

One Conscience or more: Is the Actor more than one at a time?

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Abstract: This paper approaches an important theme in the study of actors work: the multiplication of the consciousness, from the perspective of the actor's training correlated to psychology and neuroscience. We will refer to some of the best known works used in the training of the actor or which have as object of study the art of the actor, namely K. Stanislavsky – *An Actor Prepares*; Michael Chekhov – *To the Actor: On the technique of acting*, Lee Strasberg – *Strasberg at the Actors Studio*, Jerzy Grotowski – *Towards a Poor Theatre*, Bertolt Brecht – *Brecht on Theatre*, Denis Diderot – *Paradox of the Actor*. Conversations on *The Natural Son* on one hand, and Antonio Damasio's studies on the self, on the other hand, noting that theories about the cognitive functions of the human brain provide a valuable perspective on the art of the actor, especially by how it applies to the conscious and subconscious of the actor on stage. What happens to the actor while performing? How does the actor process different stimuli to build a character, and then an entire artistic act? What are the roles of the mind and body in the creative process? These are just a few questions that I will try to find answers to, while examining the actor's multiplication of consciousness.

Keywords: consciousness, actor, character, emotions, images, brain.

During my study years and later, as an actor and director, I often heard and still hear the following question from the actors: "What do I do?". The answer I usually give is extracted from the data of the script, and, most of

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the time, it has the form of a verb that describes an action because the actor's art revolves around actions. When we observe an actor on stage, we can't help wondering (the way Diderot did in his time, in his famous *Paradoxe sur le comédien*) if the action we see in front of us is performed by the actor or by the character. Of course, the physical body belongs to the actor, and the actor will act on objects (animated or not, mobile or not), but the stage illusion makes us see a character who acts according to the circumstances given by the dramatic situation. In real life, if an actor would find himself in a similar situation to that of the character, he will certainly act differently. Therefore, the natural question arises: who commands the actor's body to act? The main instrument with which the actor works is *himself*, with his body, his voice, his thoughts and his emotions. Mastering an impeccable technique, an actor will lend his entire self to his creation, letting it change his characteristics. The art of the actor is one of the most complex arts because it uses not only the artist's physique, but also his psyche. In that precise moment when the actor steps on stage, he is, at the same time, both the actor and the character. We could say that, at the level of the psyche, it is inhabited by two consciousnesses. This is not a pathology because the neurological processes, in this case, are voluntary and constantly controlled.

I believe that a study on consciousness in the art of the actor is necessary due to its extremely important role in the processes of creation and representation. Consciousness gives the actor not only a sensory perception of the inner and outer worlds, which helps him to understand dramatic situations, but also the possibility to control his creation on stage. People are endowed with a naturally conscious mind, but for the actor this conscious mind is a tool with which he can develop, enrich and deepen his artistic creation. Like any muscle in the body, consciousness can be trained through exercises of attention and concentration or the development of the imagination. Any moment of life can become for the actor a source of inspiration or a starting point for his art. The feelings he has in certain circumstances, the images he sees every day, the reactions he has to different sensory stimuli, all the objects he comes in contact with, create maps in the conscious mind of the actor. Maps that the actor can re-access during the creative process. For this reason, a second consciousness is born in the actor: in addition to the one who experiences, there is one of the observer and the creator.

Let's talk about consciousness

Consciousness is a term that has been difficult to define throughout history by philosophers and psychologists. This uncertainty can be demonstrated by the multitude of academic disciplines and professions dedicated to its study. Consciousness finds its place in philosophy, neuroscience, psychology, but also in religion, artificial intelligence, anthropology, the humanities and art. For the art of the actor, consciousness is a concept with great importance in the studies on characters and on the mechanisms of the actor's psyche, reason for which a deepening of the understanding of this concept becomes necessary.

Consciousness, being a complex hypostasis of the psyche, has generated many contradictory discussions between researchers. First, the terms used in the study of consciousness have always been different or have had different meanings. The notion of consciousness has at least three more commonly used meanings. In psychoanalytic theory it appears as the level of organisation of the psyche, in the form of "Ego as a rational part of the psyche, governed by the principle of reality, along with some aspects of the super-ego, with those relating to the moral part of the psyche and the source of guilt."² Gordon Allport, in his studies of personality, argued that attention is the code name of consciousness, so we have a definition that refers to consciousness as a form of attention. A third meaning is one proposed by introspectionism, seen as "a privileged path of the observer to his own mind, to what he feels and has in mind."³ When we refer to consciousness we must consider the way in which people realise their mental facts, perceptions, thoughts, images or emotions.

The etymology of the word "consciousness" (*con-stientia*) leads us to the idea of a "conscious" reproduction of an item (outer or inner) that the person has noticed. This reproduction takes place subjectively in the form of images, impressions or notions, and thus the item becomes an informational element for that person. The presence of a purpose is essential in conscious

² Mielu Zlate, *Introducere în psihologie* (Iași: Polirom, 2000), 258, our translation "Eului ca parte rațională a psihicului, guvernat de principiul realității, împreună cu câteva aspecte ale supraeului, cu cele care se referă la partea morală a psihicului și la sursa de vinovăție".

³ Mielu Zlate, *Introducere în psihologie*, 258, our translation "o cale privilegiată a observatorului spre propria sa minte, spre ceea ce el simte și are prezent în minte".

reproduction because it is goal-oriented. The goals have their origin in reality, in the interaction with the environment, and not in one's own consciousness. They are established before the actual accomplishment of the actions, activities and processes of consciousness. The human being has the ability to anticipate the outcome of his actions, therefore consciousness is an anticipatory reproduction of reality. This reproduction of reality is not made for itself, but in order to modify and to adapt itself to its needs, which leads us to a creative function of consciousness.

The consciousness is an intuitive and reflective knowledge. Referring to the art of the actor we can talk about consciousness in at least two directions. The first is the consciousness of the character, which is an intuitive knowledge and which puts the character into action, and the second is the consciousness of the actor, which would be the reflective component and which analyses the artistic act. Actors depict the human condition using psychophysical actions that express thoughts, ideas, states, therefore consciousness in the actor's art would refer to the perception of emotions, thoughts, sensations and will, in relation to an external or internal object, tangible or intangible, alive or inert. In order to understand the role of consciousness, I will refer to Antonio Damasio's theory about the forming of the conscious brain, which explains, from a neurological point of view, the mind's mechanism used for creating consciousness. Damasio's study is based on the interaction of the individual with objects around or inside him and the complex structuring of the images offered by these objects. What brings his studies closer to the actor's art is the use of images in self-formation.

"Self-awareness is preceded by the "feeling of self", a confused state, before the moment when the person will judge, will appreciate his way of existence. Self-awareness begins with the consciousness of one's own body, based on internal sensations (hunger, thirst, pain, etc.) to which are added the proprioceptive sensations (body position) and kinesthetics (movement)"⁴. By

⁴ Andrei Cosmovici, *Psihologie generală* (Iași: Editura Polirom, 1996), 60, our translation "Conștiința de sine este precedată de "sentimentul de sine", stare confuză, dinaintea momentului când persoana va judeca, va aprecia modul său de existență. Conștiința de sine începe cu conștiința propriului corp, având la bază senzațiile interne (foamea, setea, durerea, etc.) la care se adaugă senzațiile proprioceptive (poziția corpului) și kinestezice (mișcarea)".

analysing these sensations at the cortical level, we get to know our own bodies and we create an image of our bodies. The human brain naturally creates explicit maps of the structures that make up the body. This would be what Antonio Damasio calls “body-to-brain mapping.”⁵ Normally, the brain maps any object that lies outside it, any action that takes place outside it, and all the relationships that objects and actions have with each other and with the organism to which it belongs. Maps are built when we interact with external objects (people, the object world, spaces) and each stimulus received by the brain in relation to our own body, thus obtaining information and creating images, “the main currency of our minds.”⁶ Consciousness is what allows us to perceive these maps as images.

For Damasio, consciousness is “a state of mind that occurs when we are awake and in which there is private and personal knowledge of our own existence, situated relative to whatever its surround may be at a given moment”⁷ and “the basic ingredients in the construction of conscious mind are wakefulness and images”⁸. Images are the source of objects to be known in the conscious mind, whether they are external or internal to the body, and appear in all sensory variants (visual, auditory, gustatory, olfactory, tactile). The images that represent the body belong to a special class. They originate inside the body and refer to aspects of the body in action. Their special status is given by the fact that they are felt before any other operation involved in the construction of consciousness. “They are felt images of the body, primordial bodily feelings, the primitives of all other feelings, including feelings of emotions.”⁹

To be able to work with his own psyche and the concept of “character”, the actor must understand the processes and mechanisms of consciousness. Only in this way can he extract from himself the inspiration necessary for the act of creation. Following Damasio’s studies, we can observe a structuring of

⁵ Antonio Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind: Constructing the Conscious Brain* (New York: Pantheon ebooks, 2010), 66.

⁶ Antonio Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind...*, 58.

⁷ Antonio Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind...*, 130.

⁸ Antonio Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind...*, 152.

⁹ Antonio Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind...*, 154.

the human psyche on several levels existing simultaneously. These structures become more and more complex when we talk about the art of the actor because, when the actor is on stage, in front of an audience, he is, at the same time, both the person of the actor and the character.

What about affectivity? What is its role in forming consciousness?

For a deeper approach to the actor's complex creative mechanism, it is necessary to understand psychologically and psychoanalytically another essential concept with which he operates in his mental and physical activity, namely affectivity. Affective processes are a form of manifestation of the individual to the surrounding reality and to life situations. Affectivity is a psychic process with a subjective character through which the individual manifests his personal character, as a unique and unrepeatable existence.

Affective states are feelings that express the degree of concordance or mismatch between an object or a situation and our needs. Affects cannot be separated from our needs, tendencies, interests and aspirations, and manifest themselves in the form of impulses to certain reactions, manifestations or actions. We can divide emotional states into two broad categories: static and dynamic. Static affects are elementary emotional states (pain, sensory pleasure, pleasant, unpleasant), moods and emotions, and dynamic affects are feelings and passions. Elementary emotional states are emotional experiences of low intensity and short duration. The dispositions also have a low intensity, but they last a long time, influencing our emotional feelings that appear during this time. Emotions are short-term affective states that translate a specific of the individual's relationships with an object or situation, so they have a situational character. Their intensity can be well varied: it can be vague, medium, but also very high, like shaking the whole body.

Emotions are complex programs of actions performed in our bodies, from facial expressions and body positions to changes in internal organs and the internal environment. Feelings, on the other hand, are perceptions, images of actions, not actions in themselves.

“Seen from a neural perspective, the emotion-feeling cycle begins in the brain, with the perception and appraisal of a stimulus potentially capable of causing an emotion and the subsequent triggering of an emotion. The process then spreads elsewhere in the brain and in the body proper, building up the emotional state. In closing, the process returns to the brain for the “feeling” part of the cycle, although the return involves brain regions different from those in which it all started.”¹⁰

Emotions are triggered by images of objects or events (existing or retrieved from memory). At the same time, a feeling of emotion can be generated by the deliberate change of the body. Let’s take the following example: a certain external stimulus causes an emotion of fear and triggers various changes in the body (jerky and fast breathing, fast and strong heartbeat, tightening of several muscles, profuse sweating, etc.). The perception of these changes is the feeling of fear. Any emotion achieves this quickly and conscientiously because emotion is a program of action, and the result of action is a change in body condition. The actor, knowing this mechanism, can use it in the opposite direction, that is: he voluntarily changes his breathing, making it jerky and fast, increases his heart rate, tenses certain muscles, etc. and thus triggers the emotion.

The perception of emotions has the starting point in the perception of the situation, but the situation itself is not the trigger of the emotion. If one person recognises a situation as dangerous, another person may see it as ordinary. The significance that someone gives to a situation makes that person feel fear or nervousness, or provoke an active response. Emotions are at the meeting point between the possibilities offered by the environment around us or the situation we are in and the possibilities of action we have as individuals. The forming process of emotion goes through different stages in a fraction of a second. Once an event or situation (whether real or imagined) acquires meaning for a person, it will be judged to determine its relevance. This assessment of relevance determines whether or not there will be an emotion. In the next step, which is the assessment of the context, the person will weigh if he can cope with the situation and what would be the

¹⁰ Antonio Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind...*, 95.

best course of action. The possibilities of action will determine what emotion will come to light, if one will come out. The urgency, severity and difficulty of the situation will be assessed and will ultimately determine the intensity of that emotion. These summed up assessments will propose an action or indicate a willingness to act in a certain way, a tendency to act. Each emotion is associated with a tendency to act, with a desire or impulse to change the relationship between the person and the environment. In his studies of emotions and social interaction, professor and psychologist Nico H. Frijda¹¹ argues that such an impulse can have three possible outcomes:

- Emotional perception, including goal-oriented or fantasy-oriented behavioural plans;
- A visible behavioural expression, such as verbal and nonverbal behaviour and facial expression; and
- Physiological changes, such as arousal, accelerated heartbeat, changes in blood pressure and hormone levels.

Each stage of the forming process of emotion is subject to regulatory interventions. This regulation influences the unwanted effects of emotions. One of its effects is observed in the social setting, when we hide our true nature or feelings through other signs, such as a polite smile instead of a hateful look.

I will try to practically apply the process of forming emotions in the context of the actor's art. First of all, we observe that the situation has two different meanings: that of the actor and that of the character. The actor's situation has a real context, namely his confrontation with the audience. In this context, specific tasks must be performed that involve, among other things, the rendering of the character's emotions. For the character, there is a dramatic context given by the imagined stage situation. The actor's emotions are related to the real context, and the character's emotions are related to the fictional context. The emotions that the actor has in his private life are part of the category of ordinary emotions, which we know from everyday life. The actor's emotions in front of the audience are part of a specific set of the

¹¹ Elly A. Konijn, *Acting Emotions. Shaping Emotions on Stage* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2000).

above. To what extent can we consider the character's emotions as part of ordinary emotions given that they come from a fictional world, different from the everyday one? The character's emotions exist only in the actor's imagination in the form of mental images and differ fundamentally from ordinary, everyday emotions. The character's emotions are representations of seemingly real emotions. They are a structure of signs, made up of a pattern of ordinary emotions, in order to create a credible illusion.

Consciousness in different acting theories

The theorising of the actor's subconscious can be attributed to Stanislavsky, who, in his book *An Actor Prepares*, dedicated a chapter to this subject, equating the subconscious play with a state inspired by creativity. Stanislavsky claims that the actor's conscious mind will access the creative subconscious, and once it is put to work, it will be allowed to act without further interactions. The creation of the "feeling of truth" of a character in certain circumstances and actions is a function of the actor's imagination. The actor's goal is to transpose himself into a role, an experience in which consciousness oscillates between the character and his own person. The actor's imagination is the fundamental resource from which he can extract his fictitious circumstances in order to transpose them credibly in front of the public. This ability is conditioned by the integration of internal or external objects extracted from his imagination and which serve as psychophysical stimuli. These stimuli can be a thought of the character, a memory of the actor, a response of a stage partner, a prop or scenery or even a psychophysical action.

The way the actor uses his imagination is not a schizophrenic experience, but a creative ability meant to serve the viewer. When Stanislavsky refers to the "feeling of truth" and the "faith" of the actor does not support a literal transformation of the actor into another person, but seeks to create an illusion of reality. This is the crucial difference when we talk about the double consciousness of the actor, because in Stanislavsky's system, the actor uses two perspectives at the same time, being both on stage and in character. Using the magic term "If" can be understood as one of the many techniques

for releasing the actor's imagination and bringing it into a state of inspiration that can create an act that resembles reality. Formulated as an experiment of thought, this term challenges the actor to imagine how he would act in a certain situation "if" he were in that situation. This "if" works as a starting point in search of the character through a game of imagination, being a technique by which the actor does not forget that he is on a stage, surrounded by scenery and props. Finally, this "if" makes the actor receive stimuli that come out of the subconscious to create the illusion of reality.

The neurological function of the creational process of credibility depends on the actor's use of what Damasio calls *extended consciousness*. Built on the accumulation of knowledge and lifelong experience, extended consciousness functions as a space for storing information. It determines who we are by the fact that our actions, decisions, thoughts and behaviour are products of the past and hope for the future. Expanded consciousness creates knowledge through sensory perception throughout life, becoming a repository of memories and images, which, according to Damasio, gives us the "autobiographical self." Through the extended consciousness we can identify with other people, an essential element in the art of the actor. For this reason, the extended consciousness is a powerful tool of the actor in discovering the character.

Stanislavsky recommends using affective memory for the actor to find within him emotions similar to those of the character, but makes a difference between using personal experience in exploring the role and complete identification with the role. The actor must always be aware that he is playing a role. Drawing on his experiences in the extended consciousness, the actor finds the resources necessary to solve the emotional problem of his role.

In the chapter *On the threshold of the subconscious*, a coherent description of the process of obtaining the double consciousness is provided. The big step that Stanislavsky took in the development of the actor's art was the introduction of the actor's authentic human experience in the construction of the character. Stanislavsky felt the need to discover the relationship between technique and inspiration, and gave birth to a system that would try to solve the mystery of the actor's transformation. In describing the actor's double consciousness, Stanislavsky discovered an essential element in the

development of his system: experience must not necessarily exclude observation or judgment. And he supports his point of view, using a quote from the actor Tommaso Salvini: “An actor lives, weeps and laughs on the stage, and all these while he is watching his own tears and smiles. It is this double function, this balance between life and acting that makes his art.”¹². Therefore, without double consciousness there is no art of the actor. For Stanislavsky, understanding this double consciousness of the actor became imperative. Without the consciousness of the character there can be no artistic experience, and without the self-consciousness of the actor, he would become vulnerable to the pathological.

Director and Professor Lee Strasberg started his work from Stanislavsky’s system, developing what we call today “Method acting”. It tries to deepen the idea of the actor’s immersion in the character’s emotions. By feeding the character with the actor’s personal emotions, the performance would become more believable, the actor’s expressions will be more convincing, and the audience will be more strongly touched by the performance. This performative process is also called “identification”. The so-called “method acting” requires the actor to go beyond emotional memory and use the technique of substitution to become the character. Thus, this method turns its attention to obtaining realism. Strasberg considered that Stanislavsky’s system is limited by the actor’s emotional memory because it may be insufficient. The method requires that the actors assimilate as many circumstances similar to those of the characters, even if this means temporarily changing their way of life. Many of those who have adopted this method have experienced the lives of their characters, working on farms or factories, transforming their bodies or even living on the streets. Some actors have gone so far as to end up with serious health problems.

If the main purpose of the actor’s art is the emotion of the spectator, then, according to Strasberg, the movement of the spectator by creating within him an identification with the emotions of the character or a feeling of empathy for them, depends only on the presence inside the actor of similar emotions to those of the character. This method encourages the actor to fully

¹² Konstantin S. Stanislavsky, *An Actor Prepares* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 288.

enter the character, creating the illusion that the actor is really the character. Like other methods or systems, this presupposes the existence of a double consciousness of the actor. The actor relives the character's emotions during the performance whenever needed, but at the same time keeps them under control. The emphasis seems to fall on the personal emotions of the actor, but, in fact, the emphasis is on the emotions of the character. Personal emotions are used to shape an inner model, providing a basis for the character during the performance. The modeling of this inner model must take into account the criterion of credibility, therefore, emotions must be recognized in the form they have in everyday life.

Although Michael Chekhov began his studies with Stanislavsky, he felt that the early stages of the Stanislavsky system led to an overly naturalistic acting interpretation. Chekhov endeavored to discover and learn new ways in which actors could take advantage of their subconscious mind and the universal experience of mankind, using various exercises. He felt that it was important for actors not to limit their characters, drawing from their limited, conscious, worldly experiences. He felt that the infinite experiences of mankind were stored in the subconscious mind and could be accessed through physical gestures and other exercises that were apparently "external" in nature.

Specifically, one way in which Michael Chekhov made the connection between the subconscious and the conscious – between the external world and the internal experience that a character was to have – was by using the "psychological gesture." Through this exercise, an actor will physicalize an inner need or emotion through an outer gesture. This gesture, as well as its accompanying feelings, are then pulled back and internalized.

The concept of divided consciousness in the actor's art was brought to light by Denis Diderot, referring to his ability to operate a constant shift of his attention from the fact that he is in front of an audience to the fact that he is a character in a given situation. Michael Chekhov gave an important place in his method to this divided consciousness, which thus became a nucleus of modern acting. For Chekhov, not only the possibility of the actor to have two or more consciousnesses at the same time is important, but also the necessity of the existence of these consciousnesses. Although he also talks about double consciousness, Michael Chekhov prefers to discuss a somewhat more complex concept, namely "divided consciousness".

Unlike double consciousness, the idea of divided consciousness splits consciousness into three parts: a consciousness of the actor's person, one of the so-called "creative individuality" and one, independent, of the character. The experience that the actor lives is not only of the perception of the self as a character or of the self as an actor, but also of the perception of the character as an independent self. In support of this, Chekhov offers a simple explanation: for artists with developed imagination, images are living beings, as real to the mind as the palpable objects around us. Through the appearance of these living beings, artists see an inner life, live with them sadness or joy, laugh or cry with them and share their emotions. Unlike other artists, such as writers or sculptors, actors have to create their art in front of an audience, which makes the character the third consciousness in the actor's creative process. Describing the experience of the actor's three consciousnesses, Michael Chekhov gives the actor's image of the character as a living and autonomous being.

Michael Chekhov's methods are meant to lead the actor to the gate of inspiration. And they do this by giving the actor the necessary tools in the form of images: the Imaginary Body, the Psychological Gesture and the Motor Center. Chekhov proposes an objective approach to the actor's art, regarding the character as an objective image. The image incorporation techniques proposed by Chekhov have a path that follows the direction from the Character to the Actor, which is why they were considered "external".

For Grotowski, expressing the real emotions of the actor is essential, "everything is concentrated on the "ripening" of the actor which is expressed by a tension towards the extreme, by a complete stripping down, by the laying bare of one's own intimacy – all this without the least trace of egotism or self-enjoyment. The actor makes a total gift of himself. This is a technique of the "trance" and of the integration of all the actor's psychic and bodily powers which emerge from the most intimate layers of his being and his instinct, springing forth in a sort of "trans-lumination."¹³ The emotions of the character represented are the personal emotions of the actor and must be spontaneous and full of truth. Improvisation therefore plays an extremely important role during public performances, and not during closed study or rehearsals as at

¹³ Jerzy Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre* (London: Methuen, 1991), 19.

Stanislavsky or Strasberg. Grotowski argues that in theatre, the key issue is not living a role or putting oneself in a given circumstance, but

“the decisive factor in this process is the actor’s technique of psychic penetration. He must learn to use his role as if it were a surgeon’s scalpel, to dissect himself. [...] The important thing is to use the role as a trampoline, an instrument with which to study what is hidden behind our everyday mask – the innermost core of our personality – in order to sacrifice it, expose it. This is an excess not only for the actor but also for the audience. The spectator understands, consciously or unconsciously, that such an act is an invitation to him to do the same thing”¹⁴

In this case, the actor and the character become a single entity, merging. The actor presents himself to the audience as himself, without pretending to be something else or someone else. Although it is the most active and strongly driven by emotions, such a representation is an expression that depends on the harshest discipline. In the work of the actors with this type of search, the actor’s technique has a major importance. When we talk about a theatre in which the self is expressed, the character is not considered a separate entity, although we can observe a double consciousness: the consciousness of representation in front of an audience and the consciousness of action as if there were no audience. There would also be a duality of the “performer”: that of being natural (the expression of real and spontaneous emotions) and, at the same time, artificial (the form of the role).

Developing the theory of the *Verfremdungseffekt*: “A distancing image is one that lets you recognize the object, at the same time making it seem foreign to you.”¹⁵ Bertolt Brecht tries to combat emotional manipulation in theatre, replacing it with a surprising alienation that would reject the principle of identifying the actor with the character during the performance saying that “the actor never completely transforms into the character he plays.”¹⁶ A happy character does not have to be played by a happy actor. The same principle

¹⁴ Jerzy Grotowski, *Towards a Poor Theatre*, 37.

¹⁵ Bertolt Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1964), 225.

¹⁶ Bertolt Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre...*, 228.

applies to a tragic character. Distancing is most often associated with Bertolt Brecht's theories. The character's emotions are shown or demonstrated in a reproducible form. The main purpose of Brecht's work is to present social situations on stage as processes that can be changed. The actor's goal is to direct the viewers' attention to the socio-political aspects of the situations using the interaction of people in a social setting, the social position of the characters and the political and economic interests. This requires the emotional involvement of the actors in the image they have of their characters.

The non-overlap of the actor's emotions over the character's emotions was Brecht's reaction against the central role that emotions played in the Stanislavsky's system. For Brecht, actors are not just representing characters, they represent themselves, having opinions about their characters. Most often, this form of expression is considered "calculated" and "cold". Even though Brecht wanted a critical reflection from the spectators, he did not completely reject the emotions, at one point he even talked about awakening the emotions in the spectators.

Epic theatre, political theatre, guerrilla theatre are founded on the alienation technique and have always had an informational or educational character. In these forms of theatre based on the technique of alienation, there is no suggestion that the actor is also the character. The actor shows himself, which makes us wonder if the actor on stage is the same as the actor in private. After all, this role is included in the dramatic action. The actor does not leave the performance, the actor leaves the role of the character and enters the role of himself. If the actor who shows up is the same as the one in private life, then we can talk about the personal emotions of the actor, but if not, then we are talking about the emotions of the creative actor. We can assume the existence of a double consciousness, expressed by Brecht's "Verfremdung" which implies the simultaneous presence of the actor and of the character.

Comparing the various working methods, we can observe in the theories of K.S. Stanislavsky, L. Strasberg, M. Chekhov, J. Grotowski and B. Brecht, some common points:

- The "inner model" of the imagination - The actor creates in his imagination a model of the character he will play.

- Credibility of the expression - The actor must present to the audience this credible and convincing imagined model.
- Repeatability - The expression of the inner model must not only be credible and convincing, it must be repeatable.
- Spontaneity - Spontaneity, creativity and inspiration will lead to an authentic and lively thing, to the stage presence. For Stanislavsky, Chekhov, and Brecht, the stage presence is the focal point around which the actor's entire creation revolves.

The different working methods of the actor's art have placed an important emphasis on the actor's multiple consciousness. K. S. Stanislavsky separates the personal consciousness of the actor from that of the character, but leaves open the ways of communication between the two. Michael Chekhov talks about a consciousness divided into three levels: that of the creator, that of the person and that of the character. Lee Strasberg deepens the actor's immersion in the fictional life of the character. Really confronted with the character's problems, the actor would enrich his interpretation through real reactions coming from the subconscious. Jerzy Grotowski proposes a direction that involves the expression of the self, looking in the collective unconscious for those archetypal gestures that are found in each individual. Bertolt Brecht's point of view shows not only the distance between the actor and the character, but also the actor's opinion on the character.

Antonio Damasio's studies emphasize image mapping as an extremely important process in self-development. These maps that the brain creates and stores become the main source of inspiration in the actor's art. An actor can access its map bank and use those images to get closer to the inner world of the character.

In conclusion, I can say that the psyche has a key role in the actors work. It can hinder or limit creativity, but it can also be the richest source of creativity. Through psychophysical training, the actor can achieve a rigorous preparation for its art. Emphasis must be placed on the organic communicational exchange between the psyche and the body. Multiplication or division of consciousness are absolutely necessary processes in the art of the actor, and their good understanding gives the actor the desired control over his artefact.

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