


STANISLAVSKI: LIFE IN ART - FIRST SCENES

STANISLAVSKI: A VIDA NA ARTE - PRIMEIRAS CENAS

STANISLAVSKI: LA VIDA EN EL ARTE - PRIMERAS ESCENAS

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/sevened2025.029-060>

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ABSTRACT

The article investigates Konstantin Stanislavski's first artistic experiences, looking at his training as an actor and director based on family, school and amateur experiences that anticipate key aspects of his acting system. By contextualizing his career in the cultural scenario of 19th century Russia, marked by profound social and aesthetic transformations, the text shows how the impulse for a truer representation on stage is linked to the emergence of a new modern subjectivity. Along the way, it analyzes how Stanislavski transforms intuitive practices into a structured method, centered on physical action, scenic truth and the actor's creative engagement.

Keywords: Stanislavski. Dramaturgy. Acting. Scenic Truth.

RESUMO

O artigo investiga as primeiras experiências artísticas de Konstantin Stanislavski, abordando sua formação como ator e encenador a partir de vivências familiares, escolares e amadoras que antecipam aspectos centrais de seu sistema de atuação. Ao contextualizar sua trajetória no cenário cultural da Rússia do século XIX, marcado por profundas transformações sociais e estéticas, o texto evidencia como o impulso por uma representação mais verdadeira no palco se articula à emergência de uma nova subjetividade moderna. Nesse percurso, analisa-se como Stanislavski transforma práticas intuitivas em um método estruturado, centrado na ação física, na verdade cênica e no engajamento criativo do ator.

Palavras-chave: Stanislavski. Dramaturgia. Atuação. Verdade Cênica.

RESUMEN

El artículo investiga las primeras experiencias artísticas de Konstantin Stanislavski, examinando su formación como actor y director a partir de experiencias familiares, escolares y amateurs que anticipan aspectos clave de su sistema interpretativo. Al contextualizar su carrera en el escenario cultural de la Rusia del siglo XIX, marcada por profundas transformaciones sociales y estéticas, el texto muestra cómo el impulso en favor de una representación más fiel sobre el escenario está vinculado a la emergencia de una nueva subjetividad moderna. Por el camino, analiza cómo Stanislavski transforma las prácticas intuitivas en un método estructurado, centrado en la acción física, la verdad escénica y el compromiso creativo del actor.

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Palabras clave: Stanislavski. Dramaturgia. Interpretación. Verdad Escénica.

1 INTRODUCTION

The artist needs, among other things, the people among whom he lives and feed him with the matter for creation. Fate has spoiled me with these kinds of people and this company all my life. Starting with the fact that I lived at a time when great animation was beginning in the fields of art, science and aesthetics (STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p.39)

Konstantin Seguevich Stanislavsky, artistic pseudonym of Konstantin Seguevich Alikseyev, actor, director, director and pedagogue (1863-1938), one of the most complete theater men of his time, was born in Moscow in the midst of radical transformations, when personal experience became an important value in all fields, from artistic creation to scientific experience. In the words of Menezes (2006), the individual presents a new consciousness that will contribute to the understanding of modern man, a multiple, contradictory being in permanent process, through the bias of cultural, artistic and, especially, theatrical production.

Thus, on the one hand, the rational scientific spirit is worshipped, which, associated with capitalism and industrial evolution, stimulates progress and prosperity. On the other hand, there is the new profile of modern man that begins to take shape; the individual who wants to express the most intimate feelings; this is what Freud calls the logic of desire. The modern subject, vulnerable and susceptible to change, seeks to move away from the pragmatic character of rationality and finds in art the possibility of reflecting on his own anxieties and anxieties, and seeking the convergence of what is intelligible and what is sensible.

According to Menezes, despite the fact that Romanticism – a cultural movement that comprised the end of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century – brought to the fore a proposal of transgression, with the objective of not submitting to social conventions and placing subjectivity at the center of human attitudes; the great ruptures, however, will be elaborated in the second half of the nineteenth century, by Realism, presenting singular aspects of other moments such as Positivism, Naturalism, Symbolism and Expressionism. In this scenario, a new dramaturgy is established:

What occurs in the last decades of the nineteenth century is the irruption of a freer human being, who wants to know the external world, which teems with transformations, as well as his internal world with its dissonant wants (MENEZES, 2006, p.29-30).

It is not by chance that realistic drama is concerned with describing in detail the characters of individuals, as well as how they position themselves in society and establish

the relationship *between self and the world*. This detail endows the text with veracity, leading the reader/viewer to the understanding of the plot that begins to be woven around the characters.

The theater will show a change in the focus of the human gaze on oneself. Man is now valued for his own ability to face social conventions, to endure loneliness. Realistic subjectivity does not contribute to an unrealistic and fanciful worldview. It implies the autonomy of the modern subject who does not isolate himself in an imaginary world, but who acts in life recognizing the respective difficulties. "This new subjectivity of the era of realism is configured in the unstable foundations of a world without any truth or primary concept, everything is interpretation, possibility of signification, metaphor" (MENEZES, 2006, p.30).

The theater of the late nineteenth century, especially in the western axis, was restless; there was a clamor for the creation of a new way of interpreting. According to Guinsburg (1985), the discontent with artificiality and conventionalism in the Russian theater scene was a common point. Companies such as Meininger² and Antoine's Théâtre Libre³ and the experiences of Otto Brahm's Freie Bühne⁴ began to stage, on stage, the historical, social and psychological reality; which led to a profound reorganization in theatrical work. A new scenic reality came into discussion, the *tranche de vie* (representation of real life – "life as it is"), in which the theatrical director and the *mise scène* became the foundation of what would later lead to the "emergence of the aesthetics of theatricality or its poetics" (GUINSBURG, 1985, p. 16).

Konstantin Stanislavski's appearance as an actor dates back to early childhood, between the ages of three and four, on a makeshift stage in the courtyard of the family's country house. It seems that this puerile experience already mobilizes the unconscious of the future actor and director, awakening concerns about acting. Charged with representing one of the seasons of the year – winter – he was assigned a double position on stage: first, to remain seated and motionless in the center of the stage; then, simulate the act of setting fire to a piece of wood. The situation intrigued little Konstantin: on the one hand, the immobility in front of the audience caused him discomfort; on the other, the simulation without conviction bordered on artificiality. "Why pretend, if I can really put the stick on the fire?"

² Jorge Sax Meinigen (1826 - 1914), a talented and demanding director, founded a company whose repertoire focused on history.

³ André Antoine (1858 - 1943) French actor, author, theater director, filmmaker and critic, considered the inventor of the modern *mise-en-scène* in France and one of the fathers of naturalism in cinema.

⁴ Otto Abrahamson (1856–1912) playwright, theater director, and literary critic. He directed the Freie Bühne (free stage) theater company, whose realistic staging exerted a great influence on twentieth-century theater.

(STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p. 17), he asks. This episode already anticipates what Prado (1968) calls "the very high vigor of scenic fiction", an expression that refers to two central axes of Stanislavski's work: action and theatrical truth. In *The Creation of a Paper* (1995), the author takes up these principles when he states:

Scenic action does not mean walking, moving everywhere, gesticulating on stage. The issue is not in the movement of the arms, legs or body, but in the inner movements and impulses. Let us learn once and for all that the word "action" is not the same thing as "miming", it is not something that the actor is pretending to present, it is not an external thing; it is, rather, an internal thing, not a physical one, a *spiritual activity* (STANISLAVSKI, 1995, p. 65).

Considering the immaturity of the little "actor", who – obviously – did not understand the idea of acting, the conception of acting at that time was strongly influenced by the manuals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Talented actors existed, but there was no school for the art of acting. Hence the performance on stage obeys the mechanized repetition of mannerisms and speeches with the imposition determined by the director, without any interference from the actor. In addition, the plays were put together with few rehearsals, resulting in a caricatured interpretation. The representation, devoid of a more acute study, was based on chance and based, basically, on the will to act.

According to Gonçalves, although other artists of the time such as Antoine and Copeau⁵ Craig⁶ sought to revise the basic principles of the art of acting, "Stanislavski had the important task of systematizing the intuitive knowledge of the great actors of the past and explaining to the contemporary actor how to act at the moment of creation and/or realization of the theatrical scene" (1995, p. 10).

Stanislavski, from a very early age, paid attention to the need to systematize the process of theatrical representation. Between children's games, he was always involved in artistic activities; assuming, simultaneously, the position of actor and director. Fascinated by the Moscow Circus⁷, he decides to create his own circus: "Circus of Contantzo Alekseyev". Thus, he congregated the family, employees of the house, friends and neighbors around

⁵ Jacques Copeau (1879-1949) was an important French director, author, playwright and stage actor who founded the important Théâtre du Vieux-colombier in Paris.

⁶Edward Henry Gordon Craig (1872-1966), also known as Gordon Craig, was an English actor, set designer, producer and theater director, whose theories are known to take precedence over the theories of naturalism in vogue at the time.

⁷ In Russia, the circus is considered an art form, like ballet, opera or theater; show by different highly qualified, talented and creative artists.

shows that took place in an improvised space in the family's residence. Brothers and friends were invited to compose the *troupe* and, as the creator and director of the circus, he assigned himself the best roles. At that time, he was already concerned with the veracity of the scene; Attentive to details, he focused on the reconstitution of the circus environment, the costumes, the scenery, the music.

Assemble the box, that is, cover the door with a blanket, leaving a small window next to which it would be necessary to stand guard throughout the day of the show. This was very important, because a real box is certainly what creates the most illusion of a real circus. It was also necessary to think of the wardrobe, of the circles traced with a thin paper, through which we would jump the chalet shovels, of the ropes, of the sticks that should serve as barriers for the trained horses; it was still necessary to think about the music [...] it was necessary to believe that all this was serious, otherwise it would not matter (STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p.27-8)

The same happened when he embarked on puppet theater and, later, in his adolescence, with the plays he began to stage at the Liubimovka Theater⁸, built by his father, Sergei Vladimirovich Alexeyev, an art lover, who recognized Stanislavsky's artistic vein. This theater would later be called the Alexeiev Circle. Rippellino states that "[...] The stage was an element for him, as are water and fire. The theater fascinated him since childhood and gradually became the demon of his life" (1996, p. 07).

In Guinsburg's appreciation, the Liubimovka Theater indelibly marked Stanislavski's life, since, when he staged, on September 5, 1877, at the age of 14, the *vaudevilles*⁹ *The Cup of Tea* and *The Old Mathematician*, under the direction of Lvov – his preceptor and the first effectively to realize Stanislavski's talent for the stage – the theater loses, in short, the playful character of childhood and becomes the choice of life for the future actor and director. In this premiere, Stanislavski begins to feel the first anxieties of scenic acting, not only because of the responsibility of being directed, but, mainly, because of the fact that he realized that acting was more than reproducing the perfect copy.

I just wanted to look like my favorite actor – Nicolai Ignatievitch Muzil [...] I wanted to have the same voice as him, the same manners [...] that's why all my work consisted of incorporating all his external technique and developing the hoarseness of the voice. I wanted to be the faithful copy of him [...] The scene director had nothing to do with

⁸ The Theatre whose name refers to the locality in which the Alexeyevs had a country house; it was built in 1877 by Stanislavski's father, becoming part of the collection of theaters in Moscow and its surroundings.

⁹ A French word originated from the expression *voix de Villes*, which translates as *song of the streets*, *song of the cities*. Later, the term came to designate parodies of serious plays, in which many songs were used.

me, since the role had already been played by someone else and I could only repeat it, copy the original [...] (STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p. 59 - 60).

In the years following the inauguration of the family theater, Stanislavski's interest in effective representations of amateur theater groups was reinforced. He sought learning, so that he could develop, at the Liubimovka Theater, significant shows, staging great playwrights, such as Ostrovsk¹⁰. The theatrical attacks of the Alexeiev Circle continued, but the character of family entertainment was still maintained; The "company" formed basically by the brothers, had as its audience family members, friends, farm employees and neighbors. Between mistakes and successes, Stanislavsky achieves effective theatrical success – as an actor and director – with the comedy *The Portion of Love*¹¹, the first really serious production of the Alexeiev Circle. He abandoned formal studies and began to divide his time between working in the family factory and the theater. With the defection of several members, the activities of the Alexeiev Circle were terminated. Increasingly motivated by theatrical work, he dedicates himself to lyrical singing lessons with the famous tenor, Theodor Komissarjevski, ballet, and acting with the actress of the Mali Theater in Moscow, Gileria Fedotova.

Stanislavski began to frequent circles of intellectuals, including Fyodor Sologub, a visual artist and poet of Russian symbolism, and Alexander Fedotov, an actor, director and playwright of talent who taught Stanislavski a lot about the art of acting.

[...] Alexeiev received from Fedotov, above all, theater teachings that allowed him to free himself from operatic conventions and amateurish insufficiencies in performance. Self-control, concealment of internal emotion through a calm appearance, facial expression and eye play, revelation of restrained feelings and passions that are released at a moment of climax are some of the elements of the actor's art that Stanislavski began to deepen in his interpretations in *Pushkin's* The Miserly Knight, *Molière's* George Dandin, *Pissem's* Hard Luck, *Pushkin's* Stone Guest and *Schiller's* Kabbalah and Love (GUINSBURG, 1985, p. 22).

Fyodor Sologub and Alexander Fedotov conceived the idea of founding a kind of club where intellectuals and artists would meet: the Society of Art and Literature, to socialize knowledge and skills and from there organize shows, exhibitions, musical and literary soirees, among other activities. However, the disagreement between Fedotov and Kamissarjevski

¹⁰ Alexander Nikolaievich Ostrovsky (1823-1886) Russian playwright considered one of the creators of Modern Theater in Russia.

¹¹ *Vaudeville* - romantic comedy.

(music director) led Stanislavski to take over what was left of the company, the dramatic group. Under new direction and with the collaboration of Fedotova and other experienced actors from the Mali Theater, the Society of Art and Literature puts on several theatrical shows by great playwrights, such as Fedotov himself, Ostrovsky, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, among others. In these plays, Stanislavski points out the quality of actor and director that the words of a great critic of the time record: "it could form a theater capable of raising the moral and mental level of Russian society, that is, of pursuing the true goals of dramatic art" (apud GUINSBURG, 1985, p. 24).

According to Guinsburg (1985), the arts have always been present in the Alexeyev household. Either for the aristocratic legacy, or for the inheritance of her maternal grandmother, a well-known actress from the French stages of Petersburg. No other art fascinated Stanislavski more than dramatic art; instigated in him the metamorphosis of beings and things. Children's games were attempts to imitate the great actors. Among the school books, there was always some dramatic text, notes with schemes for dividing acts, characterizations of characters and scenarios that the young Stanislavski hid from the teachers. "In the margins of the notebooks and books I drew the plans of the mise-en-scène" (STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p. 32). It was by transiting through the theatrical universe, watching shows of all kinds, but, above all, experiencing the art of acting, that Stanislavski entered the performing world and became a master of it.

2 A NEW WAY OF INTERPRETING: THE MOSCOW ART THEATRE

On June 22, 1897, at the age of 34 (he had been directing for eleven and acting for seventeen), head of the amateur theater circle *Society of Art and Literature*, with which he had already staged a significant number of shows, Stanislavsky met Vladimir Ivanovich Niermirovich – Danchenko, a pedagogue, fictionist, theater critic and playwright recognized in the cultural milieu of Moscow. In the eighteen-hour meeting, at the Slavianski Bazaar¹², the foundations of what would be the Moscow Art Theater (TAM) were created, formed by amateur actors from Stanislavsky's company and students from Danchenko's school.

Stanislavski found in Danchenko the partner of his avant-garde ideas with which he proposed to subvert Moscow theatrical conventions and "represent the world from the perspective of a transformative and pedagogical look" (CARVALHO apud RIZZO, 2001, p.

¹² Traditional Russian restaurant, a meeting place for artists and intellectuals.

22). What seemed like an audacious and unfeasible desire became a reference for dramatic art: the Moscow Art Theater, of which Stanislavsky was director for forty years.

Dreaming of a theater based on new principles, looking for the right people to create it, we had long sought each other. For Vladimir Ivanovich it was easier to find me, since, as an actor, stage director and head of an amateur circle, I constantly exhibited my work in public shows, while the presentations of his school were rare, in most cases, closed and nowhere near accessible to everyone (STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p. 239).

The founding of the Moscow Art Theatre was a milestone in theatrical representation for the Russian and world scene. More than presenting good shows, Stanislavski and Danchenko wanted a national theater along the lines of Ostrovsky, a theater that would detach itself from the hands of businessmen and bureaucrats, that would refute exaggerated declamation and representation, that would bring human daily life to the center of discussions, and flourish in art with talented actors. Danchenko had been committed to the training of these actors. From his school, *the Moscow Philharmonic Society*, in 1898, artistic exponents such as Knipper¹³, Savitskaya, Meierhold¹⁴ Munt, Snegiryov emerged.

[...] It would have been unfortunate if this casually formed cast had dispersed to the distant corners of vast Russia and stranded there as had happened to many other promising pupils of Niemirovich - Danchenko (STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p. 239).

The two men of the theatre shared artistic responsibilities: Danchenko occupied himself with questions of a literary nature; Stanislavski, for his vast experience in directing and editing, with the staging; one attracted by the word, the other by the theatrical gesture. "The literary veto belongs to Niemirovich-Danchenko, the artistic veto to Stanislavsky" (STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p. 241).

Under the aegis of the *new* and *the unusual*, the Moscow Art Theater was built, and everything that existed in theatrical art became obsolete in the eyes of new directors and actors. Obstinate in a continuous search for novelties, the representations of the inaugural theater were initially centered on the focus on the external image and on the eagerness to arrive at the staging of the character, even before conceiving it in totality, of living it spiritually.

¹³Olga Leonardovna Knipper-Chekhova (1868 -1959) Russian actress of the Moscow Art Theater, married to playwright Anton Chekhov.

¹⁴ Vsevolod Emilevich Meyerhold (1874–1940), stage name of Karl Kazimir Theodor Meyerhold, known only as Meyerhold or Meierhold, a great theater actor and one of the most important theater directors and theorists of the first half of the twentieth century. He was part of the Moscow Art Theater.

Although the *authentic artistic truth*, on which Stanislavsky's search was centered, was that of the sets, the costumes, the lighting, the sound, the actor's external image and the external physical life, a new dramatic space was already taking shape, seeking to demystify the theatrical artificiality that prevailed in the theaters of Moscow. Stanislavski describes the moment:

The program of the activity that was beginning was revolutionary. We protested against the old way of acting, against theatricality, against false *pathos*, declamation and scenic affectation, against conventionalism in montage, decorations and *stardom* that harmed the ensemble, against the entire structure of the shows and the deplorable repertoire of the theaters of that time (STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p. 264-5).

In this experimental phase, the playwright used the simplified resource of stage direction, writing the *mise en scènes* so that young actors would copy his way of interpreting. "What else could I do? I didn't know how to teach others, I only knew how to play roles and this by intuition, without having had school or discipline [...]" (STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p. 289). Their own experiences needed to be systematized and transformed into theatrical techniques to be taught to the actors. According to Guinsburg:

[...] In the 1890s and, more especially, from 1894 onwards, Stanislavski developed a series of stagings that, although they did not hide the marked influence of the Meiningers in the direction of the actors and in the scenographic vision, already bore the stamp of an innovative spirit, concerned with finding more organic theatrical forms in relation to the human, social, historical and psychological context configured in the dramatic and scenic microcosm (1985, p. 25).

Thus, Stanislavsky begins the *modus operandi* and style characteristic of the Moscow Art Theater. It was a company in which all efforts were made for the comprehensive and exhaustive exercise of theatrical representation. It was up to the actor to find his own place in the scenic function; However, for such an effort, the action of the team that materialized the play as a collective production contributed, without leaving the scene of the actor's subjectivity. Nothing happened in isolation, much less at the whim of improvisation. The goal was the artistic perfection of the show.

The play was naturally understood to be in the first and foremost instance the written text. But their embodiment on stage was already seen as an organic whole in which, polarized by the dramatic action, the different mimic, pictorial and musical elements

were concentrated and integrated into the verbal, at the fulcrum of the others, (GUINSBURG, 1985, p. 39).

Konstantin Stanislavski was a cornerstone for the modernization of the theater. To this end, he emerges in the modern scene, bringing to the discussion and/or proposing the concept of dramatic art, undertaking not only studies on the exercise of the actor and the construction of the character, but also embodying the figure of director/director who unveils a new field of personal research, actors and audience. More than reading, memorizing and declaiming the dramatic text, the actor would need to appropriate interpretation techniques, seeking to understand the character as *a persona* and, in the scenic game, transform him into a *person*:

"[...] if we do not use our body, our voice, a way of speaking, walking, moving, if we do not find a form of characterization that corresponds to the image, we will probably not be able to transmit to others their [the character's] inner, living spirit" (STANISLAVSKI, 2011, p.27).

In Mendes' words, the "character should be thought of as a "person" even if a "fictitious person", forgetting his birth of language, his construction in language [...] In short, it is to be deceived by the strategies of drama [...]" (1983, p.47).

The playwright accurately conceived the *mise en scène*, establishing a scenic truth capable of involving not only the spectator, but also the actor himself. It is a constructed truth, elaborated with such consistency that it can lead the audience to forget the presence of the performer, even if they recognize the director's mark. Far from faithfully reproducing reality, this truth is born from artistic creation, in which the actor embodies, on stage, physical and psychological aspects of the character. Between intuition and talent, it is technical mastery that allows him to flesh out the role. Stanislavski argued that the performer must break with the vicious circle of roles shaped by their natural characteristics – refusing, for example, the attribution of characters based on physical type – and understand that technique is the way to reach the truth. After all, as the author states, "the sensation of truth is the best stimulant of feeling, emotion, imagination and creation" (STANISLAVSKI, 1985, p. 538).

The expression "to create the life of the human spirit of the character that its interpreter feels while pronouncing the words of the text" (STANISLAVSKI apud RIZZO 2001, p. 132) is an interpretation resource systematized by Stanislavski and that runs through his theatrical discourse. By seeking a convincing action, it induces the actor, through the reading of the

dramatic text, to understand the character's inner action, putting himself in his place, the *magician if it were*¹⁵ what awakens in him the desire to act on behalf of the character; that is, he suggests thinking and feeling as if he were her. According to Boleslavski, "He [the actor] needs to be born with aptitude; but the technique – through which his talent can find expression – this can and should be taught" (BOLESLAVSKI, 1992, p.17). What directs Stanislavski's theatrical representation is what moves all artistic expression, emotion, but stripped of false conventions, promoting on stage the authenticity of what is being staged: life in art.

In Stanislavski's view, the actor must dispose of his own emotion to arrive at the specific emotion of the character and, thus, find the common thread for the respective conception. The actor's work, however, is not restricted to a style of interpretation, much less to a manual. It is the attempt to find a logical attitude, a technique for training actors that must be absorbed and never appear in the scenic realization. In this way, "little by little, the system penetrates the human being , **who is also an actor** (emphasis mine), until it ceases to be something that is outside of it and is incorporated into its own second nature" (STANISLAVSKI, 2011, p. 385).

3 THE STANISLAVSKI SYSTEM: THE ART OF LIVING THE ROLE

[...] Artists have to learn to think and feel for themselves and to discover new forms. You should never be satisfied with what the other has already done [...] And if they want to create a great theater, they will have to consider all these things [cultural, social and economic aspects]. They will have to use them to create their own method and it can be as true and as great as any method that has ever been discovered (STANISLAVSKI in Introduction, 2011, p. 17).

The epigraph refers to the reaction of Konstantin Stanislavski, who always feared the dogmatization of his system, to the American students of performing arts, Joshua Logan and Charles Leatherbee, when they revealed that they had gone to Russia, in 1931, in the midst of revolutionary chaos, in order to learn the system and reproduce it in the United States. In *My Life in Art*¹⁶ (1989), the Russian master says that the system is divided into two main parts: "the artist's internal and external work on himself and the internal and external work on

¹⁵ Actor's interpretation resource contained in the Stanislavski System. It consists of appealing to the imagination in order to make certain circumstances of the character's life believable that are not part of the actor's habits, means, time or culture

¹⁶ A book that, although Stanislavski considers it as a precursor element of the "system", is seen as a purely autobiographical character.

paper" (STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p. 539). The work consists of the elaboration of a technique that triggers the actor's creative state and, therefore, contributes to this physical and psychological preparation, in addition to the deep knowledge of the dramatic text.

Stanislavski never intended that the results of his inquiries - the system of preparation of the actor, construction and creation of the character - be taken as inflexible rules. Everything he had learned and undertaken was motivated by the continuous search for scenic truth, by the desire to experiment and experience the new, to transcend conventionalism, always based on a deep knowledge of human capacities and limitations, without deviating from the elements that give life and content to the theater: author-director-actor-audience. Therefore, it could not be accepted naturally that young students were predisposed to literally copy the systematized experiences of the Moscow Art Theater.

The playwright, by transcending the modern European scene, appears on the American stages where there are not a few followers. Many of the artists of the Moscow Art Theater (Alla Nazimova, Boleslavski, Uspenskaia) touring other countries, remained in foreign lands and began to adopt Stanislavskian ideas. In addition, like Logan, theater students from different countries traveled to Russia in order to become students of the Moscow theater master. Thus, each one devoted his own impressions to a methodology that has in mind the mark of movement. Stanislavski constantly worked, modified, sought new ways of constructing the *mise en scènes*; always towards truth and art, leading the audience to laughter, tears, unforgettable emotions, as Logan describes:

[...] I had seen a performance by *Boris Godunov*, at the *Théâtre des Champs Elysées*, in Paris. It was performed by a Russian company, led by Fyodor Chaliapin, and I was deeply impressed by the performance of the great actor-singer [...] it seemed to me new and realistic as I had never expected an opera. But when I saw that same opera [...], performed at Studio Stanislavski [...], the representation of Paris became bland. Each cast member acted with sincerity. The movement of the bodies or the expression of the eyes followed the melodies and rhythms of the orchestra so closely that I soon forgot that I was watching an opera – I was mesmerized by a representation in a strange language. I didn't even realize that the orchestra was playing [...] (LOGAN, 2011, p.21).

Rizzo, however, when referring to the adoption of the Stanislavski system in the United States, mentions the fact that the passage of time between the first two books of the Russian master ended up creating a fragmented conception of the system, resulting in the understanding of the *part* by the *whole* and in a mistaken way:

In the United States, Stanislavski's teachings were widely accepted. However, paradoxically, the American current was responsible for a view restricted to the first book, *The Actor's Preparation*, which is only a part of the systematization of the actor's work proposed by Stanislavski. The solitary reading of this book provoked a partial view of the Russian master's work as a whole (2001, p. 53).

This is what happened, for example, in the *Actor's Studio* where the director, Lee Strasberg, moved by interpretation and personal procedures, abusively appropriated the resource of *affective memory*, converting Stanislavskian studies into psychodrama and hence the denomination of *method*. Rizzo records Laurence Olivier's testimony about Strasberg:

[...] You had a devouring passion for reality, and if you didn't feel exactly in tune with the images that would lead you to believe that you were "that" and that "that" was actually happening, it was best to forget about the scene altogether. Young American actors felt a painful emptiness where there should be some training or foundation that would serve as a basis for them to jump or fly (OLIVIER apud RIZZO, 2001, p.56).

According to Costa, even before the formation of the *Actor's Studio*, when it was still called *Group Theatre*, the actress Stella Adler, directed by Lee Strasberg in the play *Success Story* (1929), with a memorable performance, met Stanislavski in Paris and, at this meeting, became aware of the system and how far it was from the way Strasberg developed it in the American scene.

[...] Returning to the Group, he began to teach as well, trying to emphasize aspects that Strasberg did not work with, especially the role of the actor's imagination in his work. And, freed from the shackles of "affective memory", she once again found pleasure in acting [...] (2002, p. 35).

The designation of *method* attributed to a set of manuscripts in which the conducts and procedures of a man of the theater who dedicated himself, until the last years of his life, to the study and exercise of the performing arts, both as an actor and as a director, are recorded, seems to fall short of what he really represented and represents for the history of theater. Stanislavski's studies gave a new psychological and aesthetic dimension to the performing art. Guinsburg states that one cannot think of the modern scene without thinking of the Russian master.

Konstantin Sergeyeich Alexeiev is at the root of some basic stages, processes and achievements in twentieth-century theater [...] if it is possible to think of the history of

the modern scene as a movement that defines itself for or against Stanislavskian ideas and practice, it is absolutely impossible to think of them without them (1985, p. 11).

The playwright Dias Gomes writes in the book *The Construction of the Character* (2011): "Stanislavski is not the magic wand with which anyone can be an actor; but, nowadays, it seems absurd to me that a true actor does not know it. Even if I don't adopt it, even if I refuse it." Thus, it is necessary to stick to reading the texts more carefully, trying to avoid the misconceptions of mystification that contributed to distorted views of Stanislavskian theories.

The Russian master initially declined in the face of the Hapgood couple's proposal to edit the results of his own experience as an actor and director of actors in the most eminent company of the twentieth century. Second, because he feared that the Cartesian vision of an absolute and stagnant truth would weigh on his writings. The publication, however, could incite in the new actors and/or directors the creation of their own methodologies, ways of studying and conceiving the art of theatrical representation.

In 1930, he began to organize the first two books that would make up the trilogy of his system: *The Preparation of the Actor*, *The Construction of the Character* and *The Creation of a Role*, for which he idealized simultaneous editing, since they were complementary productions. Both would act consecutively: first, in the work of inner preparation of the actor, by exercising his spirit and imagination; second, in the use of external techniques for the creation of the character on the scene, training of the body, rigorous work of the voice, so that the artist could express himself convincingly on stage. However, it did not happen in this way. *The actor's preparation*, translated into English by Elizabeth Hapgood, was published in France in 1936 (two years before publication in Russia) by *Theatre Arts Books*. It was only after the Second World War (1939-45) that Hapgood received the original of *The Construction of the Character* from the hands of Stanislavski's son, thus verifying a distance of thirteen years between the two publications. Success will leave its mark

To this day, many people concentrate on the content of the first volume, on the inner research, avoiding and even despising the other part, that of the second volume, which is equally important and deals with the creation of the character in physical terms, voice, speech, movement, gesture, time and rhythm, and the total vision and perspective of a play or a character (GONÇALVES, 1995, p. 12).

The fact is that, around Stanislavski's work, there is a succession of conjectures; either because of the publication lag between the writings; or because of the process of translation from Russian to English, when editorial impositions and negligence occur. The researchers Camargo¹⁷, Fernandes¹⁸ Mauch¹⁹ (2010), ratify that Elizabeth Hapgood's translation, produced from adaptations and large clippings of the original Russian writings, contributed to an inaccurate and/or unfavorable view of the Stanislavski system:

The problem of the imprecision of the translations and the great cuts suffered in Stanislavski's works, in Portuguese, are some of the sparks that have agitated us, since 2002, to turn over, and perhaps demystify some misinterpreted concepts because of these same inaccuracies (CAMARGO, FERNANDES, MAUCH, 2010, p. 4).

On the other hand, the Buenos Aires publishing house, Quertzal, contrary to U.S. copyrights, translated Stanislavski's books from Russian to Spanish and tried not to betray the text; respecting not only its length (*The actor's preparation*, translated by Hapgood, was reduced by half), but also sought to meet the original idea of the playwright. The title of the three volumes, for example, when submitted to the literal translation from the Russian original, became, respectively: *The Actor's Work on Himself: in the Creative Process of Experiences - Part 1*; *The Actor's Work on Himself: in the Creative Process of Incarnation - Part 2*; *The Actor's Work on his Role*. The three volumes were translated, respectively, into Portuguese, in 1964, 1970, 1972, with the English translation of Hapgood as a source.

The translations that predominate in the West are mostly from the English language - with the exception of *My Life in Art*, translated directly from Russian in several countries, including Brazil²⁰. The research conducted by Camargo, Fernandes and Mauch (2010) shows a concern with bringing to the reader's attention aspects that are absent in the North American

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¹⁸ PhD in Music (Ethnomusicology) - PhD from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (2005). Professor at the Department of Performing Arts at the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB), responsible for the disciplines of Voice for the Actor.

¹⁹ Graduating in Performing Arts (Bachelor's Degree) from the Federal University of Goiás. Since 2007 he has received a PIBIC scholarship (CNPq), with work related to the differences in the translations of Stanislavski's works translated into Portuguese and Spanish; member of *Máskara – Transdisciplinary Center for Research in Theater, Dance and Performance*.

²⁰ Here in Brazil, there were two translations: the partial one, made by Ester Mesquita (1956 – Editora Anhembi) of a French edition, reduced by N. Gourfinkel; the other, complete, translated directly from Russian by Paulo Bezerra Bertrand Brasil, 1989, by Editora Civilização Brasileira.

translation. Since 2002, Camargo and Mauch have been revealing concerns about the translation of the Russian director's works, when they realized that many Brazilian researchers resorted to the Spanish translation, published by Editora Quertzal. Both have published two previous studies on *The Construction of the Character*, in which they establish an analogy between the North American translation and the Buenos Aires version. Part of this comparison can be found in the articles "The Stanislavski method: the edition" and "The construction of the character in Portuguese and Spanish, a comparative study"²¹ (2002), and in "The 'Truth' of Stanislavski and the creative actor: missing links in the translation into Portuguese of the work *The construction of the character*"²² (2002).

In these investigations, relevant aspects of the comparative analysis between the two versions are established: deletions of words, phrases, ideas and entire chapters that, in the North American translation, are no longer registered. At other times, one can observe the distortion of terms that radically alter the ideas proposed by Konstantin Stanislavski. Added to this is the existence of 137 unpublished pages - absent for the reader from the translation of Hapgood - especially in the discussion of the rational-emotional/emotional-rational process present in the actor's work. This relationship is a touchstone in the construction of the Stanislavskian system, and the lack of knowledge has given rise to many fruitless debates.

Following the trajectory of these studies, it is learned that Stanislavski left three versions for *The creation of a paper* registered, which were scrutinized by the editors, who opted for the one they judged to be the most complete for publication. However, according to researchers, Editora Quertzal has a differential:

[...] the editorial team often gives us the opportunity to get to know the excerpts of the different versions that were not part of the final text, in footnotes, which are fundamental for understanding the trajectory of the "system" and its creator (CAMARGO, FERNANDES; MAUCH, 2010, p.12).

Thus, it is clear that, although a possible consensus has been reached on the version to be published, the two other possibilities of finalization elaborated by Stanislavski cannot be disregarded, as if they had not existed. The concealment of such information constitutes a paradox within the academic universe focused on research - especially for the genetic criticism that is concerned with analyzing the autograph document:

²¹ The article can be accessed at <http://ufg.academia.edu/RobsonCamargo>.

²² Ibid.

[...] the genetic study confronts what [the text] is with what was, what could have been, what almost was, thus contributing to relativize, according to Valéry's wish, the notion of conclusion, to confuse the all-too-famous "closure", and to desacralize the very notion of text (GENETTE, 1987, p.369).

Such silencing compromises significant elements of Stanislavski's view of what he calls *false innovation*. The Buenos Aires publisher brings, in addendum, discussions by the Russian master about the quality of the actor's work in shows of the artistic avant-garde of the early twentieth century: "The first two decades of the twentieth century, in Russia and the former USSR, there was intense aesthetic experimentation, through futurism, symbolism, expressionism, surrealism, cubo-futurism, agit-prop²³, and many other isms" (CAMARGO; FERNANDES; MAUCH, 2010, p. 13).

According to Stanislavski, these experiments brought to the theater, artists from other areas, who prioritized more the external spatial and visual construction to the detriment of the work with an interpreter. In working with the interpreter. This practice, considered by him as exhibitionist, was shared by artists of the scene and supported by directors who, instead of stimulating the creative capacity of the actors, manipulated them as "pawns in the chess game", removing their autonomy and reducing interpretation to imposed executions, without internal justification for what they were forced to perform on stage. In the Buenos Aires translation, Stanislavski takes a position:

I do not believe that the authentic talented artist, who wrote before or who does so today according to Impressionist, Cubist, Futurist or Neorealist principles, does it for the sake of doing it [...] I do think that he has reached a high refinement of his style through extensive research, "hardships of creation", after certain negotiations and recognitions, defeats and triumphs, illusions and disappointments. The old is permanently changed **when one perceives itself stimulated by the new demands of the eternally unsatisfied and restless imagination** (CAMARGO, FERNANDES, MAUCH, 2010, p. 15) (emphasis added).

It can be seen, in the excerpt, that Stanislavski is not opposed to vanguardism. One of the outstanding traits of his trajectory was that of the researcher in incessant search for artistic truth, defender of overcoming conventionalisms that contradict the impulses of the creative imagination. Although this position is not clearly evident in the version of *The Art of*

²³ *Agit-prop* (short for **agitation** and **propaganda**) is an idea of Marxism-Leninism that concerns the dissemination of the ideas and principles of communism among workers, peasants, students, intellectuals, and opinion makers in society at large.

a *Paper* chosen by the editors for publication, in *My Life in Art*, the author refers to the Moscow Art Theater as avant-garde, by bringing the everyday drama to the stage. Among its objectives were the overcoming of declamatory techniques; of the low quality repertoire; of carelessness with costumes and sets. The innovative attitude of the actors and directors of his company came, above all, from the urgency of transforming what was obsolete in the Russian scene at the beginning of the twentieth century, without neglecting what was still authentic and significant. It would not, therefore, be an arbitrary deconstruction, but a critical and creative response. It is from this perspective that Stanislavski directs his criticism of the vanguardism that was then being established:

Their avant-garde is in no way due to the fact that they are at the forefront in the authentic sphere of performing art. What happens is that they renounce the old and eternal bases of authentic art, that is, experiences, **naturalness and truth, for the simple fact that these items are not offered. To provide them he invents something that is within his reach.** And the invented is placed as the basis of *an apparently new art*, with a tendency towards *extreme avant-garde* (STANISLAVSKI apud CAMARGO, FERNANDES, MAUCH, 2010, p. 19) (emphasis in bold by the authors and italics by Stanislavski).

According to Camargo, Fernandes, Mauch, (2010), in the Buenos Aires translation of *A criação de um papel (En El Proceso Creador de la Encarnación)*, Stanislavski states that the first actorial foundation "[...] it is the art of internal and external action" (STANISLAVSKI apud CAMARGO, FERNANDES, MAUCH, 2010, p. 16) and this fundamental aspect is not found in the spectacles of *false innovators*.

[...] the pseudo-innovative directors using cardboard and cotton, seek to modify, according to sketches, the living bodies of the actors, transforming them into lifeless puppets. And, as if that were not enough, they force us to make the most improbable poses. **Therefore, in the name of "lack of purpose", we are taught to remain motionless throughout the work, as if petrified, forgetting our bodies,** in order to *better exalt the poet's text and verb*. But this violation, far from helping, makes it impossible to live. (STANISLAVSKI apud CAMARGO, FERNANDES, MAUCH, 2010, p.19) (emphasis in bold by the authors and in italics by Stanislavski).

Stanislavski demonstrates, in the fragments, that in theatrical art, although it is vulnerable to new experimentation, the intrinsic "laws" of representation cannot be ignored. The actor not only needs a notion about the role, express what he thinks about the character, but also understand that the character has his own perspective. In the theater, the search for

only the external characteristics of certain aesthetic standards must be avoided. The Russian master positions himself against the "avant-garde" that does not know how to deal with the issues of actoral artistic construction.

4 THE ACTOR'S PREPARATION AND CHARACTER CONSTRUCTION

The Russian master understood that the first two books of the systematization, *The Preparation of the Actor* and *The Construction of the Character*, should be edited in continuity – if not simultaneously, at least with a clear sequential relationship. Hence, in the Buenos Aires translation, the denominations "Part 1" and "Part 2" appear in the titles of the works. Stanislavski allows the actor, based on the procedure of physical action, the creation of the image of the character, revealing to him, on stage, the life of the human spirit naturally.

[...] The main point of physical actions is not in themselves, as such, but in what they evoke: conditions, proposed circumstances, feelings. The fact that a hero of a play ends up killing himself is not as important as the inner reasons that led him to suicide (STANISLAVSKI, 1997, p. 52).

The system is based on the studies of the laws of the artist's organic nature that he studied as an actor and stage director at the Moscow Art Theater. "Its merit [of the system] consists in the fact that there is nothing in it that I have invented or failed to verify in practice, in myself or in my students. It emanated from itself, it came naturally from my long experience" (STANISLAVSKI, 1989, p.538).

In both books, the emphasis is on acting as art and art as the highest expression of human nature; "[...] for him [Stanislavski] as for the Greek philosopher, man is the measure of all things [...]" (GUINSBURG, 2001, p.4). The recurrent study of human nature is the foundation of all his theories and the reason why they always undergo modifications. The concept of character creation recognizes that all human beings are individuals and, therefore, different from each other; each character carries peculiarities which must be respected and incorporated by the actor; It is necessary to know the character's worldview, to perceive it in human confrontations.

In *The Actor's Preparation* and *The Construction of the Character*, Stanislavski adopts resources from fiction and tells stories that unfold in a given school of dramatic art. On the one hand, there are the student-actors, such as *Kostia*²⁴; on the other, the teacher-theater

²⁴ Diminutive of Konstantin adopted, affectionately, by the playwright's family.

director, *Torrsov*, who induces and leads the actors to the scenic truth, to the incarnation of the character, assimilating their physical and psychological characteristics. Both *Kosta* and *Tortsov* are personifications of Stanislavsky, who sometimes appears as the novice actor, always willing to throw himself into investigation and learning; sometimes as the already consecrated master of the Moscow Art Theater, experimenting with his own method of rehearsal, in the figure of the theater director.

Both in *The Actor's Preparation* and in *The Construction of the Character*, Stanislavski distributes his understanding of acting and character in sixteen chapters, in which he leads the reader/actor to interiorization and interpretation based on procedures that involve imagination, concentration and relaxation on stage. The focus is on the elaboration of scenic truth — through imitation, the magical "if", the objective and the subtext — as internal responses to the actions observed and lived. For the Russian master, the creative actor does not interpret, does not represent, does not pretend: he acts in a true way, believing in what he does. "Dressing the character" is, therefore, living the life of another person with one's own sensations. By masking himself in character, the actor mobilizes emotions that, naked, he would never bring to the public. Hiding behind the mask is not only composing a persuasive image, but, above all, being the character on stage.

Characterization, when accompanied by a true transposition, is a great thing. And as the actor is called to create an image when he is on stage and not simply to strut his stuff in front of the audience, it becomes a necessity for all of us. In other words, all actors who are artists, the creators of images, must use characterizations that make them able to *incarnate* themselves in their roles (STANISLAVSKI, 2011, p. 60). (emphasis added)

It is important to note that the term "transposition", registered by Stanislavski, goes beyond the idea of representation, especially when it is limited to the purely external imitation of the character. Stanislavski, in the person of Tortsov, by suggesting the characterization of an elderly person, draws the students' attention to the danger of following the line of "least effort", since the "copies" are not works of creation.

It is bad to follow this line. It would be best if you started by studying the nature of old age. This would enlighten you on what to look for in your own nature [...] The factors of moderation become integrally linked to the given circumstances, to the magic and the plot of a play" (STANISLAVSKI, 2011, 61).

Thus, Stanislavski denounces the false way of acting, marked by automatisms, repeated formulas and the suppression of emotional truth.

5 THE CREATION OF A ROLE: CONSIDERATIONS

The third book of the Stanislavski system trilogy, is dedicated to the final stage, the preparation of specific roles, based on the reading of three dramatic texts: *The Misfortune of Having Spirit* (comedy), by Griboyedov; Shakespeare's *Othello* (tragedy); and Gogol's *The Inspector General* (comedy). The author maintains that the work of studying a paper comprises three moments: "studying it; establish the life of the paper; and give it shape" (STANISLAVSKI, 1995, p. 19). The first impressions of the text constitute a preparatory period.

It is through the ideas that sustain the text that "the embryo of an image to be formed" (STANISLAVSKI, 1995, p. 20) begins: the actor's first contact with the character. For the playwright, the words and actions in the theater should not be dissociated from the ideas contained in the text - which, at this early stage, does not yet require an in-depth reading, nor analytical discussion or memorization of the speeches. He recommends to the reader of the play the help of people familiar with literature, capable of guiding him to get to the heart of the work, apprehending it with feeling and thought.

The reader must learn from people of literary experience to go straight to the heart of the work, to the fundamental line of emotions. A person trained in literature, who has studied the basic qualities of literary works, is able to grasp instantly the structure that led the playwright to write. **This ability is very useful to the actor, as long as it does not interfere with his own ability to penetrate the soul of the play with his own vision** (STANISLAVSKI, 1987, p. 22) (emphasis mine).

In Rosenfeld's words, the theater "is an art in its own right, according to which the play is written [...] Theater, therefore, is not literature, nor a vehicle of it. It is an art different from literature" (1993, p.21). Even so, the dramatic text has an ambiguous existence: it is, at the same time, literary and theatrical. Drama, after all, constitutes one of the literary genres already recognized by Aristotle in *Poetics*. And if it is the action that delimits the theatrical scene, it is worth remembering that the rubrics do not belong exclusively to the field of scenic art. They sometimes assume a narrative character, typical of literary discourse. According to Antonio Candido (1968), even if they disappear in the staging, the rubrics remain as a

constitutive part of the theatrical text, fulfilling the function of guiding both the idea of character and the formulation of the formulation of the *mise en scène*.

Prado states that there are a number of similarities between the narrative text and the theatrical text, and adaptations of the novel to the stage are not uncommon; But he points out that the character constitutes the turning point between the two. In the novel, even when the protagonist, the character is "just one element among several others"; in the theater, it occupies the center of the discourse.

In the theater, on the contrary, the characters constitute practically the totality of the work: nothing exists except through them [...] both the novel and the theater speak of man – but the theater does so through the man himself, the living and carnal presence of the actor [...] The theatrical character, therefore, in order to address the audience, dispenses with the mediation of the narrator. The story is not told to us, but shown as if it were in fact reality itself (1968, p. 82).

The Russian master transits through two domains, but does not confuse performing art and literary art. By suggesting literary knowledge as a basis for understanding the theatrical text and, consequently, for the conception and construction of the character, it starts from the assumption that literature operates essentially with the word and the theater, as in cinema, transforms this word into action. As Candido observes, theater, like cinema, unlike literary works, cannot "directly present psychic aspects, without recourse to the physical mediation of the body, physiognomy or voice" (1968, p.81).

According to Mendes, the dramatic text, despite its specificities, is not dissociated from the designation of literary.

What the dramatic text displays more clearly than **other literary forms** is a scenic metaphor constructed by the various levels of its basically verbal structure: the lines that draw the character and simultaneously promote the action [...] (1983, p. 55) (emphasis mine).

Following Guinsburg's thinking, the text is the instrument that enables the actor's interaction with the theatrical plot and, above all, the notion of the character.

[...] one can maintain the "text" as a constituent factor of theatrical representation. This is because, regardless of how it was elaborated and its specific value in the whole, the arrangement of the parts in the script to be followed, the fixation of traces and sketches or figures of characters and the ordering of verbal, dialogical and environmental elements, will always lead to a genre of scenic structure and discourse that will have,

schematically, or fully, the character of a "play", "text", or something equivalent, in the context of the spectacle [...] Thus, it is possible to affirm in all nexuses that, from the union between actor and text, the character is born, the mask assumed by the interpreter (2006, p. 377-8).

Stanislavski brings to the theatrical space the human reality and the complexity of representation, with the aim of achieving a scenic truth. In this sense, it is close to the thought of Rosenfeld (1993), who associates "theater" above all with the staging of a dramatic text and the transformation of the actor into a character. His proposal does not eliminate the so-called "table work",²⁵ but displaces it from a purely analytical place to a practical experience: already in the first reading, although apparently unpretentious, it is the improvisation that leads the actor to experience the body and action of the character.

For Stanislavski, the memorization of the text should not precede practical experimentation on stage. Before memorizing the lines, the actor needs to explore actions and relationships that make the words necessary, alive, rooted in the context of the character. It is the so-called method of physical action, developed in the last years of the playwright's life. According to him, the actor's job consists of recreating — from the text — the life of another person in all its possible variations. The text is, so to speak, a world suggested by words, to which the actor gives life by embodying the character. This stage, which includes the study of the text and the character, corresponds to the elaboration phase, in which the paper begins to be sketched and perceived within a network of speculations that culminate in the creation.

Stanislavski refers, in this period of study, to the analysis of the play as another step in the preparatory process for the assumption of the character; it is also a means of immersing oneself in the piece and apprehending it in its entirety. The word "analysis", however, in the theatrical context, takes on a different connotation from that present in other areas of knowledge, where creative enthusiasm is not always evident:

"[...] The main role and initiative in art belong to feeling. Here, the role of the mind is only auxiliary, subordinate. The analysis made by the artist is very different from that made by the scholar or critic. If the result of an erudite analysis is thought, that of an artistic analysis is feeling. The analysis of the actor is, above all, that of feeling, and is executed by feeling" (STANISLAVSKI, 1995, p. 24).

²⁵ Reading of text to build knowledge about dramaturgy, identifying the main lines of thought of the author when producing the set of his work (VASCONCELLOS, 2010).

In this way, the relationship between knowledge and feeling — fundamental in the creative process — allows the actor to penetrate the realm of the subconscious. For Stanislavski, the subconscious represents nine-tenths of the life of the individual or character—its most valuable part—while the mind is only one-tenth, intended to guide feelings and consciously activate intuitive creativity. Feeling, therefore, becomes the way to access the subconscious — and this is the proper terrain of artistic creation.

According to Silva (2010), for Stanislavski, the analysis of the play goes hand in hand with that of the character and simultaneously requires an inner dive from the actor himself. By seeking images analogous to those of the role he plays, he activates sensitive areas of his own experience. It is at this point of intersection between the self and the other that what Stanislavski calls unconscious creativity emerges.

The movement of interiorization proposed by the Russian director is based on the objectives outlined on stage: it is from them that feelings become possible. The actor is, so to speak, the breath of life of the role. But it is in the gesture of investigating the most intimate layers of the character that he ends up touching hidden areas of himself — that enigmatic space that Stanislavski calls "I". In Mendes' conception:

It is interesting to note the process of metamorphosis that has taken place: the actor, invested with the mask that corresponds to his character, lends him his voice; but even then it is not he who speaks, but the character, at the expense not only of his body, but of his entire "persona", which can then reveal itself as a kind of first mask, or original mask (MENDES, 1983, p. 29).

According to Guinsburg (2001), the revolution promoted by Stanislavski in the theatrical scene lies in the natural experience and organic creation of the actor's art; he placed the person on the stage of *the persona*. The character does not exist only when she enters the scene, or at the moment when she has a response to give – she exists before and after, materializing her own continuity. To play a role is to stick to the character's biography, behavior, and the circumstances of the action. In this way, the actor proceeds as "if" he were, because he experiences a psychological process that triggers the real feeling in him - that is, the actor "lives" the event and its consequences, instead of being satisfied with the external reproduction of a feeling that he does not feel.

According to Ferracini, the Stanislavskian system is not linked to naturalistic aesthetics or to realistic aesthetics, since it defends the idea that the actor creates from himself:

In fact, this "system" proposed by Stanislavski refers to a pre-expressive level of the actor and is independent of the poetic and/or aesthetic choices of the director. [...] In this way, the actor becomes independent of the direction, and also, and mainly, of the *isms* that try to define the various aesthetics. The actor becomes a creative power in himself (1999, p. 63).

Mendes reinforces Stanislavskian thinking. It refers to the essence of the theatrical character, stating that more than an organized discourse, according to its inherent logic, it is an icon that condenses a poetic emotion, a moral judgment and, at the same time, a theme. Under the name of characters such as Oedipus (Sophocles) and Hamlet (Shakespeare), an approach to the human trajectory was undertaken, bringing to the scene the vulnerabilities of the being-person. Thus: "From the semiological point of view, characters are, in their essence, poetic signs that bear resemblance to us, to our life, virtues and defects" (MENDES, 1983, p.30).

The actor, when seeking, through the "theatrical mask", what is deepest in the character, ends up entering the abyssal zone itself, the pre-place where everything seems to begin and to which one always returns; like the mythical cycle of being born, dying and reborn. There have been those who have said that "to read Stanislavski is to become aware of man's adventure in search of himself and his fellow man" (SILVEIRA, 1995). Stanislavski seeks the scenic truth that he can represent on stage, but with each performance, the playwright finds new possibilities of staging. The spectacle, as well as the audience, is never the same.

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