

■ Bodies That Matter: How Does a Performer Make Himself/Herself a Dilated Body?*

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Abstract

What is a “body”? The entire material or physical structure of a human organism? The flesh as opposed to the spirit/mind/soul? An endless weaving together of singular tissues, organs, or states, each of which is an integration of one or more impulses? A relation of forces? The reservoir of language? The inscribed surface of events? The discursive site of poststructuralism? What then is a dilated body? How does a performer make himself/herself a dilated body? Why does the dilation of the body put the body at risk? For Eugenio Barba, director, theorist, and founder of the Odin Teatret, the body is a network of energy. To act is to dilate the body and engage the entire body’s energy. The secret of the performer’s body technique is to dilate “the body’s dynamics.” Barba not only gives us an insight into the performer’s secret art but also provides us with a poetics of the dilated body. The dilated body is a site which expands itself and encompasses the whole field of energy. Only under the circumstances that a performer can dilate his/her body can he/she

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“consequently also dilate the spectator’s perception.” The purpose of this paper is to explore Barba’s theoretical formulation bearing on the making of a dilated body. This project gains its insights from Artaud’s notion of the “Body without Organs” and is further inspired by Deleuze and Guattari’s interpretation of the notion. Thus, before anything else, it purports to discuss the potential meanings and significance of the “Body without Organs” in Artaud’s as well as Deleuze and Guattari’s discourse. Then, it will examine Barba’s theorization of “the dilated body” and its related ideas, such as the notion of energy, the craft of the actor, and the discipline of theatre anthropology. Meanwhile, this paper proposes to analyze Barba’s theory of the dilated body along with other critical thinkers of the body such as Spinoza, Butler, Foucault, Nietzsche, Grotowski, etc.

Keywords: body, energy, Eugenio Barba, dilated body, Body without Organs, Antonin Artaud, Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari

What is a “body”? The entire material or physical structure of a human organism? The flesh as opposed to the spirit/mind/soul? An endless weaving together of singular tissues, organs, or states, each of which is an integration of one or more impulses? A relation of forces? The reservoir of language? The inscribed surface of events? The discursive site of poststructuralism? What then is a body without organs or a dilated body? How does a performer make himself/herself a dilated body? Why does the dilation of the body put the body at risk?

For Friedrich Nietzsche, the human body is “a more astonishing idea than the old ‘soul’” (347-48). In *Bodies That Matter*, Judith Butler refines our understandings of the complexly performative character of sexuality and gender and jolts us to think about the way the bodies are regulated, that is to say, the formation of a “regulated body.” As Butler remarks, “If the bounding, forming, and deforming of sexed bodies is animated by a set of founding prohibitions, a set of enforced criteria of intelligibility, then we are not merely considering how bodies appear from the vantage point of a theoretical position or epistemic location at a distance from bodies themselves. On the contrary, we are asking how the criteria of intelligible sex operates to constitute a field of bodies, and how precisely we might understand specific criteria to produce the bodies that they regulate” (55). In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, in the wake of Spinoza and Nietzsche, Deleuze raises the important question about the capability and nature of the body: “What is the body? We do not define it by saying that it is a field of forces, a nutrient medium fought over by a plurality of forces. For, in fact, there is no ‘medium,’ no field of forces or battle. There is no quantity of reality, all reality is already a quantity of force” (39-40). Thus, what defines a body is not anything else, not medium, nor agency, but the very “relation between dominant and dominated forces” (40). “Every relationship of forces,” argues Deleuze, “constitutes a body—whether it is chemical, biological, social or political. Any two forces, being unequal, constitute a body as soon as they enter into a relationship” (40). In other words, the body is “a multiple phenomenon” “composed of a plurality of irreducible forces” (40). In Chapter 6 of *A Thousand Plateaus*, “November 28, 1947: How do you Make Yourself a Body without Organs?” Deleuze and Guattari invoke Artaud’s image of the “Body without Organs” to teach us to make ourselves a “Body without Organs” and to wage a war against psychoanalysis and theories of organism: “The BwO is what remains when you take everything away. What you take away is precisely the phantasy, and significances and subjectifications as a whole. Psychoanalysis does the opposite: it translates everything into phantasies, it converts everything into phantasy, it retains phantasy. It royally botches the real, because it botches the BwO” (151). While it is more a metaphysical concept in Deleuze and Guattari, the term “body” is more a materialized and historicized

entity in Michel Foucault. In his essay “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History,” Foucault makes a concrete and “materialized” statement about the status of the body in light of genealogy and history, namely the “inscribed body”: “The body is the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of a dissociated self (adopting the illusion of a substantiated unity), and a volume in perpetual disintegration. Genealogy, as an analysis of descent, is thus situated within the articulation of the body and history. Its task is to expose a body totally imprinted by history and the process of history’s destruction of the body” (83).

For Eugenio Barba, director, theorist, and founder of the Odin Teatret, the body is a network of energy and the “whole body thinks/acts, with another quality of energy” (*Paper Canoe* 52). To act is to dilate the body and engage the entire body’s energy. The secret of the performer’s body technique is to dilate “the body’s dynamics” (62). Barba not only gives us an insight into the performer’s secret art but also provides us with a poetics of the dilated body. The dilated body is a site which expands itself and encompasses the whole field of energy. Only under the circumstances that a performer can dilate his/her body can he/she “consequently also dilate the spectator’s perception” (62). While to dilate is to enlarge or expand in bulk or extent, it is also an act of “*écarter*,” which signifies not only to part or spread but also to deviate, to turn or move aside. Representing nothing but its will to “em-body,” the dilated body, through its expansion, forces open the cryptic space and dissolves a vital bodily boundary. Its objective is not to bring to light the body’s shapes, forms, or structures, but rather to mobilize, to revive, or activate what’s inside the body in all directions.

How does a performer make himself/herself a dilated body? The purpose of this paper is to explore Barba’s theoretical formulation bearing on the making of a dilated body. This project gains its insights from Artaud’s notion of the “Body without Organs” and is further inspired by Deleuze and Guattari’s interpretation of the notion. Thus, before anything else, it purports to discuss the notion’s potential meanings and significance in Artaud’s as well as Deleuze and Guattari’s discourse. Then, it will examine Barba’s theorization of the dilated body and its related ideas, such as the notion of energy, the craft of the actor, and the discipline of theatre anthropology, with the backbone of Artaud, Deleuze and Guattari’s theories. The paper attempts to draw a comparison between the two notions—the Body without Organs and the dilated body—by looking into their correlations, functionings, and transformations. Finally, the paper will evaluate and critique Barba’s theorization of theatre anthropology and the notion of the dilated body.

This paper intends to analyze Barba’s theory of the dilated body along with critical thinkers of the body such as Spinoza, Butler, Foucault, Nietzsche, Derrida,

and Deleuze as well as great theatre directors such as Meyerhold, Artaud, and Grotowski. The purpose to draw various conceptions of the body from modern critical thinkers and theatre practitioners alike is to use them, as from the Deleuzian “tool box,”¹ not only to explore the formation of the dilated body but also to weave a tapestry of argument about it. These theories of the body do not delimit or totalize our subject in question but are instruments for its multiplication and expansion, like the dilated body or the body without organs.

The Body at (the) Stake: From the Body without Organs to the Dilated Body

Furthermore, when we speak the word “life,” it must be understood we are not referring to life as we know it from its surface of fact, but to that fragile, fluctuating center which forms never reach. And if there is still one hellish, truly accursed thing in our time, it is our artistic dallying with forms, instead of being like victims burnt at the stake, signaling through the flames.

—Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre and Its Double* 13

Antonin Artaud, in his Preface—“The Theatre and Culture”—to *The Theatre and Its Double*, keeps reminding us that it is time for us to break through language, form, and organisms in order to touch the “fragile, fluctuating center” (13) of life, because our flirting and dallying with words, forms, and organizations has prevented us from reaching its core and recreating the theatre. What is at stake is not the body burnt at the stake but our relentless determination to hold on to masterpieces, organisms and representations. For him, our mission is to make all our efforts to create a theatre which can bring the sacred and mythic life back to the theatre and make the invisible visible. Artaud, nevertheless, is not the only one who is concerned with the body at (the) stake (at stake or at the stake).

In this section, I will explore the notion of the “body without organs” in the interests of my own venture, that is, to analyze the making of the dilated body. In his *Lecture Notes on Leibniz*, Deleuze once said that “[e]very time you need to cry

¹ In a conversation between Foucault and Deleuze, Deleuze makes explicit statements about the use of theory: “A theory is exactly like a box of tools. It has nothing to do with the signifier. It must be useful. It must function. And not for itself. If no one uses it, beginning with the theoretician himself (who then ceases to be a theoretician), then the theory is worthless or the moment is inappropriate. We don’t revise a theory, but construct new ones; we have no choice but to make others. . . . A theory does not totalize; it is an instrument for multiplication and it also multiplies itself” (208). Please see the article for further information: “Intellectual and Power: A Conversation between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze” in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1977) 205-17.

out, I think that you're not far from a kind of appeal to philosophy."² If to cry out is the best approach to philosophy or philosophizing, Artaud certainly qualifies himself to be a Deleuzian philosopher who knows how to cry out and to appeal to philosophy. Before his death, Artaud recorded his notorious *To have done with the judgment of god* in Paris which was re-scheduled to be broadcast on the 2nd of February, 1948. He recorded not only the text but also his "immensely long and devastating scream" (Barber 207) on the 16th of January, 1948. Unfortunately on the 1st of February, "the day before Artaud's recording *To have done with the judgment of god* was due to be transmitted, the director of the radio station, Wladimir Porch, listened to the work and immediately banned its transmission" on the ground that "it was inflammatory, obscene and blasphemous" (Barber 207). Artaud was furious and felt deeply wounded by the decision. Although the recording's texts were published as a book later, "the silencing of his screams, cries and beatings was a source of terrible despair to him" (Barber 207).³

If to cry out is part of thinking, philosophy, then, is something people do with their mind as well as their body, a dilated body. In the text *To Have Done with the Judgment of God*, Artaud cries out with all his might, expresses his desire to become a body without organs, and declares war on the organs: "Man is sick because he is badly constructed. We must make up our minds to strip him bare in order to scrape off that animalcule that itches him mortally, god, and with god his organs. For you can tie me up if you wish, but there is nothing more useless than an organ" (*Selected Writings* 570-71). He goes on to argue that the "body without organs" is the way to deliver him from "all his automatic reactions" and restores him to his "true freedom" (571). Artaud conjures up the image of the body without organs as a non-organic or non-structured embodiment that is able to liberate the body from organisms. Artaud is always mindful of a deeply buried well of energy-force inside the body which has been covered or stratified by layers of structures or organisms which only serve to hinder the freedom necessary for thought and creativity. In his letter to Jacque Riviere in 1924, Artaud has already stated this need to get in touch with the raw life force explicitly: "A man possesses himself in flashes, and even when he possesses himself, he does not reach himself completely. He does not realize that constant cohesion of his forces without which all true creation is impossible" (*Theatre* 43). All of his life, Artaud has been

² Gilles Deleuze, *Lecture Notes on Leibniz*, April 15, 1980, <http://www.webdeleuze.com> (accessed Nov. 12, 2009).

³ As Artaud wrote to Jean Paulhan, "the sounds will not be heard, the resounding xylophony, the screams, the guttural noises and the voice, all of which would have at last constituted a first grinding-over of the Theatre of Cruelty. This is a DISASTER for me" (qtd. in Barber 209; *OC* XIII 139).

trying to promote or preach this vision of the body. Before his life comes to its cruel end, he puts forth this eerie and yet provocative image of the body to embody his lifelong bodily imagination.

The Artaudian image of the BwO has exerted a powerful impact on people's imagination. Its sheer poetic power and metaphoric drive have invested the image with a fascinating and disturbing quality. Different thinkers or theorists have appropriated this image for their own ends. Derrida, for example, in order to support his deconstructive thesis, qualifies his arguments by turning to Artaud's comments concerning the body without organs. He argues that for Artaud "the division of the body into organs, the difference interior to the flesh, opens the lack through which the body becomes absent from itself. . ." (186). For Derrida, Artaud's vision for a pure theatre of cruelty, a theatre without the metaphysical dualities of the past, is concomitant with Artaud's desire to become a body without organs, the free and autonomous body which does not suffer from internal divisions and blockages. Derrida concludes by arguing that for Artaud, "[t]he reconstitution of the body must be autarchic; it cannot be given any assistance and the body must be remade of a single piece" (187). In "The Theatre of Cruelty" article, Derrida contends that Artaud "wanted to save the purity of a presence without interior difference and without repetition" (249). He seems to suggest that Artaud's body without organs, though a critique of the traditional metaphysical dualities of the theatre, repeats the metaphysical tradition which thinks in terms of a pure, self-identical presence. For him, Artaud's "Theatre of Cruelty" does not deviate from the metaphysical tradition. On the contrary, he reinforces it by holding on fast to a pure, self-identical presence: "One entire side of his [Artaud's] discourse destroys a tradition which lives within difference, alienation, and negativity without seeing their origin and necessity. To reawaken this tradition, Artaud, in sum, recalls it to its own motifs: self-presence, unity, self-identity, the proper, etc. In this sense, Artaud's 'metaphysics,' at its most critical moments, fulfills the most profound and permanent ambition of Western metaphysics" (194). Derrida, while recognizing Artaud's aversion to the organization and differentiation inherent to the body without organs, critiques Artaud on the ground that his image of a body without organs is a reinforcement of the metaphysical pure presence.

As for Deleuze and Guattari, the body without organs is offered as an alternative in opposition to the organization of the body and, unlike Derrida, it is not put forward as something that is itself undifferentiated: "The body without organs is not a dead body but a living body all the more alive and teeming once it has blown apart the organism and its organization. . . . The full body without organs is a body populated by multiplicities" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 30). Rather

than, as psychoanalysis does, regarding the body as the developmental union or aggregate of partial objects, organs, drives, and bits, each with their own significance and their own pleasures, which are, through Oedipalization, brought into line with the body's organic unity, Deleuze and Guattari instead invoke Artaud's conception of the Body without Organs. They have lavished an entire chapter, Chapter 6, to address the notion in their magnum opus *A Thousand Plateaus*. The Chapter is entitled "November 28, 1947: How Do You Make Yourself a Body Without Organs?" and the date "November 28, 1947" preceding this title is the date originally scheduled for the radio broadcast of *To Have Done with the Judgment of God*.

For my own interest in this paper, Deleuze and Guattari's interpretation of the BwO is no less interesting. In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari argue that "the body suffers from being organized" or "from not having some other sort of organization or no organization at all" (21, 8). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari stretch the image even further and describe the Body without Organs as a "worldwide intensity map" (165) and they argue that "[w]e come to the gradual realization that the BwO is not at all the opposite of the organs. The organs are not its enemies. The enemy is the organism. The BwO is opposed not to the organs but to that organization of the organs called the organism" (158). While conjuring up Artaud the person as a figure and figuration for their conception of an alternative mode of thought which they call schizoanalysis,⁴ they appropriate Artaud's notion of the "body without organs" for their conception of the plane of immanence: "The BwO is the field of immanence of desire, the plane of consistency specific to desire. . ." (154).⁵ It is important to note that Deleuze often describes immanence and consistency as a plane or a field, able to expand or extend at will just as "the flow of desire itself" (156). In addition to the phrase "the plane or field of immanence," Deleuze and Guattari also like to use the word "continuum" to describe the status of the BwO: "A continuum of all substances in intensity and of all intensities in substance. The uninterrupted continuum of the BwO" (154).

⁴ For Deleuze and Guattari, schizoanalysis promotes the freedom of desire as a productive force traversing the segmented lines of habitual thought as so many intensities.

⁵ The notion of immanence, meaning the state of existing or remaining within or not going beyond a given domain, is central to Deleuzian philosophy. Returning time and again throughout his writings, this notion is employed by Deleuze to critique the structure of organization and development, to put into question the concepts such as transcendence, lack, and exteriority, and to undermine the Cartesian logic of binary oppositions between mind and body, self and the other, as well as outside and inside. "The field of immanence," write Deleuze and Guattari, "is not internal to the self, but neither does it come from an external self or a nonself. Rather, it is like the absolute Outside that knows no Selves because interior and exterior are equally a part of the immanence in which they have fused" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 156).

The BwO points to an ineffable zone that allows at once for the organization and dis-organization of intensities on its synthetic surface. Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the Body without Organs constitutes their attempt both to denaturalize the human body and to place it in direct relations with the flows or particles of other bodies or entities. The BwO as becoming and flow of forces refers indistinguishably to human, animal, textual, sociocultural, and physical bodies.⁶ It is not a body evacuated of a psychic interiority; rather, it is a limit or a tendency to which all bodies aspire. Deleuze and Guattari speak of it as an egg, a surface of intensities before it is stratified, organized, and hierarchized. It lacks depth or internal organization, and can instead be regarded as a flow or the arresting of a flow, of intensities. Moreover, the BwO is a singular unthinkable and unproductive body, which defies the dialectical logic and is a point of departure from questions of domination and control. It is no longer defined in terms of how it appears to consciousness, but is defined in terms of the forces that give rise to it. Indeed, it is regarded as an assemblage of forces, a becoming of forces, and a site where forces act upon each other.

Bearing a striking parallel to Deleuze and Guattari's attempt to conceptualize the BwO as a body of immanence, consistency, continuum, intensities, and a becoming of forces, Eugenio Barba's theatre anthropology is marked by a subversive and perilous attempt to map out a new becoming of the dilated body which is a composition that brings into play force, energy, velocity, thermodynamics, intensity and affect very much like the Artaudian and Deleuze and Guattari's body without organs. Taken together these various planes of immanence or regimes of signs mentioned above, the dilated body signals not definitive meanings but the energy-intensity-flow in an ever-expanded consistent space. "The performer, through long practice and continuous training," writes Barba, "fixes this 'inconsistency' by a process of innervation, develops new neuro-muscular reflexes which result in a renewed body culture, a 'second nature,' a new consistency, artificial but marked with *bios*" (*Paper Canoe* 26). The scenic *bios* of a performance needs to develop new consistent neuro-muscular reflexes and layerings that induce a new body culture. However, unlike the notion of the BwO theorized by Artaud and Deleuze and Guattari which is more inclined to be an abstract concept and dwells more on a metaphysical plane, Barba's notion of the dilated body bears a concrete physical existence and is a typical mind-body

⁶ In Chapter 10—"1730: Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible"—of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari address the topic of becoming from the molecular point of view since a molar state is often "endowed with organs" and "assigned as a subject" (275). For them, "all becomings are molecular" (275).

continuum which employs extra-daily techniques, organizes the performer's scenic *bios*, and generates new performer-spectator relationships and unexpected possibilities for meaning in performance.

What characterizes the very moment of dilation? How does the performer's body work to dilate itself? While dilation is the act of expanding or the state of being expanded, the dilated body is the widening or stretching of the body. Just like the BwO which is a field of intensity, Barba's dilated body is also felt and experienced as a plane of intensity or an intensified rite of passage which actively engages both the performer and the spectator qualitatively and affectively. As Barba writes,

The consequence of the process of the absorption of an action is an intensification of the tensions which enliven the performer and is perceived by the spectator irrespective of the size of the action. (*Paper Canoe* 28)

To dilate the body is to help awaken the body, that of the performer and the spectator alike, to affectivities, sensitivities, and intensities. Dilation always appears as differential intensities, taking part in a natural tendency to attract and to oppose itself and to evolve into something else. The difficulties within the theatrical performance have been those of attaining the pre-expressive intensities which produce the creative invention and differential forces.

Barba has consistently set out in his writings to stress the significance of pre-expressive intensities because each manifestation of intensity in performance discloses a prior state of intensity, the pre-expressivity, and each plane of intensity is already a coupling that exposes the qualitative character of quantity and reveals the attraction and opposition of energy particles. In other words, the pre-expressivity is the moment in which the action is both thought and acted by the entire organism, which reacts with impulse and counter-impulse, even in immobility. It is the state which engages intense muscular, nervous, and mental commitments, directed towards the next state. It is the tightening or the gathering together of opposing forces in a body which is ready to move or act. Dilation, thus, is about becoming and not about meaning and representation. It is the state of being that stretches beyond normal dimension. As Barba argues,

This dilation of the actual potentialities costs dearly: one risks losing control of the meaning of one's own action. It is a negation which has not yet discovered the new entity which it affirms. (*Dilated Body* 20)

For Barba, one does not attribute any essence or meaning to the forces which the performer employs until he/she marks their effects and examines their strategic distribution in the performance.

What is singular about dilation—to the extent that the question: what is dilation? is susceptible of any determinate answer whatsoever—is rather the infinite paradoxicality of its essential non-essentiality and the infinite negation of its relation to its own identity and affirmation. Dilation borders on limits and liminality. It is the potentialities that obey a disconcerting logic. It, then, no longer operates as a term in its own right, but rather only as a response to the interminable negation that thereby comes to inhabit it. In other words, dilation is itself inherent in the negation. What it implies is not the lure of an effusive, all embracing totality or entity, but the rigorous necessity of infinite fragmentation and expansion. This logic is paradoxical, but it is absolutely fundamental to Barba's account of dilation, of the dilated body, and of the re-fashioned body.

Any dilation involves an expansion or a negation of one's "normal" self, producing an "extra-ordinary" or "ab-normal" body in which one is not entirely oneself. For Barba, one might say, dilation is what arises when the relation between negation and affirmation is pursued to the point of its limitlessness, risking losing control of the meaning of one's own action. As Barba often says, the moment when the body is dilated is a "moment of truth," a moment "when opposites embrace each other" (*Paper Canoe* 2). Or as Barba puts it in a different way, it is a moment when "twin logics" are at work at the same time: "with the concision of his craft, he has woven together *parallel*, or rather *twin logics*, without substituting one for the other" (*Paper Canoe* 93). What the dilated body risks is the strange movement of negation by which, without ever gathering itself into dialectical unity or identity, the performer's movement comes to existence. The dilated body reaches beyond the daily limits of the body in order to embody the extra-daily techniques. It is through the observing and examining of the making of the dilated body that Barba's theatre anthropology is founded and directed. The first step of Barba's theatre anthropology is to discover "what the principles governing a performer's scenic *bios*, or life, might be. It lies in understanding that the body's daily techniques can be replaced by extra-daily techniques which do not respect the habitual conditionings of the use of the body" (*Paper Canoe* 15). From daily to extra-daily techniques, something happens. The extra-daily techniques force each contained and self-satisfied body to be presented outside its habitual patterns of action, from the point of view of its potential, as what it is not, and has never been, rather than what it has come to be. When the body is dilated or expanded, the body becomes an enigmatic, non-representable sign for those drives that undermine the sovereignty of consciousness, inviting us to look beneath the skin and go beyond the bodily limitation.

In what follows, we want to explore Barba's poetics of energy and the way the dilated body manifests energy or force relations.

“One Does not Work on the Body or the Voice, One Works on Energy”⁷

In order to re-shape her/his own energy artificially, the performer must think of it in tangible, visible, audible forms, must picture it, divide it into a scale, withhold it, suspend it in an immobility which acts, guides it, with varying intensities and velocities, through the design of movements, as if through a slalom course. We note, therefore, that what we call energy is in fact leaps of energy.

—Eugenio Barba, *The Paper Canoe* 71

In *The Paper Canoe*, Barba told us an anecdote about the word “energy.” He once thought that the word “energy” was a treacherous, delusive, and slippery term because it “lends itself to a thousand misunderstandings” (17). He, then, decided not to use the word energy with respect to the performer but the truth is that he could not stop talking and writing about it. “It cannot be avoided” (50), confessed Barba. The notion of “energy” turns out to be the mainstay of his thought.⁸ In order to understand the precise nature of energy, Barba has devoted the better part of his career to explore the way energy works and posits itself in performance. When discussing the question of energy, Barba draws on the theories of Chinese kung-fu, Louis Jouvet, Decroux, Pina Bausch, Zeami, Meyerhold, Balinese dance, etc., to explain the workings of energy. To a certain degree, it is fair to say that Barba’s theatre anthropology is founded on his poetics of energy. His notion of the dilated body is not a concept that is or can be thought but rather the image of energy, the image through which energy shows itself and demonstrates what it means to dilate the body, to make use of energy, and to reveal the implosion of a performer’s body. As Barba writes, “The word energy must be immediately given operative value. Etymologically it means ‘to be at work’” (*Paper Canoe* 17).

Time and again, Barba calls our attention to the importance of energy in making the dilated body. When the dilation of energy takes its effect, the performer’s body is dilated. This energy is a differential force which leaps and moves with varying intensities and velocities. As Barba argues, “the word energy implies a difference of potential” (*Paper Canoe* 55). For Barba, energy works through several stages and layers of difference. The differential energy shapes and

⁷ This passage is quoted from Barba’s *The Dilated Body* 53.

⁸ In *The Paper Canoe*, Chapter 5, entitled “Energy, or Rather the Thought,” concentrates on discussing the significance of energy in theatre and performance. With slight change and rearrangement, this same chapter appears as an entry-chapter again in *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*, edited by Barba and Nicola Savarese.

associates ideas, expresses feelings and thoughts, and is implicated in every move of the body. Energy is dilated only when different layers of bodily impulse, thought, affect, action, and temperature act and interact with each other.

To a certain degree, the poetics of energy expounded by Barba can be understood according to the Nietzschean and Deleuzian viewpoint of force and energy. For Nietzsche, forces and energies are divided into dominant or active and subordinated or reactive forces: “It is a question of struggle between two elements of unequal power: a new arrangement of forces is achieved according to the measure of power in each of them” (337). In order to explore the question of force and energy, Deleuze turned to Nietzsche’s thought for inspiration. In the wake of Nietzsche, Deleuze stresses the uneven and yet symbiotic relationship between active and reactive forces: “even by getting together reactive forces do not form a greater force, one that would be active. They proceed in an entirely different way—they decompose; they *separate active force from what it can do*; they take away a part or almost all of its power. In this way reactive forces do not become active, but, on the contrary, they make active forces join them and become reactive in a new sense” (*Nietzsche and Philosophy* 57). In *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, Deleuze stresses the same point with different wordings: “What remains? There remains bodies, which are forces, nothing but forces. But force no longer refers to a centre, any more than it confronts a setting or obstacles. It only confronts other forces, it refers to other forces, that it affects or that affects it. Power . . . is this power to affect and be affected, the relation between one force and others” (139). Thus, for better or worse, the active and reactive forces act upon each other.

In the same manner, Barba’s conception of the dilated body presents itself as a field of force relations which emerges as an extended and pliable space in which different forces meet and interact, act and react. As Barba argues, “What the theatre says in words is not really very important. What counts is to disclose the relationships, to show at one and the same time the surface of the actions and their internal parts, the forces which are at work and in opposition, the way in which the actions are divided into their polarities, the way in which they are executed, the ways in which they are endured” (*Paper Canoe* 95).⁹ For Artaud, the working of the multiple conflicting forces that bear on the body is “cruelty” itself. For Barba, the principle of oppositions characterizes “the essence of energy. . . . The opposition between one force pushing towards action and another force hold-

⁹ In *The Paper Canoe*, Barba expresses similar ideas when he talks about extra-daily techniques: “In extra-daily techniques, the two opposing forces (extending and withdrawing) are in action simultaneously” (25).

ing back is translated into a series of rules according to which an opposition is established between energy employed in space and energy employed in time” (28, 28-29). Moreover, Barba thinks that performance consists of the processes of “fission” which release the potential energies. While creating at once fragments of bodies and linkages between fragments, the fission in theatrical practice exerts great impact on performers and spectators alike. He mentions Meyerhold’s theory to reinforce the significance of fission in theatre: “It was Meyerhold who identified in his work a way to create a sort of fission in theatre practice, unleashing the potential energies for those who do theatre as well as for those who watch it” (*Dictionary* 118). Other than the necessity of fission, the move to dilate the body, according to Barba, always involves “the rupture”: “this rupture of automatisms is not expression. But without this rupture, there is no expression” (*Paper Canoe* 32).

Just like the process of splitting the nucleus of an atom, when the body is dilated, a large amount of energy is released. To dilate is to be coming into a splitting act “between opposing forces” (*Paper Canoe* 24), in the “contra” (24),¹⁰ to produce a new affect, rupture, and resistance (32). Although dilation is about vectors of transformation and dynamic becomings, it begins with resistances and contra, creates new architectures of tension and works with extra-daily dynamism. In other words, the move from the daily technique to the extra-daily technique is a process of becoming which begins at a pre-expressive level and ends with the presence of performer’s scenic *bios*. The dilated body is the body-in-becoming that must keep on becoming, in an indefinite movement of invention and an alteration of dynamic balance, becoming a role, a character, an impulse, and a “flow of energies” (*Dictionary* 52), opening wider and wider zones of performing space during a performance.

Energy is a deterritorialized concept in that it does not derive its entire meaning from the territory in which it is first located. When impulse and counterimpulse meet and interact, the relation that they construct affects performer’s presentation. Through the interaction of forces, the overall territory or energy of the body is expanded, or is deterritorialized and then reterritorialized in *sats* in which, Barba asserts, energy “can be suspended in immobility in motion” (*Paper Canoe* 55). While Deleuze discovered becoming as the prototype of an immanent relation, Barba believed that *sats* is the moment of pre-expressive or preacting dynamic preparation. *Sats* is the drive for an action or the prologue for the dilated body. According to Barba, “In the instant which precedes the action, when all the

¹⁰ “Actor, my friend, my brother, you live only by contrariness, contradiction and constriction. You live only in the ‘contra’” (qtd. in Barba 24; Jovet, *Le Comédien Désincarné* 241).

necessary force is ready to be released into space but as though suspended and still under control, the performer perceives her/his energy in the form of *sats*” (55). *Sats* engages the entire body by combining impulse and counterimpulse. By exercising *Sats*, the dilated body retains its dynamic immobility and altered balance. It is a body at stake, at risk, and in crisis, always in position of self-overcoming, self-fashioning, and self-expanding.

To make a dilated body, a performer needs to incite, to induce, to seduce, to intensify, to make easy or difficult, to enlarge or limit the flow of forces. When coming to terms with the making of the dilated body, it is always a question of “how,” not a question of “what”: “For the performer, energy is a *how*. Not a *what*. *How* to move. *How* to remain immobile. *How* to make her/his own physical presence visible and *how* to transform it into scenic presence, and thus expression. *How* to make invisible visible: the rhythm of thought” (*Paper Canoe* 50). In a word, Barba’s energy is always a becoming of forces. To analyze the working of energy, one must examine the transformation and the struggle of forces because it is through the on-going interaction of forces that the dilated body sustains its dynamic immobility and alters balance.

Unto a Red Hot Body and an Affective Encounter

Energy is a personal temperature-intensity which the performer can determine, awaken, model. The performer’s extra-daily body technique dilates the body’s dynamics. The body is re-formed, re-built for the theatrical fiction. This “art body”—and thus, “non-natural body”—is neither male nor female *in and of itself*.

—Eugenio Barba, *The Paper Canoe* 62

What energy or force relations does the dilated body express? What interests does it serve? The dilated body is not only a mass of energy but also “a red hot body.” The performer’s dilated body is, thus, a body which arrests flows of thermodynamic particles and intensities. As Barba writes,

The performer’s dilated body is a hot body, but not in the sentimental or emotional sense. Feeling and emotion are reactions, consequences. It is a red hot body, in the scientific sense of the word. The particles which make up daily behaviour have been excited and produce more energy. They have undergone an increment of motion, they move apart, they attract each other, they oppose each other with more force, more speed, within a larger space. (*Paper Canoe* 98)

To perform has no other aim but to dilate the body, which is the process of a body’s becoming particles, or becoming molecular of all kinds. Furthermore, to dilate the body is to sustain thermo-spatio-temporal dynamisms whose aim is to

effect a body which transforms itself into impulses. In *Towards a Poor Theatre*, Jerzy Grotowski describes this red hot body with vivid expression and imagery. After the performer eliminates his/her body's resistance to dilate, his/her inner impulse and outer action coincide and then the body evaporates and becomes impulses-in-action. As Grotowski writes,

The result is freedom from the time-lapse between inner impulse and outer reaction in such a way that the impulse is already an outer reaction. Impulse and action are concurrent: the body vanishes, burns, and the spectator sees only a series of visible impulses. (16)

When a set of bodily resistances are removed, the performer's ordinary temperature-intensity body is incited, dilated, and turned into a red hot body, an extraordinary body resonating with infinite dynamic impulses and volatile particles. It exists as intensities, thermo-dynamic energy, and a stream of impulses in action. It then brings its molecular impulses and intensities to bear on the spectators and becomes a body of affective contagion.

As a result, the dilated body as a red hot body embodies what Spinoza has asserted that we do not know, cannot know, what the body is capable of doing and achieving.¹¹ Spinoza never ceases to be amazed by the body. "What the body can do?" is one of his fundamental questions. As for Deleuze and Guattari, "Becoming is to emit particles that take on certain relations of movement and rest because they enter a particular zone of proximity" (*A Thousand Plateaus* 273). When the gap between body and mind is bridged, when the time-lapse between inner impulse and outer reaction is eradicated, the body is heated and starts to dilate—becoming-particles. The dilated body is created and enabled to communicate itself by *sats* or pre-expressivity. It does not exist in abstraction but only happen when the pre-expressivity is expressed in the theatrical production.

The dilated body is always an affect register. It takes its effect through the body's affective power—its capacity to affect and to be affected. "The power to be affected is like a *matter* of force," writes Deleuze, "and the power to affect is like a *function* of force" (*Foucault* 71-72). When the body is dilated, any residues of body/mind dualisms are completely out of place. It does away with the Cartesian dualism which privileges thinking and institutes the Spinozist affect.¹²

¹¹ As Spinoza writes in *Ethics*, "For indeed, no one has yet determined what the body can do. . . . For no one has yet come to know the structure of the body so accurately that he could explain all its functions. . . . This shows well enough that the body itself, simply from the laws of its own nature, can do many things which its mind wonders at" (155-56).

¹² Unlike Spinoza who stresses the bodily affect, Decartes detached intellectual capacities from the body and reduced human being to the "puzzling I" (*Meditations* 20) or the "I" who think. In Cartesian philosophizing, bodies do not matter. When Decartes philosophizes and thinks to himself about his

Projected towards the other, when the dilated body comes into being, it produces an affect to/for the other. This affect of the dilated body is always a sympathy, a feeling together, and a desire for relation. It signals an encounter not only with oneself but also with the other and is the capacity to enact a self-penetration and encounter the spectator and enter a relation of becoming with them.¹³ The affective encounter with oneself, between the director and the actor, and between the actor and audience are always original, essential, and enlightening. It preserves the irreducible state of being and brings forth an intensification of the encountering experience. It sets in motion modes of affective intensity across the dilated body and brings about a trance and hence an ecstasy of performance.

To dilate the body is to engage in an ethics of affect, to create an aura for the encounter with the other. This ethics of affective encounter is the ethics of affective embodiment and inter-subjectivity. With this ethics of affect, concepts such as energy, force, impulse, temperature, velocity, particle, and encounter supplant concepts such as representation, alienation, and even meaning. The affective encounter resists representation. The performer does not bring the affect back to the security of representation in consciousness; by contrast, the affect must be sought, encountered, and felt pre-expressive *sats* or through the interaction between the performer and the spectator in performance. This affective encounter acts and is enacted rather than being reflected upon. Its meanings are derived from encounters.

For Barba, the dilated body is encountered not in theoretical abstraction as a timeless existence, but only in real relations that exist among people, in real space called theatre. In the essay "The dilated body" collected in Barba and Savarese's *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology*, Barba mentioned his debts to Grotowski, the forerunner of the theory of dilation: "Today it is obvious to me that there exists a parallel that was already discernible in Grotowski's work: the dilation of the actor's presence and the spectator's perception corresponds to a dilation of the *fabula*, the plot and its interweavings, the drama, the story or the situation represented" (59).

being in the world, he offers us a notorious reasoning: "that absolutely nothing else belongs to my nature or essence except that I am a thinking thing" (Meditations 54).

¹³ Using Grotowski as an example, Barba stresses the importance to establish affective relationships with both oneself and the spectator. In *Towards a Poor Theatre*, Grotowski writes: "The core of the theatre is an encounter. The man who makes an act of self-revelation is, so to speak, one who establishes contact with himself. That is to say, an extreme confrontation, sincere, disciplined, precise and total—not merely a confrontation with his thoughts, but one involving his whole being from his instincts and his unconscious right up to his most lucid state. The theatre is also an encounter between creative people. It is I myself, as producer, who am confronted with the actor, and the self-revelation of the actor gives me a revelation of myself" (56-57).

Dilation produces affect which spreads by contagion. It constitutes the real production of mutually affective and transformative social relations. It has nothing to do with signifying. It has to do with surveying the unknown and mapping the realms that are yet to come. For Grotowski, to perform is to “reach out into the unknown” and to “engage the whole personality of the actor” (130-31). As for Barba, the secret art of the performer lies in venturing into the unknown through the dilated body.¹⁴

Barba’s Theatre Anthropology & the Dilated Body: An Appraisal

Among all of Barba’s writings, *The Paper Canoe: A Guide to Theatre Anthropology*, written in 1995, and *A Dictionary to Theatre Anthropology: The Secret Art of the Performer*, co-written with Nicola Savarese in 1991, are the two texts which address “theatre anthropology” as an area of research that has been developed over the years of meetings of the International School of Theatre Anthropology. For Barba, his theatre anthropology is nothing like the so-called cultural anthropology because it is “not concerned with applying the paradigms of cultural anthropology to theatre and dance.” Barba continues, “It is not the study of the performative phenomena in those cultures which are traditionally studied by anthropologists. Nor should Theatre Anthropology be confused with the anthropology of performance” (*Paper Canoe* 10). Rather, it refers to a new field of investigation, namely “the study of the pre-expressive behaviour of the human being in an organized performance situation” (10). Theatre anthropology, as Barba defines it, “is a study *of* the performer and *for* the performer” (13). Its first task is not to sort out a set of predetermined rules for performing but to trace the recurring principles identified in diverse theatre traditions that performers use to create energy and theatrical actions. As Barba asserts, “To trace these recurring principles is the first task of Theatre Anthropology. . . . Studying these principles, Theatre Anthropology renders a service both to the performer who has a codified tradition and to the performer who suffers from the lack of same; both to the performer who is caught by the degeneration of routine as well as to the performer who is menaced by the decay of a tradition” (15).

¹⁴ The unknown is an essential part of Barba’s theatre anthropology. In *The Paper Canoe*, Barba writes: “I believed that I was in search of a lost theatre, but instead I was learning to be in transition. Today I know that this is not a search for knowledge, but for the unknown” (5).

In contrast to the performance studies promoted by Richard Schechner, Barba's theatre anthropology focuses on analyzing the secret art of the performer. While Schechner is more interested in studying social interactions and exploring their political implications, Barba concentrates on exploring "the pre-expressive level of the performer's behaviours" (*Paper Canoe* 148) by comparing the work methods of both Eastern and Western theatre and by reaching down into a common technical substratum. At this pre-expressive level, the principles are the same, even though different theatre traditions nurture the enormous expressive differences in the art of the performer. Whereas Schechner's approach tends to "prioritize theories and utopian ideas" and neglect empirical dimensions (*Barba, Paper Canoe* 10), Barba's own method "directs its attention to empirical territory in order to trace a path among various specialized disciplines, techniques and aesthetics that deal with performing" (10). On the other hand, Barba's work in theatre anthropology, differing from Peter Brook's quest for the "expressive" universal theatre language, is more archaeological in spirit for he once said that the interculturalism which challenges him most "is the vertical one" (150) or the deep down pre-expressive one. Barba's quest, thus, is for the "pre-expressive" universal theory of performance which is gathered from his lifelong and first-hand experience and observation. He formulates his theories by drawing on theories from many theatre practitioners and real theatrical practices from different national or ethnic theatres.

In his theatre anthropology, Barba focuses his discussion on the topics of dilation and energy that originate not just from the body but also from the mind. He argues that Odin actors' focus on body-mind continuum over the years has developed a unique way of conceiving and creating performative action. Although there is nothing mysterious, transcendental, or metaphysical about Barba's conception of dilation, Barba does not reduce it to pure materialist and positivist concerns either. The purpose to dilate the body is to perform the role and to embody the score. In contrast to Stanislavski's method acting which strives to interpret the motivations and psychology of a character, the approach to role at Odin is founded on the actor's dilation of the body and their own associations.

What Barba has theorized is not an ontology, nor an epistemology, of the dilated body. Rather, what he has formulated is an economy of performativity or an "anthropology" of the dilated body which aims to go beyond itself through a series of acts of negation. This method of negation models after what Grotowski calls "via negativa" whose purpose is not to collect skills but to eradicate blocks (17), undergoing "a process of elimination" (133). What this method wants to achieve is nothing unlike Artaud's vision of the "body without organs." Dilation is not a matter of learning or collecting other disciplines and techniques—from

martial arts, Yoga, Kathakali, Kabuki, No, Peking Opera, etc.—but a matter of negating habitual blocks and resistances. Unlike Butler’s “expressive” gender performativity, what Barba has proposed to study is the performative aspects of pre-expressivity or *sats* in particular. While Deleuze discovers becoming as the prototype of an immanent relation, Barba believes that *sats* is the moment of pre-expressive or preacting dynamic preparation and dilation is the archetype of “a body-in-life in the fiction of the theatre” (62).

Barba’s dilated body is made up of complex foldings and unfoldings, skillful scenic *bios*, and flows or drifts of contradictory forces that serve to negate and cut across the stratification of the body. Patrice Pavis distinguishes Barba’s work as “pre-cultural” (7). Barba’s “pre-cultural” dilated body is nothing like the Stanislavskian body with a psychological interior or a Brechtian body bound by conscious ideas and ideologies. Rather, it can be understood as a series of mind-body continuum, a mass of energy and forces, and a mode of immanent intensity. It exists in a state of pre-representation, pre-signification, and pre-interpretation.

Given this, I still want to question Barba’s presuppositions: Can Barba’s pre-expressive dilated body free itself from actual cultural and ethnic codes? And whether can a performer’s pre-expressivity or *sats* dissociate itself from its cultural milieu or its ethnically-invested habitual patterns of movement? Jacqueline Lo and Helen Gilbert point out that Barba’s search for the recurring principles is a “search for an essence beyond socialization” which “is characteristic of the desire to transcend social and cultural ‘trappings’ in a move toward a ‘purer’ mode of communication and theatrical presence” (38). It is thus evident that his theorization of the body does not have insistent stress on historicity and specificity. Nor does it focus on sociopolitical and historical relations. Moreover, it does not purport to ask about reception processes of intercultural work or questions about power relations.

In this paper, I want to point out that Barba’s methodology risks attempting a totalizing theory of the recurring principles and perpetuating a hegemonic universalizing theatre vision. I argue that Barba’s dilated body, even in its pre-cultural and pre-expressive state, is directly involved in a political field and infiltrated by the Foucauldian “power relations” which have an immediate hold upon it and force it to carry out movements, to perform actions, and to emit signs. The dilated body is in no sense a natural body or a clean slate (*tabula rasa*) for it is either marked by history and its specificities or inscribed by culture and its ethnicities even in its pre-expressive state. It is, according to Foucault, penetrated by networks and regimes of power/knowledge through and through. While his method is to tease out the general principles, Barba fails to note that the pre-expressivity of the dilated body has always already been contaminated by ethnic

behavioral codes and penetrated by various established norms, canons, and traditional cultures.

Conclusion

In this paper, I invoke Artaud's "body without organs" for the purpose of using Artaud's theory of body and theatre and Deleuze and Guattari's renderings of the same notion to explore and illustrate Barba's notion of the dilated body. Like the BwO, the dilated body is a strange unity which is not the unity of one, nor is it a chaos which lacks unity altogether. Most important of all, it is a unity of both body and mind as well as a tension between opposing forces. Barba's dilated body does not abide by the law of imitation or representation which respects binary oppositions and boundaries. Barba has emphasized once and again that the dilated body works by extending the bodily energy in dynamically opposing directions and within an altered state of balance. It engages all body parts through extra-daily techniques. As Barba argues, "The extra-daily techniques dilate, bring into view for the spectator, and therefore render meaningful, one aspect which is hidden in daily behaviour: *showing* something engenders interpretation" (*Paper Canoe* 25). Thus, the dilated body, in showing itself, has become the body-in-becoming, always in the rite of passage of becoming-other, becoming the body of the other. The mimetic theory is concerned with the art work as a reflection of nature or a representation of reality. It conceives of the body as a structure with defined and codified parts in stable interaction with one another, with masterpieces, and with outer reality. This mimetic model implicates a mode of closure which is termed by Artaud as "organism"—a body is made up of parts (organs) with identifiable characteristics and supposedly intrinsic qualities, which predispose the whole to certain habitual patterns of action. In other words, the body is defined by that which remains the same or identical to itself. Daily body techniques generally follow the principle of minimum effort or the economy of thrift and are defined by their similarity to themselves across its variations. Unlike the extra-daily body or the dilated body, the daily body is therefore a self-identical body, keeping the same intrinsic qualities and habitual actions.

This paper examines Barba's theorization of the dilated body at the heart of his theatre anthropology. To make oneself a dilated body is to engage in a singular event, a search for singularities and haecceities. What Barba comes to affirm explicitly, at the end of what he has been searching and practicing all along, is to cultivate a praxis of body that unfolds and dilates as the thinking unfolds and

reaches out. To dilate the body is to become a body-mind machine, able to produce the new and the strange out of the old and familiar. Dilation enables the body to function dramatically in the theatre but does not necessarily yield meaning, truth, or knowledge. The will to dilation is a drive toward bodily expansion and the movement of becoming, for it increases the body's quantity and quality of forces and energies.

The performance of the dilated body is indeed the mystery of theatre. In performance, because of dilation, the boundaries or gaps between performers and the audience are broken down and dissolved to open a kind of communication and communion. Dilation is the condition of the quality performance, but it can never be contained within or defined by the performance because it is at once the excess of energy and the ecstasy of performance. In this sense, to make a dilated body is both the foundation and the possibility of performance. It is an act to create a "secular sacrum" (Grotowski 49) in the theatre through which theatre participants seek encounters and reach out into the unknown.

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事關緊要的身體： 表演者如何替自己打造一個擴張的 身體？

摘要

身體是甚麼？是人有機組織所有物質或身體結構的總和？是相對於精神／心智／靈魂的肉體？是組織、器官或身體狀態無止境的交織重疊，且每一種身體狀況都是一個或多個刺激脈動的整合？是力量間的關係？是語言的儲藏地？是事件的刻印表象？是後結構主義的論述場域？那擴張的身體又是甚麼？表演者如何替自己打造一個擴張的身體？為什麼身體的擴張會讓身體陷入險境？對身為導演、理論家和歐丁劇場創始者的尤金諾·芭芭而言，身體是一能量的網絡。表演就是去擴張身體和去運用整個身體的能量。表演者身體技藝的秘密就是去擴張整個「身體的動能」。芭芭不僅提出關於表演者秘密藝術的真知灼見，也提供我們一擴張身體的詩學。擴張的身體是一不斷增強擴大的場域，且涵蓋整個能量場域。只有在表演者能擴張自身身體的情況下，表演者「最終也才能夠開拓觀眾的知覺」。本論文的目的是在探索芭芭關於打造擴張的身體的理論建構。論文的靈感與洞見源自於亞陶「無器官身體」的概念，並進一步受到德勒茲和瓜達里對此概念詮釋的啓發。論文首先將討論「無器官身體」概念在亞陶與德勒茲和瓜達里相關著作的潛在意義與重要性。接著論文將檢視芭芭「擴張的身體」概念的理論建構，探討諸如能量概念、演員的技藝和劇場人類學領域等相關的想法與議題。論文也將借重幾位身體概念思想家的論述來剖析芭芭「擴張的身體」概念的理論意涵。

關鍵字：身體，能量，尤金諾·芭芭，擴張的身體，無器官身體，亞陶，德勒茲和瓜達里