirror represent the distance between the two 'selves', the subject's two selves, the impossibility of seeing oneself and touching oneself at the same time and the "permanent *parabasis*" and the "allegory or irony" (Kamuf, 1991:213). Derrida's reading of *Psyche and Eros* and the *Fable* reflects the methodology through which this thesis conceptualises psyche following the analytical psychology of C.G.Jung. Jung (1960 [1946]) describes the Self as an archetype that is the coherent whole that unifies both consciousness and unconsciousness; the core of the human being that is impossible fully to see and grasp despite the human's constant endeavours. The creation or understanding of the self is a continuous process of individuation, where all aspects are brought together as one.

The mythological personification of Psyche and her recognition as a deity underline the humanistic aspect of the polytheistic religion in ancient Greece that recognises the imperfection of human nature and does not assert absolute distinctions between man and gods, good and evil, rational and irrational, chaos and harmony. According to Otto (1955),<sup>13</sup> a society expresses in religion 'what is most venerable to man' and all essential questions about existence, love and death are being confronted within the religion's content (Otto,

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<sup>12</sup>Jacques Derrida, in his essay, *Psyche: Inventions of the Other*, analyzes Ponge's poem, *Fable*. The whole poem can be found in Kamuf, 1991:202.

<sup>13</sup> German classical philologist, Nietzsche's contemporary, who is particularly known for his work on the meaning and legacy of Greek religion and mythology.

1955:5). Otto in his study of the Homeric gods declares that ‘the ancient Greek religion comprehended the things of this world with the most powerful sense of reality possible, and nevertheless recognised in them the marvellous delineations of the divine’ (Otto, 1955:10). Therefore for the Greeks magical or metaphysical thinking, in contrast to the rational, comes from the depths of natural experience and therefore it stands for itself in ‘the glory of the sublime and divine’ (Otto, 1955:7). These naturalistic and humanistic aspects of the Greek religion are encountered in their philosophy, poetry, theatre and plastic art. For theatre this amalgamation of the natural, the spiritual and the divine manifests itself through the significance and appreciation of the gods Apollo and Dionysus. The opposite aspects of their divinity are being reflected not only in the art forms of dramatic poetry and theatre performances but also in everyday life, philosophy, mythology and medicine. Olympic religion ‘never speaks through conceptual formulization in the way of dogma but is expressed as a vital force in everything that happens or is said or thought’ (Otto. 1955:15). Otto suggests that

[I]t is difficult if not impossible for a modern [man] to acclimatise himself to this peculiar mode of thought, and it would be better to let the myths stand upon their own terms than to falsify them through the persistent intrusion of one’s own categories of thought. (Otto, 1955: 29)

### Socrates’ educational concept of *psychagogia*

When Aristotle mentions theatre as the highest form of *psychagogia*, he is borrowing the term from Socrates who uses it in reference to philosophical and ethical teachings about education. In this section, I examine this educational concept in order to highlight its significance and re-contextualise it within contemporary psychophysical actor training. *Psychagogia* is the central theme in Plato’s *Phaedrus* where rhetoric is called *psychagogia* referring to the Socratic conception of education as “soul-leading”, according to Muir it means the educational art of leading the soul towards the “good”, providing an account of the way in which the individual’s psyche is drawn toward dialectical examination of the “good” (Muir, 2000). Muir argues that the dialogue in *Phaedrus*:

[P]rovides a unified argument concerning rhetoric and philosophy, which are false and true *psychagogia*, respectively (*Phaedrus* 271d), and their relation to education. Central to this argument is Plato’s examination of the relative merits of speech writing

and dialectic as means to achieve true *psychagogia*, and the roles of Love (or Eros), knowledge, and the criterion of truth in such “soul-leading” (Muir, 2000:234).

Throughout the dramatic dialogue, love and the art of rhetoric are related to each other by their mutual participation in the educational act of *psychagogia* based on the Socratic acknowledgement of two types of activities: the lover who tries to form the psyche of the beloved and the art of rhetoric in trying to influence or persuade men’s psyche (Muir, 2000 [Phaedrus, 252d-253c and 271d]). Socrates argues that rhetoric as a means of education or *psychagogia* is only worthwhile if it is used in the dialectical search for what is true and the truth will not be accepted or perceived if it is not presented in a compelling way. Socrates’ intention is to use the conception of truth as a starting point, concerning both the educator and the student, for the integration of three components of *psychagogia*: love, the psyche and psyche’s desire for “good”. Psyche’s desire for “good” suggests the pursuit of knowledge, knowledge that comes from within the individual rather than from an external authority. Based on this relationship with the truth Muir interprets *psychagogia* as ‘a dialectical enquiry concerning the good’ (Muir, 2000:235). But love and “good” are relative and absolute, as our opinion for the good partakes our knowledge of the “good” and of our choices which, according to Socrates, are both relative to our level of being in itself or “know thyself”. That means that “truth” and “good” are judged based on the individual’s ethos. Socrates also differentiates three levels of love: firstly for the person or object himself, secondly the generic kind in which the person belongs or is an example, and thirdly the transcendent ‘being which truly is’, which is the ultimate object of desire for all men (Muir, 2000). This transcendental and metaphysical or phenomenological account of being goes beyond the individual. For Socrates the dialectical relationship based on love between the educator and the student is of supreme importance for succeeding *psychagogia*. The most vivid experience of the ultimate goal of being in itself comes from the recognition of the beauty and good in other human beings in the varying degrees that we perceive good. The variety of perception and depth depends on the individual himself. Muir (2000) takes this further by stating that Plato recognises as the most important in educational terms:

[T]he movement of two souls toward each other, and then together toward knowledge of the good, constitutes not only a binding friendship but also the process of mutual education of the two friends. This mutual education culminates, ultimately, in these friends’ participation in the philosophical (and according to Socrates, the best) life. (Muir, 2000:240)



These ideas reflected on the art of theatre, recognise theatre as an absolute art of speech and movement that in a compelling and convincing way tries to persuade its audience of the good and truth which it represents. Furthermore, we could also draw parallels between the relationship of actor trainer - actors and actor - spectators with that of the transcendent type of love. As we have already discussed, Aristotle examines the relationship between actor and spectator as one that motivates the psyche or creates a movement toward each other subsequently corresponding to *psychagogia*. Following Socrates' paradigm, when I argue for a theatre of *psychagogia* I question and analyse not only the art of theatre itself but also theatre's acting pedagogies and the role of the actor. Therefore, I interpret *psychagogia* in psychophysical actor training as a conceptual methodology that values the pursuit and exploration of knowledge that rises from the actor's inner experiences.

### Theatre as therapy in ancient Greece

The word *psychagogia* alongside any discussion around psyche brings into place the contemporary viewpoints of healing and therapy. According to Oxford's Greek-English Lexicon (1977), *psychagogia* contains the meaning of therapy when describing an action during which the psyche, 'beguiled from what she witnesses, experiences empathy at the contemplation of another's suffering' (O.G-E.L, 1977:2026). Theatre, particularly tragedy, provides masterpieces of kinds of actions and archetypal situations that induce empathy and contemplate sufferings.

The therapeutic dimension of ancient theatre can be detected by the attendance of patients being treated in the sanctuary of Asclepius at theatre performances. The witnessing of tragedies, comedies and satiric plays aimed to motivate a psychic motion, and therefore promote healing by awakening the presence of the patient; creating a dialogue and contact with themselves; resulting in the patient achieving inner understanding and potential transformation. The patients and healers of the sanctuary attended the performances and hence they were contemplating archetypal manifestations of mythology, reality and the divine; a praxis that aimed to motivate a psychic movement and therefore aid their healing.

Asclepius was a pre-Greek god, or rather a demon, who was both "mantic" and "chthonic"<sup>14</sup> in character; he is associated with animals and specifically the dog and serpent that

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<sup>14</sup> Mantic means having divining or prophetic powers while chthonic relates to the earth and the underworld of the dead.

symbolise healing. According to the myth, he is son of Apollo and learned the art of healing from Chiron the centaur. His cult grew enormously in reputation in Greece, and sanctuaries, devoted to his name, were built in several cities including theatre venues.

Asclepius recognises the value of theatre's therapeutic qualities and the role of the theatre within the community as an art form that corresponds to the psyche and soma as an inseparable union of spirit and matter. Epidaurus is the birthplace of the healer god and his cult is attested there from the 6th century BC. Epidaurus became one of the most important centres of healing in the ancient world and by the 4th century BC attracted the sick from farther lands seeking medical and mystical cures at the sanctuary dedicated to Asclepius. As the sanctuary in Epidauros grew in prosperity, a theatre was built next to it. The theatre of Epidaurus was designed by Polycleitus during the last quarter of the 4th century BC and became a significant cultural as well as healing centre in ancient times while it still hosts performances until present time.

In the ancient world, Asclepius' therapy or healing cares for soma and psyche as absolute union and so physical sickness and psychic imbalance were being treated as an inseparable unity. The medical symptom in antiquity is seen as the point of correspondence between the psychic inner reality and the outer somatic (Meier, 1989). There is little reliable information about the practices that were taking place in Asclepius' sanctuaries but what we do know is that the treatment there took the form of an incubation ritual that consisted of an initial cleansing bath for the soma and psyche, then the necessary preliminary sacrifices and finally the sick person slept in the *abaton*, the innermost sanctuary, in order to dream the healing dream. Thus the healing process or incubation had the characteristic of a mystery or initiation during which the healer god or healing symbols were summoned to visit the patients' dreams. In ancient Greece the attitude towards dreams was purely religious in the beginning and so dreams are seen as prayers or divine messages. Plato has no specific theory about dreams but states that the content of a dream is determined by the part of the tripartite psyche that is active. In *Prometheus Bound*, Aeschylus mentions dream interpretation as one of the cleverest inventions of Prometheus. What is constant in the development of the Greeks' theological, philosophical and theoretical approach to dreams is the dreamer's attitude towards the irrational. Meier (1989) points out that:

Anagogical readings (especially in Greek rhetoric) are spiritual or allegorical interpretations. Therefore medical practice would have an essential connection with the irrational. We may then say that what works in medicine is irrational. (Meier, 1989:25)

This kind of healing by contemplating the irrational, dreams, psyche and archetypal mythological or divine qualities, resonates with the theories of the unconscious and Freud's dream interpretation as well as the methodology of Jung's analytical psychology. Jung placed high significance upon dreams and the symbols arising from them. According to Jung (1960), dreams are glimpses into the unconscious realm of the mind; a way of the unconscious to confront its irrational messages. The following section of this thesis sets up to investigate how theatre's purpose as *psychagogia* and its relationship with irrational and unconscious images has been overlooked in the process of theatre's development in the Western world.

#### Between *psychagogia* and psychophysical actor training

The following section questions if in the process of secularisation of culture we have lost interest in and concern about psyche and how this may have influenced its relationship with theatre. From the perspective of the Christian tradition that dominates the Western world, the idea of the psyche is reduced to only one meaning, that of soul. In this thesis, I argue for spirituality in theatre that is related to a process of inner exploration embracing the irrational and the mysterious in life rather than in terms of a divine other or an organised religion. With the development of monotheistic religions, we have the supremacy of one and only, absolute god that implies the opposition of soul (good) and body (bad/sinful). The study of the psyche becomes problematic when looked at through the Cartesian dichotomy of body and mind or through religious lenses that seek relation to one God. Due to the ambiguous nature of the psyche, this study emphasises that psyche might imply its complexity and intimate connection with the lived body. In comparison to the polytheistic humanistic cult of ancient Greece, one can note that the modern dichotomy between good and evil, soul and body - where the body is seen as sinful - results in the gradual depression of the Dionysian attitude in the modern world. Within the Church, any aspect of the Dionysian attitude, such as sexuality, intoxication, irrationality, instinct, desire, chaos and so on comes to represent evil. The Greek god Dionysus, god of theatre, wine and ecstasy, symbolises one's inward journey to the depths of the underworld and physical and emotional dismemberment. Its myth and cult represent the psyche's ability to come up from the dark experience through collective artistic expressions such as dance and theatre. In opposition sits the Greek god Apollo who is identified as a god of higher civilisation; he is the god of music, healing, prophecy and law. While Dionysus is related to primordial, irrational or unconscious functions, Apollo relates to reason, harmony and beauty.

The dialogue between Dionysus and Apollo echoes Nietzsche's philosophy of the birth of tragedy that refers to the binary of the two Gods in order to speak about the 'diametrically opposed tendencies or impulses of art, man, and life' (Huskinson, 2004:13). Nietzsche uses the symbolic language of the Greek polytheistic religion to state the oppositional impulses of human existence and declares the death of the literal and conventional Christian God who no longer is a viable source of any received wisdom. In *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche (1969 [1883-1885]) presents his *Übermensch* (Superman in German) as the goal or height of human potential that comes to replace God. He suggests a spiritual pursuit in life that is not directed to a divine God but is rather seen as a communication with the psyche, turning the focus inwards to personal growth and psychological development.

During the late nineteenth century when Nietzsche stated that "God is Dead", psychology as a discipline became distinct from philosophy, and psyche as a subject matter becomes intrinsic not only in philosophical and religious discourses but also becomes the central focus of study of this new developing science of psychology. In the development of psychoanalysis, both Jung and Freud have been influenced by Nietzsche's philosophy in mapping the psyche. Nietzsche's conception of the unconscious enlarged the boundaries of the creative psyche including non-rational or intuitive sources of knowledge and encouraged unconscious communication through symbolic language. In that sense, his philosophy relates to Jung's analytical psychology and the methodological framework of this thesis. Jung, similarly, affirms the realisation of the whole Self as the ultimate goal of human health and potential. Huskinson points out how both of them valued 'the union of opposites that comprises specifically the dynamic synthesis of the Apollonian and Dionysian impulses and the consciousness and unconscious of the human psyche' in the *Übermensch* and the Self respectively<sup>15</sup> (Huskinson, 2004:3).

Nietzsche (1967 [1872]) in *The Birth of Tragedy* considers the Apollonian and Dionysian aspects of ancient Greek theatre as opposite artistic energies arising from human nature emphasising the duality of human experience. He recognises in Greek tragedy a spiritual function that enables people to regard both their suffering and joyous life experiences in the way that these opposite artistic energies come together in an amalgamation of poetry, music, dance and ecstatic emotions. Therefore, the experience of tragedy generates psychological value for both the spectator and the artist (Nietzsche, 1967). On a psychological level the Apollonian and the Dionysian are 'creative impulses which comprise

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<sup>15</sup> For a detailed analysis in the peculiar relationship between Jung's and Nietzsche's work and personalities see Huskinson, L. (2004) *Nietzsche and Jung. The whole Self in the union of opposites*. Hove and New York, Bruner- Routledge.

modes of perceiving, experiencing, expressing and responding to reality' (Huskinson, 2004:16). For Nietzsche, the Apollonian impulse corresponds to feeling oneself to be conscious and distinct, while the Dionysian impulse corresponds to feeling instinctively conjoined to the rest of reality and to the irrational. Based on this interpretation, we can relate the Apollonian to the mind while the Dionysian comes closer to the body.

According to Nietzsche's philosophy, ontologically the Dionysian impulse is primary as it relates to the more animalistic human instincts. The Apollonian impulse relates to the intellectual supremacy of human reason and its domination can be seen as a threat to alienate people from the innate and unconscious Dionysian wisdom. (Huskinson, 2004: 16-18) This statement is consonant with this thesis agreeing that a society that disregards the Dionysian and its representations in any communal engagement remains unaware of the dark or shadowy side of life and psyche. As Luchte (2004) points out, Nietzsche seeks and suggests a close and free encounter with the sacred not as a religious system but rather one in which the divine good and evil are allowed to integrate in symbiotic relationship. (Luchte, 2004) According to Nietzsche, this encounter with the sacred happens directly through the art of theatre, positioning theatre as a spiritual vehicle through which individuals can contemplate their existence. Consequently, the association of theatre with psychology is not a surprise and it unveils a long-term relationship between the two disciplines. What this second part of this chapter aims to identify is how this relationship has been established, developed, misinterpreted or even neglected.

### Nietzsche and Jung

This binary interplay of "good and evil", body and mind, Apollo and Dionysus is crucial to Jung's psychology as psyche is constructed as a living system of opposites. Jung found a wealth of symbolism in alchemy and mythology to speak about the psyche (Jung, 1949 [1923], 1956 [1952]). For a psychological understanding of the divine opposites of Apollo and Dionysus, Jung recognises Nietzsche's links between the aesthetic, psychological and metaphysical aspects of the two Greek gods. He identifies Apollo with intellect and consciousness, and Dionysus with the body and the unconscious of our psyche (Jung, 1949 [1923]). Jung agrees with what Dionysus meant for Nietzsche as 'a flood of mightiest universal feeling which bursts forth irresistibly, intoxicating the senses like strong wine. It is drunkenness in the highest sense' (Jung, 1949: 179) representing what has been repressed in excess of the rationalism of Western society.

Jung's psychological conception of the Dionysian impulse is 'the abyss of impassioned dissolution, where all human distinctions are merged in the animal divinity of the primordial psyche –a blissful and terrible experience.' (Jung, 1953: 86) and it becomes noticeable when 'man is gripped by his own barbaric and shadowing nature, dissolved into all his collective constituents made from the collective unconscious.' (Jung, 1949: 181) Thus, Jung recognises in Nietzsche's philosophy the beginning of the principles of the intuitive and sensation - from his four psychological types<sup>16</sup> - that do not differentiate the perception and contemplation of the inner images into thought or feeling but remain adapted into bodily and/or unconscious functions. He reasserts the value of the Dionysian imbricated within the Apollonian in a "both-and", as distinct from an "either-or" approach to body-mind, dissolving the previously acknowledged binaries. Based on Jung's principles, my practical exploration towards a pedagogical model of *psychagogia* treats the body-mind, consciousness and unconscious psyche as an inseparable union and it is discussed in Chapter 3.

Jung maps a mythological territory of the psyche from Greek culture that has been further explored and developed by Jungian psychologists including J. Hillman and R. Lopez-Pedraza. Hillman (1997) focused extensively on the psychological significance of archetypes, especially drawing upon Greek mythology, in the development of his archetypal psychology. Lopez-Pedraza (2000) in his psychological study of Dionysus, points out the deity's duality that can be seen as 'a psychic dynamism expressed by extreme images and emotions', a dynamism referring to depth psychology as 'he is the most psychiatric of the Greek gods' (Lopez-Pedraza, 2000:22).

From the standpoint of analytical psychology, the study of the two deities and their metaphorical representations in life can be read as manifestations of the archetypal forces of the psyche. According to Jung's analytical psychology, archetypes denote an inherited mode of functioning, corresponding to the phenomena of life. The spectrum of this mode of functioning fluctuates for humans between the biological and intellectual/ spiritual nature of our existence. The experience of archetypal manifestations in dreams, fantasies or creativity is described by Jung (1900 [1946], 1995) as 'numinous', a term that he borrowed from the German theologian Otto, wishing to describe a fundamental religious attitude of awe and exaltation generated by a feeling that exceeds the common reality. (Jung, 1995; Stevens, 1990:107) In a current dialogue about the concept of the numinous, Tacey (2009) indicates its non-religious quality that means something like 'awesome' and refers to the emotional experience of being in the presence of the sacred. The psychological reflection on the

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<sup>16</sup> Jung distinguished the four psychological types of thinking, feeling, intuition and sensation. The expression of each type has external and/or internal tendencies.

experience of the numinous has been related to the sacred and has preoccupied the thinking of many analysts and psychologists. In my pedagogical explorations, I facilitated my practice aiming to create potential numinous experiences for the participants where a connection with psyche may occur.

This thesis identifies the sacred as a numinous experience that incorporates an inseparable relationship between the good and evil, the body and mind, similar to the existence of both the Apollonian and Dionysian impulses of the human psyche. Within a theatrical context, the sacred is perceived and examined as an inner experience of the psyche, a space of meaning - literal or metaphorical - for how we consciously or unconsciously experience theatre and the art of acting. This thesis argues that the anarchic Dionysian elements of the psyche are currently overlooked. By reclaiming the sacred, theatre can embrace a 'genuine spirituality' rather than fear of the unknown or of mysticism. An actor's pedagogy of this kind has already begun with researchers such as McCutcheon (2001) who addresses the need to re-assess the sacred in the training of actors and performers through shamanism. The practical component of this thesis explores a pedagogical application of *psychagogia* within psychophysical actor training through the Sesame approach and understands psyche through the lens of analytical psychology as the embodied compositional form of life and motion. The emphasis that Sesame gives to the body, suffering and the inner irrational images reveal a connection to the approach with the psychological and metaphorical qualities associated with Dionysus<sup>17</sup>.

## **Part 2: Psyche in psychophysical actor training.**

Throughout the period from ancient Greece to the nineteenth century, theatre of *psychagogia* had passed through morality, education, religion, royal intrigues, mysticism, commercialism and decadence. The advent of Darwin's scientific theories and the dominance of rationalism pushes psyche to the margins of serious intellectual discourse. The psychological, spiritual and pedagogical attitudes that the art of acting and theatre of

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<sup>17</sup> My Masters dissertation entitled *Invoking Dionysus Aspects of the deity in Sesame training* examined specifically the connection of the Sesame training with the Dionysian aspects. (Batzoglou, A. 2008, London, Central School of Speech and Drama)

*psychagogia* incorporated in ancient Greece have become less apparent to the developing western mentality and its artistic endeavours. Within the scope of researching what psyche means, conceptually and pragmatically in relation to theatre practice and training, this thesis moves historically from ancient Greece to the end of the nineteenth century when psychology marks its appearance as a discrete scientific study and psychophysical actor training approaches are being introduced. Throughout the 2,500 years between Aristotle's *Poetics* and the formation of Stanislavski's psychophysical actor training system there have only been fragmentary discussions on how the actor prepares psychologically to portray the inner truth of characters. In the Renaissance period, the West saw signs of resurgence - like that of opera and melodrama - of a theatre according to the Aristotelian type and based on that foundation many literary scholars started to develop their own dramatic theories. The central argument was again the style, subject and content of dramatic writing rather than a concrete acting pedagogical foundation. Finally, in the eighteenth century theoretical and practical discourses on the art of acting led to a major dispute about the style of acting that revolved around opposing ideas as to whether acting should be based on real emotions or on intellectual study that excluded emotion<sup>18</sup>. 'The manuals of acting that abounded in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries aimed to codify the relationship of facial and gestural signs with the emotions they were alleged to signify.' (Gordon, 2006:19). This conflict continued into the nineteenth century when actors' attitudes seem to depend as well on socio-political circumstances of their society. With the rise of theatre's commercialism and popularity, the actor runs the risk of becoming a commodity serving the needs of a theatre industry. Theatre history has paradigms of great actors such as Edmund Kean, Eleanora Duse, Tommaso Salvini, Joseph Talma and others who fought for retaining quality and artistry in their craft. Duse in a much-quoted remark of hers, declares:

To save the theatre, the theatre must be destroyed; the actors and actresses must all die of the plague. They poison the air, they make art impossible. It is not drama that they play, but pieces for the theatre. We should return to the Greek, play in the open air; the drama dies of stalls and boxes and evening dress, and people who come to digest dinner. (Duse, in Cole & Krich 1970: part II)

According to Artaud (1974), during a period of loss of quality and depth reflected in art, theatre becomes a necessity for a society that yearns for development and transformation,

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<sup>18</sup> An evaluation and further details on the historical and socio-political study of the actor and the art of acting can be found in Denis de Diderot's *The paradox of acting* (France, 1758), and in various entries in Jean Duvignaud's *L'acteur* (France, 1965), Toby Cole and Helen K. Chinoy eds. *Actors on Acting* (New York, 1972), in Roach's *The Player's Passion: studies in the science of acting* (Michigan, 1993), in Gordon's *The Purpose of Playing* (Michigan, 2006).



'*une culture en action*' as Artaud defines it (translated in English as 'active culture' Artaud 1974:2). Artaud's theatre does not aim to imitate life realistically but to reflect a more profound and thoughtful insight of human life and society; a theatre as a vivid organism that inspires change and motivates the human psyche, a theatre that I relate to the concept of *psychagogia*. Within this theatre, the actors do not merely speak the words and move with grace but are responsible for adding insights and depth in their craft. The more truthful their representations are, the more convincing to the spectators. In relation to *psychagogia*, the development and understanding of the individual's own psyche is reflected in their ethos and actions and the dynamics of relationship with the spectators. Therefore, it is not a surprise that with the advent of psychology, theatre practitioners turned to this new science for answers on the actor's training and preparation. A discussion about psyche and the actor cannot ignore the long debates on the mystery of charisma, talent or presence, sometimes proposed to be intrinsic qualities of an actor that cannot be taught. Demastes (2002) argues that:

Theatre is a concrete reality that sparks an "essence" through a process we often call 'magic'. But it isn't magic at all in the traditional sense. Rather, a sort of spiritual *something more* has resulted from the emergent combining of numerous material *something less*. (Demastes 2002:9 cited in Power 2008: 201)

The rational and secular western mind tries to find an explanation for this "essence" of theatre and of the actor and even further to find ways to train actors in developing this "essence". In trying to explain and demystify this "mysterious something" of the art of theatre and acting, practitioners and theoreticians have spoken about the magic of theatre, the *hana* or flower of the actor, talent, energy, aura or charisma, and presence of the actor (Zeami 1984; Power 2008; Zarrilli 2008; Goodall 2008). In my understanding these different concepts or metaphorical images for acting, are attempting to give either a rational or metaphysical meaning to this intangible quality of the actor that is rather felt and not easily understand through intellectualism. This research, following the paradigm of the ancient Greek theatre of *psychagogia*, aims to investigate this irrational, ethereal phenomenon of acting in terms of the human psyche using the lens of Jung's analytical psychology. The research leaps from the period of ancient Greece to the end of nineteenth century when psychology as a science becomes a distinct discipline offering new knowledge of the human psyche, and when a specific psychophysical actor training method is first discussed by Stanislavski. The following part of chapter 1 examines critically the influences that the different psychological schools had on the development of psychophysical actor training pedagogies and the understanding of psyche within these practices.

## The resurgence of psyche from psychology

As noted, modern interpretations of the psyche refer to it as soul, mind or self attempting either to fully inhabit the Christian tradition or diminish entirely any spirituality. Psychology, which etymologically investigates the *logos* or reasoning of the psyche, tries to answer basic questions about human existence, the psyche that embraces the 'whole conscious and unconscious mind, especially when viewed as deciding or determining motivation, emotional response, and other psychological characteristics' (O.E.D.). In ancient Greece, Socrates, being persuaded that an important part of human self-understanding was lacking, made psyche 'the theme for philosophy' while it has been argued that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, 'psychological analysis (particularly psychoanalysis) of the self has replaced philosophical reflection on the soul in modern times, with a correspondingly ingrained and stubborn unwillingness to think about the soul or admit its existence' (Bloom, 1993: 545 and Cf. Gould, 1963, in Muir, 2000:237-8).

Freud's (1900) revolutionary study of the unconscious and his sexual theory were a revelation of the inner psychic reality and the beginning of psychoanalysis. This marks the beginning of many studies and schools on the nature of psyche. Freud, signifies the psyche by a rigid, sexual drive; others such as Adler propose a will-to power, absolute theory of the psyche; while on the other hand the Behaviourists criticize altogether the existence of the psyche or the unconscious. Saban (2008) points out that 'although Freud as a good neurologist upholds a dualistic scientific approach to the question, and indeed frames this psychological theories within a self-consciously scientific paradigm, a challenge to the Cartesian consensus does come from Jung – though this is implicit at first.' (Saban, 2008)

Jung, who started his career as a passionate and promising follower of Freud, gradually recognised Freud's theories as dogmatic and the two parted in 1913. Jung (1991[1946]) identified the problematic around defining psyche and suggested that psychology should give up the pursuit of a rational definition of truth about psyche because 'no philosophy had sufficient general validity to be uniformly fair to the diversity of individual subjects.' (Jung, 1991:71) He continues comparing psychology and the study of psyche with the discovery of positive, negative, irrational and imaginary numbers in mathematics:

[...T]he psyche is the greatest of all cosmic wonders and the *sine qua non* of the world as an object...all knowledge [from psychology] is the result of imposing some kind of order upon the reactions of the psychic system as they flow into our

consciousness – an order which reflects the behaviour of a *metapsychic* reality, of that which is in itself real[...] we are in a position to know only everything that is capable of being known, i.e. everything that lies within the limits of the theory of knowledge...psyche does not coincide with consciousness. (Jung, 1991:79-81)

This specific idea of the psyche as an entirety of all conscious and unconscious aspects of the human being is central to analytical psychology. Jung (2004[1957]) recognises that the development and supremacy of the human mind during the last centuries has resulted in a 'forlornness of consciousness in our world due primarily to the loss of instinct' (Jung, 2004:61). But his belief lies on the ground that the creation of something new cannot be accomplished only by the intellect without a playful instinctive capacity that acts from inner necessity. The more power men achieve over nature and technology, the deeper they ignore psyche, that has 'become a mere accident, a "random" phenomenon, while the unconscious which can manifest itself only in the real, "irrationally given" human being, has been ignored altogether.' (Jung, 2004:61)

Therefore, a rigorously undertaken process of self-knowledge and exploration will remain one-sided and incomplete if one does not acknowledge and encounter the unconscious. Jung's endeavour to give a description of the unconscious nature of the psyche states that:

The unconscious is not simply the unknown, it is rather the *unknown psychic*;...so defined the unconscious depicts an extremely fluid state of affairs: everything of which I know, but of which I am not at the moment thinking; everything of which I was once conscious but have now forgotten: everything perceived by my senses, but not noted by my conscious mind; everything which involuntarily and without paying attention to it, I feel, think, remember, want and do; all the future things that are taking shape in me and will sometime come to consciousness: all this is the content of the unconscious. (Jung, 1991:95)

A position towards the unknown unconscious challenges modern man to encounter the emotional chaos of the human psyche not by means of their intellect and rational mind but rather by instinctual foundations and an attitude based on the feeling function of our being. Jung (2004) states that the overlooking of the unconscious and therefore of the psyche as a whole 'is not the result of carelessness or of lack of knowledge, but of downright resistance to the mere possibility of there being a second psychic authority besides the ego [which is mere consciousness].' (Jung, 2004:61)

The instinctual and emotional functions of the human being are essential to actors who are seeking a methodology for their craft that will free their creative potential without rigid scientific, acting “recipes”, theatrical rules or random inspiration. Theatre practitioners turned to psychology, throughout the years of its development, seeking solutions or methods of rehearsal and actor training that assist finding truthfulness in the art of acting.

### Examining psycho- in psychophysical actor training

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, theatre had seen the heights of melodrama, romanticism, operetta and burlesque. This was a move away from theatre’s *psychagogic function* practiced in ancient Greece and discussed in detail in the previous section. Modern acting’s heredity starts from the nineteenth century with theatre practitioners fighting against theatre’s materialism and seeking for ways to embody and act out their thoughts and feelings in the most truthful manner. Gordon points out that ‘what has changed is our conception of human psychology, which determines the way in which a spectator reads acting, and the form and style of the drama that represents human psychology’. (Gordon, 2006:36) This section critically reviews key theatre approaches and then contextualises them within the concept of a theatre of *psychagogia* identifying similarities and differences to help draw out a more comprehensive praxis, which can help the actor to create motion within the psyche.

The theatre of *psychagogia* with the actor as its agent should go beyond physical, surface reality, and strive to a higher, spiritual realisation: ‘the fundamental aim of our art is the creation of this inner life of a human spirit, and its expression in artistic form’ (Stanislavski 1988:14). In this thesis any reference to “spiritual” quality of the art of theatre, is associated with the exploration of the actor’s “inner life” and “interiority”, a vitality that can be experienced but cannot be directly represented. Power (2008) declares that ‘the spiritual quality of art transcends the medium through which it is embodied’ (Power 2008:50) and continues:

Twentieth century practitioners such as Appia, Craig, Artaud and Grotowski envisaged a presence in theatre that would transcend the fictional and the representational. When Jerzy Grotowski defined the essence of theatre as: “the actor spectator relationship of perceptual, direct, ‘live’ communion” (Grotowski 1968:19) he was referring, in almost mystical terms, to the ceremonial quality implicit within the

theatrical situation itself, which went beyond the pretence of (merely) representing fictional worlds. (Power 2008: 12)

In *Poetics*, Aristotle speaks of a similar 'live communion' when he describes theatre as the greatest form of *psychagogia* facilitating a psychic motion and communication between its attendees. Theatre practitioners of the late nineteenth and twentieth century turned to psychology to generate theatre's transcendental live communion, incorporating in their approaches both the psychological and physical aspects of acting. The development of these approaches marks the establishment of psychophysical actor training pedagogies.

In the following section, I sketch this development in training and theatre practice illustrating a return to the body-mind and the psychophysical. This overview of key practitioners tracks a 'factual knowledge' of the approach to psyche in psychophysical actor training. Within my thesis, this practice review serves as a 'location in a lineage' or a 'knowledge [of] how to do things' as Nelson describes it in his model for practice as research. (Nelson in Allegue et al., 2009:127)

The thesis critically illustrates the steps of theatre's pedagogical development towards a restoration of lost or repressed aspects of a former theatre, while proposing the application of Sesame as a pedagogical approach that comes closer to the Greek sense of *psychagogia*.

### Constantin Stanislavski (1863-1938)

Stanislavski was the first theatre practitioner to use new studies from the field of psychology to inform his understanding of the acting process. He was interested in the internal development of the actor and the portrayed character, referring to the psychological and physical aspects as inseparable: 'In every physical act there is a psychological element and a physical element in every psychological one.' (Stanislavski, 1955:140) Stanislavski turned to psychology in order to fight against the "mechanical acting" prevalent at that time and highly influenced by melodrama which encouraged expression of the external representation of the character. The essence of his endeavours is found in his contribution to the internal development of the actor who portrays the truth of his character by studying characterisation and psychological situation in the action. In doing so, Stanislavski opened the path for a rehearsal and training process that required from the actor psychological involvement with, and as, the character they portray:

[A] sculptor casts his dream in bronze; an actor takes his dream of a character, realized through his subconscious<sup>19</sup>, his inner creative state, through the subject and super-objective of the role, and brings it to life by means of his voice, his movements, his emotional power directed by his intelligence. (Stanislavski, 1950:80)

Stanislavski, in his search for techniques that bridge the physical and psychological aspects of the actor, turned to contemporary psychological knowledge. These psychological theories or techniques were then applied in actor training with the aim of unlocking unconscious thoughts and feelings of the actor reaching a creative state of being. Stanislavski speaks about the unconscious but there is no evidence that he knew Freud's work on the structure of the mind even though the two men were contemporaries<sup>20</sup>. Stanislavski's approach to stimulate feelings was influenced by the experiments of the Russian physiologist Pavlov<sup>21</sup> who studied the correlation between the nervous system and the autonomic functions of the body and Vygotsky's theories on developmental and socio-educational psychology. Pavlov's study introduced the respondent conditioning of human behaviour, meaning the relationship between external stimuli and the reaction that is caused in the living organism. Stanislavski applied these new ideas in preparing the actor to find the character's logical behaviour, objectives and connections between stimulus, psychological impulses and physical expression.

Additionally, in the development of Stanislavski's system, the use of memory and the senses became invaluable tools in the creation of a true psychological being on stage. This exploration and application of elements of one's memory and senses aimed to evoke true feelings that apply to the given circumstances of the play. He called this "affective memory" and it was influenced and inspired by the work of French behavioural psychologist Ribot, who proposed that 'to re-experience the emotion, one must first re-experience the emotion's imprint. By recalling the sensory atmosphere of a past activity, one can recapture the past emotion.' (Gordon, 1987:39) Pavlov's experiments and Ribot's concept of affective memory intrigued Stanislavski, who reconceptualised elements to the devices of sense memory and

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<sup>19</sup> The subconscious and unconscious are often used interchangeably from people who do not refer to specific psychological schools.

<sup>20</sup> The connection between Stanislavski's approach to acting with Freud's studies of the unconscious is discussed thoroughly in Seidenberg, R. (1966). 'Freud and Stanislavsky. New Directions in the Performing Arts' by Donald Freed. Foreword by Lawrence J. Friedman, M.D. New York: Vantage Press, Inc., 1964. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 35:141-142.

<sup>21</sup> Despite the fact that Pavlov was a physiologist, his study has influenced greatly the development of psychology. During that time psychology as a separate discipline was not so clearly distinct.

emotional recall in his system. Later these facets became the main subject of controversy regarding interpretations and teachings of the system in America.

Stanislavski's system invites the actor to find connections between the inner life and the psychological truth of the character, to embody the characters and form the actions through the means of *perezhivanie*, meaning experiencing or "living through" the dramatic character. Stanislavski realised that 'the physical life and psychological processes that the actor underwent needed to be explored simultaneously, because they were *interdependent*.'(Sawoski, 2009:4). The explorations of the physical actions formed the last stage of the development in Stanislavski's system and were further explored by his students.

Stanislavski described his approach as 'spiritual realism' stating that 'the value of any art is determined by its spiritual content' (Stanislavski, 1959:71). He was aiming towards psychological realism for a theatre that portrays the truth of human behaviour through the theatrical. He conceived theatre as a medium through which the "truth" about society could be revealed and in that sense, I relate his theatre to *psychagogia*:

[Theatre can be seen as] a moral instrument whose function is to civilise, to increase sensitivity, to heighten perception and [...] to ennoble the mind and uplift the spirit. The best method of achieving this end was adherence to the principles of Realism. (Benedetti 1982: 11)

In general, Stanislavski's system, serves the aesthetics of drama based on the supposition that the characters on stage are portraying realistic psychological beings. The rationale of the system emphasises conscious psychological analysis of the dramatic characters through memory, imagination (magic-if) and the logic of human behaviour, but in that way, it seems to overlook the irrationality and depth of the unconscious psyche. The actor's interpretation and portrayal of the character's psychological truth is limited by their own self-consciousness. Consequently, there is no place for any potential unconscious, irrational connections with the complexity of the psyche. This thesis argues that a realistic psychological embodiment of the dramatic characters based on logical behaviour only diminishes the potential for the irrational and archetypal dimension of the drama. It argues for a pedagogical approach to psyche that harnesses an unconscious that was not yet fully discussed in Stanislavski's time. The practical research explores the application of the Sesame Drama and Movement therapy approach as a way for the actor to encounter, through the mediums of the body and instinct, the irrational Dionysian aspect of their psyche. This embodied experience of the unconscious opens the possibilities of communicating with the spectator's psyche as in *psychagogia*.

### Michael Chekhov (1891-1955)

In the 1920s, Stanislavski's student, M. Chekhov questioned the technique of emotional memory stating that it leads too readily to naturalism and stressed the importance of imagination and a more physical approach to acting. Chekhov left Russia, and his travels in Germany, France, England, Lithuania and USA brought for him new encounters, mystical ideas and philosophical interests. He articulated his departure from Stanislavski and affirmed that acting cannot be imprisoned within the limits of the actor's personality. It cannot be called art if it arises from the actor's shallow ego with its mannerisms, repetitiveness and complexes but instead the art of acting should yearn for transformation arising from the depths of the actor's self. Chekhov in his practice, addressed the question of how to access the unconscious creative self through indirect and non-analytical means.

Chekhov's preoccupation becomes the development of an "ideal actor" and therefore an "ideal theatre of the future". In addition to entertainment, theatre could bring therapeutic enlightenment, nurture, strength and inspiration to the human being. The actor has a responsibility to the audience, beyond amusement, to invade the collective unconscious and communicate to the audience's psyche (Chekhov, 2002). For Chekhov the actor as the principal artist of theatre should be an inventor and a creator; her work should exceed the limits of naturalism, logic and characterisation as a mere interpretation of the author's work; the art of acting requires imagination, freedom, spontaneity, insightful work and expressive mediums.

Chekhov conceived acting as a psychophysical process and invited actors consciously to train their bodies, their psychology and imagination in order to attain 'sensitivity of body to the psychological inner creative impulses', 'richness of the psychology of the actor' and a 'complete obedience of both body and psychology to the actor' (Chekhov 2002: 2-5). In Chekhov's technique of the "psychological gesture", the actor embodies a character's need or internal dynamic in the form of an external gesture. Subsequently, the outward gesture is suppressed and incorporated internally, allowing the physical memory to inform the performance on an unconscious level. Chekhov not only leaves space for the unconscious to emerge but he also distinguished two kinds of gestures, an everyday one, and the 'archetypal gesture which serves as an original model for all possible gestures of the same kind. The psychological gesture belongs to the second type' (Chekhov 2002:70).



Chekhov's "psychological gesture" is a concept inspired by the school of Anthroposophy, based on the theories of the Austrian esoteric philosopher Rudolf Steiner who describes Anthroposophy as:

[A] path of knowledge, to guide the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe. It arises in man as a need of the heart, of the life of feeling; and it can be justified only inasmuch as it can satisfy this inner need. (Chekhov, 1924 in Benedetti, 2005:185)

Within the philosophical school of Anthroposophy, Steiner was looking for an art that would give form and visibility to the spiritual word and expressions of the higher human being. His explorations led him to the practices of "Eurythmy": an expressive art of movement, speaking and singing, originated during 1912-13 in collaboration with his wife Marie von Sivers, an actress and speech therapist. Eurythmy aimed to reveal the deeper origins of life through the embodiment of the spiritual forces that live within human sound and movement.

Chekhov's praxis, influenced by the school of Anthroposophy and Eurythmy, reveals a spiritual, almost mystical connotation and esoteric dimension to the art of acting using ideas and obscure language that makes sense only to those who share the same beliefs. However, Chekhov's approach to acting has apparent resemblances with theatre of *psychagogia* and the theories of analytical psychology by Jung who during the same period (1917) in Switzerland published his studies on the concepts of archetypes and the collective unconscious. In addition, Chekhov gave importance to movement and the images created from the body as starting points for the actor's transformation, and on that note, his approach resembles Sesame's practice that prioritises the body as the medium to connect and express the person's interiority through the outer form. I argue, however, that the application of the Sesame approach offers a more structured, "well-held" and "grounded" way to encounter the unconscious psyche. For example, throughout the workshops of this practice as research, the actors/participants were asked instinctively to respond with their body to a given situation or myth from the ancient Greek dramas, and from there developed their exploration in a group improvisation. This process is carefully facilitated by the dramatherapist who supports and guides the actors. This practice is further discussed in the third chapter of this thesis and the workshops have been recorded and presented in the accompanying DVD.

## Lee Strasberg (1901-1982)

It was not until 1923 that Stanislavski's system travelled to America through touring productions and teachings from his students. Elements from Stanislavski's first stage of the system reached the United States where the system changed and inspired new directions within the context of psychophysical actor training. By 1920 Hollywood had become famous as the world's capital of a rising film entertainment industry aspiring after a different style of acting, that gradually took the form of a more naturalistic and psychological style. Different approaches and applications of Stanislavski's system inspired actors and teachers searching for psychological truth and emotional effectiveness of the character they portray. Strasberg, Kazan, Adler and Meisner are only a few names of American theatre practitioners who, following the system, developed and taught their own actor training approaches. Between them some emphasised the aspects relating to emotional recall and sense memory while others focused more on the logic of behaviour drawing out the truth through actions and the character's objective. Both ways were thought to engage the actor's psycho-physical instrument. Whatever the different formulations of Stanislavski's system and the debate about their faithfulness, this thesis is focusing on the questions concerning truthfulness that have been posed against the advent of psychology and psychotherapy for finding the answers.

The first decades of the twentieth century marked in America the development of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis as well as behaviouristic psychology. In 1921, Moreno, a Romano-Austrian psychoanalyst, moved to New York where he developed psychodrama and group psychotherapy. Moreno's psychodrama proposes the use of improvisation and enactment of personal stories in order to resolve inner conflicts through dramatisation. His theoretical framework draws from psychoanalysis and therefore the practice of psychodrama could be described as a dramatic enactment of the personal traumatic or problematic experiences taken from the life story of the participant. The presentation of Moreno's ideas and the group work of Impromptu Theatre in New York in 1929 alongside the teachings of Stanislavski's system influenced Strasberg who later that year founded the Group Theatre with fellow actors and directors.

Strasberg experimented with Stanislavski's basic principles from the first period of his system and formed Method Acting by developing exercises and techniques for awakening and reviving the actor's sensory memory and emotions. In Strasberg's Method of awakening and utilizing the emotions, one can identify the trends of both psychoanalysis and behavioural psychology that attempt to explain the interaction between cause and behaviour,

conscious and unconscious, the role of habits and complexes, and the process of creative imagination: 'use of memory is essential to understanding the entire process that goes into acting. In acting everything is done unconsciously as a process of memory' (Strasberg in Hull 1985:19).

Behavioural psychology maintains that thinking, acting and feeling are behaviours and as such can be described and controlled scientifically without recourse either to internal physiological events or to hypothetical constructs such as the mind. Similarly, the Method is seeking to revive and control the identified emotions and behaviours of the dramatic character through the actor's senses of taste, smell, touch and sight (Hull 1985). On the other hand, the Method invites the actor to turn to their inner world, searching and awakening past emotional experiences by using the senses as stimulus. The process of reviving past emotional situations resembles psychoanalysis that concentrates on recalling the individual's past traumatic experiences. It could be a painful and psychologically threatening process for a vulnerable individual and requires a safe and trustful environment and relationship with the therapist. For the actor, this personal process can result in a self-indulgent attitude of acting where the emotional experience remains intensively personal and egocentric for the actor, and remains for the audience incomprehensible and indifferent. On a similar note, the actor's emotional palette is reduced to their personal past emotional experiences and their imagination is restricted. A very literal representation of the feeling limits the possibility for open interpretations and psychological projections from the spectator.

Strasberg's Method Acting has been strongly associated with famous actors of the cinema and so continues to have an enormous appeal to acting trainees in the West. The experimental American theatre scene has seen the creation and development of theatre groups that have strongly questioned and tested the fine line between theatre and therapy. The founder and pioneer of Theatre of Encounter (1962) - later named Theatre Within - Alec Rubin, was both a director and therapist who in his work with actors, combined elements from his personal experience with Jungian therapy, his studies of Gestalt therapy and Janov's Primal therapy. Rubin focused especially on the affective memory exercises from Stanislavski's system and was working with actors therapeutically to unlock their full potentials considering that 'the clue to all scenes is the personal element' (Rubin, 1990)<sup>22</sup>. The theories and practices of Rogers' client-oriented psychotherapeutic approach and Perls' Gestalt therapy influenced Jonathan Fox in the development of a new theatre form, called

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<sup>22</sup> Information is taken from unpublished interview that was obtained from Joe Raiola, President of Theatre Within.

Playback. Playback is a more open and imaginative method than psychodrama that employs specifically trained actors to improvise in the moment on real given stories from the audience members. The correlation of psychotherapy with theatre and actor training has not always been carefully facilitated, resulting in a softening of boundaries between the actors' personal creative unconscious and their psychopathology. My own practice proposes the application of the Sesame approach as an oblique way to raise awareness of the psyche through the creative mediums of movement and drama. The personal element is then expressed obliquely through the medium of movement and drama and not identified within the actor's past. The therapeutic implications of this application are not related to acting and "truthfulness" of emotions but rather to the pedagogy of the actors' creative self. This position is discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

### George Tabori (1914-2007)

Tabori, a German-Hungarian Jewish theatre practitioner who migrated during the war to America, combined teachings from Strasberg, Brecht and Gestalt therapy to contribute to a radical perceptive of theatre as therapy with a directorial no-"guru" authoritative approach in working with actors. When Tabori (1990) visits Freud's house in Vienna for the purpose of a filmed interview, he is asked if theatre serves therapy in the same way as psychoanalysis and he states: 'I believe so. I believe, probably every productive activity, artistic activity, an expression has a certain therapeutic effect, an alienation' (Tabori 1990).

The aspect that differentiates Tabori's application of psychotherapeutic techniques from the tendencies of the American school lies in the fact that Tabori did not seek ways to stimulate the actor's feelings and emotions, but rather, he looks for a process of self-understanding that will liberate the actor's potential for transformation. In the only book on Tabori's praxis available in English: *Embodied Memory: The Theatre of George Tabori*, Feinberg (2000) describes his actor-centred approach, his less "directorial" role and use of techniques from Gestalt therapy and Moreno's psychodrama, indicating clearly that Tabori always considered psychotherapy a means and not an end in itself (Feinberg, 2000). He applies elements and techniques from psychology not in order to achieve desired emotional effectiveness from the actors but rather as a process of training the actor's creative self. During this process, Tabori's role is not so much that of the director but that of the facilitator of the actor's process of self-exploration and creativity. In this view, his approach draws similarities with this practice as research that explores the relationship between actor and facilitator during the process of individuation.

Tabori's main belief preserves that 'Acting, as in Hamlet's great monologue, is a synonym for Being and Being is an affirmation of the self' (Tabori, 1975: 118); 'The director can only help the actor by indirection' allowing to the actor space for 'his inner search of Being' (Tabori 1975: 126). The actor, named by Tabori as "*homo ludens*", should constantly play, think and experiment with their self and the world under the duality of self and role. In Tabori's practice, the actors and director try several techniques to succeed in freeing themselves and the body, considering theatre as a process of transformation derived from improvisation and play. Tabori with his actors explored exercises from different disciplines such as gymnastics, group meditation, group psychotherapy and techniques from Strasberg's Method, seeking to establish a different relationship with themselves, reality and the audience, in order 'to re-establish the dramatic communication'. (Tabori: 1990)

Tabori's existential theatre approach mirrors his political position during a period of rise of capitalism in Europe. He states that Western society denies encountering psychology and therapy even though it is in great need of it (Tabori, 1975). His socio-political views dominate his writing suggesting re-establishing the connection between theatre, society and therapy as a means of seeking truths about life and the self. Tabori's theatrical manifesto reflects the theatre of *psychagogia* in ancient Greece that was aiming to educate ethically the whole society.

Hamletism is an occupational disease of capitalism, a split between thinking and acting, mirroring the great split of the classes and mirrored by it. To heal that split is called revolution, but the art of revolution remains shit unless it embraces the therapy of art and the art of therapy. (Tabori 1975: 132)

### Antonin Artaud (1896 -1948)

When reviewing the possibilities for a theatre of *psychagogia* one could identify Artaud's *Theatre of Cruelty* as an attempt to re-establish theatre's social and moral role during the *Belle Époque* in France when the Dada and Surrealist movements inspired by Freud's studies of the unconscious advocated an anti-bourgeois philosophy. Artaud's theatrical vision is not directly associated with psychophysical training approaches in the sense that theatre practitioners turned to psychology in order to enhance the actor's naturalistic acting. Artaud is more concerned about the existential psychology of the human being and so he names his theatre 'of Cruelty' not by means of destruction, but of discipline and determination in the way one lives and reflects his own life, a 'theatre difficult and cruel for

myself.' (Artaud, 1974:95) He envisions an anarchic theatre that disturbs and shocks the mind, liberating dark powers aiming to induce change not only in a specific audience but in the whole nation, and in that sense is closer to the concept of *psychagogia*. 'The theatre is the state, the place, the point where we can get hold of man's anatomy and through it heal and dominate life.' (Artaud in Esslin, 1999:76) This kind of theatre is not only communicating a truth to the audience's mind and senses but aims to have an effect on the human's spirit, to their entire existence:

It [theatre] is not aimed at solving social or psychological conflicts, to serve as a battlefield for moral passions, but to express objectively secret truths, to bring out in active gestures those elements of truth hidden under forms in their encounters with Becoming....to return it to its original purpose, to restore it to a religious, metaphysical position, to reconcile it with the universe. (Artaud 1974: 52)

Artaud's *Theatre of Cruelty* expels God from the stage but retains a place for the sacred, for original representation, for the 'archi-manifestation of force or of life' that could be identified with psyche, a 'representation as the autopresentation of pure visibility and even pure sensibility.' (Derrida, 1997:238) Derrida in his reading of Artaud, suggests that Artaud deconstructs the western theatre in search of its "affirmative essence – *vis affirmativa*" which theatre has retained from its origin. Artaud views the art of theatre not as an imitation of life but rather as a medium that reinforces the communication with a transcendental principle of life.

*Theatre of Cruelty* is a hieratic theatre. Regression towards the unconscious fails if it does not reawaken the sacred, if it is not both the "mystic" experience of "revelation" and the manifestation of life in their first emergence. (Derrida, 1997: 243)

Artaud (1974 [1964]) suggests a metaphysical theatre with a distinct spatial and physical meaning, a theatre where the body portrays and embodies the idea 'of physical knowledge of images' and archetypes occurred from myths: 'Theatre's true purpose is to create myths, to express life from an immense, universal aspect and to deduce imagery from this life where we would like to discover ourselves.' (Artaud, 1974: 89)

Esslin recognises in Artaud's position parallels with Freud's view, particularly in regards to his work on dream interpretation and with the Surrealist movement that based its art form on unconscious processes (Esslin 1999:80-81). The Freudian reflections on repressed impulses, instincts, desires and the sexual theory both influenced and appalled Artaud who detested analytical interpretations. In my view, Artaud's psychology is closer to Jung's

attitude towards imagery, myths and alchemy. Artaud, like Jung, encountered myths and alchemy in his practice through their symbolic and metaphoric language rather than attempting an analytical interpretation. Artaud as a 'romantic vitalist' (Esslin 1999:80) suggests that the actor should undertake throughout his life and work a process of transformation similar to alchemy where symbols are used to transmute the soul and spirit of the actor into gesture, movement, and feelings. This process for the actor enables the potential for healing and transformation of the spectator as well. Theatre becomes the place where the magnitude of heart against the mind illuminates the spirit by revealing and expressing secret truths and repressed feelings. Artaud's refusal to see theatre as a mere place of entertainment, defending strongly theatre's potential force to encourage change not only for the individual but for the whole society echoes this thesis's resurrection of theatre of *psychagogia*. In addition, Artaud's vision of the actor as 'an athlete of the heart' reinforces the practical experimentations of this practice as research that searches for a pedagogy which facilitates the actor's inner process of encountering their interior realm of images, feelings, instincts and fantasies. In accordance with this view, Jung gives high importance to the process of individuation during which the individual encounters conscious and unconscious aspects of her body and mind in order to come closer to an understanding of her Self as the core of who she is. Jung does not suggest that this process can achieve a final realisation, but it is rather open-ended until the individual's last breath. It resembles the dance of the butterfly around the fire when the butterfly, attracted by the flames, wants to fly closer and closer but it knows that touching the flames means death.

#### Jacques Copeau (1879- 1949)

During the same period with Artaud in France, Copeau was another influential figure in the development of twentieth century theatre practice whose life and work underlined his commitment and interest in a revitalised theatre with social and moral roles within the community. Copeau - like Artaud but with less anarchic and more pragmatic ideas - fought against the superficiality of the commercial theatres of the boulevards dominated by the artistic and cultural tastes of the *Belle Époque*: 'He found it difficult to consider how he could work in an art form seemingly so concerned with surface, success, and notoriety at any cost.' (Evans, 2006:6) Copeau gradually established his own theatre group that became famous under the name *Théâtre du Vieux Colombier* and developed his unique training based on 'ethos, shared aims and ambitions' (Evans, 2006:11). In the scope of this research, Copeau's work is of interest because of the relevance of his theatrical vision to the

notion of theatre as *psychagogia* and because of his concentrated focus on researching and experimenting with ways to educate his actors on these principles.

Copeau searched for answers and advice from the personalities of the theatre world during that period such as Edward Gordon Craig, Adolphe Appia and Emile Jacques-Dalcroze. This meeting and cultural exchange with Jacques-Dalcroze on the relationship between psychological and physical disciplines, influenced the development of Copeau's psychophysical actor training approach. Copeau (1990) expressed a deep respect for 'Dalcroze's empirical approach and the way that he worked with form, experience, through improvisation and experiment, encouraging his students to reflect constantly on the emotional effect of their practice.' (Copeau 1990:60 in Evans, 2006:17) Dalcroze's practice was reflecting Copeau's passionate interest in exploring how the mental and physical attitudes of the performer could be developed and trained. Dalcroze's practice was based on movement as a possible method to release his students' natural understanding of rhythm. He also had an important friendship with the psychologist Edouard Claparede and this collaboration in particular, as well as with Appia, resulted in the creation of eurhythmics that employed games of change and quick physical reaction in order to focus on the actors' attention and increase their sense of rhythm and harmony. Later, Copeau experimented with this method, searching for ways to integrate actor training, psychological and physical activities and so his approach is situated within psychophysical actor training. The results of these experimentations did not gratify Copeau, and Evans suggests that the failure of the experiment could have been due to lack of experience of eurhythmics from the students who took the role of the tutor, rather than mistrust on the school's benefits. Copeau shared a life-long relationship with Dalcroze of mutual respect and admiration on each other's work.

Copeau placed the training of the actor's dramatic imagination and sensibility by improvisations in the centre of his approach. Furthermore, a study of ancient Greek theatre was provided during the first year of training attempting:

[A] close wedding of knowledge and practice, of renewing one's good faith in ancient traditions and rhythms, of reviving, not the actual forms of the past, but that spiritual bond which unfailingly puts us in contact with their principles. (Copeau in Gordon, 2009:129)

Copeau believed that the problem of the actor is a corporeal one focusing on the gap between the physical actions of the actor on stage and their feelings. He valued honesty, sincerity and spontaneity in the art of acting and his practice attempted to train these aspects of the actor. Copeau's use of improvisation and play within actor training influenced the



practice of theatre practitioners in searching for ways of empowering the performer's "presence" and "sense of self". Grotowski, Barba, Brook, Chaikin, Lecoq have echoed Copeau's notion of play and improvisation as the first principle for the emergence of the performer's imagination.

### Jerzy Grotowski (1933-1999)

In Eastern Europe, Soviet Communism marks the 1950s as a period of totalitarian control and it is remarkable that during these years of social and economical restrictions in Poland, Grotowski envisioned a theatre that should re-establish its ritualistic and mystical roots, aiming to restore spirituality in theatre and transformation for both actors and spectators.

In 1959, Grotowski began his work as the artistic director of a small theatre in Opole with experiments on revitalising theatre as a communion with transcendent forces. Grotowski was in search of a theatre as ritual and a transcendental actor. His interest and search into spirituality and psychology is attributed to his childhood experience and influence from his mother whose beliefs were grounded in Eastern philosophies and particularly in Hinduism. When Grotowski had to choose his university subjects he was in a dilemma between psychology, theatre and Sanskrit and, despite the fact that his studies focused on theatre, he never ceased the reading and research on the other subjects that consequently informed his performance-making and training practice (Wolford in Schechner and Wolford, 1997).

Grotowski's methodology rooted in Stanislavski's system and principles, aims to create theatre as an authentic communion that represents the efficacy of old rituals within society. Despite the fact that Grotowski avoids naming specific attributes of schools of psychology or philosophy that informed his methodology, the practical experimentations towards a transcendental altered experience of the actor's body-mind resonate with a profound interest in the study of human psyche and archetypes from the theories of Jung, Durkheim's and Turner's studies into the cultural anthropology of religious behaviour, Nietzsche's turn to the Dionysian mythical psyche, Artaud's ideal of a "theatre of Cruelty" and the traditions of Asian theatre (Grotowski, 1975; Schechner and Wolford, 1997; Levy, 2005). Grotowski is looking for:

[...S]omething which existed in the past but has been forgotten over the centuries.  
That is that one of the vehicles, which allows humanity to have access to another

level or perception is to be found in the art of the performer. (Grotowski quoted in McCutcheon, 2008: 29)

For Grotowski, the importance of the theatre he envisions lies in the training and the inner and outer preparations of the actor. During his different periods of experimentations in performance and psychophysical training approaches, Grotowski (1975) insists on a *Poor Theatre* where the main instrument is the actor's 'being', an absolute unity of body, mind and soul where theatre happens within the relationship and interaction with the audience (Grotowski, 1975). He placed the body in the centre of his practice trying to reach a profound level of expressivity through intense physical training. The long and repetitious physical training is aimed at bringing the performer to a different state of mind, a meditative state or perhaps even unconscious when the intellect does not control the actions. In a booklet documenting his first practice in Opole he presents his ideas explaining that 'physical action must be founded on and rest on the actor's personal intimate associations, on his psychic batteries, his internal accumulators.' (Grotowski in Barba, 1995):

Theatre –through the actor's technique, his art in which the living organism strives for higher motives – provides an opportunity for what could be called integration, the discarding of masks, the revealing of the real substance: a totality of physical and mental reactions. This opportunity must be treated in a disciplined manner, with a full awareness of the responsibilities it involves. Here we can see the theatre's therapeutic function for people in our present day civilization. It is true that the actor accomplishes this act, but he can only do so through an encounter with the spectator –intimately, visibly, not hiding behind a cameraman, wardrobe mistress, stage designer or make-up girl – direct confrontation with him, and somehow “instead of “ him. [...] This act, paradoxical borderline, we call a total act. In our opinion it epitomizes the actor's deepest calling. (Grotowski, 1975:211)

More specifically, it is with Grotowski's training practice that this practice as research draws parallels within the context of a theatre pedagogy based on *psychagogia*. The application of psychology does not aim to achieve psychological realism but the performer is called to study and work profoundly with their inner state of being. Grotowski's pedagogical approach is based on the search for “truth” and “essence” of the performer rather than the training of their skills; it is the training for an idealised theatre. My personal connection through training workshops on Grotowski's theatre practice and the similarities with Sesame's application of drama are highlighted in more detail in the second chapter of this thesis.

For Barba who studied with Grotowski, the importance of training lies in the relationship between action and reaction and he trains the actor to reach a status of no pre-thinking allowing his 'being' as body-mind-soul entity to be present and fully alert to respond authentically and in the moment. He explains further that 'to find the body's extra-daily techniques, the performer does not study psychology but creates a network of external stimuli to which s/he can react with physical actions.' (Barba, 1995:35+60) Peter Brook, whose work has similarities to Grotowski's ideas on the actor's ethos and inner process, develops his practice further, aiming to transcend the personal myth of the performer into thrilling theatrical cultural exchanges (Gordon, 2006). Brook does not focus on solving the problem of actor training but rather focuses on utilising different approaches and forms to produce performances. In Brook's theatre practice the use of play and improvisation aim to guide the actor to face their barriers, bringing them closer to their inner and collective myth, to the point 'where in place of a new found truth he [the actor] normally substitutes a lie' (Brook 1968:126). With this concept, Brook moves closer to the creative threshold of the imagination inherent in every human being. This idea echoes Jung's theories of the collective unconscious where Jung situates the archetypal figures and archetypal situations that many cultures have commonly manifested in their mythologies. Brook does not use Jung's vocabulary, but his language remains much more theatrical, closer to the teachings of Zeami<sup>23</sup>, Grotowski and Barba.

Brook's theatre practice and rehearsal process is situated within the realm of psychophysical actor training and within the scope of a theatre of *psychagogia* that this thesis investigates. The spiritual attitude, as in Grotowski's practice, is attributed to the search towards the 'interiority' of man, towards the unknown realms of being that we could identify with the unconscious from a Jungian perspective.(Brook, 2009)<sup>24</sup> His interest lies in the performer's interiority and self-exploration that can create a personal confrontation with the spectators during the performance. Brook proposed that because of this inner search 'the actor must bring into being an unconscious state of which he is completely in charge.' (Brook 1968: 141) The result would be a whole creative being with constantly illuminated emotion by the intuitive intelligence, and consequently, the spectator ends by experiencing something

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<sup>23</sup> Zeami (1984) in his treatises deals with a need to create in the spectators a sense of beauty in performance that lies behind and beyond the kind of surface portrayal of the characters or the dramatic scenery. What Zeami speaks mostly about is the stage presence of the actor and the artistic ways in which she represents the drama physically, vocally and spiritually.

<sup>24</sup> Brook was particularly interested in the esoteric teachings of G.I. Gurdjieff who taught about "work on oneself." He presented his teachings and ideas in three forms: writings, music, and movements which correspond to our intellect, emotions, and physical body.

equally indivisible. Catharsis can never have been simply an emotional purge: it must have been an appeal to the whole man. (Brook, 1990)

Directors like Grotowski, Barba, Brook, and others in Europe represent a group of theatre practitioners that re-examined the role of theatre and actor beyond entertainment searching for an affirmative purpose of theatre in the society. Similarly in New York, from 1955 through the 1960s, an interest and exploration of rituals and its relation to theatre practice in its artistic or therapeutic value began. During the 1960s, the advent of anthropological studies, the anti-war hippie movement and the rise of interest in ritual, symbols and mythology mark the beginning of performance practices that are shifting away from naturalistic drama. Beck's and Malina's Living Theatre and Chaikin's Open Theatre are some examples of theatre practice that reflect the conviction that the actor's inner process is of high importance during the creative theatre process. Chaikin's approach with the Open Theatre echoes an interest in the psychology of the actor and their encounter with the unfamiliar unconscious that is not interested in reaching psychological realism, but in grounding the actor's presence. Chaikin refers to the actor's creative work as a journey that goes beyond the safe limits, breaks the theatrical stereotypes of characters and becomes a discovery for one's self arising from the unknown zone in us, using collaborative and wide-ranging improvisational processes that included exploration of political, artistic, and social issues. He does not regard his theatrical work as therapy, insisting that his theatre is political and recognising it as a medium to alter perception aiming at human transformation. He aims for a political theatre in the sense that it gives voice to powerful human forces and feelings by awakening the subjective and mythological dimensions of people, a theatre that should cause a "movement" in the spectator's whole being and therefore a theatre of *psychagogia*. The studies of the anthropologist Victor Turner on ritual, symbol and social drama also influenced Schechner in New York who drew from Turner's theories and worked collaboratively with him in the creation of the new field of Performance Studies. The creation of the Performance Group from Schechner in 1967 establishes a new practice of experimentation on re-establishing theatre's ritualistic attitude and the performer's presence within it.

The combination of anthropological studies with performance, the advances of analytical and somatic psychotherapy where physical presence and movement are taking a central position alongside the experimentations of theatre groups, have intermingled and resulted in the formation and development of dramatherapy in the USA and the UK. Dramatherapy recognises and utilises the therapeutic significance of a theatre that values the inner process of the performer/participant and aims to re-establish a psychological evolution leading to healing. The objective of an altering state of consciousness through physical and mental

exercises corresponds to the aims of dramatherapy and therefore serves as a medium of encountering the unconscious creatively. The practices of Grotowski, Barba and Brook have predisposed the development and training of dramatherapy and even more specifically of the Sesame approach. My practice as research specifically examines the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement therapy that was founded in 1964 in the U.K by Marian Lindkvist.

The theatre practitioners that have been reviewed in this chapter indicate some ways that psyche has been perceived within psychophysical actor training pedagogies. To master a process of self-awareness for the actor these theatre teachers have employed studies in psychology, psychotherapy and philosophy towards a psychophysical actor training pedagogy that has subsequently had a significant influence on the formation of Western theatre education in communicating human truth to the audience. These different approaches resonate with an old and established interest in training the actor's body-mind, perceived in this thesis as psyche. However, there are still open questions on how to interpret and train psyche within psychophysical actor training. The ethereal and intangible quality of the concept of psyche can hardly be pinned down and examined by rigorous scientific ways without losing something from its emotional and spiritual attitude. In contrast to attempts at demystifying the concept of psyche and rationalising any type of spirituality attributed to it, my practice as research proposes to embrace the unknown and irrational aspects of psyche. The application of the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement therapy into actor training implies the re-examination of actor's psyche holistically through the union of body and conscious and unconscious mind. The Sesame approach facilitates for the actor a secure place for communicating with one's own psyche through symbolic and embodied experiences.

### The paradigm of shamanism in theatre

The practical applications of shamanism and the consideration of the actor as shaman stand in parallel with the argument of this thesis for spirituality and psyche's awareness into theatre pedagogies and practice. Eliade (1989) describes shamanism as an archaic technique of healing and ecstasy and suggests that 'the writer who approaches shamanism as a psychologist will be led to regard it as primarily the manifestation of a psyche in crisis or even in retrogression' (Eliade, 1989:xi). The altered state of mind that shamans reach consciously through a "shamanic journey" is applied similarly for the actor to facilitate a state of trance or absent-mindedness that eliminates the control of their intellect and rational mind. This technique aims for the actors to experience a trance-like consciousness learning to

master or to surrender to their own energy and body. The integration of shamanism into actor training has been examined thoroughly by practitioners and theorists such as Bates (1986), McCutcheon (2001) and Karafistan (2003).

Equipped with knowledge and experience from clinical psychology and shamanism, Bates developed a practical link between the two during his ten years of employment at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. In his book *The Way of the Actor: A New Path to Personal Knowledge*, Bates (1986) makes parallel descriptions between the shamans and actors recognising both as guardians of knowledge: 'For thousands of years actors were regarded as the guardians of wisdom. And the way of the actor was a path to personal knowledge and power.' (Bates, 1986:2) By reevaluating the role of the actor as shaman, Bates reassesses the role of actors within society as 'essential for maintaining our vital links with the imaginal world, our universal self, the part of us that unites with the rest of the humankind' (Bates, 1986: 204) Bates claims that actors perceived as shamans are allowing us to reconnect with the unknown, the irrationality of human nature, the secrets and mysteries of life, the magic world of shared imagination. In that sense, the role of the actor/shaman is crucial in society under the function of transcending the personal boundaries for gaining knowledge and through dramatic performances guiding the participants into ritualistic spiritual journeys.

The work of Karafistan (2001, 2003) is based on the same principles as that of Bates, investigating shamanic dimensions within modern theatre practice. Karafistan bases her argument on her personal knowledge and experience of the roles of an actor, psychologist and shaman. Her viewpoint reflects a spiritual longing in life and in theatre that is being pedagogical to the spirit and the senses appealing to a deeper level in the human being – a theatre that could refer to *psychagogia*. The shamanistic initiation involves a personal breakdown by facing the shadowy aspects of the self, leading to 'a transpersonal breakthrough' (Karafistan 2003:151) that will enable the individual to become a healer. The reference to the ancient Greek myth of Chyron illustrates poetically the personal journey of the wounded centaur who in search of healing himself becomes the wisest healer. Karafistan's attribution of this quality to the actor reflects the idea of the actor being the medium for healing through theatre. By linking the importance of a shaman's suffering and healing to the actor she suggests that actors are after a psychic journey during which they encounter their shadows, complexes, different aspects of their unknown self, symbols and images from the unconscious in order to achieve self awareness and understanding.

It is important to say that a consciousness and full understanding of the role of the shaman is not necessary to be a good actor. What is needed is a simple awareness of a deeper self and how to open this self up to an audience on the stage to create empathy and truth. (Karafistan 2003:158)

The attributes of the wounded healer are a common feature in both Jungian psychoanalysis and the Sesame approach that suggest that the therapist should first face their own wounds before they meet others. During the Sesame training course, the trainee dramatherapist undertakes a very intense psychological process of inner exploration before any clinical application of therapy. Karafistan's methodology combines elements that she matches and links together, like a jigsaw, from the theories of Jungian psychoanalysis, anthropology, shamanism, theatre practitioners, personal experience and reflection (Karafistan, 2003, 2004).

Taking a similar route, McCutcheon's (2001) research in Australia draws on shamanism, aiming to re-assess the sacred in actor training and theatre. She refers to the sacred, drawing from the studies of Eliade and the Jungian analyst Tacey, when the sacred is 'more than an idea, it is an experience where the world means something' (McCutcheon, 2001:4). In theatre, for McCutcheon, a separation of mind and soul exists that is responsible for the lack of a 'genuine spirituality' which she claims to re-assess through the rites of the shaman, shamanic meditation, journeying and trance experienced through our ability to consciously move beyond the physical body. McCutcheon (2001) addresses the absence of a 'genuine spirituality' as part of the actor training for western theatre and therefore she reclaims the sacred in theatre.

### Distinctiveness of the Sesame approach as a modern *psychagogia*

Shamanism is an archaic indigenous tradition that relates little with Western life and the theatre world. For a trainee actor who lacks any comprehension or experience of the psyche or the sacred, the phenomenon of shamanism, its language and practice, can feel alien. On the other hand, the application of the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement therapy, as this research suggests, offers a more accessible path for the actor since it employs the familiar artistic agencies of drama, myth, improvisation and movement<sup>25</sup>. The critical difference between the described practices and this thesis are not defined in terms of

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<sup>25</sup> The appropriateness of the Sesame approach and its methodology are discussed in the third part of Chapter 2.

objectives and context but rather in terms of the applied methodologies and the effectiveness of practice to train the concept of psyche within psychophysical training. My practice as research explores the application of the Sesame approach as a valuable methodology that enables the trainee actor to gain self-awareness and the possibility of profound experiences through their body.

Zarrilli's psychophysical methodology falls under the same criticism of an alien language and practice for the Western performer. Zarrilli's approach incorporates phenomenological thinking and eastern philosophies arising from the perception of the body-mind union set against Cartesian dualism. In agreement with this thesis, he conceives the human body and mind as a gestalt and so the physical is inseparably related to the psychic. However, he insists that the inhabitation of the whole body and mind, externally and internally can be achieved through the physical training of yoga and the martial art *Kalarippayattu*. He emphasizes the importance of breath, working on one's self and the act of imagining as a phenomenon of the entire body-mind. Therefore, psychophysical training for Zarrilli means the acknowledgment of the physical body in relation to the notion of *ki* energy. His approach prepares the actor to 'be able intuitively to actualize a full-bodied connection to that image which is palpable through the actor's body' (Zarrilli, 2009: 39). In this method of training, the exercises are performed not only by the muscles but also through the breath that is recognised as the inner life force that leads any movement. 'The training begins with the breath because it offers a psychophysical pathway to the practical attunement of the body and mind.' (Zarrilli, 2009: 25). The concept of *ki* energy as perceived in the East is equivalent to the notion of the psyche in ancient Greek - which also means breath. This thesis suggests a more accessible and embodied concept of psyche within what is called psychophysical actor training in Western theatre education. Zarrilli (2009) suggests an intense physical training almost of spiritual significance. The intensity that he suggests through his practice corresponds to the ascetic Asian performance training of the traditional theatre kinds rather than the contemporary western one.

This review of theatre's psychophysical practices sketched the different conceptual and pragmatic understandings of the concept of psyche within modern theatre practices. This thesis argues that in the process of secularisation of Western culture and the rise of science, the perception of a theatre of *psychagogia* with elements of a spiritual nature started to disappear and subsequently influenced the development of acting pedagogies. The question posed by this thesis revolves around the establishment of a pedagogy for the psyche within psychophysical actor training that underlines the necessity and importance of the awareness and experience of the psyche for the actors. My practice explores the application of the



Sesame approach to Drama and Movement therapy as an oblique and artistic approach to encounter an unknown inner reality, to become aware of and access the creative powers of the artistic self. I propose the Sesame approach as a methodological framework that resonates with the pedagogical concept of *psychagogia* since it embraces introspection, the unconscious, symbols and induces spiritual connections<sup>26</sup>. My research and its practical investigation is presented as a culmination of a process of rediscovery and restoration of theatre's spiritual function sought by other theatre practitioners throughout the twentieth century.

I end this first chapter, echoing Benedetti's question in the book *The Art of the Actor*:

A fundamental question that has to be asked is: despite all the changes of form and presentation that have taken place over two hundred years, are there elements in the actor's art that are permanent, and linked to his own and other's psycho-physical process? (Benedetti, 2005:5)

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<sup>26</sup> The methodology of the Sesame approach is presented and discussed in Part 3 of Chapter 2.

## Chapter 2

### *Ethos – Ethopios – Mythos*

#### Building a methodology

Coupled with the necessary theoretical and practical input in the course, self-experience was of prime importance. This element was in keeping with my belief that until we know for ourselves the power of the art form, we should not offer it to others. (Lindkvist, 1998: 36)

In this chapter, I present the ways in which, as a researcher and practitioner, I have come to understand psychophysical actor training conceptually and pragmatically and the role of the actor as a psychagogue. As I discussed and illustrated in the previous chapter, the term “psychophysical” becomes problematic because of the different approaches to the psychological elements within it. This research employs the term “psychophysical” for reasons of precision and focus on searching for a pedagogical approach that incorporates psychological and physical aspects in its training. More specifically, this research focuses on the means by which the concept of psyche is manifested within pedagogical approaches. Psyche is understood from a Jungian perspective, as an infinite complexity combining all experiences of the body and conscious/unconscious mind. My practice as research approaches psychophysical actor training from that perspective and explores the application of a modified Sesame approach of Drama and Movement therapy for expanding the actor’s self-awareness. In this thesis the self is understood under the analytical psychology of Jung designating the unity of the personality as a whole of conscious and unconscious phenomena of the psyche – this concept will be thoroughly discussed in the third part of this chapter. The ancient Greek myths are employed as the vehicles of this inner psychological exploration. This application is situated within the pedagogical concept of *psychagogia*. The thesis suggests that, with the awakening of the actor’s personal psyche, the understanding of others and therefore the actor’s personal ethos communicates these inner qualities to the spectator. In effect, the actor becomes the psychagogue within my understanding of a theatre of *psychagogia*.

By following the school of autoethnography where authors or researchers draw on their own experiences to extend understanding of a particular discipline, this chapter places emphasis

on the way I interact with the culture and discipline that is being researched and recognise the implications that surround the ideas of this study (Holt, 2003). As Glesen and Peshkin (1992) suggest: 'the subjectivity of the researcher is seen as a resource for understanding the problematic world they are investigating, as something to capitalise on rather than exorcise.' (Glesen & Peshkin, 1992 in Holt, 2003:15)

The following chapter presents an autoethnographic narrative account that intends to provide an introduction to and critique of the researcher's culture; the research process of this writing account (*graphy*) proceeds from my personal experiences (*auto*) and continues with my understanding of psychophysical actor training (*ethnos*). Through an autoethnographic lens, reflexive researchers focus inwards using their own experience in the studied culture to 'bend back on self and look more deeply at self-other interactions.' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000:740) The researcher's personal experience becomes important in how it illuminates the culture under study. Following the paradigm of reflexive autoethnographic researchers, I use all my senses, my body, movement, feeling and my whole self to study and learn from my own experience. The methods I used articulate a complex body-mind approach include reflexivity, questioning myself and others, doubt, a search for meaning within me, others and literature when available.

My education and acting backgrounds inform the methodological lenses through which I understand and examine psychophysical actor training and ancient Greek dramas. Autoethnography implies experiential knowledge that interweaves past and present experiences. My personal experience connects with the cultural placing of the self within a specific social context – that of psychophysical actor training and the Sesame approach of drama and movement therapy. In that way, I recognise that my individual interpretation and approach to the disciplines I am bringing together plays a direct role in how as a practitioner-researcher, I facilitate their practical applications. Reflexivity, personal accounts, my informed intuitive function and self-consciousness have significant roles in the way my research is performed and moves forward. These are manifested within my role and ethos as the facilitator of this practice as research and within the analysis and examination of the phenomena of psyche.

My role as the researcher/facilitator of this approach and the relationship I built with the participants inclines me to a personal consciousness of this inner quality of the art of acting and informs this practice as research methodology. I am the first to become the psychagogue for the participants in order to nurture and educate this quality in them.

I recognise the implications and relevance of my personal presence and self-consciousness throughout the process and into the application of the Sesame approach and the use of ancient Greek dramas. I cannot deny of course, the cultural intimacy and meaning that these have to me and the personal engagement with the research question. I search within my knowledge and shared experience with the participants for deepened and extended understanding that would further illuminate pedagogical structures and essences within the context of psychophysical actor training.

However, this practice as research involves other participants and values greatly the way their experiences influence the route of the research. Following the paradigm of heuristic research, I am seeking to discover the nature and meaning the practical applications had for the participants. Moustakas (1990) states that:

[H]euristics refer to a process of internal search through which one discovers the nature and meaning of experience and develops methods and procedures for further investigation and analysis. [...] Heuristic processes incorporate creative self-processes and self-discoveries. (1990:9)

Heuristic research embraces the methods of reflexivity, introspection and instinctive practice. It is a methodology that has its roots in psychotherapeutic practices valuing lived experiences in search of their meaning (Moustakas, 1990). This is associated with the idea of a search for information and knowledge that is linked in this thesis not only to the internal experience and development of the researcher but also that of the participants. The methods I used from heuristic research involve self-reflexivity and introspection of the participants, giving emphasis to their internal frame of reference. These took the form of group conversations, written questionnaires, interviews and reflexivity through drawing. In addition, I explored how my actions and behaviours as a facilitator/pedagogue may influence the participants of my workshops.

This chapter is structured according to the journey of my development as performer, facilitator and researcher. Ethos is highlighted from Aristotle as an important aspect of the actor as psychagogue. Therefore the first part of this chapter is titled **Ethos** and reviews the role of the actor as a psychagogue during the period of ancient Greek theatre of *psychagogia*. The Greek word for actor is *ethopios*, literary meaning the maker/doer of ethos. My development as an actor (*ethopios*) is presented in the second part of this chapter, titled **Ethopios**. It reflects on my actor training, cultural heritage and experience of psychophysical actor training in the way that these have informed my personal ethos as performer and facilitator. Finally, the third part introduces **Mythos** as understood from a

Jungian perspective as the realm that includes all irrational, metaphysical or spiritual aspects of human life. This third part discusses Jung's analytical psychology and its practical application through the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement therapy. More particularly, I examine why and how myths are incorporated in this practice. The Greek dramas are employed as the most appropriate vehicles towards connection and cognisance of the concept of psyche because of their archetypal and psychological resonance. The Sesame structure is examined in detail as it has been followed precisely throughout this practice as research.

### **Part 1: *Ethos*: The actor as a psychagogue in Greek antiquity**

In Aristophanes' *The Frogs*, Dionysus the god of theatre is visiting the underworld to resurrect the best tragic poet in order to save the city and keep theatre alive. In a period of decline for Athenian tragic poetry and theatre, Aristophanes satirically and comically suggests the return to the poets who had mastered the art of tragedy. When Dionysus finally reaches the underworld, a trial is staged between the deceased tragedians and a battle between Aeschylus and Euripides results with the former as the winner who will return amongst the living. Using the story of *The Frogs* as a metaphor and Dionysus as the personification of the psychagogue in its literary sense as necromancer and in the spiritual sense of guiding the psyche, I invite the reader to "return to the origins" of theatre and acting, recalling the concept of psychagogue from the archaic underworld. The quest is to resurrect any knowledge about the art of acting that may support the endeavour of this research for creating a pedagogical approach that embraces the concept of *psychagogia* and arouses the actor's awareness of psyche. How does the actor become a psychagogue?

As I have discussed in the introduction, the term psychagogue derives from the ancient Greek *ψυχαγωγός* found in the Oxford English dictionary as: '1. Conjuring up the dead, (noun) a necromancer, leader of departed souls - said of Hermes' and describing as well: '2. A person who directs the mind; a teacher, an instructor and 3. A medicine that restores consciousness or revives the body.' In reviewing the art of acting in ancient Greece, the following section intends to understand the psychological and physical means through which

an actor becomes a psychagogue for the spectator by embodying and accomplishing an unconscious emotional connection, characteristic of a theatre of *psychagogia*.

Despite the fact that it is Aristotle in the *Poetics* who refers to theatre as the greatest form of *psychagogia*, he did not write systematically about acting [*hypokritike*] which was considered as an art only later and more in relation to rhetoric. Actors in ancient Greece were associated with orators and so, in Aristotle's view, their artistry, meaning the art of speaking, needed to be compelling to audiences of all kinds. It is in the middle of the fifth century BC that the actor's art gains recognition and prizes for actors were first introduced at the theatre festivals. In *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*, Aristotle introduces only a few remarks about the art of acting focusing mainly on the delivery of prose in terms of managing the voice. He defines acting as 'being concerned with the voice, and how the voice should be adapted to the expression of different emotions' (Arnott, 1991:79) However, the importance of the body for the ancient actor is underlined by their physical training that resembled that of athletes. This intense physical training brings up in the modern mind resemblances with psychophysical actor training.

More important in the scope of this research than the actor's voice and physical training is the way by which the actors were trained psychologically to become psychagogues. An actor gains an awareness that in Jungian perspective goes beyond ego consciousness to a wholeness of the unconscious and conscious being, a psyche. Within this thesis, I identify this awareness as essential in achieving the type of theatre that Aristotle describes as the greatest form of *psychagogia* and in nurturing the actor towards their development as a psychagogue.

In ancient Greece actors were popular and had much influence in the shaping of the culture of a society in which theatre was widespread and powerful. The more compelling the actor, the more effectively they can awaken emotions that 'lay below the surface and outside the control of the rational consciousness.' (Easterling, 2002:339) Therefore the actor within Athenian society is seen 'as a kind of mouthpiece for powers beyond control giving him "psychagogic" functions.' (Easterling, 2002:339). The emphasis on emotion is consonant with the poetic and philosophical traditions 'from Aristotle's emphasis on pity and fear to more recent echoes of Eratosthenes' argument for the primacy of "enchaining" the listener (*psychagogia*).' (Easterling, 2002:354) When considering the actor's capacity to "play out" or enchant the audience it is not surprising that they were perceived as dangerous, uncanny or fascinatingly in touch with what is other, mysterious or divine in human experience. We should not forget theatre's spiritual and religious function in ancient Greece and how acting

was addressed to the divine. This relationship only serves further to increase the perception of the ancient Greek actors as both dangerous and fascinating. Perhaps it will help our understanding of Greek acting to consider the collective unconscious of a society that attended theatre to witness and bridge the gaps with the supernatural or archetypal realm, an interlocking between religion, the stage and life.

However, these associations with the irrational and the supernatural seem removed from Aristotle's description of the actor as a skilful performer and orator who uses voice and movement to portray the dramatic embodiment of fiction and pretence. Aristotle states in *Rhetorics* that the aim of the actor, as that of the orator, is to persuade the audience, and so he notes the expression of emotions and natural speech as agents towards a successful and compelling art of acting. Ancient writers fail to describe a model for the art of acting that explains how the actors succeed in their artistry as enchanter of the audience – and become psychagogues. Nevertheless, Sifakis points out that the masked actor of antiquity is not concerned with a naturalistic character formation like the modern actor, but rather the embodiment of ethos in creating the archetypal figures found in Greek dramas. Sifakis, drawing upon Aristotle's psychology, defines ethos as the 'kind of thing that manifests choice' (Sifakis, 2002:150) and so thinks of 'ethos not in terms of the individual dramatic characters but in terms of *moral qualities characteristic of broad categories of people*;' (Sifakis, 2002:151). In that case the actors are required to portray the ethos of a kind of person while at the same time their own ethos is revealed:

[T]his together with the requirement that the ethos of the *dramatis personae* should be made clear by what they say and do in relation to the action in which they are involved, makes the characters of the tragedy into the morally specified archetypes they are (in contrast to the stereotypes of, mostly, popular literature: usually minor character types or tokens of types found across many specimens of a genre of fiction). (2002:151)

The key to understanding this mode of Greek acting is to consider acting's symbolic function both as an ethical and an emotional representation of archetypal figures. The creation of a character included not only the external transformation but also the embodiment of ethos, the merging with the role and the remodelling of one's self by eliminating ego as much as possible. Lada-Richards highlights the 'abandonment of the actor's self' and 'inner congruence' of the actor in order to successfully persuade its audience. (Lada-Richards in Easterling & Hall, 2002:396-397 and 402-405) In my understanding, it is this non-ego attitude of the actor that transcends their acting and so theatre to a communication between

psyches as in *psychagogia*. In my practice, this attitude is nurtured and embraced from both Jung's analytical psychology as well as the Sesame approach and it will be outlined in the third part of this chapter.

This unity of body and psyche for the ancient actor also had symbolic and religious functions since the nature of the acting profession was strongly spiritual in relation to Dionysus. In the perspective of a contemporary theatre of *psychagogia*, this thesis argues for a human spirituality that is 'embodied and grounded in our relation to the human and more-than-human world that we inhabit.' (Johnson, 2008:14) Furthermore, this thesis proposes the resurrection of spirituality into actor training through the body as a place to encounter the unconscious and its imagery, symbols and unspoken irrational language aiming for an experience of the numinous. A numinous that does not concern a disembodied transcendental soul or God neither requires any form of belief in supernatural godly forces but rather gives importance to the inner situation and the irrational, sensational communication between psyches.

Throughout the first Chapter, I discussed how within Western theatre training the spiritual, symbolic and archetypal dimension of the art of acting has been overlooked. This thesis identifies the problem in theatre's turn away from *psychagogia* and the lack of pedagogical actor training approaches that prepare the actor's ethos to embody and express emotions and archetypal manifestations. My practice as research focuses on the importance of gaining awareness and experience of the psyche's unity within psychophysical actor training. Johnson describes this embodied and immanent meaning as the 'deep-seated bodily sources of human meaning that go beyond the merely conceptual and propositional.' (2008:11)

My practice underlines the importance and urgency of forming a psychophysical training pedagogy that prepares the actor to embody, to voice and to experience the poetic, symbolic and archetypal nature of its art for a theatre of *psychagogia*. This research proposes the application of the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement therapy for actors to raise the actors' awareness of the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche by encountering creatively the archetypal manifestations within ancient Greek theatre. I am in search of a training method that facilitates the participants' inner process and search for meaning that happens in the 'bodily depths of human meaning-making through our visceral connection to our world' (Johnson, 2008:xi). The Greek myths are used based on the Sesame approach as vehicles towards the formation of a pedagogical approach that promotes *psychagogia*. This is supported by the belief that the immanent psychological significance of the myths is



guiding the trainee to an inner exploration and growth of their self-understanding nurturing the actors' ethos away from egoistic and shallow attitudes.

## **Part 2: *Ethopios*: The actor as a maker of ethos**

The approach to this research and my understanding of psychophysical actor training draws upon my personal experience as an actor as well as a Sesame dramatherapist. Within the methodological frames of heuristics and autoethnography, I recognise the importance of my personal theatrical and dramatherapy journey in the formation and actualisation of this research inquiry. The following section of this chapter presents these personal experiences and understandings of psychophysical actor training pedagogies and the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement Therapy which have informed the construction of this practice as research. The unexpected creative qualities and increased self-awareness that I have gained through my training as a dramatherapist motivated the reframing of acting problems and the beginning of my research inquiry. This practice as research project has been developed to illuminate this inquiry and determine if a pedagogical process based on the Sesame approach could be valuable within actor training. Moustakas and Douglas (1990) point out that:

[L]earning that proceeds heuristically has a path of its own. It is self-directed, self-motivated, and open to spontaneous shift. It defies the shackles of convention and tradition...It pushes beyond the known, the expected, to the merely possible. Without the restraining leash of formal hypotheses, and free from external methodological structures that limit awareness or channel it, the one who searches heuristically may draw upon the perceptual powers afforded by...direct experience. (Douglas and Moustakas in Moustakas, 1990:17)

My application of the autoethnographic process engages with my personal training background to discover a pedagogical acting approach that facilitates the actors' awareness of psyche. The following paragraphs on my personal training attempt to illuminate the concept of *psychagogia* resurrected not only from the theoretical analysis of the ancient Greek philosophers but also through my personal theatrical experience. The emphasis on the ancient Greek dramas is based on their psychological and philosophical readings

underpinning the direct connection of the ancient Greek myths and archetypes. Within the Sesame approach myths are used to engage the participants through their body with the mythological and archetypal realm. Therefore, throughout this practice as research, I argue that myths because of their archetypal loading, offer an appropriate material for encountering the depths and complexities of the human psyche. Thus, I explore in practice the embodied encounter with the ancient Greek dramas in order to support the pedagogy of the actor's ethos and psyche within a theatre of *psychagogia*.

### The Greek school

In Greece, the continued study and production of ancient Greek plays seems like a natural and consequential line of history for a country that wishes to keep connections with its cultural heritage. The study of these plays and myths are central both to the educational system as well as in the artistic life of the country. For more than forty years, the Hellenic Festival has produced performances of ancient Greek dramas at the theatre of Epidaurus. Consequently, the training of actors in ancient Greek tragedy and comedy is a particular module at every drama school in Greece. The training method or approach utilised in these modules differs based on the drama school's mission. My personal experience with this training took place at the Greek drama school of Teatro Technis (Art Theatre) -Karolos Koun. The teaching in this school theatre aims to accomplish *psychagogia*, and the ancient Greek dramas hold a significant position within the training.

During the Axis Occupation of Greece during the Second World War, Karolos Koun was the first to break away from the intellectual, classicistic and stylised acting forms of the ancient Greek dramas established by the German philhellenism at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1942 Koun, the founder and director of the experimental Teatro Technis, built a theatre in an abandoned basement that used to be a decadent cabaret /bordello with a small group of devoted actors. In this unlit basement –still known as “The basement” [το Υπόγειο] - Karolos Koun and his actors constructed their dreams for a better theatre. As the name of Teatro Technis (translated as Art Theatre<sup>27</sup>) reveals, the approach to theatre and training was based on Stanislavski's system in search of truth and realism. The key principles of inner truth and psychological realism were applied in the creation of ancient Greek performances, but this time the search for truth was magnified and expanded to the archetypal and symbolic dimensions. In an attempt to reach these archetypal and symbolic

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<sup>27</sup> The theatre was named after Stanislavski's Moscow Art Theatre

dimensions, Koun looked to the ancient Greek dramas for what is still relevant culturally to modern Greek life rather than remaining focused only on the importance of the prose. This was in direct contrast with the German philhellenic school which focused on the analytic and academic representations of the texts. Koun states that his first concern when dealing with the ancient Greek dramas is to be moved, to find the immediacy with current life, immediacy in terms not only of the socio-political context but also of the poetic, philosophical and emotional immediacy (Koun, 1983 [audio]). For *Theatro Technis*, theatre-making during the German occupation in Greece was not a mere artistic creation but a place of liberation and eloquence of the Greek spirit, a place where the communication among actors and spectators becomes a necessity of the psyche. And because of this approach, Koun's view of the ancient Greek dramas is rooted within *psychagogia*. Koun in recorded interviews speaks about the Greek dramas:

The ancient writers are not only valuable poetically. They are necessary to us in order to make the world we live in better. The ancient dramas serve to guide people to become more virtuous, more ethical, more perceptive, more spiritual, and richer in their spirit and psyche. This is for me theatre's purpose and destination. (Koun, 1983)<sup>28</sup>

His teachings were based on the art of acting and the training of the actor's ethos. He was in search of a passionate and soulful theatre that arouses empathy in the spectator and elevates or transports the psyche as well as being amusing. His theatre's spirituality can be traced to the passion, devotion and intimacy of his ensemble to the art of theatre. Koun's methods of theatre-making and training actors were based on an understood mission or motto saying, "we are making theatre for our psyche":

We are not making theatre for theatre itself. We are not making theatre to live. We are making theatre to enrich ourselves, the audience that will witness us and all together to help create a widely spiritual and intact culture. (Koun, 1987)

Karolos Koun's philosophy of theatre and actor training penetrates to the core my own creative being in my development into an actress and a researcher in search of a new psychophysical actor training approach that utilises both the ancient Greek dramas and the Sesame approach. Even though I did not have the opportunity to meet Karolos Koun before his death<sup>29</sup>, his spirit and teachings still echo strongly in the drama school of the Greek

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<sup>28</sup> The translation of Koun's quotes from Greek belongs to the author.

<sup>29</sup> Karolos Koun died on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February 1987.

Theatro Technis where I trained and in “The Basement” where I worked for three years as an actor. Furthermore, his philosophy has fuelled my experience through the teachings of Koun’s students and my tutor in the performance of ancient Greek dramas at the drama school of Theatro Technis, Dimitris Oikonomou.

Oikonomou, was one of Koun’s last pupils and worked very closely with him on his final productions of ancient tragedies and comedies. Oikonomou developed the training approaches that he learned from his great teacher with added elements from different disciplines like Kundalini yoga, esoteric readings and his travels and workshops at the Grotowski Institute in Poland. He created a method named Bioenergetics that combines physical awareness, repetition and movement that brings the body to exhaustion in combination with detailed work on the text and rigorous control of the breath. The aim of this psychophysical method was to support the actor in bringing inner and outer weight, volume and embodied meaning to the spoken words utilising their psyche as union of mind, voice and movement. A very eccentric and intense character, he never explained in words or theories his method or left any written documents, leaving only the experience to arouse meaning and understanding<sup>30</sup>. Bioenergetics is a method that challenges the students to trust the process and allow their body and mind to surrender rather than relying on intellect. Only then, the actor can discover an unknown inner physical and vocal sensibility that breaks through. While many students found it difficult to surrender or trust a facilitator and a method that has little structure or clarity, I personally managed to “let go”, “dive deep” and experience the great benefits of this method. The experiences that I gained strengthened and raised my awareness of my inner process, and expanded my sensitivity. The unexpected physical energy that emerged after initial exhaustion surprised me as it surpassed my perceived personal limits. In my experience this energy surge was directly related to the newly shared perception of the collective group. However, since my gained knowledge was not equally shared by the majority of the students who found the method unsafe, in my own practice as research I took on the role of the facilitator wanting to explore and experiment on some of the basic exercises from Bioenergetics. For that purpose during the workshops I conducted for actors, I combined elements from the Sesame approach in order to establish and ground the means by which a reduction of the level of consciousness (“let go”) can be facilitated safely for every participant.

During my practice as research experiments, I came to realise the innermost implication of my personal experience of Oikonomou’s teachings that has accordingly informed the acting

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<sup>30</sup> Dimitris Oikonomou died on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 2010 before I managed to conduct an interview with him.

pedagogy I am in search of. More specifically, what I take as a valuable lesson from this approach is the multiplicity of awareness, focus and concentration that the training requires. The development of this multiplicity is experienced in the following progression: firstly, the actor must focus inward to their being, while remaining physically grounded and maintaining a sense of their surrounding personal space. Next, the actor turns their focus outward from their body to their relationship to the other bodies within the space. And finally, this collective focus is moved forward and out to be shared amongst others, reaching the outer limits of the working space. The actors are in constant movement **doing** actions rather than focusing on mental or psychological processes of **being**. By this distinction I refer to the notions of **doing** as an integration of physical and mental action or movement while by **being** I mean a mainly mental activity of self-reflection.

This attitude corresponds with contemporary theories of feeling and the emotional body where doing through the body is recognised as the primary force of action and reaction to emotional situations. (Damasio 2006, Johnson 2007, Lopez-Pedrada 2000) According to the Jungian psychotherapist Lopez-Pedrada ‘the principles of the emotional body are **doing** and **being**, and being cannot be expressed itself without doing (Lopez-Pedrada, 2000). In accordance, the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement therapy places the body in the centre of inner exploration and encounter with the unconscious. A practical demonstration of the above referenced practice is presented in the DVD *Appendix* of this thesis (Chapter 2, track 2.1 titled Bioenergetics). As will be discussed in the third chapter, the concept of the emotional body took a central position during the third step of my practical experimentations<sup>31</sup>.

### The Polish school

The Polish physical theatre training tradition also assumes a significant position in my personal experience on psychophysical actor training and on this research inquiry for a pedagogical approach based on spirituality, psyche and the actor’s presence. In Poland, following the psychophysical approach that Grotowski introduced and established during the 1960s-70s, post-Grotowskian theatre companies including Gardzienice, Theatre Zar and Pieśń Kozła (Song of the Goat) began producing work that is visceral and highly dynamic, aiming to address the deep collective qualities of human existence. Romantic ideas such as the importance of emotions, the revolt against scientific rationalisation, artistic expression as

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<sup>31</sup> Refer to Chapter 3, Step 3 for these discussions and to the DVD, Chapter 3, Step 3 (tracks 3.3.1 & 3.3.2)

a vehicle for socio-political change, inspiration from nature and folk culture and the idealisation of the body resonated within the Polish artistic life. Mickiewicz the leader of the Polish Romantic movement greatly influenced Grotowski in his theatrical experimentation. This psychophysical theatre tradition defies spirituality in the traditional sense of the term. It promotes spirituality in rigorous training practices that demand an extreme level of commitment, body and mental control and physical exertion. The ethos of this training encourages the performer to surpass the limits of the everyday, their mannerisms and comfort zones by pushing the self into unknown territories. It includes many dimensions such as acrobatics and a repertoire of physical movements, fabrication of images, exploration of text, rural and folk contacts and a specific aesthetic of working, travelling and living together. The emphasis of the work lies on rhythm, physicality and musicality so that the actors become highly conscious of their own body creating a fictional space that might be called a ritualistic space where the actor may achieve personal metamorphosis. Based on my experience and understanding, this theatre and training tradition aspires to create a tacit, emotive and expressive communication between actors and spectators that I relate to the concept of *psychagogia*. In the following section, I focus on the aspects that inform my practice and the suggestions I made to solve problematic areas I identify within this training.

More specifically within the scope of this research, Włodzimierz Staniewski at Gardzienice Theatre Association has dealt extensively with ancient Greek theatre approaching the classic texts rhythmically and ritualistically. During the course of actor training, Greek tragedy is taught as a separate module with a focus on vocal harmonies working especially on folk songs, images from ancient Greek vases and physical actions in the body that can portray the ceremonial and archetypal aspects of the plays. Staniewski is seeking to find connections through rituals, songs and dances between the ancient and modern world so that theatre and especially ancient Greek tragedy can be re-performed: 'I believe we need to re-invent, to re-recognise ourselves in history.'(Staniewski, 2007)

The focus of his approach lies in the behavioural externalised physical and vocal actions rather than the inner psychological processes (Hodge, 2010). Allain (1997) who studied this actor training closely states that 'Gardzienice links emotion to breath, rooting expression and emotion by physical rather than psychological means' (1997:62). The training encourages spontaneity and transcendence, musicality, singing and mutuality by focusing on external impulses coming from the other performer or the music rather than from personal psychological impulses. In that way, the actor does not try to invoke the emotion from within their personal psychological realm. Allain points out that:

In their performances, the characters that Gardzienice create are allegorical, archetypal or choral. The training encourages exploration of human physicality and its representation within a cultural context, rather than psycho-physical or situation based behaviour. The emphasis is continually on movement without psychological motivation. (Allain, 1997:68)

Allain avoids the characterisation of this training as psychophysical, interpreting the component 'psycho' in terms of psychological realism or personal psychological material of the actor. However, he recognises a spiritual significance of the physical exercises wherein the creation of mutuality between performers is of higher importance than the accumulation of skills. The emphasis is on creating an atmosphere of trust and security that supports the participants' slow and personal process and an encouraging direct, unguarded communication between them (1997:60-67). According to Allain, the communication that Gardzienice aims to establish during their training has 'almost a therapeutic function reflecting Grotowski's concerns during his paratheatrical activities which prioritised the subjective of creativity rather than its objective presentational values.' (Allain, 1997:69) In my understanding, this aspect of the training corresponds with the concept of *psychagogia* and psyche, nurturing conscious and unconscious qualities of the performer beyond the ego's narcissistic surface. Nevertheless, what is lacking in Gardzienice's minimal theorising of the training practice is a grounded and appropriate theoretical and practical language to address these irrational or arbitrary elements of the training that often in practice depend on the facilitator's idiosyncratic approach.

Gardzienice's training aims to liberate participants from social patterns and personal restrictions requiring them to become part of a mass organism with no dominant egos. The work offers to its participants an experiential and psychological practice of universal human physicality where individual self-consciousness diminishes (Allain, 1997). The training demands the performer to be open, submissive and receptive to the director and the whole group so that they are flexible and have stamina. However, the training does not have a specific methodology on how this ethos of non-ego attitude of psychological and physical openness for the actor are being facilitated and succeeded. Staniewski's attitude is described by Allain, as provocative, aggressive at times, forcing the performer to plunge emotional depths cutting through psychological resistance. This attitude may produce individual magical moments of liberation and openness but does not guarantee their repeatability. I argue that the relationship that the facilitator/educator establishes with the participant is of great importance for a more enduring improvement of the performer. Throughout this practice as research, I explored the application of the Sesame approach of

Drama and Movement therapy in combination with the above mentioned training approaches, working towards the formation of a pedagogy that trains the actor's body-mind unity (psyche) utilising the ancient Greek dramas to encounter the symbolic and archetypal dimensions of human life. The Sesame dramatherapist is trained to be able to create a therapeutic relationship with the participant overcoming personal idiosyncratic behaviours focusing particularly and only on what is beneficial for the participant. More particularly, borrowing from the Polish training approach I was looking for ways to awaken the emotion through physical engagement originating in external impulses. These experiments lead to improvisations based on either images from ancient Greek vases or themes from the Greek myths. For example, the images were introduced and utilised under the instruction to embody an appealing image and create a movement sequence that will potentially arouse personal connections. Later, I incorporated text from Greek plays into the impulse exercises aiming to guide the participants in finding ways to embody the words, radiating their meaning and emotion through the body. Demonstrations of these experiments are included in the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia* (Chapter 3, Step 3 and 4) and discussed in detail in the third chapter of this thesis.

### Making connections

The re-introduction and facilitation of these training approaches through the lens of the Sesame approach aimed to induce embodiment and awareness of the depths of the personal and collective psyche. In chapter 3, I suggest that Sesame goes further than the practices of Koun, Oikonomou and Gardzienice in recognising and valuing the importance of the union of consciousness and unconscious in both the actor's process and the relationship with the facilitator. In that way, Sesame facilitates a development of self-awareness and expression for the actor through myths, movement and drama. The more one actor is exposed to the depths and treasures of the archetypal images and motifs that are encompassed in the ancient Greek dramas – or other universal myths - the more they become aware of the depths of the human psyche and their personal and collective unconscious.

Sesame's use of myth enactment based on intuitive personal responses encourages a visceral, emotional and rather unconscious first connection with the material of these texts. This personal and instinctive connection with the mythological and archetypal manifestations that belong to the realm of the collective unconscious reflects what Jung called the 'transcendent function', a psychic function that arises from the tension between



consciousness and the unconscious and supports their union. Jung in his study *The Structure and Nature of the Psyche* (CW8) describes the collective unconscious as:

The collective unconscious - so far as we can say anything about it at all - appears to consist of mythological motifs or primordial images, for which reason the myths of all nations are its real exponents. In fact, the whole of mythology could be taken as a sort of projection of the collective unconscious [...] We can therefore study the collective unconscious in two ways, either in mythology or in the analysis of the individual. (Jung, CW 8, 1960:152)

The disciplined training pedagogies for a theatre that surpasses the narrow interpretations of psychological realism by highlighting the symbolic and archetypal dimensions of the ancient Greek dramas, need to incorporate in their training a concrete and transferable knowledge on how this spiritual dimension can be achieved. In taking forward this theatrical vision, I proposed and explored in my research the application of the Sesame approach for facilitating and supporting safely the actor's inner explorations in the archetypal and psychological abyss of the human psyche. Additionally to an awareness of the wholeness of the psyche, it seems that what is not grounded or even clear for Oikonomou or Gardzienice is the way in which the inner process of the actor is facilitated safely or therapeutically. It is important that during a psychophysical process, the actors feel protected and safe so that they can surrender their ego-consciousness and intellectual control. Protection requires the facilitator to have patience and not force the actor towards a desired result, but allow time for the actor to reach what the situation demands. With patience, the facilitator respects and supports the energy and psyche of the actor and mainly their vulnerability. More importantly, the facilitator should guide the actor in an inner exploration and expression without judgement or deception. For me this is the practical application of the pedagogical concept of *psychagogia* that can be embraced by the Sesame approach. This connection and the methodology of the Sesame approach will be discussed in the following part of this chapter.

In concluding this account of my autoethnographic journey, the experience and learning through the above actor training approaches and the completion of a Master's degree in the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement therapy reinforced the possibility for a theatre practice and pedagogy based on the concept of *psychagogia*. If my actor training at Teatro Technis formalised my ethos as a creative person then my Sesame training reinforced my ethos as a facilitator embracing introspection, intuition and self-awareness based on the Jungian perspective. Furthermore, the embodied engagement with the myths empowered my imagination and irrational creative function. This gained knowledge and experience

motivated this inquiry towards a heuristic research for what a similar experience has to offer pedagogically to performers.

### **Part 3: MYTHOS: The methodology of the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement Therapy**

This thesis argues for a pedagogy of the psyche that incorporates myths through the application of the Sesame approach of Drama and Movement Therapy. In my practice as research, the Sesame approach is suggested and applied as an appropriate method for actors in accessing and gaining awareness of the psyche because of its direct resonance with the agents of drama and movement. As noted, Marian Lindkvist founded Sesame in the 1960s alongside the development of a mime theatre group's touring in clinical settings. Sesame's methodology draws upon elements of Jung's analytical psychology, Winnicott's studies on developmental psychology, Laban's movement analysis and Peter Slade's theories of play, mythology, physical theatre, improvisation and ritual. The methodology allows for personal engagement with the psyche, the unconscious, and the otherworldly. By "otherworldly", I mean all that is not within the limits of everyday experience. Jung was very interested in mythology. He stated that myths can teach us about psychology and human nature in two ways; through projection, since psyche tends to personify and project itself on the myth, and by presenting the historical conditions of man.

Within this investigation, an encounter with the Greek myths is suggested for the actor to establish an embodied relationship with the psyche. Such a relationship offers resources from which the actor can draw. In practical actor training terms, the Sesame process facilitates and trains the actor's attentiveness and attunement with their inner world, while at the same time the actor is in relationship with the "other" on-stage (other actor) and off-stage (the spectator). The psychophysical explorations of ancient Greek myths aim to train the actor's sensitivity and mythological intelligence while they offer possibilities for encountering previously unconscious feelings, thoughts, images and archetypal manifestations. According to the philosophy of Sesame, the acceptance of the unknown and the non-verbal process does not seek to resolve the mystery of acting or the actor's psyche but rather to offer a secure, "well-held" place that frees the psyche, enabling the unconscious to manifest itself and enrich our artistic potential. In my application of the Sesame approach for actors, I relate this acceptance and nurturing of the psyche to the pedagogical concept of *psychagogia*.

The Sesame approach draws upon Jung's concept of individuation suggesting that the individual is undertaking a life long process during which their self-understanding is developed and extended through bringing unconscious phenomena to conscious awareness. Jung suggests that this process is natural and does not necessarily require therapy; it is a process that expands the way we look at and understand our selves and the world. It may be however, that the process of secularisation in Western culture has diminished this capacity. The practice of this research facilitates a process of individuation for the actor towards a profound understanding or cognisance of their creative self. I argue that through the use of the Sesame approach, the actor's presence and attitude of psyche is trained so that it might be radiated or embodied in their art of acting. I recognise that teaching acting techniques is important, but these cannot train qualities such as "presence", "ethos" or "energy" that make an actor distinct. In my methodological approach, the inner qualities of the actor are developed through pedagogical processes rather than exercises of virtuosity. Maeterlink states the importance of these qualities when he says:

What I say often counts for so little; but my presence, the attitude of my soul, my future and my past...a secret thought, the stars that approve my destiny, the thousands of mysteries which surround me and float about yourself –all this it is that speaks to you at ...[the] tragic moment. (Maeterlink in Gordon 2006:91)

Within my practice, the Sesame methodology, specially modified for actors, suggests the embodiment of the ancient Greek myths as vehicles towards consciousness and self-awareness, training actors through the pedagogical concept of *psychagogia*. This thesis argues for the non-verbal and tacit communication between actors and spectators that Aristotle describes in the *Poetics* requiring acknowledgement and pedagogical training of the actor's psyche in order to be accomplished on stage.

### Training

My suggestion is that firstly during training, the actors undertake a process of awareness and consciousness of aspects of their psyche so they can communicate them to the spectators, guiding them towards a similar silent and inner dialogue. Jung points out the significance and effectiveness of education through example as the kind of education that can proceed wholly unconsciously and he recognises this learning through examples from the environment as a primitive feature of the psyche. In his analysis, 'education through example rests on this fundamental fact of psychic identity, and in all cases the deciding

factor is this seemingly automatic contagion through example.' Jung (1954) continues to describe this type of education borrowing the term *participation mystique* from the French anthropologist, Levy-Bruhl. (Jung, 1954: 149) Based on these ideas, Jung believed that a therapist could guide her patient's inner exploration for as far or deep as she has been herself. This pedagogical approach corresponds with the Socratic concept of *psychagogia* during which the educator guides the student towards a dialectical examination of human nature. In the case of psychophysical actor training, the facilitator embraces the concept of *psychagogia* and so becomes the psychagogue who indirectly and with non-analytical means suggests to the actor an attitude of self-reflexivity and exploration of the lived experience. There is an apparent contradiction in a suggested pedagogy that is based on the theoretical framework of analytical psychology but what I need to clarify is that this pedagogy is not analytical in terms of "psychoanalysing" or interpreting the material in relation to the personal life of the participant. The actor's attitude and cognisance of psyche is manifested obliquely in their art of acting and consequently the actor becomes the psychagogue for the spectator. The ethos of the educator is manifested through her actions and correspondingly, the actor learns to be psychagogue herself for enabling this psychic relationship and communication with the spectator. The actor, depending on the level of her psychological exploration, manifests, portrays or embodies in an accordant level the ethos of the character or of the figure in the performance.

Similarly, Artaud (1974) desires for the actors 'to arrive at the emotions through their powers instead of regarding them as pure extraction, conferring a mastery of an actor equal to a true healer's'. (Artaud 1974:102) Furthermore, the religious and ritualistic aspects that Artaud identifies in theatre correspond to his visions of a physical theatre that gives form to the Dionysian spirit incorporating darkness, dismemberment, passion, ecstatic dance and music. (Esslin, 1976) The Greek god Dionysus symbolizes an inward journey to the depths of the underworld and physical and emotional dismemberment. Its myth reminds the inherent human ability to rise from the depths of such an experience through artistic expression such as in dance and theatre. In Sesame's approach to Drama and Movement Therapy, the body takes a central position and attention. The focus that Sesame gives to myths, embodiments, movement, contact and drama is the first indication of this practice's relation with Dionysus. Therefore, by placing myths as a vehicle for psychophysical actor training, the approach embraces *psychagogia* and the importance of the actor's inward journey for an embodied experience of their psyche.

Reading the myth of Dionysus as a metaphor where the underworld is the unknown, Dionysus invites us to cross over the limits of consciousness and enter a field of the

unknown which consists of everything we do not know from the outer but it is experienced immediately in the inner world. Jung (1995) named this territory 'the unknown in the inner world as unconscious' and differentiates the personal unconscious and its deeper stratum of the collective unconscious where we find instincts, archetypes and contents with more universal or regular occurrence in various cultures and time periods. (Jung, 1995) This metaphor reinforces an interpretation of the Dionysian aspects as an archetypal manifestation of the repressed paradoxical nature of our psyche and corresponds to the Sesame approach. Sesame's practice aims to re-establish through drama and movement the connection with the metaphysical, spiritual basis of human existence by awakening and activating the psyche. This connection starts from the body, which is closely related to the unconscious, when there is no conscious control and judgement of its actions. More specifically, the contents of myths represent the collective unconscious and archetypes and have the capacity to create psychic motion connecting psychological reality with the archetypal realm. Jung was not promoting the use of myths as religious material but rather to engage with myths in order to not lose contact with the irrational, supernatural or spiritual dimension of being. He stated that a life entirely based on logos and rational reasoning loses the ability to deal with the irrational, with *mythos* and so becomes rigid and one-dimensional.

This research acknowledges the importance of encountering the unconscious during a process of self-exploration and understanding of the human psyche but also recognises the potential misinterpretations related to these psychological explorations. The terms self-exploration and self-realization are widely used today in various pedagogical and psychological circles but often in the sense of discovering a certain ego identity that then becomes continuous and stable. A rigid ego identity finds it difficult to allow inner transformation. The claim of this research for self-awareness and consciousness in psychophysical actor training should not be confused with self-knowledge that stays focused only on the ego personality. Ego-consciousness does not take into account the contents of the unconscious that will remain hidden to us if we do not confront them in our dreams, fantasies, imagination and creativity (Jung, 1991, McGlashan, 1994). Jung's concept of individuation suggests discovering and entering into relationship with what he calls the "Self" as something entirely different from the ego. The Self is not the ego but:

[A] more embracing or eternal inner personality that is hinted at by this symbol. Jung defined it as the conscious-unconscious wholeness of the person. Only the ego is capable of realizing psychic contents. Even something as great, even divine as the Self can only be realised merely by the ego. That is the self-realization from a Jungian perspective. (Von Franz, 1990:8)

The relationship between a person and the Self as defined by Jung, has nothing to do with egoistic individualism or narcissism, that are arguably common attitudes attributed to modern actors. As noted, this research re-establishes the actor as a psychagogue suggesting a pedagogical training for the actor which brings them closer to an embodied understanding of the archetype of the Self. The Sesame approach of Drama and Movement therapy employs drama, myths, stories, and movement aiming to facilitate relationships and spontaneous embodied associations from the inner life.

Sesame's principles rely on the importance of encountering the unconscious to inspire imagination and a symbolic attitude. The approach emphasises symbolic images, metaphors and allegories guided by the Jungian theory 'that the unconscious psyche has the chance to find expression through the emergent symbols within the art forms of drama and movement, with the therapist acting as guide, witness and "actor" at different times' (Hougham, 2009: 31). For Jung, symbols are the product of the 'transcendent function' in the psyche, 'which serves to unite psychic opposites and which are recognised for their duplicity and numinosity.' (Hougham, 2009: 31) This transcendent function in Sesame is activated through theatre and the communication between actors and spectators or therapists and participants. The roots of the Sesame approach belong to theatre and especially mime and movement. It is through Lindkvist's encounters with the in-patients and the numinous experiences that she had through "Kats" that Sesame as a therapeutic approach emerged. Furthermore, Lindkvist's encounters with traditional African healers signified the symbolic and healing dimensions of movement and enactment. In the DVD *Appendix* (Chapter 2, track 2.2 titled Sesame's foundations), Lindkvist speaks about Sesame's first steps, her experience after visiting an African healer and the Sesame practice.

### Playspace and the roles of the dramatherapist

Throughout this practice as research I, as the facilitator/researcher, acted and reacted according to my ethos as a Sesame dramatherapist. The essence of the process lies in the relationship that was being established and being acted out between the participants and the facilitator. My actions or reactions were not determined by any judgemental values and throughout the process I did not claim to hold the answers or the truth of what the actors should experience. In accordance with the Sesame approach, the relationship with the other is interpersonal and intrapsychic and takes place verbally or non-verbally during the action, in the created "playspace", a term described by the American dramatherapist D.R.Johnson (1992):

The playspace is an interpersonal field in an imaginative realm, consciously set off from the real world by the participants, in which any image, interaction and physicalisation has a meaning within the drama. The playspace is an enhanced space, where the imagination infuses the ordinary. The playspace is where dramatherapy takes place, and therefore the dramatherapist's primary task is to introduce and sustain the playspace for the clients, whether he or she is outside it or inside it. (Johnson, 1992:112-113)

Furthermore, Johnson (1992) distinguishes the different roles of the dramatherapist:

- 'shaman or actor' when the dramatherapist acts or embodies the actions, emotions, situations for the participants,
- 'director' when the dramatherapist directs and constructs the participant's actions and improvisations within the playspace,
- 'spectator or witness' when the dramatherapist does not participate in the action but observes from outside the playspace,
- 'guide' when the dramatherapist participates in the action from a peripheral position that enables them to make suggestions without intervening directly with the action.

During my Master's studies, in collaboration with two other colleagues, I conducted research on these different dramatherapy roles. We argued that the role of the dramatherapist during the session does not remain fixed to one role. We attributed to the dramatherapist's attitude and role a mercurial quality and named it 'mercurial dance' (Watson, Freeman and Batzoglou, 2007). This means that the dramatherapist/ facilitator (re)acts verbally but more often non-verbally, to the situations and takes on interchangeably the different roles according to their personality and the needs of the moment. The facilitator's action or reaction is based on their informed instinct after "reading and listening" to the psychophysical involvement of the participants.

Specifically within this practice, the process is facilitated towards a deeper exploration of the actors rather than therapeutic attendance of the participants' psychological needs. In practice that means that during the session, I moved through the mercurial dance shifting from one role to the other either getting involved in the actions or staying outside the playspace allowing time for things to unfold. I stepped in and suggested opposite actions ('director' or 'guide') or moved the situation further ('guide'), or embodied more dark or shadowy aspects of the myth that participants were not willing to embody at this stage ('shaman or actor') or just witnessed patiently leaving the participants to embody the myth and the images as they wished ('witness'). Practical examples of these different roles will be

discussed in more detail in the third chapter and illustrations of these different actions will be signposted to direct the reader to the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia*.

### The use of myths and play

Paralleling the Sesame approach, the ancient Greek myths are employed as vehicles for the exploration of the human psyche of the actors in this research. The inner journey is a journey to the “abyss or the unknown”. During my Sesame training, I experienced myths as the vehicles towards this inner mystery. I found in myths truths that spoke to me and fascinated me in their relevance to my personal psychological abyss. The myths illuminated the journey inwards, and the embodiment of images and characters from the myths brought revelations and meaning to my personal life. The irrationality and mystery within the myths offered the ground for inner expression of unconscious feelings and images. Following my personal experience, I explored in this research the application of the Greek myths through the Sesame approach for facilitating a similar inner process of self-awareness for the actor. Jung notes that ‘the more critical reason dominates, the more impoverished life becomes; but the more myth we are capable of making conscious, the more life we integrate.’ (Jung, 1954: CW15para98)

Myths and traditional stories are widely recognised and studied as holders of truth and knowledge about human nature. With the advent of psychoanalysis, Freud and Jung opened the way to a new recognition of myth and dream as homologous agents to comprehend neurosis and the unknown psyche. Their psychological readings of mythological phenomena demonstrate the identity and relationship of the mythological realm with the unconscious, dream and imagery. Mythology is recognised as ‘the womb of mankind’s initiation to life and death’ or as ‘the picture language of metaphysics’, through which the second birth is achieved for the individual’s life facilitated through mythological rites. (Campbell, 1990:51) Through dreams and myths we come in contact with the mysteries of human life and with the deeper and wiser inward Self.

In relation to actor training, Chekhov recognised fairy tales as the best material for his teaching stating that all theatre plays aspired to the condition of fairy tales. When using myths in Sesame practice the story is enacted and improvised by the participants and expressed through image and symbol rather than a literal dramatic representation. The way the myth is portrayed resembles the perplexing language of dreams. It may not have a



direct, rational meaning but the myth's meaning permeates the consciousness for the participant who experiences it through their sensations. The embodied meaning is more powerful for the individual than an intellectual encounter with the story when reading it or hearing it. Watts (1996) stretches this significance:

In using the myth within the context of drama we are working with powerful energies and this must be respected and taken seriously. It is one thing to hear or read a myth, but enacting is quite another. Enacting means engaging with the myth with the whole of our being - feeling, thinking and using our bodies; we are also relating to other people who are participating in role. No repetition of myth enactment will be identical; how a group works with the material depends on the chemistry of the individuals within the group and upon the particular mood at the time. (Watts in Pearson, 1996:28-29)

The application of the myths encourages actor's reconnection with archetypal principles that illuminates "mythopoetic" aspects of their psyche. The mythopoetic is described as the human ability of relating and imagining life experiences through myths. The focus on Sesame's approach is a pedagogical cultivation of a 'mythological intelligence' that amplifies the images, symbols and metaphors within the myths. To reflect on the images arising from the psyche within a mythological context minimises the possibility for an analytic reductionism and pathologising of the psyche. (Hougham, 2009)

In the context of acting, the embodiment of the myth in combination with the avoidance of any interpretation of the symbol allows the actor to give an artistic expression of the image without losing any of its psychic force. By this means, the practice as research posits that a communication based on *psychagogia* may be achieved. Indeed, that is why a key aspect of the research is located in praxis. The relationship of the actor with myths is not a quest for scientific or analytic interpretation of the given images or symbols but rather a feeling of immediacy with true mythology. Mythology is not only 'possessed of meaning' but rather 'explanatory, that is assigner of meaning' (Jung and Kerenyi, 1963:5).

McGlashan (1994) notes that to see the objects around us in stories or in reality as symbols

[I]s to intensify almost painfully the vividness and concreteness of the actual.[...] Archaic man spontaneously saw life in this way, but today perhaps only the artist understands that an object has not merely a concrete actuality, but also a transcendent reality, and perceives that this reality is something which the phenomenal world reveals rather than contains or engenders. (McGlashan, 1994:71)

The capacity to understand an object or nothingness beyond a concrete reality is consistently found in the act of playing. The child plays with the objects around her to transcend their apparent actuality. The child's imagination expands with ease as an inherited aspect of our being. Artists are called not to abandon their capacity for play but to amplify it through their artistic mediums. Pablo Picasso said 'Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.'<sup>32</sup>

The art of acting is an act of playing; the actor is "playing a role"; actors and spectators are playing a game based on pretence and belief; the actor "plays" with his body and self seeking the most truthful transformation. The actor is required to behold her creative playfulness as the valuable secret of her art and approach acting with the same intensive curiosity and liveliness as a child. The Sesame approach emphasises the importance of spontaneous play and encourages the awakening of intuition. Myths are approached with spontaneity and a playful attitude led by the body. The actors are not seeking an interpretation of the myth's characters and situations but rather an intuitive response to the myth. The meaning of the myth is not searched for outside but rather within each individual and the gained knowledge is an embodied knowledge. Jung described intuition as a function separate from thinking, feeling, and sensation, which was characterized by the ability to see connections between things and find the potential inherent within a situation. Although this is the primary characteristic, "intuition is not a mere perception, or vision, but an active creative process." (Jung, 1971:221) Intuition provides the impetus for creative endeavour and as such has been experienced by Jones<sup>33</sup> in his work after the relationship with Jung and his theories:

According to Jung, something within the universal unconscious is striving for expression and the original manifestation of this striving is an intuition. The artist is compelled to search for a means to express this intuition. To explain further how this imaginative-intuitive faculty operates within the artist Jung provided an analogy: "The creative urge lives and grows in him [the artist] like a tree in the earth from which it draws its nourishment. We would do well, therefore, to think of the creative process as a living thing implanted in the human psyche. (McDermott, 1984:218)

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<sup>32</sup> A popular quote of Picasso from an unidentified source. I first saw it as graffiti at Barcelona in 2000 in the streets around the Museum of Pablo Picasso.

<sup>33</sup> Robert Edmond Jones (1887-1954) was an American theatre designer who became interested in Jung and travelled to Zurich to pursue analysis with him. His work flourished and became increasingly popular after this endeavour.

My practice as research applies this approach to actor training aiming to enable for the actor a relationship with their psyche, both conscious and unconscious through the use of play, movement and myths. Sesame encourages an attitude of play by constantly engaging imagination, creativity and curiosity. This attitude is based on the principles that Winnicott (1971) deploys in his book *Playing and Reality* stating that playing is itself a therapy since it is an act informed by the instinct and the unconscious.

### The Sesame structure

Sesame's structure of a therapeutic session facilitates gradually, carefully and playfully the process of accessing the unconscious. The established sequence of events in a Sesame session is performed as a ritual that acts as a container for the work to take place. Roose-Evans (1996) describes ritual as:

[A]journey of the heart, which should lead us into an inner realm of the psyche – the ground of our being - and if we perform such rituals with passion and devotion, they will enhance our desire and strengthen our capacity to live. (Roose-Evans in Pearson, 1996: 106)

At a psychological level, the ritualistic structure mirrors the way in which the human psyche reveals and expresses itself, especially when dealing with overwhelming feelings. In this sense, the Sesame structure resembles the mythological Dionysian journey to the underworld (unconscious) and the journey back to the upper world with gained experience and knowledge.

The structure of a Sesame session is constructed following the protocol of group therapy: 'one of the most potent ways of providing structure is to build into each session a consistent, explicit sequence. [...] a protocol of structure has the advantage not only of efficiency but also of ameliorating anxiety and confusion.' (Yalom, 1995:471) It is this explicit sequence that constitutes the ritualistic aspect of the session and establishes the possibility of an encounter with the unconscious.

A Sesame session starts in a circle with a "focus" and a "warm-up" both of which aim to allow participants to arrive in the space physically and mentally and to promote individuality while acknowledging others and building group trust and focus. Within the "warm-up" participants begin with physically warming-up the body, shifting awareness from the thinking

functions to the centre of the physical body and awakening or warming-up the instinctual functions and the imagination. Often, images are used to support the physical movement of the participants. Such images begin to introduce themes of the main activity of the session. Following the warm-up is the “bridge-in” which metaphorically suggests the bridging to the unconscious. Exercises or actions in this section are introduced to encourage engagement with the whole personality, body, imagination, voice, images, memories and feelings. Jung’s understanding of the nature of the unconscious emphasises it as a place of hidden potential containing creative material. Through the process of working with play, improvisation and the body, the “bridge-in” offers a space for instinctive access to and expression of deeper layers of creativity. These activities “bridge-in” to the “main event” during which the facilitator introduces the working theme of the session. This may be done through storytelling, drama, movement, objects, music or other stimulus for improvisation. The group of participants is reacting instinctively through movement to the given theme. The main aim within this section is engagement with the unconscious through embodiment and the possible integration of this material into consciousness. Subsequently, the “bridge-out” indicates the process of bringing back to consciousness that which was experienced in the session. It provides a space for individuals to share their experiences in non-direct ways, e.g. through images, drawings, written or verbally shared words. Participants are asked to reflect on what was experienced rather than analyse why and what they did during the improvisation. The session ends with the “grounding”, a more conscious space aiming to de-role and return participants to the present and finally to close the session by treating the mind-body unity with relaxation. The structure offers a pathway for the encounter with the unconscious and the emergence of images, feelings, movements and thoughts. Hougham (2005) in his clinical analysis of bridging the conscious with the unconscious concludes saying that

[W]ithin the process of dramatic improvisation, there was a freedom offered to the clients [participants]. And here we are presented with paradox – the paradox of investing truth in the drama, whilst maintaining some reflexivity that we are engaged in the drama. This is at the heart of understanding how the unconscious and the conscious, from a Jungian perspective have a bearing on practice. (Hougham, 2005:10)

During the experimentations on the application of the Sesame approach for actors, the Sesame structure was followed precisely when planning and facilitating the workshops of this practice as research. In each one of these workshops, I chose one theme or myth from a Greek drama and introduced the different exercises in a way that suggest an ongoing movement inwards, towards the deeper layers of existence and creative potential as actors.

The participants were not aware of the different sections as exercises were not fragmented but rather presented with an organic continuation. Modifications of the structure occurred in terms of timings since typically a Sesame clinical session may last from 45 to 50 minutes while the workshops of this research varied from 2 to 4 hours up to 12 hours of intensive work. Other modifications were related to the content of the session introducing exercises that were more direct and familiar for actors. The sessions were not intended to focus on therapeutic aims but rather pedagogical. Despite the fact that in this practice the aim is not therapeutic, the process is facilitated for the actor in a way that embraces both the methodology of the Sesame approach and the pedagogical concept of *psychagogia*. A well-structured and prepared workshop plan allowed both participants and facilitator to engage with the material on a profound level, creating a space for encountering intuitive, unconscious images and symbols. A practical edited demonstration of the Sesame structure with examples of each section from different workshops is included in the DVD *Appendix* (Chapter 2, track 2.2 –Sesame structure).

From the perspective of the participants, the experience of this structure was identified with feelings of safety, clarity and protection expressed verbally or written through their comments in the interviews and feedback/questionnaires<sup>34</sup>. More specifically, the words that were most often used are summarised here: support, relaxed, trust, warmth, enjoyable, comfortable and good feeling. Undoubtedly one cannot ignore the fact that it is not only the structure of the session itself that creates a good working environment and comfortable atmosphere but equally, it is the ethos and attitude of the facilitator. My role and attitude as facilitator, based on *psychagogia* and the Sesame philosophy, will be discussed in detail in the following chapter when I examine separately the practical experimentations of this practice as research.

The third and last chapter of this thesis examines how the methodological premises discussed in the above chapter take form in practice. I also explore how the practical applications of psychophysical actor training, Greek myths and the Sesame approach support the formation of a pedagogical model that illuminates the actor's awareness of the psyche and its creative potential. The hypothesis is that this pedagogical model based on the concept of *psychagogia* will train the actor for achieving a theatrical communication that goes beyond the limits of consciousness creating a movement in the spectator's psyche.

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<sup>34</sup> The feedback/questionnaires are included in the Appendix page 138 and video recordings of the interviews are included in the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia* (Chapter 3, Step 4, track Participants' feedback)

In closing this chapter, my journey and theatrical experiences discussed map the territory that influences methodologically this practice as research. The understanding that was gained through the study on the notion of the psychagogue highlighted the importance of the ethos of the actor and the means by which this ethos can be nurtured. By examining my personal psychophysical actor training experiences within the Greek and Polish schools, I critically chose what to take forward or leave behind in my practice as research towards a pedagogical approach that facilitates securely the actor's inner psychological process that surpasses the narrow ego-consciousness. My training on the Sesame approach, and my personal development through it, reinforced the hypothesis for a practical investigation that applies the Sesame approach in psychophysical actor training. The following chapter outlines the experimentation of this hypothesis, gaining knowledge as it moves forwards.

## Chapter 3

### Testing the ground:

#### **A practical experimentation of the application of the Sesame approach into psychophysical actor training**

The theatre is defined as an assembly of human beings striving to establish contact with the profound mainsprings of their own being, the dark forces of physical emotion which lie beyond the trivialities of their everyday existence. (Esslin 1999: 83)

In this chapter, I discuss and analyse my praxis following the steps that formed this research journey. This critical writing is informed by the metaphor of a ladder illustrating each project as a step that leads to further experimentations (table 1). The steps may have different sizes but they are all moving upwards towards the hypothesis that initiated this journey. Following the reflections highlighted in Chapter 2 from my personal experience with psychophysical actor training and my training in the Sesame approach, I explored a modified Sesame approach of Drama and Movement Therapy for actors in order to create a pedagogical model that raises the actor's awareness of her psyche's wholeness and creative potential. I have explained how Sesame facilitates this encounter using movement, myth enactment and self-reflection. As tools in this experimentation, myths endorse awareness and a correlation with the archetypal materials of the psyche, offering the opportunity for an inward exploration of the self. For my project, I particularly focused on the use of ancient Greek myths due to my personal connection with these. Through this process, the actors acquire an embodied knowledge that affords significance to the individual's experience. If we agree that the tasks of the previous chapters were to ask "what" and "why", then the task here is to explore "how" this approach can be applied for actors towards a theatre with the spiritual significance of *psychagogia*.

This practice plays a key role in the investigation of a new pedagogical model for actor training including workshops that I facilitated for actors and a collaborative project facilitated with a director. The participants of the research are trained and experienced actors and directors of various nationalities and between the ages of 25 to 35 years old. The majority

were postgraduate students from Central School of Speech and Drama where most of the projects took place between the years 2009-2011. For reasons of confidentiality, their names have been altered and their identity is revealed only when there is formal consent and acknowledgement from the individual<sup>35</sup>. The following table illustrates the different steps of the research that will be discussed in this chapter and are presented in the DVD of this thesis.

<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Step 2</b>	<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Step 4</b>
Initial preparatory workshop exploring the Sesame approach for actors	<i>Accidental Art</i> : my collaboration with a director in the process of devising	Emotional Body: exploring embodiment through a combination of the Polish school of psychophysical actor training and the Sesame approach	Finding the numinous: the use of Greek myth enactment as a vehicle to connect the personal with the archetypal

Table 1. The steps of this practice as research

Through the combined lenses of heuristics and autoethnography, this project sets out to investigate subject matters that are based on personal experience and critical interpretation. These are based on the previous experiences and cultural background both of myself - as a researcher - and that of the participants. The focus of my analysis and discussion throughout this chapter is the approach to facilitation and the process of the whole group. This means that while I am aware and take into consideration the individuals' needs, I plan and facilitate my work based on the group's process. However, I recognise the problematic inherent in a study that explores feelings and subjective experiences while giving importance to these for articulating its outcomes. To increase the validity and evidence of the responses, I have used methodological triangulation in exploring my research question and argument. Within the area of Social Sciences Prof Alan Bryman defines triangulation as:

<sup>35</sup> In the Appendix page 170 is included the template of the informed consent I have used throughout this practice as research.



[T]he use of more than one approach to the investigation of a research question in order to enhance confidence in the ensuing findings. Since much social research is founded on the use of a single research method and as such may suffer from limitations associated with that method or from the specific application of it, triangulation offers the prospect of enhanced confidence. Triangulation is one of the several rationales for MULTIMETHOD RESEARCH [Bryman's emphasis]. The term derives from surveying, where it refers to the use of a series of triangles to map out an area. (Bryman, date unknown: 1)

In the process of a heuristic search, I used reflexivity, self-dialogue and personal journals to challenge, confront or even question my approach as a facilitator within the pedagogical concept of *psychagogia*. During my practice and in the various steps of this research, the participants of the workshops are considered co-researchers, encouraging their reflexivity and critical input. This choice is made in order to construct the research on the basis of empowerment, giving voice to the people that influenced and formed the process of this research. Therefore, I investigated the significance that the experience had for the participants and collaborators during the projects by conducting interviews, questionnaires, collecting feedback and their self-reflexive creative drawings. Finally, I documented the different processes by using still photographs and video recordings of the workshops. The DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia* of this thesis includes the documentation of these different steps and it is suggested to be viewed in combination with the reading of this chapter. In the Appendix of this thesis, I have included all the session plans I designed for the different workshops following Sesame's structure and methodology. Each session plan outlines not only the structure of the chosen exercises but also the rational behind that choice.

The structure of this chapter follows that of the ladder metaphor outlined in the introduction of this chapter. Each step of this practice will be presented and discussed in separate sections and the methods of analysis and study are incorporating different voices. These three different voices are represented by different formats:

1. my individual academic critical analysis of the material from the practice forms the main part of the text in standard format and layout;
2. ***the participants' voice on the experience is illustrated in the text within boxes in italics and in orange;***

3. *my personal reflexive accounts as a researcher and practitioner are also in italics but in mauve.*

This approach to writing mirrors Jung's attitude as a writer who wrote as though he believed, that:

[W]riting should aspire to the greatest authenticity by including unconscious psychic creativity *within* writing, not limit it to the outside, to what psychology is *about* [author's italics]. Truly, Jung's works aim for a fidelity to *psyche-logos* words that respond to the *whole* of the mind and not just its well-mapped territories. (Rowland, 2005:1-2)

Jung justifies his style of writing as experiential, insisting that he is describing psychic phenomena that could be expressed abstractly, and are only truly communicable in a more intuitive manner. (Jung, CW7, 1953) When it comes to representing the psyche without imaginative, experiential, emotional writing, then writing fails to represent both masculine (animus) and feminine (anima) qualities of the psyche. The anima has an erotic, emotional character, the animus a rationalising one. The feminine writing is pregnant with embodied experiences and sensations while the masculine writing is more traditionally academic with a rational, logical reasoning and language. (see Jung in Rowland, 2005: 49) For this chapter, I write from my body, expressing thoughts, feelings, sensations, the instincts that formed my decision-making as an intuitive practitioner that is flexible and open to what is going on in the moment and is not fixed in the prepared plan. I learn from my actions and mistakes and reflect on them critically with reason. Each step moves this praxis forward to the next experimentation based on intuition, feelings and critical reflections from both myself and the participants. I am experimenting with qualities, conditions and relationships that underlie the fundamental question of this practice as research towards a pedagogy of the psyche.

The beginning of this kind of theatre pedagogy starts with the relationship of the actors with their own self. In a Jungian sense, the Self corresponds to the archetypal concept of wholeness that includes all conscious and unconscious aspects of the human being. The attitude of introspection and examination of all lived experiences in relation to the personal and collective unconscious is what Jung names a process of individuation in coming closer to an awareness and understanding of the Self. The Socratic concept of *psychagogia* utilises the method of inner examination and questioning in the search of answers and meaning of the experience. The actors by deepening and expanding their self-awareness transcend acting and theatre to a psychic conscious and unconscious communication between stage

and audience that serves as *psychagogia*. Then theatre guides the spectator towards a similar inner examination of the experience<sup>36</sup>.

My research is based on a psychological quest of gaining information about the actor's creative self and the way this knowledge can be used to transform and transcend their art of acting. The gained understanding of the self liberates the actor from ego-based complexes and psychological tensions enabling a communication borne from the wholeness of the psyche. We could say that the use of the Greek myths offers spiritual significance to the conscious and unconscious psychological experiences of the actors in a theatrical language.

## **Step 1**

### **Initial preparatory workshop exploring the Sesame approach for actors**

I facilitated a two hours workshop for a group of seven postgraduate students undertaking a Master's course in Actor Training and Coaching at Central School of Speech and Drama (March 2009). I designed the workshop based on the Sesame structure aiming to explore the structure and the model of myths within actor training<sup>37</sup>. Following the Sesame structure that I described in the third part of chapter 2, I decided to use the myth of Oedipus and encourage a free improvisation initiated from spontaneous images from the myth as a "main event". Accordingly, the "warm-up" and "bridge-in" included exercises around group formation and themes from the myth. I chose a group of participants that have theoretical and empirical knowledge both as actors and actor-trainers so I could check and question the ground in which I am applying the Sesame approach. The exercises that I choose for the first part of the session focused on building trust and attunement between the whole group and the individuals. I also intended to encourage a playful attitude with the given material.

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<sup>36</sup> My pedagogy of the psyche based on *psychagogia* is related with ethos and morality but should not be confused with the moral in social everyday life. It is not concerned with the right or wrong attributed to a divine or a social law, neither is it concerned with ethical judgement.

<sup>37</sup> The session plan of this workshop is included in the Appendix of this thesis p.154

In this first step, I needed to establish in practical terms the way in which the Sesame approach applied within psychophysical actor training is not a therapeutic process for actors' psychopathology; it is not a technique of emotional effectiveness for character building; it is not psychodrama or psychoanalysis or psychotherapy for actors. It is rather suggested and applied as a process for encountering images and feelings that spring from unconscious or unknown parts of the actor's being. The images work as mediators between the conscious and unconscious levels of being, facilitating self-exploration and awareness of the creative psyche as a unity of consciousness and unconscious. As explained by Jung:

The psyche consists essentially of images. It is a series of images in the truest sense, not an accidental juxtaposition or sequence, but a structure that is full of meaning and purpose; it is a "picturing" of vital activities. And just as the material of the body that is ready for life has need of the psyche in order to be capable of life, so the psyche presupposes the living body in order that its images may live. (Jung, CW 8, 1926: 325)

I start my analysis with a personal account of thoughts, images and feelings after the workshop. This reflexive description, written immediately after finishing the workshop, becomes the starting point for the critical analysis and examination of the first step. This method of critical reflection of an intuitive practitioner is common practice for the Sesame Drama and Movement therapist who learns to observe inside and outside of themselves.

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### ***Personal account***

***They knew all the exercises that I used in the first part of the workshop (ball game, mirroring, and blind leading) and a feeling of boredom or "again?" was gently expressed non-verbally. I should have chosen exercises that are more challenging for trained actors in order to engage them fully. Nevertheless, at the discussion at the end of the session they noted that they engaged with the familiar exercises pleasantly and in a more advanced and profound level. Perhaps because of the emphasis I was pointing out to focus on each other, to the space and the importance of eye contact. What I wish to facilitate is attunement with one's interiority and with each other. [I describe this term in the following section of my writing]***

***In general, I felt that I needed more time. Everything felt rushed and each exercise and improvisation could have filled double the length of time I allowed. I feel that I rushed***

*them, for example, to make contact with others after the proposition to embody individually an image from the myth. I was concerned about time and reflecting back to my attitude, I observe having expectations and being impatient about their reactions.*

*I am glad I followed my instinct and I did not ask them to name and cast themselves in characters from the myth as they would have in Sesame's therapeutic practice. That was a good decision made in that moment. Otherwise, it could create a very literal representation of the myth and this is not the point. The aim was to embody a sense, a general feeling or an image that struck them from the myth and then gradually developed into a group improvisation for the purpose of their own inner exploration and not a theatrical performance of the myth.*

*I sensed that I had to take part in all the activities, to be in the space with them and facilitate from inside. My position is not that of an outsider and expert who directs the actions but rather that of a collaborator. By being and working with them in the actions I could suggest things physically and support their process non-verbally. Additionally by participating, I can have a better understanding of how the group and the individuals react and feel. Perhaps this is how I become the psychagogue?*

*The telling of the myth happened in the typical Sesame way where everyone sits in a circle and hears the story told from the facilitator. I have doubts about this method for sharing the myth. How can it be done or introduced and how do they listen? Some were lying down when others were sitting in the circle but I want to find a more physical, creative and less passive way for them to listen. Perhaps I can try to have the storytelling at the same time while the participants move or create sounds with their voice or instruments. I also want to try to split the story into smaller parts and work with the themes more intensely.*

*The words that the participants wrote down at the "bridge-out" reflect a collection of images and themes from the myth as well as an account of the experience as a whole: blind, search, struggle(x2), death, neck-break, alone, pierced, fate, gods, cursed, exiled, truth hung, eye stained, organic, primal, powerful.*

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The key elements of practice that are highlighted from this first step are the concepts of informed instinct, attunement and myth enactment.

As discussed in the previous chapter, as a dramatherapist I use my intuition to act and react in the moment, and the term “informed instinct” describes a quality of responsiveness to what is going on in the moment. The term, created by Audrey Wethered, co-founder of the Sesame approach, is used in Sesame practice and is referring to the inner drive that supports the therapist’s decision-making (Wethered, 1973). Similar to the role of a therapist, my reactions as a facilitator within the workshop were shaped from my informed instinct. The informed instinct is not a mere intuitive response in the moment but it is rather informed and grounded by the individual’s previous experience and knowledge or we could say embodied knowledge. Echoing Jung’s theories on the intuitive function, the meaning of the response springs not from reason, conscious knowledge and previous reflection but happens in the moment driven from an intuition that is gained after the training and practice of listening to it and trusting it. In a poetic sense, the heart endorses the head in the acting or decision-making.

Sesame therapists are trained to listen and rely on their intuition and I argue that this is a key element for the actor who needs to act and react in the moment and respond intuitively to whatever is going on. Intuition as a holistic way of perception appears to be an unconscious insight that reaches consciousness through physical actions or mental images or feelings<sup>38</sup>.

I believe that the actors need to nurture trust in their intuition and their bodies. This nurturing of psychological qualities and of unconscious mental process requires insight, a relaxed mood, rumination and time. Intuitive decision-making requires critical control by regular reflection, self-evaluation, self-monitoring, learning from colleagues, observing inner self and outer behaviour, repetitions, mannerisms, routines and dreams. The awareness and training of these qualities brings the actor to a state where deliberative reflection and monitoring of practice should be ongoing and embedded. The benefits or actual results of this pedagogical application need time and regular application in order to be developed, therefore, in my next steps I aimed to establish an ongoing weekly process with a group of actors.

During the workshop, the participants were challenged to switch their mode of behaving from intellect to intuition, but without previously having gained experience and training this is an almost impossible task in a two-hour workshop engaging with unknown material. To begin with, I introduced the well-known exercises of throwing a ball in a circle trying to find a common focus between them and achieve communication beyond words and nervous giggling reactions. Even in this group of people where participants knew each other and had

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<sup>38</sup> For example, the participants’ first choice and embodiment of elements from the myth is an intuitive reaction. As well as my interventions in the various improvisations.

spent months studying together there was not yet a common meeting space of focus. The video track - Step1 in the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia* illustrates these remarks and the level of concentration and attunement within the group which got easily lost when the exercise became more demanding and the balls were increased from one to three and when the group started to move around the room. For that reason, only during the exercises that they were already familiar with, could the participants find a deeper level of attentiveness and engagement as they observed at the end.

The actors work in ensemble and theatre is a group activity that requires a good level of bonding and communication between its members. Attunement for the actors is a necessary quality of relationship and responsiveness to what is going on in the present moment similarly to musicians who need to tune their instruments together before they perform. Nagamoto (1992) describes attunement as the relationship or 'the mode of engagement between a personal body and his/her living ambiance, both internal and external.' (Nagamoto, 1992:xxv) What is emphasised through his theory is the focus on somatic knowledge in contrast to the intellectual one.

The Sesame approach embraces this concept and facilitates the training of intuition and attunement first for the individual therapist to be attuned with her physical body and inner state and then with the others in the group. Grotowski (1975) was particularly interested in these qualities and in his training of actors insisted on them reaching a great level of physical and vocal attunement with themselves, other fellow actors, the spectators and the space around them. According to Prof. Dariusz Kosinski the philosophy of the tone in the Polish theatre tradition finds its root in the Romantic Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz who referred to tone as the energy or essence in human beings, the tone is not only inside the man, a man is in tone; the tone should be revealed in his voice, in every word, in every look or movement (Kosinski, 2010<sup>39</sup>). The psychophysical actor training of the Grotowski legacy is rigorous, demanding a great amount of energy and concentration but it is also spiritual in the sense of searching for a quality that it is not religious but it is experiential, irrational or metaphysical. The application of the Sesame approach in my practice is based on a similar methodology but without being so rigorous and physically demanding. One can observe in the DVD, Step1 of Chapter 3, the way in which the exercises are being facilitated with an aim to prepare the performer for being in tune with themselves and others, to be fully in the moment physically and mentally.

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<sup>39</sup> Personal notes taken during his lecture at the conference "In search of Human essence: the aesthetics and method of Song of Goat theatre", Barbican 20/11/2010)

During the first experimental workshop using the Sesame method, the participants commented on how the structure provided a space for spontaneity and play while, at the same time, they could relate with the exercises in a different way. I later identified the need for more time in order to achieve attunement and connections especially during the improvisation that sparked after the telling of the myth. After sharing the myth of Oedipus, the participants were invited to embody individually one image, character or idea that stood out to them during the storytelling and then to move into a group improvisation. In the same video-track, we observe a few moments from this improvisation and my efforts to create some connections between the individuals by physically bringing them into contact. The enactments of the myths through the Sesame approach afford ways of finding embodied meaning for the actor. They offer ways of implicit learning through the body, connection with personal sensitivity and creativity.

After responding intuitively to my experience and learning in Step 1, in Step 2 I explore the ways in which I could inspire the actor's trust in their own intuition, their attunement with their inner process and in relationship with the other as well as awakening their expressivity through the body. Starting with the body in Step 2, my intention was to nurture and exercise the psychological qualities of the actor that communicate through movement and voice emotions, images and thoughts that guide the spectator to experiences of the psyche. My role as a facilitator of the actors' inner process was, for this step, explored in collaboration with a director who would be responsible in creating a performance piece out of these improvisations. Additionally, I needed to search the ways in which the myth could be introduced and utilised throughout this process to serve a pedagogy of psychological self-awareness.

## **Step 2**

### ***Accidental Art: my collaboration with a director in the process of devising***

*Accidental Art* was a twelve-hour collaborative project as a part of the Accidental Festival 2009 where I took the role of the dramatherapist/psychologist applying the Sesame approach for actors. Working alongside a director and a producer, we created a devised



performance piece (see advertisement below). Equipped with the gained knowledge and experience from the Step 1 of this practice as research, in this second step I investigated how the qualities of attunement, informed instinct, playfulness and spontaneous unconscious reactions can support the psychological and physical abilities of the actor in the process of devising. This project is analysed as a case study since it is the only project that explored the Sesame method as a tool for artistic creation in collaboration with a director and producer. The documentation of this step is presented in the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia*, Chapter 3, Step 2, in the form of a slide show<sup>40</sup>. The participants' feedback of the experience has been documented through personal email communication and an interview conducted by *London Theatre Blog* (2009)<sup>41</sup>.

### ***ACCIDENTAL ART by Accidental collaborators***

***Saturday 23rd May 2009 at 12:30pm-2:30pm Clore studio | Roundhouse Theatre***

*Accidental Art is an experiment in which three actors, one director and a psychologist have been invited to collaborate over a consecutive period of twelve hours, during the Accidental festival. The actors and the director in collaboration with the psychologist will adopt methods used in dramatherapy and use them as alternative tools to create a new piece of theatre, which they will present in the Clore Studio. There will be a discussion about the process after the performance, where audience questions and feedback will be welcomed.*

*What do think will happen? Will it be a disaster? A masterpiece? A new zany piece of theatre?!*

*Whatever you think, we'd love to hear your thoughts! To leave a comment visit our blog at <http://accidentalfestival.blogspot.com/>*

The project *Accidental Art* was initiated and produced by Nessah Muthy who at the time was a second year student on the BA course Performance Arts at Central School of Speech and Drama. It consisted of two days, the first of which was a 12 hour closed door working collaboration, followed the next day by an open public performance. The project was part of the 2009 Accidental Festival that 'encourages and inspires interesting collaborations and debates that will contribute to the progression of theatre, performance and the arts.' (Accidental Festival, 2009)

Muthy states that her original idea was inspired after attending a workshop by Ruth Little focusing on alternative theatre collaborations with scientists to develop what Little has called "Metabolic Dramaturgy" – the dramaturgy of non-linear living systems (London Theatre Blog,

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<sup>40</sup> All photos of *Accidental Art* that are included in the text or in the DVD are by photographer Jon Paley

<sup>41</sup> A printed version of the interview is included in the Appendix page 133

2009: interview). Muthy wanted to do something similar with psychology as an alternative methodology that could be translated into structures and exercises for a new process of making theatre. Initially she had no specific instructions or areas of interest from psychology and so at the first preparatory workshop psychologist Tanya Zybutz initiated discussions around the type and subjects of psychology that needed to be clearly addressed before we made a decision on our focus. The discussions revealed an interest in the unconscious and so led to the agreement of investigating ways to encounter the unconscious as a potential realm for creative representations. At this phase I joined the creative team as psychologist /dramatherapist specifying the methodology of the project by recommending the application of the Sesame Approach for creatively encountering the unconscious. In my role as dramatherapist I was responsible for facilitating the first 9 hours of the process and creating the appropriate environment and situations for the last three hours of devising when the director took over.

Having undertaken the first step of this practice as research, I suggested exploring the enactment of myths and stories as a way into the unconscious. A discussion between the producer, the director and myself led to the decision to explore the myth of Oedipus which has already been strongly associated with psychology and especially psychoanalysis and the unconscious. Freud extensively studied the tragedy *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles and from it developed his sexual theory on the Oedipus complex. In contrast, our aim was to explore a



more organic response to the myth within the context of modern society, and we anticipated questions such as: How do young men relate to the myth of Oedipus? How does Jocasta feel? How does a woman relate to the myth and with which character does she empathise instinctively? What is the relevance today of the archetypes within the myth?

With the use of the myth of Oedipus rather than the actual text of Sophocles' tragedy, we intended to deal openly with the archetypal figures and situations trying to avoid stereotypical interpretations. Stereotypes refer to cultural contemporary notions of behaviours that are based on social assumptions about individuals. They are not psychologically explicit about the

individual but rather general projections put on others. On the other hand, archetypes, literally meaning “first type”, are ideal forms of the perceived or sensed phenomena and in the analytical psychology of Jung, archetypes are recognised as forms of instinct and described as innate universal psychic dispositions that form the substrate from which the basic themes of human life emerge. Jung (1995) explains that:

[T]he archetype itself is empty and purely formal, nothing but a *facultas praeformandi*, a possibility of representation which is given *a priori*. The representations themselves are not inherited, only the forms, and in that respect they correspond in every way to the instincts, which are also determined in form only. The existence of the instincts can no more be proved than the existence of the archetypes, so long as they do not manifest themselves concretely. (Jung, 1995:413)

The challenge was to turn the focus onto the archetypal figures and situations of the story, enact the actions with ritualistic processes through the body and therefore discover what these mean to us through our own personal engagement and embodiment. To achieve an awareness of the parts of the myth that resonate to each one of us personally, we followed the instinctive physical reactions that the story brought up. In my role as a dramatherapist, I made suggestions intended to broaden and expand the mythological framework that we were working within and so develop the actors’ creative instincts. The myth of Oedipus was a tool to work with within this collaboration and not the reason for it. The aim was not to rediscover the sub-texts of the story (as in classical actor training) but to use it as a vehicle towards a new way of creating work though encountering the unconscious.



The working plan of the day followed the ritualistic structure of a Sesame session modified to the needs of the project and the outcome of shaping a performative piece for the next day<sup>42</sup>. We experimented with physical, verbal and non-verbal exercises, voice and sound all aiming to build emotional and physical trust within the group and prepare or “bridge-in”

the actors for instinctive, unconscious responses. The chosen exercises were based on

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<sup>42</sup> Sesame structure has been discussed in details in the third part of Chapter 2. The session plan of the twelve hours is included in the Appendix pages 156-158

themes from the myth of Oedipus such as blindness, power, fate, loss, identity, suicide etc. The exercises were introduced and practised playfully aiming for spontaneity, humour, emotional and physical reactions and verbal or non-verbal expressions from the actors. In my role as dramatherapist I intended to create a secure and comfortable place so that the actors could freely relate to and explore emotions, sensations and reactions to the themes and images that were introduced. Using Johnson's (1992) term that I recounted in the third part of chapter three, I was aiming to establish a well-held 'playspace' where the actions could take place freely.

There was a very delicate balance that had to be achieved between creating a safe environment for the actors, whose reactions were unscripted, and sometimes surprisingly emotional, and stimulating their imaginations. My position as a dramatherapist was "in-role" involved in the action and regulated a great interaction with, and proximity to, the actors. Johnson (1992) explains what a dramatherapist "in-role" means:

Technically this means that the therapist enacts a role in the drama, that is, participates with the client in the enactment. This is the therapist's second role, the first being the role as 'therapist'. (Johnson, 1992:112)



As in traditional group therapy, success and effectiveness is 'mediated by a relationship between therapist and patient that is characterized by trust, warmth, empathetic understanding, and acceptance' (Yalom, 1995:47-48). In terms of the quality of the relationship between participants and therapist, the three basic elements that are played out are being with, being against and influencing. In the field of dramatherapy, the participation of the therapist in-role is not alien for the practitioner who often works from inside the dramatic action. Throughout the twelve hours, I acted within the playspace in the double role of a therapist and a performer being with, being against and influencing the actors according to what they were doing. I facilitated the participants' creativity and imagination based on my skills in attuning to what is needed within the group and how the group can progress. My interventions combined a kind of identification or attunement with

the participant's bodymind entirety and an innate instinctive knowledge of that which comes from your own bodymind (Pearson, 1996). Accordingly these interventions were based on my knowledge, my training, personal and interpersonal awareness and my instinct, or "informed instinct", as it has been described in Step 1 of this chapter. More essentially than supporting the actions, as a dramatherapist I was aware of the actors' difficulties and struggles in relation to the dramatic action and I was supporting them with proximity psychically and physically. That meant either taking a similar or opposite body position in space with them or moving their bodies towards another actor in order to help them connect with someone else or even to move forward. Through this connection, the actor shifts from a difficult internalised situation towards the external surroundings and feels more secure in the presence of others.

For example, being against the participants' actions means that during their explorations I introduced opposite actions to what they initially improvised. This methodology, based on Jung's (1959) notion of opposites, asks the actor to encounter both sides of their psyche, meaning the one that is closest to the ego but also the one that is in the shadow or other side, the dark side of the psyche. The experiences of an actor when dealing with dark and tragic stories need an emotionally secure environment that supports the actor's feelings. This enables the actor to feel not threatened by these emotions personally while being able to stay focussed on the creative aim of this exploration. Within the following box, a participant of this project describes the experience of an incident that made her feel uncomfortable and later I discuss how I dealt with it within the playspace.

***Actor: In one exercise, I ended up playing Oedipus for a very long time, from the discovery of his identity through the blinding. I was blindfolded and the other performers were taunting and pushing me, and this really disorientated me. It got quite scary and uncomfortable, to a point where I wanted to say stop, but was aware that was my reaction. I think you really have to negotiate what kind of personal agony you are willing to get yourself through to find the real experience of a character, and what becomes too much. You don't have to go kill someone to understand how it feels.***

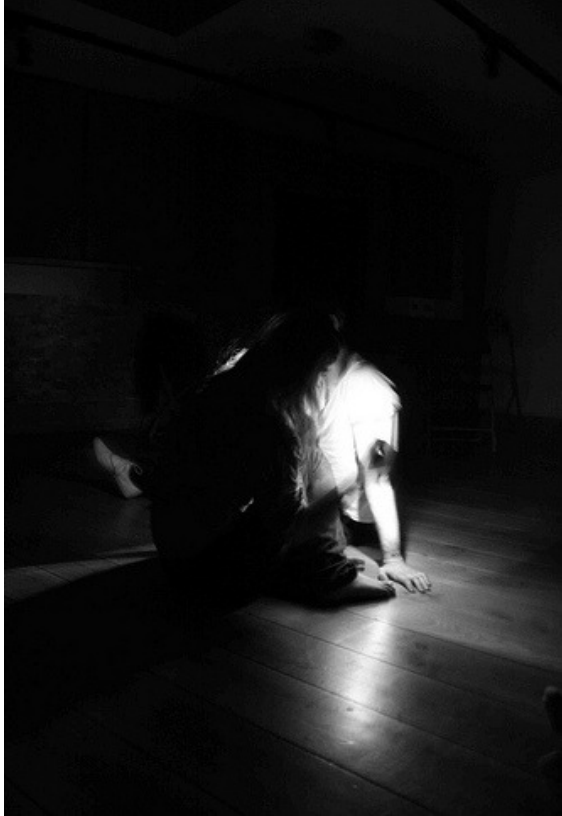
The actor was distressed by her own vulnerable response to the exercise. Uncomfortable feelings were not unexpected but rather understandable when dealing with this kind of material. As a facilitator I had to make sure that she felt secure enough to experience them and find empathy with Oedipus and his story but also to bring for herself a closure and reassurance. She continued the exercise even though she was emotionally upset, a fact that

underlines that she was aware of the interface between her personal reaction and acting. Remaining in the dual role of a therapist /facilitator and a performer, I allowed the group to react against the actor who was embodying Oedipus at that moment in order to give her time to experience and react to the created circumstances. When I judged instinctively that the actor could not hold the boundaries of her personal defence any longer, I approached her and intervened being 'in-role' by touching her arm and spoke to her as Oedipus' daughter Antigone: "Come on father; hold my hand and I will guide you outside the city." In this way I steered of the emotional situation, to be directly and only related to the dramatic characters rather than to personalise the feelings. I reassured the actor, and led the improvisation to its conclusion.

During the "bridge-out" the actors had the opportunity, if they wished, to express verbally or non-verbally their experience and so bring consciousness to what happened. The actor in the incident described above, who had by that time regained her confidence, shared her discomfort with the group, acknowledging additionally that this was her personal reaction coming through the character. Later in an interview given after the whole project had finished, she described her process of working as follows:

***Actor: What carried through was a personal awareness of how to work this way, being available to your first instinct as a performer. It made it much easier to be fresh with a character because of the sense of play and spontaneity. In terms of dealing with the unconscious, you delve into a lot of aspects of yourself that you are not aware of. You act very instinctually, which helps find moments of honesty with the character. You watched the performers transform themselves, everyone played Oedipus more than once. The audience was seeing that all these people exist amongst these performers, so they can exist in themselves. There was a rule of performance where we accepted that anyone at any point could change. This was a result of the process, where we worked with instructions, playing emotions, characters and situations in various ways. Anouke [director], Tania [facilitator/researcher] and Nessah [producer] made sure we never stuck to one character but took the twelve hours to delve into our own selves as well as the myth. This was so valuable.***

What the actor experienced and found valuable in the above incident was the awareness of disturbing feelings that the character of Oedipus and his situation raised up from the shadow of her own psyche. Jung (1959) used the term 'shadow' to describe the repressed or denied



part of the Self. The shadow is part of the unconscious and contains intolerable emotions, thoughts, repressed weaknesses, limitations and instincts, as well as unrealized talents and gifts. Jung named shadow the territory of the psyche that stands in opposition to what we consciously know about ourselves. The acknowledgement and experience of the shadow is an important idea in Jung's psychology suggesting that a balance is always necessary when delving into one's self. Jung paid significant attention to the shadow of the psyche and its hidden, repressed elements that are denied expression as sources of all evil and wounds. As adults we experience these parts in our dreams and fantasies, through projection onto others or at some rare moments of feeling as being possessed by something

which is not ourselves (as can be the case for an actor). The shadow parts find their way to the surface of consciousness, demanding attention and care. Moreover, the shadow parts offer unique gifts to help us to make further steps in understanding the self and becoming whole. However, entering this space is not an easy task; repressed parts are very often experienced as unfamiliar. Awkward feelings and sensations may arise and inner conflicts make their presence felt. Jung claims that what is required is a Dionysian attitude towards the opposite forces of light and darkness. The challenge for the actor is to free their instinctive impulses and make possible the communication of the character's inner life towards the audience or the other. As discussed in Chapter 1, the Dionysian attitude is identified with the shadow and with connecting the opposites, meaning an attitude of finding ugliness which is also beauty, the brilliance in the darkness. Following this attitude one can gain deep insight into the Dionysian qualities of the unconscious, the crude forms of which can reach the surface of consciousness at the outbreak of illness, suffering, madness or erotic fantasies and ecstasy.

The artist is choosing art to form and express this "madness" and the extremes of life through theatre. The development of a pedagogical model based on the Sesame approach necessitates that the actors are invited to see their images and psychological dismemberment in the mirror of Dionysus, trusting the ability of the Dionysian psyche to ascend upwards after reaching the bottom; in Jungian terms, to trust our psyche's capacity

to self-regulate. Psychological suffering is intrinsic to tragedy and the aim of applying a therapeutic approach is not to eliminate suffering but to allow the actor to acknowledge it, experience it and give it a voice - to find a form through art in which it can be expressed. The tragic actor is an artist of the psyche, transforming pain into art. What is necessary for a pedagogical model, is the discipline of the work and therefore the art provides the middle ground where the emotional discomfort derived from the psyche, takes artistic form.

In the last three hours of this intense day the director took control of the process deciding on the final format of the performance. The improvisations based on the myth were not planned with the final performance in mind but they were rather spontaneous and random. The director's task was to select aspects from these improvisations that had a theatrical interest and to create a performance out of these. Finally, drawing from the improvisations of the whole day as well as her own suggestions for actions, she structured a 30 minute devised performance piece. It was rehearsed and then presented the following day to an open public audience who were seated in a circle, witnessing the performers in the middle. The performance was followed by questions and answers from the audience who were interested mostly in the creative process of the project and the experiences of the actors during the collaboration. As a response to the project the online magazine *London Theatre Blog* conducted an interview with the creative team which is included in the Appendix 1 (p.133).

As part of this practice as research, the *Accidental Art* project has offered new insights into my application of the Sesame approach for actor training. The observations that the director, as an outsider to the process, was able to make on the development of the actors throughout the process enabled me to evaluate some of the aims of this practice, and offered answers to the research inquiry and suggestions for further steps in practice. It is important to acknowledge that what was new about this process was not so much the types of exercises that were used, but rather the way they were facilitated. My role as the dramatherapist and the way the actors were guided physically to explore opposites and uncomfortable areas within themselves was an important discovery towards a pedagogical model based on *psychagogia*.

Additionally, in this second step of the practice the appropriateness of the Sesame approach in preparing the actors for devising was highlighted. The playful exploration of archetypal psychological situations, the way the process was structured carefully to guide the actors in a state of openness and spontaneity, the oblique therapeutic ways in which difficult emotional reactions were dealt with and the non-ego attitude that was nurtured, demonstrated the Sesame approach as a good practice for grounding the actors' psyche



and freeing their imagination and body for devising process. Unlike other psychophysical approaches which can create psychologically threatening and unsafe states, the Sesame approach facilitates the actor's inner process because of the secure psychological environment it creates. My role as the dramatherapist, or the pedagogue for the psyche, provided a grounded and professional attitude towards these inner psychological explorations of the actor. The healthy relationship that the dramatherapist establishes with the individual and the group prepares the ground for a profound therapeutic relationship between the actor, their self and personal material that is expressed in the art of acting. The director, mainly concerned with the artistic result of the process, does not always show the necessary attention, patience and support to the actors' psychological responses that may block or tense their performance.

Below I include the voice of the director and her observations about the possible application of the Sesame approach in actor training using ancient Greek dramas. The facilitation of the actor's process through the Sesame approach does not aim to replace the director or the trainer but rather work collaboratively with her throughout training or rehearsals in order to enhance the full potential of the performers. The first two speeches are part of a personal discussion/feedback I conducted with her while the last box includes the director's answer during the interview conducted by *London Theatre Blog* (2009).

***Researcher /Dramatherapist: - How did you experience the use of the Sesame method in relation to your role as director in the Accidental Art?***

***Director: Overall, I found the use of the Sesame Method, and the collaboration between all of us extremely creative, inspiring, hard work, draining and at times, humorous. I felt that there was a lot of respect for each other's role and input, especially in the preliminary planning between the producer, psychologist and director - and I think perhaps the nature and quality of the Sesame Method encourages exactly that kind of harmonious collaboration. I felt that, for the majority of the time, the actors also responded generously, harmoniously, bravely and creatively to other people's roles and input, within the team. Again, I think this was partly attributable to the 'safe' but emotionally open, exploratory environment set up very efficiently on that day by the dramatherapist, through Sesame.***

*Researcher/ Dramatherapist: Could you identify any differences of the Sesame method in comparison to other methods or techniques used for the actor's creative process?*

*Director: By the way that the exercises were introduced and led, I felt there was a more spontaneous, sensual, gleeful and even healthy quality to the Accidental physical work than is sometimes achieved by more traditional methods. In my experience, standard 'physical theatre' and 'improvisation' sessions are usually more inhibited - i.e. the actors' instinctive responses more repressed - than they appeared to be with the Sesame Method. Perhaps this is because the use of myth unlocks responses that are at once true to the individual and universally recognisable.*

*Journalist: What have you discovered about the relationship between psychology and actor training?*

*Director: I am interested in seeing how methods from these experimental processes can directly influence the training of an actor, giving way to more authentic performances. Theatre is always going to involve parameters and limitation, and I want to see how we can use this method to free up, authenticate something that is still traditional.*

*I think it should be part of drama training. As someone who works in drama school education, I think there should be a special period a week where actors can access these parts of themselves, give up the useless hours of fencing and allow these explorations to be part of the curriculum.*

The director's comments and observations highlight the quality and manner in which the Sesame approach facilitates the actor's process of delving into their inner world. What is overlooked in psychophysical training approaches is the protection and guidance of the actors' vulnerability and sensitivity when dealing with dramatic material that may invoke personal unconscious feelings. A pedagogy of the actor supported by the Sesame approach enables the actor to gain awareness about their psyche and so ground their confidence and psychological strength. More specifically, this project and my role as dramatherapist in collaboration with a director demonstrated the appropriateness of Sesame's application not

only for training processes but also in the actor's preparation for devising. A trained dramatherapist working alongside a director can facilitate and prepare the actors psychically and physically in order to improvise freely and with inner depth and honesty in the given themes. In the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia*, Chapter 3, Step 2, the reader can see more still photos that documented the creative process of this project<sup>43</sup>.

The discoveries from Step 2 guided me to explore in my practice as research how the Sesame approach could be incorporated in the weekly schedule of actor training. The basis of this exploration was to be the psychophysical training of the actor through their body and not the creation of a therapy group for actors. Moreover, it retained a balanced focus on the physical as well as the psychological aspect of the training and how the experience influenced the actor's actions and reactions.

### Step 3

#### **Emotional body: Exploring embodiment through a combination of Polish psychophysical actor training and Sesame approach**

The gained knowledge from the study of Step 2 pushed me forward to explore how the Sesame approach can be applied by facilitating a weekly schedule of psychophysical actor training. This third step of my practice aimed to investigate the benefits of a longer process for actors that will engage both their physical body and their psyche in expanding their creative potential. Additionally, for this experimentation I decided not to use the storytelling of the myth directly but explore how I can introduce themes and images from the Greek myths when working with exercises from the Grotowski training legacy based on the philosophy of the Sesame approach and the pedagogical concept of *psychagogia*. I choose these exercises because of Sesame's connection with this actor training tradition and my personal

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<sup>43</sup> The photographer was invited to stay within the working space for the first sections of the twelve hours but was asked to leave during the "main event" that included the improvisation on the myth of Oedipus. This decision was based on the belief that the photographer with his presence and the act of photographing within the space might create a feeling of intrusiveness for the performers. This element of the process needed to be facilitated in the privacy and intimacy of the working group we had built since the beginning of the session.

experience. I designed and facilitated eight workshops each three hours in length, open to current postgraduate students at Central School of Speech and Drama (May-June 2010). This step of the practice has been documented through video recordings and it is presented in Chapter 3, Step 3 in the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia*. The participants' experience has been evaluated through a feedback questionnaire I distributed at the end of the course<sup>44</sup>.

For these workshops, I invited participants to explore the body's potential and imagination in order to bring us closer to an embodied understanding of the ancient Greek myths. Drawing from selected exercises from both the Grotowski and the Sesame approaches, I aimed to explore ways to unlock the actor's physical creativity and awareness of the body and mind as a unity. Particular focus was given on awakening the body and encouraging a connection with internalised sensations as well as external stimuli. For that reason, I repeatedly used exercises with impulses in order to encourage reflection on internal imagery or relational impetus. For example, in one case I suggested to participants the image of water as an internal stimulus to move their body in space, while in the development of the process I asked them to work in pairs giving, by touch, impulses to their partner to move body parts<sup>45</sup>. The term "psychophysical" indicates an implicit relationship between the actor's physical body and psychology. The body is considered as an expressive instrument that connects the inner feelings and images with their outer expression. By listening to and following the physical instincts of our bodies we enable a deeper communication with ourselves and others. My process aims to connect us with the ancient myths in a more personal and meaningful way.

The embodied meaning of archetypes that I am looking for emerges from unconscious bodily encounters and it is communicated on this deep level between actor and spectator as in *psychagogia*. Johnson (2008) in his book *The Meaning of the Body Aesthetics of Human Understanding* suggests that

[F]or this immanent or embodied meaning, you must look more deeply into aspects of experience that lie beneath words and sentences. You must look at the felt qualities, images, feelings and emotions that ground our more abstract structures of meaning. (Johnson, 2008:17)

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<sup>44</sup> All feedback questionnaires completed from the participants are included in the Appendix page 138

<sup>45</sup> Examples of this practice can be seen in the DVD *Appendix* (track 2.3 *Sesame Structure*)

And he continues to underline that 'an embodied view of meaning requires an embodied, non-dualistic, naturalistic view of mind and body as one process' (Johnson, 2008:17). This view foregrounds this thesis's definition of psyche where both conscious and unconscious aspects of the mind are being encountered.

In the history of actor training there are paradigms of approaches that focus on actors' physicality as a vehicle to explore or express embodied meaning. I have discussed applications of psychology in theatre practice in Chapter 1 and the relationship of Polish theatre training schools to the ancient Greek dramas in Chapter 2. Psychophysical actor training of the Grotowski legacy is a pedagogical model that aspires a certain spiritual aspect for the performer in the sense of a sensitivity for metaphysical qualities. Grotowski (1975) and the other practitioners that followed and developed his physical training, investigated ways to overcome the limitations of the everyday muscular body in order to expand its creative and expressive ways. Grotowski states that the use of acrobatics and plastic exercises is not aiming to train the physical skill of the performer but rather to facilitate coordination and transcendence. The psychophysical actor training approach of the Grotowski legacy is employed because of its focus on the body and I have combined it with the Sesame approach to facilitate the process of cognisance between unconscious and consciousness in a more safe and playful environment for the actor. I believe that the Sesame approach allows for a grounded and balanced way to incorporate psychological and physical awareness of the actor's inner process and outer manifestations.

The emphasis of my work lies on the body as the agent for finding inner connections, meaning and the embodiment of that meaning. Analytical psychology perceives the body as the first medium that relates the inner life with the outer. Beyond the biological, physical body, the body is spirit communicating unconscious messages and reflecting emotions that concern the internal state of the individual. In eastern philosophies and medicine, this appreciation of the body as the union of psyche and soma is ancient and applied in practical healing traditions like Ayurveda, acupuncture, meditation, yoga, shamanic healing and others (Nagamoto, 1992). In the western medical world researchers have more recently acknowledged the connection of psyche and soma and investigate their relationship in psychosomatic illnesses (Keleman, 1989, 1986, Nemiah, 1972). Current philosophical schools suggest the dialogue between an empirical neuro-scientific research and phenomenological accounts (Damasio 1994, 1999, Johnson 2008, Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, 1999). In the vocabulary of psychotherapy, the capacity of the body to find, express and embody meaning and feelings is called the emotional body (Lopez-Pedrada, 2000). As I mentioned in the third part of the second chapter, the emotional body is described by Lopez-

Pedrada as the psycho-physical locus of the emotional being, of feelings and emotions, of likes and dislikes, sensual enjoyment and aesthetic appreciation. It manifests itself in body images, voluntary and involuntary signals like tics, nodes, blushing, illness, and fantasies (Lopez-Pedrada, 2000).

The understanding of the emotional body can only be derived from self-discovery, experience, interaction and imagery. The basis of our mind and soul is mythopoetic and therefore through images, feelings, archetypal figures, stories and myths we understand and react to the world (Jung, 1960; Hillman, 1992). To aid our mythopoetic mind in understanding the notion of the emotional body, Lopez-Pedrada personifies it as Dionysus, the god of the body and the emotions, closely related to irrationality, madness and the instinct. Dionysian worship was formed in rituals that include aspects of initiation, dismemberment, death and ecstasy. The most representative example of the Dionysian cult amongst the ancient Greek dramas is found in the *Bacchae* by Euripides and so the myth behind this play was chosen as the starting point for the explorations of this third step.

Throughout the workshops, I explored the application of exercises from both the Greek and Grotowski inspired schools within the Sesame structure and methodology in order to bring awareness of the actors' emotional body. I aimed to discover ways to embody meaning of the archetypal manifestations within the myth that can transcend the personal to the collective. In practice, I developed exercises from Oikonomou's Bioenergetics in combination with impulse work, group mirroring and image based improvisations. To start with, and in order to familiarise the group with the work, I brought images from Greek images that we used as inspiration to develop movement sequences. As a continuation I described to them images from the myth to finally reach a level of improvisation with images that sprung spontaneously from them as a response to a theme from the myth – for example initiation, sacrifice, ritual etc. In the following paragraphs, I discuss incidents from the workshops illustrating the journey of this step. The focus lies on the way I intervened in order to facilitate a psychological experience for all participants. The participants' experiences are captured through film, a group discussion and through their answers to the feedback/questionnaire.

### Improvisation on the *Bacchae*

The incident I describe below happened at the third of the eight workshops with three female participants<sup>46</sup>. The discussed incident can be viewed in the DVD *Practical experiments*

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<sup>46</sup> The session plan of this workshop that also include the rationale for each exercise can be found in the Appendix page 159

*towards a theatre of psychagogia*, Chapter 3, Step 3, track: Improvisation on the Bacchae. During the “warm-up” I introduced the preliminary exercise from Oikonomou’s Bioenergetics<sup>47</sup> to release the physical tensions of the individuals and shift the focus from their intellect to the sensations inside their physical body. In the beginning, the exercise resembles an individual’s meditative process so after the first part of individual practice, I instructed the participants to mirror group physical actions in order to connect the group together and raise sensitivity and attunement with others. When I sensed that the group had reached a level of communication, I introduced images from the bacchic ecstatic chorus in the homonymous Euripides’ tragedy and invited the participants to react physically and intuitively to these, forming an improvisation. I intended to explore how we can find embodiment and truthfulness in the performance of a ritualistic madness that characterises the attitude of these women.

The Dionysian ritualistic madness differs from mental illness and insanity. According to Socrates in *Phaedrus* ‘our greatest blessings come to us by way of madness’ and Plato distinguishes four types of this divine madness. These are prophetic madness, whose patron god is Apollo, *teletic* or ritual madness, whose patron is Dionysus, poetic madness, inspired by the Muses, and erotic madness, inspired by Aphrodite and Eros (Dodds, 1951). The ritualistic madness of Dionysus, through initiations, aims at ‘the communion with the God’ (Dodds, 1951); it is a numinous experience valid for those who belong to his *thiasos*, the initiates that wish to depart from conscious reality, the limited time and space of reality, and enter unknown territory in order to experience an altered consciousness. This experience may happen in different forms and it resonates with possession, shamanism, meditation, praying and substance abuse, but within the context of actor training, I am searching for ways to experience this quality based on embodied collective phenomena for the actors.

The video track in the DVD is edited in a way that highlights the different reactions of the participants to the exercise and the way I facilitated the process for each one of them enabling them to value their unique reactions. I start my critical reflections by the notes I took immediately after the workshop that are presented below.

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### ***Personal account***

***Today during the workshop, I witnessed two different personal reactions of two individuals during the improvisation. After introducing the images that refer to the***

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<sup>47</sup> Analysed in this thesis second part of Chapter 2 and a practical demonstration is included in the DVD *Appendix*, chapter 2, track 1

*maenads, I encouraged the participants to create with their bodies a still image that struck them from these. I then suggested developing this image and moving around the space. This instruction was not received with ease and I could see their struggle. Therefore, I suggested thinking of the maenads as an animal and using the physicality of the animal to move around. That was a good use of metaphors that enabled them to move. Gradually, I recommended that the physicality of the animals could take more human form, always in relation to the maenads. The prey became the hunter as they were looking for food. The dynamic between the participants changed totally as they all came together to hunt down, kill, take the skin off, cut the meat and eat the prey. The two participants were deeply engaged with the actions while I could sense a slight resistance from the third woman (A). In physical terms, her movements were gentle, indicating more a movement of caress rather than scraping on the imaginary dead animal. I immediately thought that she is probably a vegetarian and her cognitive ego does not allow her body to connect with primordial animalistic actions. She could not find relativity with the personal in order to allow the collective unconscious experience to happen. On the contrary, the other participant (B) was far too absurdly into the action, using all her body absent-mindedly. I joined in with them during the improvisation and asked each one of them in turn to repeatedly do their movements while others were watching. I wanted to value each one's unique response to the action and raise awareness of differences and similarities. To finish that up I suggested a ritualistic closure of the improvisation. After that the first participant sat immediately in the circle for the bridge-out, almost relieved that the improvisation had finished while participant B showed great resistance of returning back to the here and now mentally and physically –she remained on the floor lying on her belly. I had to wear my dramatherapist hat and employ techniques from Sesame to support both participants in their search. Therefore, during the reflection time at the end of the session, participant A admitted her struggle since she is a vegetarian but still willing to search these qualities within her. I then invited participants to say a word that represents for them being a maenad and to choose an ordinary private action that reflects that sense. My intention was to allow participant A to find these qualities for herself from within rather than waiting from an outsider to direct the acting, and support participant B to retain the sensation that she didn't want to abandon by merely changing the form of its expression. Participant A started dancing with no music and there, during this silent dance, for the first time during the course of the workshops I witnessed her less sceptical and inhibited and more willing to "let go" of control, expressing openness and flow.*



The documentation of this specific workshop (Chapter 3, Step 3 in DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia*) demonstrates the practical applications of my interventions in order to facilitate the experience for each one of the participants according to their psychological tendencies. Participant B (the lady with pink trousers) expressed directly and immediately her experience during the “bridge-out” recorded in the video track, while participant A mentioned this moment in the feedback/questionnaires that I distributed, as one that worked the best for her in finding depth and embodied meaning:

***Participant A: I did manage to make connection between the ancient material and my personal creative process at several points during the workshops. For example when we were working on the Bacchae I had an image of being in a rock concert that I could really go “wild” and have physical freedom.***

Participant A was a very reserved individual finding it difficult to totally express her deep inner feelings freely through movement. Even though she was physically flexible, I could sense inhibitions in expressing non-judgementally through movement her interior world. In psychological terms her psyche was not in “place”, meaning that there was no unity in the connection between the psychological state and the physical one. According to Jung’s psychology (1960), it is first through the surface mind that we contact the world. This part of the mind, called Ego in Jungian psychology, is the realm of the human consciousness where all rational, literal aspects of the daily operative system take place. Through this mind state we communicate with words, we understand, we analyse, we have control and power over it. On a deeper level the “Deep mind” or unconscious is the place for all the intuitive aspects, the emotions, the non-verbal communication, the land of our physical body as well. It is the place of images, dreams, senses, symbols and myths, of suppressed feelings like fears, hurts, and painful memories that we do not have power and control of, but it is also the location of our greatest inner resources. If psychopathology and analysis examine suppressed feelings and traumas in order to release symptoms, then it is art that awakens the deep mind as the source of every creative activity that involves imagination; it is there that our spontaneous inner child lies, the child that is the guide for the actors’ inner exploration that I propose in this practice. It is exactly with the playfulness and freedom of a child that the Sesame approach invites the trainee actor to encounter through movement and drama the creative potential of her unconscious. The exploration does not happen in rational or analytic terms but rather in the irrational manner of the emotional body that seeks meaning in the phenomena in the same way that the infant perceives meaning in the world.

It is widely acknowledged that the physical body and the psychology of the human being influence each other in constant interplay. Moreover, actors should consider their body as an instrument for expressing creative ideas and inner impulses on stage in a harmonious communicative way. If an actor can feel deeply and comprehend her inner riches but fail to express them or convey them to the spectators, there is no communication or motion of the psyche with the audience as in *psychagogia*. The aim of the actor is to discover the source of creativity and desired energy from which true impulses can arise and consequently respond physically and psychologically to these impulses. The physical exercises that we performed during the workshops are helpful to overcome the body's resistance that the ego part of the mind controls, but furthermore, they are used to develop the body's sensitivity to the inner impulses and the emotional body's expressivity and interpretation of these inner impulses. Inspired by Oikonomou's Bioenergetics and the exercises of impulses from the Grotowski inspired training school, I describe the movement of the psyche starting from inside the actor's being, then moving outwards to express feelings, and then forwards to communicate these with fellow actors and the audience. In order to achieve this motion, the physical exercises, even if they started individually, were developed in pairs so the action/reaction of the actor is always in relation not only to her inner impulse but also to the other.

Throughout the course of the workshops, when the group established a good understanding of the qualities that the physical exercises were aiming to awake, I introduced the use of text as additional stimuli for action and reaction. Text was incorporated in this step of the praxis as my response to the group's tendency to speak a lot during the improvisations. In contrast to the non-verbal exercises of the first part of the session, when the improvisations started the group, after a short amount of time, used words and everyday conversation. I was not against the use of conversation during the improvisations but I noticed that they stopped moving when speaking. Therefore, I wanted to explore ways of speaking words or a text as an organic reaction to what is happening to the actors inside and between them, and not only from an intellectual capacity. Each participant chose and learnt three to four lines from an ancient Greek play. Speech was gradually introduced during the physical actions, trying not to lose focus on the core of the body so that it is spoken in an organic physical way, rather than an intellectual one. I was looking for ways in which the text would be said as a reaction to what is happening inside and outside of the actor, in that sense the speech was also seen as a movement or response to an impulse.

At this point, I wished to explore how the connection and awareness of their inner state and physicality can be reflected in verbally expressive mediums. I was wondering if the movement that they are physically performing outside is creating any psychic movement and

how this quality can be transported through speaking the text. I was looking for the 'transparency' that Brook requires in his actors as a 'capacity to articulate the trajectories of inner impulses' (Hodge, 2000: 176). The exercises that served this purpose are presented in the track titled "Improvisation on Medea using text" (Chapter 3, Step 3 of the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia*). More specifically, the video track presents a moment of improvisation from participant S using text from *Medea* by Euripides.

The outcomes of these exercises were noticeable through feelings and cannot be easily captured on screen. The participants' personal experiences are presented through their answers in the feedback/questionnaire. Additionally below I quote from my personal journal describing the exercises when these ideas were explored.

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### *Personal account*

*During the last workshop in this series, in a playful and relaxed atmosphere, participants and myself were practising an exercise based on impulses from the Polish theatre training tradition. The exercise happens in pairs and because of the odd numbers, I was taking part in the exercise being at the same time the group's leader and a team player. We had been practising the exploration of physical responsiveness to the impulses long enough to be able to develop the practice into a verbal reaction as well as using random words intuitively. Gradually I suggested we start using the text they have learnt, saying it in dynamic ways according to the impulses they were receiving from their partner.*

*The actors were instinctively searching for the boundaries between themselves, the emotions of their character and the others. In response to their partner's actions/emotions and to the whole group, I was amazed to hear and feel the text performed in a creative and meaningful way from all of the participants. The concentration on their intuition as the motivation to move or to speak enabled them to react without stereotypical, preconceived ideas about the text and the character. Their words were becoming meaningful for them through their body and so this meaning was embedded within their movement and voice.*

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Finally for this step of the practice, I conclude with the comments of the participants on the experience stressing different aspects where they felt that something had been achieved. Their comments are quoted directly from the answers they gave to the feedback questionnaire I distributed at the end of all of the workshops. I have left their punctuation and phrasing unaltered.

*Participant C: In the fifth session I was with Tania [facilitator] exploring the movement and the lines. I would never imagine to say the lines (My last day,...no one sing for me at my wedding...)like that (focused on the feet). After that, I was with the other two participants. The emotion from the play (Antigone) gave me an interface to work with others. When I fell out of the role, the emotion and psychological state helped me go back to the role. I felt I could interpret the play by my own way.*

*Participant A: The psychological element appeared mainly in the last session (that I have participated into) when I used text from Electra by Sophocles combined with gesture. It was a great experience for me because I could really associate the words with the physical condition of the character. I made some useful discoveries and the process kept me away from stereotypes we usually see in Greek drama performances. [Note that this participant was Greek with both training and professional experience of performance of ancient Greek dramas]*

*Participant S: I have found that I am very free in the work that we have done and able to respond and express whatever impulses or emotions come very easily. I felt very open and available, and able to respond during the exercise with the text. I think for me working this way helped me to feel very quickly as if the words are my words because it was related to my own impulses that came out of the exercise that we were doing with the text. I also found that I was able to [explore] many more possibilities with the text working that way –things that I wouldn't have “thought” about in advance but which were just there in the exercise. I felt that there was no barrier between my “idea” of the text and my expression of the text, which has sometimes been something that I feel, constrains me when working in a more “conventional” way.*

The learning outcomes from Step 3 and the feedback of the participants drove me forwards to the fourth step where I intended to develop further and deeper the idea of Sesame's application in a weekly base for a closed intensive group of performers. I felt that I needed to deepen my understanding of the quality and nature of the relationships I established with each participant and the group. What feels to be of high importance for the pedagogical approach that I develop is how the process is being facilitated, and so experienced, for both the individual and the whole group. Bryon (2009) points out that in a process that prioritises embodied knowledge rather than the cognitive theoretical one:

[T]he *way of practice* is not about learning the codes. Rather it includes a quality of performance that is brought forth by the *process* of meaning making. It is this *way* that is passed down from teacher to student and takes the time and requires the exactitude: not the learning codes. (Bryon, 2009: 107)

## Step 4

### **Finding the numinous: the use of Greek myth enactment as a vehicle to connect the personal with the archetypal**

In this fourth and final step of my practice as research, I created an intensive group of actors who would commit to attend every workshop in the process and so develop and explore with them their relationship with myself as a dramatherapist and psychagogue. This step included five workshops of 2 and half hours each designed and facilitated by me<sup>48</sup>. The workshops took place at Central School of Speech and Drama (February - March 2011) and the participants of the workshops were four postgraduate students from the MA course Advance Theatre Practice that focuses on devised theatre. Because of the grounded and mature relationship that was established between us and a desire to highlight their ownership of the experience, in agreement with the participants, I refer to them by their first names<sup>49</sup>. The

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<sup>48</sup> The workshop plans of all workshops from Step 4 are all included in the Appendix pages 160-169

<sup>49</sup> The participants of this course of workshops were Lisa Turner, Jacqueline Coombs, Yukiko Kato and Alexander Winfield

documentation of this step includes seven tracks that form Step 4, Chapter 3 of the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia*.

The aim of this practice was the facilitation of experiences for the actors that would engage their creative unconscious, deepen their self-awareness and encourage personal emotional relations with dominant archetypal manifestations within the ancient Greek myths. The focus of this research step became the relationship that is needed to be created and established between facilitator/ dramatherapist and actors for a pedagogy of the psyche. I also focused on how the storytelling and enactment of the myths can initiate an encounter with the actor's creative potential and offer a psychologically informative exploration for this more concentrated group. The methodological approach that grounded both the relationship with the participants and the facilitation of this process is based on the pedagogical concept of *psychagogia*. Within this concept, I aimed to guide the participants into an internal exploration of the experience in order to discover personal meanings and truths in relation to the archetypal figures and situations within the myths. Within psychophysical actor training the focus was placed on exploring the ways in which the actors embody and represent the archetypal characters embedded within personal material that arises from their creative unconscious. I identified the experiences of the participants throughout the improvisations with Jung's concept of the numinous. These experiences alter the individual's perception, are often surrounded by an atmosphere of sensitivity and surprise the participants with revelations rising from the deepest parts of the self. The embodiment of inner images is charged with emotions and personal symbolic meaning that may resonate and communicate similar qualities and feelings to the spectator.

Drawing from heuristics, I employed self-reflexivity during the "bridge-out" of the session in order to find what the experience meant for the participants. To achieve this goal, I first introduced and offered time to reflect on the embodied experience. This method took the form of creative and reflexive drawing for five minutes at the end of each improvisation. Jung gives high importance to the process of individuation during which the individual encounters conscious and unconscious aspects of their body and mind in order to come closer to an understanding of the self as the core of who they are. Jung does not suggest that this process can reach a final realisation but it is rather open ended until the individual's last breath. It resembles the dance of the butterfly around the fire where the butterfly is attracted to the flames and wants to come closer and closer but it knows that if it touches the flames it will be its end. Jung's most poignant demonstration of the process of individuation is *The Red Book*, his personal journal where alongside his scientific study on the nature of the psyche he explored creatively the contexts of his own unconscious mind, fantasies and

dreams. The journal has only recently been published as *The Red Book* (2009) marking new insights in the way that Jung incorporated images, symbols and mythological material to his psychological theories and encounters with the unconscious. The practical paradigm of Jung's *The Red Book* has been employed in this step as a means to encounter and engage with images and mythological figures during the "bridge-out" and so bringing consciousness to the experiences. The participants' drawings are presented as a slide show in the track titled "Drawing Reflections" (Chapter 3, Step 4 of the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia*).

The workshops have been documented attempting to capture the embodied experiences of the participants as well as the relationship that I, as the facilitator, have established with them in order to guide the process. The video tracks of these documentations can be seen before or in parallel with the reading of the following section where I discuss and analyse both my personal reflections on the process and the reactions and reflections of the participants in relation to specific events. In recounting these events, I examine feelings, changes or blocks in physical and psychological behaviour and moments when some sort of liberation or self-revelation had occurred. In addition, during this final step of the research I became more aware of how and when I chose to intervene as facilitator based on my knowledge, experience and informed instinct as a trained dramatherapist. The significance of my role within a pedagogy that relates to *psychagogia* focuses on how I guide and support the participants into the psychological process.

The psychic phenomena experienced throughout the improvisations of the myths 'cannot be grasped in their totality by the intellect, for it consists not only of meaning but also of value, and this depends on the intensity of the accompanying feeling-tones' (Jung, CW9, 1959: 28). For the documentation and editing of the video tracks included in Step 4 -Chapter 3 of the DVD *Practical experiments towards a theatre of psychagogia*, I employed self-reflexive editing aiming to present the facts that took place in a way that the phenomena, the interventions and the participants' reactions can be observed as an integrated process. Additionally, the experience of the participants has been evaluated and discussed in documented interviews that took place individually after the completion of the course (track "Participant's feedback" in Chapter 3, Step 4).

I invite the reader when watching the video tracks to notice the development of the participants' engagement both psychologically and physically. Undoubtedly, the documentation diminishes the intensity of moments, the felt phenomena that exceed conscious spheres and the moments of silence when communication is achieved through

the wholeness of psyche. The notable moments that encompassed a spiritual interaction were more easily felt and experienced psychophysically rather than captured on the film or described intellectually. The witnessing of one of the workshops aimed to communicate the feeling of these qualities and the significance that these had throughout this practice as research.

This step of the practice as research was specifically designed to master the facilitation of this psychological or spiritual process for the actor within psychophysical actor training. Throughout the course of the workshops, the “bridge-in” sections introduced physical exercises, musical and rhythmical communications and explorations, aiming to shift the consciousness from an intellectual function to a more instinctual function of the actor. Jung names this transition as a reduction of the level of self-consciousness using the French phrase *abaissement du niveau mental*. According to Jung the reversal of the conscious state occurs vividly from the emerged unconscious images, feelings, thoughts and ‘every *abaissement du niveau mental* brings about a relative reversal of subjective values’ (Jung, 1959: 28). It is exactly this relative reversal or re-examination of the values that I relate to the concept of *psychagogia*, encouraging and facilitating the actor’s process of individuation that can access deeper levels of ego consciousness. In this practice and within psychophysical actor training this was initiated through exercises and actions that aimed to awaken the instinctual, non-verbal functions of the actor in relation to their psychophysical state and that of their co-players.

Moving forward after that experience with the knowledge gained from the previous steps during this course of workshops, I designed each one developing exercises from one week to the next, taking the psychological exploration each time a little bit further and introducing each time a different myth for improvisation. The intensity of the small group, the commitment of the participants to the process and their artistic background also informed and influenced my approach. In this specific group for example, I took into consideration that I had a puppeteer, a singer/musician, a ballet dancer and a drummer/stage manager whose individual practices include expressing their artistry through non-verbal means. During this experimentation, I realised clearly the importance of the interpersonal and inter-psyche relationship that I was called to establish with each individual and the group as a whole. Bolognini defines inter-psyche as ‘the extended psychic dimension, regarding the joint functioning and reciprocal influences of two minds.’ (Bolognini, 2004:337) To establish this relationship, I had to acknowledge not only my personal behaviour, psychology and background but also that of the participants. It is through this relationship that I can fulfil in practice the application of *psychagogia* as a method of guiding the other towards a deeper



psychological exploration. I do not wish to deal with this relationship in psychotherapeutic terms but rather to examine the ways in which this relationship can support and facilitate the actor's creative psychophysical maturation.

In dealing with the living processes of the psyche, I gave preference to a dramatic, mythological and even abstract way of approaching and expressing archetypal psychological situations. That way of working was introduced gradually, and transparently on my part, based on the reasons and intentions of each exercise. This transparent and honest communication supported and grounded the interpersonal relationships of trust between us.

Starting with an exercise exploring embodiment of the gods from the Greek pantheon that could personally relate to or be cast on by others, I wished to introduce personal connections with the archetypal material that could exceed stereotypical representations. The way we look at and perceive ourselves may differ from that of the others and this is a very important psychological knowledge for actors who wish to transform themselves beyond their everyday persona. In the track "Embodying the Greek gods" (Chapter 3, Step 4, DVD) the reader can see the exercises while listening to the participant's reflections.

During the second workshop, because of the participants' musical background I brought in musical instruments that assisted in practical terms the *abaissement du niveau mental* in relating and communicating psychophysically between us. This led to the myth of Dionysus presented through the themes of initiation, dismemberment and recognition. In the track titled "Improvisation on the myth of Dionysus" (Chapter 3, Step 4, DVD), the reader can observe the interventions that I suggested to relate and develop the participants' actions. When moving from the ritualistic ecstasy and dismemberment of Dionysus, the participant Jacqueline resisted moving forward and expressing the dramatic recognition of the slaughtered Pentheus by his mother Agave. She immediately feared the weight and intensity of this psychological moment and stepped back. When she realised with my assistance and guidance that it was her intellectual assumptions for an artistic result that blocked her exploration, she continued showing trust in the psychophysical way I guided her. The comments from the participant during the "bridge-out" are recorded in the video validating the cognisance she gained after this experience. I identify my role in that incident as that of the psychagogue, a mediator between her conscious and unconscious phenomena of the psyche in relation to the given myth.

My identification and personification with *psychagogia* expresses not only conventionally a pedagogical relationship with the participants but equally – or more importantly - an inter-psychic connection and guidance. This can be manifested through words but more often in

that case through a non-verbal landscape. In practice, the roles I employ as a dramatherapist have the interchangeable quality of Mercury that I discussed in Chapter 2. The track “Improvisation on the myth of Antigone” (Chapter 3, Step 4, DVD) presents a good example of this relationship, the non-verbal guidance and the embodiment of the mercurial dance of the dramatherapist. By observing an avoidance to further develop some psychological situations amongst the participants that dealt with struggles against authority or confrontation, I took on the behaviour that was avoided and became the tyrannical Creon. According to Johnson (1992), this role of the dramatherapist is named as ‘the shaman-actor’ dramatherapist. This conduct allowed the participant Alexander to deepen his performance of embodying Antigone. Psychologically his experience of Antigone’s persistence in the sacrifice would remain meaningless without a Creon to fight against. While watching the improvisation the reader can listen to Alexander’s reflections on the significance that this improvisation had for his self-awareness as a creative person.

The next workshop dealt with the myth of Prometheus who steals fire, the “flower” of all knowledge, from the gods to give it to mortals. Despite the symbolic and archetypal significance of this character and his myth and the intensity and organic flow of the previous workshop, the participants did not achieve an *abaissement du niveau mental* with the concentration and psychological strength that I had observed in previous improvisations. The track “Improvisation on the myth of Prometheus” in Step 4 of the DVD documents significant moments of this workshop while I personally reflect on the difficulties I identified during that session. However, this workshop underlies once more for this practice as research the importance of the relationship that the dramatherapist establishes with the group in facilitating their inner process according to what is expressed and manifested by them, rather than the preconceived notions of the dramatherapist. *Psychagogia* encourages guidance of the psyche towards inner explorations that are willing to go without force or manipulation.

The self of the actor integrates different aspects and elements of the everyday conscious and unconscious life and often it is impossible to ignore these while performing. A pedagogical training process based on the concept of *psychagogia* and applied through the Sesame approach supports the actor’s process of individuation in order to gain cognisance and control of her potential. Similarly to psychotherapeutic practices and the application of *psychagogia* from Socrates, the importance of this pedagogical approach lies in the interpersonal and inter-psychic relationship that the facilitator manages to establish with the participants and the group as a whole. This connection with the inner process of everyone involved, the attitude of introspection and examination of the lived experiences and the

communication of these qualities through the art of acting, are what I contribute to the concept of psyche within psychophysical actor training inclining a spirituality of theatre that is embedded in *psychagogia*.

To conclude this chapter dedicated to my practice, I invite the reader to watch the last workshop of this practice as research that was based on the story of *The Frogs* by Aristophanes, track "Improvisation on the Frogs" (Chapter 3, Step 4, DVD). The participants had developed such an organic flow and communication during the improvisation that no major interventions occurred from my part. My continuous involvement was needed only to make sure that there were connections between their different actions, to keep the energy levels high and to support through my actions a psychological allowance of ridiculousness, playfulness and distortion of the ego.

The metaphor of the ladder that has been used to guide us through the experimental applications of this practice as research does not suggest the arrival to a final step but rather an ongoing ascent in establishing a pedagogical model towards a theatre that embraces *psychagogia*. Each step of this journey yielded insights and learning. The internal qualities of informed instinct and attunement that were pointed out in Step 1 as significant for guiding the actor's inner process, the ability to move between the opposite parts of the psyche in widening this exploration as was highlighted in Step 2, the awakening of the emotional body in Step 3 as the medium to take the actor through this journey and finally the way that this process is facilitated and guided through interpersonal and inter-psyche relationships contribute to this research inquiry.

## Conclusion

Time present and time past  
Are both perhaps present in time future,  
And time future contained in time past.  
(T.S. Elliot, 1944)

The research inquiry that initiated this study revolves around the concepts of *psychagogia* and psyche in psychophysical actor training. More specifically, the aim was to explore the application of a modified Sesame approach of Drama and Movement Therapy in psychophysical actor training for facilitating the actor's inner process. Such a research inquiry is inevitably a matter of practical exploration informed by a conceptual framework and critical reflection (see Robin Nelson's model for "Practice as Research" in Allegue et al, 2009). During the three years of this research, my explorations accordingly included three series of workshops and a collaborative project in which I explored a combination of the Sesame approach and exercises from the psychophysical Greek and Polish actor training schools. In this practice, I used the ancient Greek myths as stimulus for encountering the creative unconscious of the participants. By this means, I realised how the embodiment and improvisations based on the myths could create a pathway to connect the personal with the archetypal. This conclusion aims to summarise the argument and the discoveries of this practice as research making a case for a contribution to new knowledge and practice. By no means does it serve as a final answer to this research inquiry but rather as the completion of this particular research journey.

To recapitulate this thesis, I argue for a treatment of psyche within psychophysical actor pedagogies that recognises its totality as an inseparable unit of all conscious and unconscious aspects of human psyche. In Chapter 1, by introducing the concept of *psychagogia* and its therapeutic and pedagogical implications, I argue for embracing psyche and spirituality in the sense of inner exploration for the actor within psychophysical actor training. Building on this platform, and based on the Jungian perspective on psyche, I highlight the problematic of neglecting the irrational, mysterious and intuitive functions within existing theatre pedagogies. The critical review of the theatre practices that have incorporated knowledge and techniques from psychology argues towards an appropriate pedagogical approach within psychophysical actor training that does not treat the component "psycho" only in terms of psychological realism or transcendence but rather in terms of a spiritual inner process of self-understanding for the actor.

The undertaking of a process of this kind is not uncommon since actors in drama schools are undertaking a process of self-exploration during their first years of actor training. They are often encouraged to leave behind personal habits, manners, psychological complexes, and to eliminate their ego. However this inner process is not often supported or facilitated in a secure and professionally held manner from someone who has an understanding of the complexities, irrationality and vulnerability of the human psyche. My practice as research proposes a pedagogical model that enables the actor to reach a level of acceptance and self-awareness so that they can allow their ego to “let go” of control, transform and transcend itself. The proposed facilitation of this redefined process of inner exploration is based on the methodology and structure of the Sesame approach, run by a professional dramatherapist who knows not only how to execute the exercises but to support and guide the actors’ psyche into its depths. In this way, the proposed application does not conflict with the existing psychophysical actor training schools but is rather suggested that it should be incorporated in the training for enriching the approaches to the psyche. Furthermore, this treatment of the psyche encompasses the most relevant and recent theories and practices of the unconscious.

In Chapter 2, I begin with an argument for the development of the actor’s ethos and her responsibility in becoming the psychagogue within the theatre of *psychagogia*. The actor’s training and profession is perceived with an attitude of devotion and spirituality that depicts acting not only as a metier but as a vocation. Based on this proposition, the actor is the psychagogue, the one who first has led their own psyche to a critical examination of its nature so this embodied knowledge might be transmuted to the characters she portrays, guiding the spectators towards similar depths. In this chapter, I continue with a description of my experiential understanding of psychophysical actor training through my training in the Greek and Polish schools.

Finally, I argue for the appropriateness of the Sesame methodology as one that embraces the unconscious psyche, its creativity and irrationality through the oblique application of play, myths, and movement towards a process of individuation. In my practice, the encounter with, and access to, the unconscious is proposed to happen through the body combining the two psychophysical approaches of the Greek and Polish schools and the Sesame approach. This process is proposed for the psychological explorations of archetypal material within ancient Greek myths, thus increasing actors’ mythological intelligence as well as their embodied experience and knowledge of the human psyche. The body is perceived and approached as the emotional, irrational and Dionysian body following Lopez-Pedrada’s theoretical framework.

These theoretical and experiential juxtapositions are analysed and explored in Chapter 3 where I discuss the practical applications when moving towards a pedagogical model of *psychagogia*. During my praxis, I realised how I, as the facilitator, need first to become the psychagogue who indirectly and non-judgementally suggests to the actor an attitude of self-reflexivity and exploration of the lived experience. My approach prioritises the body and the intuitive function in becoming responsive in a more profound and truthful way for both the facilitator and the actor. The body, and thus the emotional body, conveys the most appropriate starting point to find connection, expression and attunement with the actor's interiority, the others in the group and the archetypal dimensions of the ancient Greek dramas.

The Greek myths have been a rich material for an encounter with archetypal manifestations and the creative unconscious. The Greek myths were chosen because of my knowledge and cultural connection with them, as well as their direct link with the Greek ancient dramas. Nevertheless, the suggested application of the Sesame method does not limit itself only to the use of Greek myths but it emphasizes how myths and stories from all cultures and time periods carry important knowledge about the human psyche. The playful and embodied enactments of the myths allow the actors to transform themselves, exceeding their personal limitations and connecting with the archetypal. The enactment of myths also provides an awareness of the intercultural similarities and differences that people experience. The outcomes of my practical explorations suggest the relationship that the actors established with their psyche prepares the ground for a communication with the spectators that goes beyond consciousness, creating a psychic movement, as in theatre of *psychagogia*.

The emphasis of this pedagogical model concerns the facilitative approach of the educator /facilitator. Throughout this practice as research the importance of creating a structured, supportive, well-held and relaxed pedagogical environment was highlighted, in order for the actors' self-exploration to take place. The essence of this process lies in the relationship that is being established and acted out between the facilitator and the participants. This relationship is interpersonal and inter-psychic, happening verbally or non-verbally with the whole group and each individual separately, while the facilitator takes on interchangeably different roles according to the needs of the moment. Specifically within actor training, the facilitation of the process aims towards a deeper inner self-exploration rather than therapeutic attendance of the participants' psychopathological needs. The possibility of applying the Sesame approach towards that goal opens new questions and routes for further research and development.

This praxis provides the foundations for a new pedagogical approach for the treatment of psyche in psychophysical actor training. The main contribution to knowledge is made in two ways. Firstly by introducing the concept of *psychagogia* that holds together theatre's purpose as a medium of communication between psyches. This thesis establishes psyche within psychophysical actor training based on the Jungian conception. It is important to note the open-endedness of this process and the fact that it does not suggest a single performance form or style but rather aims to engage actors pedagogically and artistically in a theatre with the spiritual significance of *psychagogia* rather than mere entertainment. Its essence lies in the intangible psychic movement that takes place within the actors and the spectators who share a communal experience. Within this context, a theatre aiming towards *psychagogia* is not concerned about the theatrical external means but rather about this phenomenon of movement within, the emotion that is being communicated between on-stage and off-stage. Interestingly, this aspect of psychic connection beyond consciousness was highlighted as well during *Magisterium* - my performative installation as part of the Collisions Festival 2010- that creatively presented the theoretical framework of this thesis. There the guests in this performative space were asked to engage with all their senses and respond to my questions and search for a "recipe for good theatre making". Through the very inventive, poignant and humorous recipes that were created, the audience emphasised ingredients concerning connection, communication and surprisingly, soul<sup>50</sup>.

Secondly, this study contributes to theatre pedagogies and practice by developing an approach that supports and guides the actor's inner exploration of the creative self. The facilitated encounter with the unconscious raises the actor's self-understanding. Based on the basic idea that our living being is related to some motion inside or outside the boundary of our physical body that constitutes the quality of our psyche, the raising of consciousness is a revelation of existence, of our creative potential closer to the core Self, as in Jungian psychology. Indisputably creativity, and acting in particular, require more than consciousness; they require abundant facts and skills, work and abilities. The proposed pedagogy in this thesis does not intend replacing existing skill-based actor training but rather to integrate these different trainings with a complementary process of dramatherapy for raising the actor's awareness of psyche and so expand their sense of self and creative potential. The task is not the therapy of actors; this may happen automatically, unconsciously, it is the procedure of the cathartic redemption that Aristotle mentions in *Poetics*. Actors perform to fulfil a need for expression and communication of feelings with

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<sup>50</sup> As mentioned previously, photos of the space, the guests' comments and their recipes can be seen in the DVD *Appendix, Magisterium*

others and through the theatrical practice they explore their inner self . However, I recognise the implications of this pedagogical approach towards a more counselling-based practice that could encourage verbal and direct personal reflections from the trainee actors.

Ultimately, and from an idealistic perception, this thesis proposes that theatre and actors of *psychagogia* may influence and change society. Consciousness of the psyche's complexities allows for making better judgements, 'allow us to create a better life for self and others' and in the case of theatre, the actors have the means to guide the spectators in a variety of creative ways and, 'in so doing, improve human existence rather than worsen it.' (Damasio, 2000: 316) In this way, actors individually and theatre collectively might move towards *psychagogia*. This is not an easy and immediate process, it requires time and commitment. Results may be small and few may recognise differences, but psyche will fulfil its homeostatic, self-regulating role over existence. Knowing will help being and perhaps improve not only the art of acting and theatre but also civilisation.



## Glossary

terms	Descriptions
Alchemy	A process of transmuting ordinary metals into gold. Jung used the knowledge of alchemy metaphorically in relation to the process of individuation.
<i>Animus /anima</i>	Jung used these terms to speak about the masculine ( <i>animus</i> ) and feminine ( <i>anima</i> ) aspects of psyche.
Archetype	In Jungian psychology, an inherited, unconscious and collective form that is biologically present in individual psyches. 'An archetype means a <i>typos</i> (imprint), a definite grouping of archaic character containing, in form as well as in meaning, mythological motifs.' (Jung 1986:41)
Attunement	Used in Sesame practice to describe the process of 'tuning in' to one's inner world and to the psyche of others in a group.
Bioenergetics	Oikonomou used this term to describe his approach to psychophysical actor training.
Bridge-in Bridge-out	Sections of the Sesame structure that indicate activities to support the process of delving into or out of the unconscious.
Consciousness	The mental function of the brain that allows us to be aware of everything about our existence and the world around us. 'Consciousness is like a surface or a skin upon a vast unconscious area of unknown extent.' (Jung 1986:7)
Ego	In Jungian psychology, ego is in the centre of the field of consciousness. It is the conscious, rational component of the psyche that experiences and reacts to the outside world. Everything that is conscious relates to the ego. 'The ego is a complex datum which is constituted first of all by a general awareness of your body and your existence and secondly by your memory data.' (Jung, 1986:10)
Embodied knowledge /embodied meaning	The gained knowledge and meaning of an

	experience that is rather felt in the physical body rather than understood intellectually.
Emotional body	A term used by Lopez-Pedrada to describe the physico- etheric (psycho-physical) locus of the emotional being, of feelings and emotions, likes and dislikes, sensual enjoyment and aesthetic appreciation. It manifests itself in body images, voluntary and involuntary signals like tics, nodes, blushing, illness, and fantasies.
<i>Ethopios</i>	Greek for the actor, literally meaning the maker /doer of ethos.
Ethos	An individual's character and quality of being in the world, as well as their moral values.
Grounding	The final section of the Sesame structure using relaxation activities to bring participants physically and mentally to the present.
Individuation	According to Jung 'the process by which a person becomes a psychological 'individual', that is, a separate, indivisible unity or whole.' (Jung, 1995:415)
Mercurial dance	A term created to describe the interchangeable roles of a dramatherapist during a session.
Mythopoetic	The function of our mind that interprets or understands experiences through stories, images and metaphors.
<i>Mythos</i>	Greek for myth.
Numinous	Indescribable, mysterious or spiritual experiences beyond everyday consciousness, pertaining to the divine.
<i>Psychagogia</i>	Greek, translated into English as entertainment or amusement, but literally meaning leading the psyche.
Psychagogue	The mediator of <i>psychagogia</i> . The OED defines this as 1. Someone who directs or leads the mind. 2. A person who calls up departed spirits; a necromancer. 3. A believer in or practitioner of <i>psychagogia</i> .
Psyche	Greek for soul, literally meaning breath, spirit and butterfly; it is the life force in everything that is alive. In analytical psychology of Jung, psyche is the

	<p>wholeness of conscious and unconscious forces in human nature. It is not a single or defined entity but it has multiple layers, it consists of images and it tends to split. For Jung psyche is both the object and subject of psychology.</p>
Self	<p>According to Jung, self is the totality of the personality embracing both the conscious and unconscious psyche. 'The self designates the whole range of psychic phenomena in man. It expresses the unity of the personality as a whole.' (Jung, 1995: 460)</p>
Shadow	<p>In Jungian psychology, the shadow or shadow aspect is part of the unconscious mind consisting of repressed psychological elements that are incompatible with the chosen conscious attitude. 'The shadow behaves compensatorily to consciousness; hence its effects can be positive as well as negative.' (Jung, 1995: 418)</p>
Shamanism / Shamanic journey	<p>An anthropological term referencing belief systems and practices concerning healing, spirituality and connection with nature. Shamanism encompasses the belief that shamans are the mediators or messengers between the human and the spirit worlds. The shamanic journey is a practice during which the shaman journeys and guides others into different states of consciousness. It is undertaken for specific reasons of healing or gaining knowledge.</p>
Unconscious	<p>According to Jung, the unconscious part of the psyche consists of everything that is not directly accessible to consciousness, that is unknown, irrational and thus at the opposite of consciousness. Jung divided the unconscious into personal and collective unconscious. The former is the unconscious of each individual while the latter consists of all archetypal, mythological, spiritual symbols and experiences of human nature.</p>

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1.**

***Accidental Art* interview, published online on London Theatre Blog (2009)**

- London Theatre Blog - <http://www.londontheatreblog.co.uk> -

### ***Accidental Art* – an experiment in theatre making**

Posted By Diana Damian On July 13, 2009 @ 5:28 am In Cross Disciplinary, Interviews, Roundhouse Theatre | 2 Comments

*Accidental Art* is an experiment in theatre-making whose outcome was performed at this year's Accidental Festival <sup>[1]</sup> at the Roundhouse Theatre <sup>[2]</sup> in May 2009. The experiment saw a director, a psychologist and a group of actors devise a short performance based on the myth of Oedipus <sup>[3]</sup> over a twelve-hour period. *Accidental Art* uses methodologies from dramatherapy to access the imagination and the unconscious, fuelling the devising of character and content. It is an experiment that aims to uncover different methods for making theatre inspired, in this case, by psychology.

The experiment is a result of the collaboration between psychologist and theatre practitioner Tania Batzoglou, director Anouke Brook, and project leader Nessah Muthy. I invited Tania, Anouke, Nessah and one of the performers, Lea McKenna-Garcia, to discuss the project in more detail.

**Diana Damian:** Nessah, where did the idea of *Accidental Art* come from?

**Nessah Muthy:** I attended a workshop given by Ruth Little, the literary manager at the Royal Court, in which she was discussing alternate ways of making theatre. She is currently collaborating with scientists to develop what she has called 'Metabolic Dramaturgy' – the dramaturgy of non-linear living systems, I wanted to do something similar with psychology, to look at alternative methodologies that could translate into structures and exercises for a new process of making theatre.

**Diana Damian:** And how did the collaboration emerge between the three of you?

**Tania Batzoglou:** I have similar interests as my practice based PhD looks exactly at how we can use methods from psychology, particularly from dramatherapy, to allow actors to free up their imagination and access their unconscious, incarnating a character that is not far from who we are. The drama and movement method I have been trained in, Sesame <sup>[4]</sup>, facilitates this process where the unconscious reveals itself. So we decided to implement this method that works through symbol, metaphor and the use of myths to aid the actor in finding honesty and embodiment in the work.

**Anouke Brook:** I am also interested, in my directing work, in alternate ways of making theatre, and in the universality of mythology. We chose a Greek myth and looked at the parameters of the project, what structures to build in and how we could implement Tania's dramatherapy techniques to devise a performance based on *Oedipus*.

**Diana Damian:** Nessah, how did the project develop into the twelve hour experiment at the Roundhouse?

**Nessah Muthy:** The twelve-hour day with Tania and Anouke was influenced by the most successful elements of two previous experiments. The first experiment lasted three hours, and brought together a psychologist, a director and three actors to make a piece of work. Although loose, some interesting ideas came out of it related to how psychology can create a particular relationship between two actors, as well as creating or stimulating empathy

rather than sympathy in the audience. There was a very delicate balance that had to be achieved between creating a safe environment for the actors, whose reactions were unscripted, spontaneous and sometimes surprisingly emotional, and stimulating the imagination. The second experiment was a lot more safe and structured, as we chose to look specifically at the unconscious.



Georgia Christou and Tania Batzoglou in rehearsal for *Accidental Art*

**Diana Damian:** Lea, you were in the first two experiments and one of the first collaborators. As an actor, how did your process of working develop?

**Lea McKenna-Garcia:** What carried through was a personal awareness of how to work this way, being available to your first instinct as a performer. It made it much easier to be fresh with a character because of the sense of play and spontaneity. In terms of dealing with the unconscious, you delve into a lot of aspects of yourself that you are not aware of. You act very instinctually, which helps find moments of honesty with the character.

**Diana Damian:** How did the twelve hours at the Roundhouse unfold?

**Tania Batzoglou:** We followed the structure of the dramatherapy method Sesame, which focuses a lot on the body as key to accessing the unconscious. We adapted it to the needs of the day, working towards a specific artistic outcome. We were not very strict on following the myth of Oedipus, it just happened that we covered most of the story. The actor was the main attention on stage, and we used few books, torches and even drums that played different roles in the process and the final product. Both what you are attracted to and what you are avoiding belong to you, and we tried to open that to the actors, not let them indulge in one character or moment. Thanks to the build up, it was a smooth process when we reached the free improvisation.

**Nessah Muthy:** It was important to filter through the exercise, which is why we brought Anouke in, to serve the audience, not to become self-indulgent but to work with limitation and structure.

**Anouke Brook:** We did not want to invite the audience into a rehearsal, but we wanted to create a finished piece, with a narrative of sorts with drama, pace, variety. We took that on as a challenge in the twelve hours. We played with chronology and created scenes that were not necessarily from the myth. We wanted to give the actors the safe environment and permission to play and explore. As a director you feel a strong responsibility throughout and

register empathy, but you have to keep an eye on the overall, you are analytical rather than sympathetic.

**Lea McKenna-Garcia:** You watched the performers transform themselves, everyone played Oedipus more than once. The audience was seeing that all these people exist amongst these performers, so they can exist in themselves. There was a rule of performance where we accepted that anyone at any point could change. This was a result of the process, where we worked with instructions, playing emotions, characters and situations in various ways. Anouke, Tania and Nessah made sure we never stuck to one character but took the twelve hours to delve into our own selves as well as the myth. This was so valuable.



Daniel Pinto and Georgia Christou in rehearsal for *Accidental Art*

**Diana Damian:** How did you negotiate your presence within that character, how did you stop yourself from looking in on yourself?

**Lea McKenna-Garcia:** In one exercise I ended up playing Oedipus for a very long time, from the discovery of his identity through the blinding. I was blindfolded and the other performers were taunting and pushing me, and this really disorientated me. It got quite scary and uncomfortable, to a point where I wanted to say stop, but was aware that was my reaction. I think you really have to negotiate what kind of personal agony you are willing to get yourself through to find the real experience of a character, and what becomes too much. You don't have to go kill someone to understand how it feels.

**Diana Damian:** How do you feel about the audience observing the whole process, not a final performance?

**Nessah Muthy:** We were considering streaming and filming, but confidentiality was a problem from the beginning. One of the main reasons that stopped us was the lack of power you have in such a situation. This kind of work needs to happen in a safe environment, and any outside presence becomes problematic.

**Anouke Brook:** I would love it if the audience would just watch the process, since I think there is a real niche for that.

**Tania Batzoglou:** It would be great if people could watch the twelve hours, but, indeed, audience would affect the intimacy.



Daniel Pinto, Georgia Christou, Tania Batzoglou and Lea McKenna-Garcia in rehearsal for *Accidental Art*

**Diana Damian:** What have you discovered about the relationship between psychology and actor training?

**Anouke Brook:** I am interested in seeing how methods from these experimental processes can directly influence the training of an actor, giving way to more authentic performances. Theatre is always going to involve parameters and limitation, and I want to see how we can use this method to free up, authenticate something that is still traditional.

**Tania Batzoglou:** I think it could work perfectly. If in a classical training drama school you had the ability to experience this for several hours every week, you create a connection with yourself, your material comes from you unconscious, imagination, your own body.

**Anouke Brook:** I think it should be part of drama training. As someone who works in drama school education, I think there should be a special period a week where actors can access these parts of themselves, give up the useless hours of fencing and allow these explorations to be part of the curriculum.

**Nessah Muthy:** I would like to be involved in the process as a playwright, taking my inspiration from what happens into the rehearsal room, so the script can emerge from these psychological explorations. I want to be able to write from what I see.

**Anouke Brook:** We see this as the first phase of development, and funding would be a blessing, since it would allow us to develop the project, delve further into the experimentation.

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URL to article: <http://www.londontheatreblog.co.uk/accidental-art-an-experiment-in-theatre-making/>

URLs in this post:

[1] Accidental Festival: <http://www.accidentalfestival.com/>



[2] Roundhouse Theatre: <http://www.roundhouse.org.uk/>

[3] The myth of Oedipus: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oedipus>

[4] Sesame: <http://www.sesame-institute.org/>

## Comments

□ *Kate Foy* #1 year ago

[Note: This comment was originally printed on the World Theatre FriendFeed Group and is re-printed here with permission from the author.]

I read the article with a mounting sense of mild-level panic. 'Oh dear, self-indulgent 'theatre' produced via spurious drama therapy exercises at work again!' As a young actor training in the late 60s-early 70s I fell victim to some of this stuff, and I have to say I still feel anxiety at unscripted, unstructured, unsupervised work that draws upon actors' willingness to 'open themselves' to affect-state experimentation in the name of performance creation.

Of course I'm not at all suggesting that the participants in the project that forms the article are unqualified, but as you might gather, the tone of this response is obviously part of the lingering resentment I carry with me from my own experiences of this kind of work.

Other workshops I've attended over the years where this kind of approach was taken often resulted in confusion and panic by the actors ... and for me, a pulling back which was simply non-productive. The performance creation was quite frankly of dubious 'value.' You 'll see, reading between these lines, that I value the craft of acting and performance-creation very highly.

## Reply

□ *Tania Batzoglou* # 1 year ago in reply to *Kate Foy*

Hello both and thank you for your comments about the project Accidental Art. I appreciate the fact that people read and commented on it.

The dramatherapy method that we used - in which I am fully qualified- has nothing to do with Moreno's Psychodrama or Fox's playback theatre or even Strasberg's Method Acting that were popular methods during the 1960s-70s. I have as well bad experiences from various self-indulgent exercises, facilitated from directors that had not idea on how to deal with actor's strong emotional reactions. I suggest the Sesame method because it is oblique: nobody reveals personal issues or digs past emotional traumas. There is no kind of interpretation or analysis and the work is based on the body and on the images created by it. If you wish have a look at Sesame's website: [www.sesame-institute.org](http://www.sesame-institute.org)

The application of the method into actor's training took place for the first time as a first step of my practice as research PhD.

## **Appendix 2.**

**Feedback questionnaires following the completion of the workshops in Step 3**

**Feedback – Questionnaire<sup>51</sup>**  
**Workshops on psychophysical actor training for ancient Greek tragedy and comedy**  
**(Fridays: 4/06-2/07/2010)**

**Facilitator:** Tania Batzoglou  
**Number of sessions attended:** 5  
**Participant:** C

**1. How do you understand the term psychophysical training within your experience of actor training?**

I think it combines psychological and physical elements, like combining Meyerhold (bio--) and Stanislavski, or like combining physical theatre with traditional drama training. I think actor's training is always the combination of both psychological and physical, it is just the different emphasis, or focus, on either aspects.  
[I am not sure how to spell the names, the intranet isn't working so I couldn't double check.]

**2. What is your previous experience with psychophysical approaches and ancient Greek dramas?**

I am not sure how to say my previous experience with psychophysical approaches. I only have a brief experience on realistic acting. But I have more experience on poor theatre's method, movement, contact improvisation.

For ancient Greek dramas, I had read some plays, studied the history of Greek ancient theatres, and seen some performances.

**3. Do you have any reflections on psychological and physical elements during the workshops?**

I felt I was encouraged to use physical elements more to explore the psychological aspect. I felt I did not explore psychological aspect deeply. Maybe it is to do with the approach, as well as the time constraint.

I think the physical element gives another layer of depth to the actor and the performance.

**4. Can you identify elements that are new or different to this context?**

For Greek drama, I think the approach is new. To infuse the depth from bodywork is effective to the performance.

For psychophysical method, as I said above, I felt I was encouraged to go from physical angle. Maybe another way would be to try psychological aspect and see what physical expression comes.

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<sup>51</sup> The content of this questionnaire will be used for research purposes. Your answers are confidential and your names won't be mentioned if you prefer so. Please feel free to answer with honesty as I consider you as co-researchers during this process. Thank you in advance for your valuable time and contribution.

**5. Did the workshops enable you to bridge the gap and make connections between the ancient material and your personal creative process? Please give one or two examples.**

Yes, I think I was doing that for the whole 5 sessions. Like the first session, we used the gestures in the vase drawings to explore three movements. To link the three movements, I repeated with my physical rhythm and breathing. To make the movements familiar and to take in/respond to the other's movement, I need to invest my energy to my body and allow the kinaesthetic awareness carry me through.

In the fourth session, I repeated the killing movement. I was aware of my internal state (ambivalent, hurt, sad...) so my movement was heavy, sudden and direct. The quality reflected my internal process (although it might be more psychological than creative). But if I could repeat the exercise again, it could become my creative process.

In the fifth session, I was with Tania exploring the movement and the lines. I would never imagine to say the lines (My last day, ... no one sing for me at my wedding...) like that (focused on the feet). After that, I was with the other two participants. The emotion from the play (Antigone) gave me an interface to work with others. When I fell out of the role, the emotion and psychological state helped me go back to the role. I felt I could interpret the play by my own way.

**6. Could you reflect on the facilitator's style and approach towards the whole group and you as an individual? (Please reflect on the facilitator's balance between verbal and non-verbal attitude, effectiveness of comments, etc)**

I like your style and approach. I felt it's quite balancing. However, at some points I felt you seemed amazed by what came out from the work. It gave me the impression that you were surprised. [but it may be my projection]

When I asked questions, I had got the answers I was seeking, so I felt quite good.

**7. Please feel free to add any further comments or feedback**

Thank you. I hope I could participate in your research in the future. I did not make any notes for the sessions, now I feel regret for not doing it.

**Many thanks for your time**

**Feedback – Questionnaire**  
**Workshops on psychophysical actor training for ancient Greek tragedy and comedy**  
**(Fridays: 4/06-2/07/2010)**

**Facilitator:** Tania Batzoglou

**Number of sessions attended:** 3

**Participant:** A

**1. How do you understand the term psychophysical training within your experience of actor training?**

Psychophysical approach in my understanding involves the whole of your self in an action. Your body is alive and present in the space and capable of expressing psychological states or create them.

**2. What is your previous experience with psychophysical approaches and ancient Greek dramas?**

I have participated in a professional performance of *Bacchae* as a member of the chorus. We worked with a choreographer in a physical way attempting to express what might be the psychological state of the women in the chorus. The text was rather a product of the physical state and it was delivered through it.

**3. Do you have any reflections on psychological and physical elements during the workshops?**

I have learnt some great releasing exercises. The psychological element appeared mainly in the last session (that I have participated into) when I used text from *Electra* by Sophocles combined with gesture. It was a great experience for me because I could really associate the words with the physical condition of the character. I made some useful discoveries and the process kept me away from stereotypes we usually see in Greek drama performances.

**4. Can you identify elements that are new or different to this context?**

I believe the fact that it prioritizes the body and the immediate response to the story or words through the body instead of text based work. I would also add the element of approaching these plays by finding yourself in them rather than trying to imitate or reproduce the ancient source.

**5. Did the workshops enable you to bridge the gap and make connections between the ancient material and your personal creative process? Please give one or two examples.**

I did manage to make connection at several points during the workshops. For example when we were working on the *Bacchae* I had an image of being in a rock concert that I could really go 'wild' and have physical freedom. Another example was the tiredness and struggle of *Electra* which I experienced during the exercises and that I could relate to it through the body.

**6. Could you reflect on the facilitator's style and approach towards the whole group and you as an individual?** (Please reflect on the facilitator's balance between verbal and non-verbal attitude, effectiveness of comments, etc)

There was a good balance between verbal and non-verbal attitude. She was well prepared and the exercises were appropriate for the desired outcome. Tanya was obviously interested and self-involved in the whole process being both a group leader and team-player when it was needed.

**7. Please feel free to add any further comments or feedback**

Maybe it was a little bit difficult for some people who were not familiar at all with ancient Greek drama to get the most out of the workshops. A more extensive reference or even some scene reading might helped.

**Many thanks for your time**

**Feedback – Questionnaire**  
**Workshops on psychophysical actor training for ancient Greek tragedy and comedy**  
**(Fridays: 4/06-2/07/2010)**

**Facilitator:** Tania Batzoglou

**Number of sessions attended:** 1

**Participant:** D

- 1. How do you understand the term psychophysical training within your experience of actor training?**

As a mixture of both mental and physical training combined.

- 2. What is your previous experience with psychophysical approaches and ancient Greek dramas?**

Zero.

- 3. Do you have any reflections on psychological and physical elements during the workshops?**

Since I just assisted to the first workshop, I cannot quite remember, but I recall doing some very playful exercises that situated all attendants in a very good position for concentration and readiness.

- 4. Can you identify elements that are new or different to this context?**

Personally, I specifically recall the first warm-up exercise in which we have to pass our leg on top of crossed arms.

- 5. Did the workshops enable you to bridge the gap and make connections between the ancient material and your personal creative process? Please give one or two examples.**

The fact of creating physical sculptures with our bodies out of ancient Greek images created a bridge between both past and present.

- 6. Could you reflect on the facilitator's style and approach towards the whole group and you as an individual? (Please reflect on the facilitator's balance between verbal and non-verbal attitude, effectiveness of comments, etc)**

There was a sense of warmth and she was able to create a very good working environment.

- 7. Please feel free to add any further comments or feedback**

I wish I was able to attend more workshops but due to travelling I was only in London for the first one.

**Many thanks for your time**

**Feedback – Questionnaire**  
**Workshops on psychophysical actor training for ancient Greek tragedy and comedy**  
**(Fridays: 4/06-2/07/2010)**

**Facilitator:** Tania Batzoglou

**Number of sessions attended:** 1

**Participant:** E

**1. How do you understand the term psychophysical training within your experience of actor training?**

I would explain this term as an awareness of the effects or changes that physical exercise has on the psychic state of the person.

**2. What is your previous experience with psychophysical approaches and ancient Greek dramas?**

I participated in re-enactments of scenes from ancient Greek myths during my training in Drama-Therapy at Roehampton (University of Surrey) in 1998. This was an exploration of the archetypal roles in myth.

I chose to work on the story of Demeter and Persephone.

**3. Do you have any reflections on psychological and physical elements during the workshops?**

I attended the first workshop and very much enjoyed the exploration of the physical shapes shown on Greek vases, of the Maenads in the Dionysian myth. I worked on a modern production (in 1994) of *The Bacchae* that linked the ancient story with the modern phenomenon of 'Raves' and the use of Ecstasy instead of alcohol. I would have loved to have had these pictures when I worked on the movement aspects of the production.

**4. Can you identify elements that are new or different to this context?**

**5. Did the workshops enable you to bridge the gap and make connections between the ancient material and your personal creative process? Please give one or two examples.**

**6. Could you reflect on the facilitator's style and approach towards the whole group and you as an individual? (Please reflect on the facilitator's balance between verbal and non-verbal attitude, effectiveness of comments, etc)**



The facilitator's style was relaxed and supportive – I was helped by her attentiveness during one of the warm-up exercises that I found difficult (lifting my legs over the held arms of myself and my partner).

It was also helpful that the facilitator joined in and took part in the main piece of improvisation (when we linked 2 physical stances). She was able to both model the action and build the level of trust in the group by doing so.

#### **7. Please feel free to add any further comments or feedback**

The Group Massage at the end was a lovely way to end the session, giving us a physical 'cool-down' and a group experience, a sense of 'togetherness'.

I am sorry that I didn't manage to come to more sessions. I didn't really get enough experience to comment on the psycho-physical aspects of the workshops.

**Many thanks for your time**

**Feedback – Questionnaire**  
**Workshops on psychophysical actor training for ancient Greek tragedy and comedy**  
**(Fridays: 4/06-2/07/2010)**

**Facilitator:** Tania Batzoglou

**Number of sessions attended:** 3

**Participant:** M

**1. How do you understand the term psychophysical training within your experience of actor training?**

Psychophysical training is something that I looked at in my own Masters degree. It was used particularly in breath work when the emphasis was on visualising every breath and what was happening at the time, imagining the breath entering and leaving our bodies.

**2. What is your previous experience with psychophysical approaches and ancient Greek dramas?**

I have never mixed the two together. My work with psychophysical approaches has been something I have done more than look at Greek Drama. Psychophysical is something I looked at a lot in Drama School.

**3. Do you have any reflections on psychological and physical elements during the workshops?**

There were times when holding a 'ball of energy' that I actually felt like I was holding a ball and that or something else physical between my grasp. This is something that I have taken into other performances to help with character posture. The physical elements are something that I like to look at with actors within an exploratory rehearsal period. But applying the mental to the physical side seems to make everything so much easier when in performance.

**4. Can you identify elements that are new or different to this context?**

**5. Did the workshops enable you to bridge the gap and make connections between the ancient material and your personal creative process?**

I think the workshops helped in my own process as an actor in performance. But it didn't have any particular bearing on understanding the material.

**6. Could you reflect on the facilitator's style and approach towards the whole group and you as an individual? (Please reflect on the facilitator's balance between verbal and non-verbal attitude, effectiveness of comments, etc)**

The balance between verbal communication and physical display was good. The use of physical display helped those to be more comfortable with what they were asked to do and the verbal communication before an activity took place and also once it had finished meant that there was complete understanding by those taking part. Comments made were clear and concise which is probably the main reason as to why the workshops were so successful in bringing out good material in the participants.

**7. Please feel free to add any further comments or feedback**

The sessions were extremely enjoyable and will be beneficial to my future practice.

**Many thanks for your time**

**Feedback – Questionnaire**  
**Workshops on psychophysical actor training for ancient Greek tragedy and comedy**  
**(Fridays: 4/06-2/07/2010)**

**Facilitator:** Tania Batzoglou

**Number of sessions attended:** 1

**Participant:** S

**1. How do you understand the term psychophysical training within your experience of actor training?**

I'm not sure if my understanding of what it means comes from my training, but for me my understanding would be that it is about how the body, physicality and movement affects inner impulses and emotions. In my training at LISPA, the work that we have done has often worked in this way – so that the movement of the body affects the inner thoughts/emotions/images in the imagination etc.

**2. What is your previous experience with psychophysical approaches and ancient Greek dramas?**

Most of my training at LISPA has been working in this way (if I have understood correctly what this means!). Working with ancient Greek drama, I have worked recently on Antigone, where a lot of the work that we have done has been approaching the text in this way. This has been very exciting for me because by working in this way I feel that we were able to bring the text alive in our bodies and so for an audience in a way that I haven't often (or ever, in fact) seen when watching ancient Greek drama in theatres in London.

**3. Do you have any reflections on psychological and physical elements during the workshops?**

During the workshop I attended, I again found it very exciting to work in this way and to work in this way specifically using ancient Greek text. I have found that I am very free in the work that we have done and able to respond and express whatever impulses or emotions come very easily. I felt very open and available, and able to respond during the exercise with text.

**4. Can you identify elements that are new or different to this context?**

No! Sorry, I'm not sure I understand the question!

**5. Did the workshops enable you to bridge the gap and make connections between the ancient material and your personal creative process? Please give one or two examples.**

I think for me working in this way helped me to feel very quickly as if the words are my words because it was related to my own impulses that came out of the exercise that we were doing with the text

I also found that I was able to find many more possibilities with the text working in this way – things that I wouldn't have 'thought' about in advance but which were just there in the exercise.

The exercise that we did helped me very much to connect the text with the impulses that I felt as a result of the exercise that we were doing, and this was very exciting for me (as I have said) as I felt very free in the work that we were doing. I felt that there was no barrier between my 'idea' of the text and my expression of the text, which has sometimes been something that I feel constrains me when working in a more 'conventional' way.

**6. Could you reflect on the facilitator's style and approach towards the whole group and you as an individual?** (Please reflect on the facilitator's balance between verbal and non-verbal attitude, effectiveness of comments, etc)

I felt very comfortable in the workshop and within the group. I felt that all of the instructions given were clear except at one point during the exercise in our pair we weren't sure which text we were supposed to be using (Greek text or our words) at this point, because Tania needed to be part of the other pair, I think she wasn't aware that we were confused and we were also not able to ask her as we didn't want to disturb what that pair was doing.

Apart from that, I felt that the amount of verbal instructions given was ideal – i.e. enough so that we could understand the exercise but never feeling that there was too much talking and where the exercise was more easily explained by a physical demonstration of what we were doing she did this instead.

I also really appreciated when we were discussing the session at the end that we had the opportunity to give our thoughts/feelings/impressions and at this point I felt comfortable enough to give honest feedback on what my experience of the workshop had been. I really appreciated that at this point Tania was able to lead the discussion but also at any point was more likely to step back and allow us to say what we would like to say if there was something that we had to say.

**7. Please feel free to add any further comments or feedback**

**Many thanks for your time**

**Feedback – Questionnaire**  
**Workshops on psychophysical actor training for ancient Greek tragedy and comedy**  
**(Friday: 4/06-2/07/2010)**

**Facilitator:** Tania Batzoglou

**Number of sessions attended:** 2

**Participant:** K

**1. How do you understand the term psychophysical training within your experience of actor training?**

I am not specifically aware of any training that is termed as such, though what comes to mind is Grotowski's approach to stripping away what could be seen as the insincerity of acting, for want of a more intimate and even truthfully responsive actor whose mind and body are not separated. This is what I think of when I look at 'psychophysical': the bringing together of the actor's body and mind in a way that puts them intimately in touch with each other.

**2. What is your previous experience with psychophysical approaches and ancient Greek dramas?**

My experience with ancient Greek dramas is very limited; I have only ever read texts and never actually seen a Greek tragedy in full production! My experience with psychophysical training is equally limited – I have worked a few times in a way that can be described as 'post-dramatic', and in which I tried to get the performers into a state of 'alertness' and aware of themselves and their bodies – all in order to illicit sort of 'gut responses' from the performers, when introducing devising stimuli. However I was not aware of the term 'psychophysical' and did not press any keen emphasis on the connection between physicality and thought processes/emotions – or any other cognitive behaviour.

**3. Do you have any reflections on psychological and physical elements during the workshops?**

I particularly noticed that with the early relaxation exercises (the ball of hot air et al) each of the performers would interpret the instructions a little differently, and to lesser or greater degrees – i.e. when you would ask them to speed up the movements/air, some of the performers would naturally become more frenetic with their movement, whilst others would speed up but remain calm and somehow in control – this always affected how their 'mood' seemed to be and would later inform developing 'characters' in improvisation exercises. This was particularly evident in the second workshop: the exercise where 3 performers would vie for control over each other (leading with their hand) produced 3 very different relationships (in their respective groups.) In one, for example, the relationship between two of the performers was one of playful curiosity, with the third person trying their utmost to derail the 'intimacy' it produced. This then meant that, should the third person gain control, the mood was one of 'rejection' or 'outsider', and the two who had been playing would almost team up to retain their previous state. After building up the exercise from pair work, it was clear that each of the performers had taken up a different attitude toward being lead/leading, and yet each of them had been given the same instructions. Perhaps it said something about their general mindset; i.e. curious, timid, competitive, etc.

**4. Can you identify elements that are new or different to this context?**

**5. Did the workshops enable you to bridge the gap and make connections between the ancient material and your personal creative process?** Please give one or two examples.

As an outsider to the exercises it is difficult to say. I feel we were just getting into the material by the end of the second workshop, which is unfortunate, but we could already see the performers playing out some of the archetypal 'emotions' or 'positions' specific to certain Antigone characters. In the final workshop, I remember seeing a scene (actually, I had missed the beginning but arrived half way through) in which M. was glowering and chastising S. for something; he had clearly been wronged and was demanding answers – demanding satisfactory explanation as to why she did what she did. Though not confronted with much resistance (ala Antigone), M. exuded a sense of 'position' and power over S.'s developing character, and yet he was helpless to do anything other than demand an explanation. He was seething, and more so because whatever had happened he couldn't undo. Though this is not entirely faithful to the position Creon finds himself in (I guess until later in the play when he begins to feel the events are taking on the guise of a personal attack), the 'status', sense of futility in being able to make right what has been done wrong, and anger in response to the previous, were essential traits that we were looking for in the character. S.'s character was interesting – clearly mortified at having wronged her 'superior' she at once denied the steadfast traits in Antigone, and somehow exuded a sort of amalgamation of Ismene and Haemon, without the respectful rectitude of Haemon and lack of **actual wrongdoing** of Ismene. I'm not sure what she had been instructed to do but while her break from established characters lead us down a different path, her character did fuel the fire of Creon's anger, showing us a more personal than 'sovereign' side to his rage. L., as the manipulator, broke even further from the Greek text/characters, but provided a calculated opposite to S.'s broken guilty party. In the end, then, this exercise almost acted as an insight into Creon's more personal response to being wronged which, reflecting on the final show, could actually be seen in C.'s portrayal of the developed character when at the height of his anger.

**6. Could you reflect on the facilitator's style and approach towards the whole group and you as an individual?** (Please reflect on the facilitator's balance between verbal and non-verbal attitude, effectiveness of comments, etc)

In the first workshop, particularly with a group of people who didn't know each other and were perhaps not used to such a way of working, I think it took a while for them to understand what it was you wanted from them. This was down to a combination of verbally instructing them to do something perhaps unfamiliar, where a demonstration or an 'easing in' would have worked better, and also that some of the exercises weren't prefaced with what you hoped to achieve. However, this may be due to you not wanting to plant any ideas of what they should feel/do into their heads, and thus undermine the exercise before you started. However during the exercises the consistent instruction did help them all to find what they were doing, and support them through their exploration. More importantly, your willingness to involve yourself in the exercises and lead by example seemed to me a very

apt way to demonstrate what you are looking for without compromising the exercises by over-explaining. Also your willingness to let myself and any other non-participant contribute was invaluable, particularly when I had a pen and some scrap paper to hand, and saw an opportunity to introduce stimulus that may 'connect' or 'collide' with what I was seeing in the performer.

**7. Please feel free to add any further comments or feedback**

Thank you so much for doing the workshops – I cannot even begin to describe how grateful we are and how interesting they were! I'm sorry I haven't answered question 4 – I'm not really sure what you mean by it! If you want to explain it in an email then I'll answer it no problems.

I hope it's useful and I've tried to remember as much as I could – so sorry if I've rambled or missed the point.

I really enjoy working in this way and just hope that one day we will have the time and artistic license to take it further!

Cheers

**Many thanks for your time**



### **Appendix 3.**

Workshops plans

## Step 1 of Workshops

Preparatory workshop with the students from the MA Actor training and coaching course 2009, CSSD

5 pm FOCUS	In circle on the floor Welcome, introduce myself + research, explain the purpose of this workshop, share names, create a working alliance, ask permission for recording -questions-	Built an open environment for the group's work  Inform participants about the aim of this workshop and of the whole research, define their participation in terms of working alliance, feedback and video- recording  Ease anxieties and the mind's curiosity
5:30 pm WARM UP	Standing circle, ball game with names, increase balls and drop out the shout of names Walk around the room and pass the balls to each other	Warming up the body and awakening their attentiveness through playful games. Help them concentrate and connect with others in the group
5:45 BRIDGE IN	Working in pairs: Mirroring exercise, start with having clearly a leader and a follower and gradually merge the roles as if the movement happens simultaneously.	Bring attunement with each other and turn focus on the moving body. To shift their state of mind from the intellect to the more intuitive and feeling function.
6:00 pm MAIN EVENT	Storytelling of the myth of Oedipus, begin its enactment and improvisation (whole group or divided)	To approach the ancient material through a physical, irrational engagement. To explore for psychological connections and feelings expressed through the body and its images.
6:30 pm BRIDGE OUT	Create a statue or a still image from the myth representing your experience  In circle on the floor: write on paper 1-3 words from the experience	To bring consciousness and reflections after the improvisation. Start with an abstract oblique way to express the inner experience and then to the more direct use of words.

<p>GROUNDING</p> <p>6:40 pm</p> <p>7:00pm</p>	<p>Relax body on the floor, imagine the body sinking or as if emptying a bag of sand</p> <p>In circle, feedback and Questions</p> <p>Thank everybody</p> <p>Finish</p>	<p>To return to the here and now, to relax both the mind and the body.</p> <p>Allow time for reflections and explanations.</p>
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## Step 2 Workshop plan for Accidental Art

Twelve Hour Collaboration Friday 22 May 2009 – The Clore Studio, Roundhouse theatre

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
8.30am	Set up the Clore Studio and arrange the food for lunch.
8.45am	Meet all Accidental Art collaborators in the foyer of The Roundhouse and show them to The Clore Studio.
9.00am <u>Focus</u>	<p><u>Contracts and introductions:</u> Nessah to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce everyone</li> <li>• Explain project and schedule of the day</li> <li>• Explain rules: mobiles off, no food in space,</li> <li>• If anybody has any injuries or anything else they feel the group should be aware of please let us know.</li> <li>• Photos will be taken but there will be a section when no photos are taken.</li> <li>• If anyone feels uncomfortable at any point, we ask that you don't leave the room, but instead go over to a corner.</li> </ul> <p>1a) Walk around the space and explore it, connect with it and get familiar. 1b) Make contact with each other, non verbally, with an unusual body part. Greeting people in an alternative way. 1c) Whilst doing think of a short phrase that describes an aspect of who you are and say it as you greet each other. For example, 'I like chocolate' or 'I am Greek.'</p>
<u>Focus exercises</u>	
9.20am <u>Warm Up</u>	<p><u>Exercise 2:</u> (15 minutes) Led by Tania 'Red Shoes' for everyone. For example: 'Change place if you have a cat.'</p> <p><u>Exercise 3</u> (15 minutes) Led by Anouke 'Movement Dialogue' for actors only. Question and response through movement.</p> <p><u>Exercise 4:</u> (20 minutes) Led by Tania Puppet exercise in pairs. 'Powerful and the Powerless'</p>

<p>10.10am <b>Bridge In</b> Led by Tania</p> <p>(toilet break)</p>	<p><u>Exercise 5:</u> A continuation of exercise 4: Blind Folded exercise. Walk them around, explore the space, objects, have different paces...run, then bring them together and create the story for the other person, follow your fate.</p>
<p>10.40am Led by: Tania</p>	<p><u>Exercise 6:</u> Sound exercise, make sounds on themes of loss, loneliness, pity, birth, death, anguish, calm, hope, confusion and anguish. Layers of sound, how can we sound as one, sounding as if we are all yawning, humming? How does pity sound to you?</p>
<p>11.00am <b>Main Event</b></p> <p>NO PHOTOS</p> <p>Anouke shares the story and Tania supports and leads the actions.</p>	<p>Storytelling (5 -7 minutes) Stay in a circle; find a comfortable position to hear the story. Pause for two minutes afterwards and then invite them to improvise, without discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Make a body image from the story.</li> <li>B. Move the image forward and explore in your own way.</li> <li>C. Interact with other (It is not necessary to recognise/understand what others are doing)</li> </ul> <p>Not limited to having to embody a character, can be a character image, a feeling, location, object or action. Repeat with a second idea.</p>
<p>12.20pm <b>Bridge Out</b> Led by Tania</p>	<p>In circle, allow time to express feelings, experiences and share what they didn't have time to do.</p>
<p>12.30pm  1.20pm</p>	<p>Lunch in the Ushering Room. Clore Studio, needs to be locked. Re-open the space.</p>
<p>1.30pm Led by Tania</p> <p>Led by Anouke</p>	<p><u>Exercise 7:</u> Impulses and action reaction, including dialogue. (With music)</p> <p><u>Exercise 8:</u> Phrases they have learnt develop into an improvisation.</p> <p>Review themes and images from the first part, return to things that came up from there.</p> <p>Improvise more specifically looking at opposite</p>

Led by Tania	<p>goals between individual characters and the rest of groups. Explore the relationships of Oedipus and Laius (try to avoid each other but the 'forces' are pushing them to meet) - locaste and Oedipus (mother and child relationship /sexual relationship) - Oeidpus and citizens (authority/ banned from city).</p> <p>Sit in a circle and share comments, for the last ten minutes.</p>
5.00pm 5.50pm	<p>Dinner in The Roundhouse café. The Clore Studio needs to be locked. Re-open the space.</p>
6.00pm Led by Anouke Lighting designer joins us 8.40pm	<p>Shaping and Directing.</p> <p>Final photos</p>
8.55pm <b><u>Grounding</u></b>	<p>Time to sum up for tomorrow's performance, make sure everyone is ok and allow time for expressing any thoughts or feelings.</p>

## Step 3 of workshops

### No 3. Friday 18/06/10

<p>FOCUS</p> <p>6:30 pm</p>	<p>In circle on the floor  Welcome, share names and a good performance example of tragedy or comedy that they have seen.  Remind what we did last week  Working alliance (feedback, commitment, honesty, awareness of sensitive issues, permission for recording)</p>	<p>Introducing the work, myself and each other  Breaking nervousness  Allow time to get to know each other and ask questions  Assess their experience and expectations</p>
<p>WARM UP</p> <p>6:50 pm</p>	<p>Oikonomou bioenergetics:  Release energy, thoughts, see yourself, celebrate yourself  And be light ~clouds, air, no gravity, sea, swimming, freedom, sand, warm, peaceful  Close exercise with the imaginary finding of a shell that they can keep to remind them this experience</p>	<p>Focus on the body  Awareness of the group and the space  Gradually increase energy levels and explore different dynamics within the themes of the myth  Activate imagination, making connections with the imaginary material and the self</p>
<p>BRIDGE IN</p> <p>7:15 pm</p>	<p>Group mirroring movement  ~repeat movement  Introduce the group of mainades and their actions (bacchic rituals and dances)  Bring in the themes of joy, belief, ecstasy, tribal /pagan</p>	<p>Attunement and building relationships  Trust and collaboration  Responsiveness and instinct rather than thinking factor  Unity, collaboration, chorus, become a group of followers</p>
<p>MAIN EVENT</p> <p>7:35 pm</p>	<p>From the myth of Bacchae introduce the images of Pentheus's transformation into a Bacchae, his arrival on the mountain, dismemberment and death from the Bacchae.</p>	<p>Use the physical movements that they have developed from the previous exercise to connect with the situations within the myth.</p>
<p>BRIDGE OUT</p> <p>8:10 pm</p>	<p>Ritualistic closure of the impro  Sharing sound and movement for release the tension  Step back + silence  Share feedback and questions in the circle</p>	<p>Exit the playspace ritualistically allowing time for the psyche to make connections.  Bring reflection and consciousness to what happened</p>
<p>GROUNDING</p> <p>8:15 pm  8:30pm</p>	<p>Lying on the floor  In pairs stretching – massaging</p> <p>Thank everybody  Finish</p>	<p>Relax body and mind  Make sure everyone is ok.  Return to everyday</p>

## Step 4 of workshops

### 1.Thursday 03/02/11 5pm-7.30pm at Rehearsal room 8

List of objects: Two video cameras, Greek gods cards and images, colourful pencils and notebooks for everyone (6-7)

Section –time	activity	Aim
Focus 5-5.30pm (slow start)	In circle on the floor Introductions: who is who (I start, info about research, give informed consent forms) Participants speak about what interests them and share smg they know about the Greek gods	Build team for trusted and opened group work Informed participants about the research’s nature and requirements Assess their interest, abilities and previous experiences Introduce the subject of work for today’s session
Warm up 5.30-5.50	Circular movements of all body parts starting from the feet –special attention to the hips Internalise image of the butterfly to move around the space, Balancing the space moving all together in the same rhythm Changes of gaze: inwards, towards others, beyond others to the walls Greet each other as you are moving with no touch or words –gradually add touch on a body part (keep changing)	Warm up the body with fluidity, lightness and groundness Introduce the butterfly as the symbol of psyche experimenting physically with the qualities of her flying Building group awareness and sensitivity for each other’s presence Increase and extend awareness of self and others and space ~circles of concentration Introduce touch
Bridge-in 5.50-6.15	In pairs, get to know each other’s energy and body by the touch/ non-touch Create a playful, open dance In 2s or 3s one puppet one “God” or manipulator	Explore each other’s presence and energy  Introduce this way of working in order to prepare for the main event that follows.
Main event 6.15-6.45	Introduction and description of the Greek gods (show cards and pictures) -cast oneself to a Greek god and find a physical position	Exploring the embodiment of archetypal figures that are commonly present in the Greek dramas. Find a unique personal way



	<p>with three actions going from one to the other ~share in circle (mental note of that experience)</p> <p>- cast other to a Greek god and sculpt him (lastly give breath and open the eyes to bring psyche) ~change pairs</p>	<p>to embody the archetypal gods matching with personal qualities, the embodiment or performance of the archetypes happens from inside out. The two different casting sculpturing attempts to raise awareness of personal view and others view from outside about self. The ritualistic facilitation of the exercise aims to create a sense of numinous experience that draws from ancient Hindu practices of sculpturing statues of gods.</p>
<p>Bridge-out 6.45-6.55</p>	<p>Release of statues Reflections and feedback in pairs 5' on your own to write down or draw impressions, feelings, images, words In circle share thoughts, comments, likes or dislikes</p>	<p>Emerging consciousness, self awareness Bring meaning to the embodied experience</p>
<p>Grounding 6.55-7.00</p>	<p>Turn back to back with someone and release all weight, push each other through the back till you are both on the floor Relax all muscles, focus on breath, empty your mind I go around and stress their limbs</p>	<p>Return to here and now Relaxation of muscles and mind</p>

## Step 4 of workshops

### 2. Thursday 10/02/11 5pm-7.30pm at Rehearsal room 5

List of objects: video camera, two tapes, musical instruments, journals, pencils, informed consent forms

Section –time	activity	aim
Focus 5.15-5.30pm (slow start)	In circle on the floor Say smg from last sessions that stayed in their mind. Explain today's work  (informed consent forms)	Build trust and openness in the group And make links with last session Introduce the subject of work for today's session: Chorus, Bacchae and dismemberment
Warm up 5.30-5. 50	Starfish on the floor, sink in, leave weight, quiet the mind, stretch arms and legs, rock to massage your lower back, lift up legs and lower them down I turn them around from the hand...lying on bellies Come to plank, dog posture, move hips, plank, and cobra posture. Choose one body part to guide your movement, to turn you over, to lift you up to different levels, Keep changing different body parts, continuing with flow Percentages of energy for the dynamics of movement	Warm up the body with opposite forces of gravity and lifting, moving the body around starting the movement from one body part as the rest of the body follows relaxed.  One leads the rest follows when the body is relaxed Increase body awareness and fluidity in the body  Control of energy and force
Bridge-in 5.50-6.30	In pairs, work with the impulses and explore the movement of the whole body as a unity Come together as group closely together, moving as one body, following one, changing sides, finding one rhythm together...in space... One is introducing movement others follow, keep changing Bring in musical instruments Explore sound and movement together Bring in themes from the myths: One cuts off the	Expand the previous exercise from internalised impulse to a respond to the outer stimuli Group and individual awareness Impulses from inside and outside becoming stimulus for the whole group to move Belonging in the group by keeping individuality Coordination of different senses and stimulus, deepening the levels of awareness Explore physical belonging

	group, comes in centre and goes with the group or against it, be initiated or dismembered	and exclusion, initiation, ecstasy and dismemberment Physical experience and embodied meaning of these qualities
Main event 6.30- 7.00	In circle, the storytelling of Dionysus myth (connecting with dismemberment before) Following first impression take a posture within the room embodying an image from the myth I then bring them together in two groups of 3? (or all together as a whole) According to their first response they connect and continue towards a group improvisation  The basic elements that need to be explored: Pentheus transformation to a Bacchae from Dionysus and Pentheus dismemberment from Bacchae and Agave's final recognition of her action	Exploring the embodiment of archetypal situations of initiation, dismemberment by casting oneself in the myth. Find a personal way to embody the action bringing in personal conscious qualities and then introducing opposites. Exploring the complexities of the characters and their actions that are not one sided, search for different interpretations meaningful according to the individual's real life Train the "mythological intelligence" of the actor
Bridge-out 7.00 -7.20	One word from each/comments after the experience, visit the opposite of what you did 5' on your own to write down or draw impressions, feelings, images, words	Emerging consciousness, self awareness Bring meaning to the embodied experience
Grounding 7.20 -7.30	In circle share thoughts, comments, likes or dislikes Body massage in 3s	Return to here and now Relaxation of muscles and mind

## Step 4 of workshops

### 3. Thursday 17/02/11 5pm-7.30pm at Rehearsal room 8

video camera, two tapes, musical instruments, objects, journals, pencils, informed consent forms

Section –time	activity	aim
Focus 5.10-5.20pm (slow start)	In circle on the floor Introduce Experience and explain about Monday's examination Share thoughts from last session and inform Alexander about last part that he missed Introduce the subject of work for today's session: explore common themes on the Greek myths by using objects and improvise on the myth of Antigone	Build team relationship Always start with a circle of focus bringing us all together and making links with last session Inform them about today's work in order to reduce anxiety and the mind's curiosity
Warm up 5.20-5. 50	In pairs: massage each other using three actions: squeezing, patting, brushing, at the end vibrate the sound of their breath /swap  In their own space: Oikonomou's exercise from Bioenergetics, All together: Move in space, interact with others: hand shake balance, back to back, push and pull, hand-leg shake, head to head moving together	Introduce physical touch and exercise their attitude of attuning with each other by listening through the body and touch; connect through the breath; relax the muscles and the mind Turn the focus inwards, then bring awareness outwards and forward to share with others Stay in contact with inner situation, in connection with the other and sharing with the other
Bridge-in 5.50-6.30	Bring in musical instruments: Choose instrument and continue previous exercise creating "dialogues" with others in space with the body, breath and instrument  Bring in objects, choose one and on your own space create a story (verbal or not) that includes the themes of dilemma, battle (inner or outer) and final recognition or revelation (change the	Develop the previous exercise adding an external object (instrument) that is used to express their interiority and communicate intimately with others Attuning through different mediums Raise group and individual awareness and respect on each one's individual process Find physical experience and embodied meaning of these qualities that commonly

	future) Share individual's impros	appear in tragedies, exercise mythological intelligence through playfulness and imagination
Main event 6.30- 7.00	In circle, storytelling of the myth of Antigone Following first individual impression we will improvise first part: Antigone vs Creon, (Chrysothemis in middle, dead borther, Creon's son in love with Antigone) Second: Antigone's wedding ritual with death Third (if time): Creon's revelation about his son suicide followed by his wife's (free to use the instruments or objects if they want)	Developing the previous exercise from using objects to personal embodiment and so exploring the embodiment of archetypal situations within the myth Find a personal way to embody the action brining in personal conscious qualities. I then will introduce opposites. Exploring the complexities of the characters and their actions, search for different interpretations meaningful to the individual.
Bridge-out 7.00 -7.20	Sharing one word from each one after the experience Step back from the "playspace" Put instruments back and clear the space 5' on their own to write down impressions, feelings, images, words	Emerging consciousness, And self-reflexivity to the embodied experience by non-analytical or interpretative means The gained cognisance remains private and expressed through artistic, symbolic means
Grounding 7.20 -7.30	In circle share thoughts, comments, likes or dislikes Remind everyone about changing room for the following session /examination (New studio) Lie on the floor and stretch, relax	Return to here and now Bring awareness for the examination and prepare ourselves for that day  Relaxation of muscles and mind

## Step 4 of workshops

### 4. Monday 21/02/11, 5pm-7.00pm in New Studio

Items used: video camera, two tapes, musical instruments, objects, journals, pencils, informed consent forms

Section –time	activity	rationale
<b>Focus</b>  5.00-5.10pm	In circle on the floor, share thoughts from last session and remind participants about the examiners' visit. Introduce the subject of work for today's session: Exploring common themes on the Greek myths by using bodies and improvise on the myth of Prometheus	We always start with a circle of focus to bring us all together and make links with last week's work Provide information about today's work in order to reduce anxiety and focus their mind's curiosity
<b>Warm-up</b>  5.10-5.30	Warm up by moving the different body parts using an internalised image of water (explore different bodies of water, volumes, dynamics etc). Consciously allow breath to be heard and create sounds. Starting individually and then moving all together to make connections and interact with others. Develop last week's actions by adding breath and sound as an additional impulse: handshake balance, back to back, push and pull, hand/leg-shake, head to head moving together.	Stretching the muscles and the mind by using an internalised image will support their movement and sound. Furthermore, the image of water is relating with the myth of Prometheus and especially the chorus of Ocean's daughters. Awaken their attitude of attunement with each other by listening through the body, breath and touch. Turn the focus inwards, staying in contact with the inner situation, then bring awareness outwards in connection with the group, and forward to share with the other.
<b>Bridge-in</b>  5.30-6.00  <i>~examiners enter ~</i>	Introductions while participants are choosing an instrument and continue previous exercise creating "dialogues" with others in space with the body, breath and instrument.  Working in pairs, one partner using the other's body creates a story (verbal or not) that includes common	Develop the previous exercise adding an external object (instrument) that is used to express their interiority and communicate intimately with others. Attuning through different mediums.  Develop last week's exercise in finding embodied meaning of these qualities (dilemma, conflict /restriction,

	<p>themes in tragedies: dilemma, conflict (inner or outer) /restriction and final recognition or revelation. Incorporate the different types of action/reaction that we have explored in all workshops.</p> <p>-Swap roles in the pairs-</p>	<p>revelation). In that way the participants “exercise” their body’s sensitivity, attentiveness, and attunement through theirs and other’s inner and outer process. Furthermore, they explore and exercise their innate mythological intelligence through playfulness, physicality and imagination.</p>
<p><b>Main event</b></p> <p>6.30- 6.50</p>	<p>In circle, storytelling of the myth of Prometheus. Following first individual physical impression on the myth, participants start improvising. Looking specifically at: Prometheus’ dilemma and conflict with the gods. The punishment from Zeus who orders Prometheus to be bound on the rock and his liver to be eaten daily from an eagle. The visit of Io who has also been punished or “bound” in a frenzied constant wandering and dancing seen opposite Prometheus’s iron chained immobility.</p>	<p>Developing the previous exercise to an exploration of the embodiment of archetypal situations and figures within the myth. Find a personal way rather than a stereotypical representation to engage with the embodiment of personal conscious or unconscious qualities. I may suggest or introduce opposites and bring attention to hidden or blocked feelings. Exploring the complexities of the characters and their actions, search for representations meaningful to the individual, inviting a meeting with the archetypes.</p>
<p><b>Bridge-out</b></p> <p>6.50 - 7.00</p> <p><i>~examiners exit~</i></p>	<p>One word or sound from each one. Step back from wherever they are, put instruments back and clear the space. Reflect on what the fire means for them. 5 min on their own to write or draw down expression, feelings, images and words after the experience.</p>	<p>Emerging consciousness and reflexivity for the embodied experience by non- analytical or interpretative means. Find personal meaning to the myth. The gained cognisance remains private, expressed through artistic, symbolic means that make sense to the individual. Their images or text are not discussed or analysed within the group.</p>
<p><b>Grounding</b></p> <p>7.00 -7.10</p>	<p>In circle, share thoughts, comments, likes or dislikes. Massage the other’s body in threes: squeezing, patting, and brushing.</p>	<p>Return to the here and now. Final stretching of the muscles and relaxation of the mind.</p>

## Step 4 of workshops

### 5. Thursday 03/03/11 5pm-7.30pm in Rehearsal room 8

video camera, two tapes, masks, journals, pencils, informed consent forms

Section –time	activity	aim
Focus 5.10-5.20pm (slow start)	In circle on the floor share thoughts and feelings from last week Introduce the subject of work for today's session: explore comedy, sound and movement and the use of mask through the story of Aristophanes' The Frogs'	We always start with a circle of focus bringing us all together and making links with last session Inform them about today's work in order to reduce anxiety and the mind's curiosity
Warm up 5.20-5. 50	A good stretch and warm-up of the body especially of the low back, hands and hips Move around in a restricted area close to the wall to prepare for lifts: First, all together on the floor in a line one person on the top, feeling the other's weight and move them to the other side by rolling. In circle one in the middle: lift named clock tic-tac In pairs: back to back lift - side ways lift - and climb up the hips	Introduce taking over weight and letting go weight as an exercise for attunement, letting go inhibitions, develop trust and listening through the body and touch; connect through the breath; relax the muscles and the mind to feel lighter. Working together.
Bridge-in 5.50-6.30	In circle with closed eyes we explore and develop sounds, first individual sounds and then tuning all together to harmonise, to create dialogues, to create chaos. Bring in themes from the story: arguing, body sounds (farting, burping, vomiting), physical pain, frogs – brekekekex coax coax-, and ghostly or spooky sounds. In pairs continue the dialogue with sound adding movement.  Bring in masks and explore playfully the physicality and the voice of the masks. Choose one mask and	Find vocal expression of individuality and communication through sound with the whole group. Playful exploration with the sound and more specific comic sounds, twisting and shifting the norms and the everyday sounds. Explore the sound embodied and in connection with others.  Allow the external object to transform the body's movement and sound. Developing the last session's



	create a physical and vocal short improvisation based on the themes of dilemma, conflict and revelation.	explorations with object and another's body now the mask and your own body becomes the medium to communicate a story based on the themes.
Main event 6.30- 7.00	In circle, I tell the story of the Frogs Following first individual impression on the myths we will improvise Dionysus and the frogs crossing to the other side meeting the dead Dionysus and Xanthias dilemma of identity and transformation Euripides and Aeschylus in court and Dionysus in role of the judge weighting their lines	Developing the previous exercise in exploring comically the embodiment of archetypal situations within the myth. Find a personal way to embody the action brining in personal conscious qualities. I then may introduce opposites. Exploring the complexities of the characters and their actions, search for different interpretations meaningful to the individual.
Bridge-out 7.00 -7.20	Ritualistically take out the mask and say one word or a sound to the mask. Step back from the "playspace" 5' on their own to write down impressions, feelings, images, words	The ritualistic attitude allows the individual to acknowledge the transcendental function of the mask's embodiment. Emerging consciousness, Reflexivity to the embodied experience by non analytical or interpretative means The gained cognisance remains private and expressed through artistic, symbolic means
Grounding 7.20 -7.30	In circle share thoughts, comments, likes or dislikes after the whole course of workshops Organise a 20' one to one interview with each one. Lie on the floor and stretch, relax	Return to here and now Bring awareness for the end of the workshops and plan for its official closure  Relaxation of muscles and mind

**Appendix 4.**

**Informed consent template**

## **Informed Consent**

### **Title of Research:**

Towards a theatre of *psychagogia*: an experimental application of the Sesame approach into psychophysical actor training

### **Researcher:**

MPhil/PhD student Antonia Batzoglou supervised by Dr Experience Bryon and Richard Hougham

### **Brief description of research project:**

This practice as research project proposes a pedagogical model for the training of ancient Greek dramas within the area of psychophysical actor training, based on the methodology of the Sesame approach to Drama and Movement Therapy. My research sets to explore what the psyche means, conceptually and pragmatically, within psychophysical actor training and investigates in practice the application of a modified Sesame Drama and Movement Therapy approach for actors. The project you are invited to participate entails a course of five workshops on Thursday evening 5-7pm from 3/02/11 till 3/03/11 at CSSD. Based on the Sesame methodology and structure, the project aims to use ancient Greek myths as vehicles to encounter conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche. The research explores ways for an embodied experience and awareness of the archetypal figures within Greek drama. The Sesame Drama and Movement Therapy approach facilitates this process in a safe and reflexive way, raising the actor's cognisance, sensitivity and psychical expression.

### **Uses, publication and presentation of the research:**

The practice based research is undertaken for the completion of an MPhil research degree at Central School of Speech and Drama. The purpose of the research is educational and any further publications will be within academia.

### **Information stored and Confidentiality protected:**

All information, observations and footage collected are stored in a safe private place under the researcher's surveillance and anonymity is granted by altering participant's names. All information will be stored for five years.

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I have read and understood this Informed consent form provided to me. I agree to participate and I am aware that I may withdraw this consent at any later date I wish. I am over 18 years of age.

I agree to assign copyright to CSSD and the researcher Antonia Batzoglou and to waive my moral rights in any oral statements, written statements, photographs or other audio-visual recordings given as a part of the research. I agree that all of this information can be processed in order to facilitate the research being undertaken. I agree that this will be for educational purposes and in perpetuity.

### **Participant signature:**

### **Date:**

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