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THE FOLK TALE OF THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN FOR AN ANIMATING THEATRE PEDAGOGY

DRAMA ANIMATION

Some people might ask why theatre is so important during school: the answer is, in order to lighten up the children's souls, to help them achieve self-knowledge through the significant, everyday issues of life presented to them, as well as to make them discover the many prospects of knowledge and understand the functions of being. By offering them an overall perception of themselves and the world, theatre becomes a vehicle for holistic learning.

Thus, the purpose of theatre in school is to educate in real life terms. This can really happen when the process of education carries strong encouraging qualities which will allow the art of theatre to reborn and remain always modern, under the light of both the scientific as well as the artistic regard and practice (Grammatas, 2003). In other words, the communicative function of the theatre is the minimal sufficient condition to shape minds through negotiation and reflection (Courtney, 1981, Bakhtin, 1981, Cummins, 1999), in a true, natural and aesthetically valid manner, without didacticism, without pretentious effects and easy solutions.

From the above emerges that the theatre's pedagogic strength can inspire original theatrical creation. In that sense, inspiration constitutes a process of mobilisation of the psychomental and body energy of children (Winnicott, 1966, Piaget, 1962, Vygotsky, 1993) which, as necessity, interest and experience, seeks creative satisfaction and reformation.

The pedagogy of theatre gives the animator the opportunity to create and inspire the theatrical phenomenon from the psychological and social angle (psychoanalytic, cognitive, social-cognitive and humanistic), by employing drama - representative conventions and drama - textual techniques, which involve and at the same time aim at the interpersonal, linguistic, bodily-kinaesthetic and, mainly, dramatic intelligence of children (Gardner, 1985).

In order to urge theatrical inspiration, the animator should stimulate children's enthusiasm in a genuine way and with sincere emotion, through his psycho-pedagogic and artistic adequacy, so to make them enter, spontaneously, role playing. His bodily attitude and movement, as well as his words, should give vent to sentiments and thoughts in a balanced, rational and yet passionate way.

Projecting all the moral and mental intensity of a poet – even with minimal technical skills – he can reflect with enthusiasm upon new ideas and bring forth the children's emotions during the magic, and yet so real, world of their game. Besides, drama animation requires mainly from the animator a quality of sense and emotion and solidarity (Freire, 1998: 54), which generates an atmosphere of real life game, deeply psycho-mental. Therefore, encouragement is not confined to a number of commands to be executed; it is a process that illuminates the soul. The animator's presence is necessary in order to mobilise, through drama-educational freedom, the children's

interest as well as the particular personality of each one so to involve them in theatrical convention without limiting their creative imagination. Most importantly, the animator's presence is necessary in order to observe whether his encouragement efforts penetrate the group's feeling, as well as to receive the "signifieds" in the body expressions and wordings of its members, using both his senses and his sensitivity.

To this direction, the animator with artistic inventiveness and psycho-pedagogic knowledge is called to import new ideas, conventions and techniques, for the encouragement of the children's participation.

Using stimuli, both visual and acoustic that he will adjust to the group's dynamic, he will control the intensity - of the reality as well as of the drama, and he will challenge the new and the spontaneous, the improvised and the different, ready to face on the spot each "now" of the children's interests and, if necessary, through the prism of an open goal oriented model (Elliot, 1991: 54), he will add to or change the planning and reorganize the action as it happens (Papadopoulos, 2007: 94).

Certainly, the essence of drama encouragement passes through the exploration of a story, where the animator's sensitized presence is fundamental.

Thus, the way that he will guide the role playing reflects his personal theory and view of life as well as his drama-educational methods, conventions and techniques.

In the present work we develop the story of The Pied Piper of Hamelin, in order to show how in the inquiry drama (see table 1) the initial elements of the story are reformed and explored in a particularly meditative way, thanks to drama animation and not simply because of the experiential approach of the following: a) the structural elements of the theatrical form, b) the drama conventions, c) the drama - textual techniques, d) the questions and e) the scenic practices (Papadopoulos, 2007). At the same time, the decisive role of the animator is emphasised.

THE STORY

In a small city called Hamelin all inhabitants were getting desperate because of the plague of mice. The mayor of the city said, indignant, that something had to be done urgently. At that moment a young man appeared in front of him and declared that for a thousand florins he would rid of the mice. Overwhelmed with joy, the mayor promised to give him a hundred thousand florins if he succeeded. The young man went right away in the fountain of the central square and begun to play a melody in his pipe, and all mice started coming out from their burrows and gather in the square. Enchanted by his melody, they followed the young piper outside the city, in the fields, and when he entered the river, they followed him into the water as well and they were all drowned. The inhabitants of Hamelin welcomed the young man as a hero. When, however, the piper went to the mayor to ask for the fee he was promised, the mayor replied that his work did not worth more than ten florins and that he would give him only that much. The young man, angry with the mayor's dishonesty, refused to take it and left, warning the mayor that he will regret it. Playing again his pipe, he enchanted this time the city's children, who gathered like hypnotised in the square and disappeared after him into the mountains. The mayor's own son was among them, so he had to admit to the rest of the parents the trick he played on the piper. Everyone in Hamelin was inconsolable, crying day and night. Months have passed and the mayor as well would not stop crying. When the hundredth thousandth teardrop flowed from his eyes, a far-away melody was heard. It was the piper, coming back with the children. The parents hurried full of joy to embrace their sons and daughters. Then, the young piper approached the mayor and told him that what he had refused to pay in money, he paid in tears. After that he disappeared into the mountains, playing his

pipe. As for the mayor, he was elected again in next elections as the people preferred having him to someone else whose vices they wouldn't know¹.

THE AIMS

The drama animation of the story gives children the chance to explore it through their subjective point of view (Barton & Booth, 1990), while the psychodynamic function of the group allows them to understand themselves through the feelings and meanings they share with each other (O' Neill & Lambert, 1982: 13). From this point of view, The Pied Piper of Hamelin constitutes the field in which the animator should seek the children's energetic involvement in joining the group's solidarity and understanding their own lives through the lives of the characters. To this direction he facilitates them:

- To overcome their natural reticence and use their bodies to express themselves, through bodily-kinaesthetic activities.
- To develop an awareness of responsibility and become familiar with the skill of putting themselves in somebody else's shoes.
- To critically reflect the characters' ethics, to interpret and assess the motives of their attitude and behaviour - one that is often radically different from their own.
- To develop their communicative skills in different circumstances of communication, through reasoning and meditative expression, both oral and written.
- To develop environmental and political conscience through the confrontation of everyday routine in the natural and social-cultural environment.
- To reconsider their initial attitude, perception and practice in theatrical role and out of it.

THE QUESTIONS

The animator's questions, which are formed through suitable drama conventions (Neelands, 1990), as shown right below, give children the possibility to explore the depths of the story, illuminating the focal point and the different each time point of view. The animator asks in order to arouse their interest to learn more about life and the problems the characters are facing; at the same time, it is important that he as well does not know the development of things or the solutions that the group will seek (Morgan and Saxton, 1995: 67-70, Wagner, 1990: 60).

Some indicative questions could be:

- How do Hamelin's inhabitants face the situation with an army of mice swarming the city and how the chief cheese-maker and his family?
- How does the mayor react to the disappearance of the city's children, but also to that of his own child?
- How does the chief cheese-maker feel about the disappearance of the mice?
- How can the mayor and the city council convince the piper to bring the children back?
- Where are the children and what are they doing all that time they are with the piper?
- Are the children happy staying with him? If not, are they willing to escape and how?

¹ The story may have various symbolisms. According to one version, the piper symbolizes death which, in the form of plague, took the lives of many children in Germany during the Middle Ages; according to another version the story is interpreted through the phenomenon of child labour, a usual practice of the era, when people were visiting cities seeking for children to work for them in other regions of Europe, resulting to many children disappearing for ever (Tarlington and Verriour, 1991: 93). In reference with the story see also Wooland, 1999.

THE METHODOLOGY - PROCEDURE AND TECHNIQUES

The inquiry drama lays emphasis on the exploration as a process and from this point of view is underlying the principles of processes models. In these, personal and social experience constitutes the basis for theatrical investigation of the initial source-text through a theatrical form, aiming to create a new understanding (Neelands, 1990: 64). The method in question is developed in four stages that concern: a) creating a suitable atmosphere among the group, b) introducing the children to the initial environment of the story, c) exploring and creating the new dramatic environment, d) assessing the new experience and understanding; there is also a fifth, optional stage, concerning the presentation of the total theatrical investigation, as illustrated in table 1 (Papadopoulos, 2004).

(TABLE 1)
INQUIRY DRAMA

A. CREATING ATMOSPHERE FOR THE GROUP variety of games (bodily expression, introduction, observation, etc.)
B. INTRODUCING THE INITIAL ENVIRONMENT Teacher in role or out of role – children out of role ● GETTING TO KNOW THE WORK listening/reading of the story
C. CREATING THE DRAMATIC - NEW ENVIRONMENT ● FIRST REMARKS CONCERNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STORY discussion out of role for the dramatic environment ● URGING ACTION AND REFLECTION improvised actions – use of conventions and techniques/reflection in role ● CONFIGURATING THE STORY configuration of episodes out of role with intermediate improvised actions, writing workshop - writing of narrative/theatrical work
D. ASSESSMENT Assessment of the action that leads to understanding and creates new action
E. PRESENTATION ²

A. CREATING ATMOSPHERE FOR THE GROUP

The animator, with genuine enthusiasm aims at creating a playful, amusing atmosphere, with introductory games and activities of observation, expression and communication, all of which strengthen the sense of ‘‘belonging’’ to the group. The participants sense a deep liberating process, expressed with intense bodily movement and imaginative action, while the animator motivates them to enjoy spontaneously its carelessness. In this ambiance they appreciate the simplicity of the game, without the stress of having to study anything particular (Kouretzis, 1991: 31).

B. INTRODUCING THE INITIAL ENVIRONMENT

Getting to know the work - Listening and reading of the story

² The presentation can also take the form of an organized theatrical performance (can also be a theatrical performance).

The animator reads to the participants the story of The Pied Piper of Hamelin, in an intense theatrical tone, aiming to create a feeling of sentimental and intellectual involvement and interaction.

He chooses to stop the narration³ at a point where intensity escalates, in an effort to boost their interest as to what happens next, while, at the same time, asks their point of view as to what might follow (Booth, 1994: 62). Thus, the point of interrupting the narration is when all the children of Hamelin are disappeared. The piper, who rid the city of the mice, took with him the children as the city mayor violated their agreement when he denied paying him the amount he had promised him. The prevailing question is critical and constitutes a turning point for the story's development, as well as for inventing alternative points of view. Are the children alive and if yes where are they?

C. CREATING THE DRAMATIC - NEW ENVIRONMENT

1. First remarks concerning the development of the story

The animator's concern is to facilitate the children determine and comprehend the structural elements of theatrical form and, particularly, of the dramatic environment and the "focus" - that is, the best angle through which the problem will be investigated; moreover, he has to determine the dramatic time and space as well as to explain the symbols (O' Toole and Haseman, 1984).

In order for the story to be properly explored, it is essential to choose a specific point of view. This, alternatively or consecutively, can be the mayor's point of view, the piper's, the parents', the children's, the chief cheese-maker's etc. Each one of those views corresponds the particular way with which each character perceives or reacts to the various problems that arise. In this light, the same fact is very often interpreted and handled differently by each character, depending on their personal beliefs as well as the benefits or courses of action that the process entails⁴.

A brief discussion, out of theatrical role, illuminates the characters' lives - their problems, their relationships to one another, their attitudes, their dead ends and their prospects (Neelands, 1990: 70).

2. Urging action and reflection - Introducing the roles

Introducing the roles constitutes the basis for decoding the story. It is of great importance that the participants undertake certain roles; they must put themselves in the place of the children, the mayor, the mice, the piper etc.

In order to familiarize with the roles, a "metamorphosis" should happen. And it can only happen if the participants believe in themselves (Wagner, 1990: 67), but most importantly if the animator achieves through his determinative role to build each character's psychology. Indeed, by which definite actions will he make them believe that they really have in them what it takes - what they claim to have?

It is imperative – in all the activities that will follow – that the animator "ensoul" the planning of the story's exploration, the conventions/techniques, the content and style

³ It's the corresponding phase of problematisation in the critical model of teaching, where superior cognitive functions like the assumption are challenged (Lipman, 2006).

⁴ It's about the epistemic mode of engagement, where "the meaning is faced as uncertain, impermanent and open in alternative interpretations and revisions" (Wells, 1990) cited in Pappas Ch. C. & Zecker L. B., 2006

of his words, his observations, his comments and rhetorical questions, the colours of his voice and his silences, his face expressions, his bodily movement as well as his immobility, in order to encourage the children's imagination and reflective emotions. He should devise on the spot his own tale, in a way to create a unique atmosphere, arousing thus the children's interest.

a) Bodily - kinaesthetic action - guided fantasy

The animator, using gestures and other expressive forms, suggests children to assume consecutively various roles and act through short frames which, though not directly related with the story he previously read to them, reflect however in general its environment. Alternately, then, whenever he finds it appropriate, he moves with them in the room assuming the same role as them, either moving or standing still in the greater area from where he animates each frame, careful not to make the narration of pictures too detailed, as this would limit their creative imagination. His aim is to increase the children's enthusiasm for the role, bringing them to the heart of the kinaesthetic and improvised scenic action. Consecutively they assume the roles of the city's children, the mayor, the mice, the piper etc.

With his words, describing an action, wondering for something or even leaving continuity gaps in an ambiguous way, the animator calls the children to play their own selves, to be pure and genuine. At the same time, he chooses suitable music to support the carelessness of their game. His words provide information about the place where the children are – their roles, feelings, movement, thinking etc., which give feedback to their imagination, bodily movement and expression.

Furthermore, he asks them to move as mice, while at the same time describes or asks them about their life, giving emphasis on the unexpected joy of rich food and good life, as well as on a feeling of dominance - a feeling he encourages them to express in an intense way through their bodies and faces. Where are they and how do they feel with so much food, how are they doing in the chief cheese-maker's shop with their family, in the city's streets etc. In the same way he can motivate their imagination and guide the action of the roles and, therefore, the mayor's point of view, the piper's, the chief cheese-maker's and so forth.

They improvise various frames of the story. They are moving in the room and when they see someone they express their sentimental state for whatever situation the animator suggests them to perform that moment. Indicatively, when grouped in pairs of two, one can be the mayor and the other one the piper (*during the making of the agreement, after its violation from the mayor, etc.*) or one the mayor and the other one a parent (*after the children's disappearance*) etc. – or vice-versa.

Through bodily movement and expression, they enact, among others:

- the plague of mice in the city
- the mayor's desperation for the mice problem
- the way both children and mice are enchanted by the piper's melody and gather by the hundreds in the city's square (immediately afterwards action freezes for thought and social situation tracking or simply for freezing of expression).
- the reaction (desperation and exasperation) of the parents/ the town council for the situation and the mayor's attitude (scowling, frowning, being thoughtful etc)
- the children's meeting with their parents after they have returned.

Of particular importance is the appropriateness of the various stimuli, in terms of their qualitative characteristics and, especially, of the animator's verbal stimuli (context, style, pauses, etc), of his bodily expression (face expression, movements of his body

parts, rhythm of movement, immobility, etc), of the music and sounds (style, volume, etc). And all this because the way the above stimuli are given, motivates accordingly the participants' mood to enter dynamically the action and believe in their role.

b) Thought and social situation tracking

After spontaneous kinaesthetic action follows thinking, as the animator asks children in role to think during the answering of his questions, which regard existing or even previous situations. In this way he urges them to explore their deep personal feelings. He explores their thoughts (talking freeze or thought tracking) and social situation and he poses questions about their identity (*who/what are you? What's your name?*), their emotional situation (*how are you feeling?*), the place where they are (*where are you?*) and whatever else he reckons he should know.

Moreover, he asks about the work they are doing ([action] *what are you doing?*), the motives (*why are you doing it?*), the investments (*what do you expect?*), the models (*who are you models?*) and their values (*what does this mean for your life?*) (Heathcote and Bolton, 1995: 19- 20).

He interrupts therefore the group's action in the role of the city's children, and by touching each one or some of them on the shoulder, asks them questions pertaining to their life as the city's children (what are you? what are you doing? how do you feel? have you got any friends? what games are you playing together? what makes you happy? etc). If the animator thinks is necessary, he can respond to their answer with a new question: that requires readiness and the skill to pose suitable questions with regard to the psycho-emotional and social situation of every participant, in two levels: a) as an individual and b) as the city's child, since there is strong interaction between the two roles, social and theatrical.

Similarly, he can ask the participants after their action in the mice's role (*..., how are you feeling now that you eat the chief cheese-maker's cheese? How do you think the chief cheese-maker's children feel now that their dad has no cheese to sell?...*), in the mayor's role (*how are you feeling now that the city is plagued by mice? What are you planning to do?...*), in the piper's (*what can you do with your pipe? where are you from?...*), in the chief cheese-maker's (*what are you planning to do now that your work is ruined? how are your children dealing with the difficult situation you are getting through?*) and so forth.

The animator can pose questions to the children that are in the freeze frame:

‘Who are you, where are you, what are your feelings for what is happening, what do you think that should happen?

How do you feel being mayor? Why did you claim the mayor's place? What is more important for you? Where do you think the children are? Are you a parent too? Have you spoken with any of the parents?

How are you feeling now? What is your opinion about the mayor? If you were him, how would you react?’

c) Forum Theatre

The mayor and the piper, under the shadow of the mice problem, are discussing alone in the mayor's office. It's the convention of improvisation, which gives the chance to more than two participants to express their opinions (Boal, 2001), as every spectator who wants can – by raising their hands - replace someone from the previous ones and

show their own opinion about the mayor's and the piper's attitude towards the negotiation of the agreement.

Before the discussion, the animator gives some information about the precise place and time of the meeting and, maybe, about the psychological and social situation of the characters.

During the improvisation - which could be taking place in an environment with appropriate music and lighting - there is a flow of information which illuminates particular aspects of the characters, deriving from what the children involved in the discussion say.

The animator can contribute to the dialogue's quality, for instance by stopping it at certain critical points, if he thinks it would help, and posing appropriate questions to the mayor and the piper, (see "thought and social situation tracking" convention), facilitating thus the listeners to comprehend every concept as well as the discussion to flow smoothly.

d) Role-playing

Instead of the convention presented in theatre forum, another one can be chosen: the role game, where in order to deal with the mice problem and after an invitation from the mayor, the piper joins the city council meeting and give its members sufficient explanations as to his ability to tackle the situation effectively.

In the meeting the animator can play the mayor or the piper and through their views guide the exploration of the story. Of particular importance are the questions made by the animator who, depending on the situation, can argue or raise questions about the social, political, economical and moral aspect of the problem. Consequently, through conversation he can broaden the participants' minds (O' Neill, 1989: 147- 159).

Another way to boost faith in the theatrical role is through a development of the ritual convention; preparing and reading out issues of the agenda during the city council meeting, as well as introducing the piper. Additionally, participants could use cards with their names written on them, and the arrangement of the desks could be made in a realistic or minimalist-symbolic way.

Alternately or selectively, in role-playing the following subjects can be developed:

- The parents of the school's parents association discuss about the children being kidnapped and ways to deal with the situation (the animator in the role of the parents association president).
- The parents of the school's parents association welcome the piper and try to persuade him to set the children free (the animator in the role of the piper).
- After the children's disappearance the city council meets, along with the mayor; many councillors agree with his actions while many others keep a critical eye towards him. They discuss various ways to solve the problem (the animator can undertake the role of the mayor and at one point the role of a postman who brings news that will change the situation unexpectedly and will give the action the necessary dramatic tension).

In this meeting the piper (the animator in role) can suddenly come along and lay down his conditions – not necessarily involving personal gain - for the children's return. For instance, he can say he heard rumours that many parents force their children to do labour jobs and so to ask the city council to ensure the children's healthy living in Hamelin.

e) Improvisation

Alternatively, a monologue can be presented by the mayor or the piper, whose characteristics will be congruent with the dominant emotion of the situation. The three phases below are indicative:

In the present phase the monologue can be confessional, something that could reveal the real intentions of each character.

In the next phase during the children's disappearance the monologue can be apologetic, either because of the mayor's guilt about not giving the agreed amount of money to the piper or because of the piper's guilt to take the children with him. But also in the end of the story, once the children have returned and their adventure ended successfully, the monologue can illuminate the emotions and the personality of the characters (the mayor, the piper, the councillors, the parents).

Thus, facing the audience or standing, pacing up and down around the mayor, the piper or a parent who sits on a chair:

- The mayor talks to himself about the situation, the reason that caused the kidnapping and his share of responsibility (*I couldn't resist the idea that Hamelin would save money. It was my belief that we could build an orphanage with it, which was always our dream. It was my fault, I know it, but I wanted to help the city. I couldn't believe that the piper would be so revengeful*). (Consecutively can follow as many participants wish to).
- A parent talks to himself about the situation, he expresses his feelings and he suggests a way to react (Consecutively can follow as many participants wish to).

f) Hot seating

The animator – or one of the participants⁵, according to the psycho-pedagogical - didactical and dramatical aims, can choose the mayor's role, the piper's, a parent's or someone else's and sincerely answer the questions of participants who are out of role or in role – that of a journalist for instance, while the situation in terms of time can be either before or after the children's disappearance, or even after their return.

In this emotional environment, the animator – or a child - in theatrical role sits at the centre of the stage and talks about anything he is asked in relation to the problem, about his attitude and his behaviour, but also generally about his life. Often, questions focused on the personal life of the characters that sit on the hot seating (family, childhood, a fact that at the beginning wasn't revealed, etc), give an unexpected dimension and development in the story and cause a new interpretation and understanding of their personality.

The group is sitting around the central character. Everyone poses a question to the character and waits for the answer, without however a conversation developing between them. In this way the optical angle of the role is illuminated, as the aim is not to hear what the participants think, but what the character actually believes.

Of course, the questions, depending on the aim of each activity (for example language exercise) can have been already prepared from the group in a previous activity. This, nevertheless, reduces the power of questions, as every following question should take

⁵ The hot seating might need particular attention, if one of the participants undertakes the central role; the animator should take under consideration the psycho-social demands of the role before assign it to anyone, as those demands may be disproportional in regard to one's coping abilities.

into consideration the previous questions and answers, something that would not happen if the questions were not prepared.

Instead of sitting around the central character who is sitting or standing, the participants can ask questions while standing around him, either facing him or with their backs turned or in another way, which every time determines the psychodynamic of the activity.

a) children in theatrical role (journalists, parents, etc)	during the problem with the mice	after the children's disappearance	after the children's return
b) children out of role			
mayor			
piper			
parent			

ii. Afterwards, the children in the role of the parents, while moving in the space, express with bodily and verbal expressions their feelings (for example sympathy) towards the mayor or the piper, who is sitting on the seat.

g) Freeze frame (in the past, the present, the future)

In still image the children prepare and enact themes that reflect their interest, like:

- The mayor discussing with the piper.
- The parents discovering that their children are missing.
- The mayor - perhaps psycho-emotionally influenced - many years after the children's disappearance.
- The city councillors, depending on the decision they will take, showing their emotional state.

In the activity the emphasis is given to the facial and bodily expression of the characters, but also to the bodily pose and the way they place themselves in relation to each other. Thus, the freeze frame as a sociogram maps out their personal and social relationships.

h) Thought and social situation tracking

The animator can repeat the convention of thought and social situation tracking and ask the children that are in the still image:

- (question to any character) Who are you, how do you feel about what is happening, what do you think that should happen?
- (question to the mayor) How do you feel as a mayor? Why did you claim the mayor's place? What is the most important thing for you? Where do you think the children are? Are you a parent too? Have you spoken with any parents?
- (question to any character) How do you feel now? What is your opinion for the mayor? How would you react, if you were him?

i) Role on the wall

A child lies down on a big sheet of paper and the rest draw his outline, which can be:

- the mayor's outline.

Afterwards, out of theatrical role, they write out of the mayor's outline (with markers) their thoughts and points of view on the situation and his behaviour⁶.

You don't understand that what you did was wrong?... You made a mistake! Say you are sorry!... mayor, it's your fault! Now the whole village will suffer because you didn't keep your word. You have done it again. All the children disappeared!... Your own child is gone!... You are a greedy scum! You got the children into trouble!... Happiness is not in quantity but in quality... is money all you care about? ... Why didn't you keep your promise? Aren't you afraid with the mess you have caused?... You did it well!... Why did you break your promise? Everybody is punished now because of you... Are you happy with this? What do you have to say now? You should know that there is no such thing as a coincidence. You deserve your sufferings!...

The children, from the mayor's point of view, write inside the outline their thoughts and self-criticism.

He seems good but I have the authority!... I wanted everything and now I lost everything. What can I do? Where can I find him and tell him that I am sorry?... The piper played a dirty trick on us though he didn't seem capable of doing so. I made a mess of it. You may lose what you have by grasping for more ... I want my child back. I don't care even if he takes all my fortune... If I could turn time back, I would change everything ... I couldn't imagine such a disaster. It was my fault! Now I should correct my mistake. But how?... Dear God, what have I done!! I regret the way I behaved... I should have kept my word! My child, what I have done, what I have done! Oh death, redeem me!... I made a mistake. I apologise to all of you. I will beg the piper to bring our children back!... Everyone pays for their mistakes. I should make things right!... I couldn't imagine that the situation would come to this... I behaved badly and now I'm paying for this. What am I going to do? How can I make things right?...

- the piper's outline

Afterwards, out of theatrical role, they write out of the piper's outline their thoughts and points of view on the situation and his behaviour.

I know that you feel bitter. Take care of the children... You should teach the mayor a lesson for the way he treated you... Don't be sad for this injustice. The only responsible is the mayor... Don't wrong the others! Where are the children-citizens? How will they come back?... You could revenge only the mayor. The children are innocent! No good deed goes unpunished... Please bring the children back to the city... Find another way to revenge... You are right. But it's not the children's fault. You are a musician. You enchant and you are being enchanted. You can't hurt anyone!... You did the right thing punishing him. But don't hurt the children... You did what you knew best. You rid of the mice. But think again what you did with the children! It's not right!... You taught the mayor a valuable lesson. But the children should return back to their families!...

The children, from the piper's point of view, write inside the outline and justify his attitude towards the mayor's dirty tricks.

I cannot understand how this man was elected mayor... We are going away just for a while. Just to scare the mayor... Of course there are also the others. Let them wait in

⁶ Writing thoughts to the mayor about the situation and his behaviour – out of the outline - could also be done by the participants in the parents' role or in the role of the Hamelin's children.

distress, since they elected such a mayor...I will not hurt the children. I only want the mayor to understand his mistake...I taught the mayor the lesson he deserved. It's not the children's fault. I will...This greedy soul should be taught his lesson, he and the whole village that elected him. Whatever happened to values?...I didn't care for the money. But the mayor should be taught a lesson! He deserved to suffer!...I think that he has learned his lesson. I will return the children back to their families!...Greed and dishonesty shall be punished!...He should finally understand that he cannot use his power to cheat and take advantage of others...You will regret this bitterly. I promise you!...I will not be humiliated...How I ended up like this. I became the same as he. This cannot continue. I should return the children back to the city... All of them believe that they are so strong and invulnerable! They need to be taught a lesson...This is how you treat me? I will show you then. You did me wrong and you will be punished. I asked for so little and instead you revealed your real self to me: a liar, a conceited person⁷ ...

The children can also:

- choose and mark a symbol on a part of the mayor's or the piper's body. The selection of the part or of the symbol reflects the opinion of each one for the character's personality⁸.
- create the outline of a pipe, the music instrument. At first as mayors, before the news about the children's disappearance, they make suggestions and write on a piece of paper about the pipe's potential help. After the story's development, in the role of the mayor, they evaluate the impact of the pipe on their city, using the previous piece of paper or in a new outline.
- place on the mayor's outline – body - gifts to him.
- consider what they have written by reading it aloud or silently, each one his own or someone else's.

j) Conscience alley - Conflicting advice

The participants are standing in two groups, one opposite to the other, forming with their arms a tunnel (conscience alley). The mayor walks through it, looking at each participant, now to his left, then to his right, listening all that time what they say to him. (*Apologise to the parents and find the strength to fight for the children...What is done cannot be undone, now the only thing that matters is the children...Stop crying and find solutions in the city council...*). The piper can walk through the tunnel too, as well as any other character that might be asked by the participants or that the animator suggests. Thus, as a character walks through, he can listen to the participants in role or out of role, like for example:

- the mayor hears:
 - the participants' opinion out of theatrical role,
 - voices in his head,

⁷ The texts are written by the participants of the relevant workshop which was conducted in Athens in March 2008 during the 6th Conference of Hellenic Theatre, Drama and Education Network.

⁸ In the workshop of the 6th Conference of Hellenic Theatre, Drama and Education Network the participants were asked by the animator to draw the symbol which they thought more suitable to the mayor's or the piper's condition. Almost all participants chose either the heart or the head.

the city councillors' points of view before he decides what is to be done now that the children are lost, etc.

- the piper hears
 - the participants' opinion out of theatrical role,
 - voices in his head,
 - the parents' opinion etc.

The convention can be developed in a different way, where all the participants, in theatrical role, do not create a tunnel, but another equivalent creative form with their bodies.

The main characteristics of the convention are on one hand the gravity of the situation which the character faces, and on the other hand the tension which is usually caused by conflicting advice. The animator can intensify these elements with a poetic, enigmatic style in his introductory clarifications and comments.

In order to create a powerful experience, it is important the feeling that the animator produces while reciting instructions. Thus, he explains the convention in a few words, without any specific analysis and further explanations, as this would destroy the atmosphere. He emphasizes the poetic function of each word and phrase, which reflects his beliefs in the state of the conscience's voices.

k) Collective Role

The participants represent the mayor's thoughts; he is seated in front of them and reacts only through his bodily expression to what the players say – the thoughts, that stand right behind him. (*What I did wasn't right...It wasn't the children's fault. It wasn't my son's fault...*)

The convention of collective role is important, as it gives the opportunity for co-ordination of speech and movement. Each thought that is spoken out spontaneously by the mayor or the piper becomes an emotional reaction and bodily expression and this constitutes an excellent exercise of observation, attention and listening, as the convention often requires transition from one emotional state to an opposite one.

l) A Day in the Life

At the beginning the children create still frames from the mayor's life; from his childhood (past), his adult life (present) and his senior years (future). Through these freeze frames – at a second layer - can occur thought and social situation tracking or their depictions can be brought to life through short improvised action.

This convention encourages time tracking through observation and retrospection of the situations, while the pictures created facilitate transition from present time to the past and again to the future as well as understanding of attitudes and behaviours. Indeed, giving emphasis to the transforming dynamic of this convention, the animator can ask from the participants who observe the picture to change the bodily pose and expression of the players who enact the situations, which allows analysis of their psycho- social aspects.

m) Writing in role

The children, individually or collectively, in various phases of the exploration, can create their written texts (writing in role), like letters, messages, diaries or any other, with all kind of subjects (for example the absence of a beloved person, etc):

Letters

- A letter from the city's children to the mayor
- A letter from the mayor to a colleague to say about his successful agreement
- A letter from the mayor to the piper
- A letter from the parents to the mayor or the piper
- A letter from the parents to the city council

The letter is written with the animator playing the president of the parents' association. (Before the composition of the letter the parents can express their opinions in the forum theatre).

Messages

- Messages from the children to the mayor
- Messages from the children to the piper

Diaries

- The mayor's diary about the forthcoming meeting with the piper and what they expect from this (impressions, reservations, predictions, motives, visions)
- The mayor's diary about the children's kidnapping
- The mayor's diary after the happy ending
- A parent's diary
- The children's teacher diary
- A mouse's diary
- The chief cheese-maker's diary
- A child's diary
- The mayor's child diary
- The participants' diary (out of role)

n) Teacher in role

The animator performs various roles (teacher in role), like the mayor's, the piper's, etc. Thus, playing a messenger, he can bring a cassette or a letter with the children's answer, from which we learn that they ask to stay with the piper for a while longer or that they ask the mayor to go on trial etc.

o) Document

In the above convention of "teacher in role" can also be added the convention of the Document, where the animator can undertake the role of a messenger or a resident and bring to the city council a document, like a child's hat that he supposedly found in a street out of the city.

The document's presence creates a realistic situation, which is reinforced by the animator's words, which in turn create a great sensation. In this psycho-intellectual and social environment the flow of the city council's conference can change and that can have a catalytic influence on any decision they take for further actions.

p) Improvisation

Two children or the whole group, in individual or collective role, are lying down on the floor without looking at each other, with appropriate music, and enact the mayor's

meeting with his son who has now returned – though that this can also be happening in a dream.

An improvised dialogue is developing, that often looks like interactive monologues which illuminate the relationship between father and son. A remarkable meeting takes place - could be many years after - something like a life's account before an important moment (for example the mayor's child getting married, the last hours before the mayor's death).

The animator, with interstitial poetic monologues, animates and often directs the imagination of the participants, who respond in the role of the mayor or his son with their improvised and spontaneous scenic action and speech. A poetic atmosphere is created, deeply sensitive, with solid language and profound meditation. Figures are moving or standing still, walking, running or crawling, soliloquize or converse and envision their previous, as well as their future lives. In a dreamlike fantasy, in the course of a lifetime.

The animator could say:

That night in Hamelin the son met his father...

That night in Hamelin the mayor found himself...

That night in Hamelin father and son left forever and went to find the piper in another world, without unhappiness, in a paradise world.

If the road brings you in Hamelin, seek for the children and look into their eyes...

If the road brings you in Hamelin, listen to the children's song...

If the road brings you in Hamelin, don't forget to ask for that mayor...

If the road brings you in Hamelin, you will find that Hamelin is your soul...

3) The configuration of the story

In the writing workshop the children can form and compose a narrative or a theatrical text (Grammatas, 2003: 458). Thus, in *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, the previous stage activities (creation of action and reflection) can give feedback to the children's new text, which could be presented in a presentation (see table 1).

D. ASSESSMENT

The children, out of role, assess their work. It is a process of formative assessment (Morgan and Saxton, 1995: 194- 195). Within the group they write or express orally their opinions and feelings. Also, they discuss about different versions of the story (Booth 1994: 95).

The particular atmosphere of the story's exploration, which on previous stages is based on the playful and poetic sense of the words as well as the animator's bodily expression, is also present during the assessment; an idiomorphic form of a reflective activity that gives emphasis to the artistic-cogitative emotion and understanding through the experience (Papadopoulos, 2004).

In that sense, children are sitting in the group's circle and inside it put the mayor's outline. What do they want to tell him? What do they want to say to each other about how they felt and what they thought? What was it that they wanted to say but never did? And so forth.

Moreover, the animator can give them a lump of earth which passes from hand to hand. Each one feels it, smells it and puts it back on the outline. They observe the picture. They close their eyes and keep the feeling. They bring back to their minds the outline-body of the mayor, the words that were written before and the lump of the

earth now. They keep silent. What does this bit of earth symbolize? How does it relate to the mayor? What do they want to say? With their eyes open or closed they express either with words or with bodily expression what they feel. But also a piece of fabric or lace, a sample from the children who returned to the city, or a bottle with the mayor's tears can constitute documents and symbols for the understanding not only of the story, but also of their own lives.

The trip to Hamelin can be a soul-inspiring ride where the world is viewed through collective action and reflection.

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