

# Close Relations



# Close Relations:

## *Spaces of Greek and Roman Theatre*

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Cambridge  
Scholars  
Publishing



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This book first published 2016

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-8952-0

ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-8952-0

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# INTRODUCTION

## SPACE, THEATRE, AND CLOSE RELATIONS

PAUL MONAGHAN

“It has been said that a room does not exist, only the borders which form a room. The wall is the element, and by planning it you create the room.”  
(Jan Henricksson, in Parment 2000, 25-26)

One might imagine that the first task of a book that focuses on space and spaces is to define what “space” is and what “spaces” are being discussed. But the elusiveness of space is proverbial. As Henricksson suggests in the epigraph above, space is often thought to be something intangible that exists in between two or more solid objects, or—in the case of “outer space”—in some relation to either the earth, or more loosely in relation to, and as a container for, a multitude of planets and stars. Early in the twenty-first century, more than forty years after Foucault, Lefebvre, and others inaugurated the so-called “spatial turn” in many different disciplines (see below), space nevertheless remains “relatively diffuse, ill-defined and inchoate” (Hubbard and Kitchin 2011, 7). But whether we think of space as existing in between or in relation to solid objects (the “relationalist” position of Leibnitz), as an actual entity that is independent of all objects and object relations (the “absolutist” position of Newton), as something that “contains” these objects (Plato’s *χώρα*) and that thereby allows them to exist in relation to one another, or (along with time) as one of the primary lenses through which our minds are able to relate to the world of experience (Kant), and whether one believes space is “real” (mind-independent) or “ideal” (mind-dependent)—the intangibility of space is very often experienced as possessing concrete qualities and dynamics. Indeed, this is the force of Henricksson’s comment. The dynamic and feel of a room is determined by the walls that both contain and create it. The same can be said of “social space,” especially since Henri Lefebvre’s seminal *The Production of Space* (1991).

Heidegger (2001) expresses a similar notion when he asserts that “[b]y means of the temple, the god is present within the temple” (40). The “god” here can be taken as something intangible that is nevertheless experienced as potent, something vital that exists or is experienced only when the frame around it brings it—or at least its manifest presence—into being. Space, in this conceptualisation of it, is something like a framed and compelling in-betweenness. Although it cannot adequately be described as an object, nevertheless is it *experienced* as something with a certain degree of “objectivity (the quality an object possesses)” (Pearson and Shanks 2001, 98). It is experienced as something akin to an object-like non-thing.

The difficulty in grasping the notion of space is compounded when one considers that concepts of space-being concepts—as well as space itself, also exist inside our bodies and our minds, if indeed those are separate as Descartes asserted. When we speak of “a mental space,” we are delving into the realms of human consciousness, cognition, and imagination. Attempts to understand these phenomena have occupied philosophers, scientists, religious thinkers, artists, academics, and other ordinary people for many centuries, and are likely to be ongoing for many more. Indeed, the difficulty in understanding and defining space remains striking, despite all our best efforts and the great advancements in science and the study of human consciousness—perhaps even *because* of them. At the level of something external to the human being, recent discoveries that neutrinos, the most minute elementary particles known to exist, do in fact have mass, and that trillions of them pass through our bodies every second of every day (<http://ctp.berkeley.edu/neutrino/neutrino.html>, accessed December 4, 2016), has problematized the idea that space is very different to matter. Even more recently, gravitational waves, or ripples in the space-time continuum, predicted by Einstein around 100 years ago, have finally been detected (<http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2016/02/gravitational-waves-einstein-s-ripples-spacetime-spotted-first-time>, accessed February 16, 2016), opening up new understandings of space-time. At the level of something internal to the human being, our understanding of human consciousness remains partial, at best, as does our understanding of the “close relation” between these internal and external spheres—if, indeed, this bicameral view of the relationship between physical and mental space holds any validity, which Kant, Lefebvre, Foucault, Soja, and others have contested.<sup>1</sup>

The field of key philosophers and scientists who have theorised the nature of space includes, *at a minimum*, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes,

Leibnitz, Newton, Berkeley, Kant, and Einstein. But Hubbard and Kitchin's (2011) *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, which includes none of the above, lists sixty-five others whose principle disciplines encompass geography, anthropology, sociology, economics, history, politics, philosophy, organisational planning, and other fields. Henri Lefebvre's (1991) *The Production of Space* looms large in the field, as does the work of Yi-Fu Tuan (*Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, 1977), Edward Soja—with whom the phrase, “the spatial turn” in disciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship since the mid-1990s is closely associated (*Postmodern Geographies*, 1989; *Thirdspace*, 1996; *Postmetropolis*, 2000), and Doreen Massey (*Spatial Divisions of Labour*, 1984; *Space, Place and Gender*, 1994; *For Space*, 2005). But to name a few is inevitably to omit many other important theorists. Moreover some clearly relevant thinkers/practitioners of space, such as Gaston Bachelard (*The Poetics of Space*, originally 1958), Kevin Lynch (*The Image of the City*, 1960), and Frank Lloyd-Wright (in particular, his notion of “the space within to be lived in”, known as his “fourth dimension”: see Salter 1999, 3), are not included in Hubbard and Kitchin, nor are any theorists of literary studies, visual arts, film studies, and—most importantly for this volume—theatre studies, a topic I return to below.

Theorists such as these and others have grappled with the indefinable nature of space. If we add popular usage, the term “space” now has a bewildering array of adjectives to hold its hand. So pervasive, yet elusive, is the notion of space to our lives and our thinking that, like the term “realism” (Grant 1970, 2), it cannot be let out without a suitable chaperone. We now speak of actual, geographical, symbolic, virtual and cyber space, public and private space, personal and interpersonal space, social space, bounded and liminal space, outer space, cosmic space, metaphysical space, mental, perceptual, and imaginative space, presentational and representational space, diegetic and extra-diegetic space, the space of consciousness, visual and aural space, cultural and intercultural space, absolute, abstract, and relational space, Euclidian, mathematical, and geometric space, vector, function, and topographical space, space-time, situated space, parking space, space to think, to work myself out, to breathe, to create, work, play, eat, pee...to name just a few. In addition, related spatial terminology, such as “mapping, regions, place,...territory, location,...[and] cartography” (Soja 2009, 25), is in widespread use. As Crang and Thrift (2000) suggest, “[s]pace is the everywhere of modern thought” (1). And if we then delve into the realm of space as it is conceived of and discussed in drama, theatre, and performance studies, we enter what McAuley (2000) has called a

“terminological minefield” (17) in which the same or similar terms are used to refer to very different concepts, and different terms are used to refer to the same or very similar concepts.

Fortunately, a full account of space is not required here, not is it my undertaking to provide a comprehensive account of theatrical space. Rather, this introduction surveys some of the more important ways that concepts of space, spatial thinking, spatial practices, and spatial relations inform the notions and practices that are discussed by the various contributors to this volume in relation to Greek and Roman drama, theatre, and performance, in antiquity and in the modern world. In keeping with this aim, the brief survey I offer here is not intended to be in any way comprehensive—a task that would require the entire book, and much more. The following account merely touches on a few key aspects of how space has been understood from Greco-Roman antiquity to the “spatial turn” in much disciplinary and interdisciplinary thinking from the 1970s-1990s—a crucial change in the awareness of space that has, it should be said, infused all subsequent discussions of spatial concepts from earlier periods in history.

### **Notes on the History of Space**

A basic understanding of the way that space was understood and/or practiced in ancient Greece and Rome is essential context for this volume. In *Space and Society in Greece and Rome* (2013), Michael Scott consciously applies to antiquity the awareness, generated by the “spatial turn,” that space consists of fluid social constructs rather than static geographical entities. Greco-Roman spaces, asserts Scott, “reflect and articulate practices of social behaviour” (1). His examination of the shifting nature and importance of public space, specifically the agora at Cyrene, from the seventh century B.C.E. to the fourth century C.E., reveals “how the politics of the city were formulated, negotiated, and perceived” over that period of time (43). An analysis of the relationships between shrines devoted to different gods on the key Aegean island of Delos, from the eighth until the first century B.C.E., shows that Delos was the site of “a network of polytheism...which constantly reflected and constructed, influenced and was impacted by Delos’ entwined religious, social, political and economic life” (75). In Scott’s third study, Roman funerary spaces, in particular the spatial dynamics of tomb groups lining the streets entering Rome, Ostia, and Pompeii, are shown to have presented “multiple aspects of [the city’s] identity to visitors arriving at different points” (106). Scott then analyses the relative physical and

conceptual proximity and distance between *poleis* in the ancient world, in particular between metropolis and colony. He argues that the dynamic and changing relationship between Corinth and Syracuse “was part of a complex and changing discourse operating simultaneously on numerous levels, of which the ‘moment’ of colonisation was only one” (136). In his final chapter, Scott turns to the relationship between space and text in literary genres in Greece and Rome, using as his case study Strabo’s portrayal of Greece in his early first century C.E. *Geography*. In particular, Scott focuses on the meaning and value of Greece as “a space within the *oikoumene*” (137), or known world, as constructed by Strabo.

Vernant (2006) focuses his account of the organisation of space in Greece around three themes: Hestia-Hermes (Greek mythology), Anaximander’s geometric cosmos (Presocratic philosophy/natural science), and the politico-spatial reforms of Cleisthenes (Greek sociopolitics). In the Hestia-Hermes dyad, Hestia is associated with the hearth and the earth, the internal centre of the *oikos* and *polis*; she forms the unmoving “node and starting point of the orientation and arrangement of human space” (159). As an intimate point of orientation in space, Hestia represents what Bachelard (1994) describes as the impulse to inhabit an interior space, to go inside and curl up (4-7). Hermes the swift-footed wanderer god, on the other hand, is the liminal mediator between mortals and gods, between one world and another. He flourishes in the external, public world of opportunity and movement (160-61). The Hestia-Hermes couple, argues Vernant, represents a “marked tension in the archaic conception of space”:

space requires a center, a nodal point, with a special value, from which all directions, all qualitatively different, may be channelled and defined; yet, at the same time, space is a medium of movement, implying the possibility of transition and passage from any point to another. (161)

Although Hestia embodies a centre-periphery dyad that privileges the centre, Hermes seems to have carried an equal force in the mythological consciousness. In contemporary theory, (masculine) space is seen to have gained over time a privileged position in respect to (feminine) place (see Casey 1997).

Vernant (2006) further argues that political and intellectual developments from the eighth to the fifth centuries B.C.E. affected “space, [civic] time, and number all at once” (237). Firstly, the emergence of the Greek *polis* out of the so-called Dark Age of Greece established the agora as an egalitarian political centre where every male citizen could make his

voice heard. Secondly, the new geometric concept of space developed by Anaximander and his Ionic contemporaries during the Archaic Age located the earth immobile at the centre or *omphalos* of a spherical cosmos (208-09)—hence its association with Hestia—and thereby abolished any absolute value attached to directions in space (202). And thirdly, Cleisthenes’ radical democratic reforms near the end of the sixth century B.C.E., which were similarly geometric in design, established a new division of Attica into ten *trittyes* (tribes) and demes “marked out on the ground as real divisions that can be drawn on a map” (238), and grouped them in an egalitarian way around the central town of Athens. At the centre of Athens was the Bouleuterion, the seat of the Council of Five Hundred with equal representation from each of the ten tribes, who presided over the *ekklesia* for equal segments of “civic time” through the year.<sup>2</sup> As Vernant notes, the centre, both physically and conceptually, now “expressed in spatial terms no longer the notions of differentiation and hierarchy but rather those of homogeneity and equality” (238). Thus, political life, urban space, cosmology, and astronomy were joined in a new conceptualisation and production of space.<sup>3</sup>

The ideal city proposed by Plato in *The Republic* and *Laws*, although similarly aimed at political stability, provides a very different spatial model for the organisation of the state based on mathematics, which is now conceived as intimately connected to the quasi-divine Forms. Influenced to a degree by the fifth-century town-planner Hippodamus of Miletus (Vernant 2006, 248-54), Plato envisaged the ideal state as organised “in the form of a spatial pattern” (257), just as Cleisthenes had done. But this pattern was now conceived along differential, as opposed to homogenous, class lines. With the acropolis—consecrated to Zeus and Athena—now replacing the more secular agora as a centre point, the polis in Plato’s ideal model is organised into twelve equal parts, one for each of the twelve tribes.<sup>4</sup> Since, in addition, “each of the twelve months of the year is devoted to a particular god” (258), the gods in this scheme possess both space and time: “The division of space and time correspond to each other for the simple reason that they are both modeled on the divine order of the cosmos” (258).

In *Timaeus* 49-53, Plato offers a different and highly influential account of space. Here the “character” Timaeus explains that, in addition to the noumenal Forms and their phenomenal appearances, a third notion is necessary to explain the cosmos. Variouslly called *ὑποδοχή* (“receptacle”) or *χώρα* (“space” or “place”), this third concept is necessary because “everything that exists must be somewhere and occupy some

space, and...what is nowhere in heaven or earth is nothing at all” (52b).<sup>5</sup> Space, “invisible and formless, all-embracing, possessed in a most puzzling way of intelligibility, yet very hard to grasp” (51a), is described as “a kind of neutral plastic material on which changing impressions are stamped by the things which enter it...the things which pass in and out of it are [phenomenal] copies of the eternal realities [i.e. the Forms]” (50c). Thus, space is referred to as the nurse or midwife of all Becoming and change (49a).<sup>6</sup>

Descartes took up the problematic nature of *χώρα*, but dealt with it in a different way (*Meditations* II). It is unclear whether Plato envisaged *χώρα* to consist of some kind of pliable matter or alternatively as a matter-less void. The Greek Atomists, Leucippus, Democritus, Epicurus, and the Roman Epicurean poet Lucretius were certain that void existed, and that matter moved through it incessantly. Descartes, however, denies the existence of void. There are only two substances in the cosmos: *res cogitans*, “thinking substance, subjective experience, spirit, consciousness” is entirely separate and distinct from *res extensa*, “extended substance, the objective world, matter, the physical body, plants and animals, stones and stars, the entire physical universe” (Tarnas 1991, 277-78).<sup>7</sup> *Res extensa*, matter or body, is something perceived by Mind to exist strictly outside of itself, as the object of its gaze. As something possessing length, breadth, and thickness, matter is also inherently measurable, and operates in an entirely mechanical way. No other substance is possible, or necessary, but both derive from God, a perfect, objective, omnipotent, infinite, and necessary Being who exists insubstantially outside of and beyond both substances, but whose Being, somewhat like Aristotle’s God, can be described as pure Mind.

There is no void—but the problematic and elusive nature of space seems to have worried Descartes as it did Plato. *Res extensa* needs space to “extend” into, but by definition everything except Mind is “extending substance.” Space is therefore explained as an aspect of matter/body. In an echo of Plato’s description of *χώρα* as “a kind of neutral plastic material on which changing impressions are stamped by the things which enter it” (50c), in his famous “wax” thought experiment in *Meditations* II, Descartes ([1641]1984) explains the nature of extension-in-space by reference to a lump of wax. Freshly taken from the hive, the wax possesses “extension:” a certain shape and hardness that can be touched and sounded, and a range of qualities such as colour, texture, a sweet smell, and so on. When the lump of wax is taken close to a fire, however, it loses all those qualities, and melts. “But does the same wax remain?”

asks Descartes. What remains, he answers, is “merely something extended, flexible and changeable” (20). The same substance remains, but its extension in “space” has changed.

A further issue for Descartes’ dualism is the exact relationship between Mind and Body, and how they both relate to space—issues that Descartes rather unsatisfactorily responds to by proposing that the pineal gland in the brain is the point at which the two substances meet. The pineal gland processes *res extensa* rather like, as Wiles (2003) suggests, a kind of mini-theatre in the head in which the spectator-Mind views and processes the actor-bodies (4).

The crucial issue of the relationship between space and time, and between both space and time and the human mind, was taken up by Kant, whose views on space and time are embedded inside, and form a crucial component of, his overall transcendental Idealism.<sup>8</sup> Kant’s so-called “Copernican Revolution” posits that the “thing-in-itself” does exist separately from our perception of it, but we cannot actually *know* this noumenal realm because all our so-called “knowledge” is determined by the internal structures of the mind—a conviction that underpins his propositions on space and time, and vice versa. In his 1770 *Inaugural Dissertation*, Kant asserts,

Space is not something objective and real, nor a substance, nor an accident, nor a relation; instead, it is subjective and ideal, and originates from the mind’s nature in accord with a stable law as a scheme, as it were, for coordinating everything sensed externally. (Ak 2: 403)

In the early sections of his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant argues that space and time are “intuitions” (singular and immediate objective cognitions, as opposed to either subjective sensations or generalised and the result of thought, which he calls “concepts”), and *a priori* (prior to and independent of experience; if they were dependent on experience they would be *a posteriori*). Space and time are the *forms* in which experience is possible—the spectacles through which we “see”—rather than *what* is experienced or seen. In other words, space and time (and a number of other lenses) constitute the mediating cypher through which the things-in-themselves are presented to the mind or consciousness. Space and time, therefore, “are only sensible forms of our intuition,” not “conditions of objects as things in themselves” (*Critique* A369). We can therefore speak of space “only from the human standpoint” (*Critique*, A26/B42).

Turning away from the debates about the relational or absolute nature of space, Kant focused instead on the distinction between realist and idealist, where “real” is mind-independent (the things-in-themselves) and “ideal” is mind-dependent. In his *Prolegomena*, published in 1783, Kant makes his position clear:

Space and time, along with what they contain, are not things, or properties of things, in themselves, but belong merely to the appearances of such things...space [and time], along with its determinants, can be cognized by us *a priori*, for space, as well as time, inheres in us before all perception or experience as a pure form of our sensibility and makes possible all intuition from sensibility, and therefore all appearances. (Ak 4: 374-5)

As Lefebvre (1991) was later to put it, “Kantian space, albeit relative, albeit a tool of knowledge...was yet quite clearly separated (along with time) from the empirical sphere”—a primary reason for Lefebvre’s rejection of the notion (see below).

By focusing on the relationship between the mind and the world, and the vital role of space and time in that relationship, Kant effectively turned spatial thinking towards the late-twentieth-century “spatial turn.” Kant gave equal attention to both space and time, but, as two of the primary instigators of the spatial turn, Michel Foucault and Henri Lefebvre, objected, during the nineteenth century theoretical thinking focused far more on time than on space. As Warf and Arias (2009) assert, after Kant “[t]he reassertion of space into modern consciousness was a long, slow, and painful undertaking” (3).

### **“The Spatial Turn”**

As Edward Soja (2009) puts it, the “Spatial Turn” consisted of a “fast-flowing diffusion of a spatial perspective across nearly every discipline” that “burst onto the academic scene some time in the mid-1990s” (23). As a phrase and a concept, the “cultural turn” is strongly associated with Soja, whose work, in turn, builds on that of Michel Foucault, Henri Lefebvre, and others. Soja (2009) notes that the “spatial turn” of the late 1960s and early 1970s began in Paris with the apparently entirely independent work of Foucault and Lefebvre, who asserted “the ontological parity of space and time,” where “each was formative of the other at a most basic existential level, with neither being intrinsically privileged” (18). Foucault’s essay, “Of Other Spaces” (a lecture given in 1967, but published in 1986) and Lefebvre’s *La Production de l’Espace* (1974, translated into English as *The Production of Space*, 1991) provided the

impetus for “a radical rethinking of the ontological, epistemological, and theoretical relationship between space and time and...geography and history” (Soja 2009, 18). Both Foucault and Lefebvre noted the important contribution to their thinking by Gaston Bachelard, who suggested in *The Poetics of Space* (1994) that all constructions of space are an attempt to give shape, intimacy, and meaning to an otherwise vast and forbidding universe (3-37).

Hubbard and Kitchin (2011) note that during the twentieth century, prior to the spatial turn, space had been comprehended, especially by geographers, as either a neutral container housing objects and flows of behaviour (the “container” theory) or a “backdrop against which human behaviour is played out” (the “blank canvas” notion). Space thus conceived was defined by and understood through Euclidean geometry (4). A new positivist spatial science in the 1950s and 1960s, which proposed that “spatial laws” were to be understood through statistical analysis, paved the way for an objectivist refinement that saw space “as a surface on which the relationships between (measurable) things were played out.” Relationships between things were understood to be the product of “direction, distance and connection” (5). A psychological and behaviourist perspective “that explored the role of the conscious mind in shaping human spatial behaviour” was then followed during the late 1960s and early 1970s by the realisation that space was “inherently caught up in social relations, both socially produced and consumed” (5). This understanding of space was pivotal in generating the spatial turn.

Foucault’s (1986) particular contribution to a new awareness of space was three-fold: firstly, he suggested that “[w]e do not live inside a void that could be coloured with diverse shades of light, we live inside a set of relations” (23). Secondly, Foucault saw that, whereas “Medieval space” was one of emplacement—one thinks here of Hestia, the current epoch “is one in which space takes for us the form of relations among sites” (22-23)—and here one might think of Hermes. Thirdly, Foucault conceived of all “real” *created* spaces (as opposed to impossible utopias) as “heterotopias,” which he glosses as “a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted” (24). This latter notion has been particularly influential in the theorisation of theatrical space.

Lefebvre ([1974]1991) similarly asserted that social space is defined and produced by a set of power relations. As Lefebvre puts it, “(Social)

*space is a (social) product*” (26, original emphasis). Since social space is both physical and mental, the “object of interest” must “shift from *things in space* to the actual *production of space*” (37). Lefebvre’s (1991) well-known but somewhat opaque triad of “perceived-conceived-lived space (in spatial terms: spatial practice, representations of space, representational spaces)” (40) was designed to shift attention away from the bicameral spatial thinking that contrasted “material conditions, mappable spatial forms, things in space (Lefebvre’s perceived space or spatial practices),” on the one hand, and “mental or ideational imagery, representations, thoughts about space (Lefebvre’s conceived space)” (Soja 2009, 19), on the other.<sup>9</sup> While too great a focus on the spatial analysis of material surfaces, notes Soja (2009), “could block deeper understanding of the causal forces underpinning these surface expressions,” too much emphasis on mental space and representations risked losing touch with social reality in a cloud of idealism (20). “Lived space,” Lefebvre’s (1991) third space or “moment” of social space (40), is not so much a different space from the first two, but one that, being simultaneously experiential, subjective, and imaginative, and enriched by the arts and literature, overlaps with, bridges, and transcends them. Lived space “overlays physical space;” in lived space, the imaginations of “inhabitants and users...[and] some artists” seek to “change and appropriate” physical space (39).

Barnett (1998) notes that the cultural turn “needs...to be located within the wider set of debates that emerged in the late 1980s around postmodernism” (381); those debates continue to stimulate spatial thinking. There have been many elaborations of the spatial turn since it took off in the mid-1990s—too many to even pay lip service to in this Introduction. Suffice it to mention here that one prominent strand of the spatial turn focuses on the relationship of (male) space to the more embodied, localised, bounded (female) “place” with its greater sense of belonging and identity (Hubbard and Kitchin 2011, 6-7; Tuan 1977; Casey 1997). Other “spatial” investigations include space and gender, an extension of the notion that space is produced by power relations (Doreen Massey 1984, 1994; Gillian Rose 1993, 1995; Judith Butler 1990, 1993), cultural, intercultural, and postcolonial space (Said 1978, 1993; Bhabha 1990, 1994; Sen 1981; Spivak 1986, 1987, 1988, 1990), and many other fields. The notion that subjectivities and global cultures, conceived of in spatio-temporal terms, are constantly territorialised, de-territorialised, and re-territorialised by various forces was introduced by Deleuze, and Deleuze and Guatari (Deleuze 1988, 1993, 1994; Deleuze and Guatari 1984, 1987). A multitude of theorists and scholars have investigated space

in relation to language and literature, the visual arts, cinema, the plastic arts, and of course drama, theatre, and performance. As Hubbard and Kitchin (2011) note, “[t]he idea that culture not only takes place but makes place, is now manifest in a bewildering variety of work” (8).

### **Space and the theatrical medium**

In the context of the brief history of notions of space above, it is not surprising that “theatrical (or performance) space” is as amorphous a term as most terms relating to space in general. It is well recognised that, as an artistic medium, theatre is distinguished by being an interaction between performer(s), other production elements, and spectator(s) in a specific and limited space-time that “alone makes possible the simultaneous presence of both the performer and the watcher” (McAuley 2000, 3). Ubersfeld (1981) defines theatre as “a particular mode of spatial organisation” (53). But, as noted above, the field is beset by what McAuley (2000) calls a “terminological minefield” (17). The situation is further complicated by the fact that, as Puchner (2002) notes, theatrical performance is both a performing art, an aesthetic medium in which the physical space (or, potentially, the virtual space) shared by performers and spectators is crucial to the weave of performers performing with other “instruments” of the dramaturgical ensemble, and a representational art, whereby the performance represents, stands in for, or relates in some way to a space and to action outside of the aesthetic medium (521). This “double allegiance” accounts not only for the great variety of theatrical styles and traditions, but also for the difficulty in understanding and analysing performance, and “performance space.”

A “simple” version of the central working relationship in theatre is that it is essentially the same as in any work of art, that is, a triangular interaction between the work itself (in this case, the performance), the world of social, lived experience external to the performance, and the physical/mental space of spectator experience, perception, imagination, and interpretation. In the case of fifth-century B.C.E. Greek tragedy, however, a fourth space must be added: the transcendental or metaphysical arena in which lived experience, the performance, and subjective, imaginative responses relate more or less directly to “cosmic space” (see Rehm in this volume). In “cosmic space,” extra-human forces, commonly but not necessarily referred to as “gods,” are seen to operate independently of humans, but at the same time as one part of the dual agency involved in human affairs (see Monaghan in this volume). It is precisely this metaphysical arena that Plato emphasised (referring to it as a realm of

Forms), albeit as something theatre was not capable of accessing, the space that is longed for by much Modernist theatre, and that falls into relative insignificance in the postmodern world—or, perhaps, is replaced by global economic and other forces beyond any individual's sphere of influence or understanding.

The “simple” version of the theatrical matrix outlined above has already turned into an exceedingly complex one—and necessarily so. None of the factors in the so-called “simple” version are actually simple, and there is so much more to account for in a “complex” version. The relationship between the world outside of theatre and the world of the performance can be direct or indirect, with a greater or lesser degree of obvious contiguity; the former is often refracted through fictional or quasi-fictional locations (Thebes, Athens, Moscow, and so on) and situations (mythical narratives, for example).<sup>10</sup> But while performance is “a special world set aside from everyday life by contractual arrangements and social suspensions,” yet it is “not entirely hermetically sealed” (Pearson and Shanks 2001, 27). The membrane surrounding the performance event is porous, and situated in between these two realms, both creating and interpreting the relationships between them, are human beings, purposive agents (the makers and the receivers of the performance, and those in positions of social power who influence them) who seek to wrest a new utterance from received physical, mental, architectonic, aesthetic, socio-political, cultural, historical, and other spaces. And of course both the actual composition of the performance event and responses to it are informed and structured to various extents by the world of daily, lived experience, the culture we live in, its history, traditions, social practices, and so forth. These “social realities” (or socio-political and cultural spaces) include our very notions of theatre and performance (including, therefore, my own description in these paragraphs), the location of the performance space or theatre building in its physical environment, the key relationships between performer and performer, performer and spectator, spectator and spectator (Pearson and Shanks 2001, 20), and so on.

What is common to the various theatre traditions is the space-time-action matrix of the performance event, constituting what Bakhtin (1981) called a “chronotope,” that is, “the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature” (Bakhtin and Holquist 1981, 84). Bakhtin notes that both Kant and Einstein employed the notion of “chronotope,” Kant—as noted above—defining space and time as the indispensable cyphers through which experience and cognition are made available, and Einstein using it as part of his Special

Theory of Relativity (84-5). Bakhtin also notes that “it is precisely the chronotope that defines genre and generic distinctions;” in literature, “the primary category in the chronotope is time” (85). But both space and time define theatre as a medium, leading Pavis (2003) to describe the theatrical chronotope as “a unit in which temporal and spatial indices form an intelligible, concrete whole” (148-9, paraphrasing Bakhtin and Holquist 1981, 84; see also Wiles in this volume).

The chronotopic performance event (tragic actors and chorus performing before an audience, for example) consists of a layering, in actual three-dimensional space (the theatre of Dionysos, for example) and real time, of aural, visual, spatial, and kinetic performance textures—both experiential and referential—woven together in constantly shifting and more or less sophisticated ways, such that they act upon the senses of the spectators. I differentiate “performer” from “performance,” because the performer is only one element, *usually* but not *necessarily* central, in the complex interplay of components that generates these experiential and referential performance textures.<sup>11</sup>

As—*usually*—the central and defining feature of live performance, the body of the actor, the source of theatre’s uniqueness as well as its limitations (States, 1985, 129-30; Pavis 2003, 57), adds yet another complicating factor. Central to theatre as a mimetic art, and an iconic sign of the external world, the body in performance lends itself to semiotic readings, revealing various forms of information and sensibilities; it is written-on (by culture, gender stereotypes, theatrical traditions), and it also writes narratives and discourses. Fischer-Lichte (2005) refers to the body in this mode as the “semiotic body,” one that “creates the illusion in the mind and imagination of the spectator” without the body of the actor itself undergoing the action or situation it represents (5). But as the primary element in a performing art, the animality of the human body in live performance, which Fischer-Lichte refers to as the “phenomenal body,” is thick with an only partially quantifiable and readable “phenomenal heaviness” (States 1985, 37). Despite its simultaneous existence as a semiotic body, the phenomenal body ultimately resists concrete, stable, and precise meaning in theatre as it does in life outside of theatre. While the semiotic body *represents*, the phenomenal body *experiences*, and it is this “vital, organic, energetic body whose sensuousness works directly on the phenomenal body of the spectator” (Fischer-Lichte 2005, 5). What is distinct about the body, however, is that, viewed as central to theatre either as a representational or a performing art, the body is indubitably *of* and *in* this world. One of the primary factors that differentiates forms or

genres of theatre is the extent to which the body is either celebrated or denied according to the ideologies and metaphysical assumptions in operation.

That the space-time-action matrix of performance must necessarily be actual and “live” continues to be an area of debate in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century when virtuality is so prevalent (see Phelan 1993, 146 and Auslander 1999). But the debate may be more a matter of categorisation than real substance. In theatre, aspects of the external world and internal consciousness, as well as what happens at the limen between one and the other and in the overlap and interaction between them—or whatever the relationship between the world and consciousness *actually* consists of—are “uplifted to the view” (States 1985, 35), but always mediated by “forms of abstraction, displacement, condensation, and estrangement” (Puchner 2002, 521). This interplay is further complicated by the fact that, as well as perceiving, the spectator also *imagines*, “sees” things in the mind’s eye other than what is *actual* in the perceptual field before his or her eyes, ears and other senses (see Beacham in this volume). This mental space is the virtuality we have been familiar with for millennia, a space of response, making sense of, ordering sensations according to our own past experiences, personalities, needs, and desires. Thus, there has always been a degree of “virtuality” in live theatre (in the imaginations of spectators). Moreover, there is always a degree of “liveness” in the human response to inanimate or virtual representations, whether in the form of screen-based media, poetry, painting, or any other format. In the fifth century B.C.E, where the vast majority of dramatic experiences were obtained through live performance rather than through private reading or any other “document” of live performance, “mental space” seems to have been especially important.<sup>12</sup>

Theatre scholars have made many attempts to analyse this highly complex nature of theatrical space. Wiles (2003) analyses the different ways in which this “mode of spatial organisation” has been configured from the Greeks to the late twentieth century, with comprehensive discussions of what he terms sacred space, processional space, public space, sympotic space, the cosmic circle, the cave, and the so-called empty space of the mid to late twentieth century. Ubersfeld’s early (1977) theorising and taxonomy of theatrical space (119-50) has been highly influential. But Gay McAuley’s (2000) wide-ranging “taxonomy of spatial function in the theatre,” which draws on but reconfigures the work of Ubersfeld and others, articulates the complexity of theatre space in a particularly useful way.

The first of McAuley's five categories, "The Social Reality," encompasses "Theatre Space" and "Rehearsal Space." Theatre Space denotes all aspects of the external and internal physical realities of the theatre building or performance space, including its architecture, previous functions, and its location and associations in the urban environment (24-25). The space inside the theatre building or precinct is divided into the more or less mutually exclusive "Audience Space" and "Practitioner Space," and the inclusive "Performance Space" (the stage or performing area and the auditorium, which is shared by both audience and practitioners). The configuration of this third space is crucial to the event.<sup>13</sup> "Rehearsal Space" is usually ignored in analyses, but can have a deep impact on the performance event (27). The second category, "The Physical/Fictional Relationship," described as "the heartland of theatrical semiosis," recognises "the constant dual presence of the physical reality of the performance space and the fictional world or worlds created" (27). Within this category, "The Stage Space" designates the physical actualities of the stage or performance area with its particular architectonic and other opportunities and limitations. The particular physical use of that space, in the multiple sense of design or spatial composition (points, lines, frames, volume, etc), use by actors, articulation by light and sound, and so on, McAuley calls "Presentational Space." "Fictional Place" is the third term designating "the place or places presented, represented or evoked onstage and off" (29), with the further elaboration that this space also reflects the social, cultural, and ideological realities of a particular time and place. "Location and Fiction" (30-31), the third category, is an expansion upon the complexities of "The Physical/Fictional Relationship," and includes "Onstage Fictional Place" and "Offstage Fictional Place," the latter of which is further subdivided into those places which are "unlocalized" and "localized." "Localized offstage space" is, in turn, subdivided into places which are contiguous (conceived and sometimes seen to be just off stage) or which are distant (and usually unseen). "Audience off" completes this set.

McAuley's fourth and fifth categories, "Textual Space" and "Thematic Space," focus more deeply and closely on the spatial role of text and meaning. Textual Space includes spatial references in the script and in the stage directions, the "spatial structures contained in the playtext, geographical and other place names...descriptions of place and space" (for which, in relation to translating Greek tragedy, see Rehm in this volume), indications of proxemics, and so on (32). "Thematic Space" designates the meaning of "the way that space and place is conceived and organised, the kinds of place that are shown and/or evoked, the values and

events associated with them,” and so on. Understanding Thematic Space is crucial, argues McAuley, to “unravel the philosophical and ideological content of play and production” (33). This level of analysis, she notes, “brings together all the spatial signs and all the spatial functions from the other categories: meaning emerges only when all these functions are seen structurally as parts of the whole” (33).

McAuley’s spatial taxonomy, although somewhat dry at times, goes some way towards addressing “the swirling, complex, contingent, ever-changing maelstrom of possibilities” (Warf and Arias 2009, 6) that is theatrical space. But what of the theatrical space of Greek and Roman theatre? All theatre, embedded in a time-space-action chronotope, an interaction between live (or perhaps virtual) performance and spectator(s) in a time and space that is no longer the same at any moment after its immediate completion, is “the always, already gone by” (Ernst 1996, 125). But when the theatre in question is in the “always, already gone by” of antiquity, extra difficulties are encountered. Chapters in the first section of this volume address aspects of theatrical space in Greece and Rome, but two other important and extensive examinations of performance space in ancient Athens have been David Wiles’ 1997 *Tragedy in Athens: Performance Space and Theatrical Meaning* and Rush Rehm’s 2002 *The Play of Space: Spatial Transformation in Greek Tragedy*.

I have mentioned above Wiles’ (2003) examination of the history of theatrical space, in which Greek theatre is identified as “a continuing reference point for western practitioners, who have shaped their work in response to a particular understanding of the classical world” (20). In *Tragedy in Athens*, Wiles (1997) extensively investigates “performance space and theatrical meaning” in Greek tragedy. Declaring himself to be firmly situated in the current of what above I have described as the “spatial turn” (1-22), Wiles first examines the evidence for the shape of the fifth-century BCE theatre of Dionysus (23-62). He reaches precisely the opposite conclusion to Sear in this volume, that is, that the orchestra and *theatron* was circular. Regardless of the veracity or not of this conclusion, Wiles’ insight that Greek tragedy in performance was “a spatial construct, organised in relation to spatial oppositions that were rich in associations for the Greek audience” (62) is especially valuable. Furthermore, his analysis of both the east-west axis of the Theatre of Dionysus (from the Odeon, at least from the 440s BCE, on the audience’s left through the theatre orchestra to the Temple of Dionysus on the audience’s right) and north-south axis (from the Parthenon and Council behind and north of the audience “through the centre of the auditorium

where the priest and [cult] statue were located, through the centre of the *orchêstra* and through the central doorway” towards the sacrificial altar behind the *skênê*: 57), adds a new and valuable dimension to the experience of Greek tragedy in ancient performance. The rest of *Tragedy in Athens* is devoted to exploring these insights in detail, with illuminating chapters focusing on: the centre point of the *orchestra* (effectively the domain of Hestia) and its periphery—Wiles argues that both actors and chorus were placed in the *orchêstra* in relation to the *thymelê*, which he envisages as a sunken hearth-altar (63-86); the spatial relationship between the actors, chorus, and audience (87-113); the chorus’ continual transformation of space (114-32); the way that every tragedy “creates a coherent topography framed around a binary east-west opposition (156, explored 133-60); and the dialectic between the private world inside the *skênê* and the public world outside it in the *orchêstra* (161-74). The vertical dimension that demarcates “the tripartite universe of immortals, mortals and dead” (176) is also explored, in respect, firstly, to the relationship between the roof of the *skênê* (from at least the *Oresteia* in 458 BCE) and, later, the crane on the one hand, and the earth floor of the *orchêstra* on the other; and secondly, the relationship between the audience in the *theatron* and the actors and chorus below them (175-86). The last two chapters explore the demarcation of sacred space by the *thymelê* in the centre of the *orchêstra* and the placement of objects and bodies in relation to it (187-206); and finally, the all-important relationship between the performers in the *orchêstra* and the spectators in the *theatron*, which, Wiles argues, was characterised not by separation and difference but rather by contiguity and equality (207-221).

In *The Play of Space: Spatial Transformation in Greek Tragedy*, Rush Rehm (2002) strongly opposes the approach he sees Wiles to have taken. Opposing “structuralist binaries” (1ff) and the use of “reading” metaphors in relation to theatre performance (8ff), Rehm instead draws on the “ecological” approach to human perception of cognitive psychologist, James J. Gibson (11-18), the notion of “hodological space” (“space that matters, paths that tie people together or distances that keep them apart”: 19) of gestalt psychologist Kurt Lewin (18-19), and Foucault’s notion of heterotopia (19). With these notions, Rehm emphasises the sequential perceptions of spatial transformations by audiences who are “nested” in the space and time of fifth-century BCE Athens and its various social, political, and religious spaces and practices. Rehm posits and draws on six spatial categories that he sees as “basic to the theatre of Dionysus in Athens” (20). “Theatrical space” refers to the physical space (for example, the theatre of Dionysus) in which a performance takes place, thus calling

into play the other spaces. “Scenic space” “defines the [fictional] place of a given tragedy...with greater or lesser specificity” (21), with the potential for fluid shifts by means of “the facade with central entrance, by scenic elements (an altar or tomb, painted backdrops, significant props), and by references in the text...” (20). “Extrascenic space” refers to fictional space that is “lying immediately offstage, behind and contiguous to the façade,” spaces that are frequently evoked by a messenger (21). Rehm emphasises the “interactive, permeable, and transformative” nature of this space (22). The fourth category, “distanced space,” refers to “local,” “foreign,” and “divine (or mythic)” spaces that are invoked in some way by the drama but neither witnessed within the performance nor alluded to as being continuous with the fictional place of the performance (22). The last two spaces, “self-referential” or “metatheatrical space” and “reflexive space,” refer the audience respectively to the facts of theatrical performance (musical accompaniment, choral dance, and so on, in a way that assists the audience to develop “a flexibility of seeing”: 23), and to the civic nature of Athenian life. Reflexive space “emerges when tragedy takes on a strongly fifth-century flavour, or a speaker alludes to contemporary political concerns, or when the theatre evokes other public space....” (24). Rehm then devotes the rest of the book to an exploration of the complex interplay of these six spaces in a range of tragedies.

I suggested at the start of this Introduction that, due to its intangible yet dynamically potent nature, space might be described as an “object-like non-thing,” and that Heidegger (2001) expresses this aspect of space in his assertion that it is “[b]y means of the temple [that] the god is present within the temple” (40). Exactly the same description might be posited for theatre performance and theatrical space. While performance cannot adequately be described as an “object,” a term denoting a stable, unchanging, and nameable arrangement of components that can be touched and observed, the performance event does have a certain degree of “objectivity (the quality an object possesses)” (Pearson and Shanks 2001, 98). The specified and limited space-time-action matrix of the performance event has some resemblances to other artefacts, in that it has been constructed and rehearsed (in more or less intuitive, purposeful, and conscious ways) such as to be capable of (more or less) precise iteration. And in theatre, as States (1985) adds in reference to Heidegger, when the overall dramaturgy is sufficient to the task, “[i]t is the truth of the god that arrives on the stage and not the stage that refers to a ‘real’ god beyond it, existing in some unavailable form” (3). At the same time, performance in theatre (as opposed to ‘performance’ in daily life) might truly be described as “a point of crystallisation in a continually moving, dissolving and

reforming pattern” (Bratton 2003, 38), in which the components enter into a “relationship of unending refraction” (Carlson 1992, 318). This understanding of performance mirrors the understanding, established by the “spatial turn,” that space consists of “a swirling, complex, contingent, ever-changing maelstrom of possibilities” (Warf and Arias 2009, 6).

## **Close Relations: Spaces of Greek and Roman Theatre**

To understand space, theatre, and theatrical space, an interdisciplinary approach is needed. The title of this book, and of the conference that inspired it,<sup>14</sup> refers to the “close relations” that exist between the many aspects (both external and internal) and notions of space and their complex interweavings, between the disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches that are needed to understand space, especially since the “spatial turn,” between notions of space in general and those of theatrical space, between Greek tragedy as it existed in antiquity and as it has been “received,” interpreted, and transformed throughout history ever since, and between the scholarship that is required to analyse these various phenomena—and that is featured in the chapters of this volume. As Warf and Arias (2009) put it,

Because so many lines of thought converge on the topic of spatiality, space is a vehicle for examining what it means to be interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary, to cross the borders and divides that have organized the academic division of labor, to reveal the cultures that pervade different fields of knowledge, and to bring these contrasting lines of thought into a productive engagement with one another. (2)

Precisely this “productive engagement” is what we have striven to achieve in this volume.

*Section One: Spaces of Greek and Roman Theatre in Antiquity*, focuses primarily on “spaces” of Greek and Roman drama, theatre, and performance in antiquity. At the same time, the Section looks towards and draws from the contemporary world, and also sets up a number of paradigmatic approaches to the examination of “space” in its many manifestations that are pursued throughout the book.

The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens was the primary physical space of fifth-century Greek theatre. In Chapter One, Frank Sear examines the crucial question of the shape of this all-important physical space, a question that has generated so much debate. Sear’s comprehensive study of Roman theatres was published in 2006. Here he turns his expert

archaeological eye on all available evidence for the Theatre of Dionysus and other fifth-century and relevant later theatres in Greece, and concludes that the weight of evidence suggests that “the fifth century BCE Theatre of Dionysus had an irregular or rectangular orchestra and rectilinear seating” (45).<sup>15</sup> The fourth century orchestra of this theatre, rebuilt by Lykourgos between 338-326 BCE, was certainly circular, but Sear concludes that this rebuilding project was most likely influenced by the new and perfectly circular orchestra at Epidauros, which, he suggests, was most likely built around or soon after 340 BCE (54).

In Chapter Two, Richard Beacham explores the complex and sophisticated relationships between the “actual, the visual, and the mental spaces” of Roman theatre and Roman “theatricalism,” a term with which he refers to “the whole range of borrowings, in various media and forms, from the domain of theatre” (69). Focusing on the notion of “double vision,” that is, the idea of “being, through such appeals to the visual imagination, in effect in *two places at once*,” Beacham asks: “What and how did the Romans ‘see’ in what Cicero termed the ‘mind’s eye’?” (67). In a step-by-step argument that is both wonderfully clear and yet deeply penetrating and persuasive, Beacham illuminates the “multi-perspectival aesthetics” created and exploited within Roman theatre, written narratives employing the technique of *ekphrasis*, and Roman wall paintings (73f). The sophisticated mental representations generated by such an aesthetic are, on the one hand, compared to computer-generated, three-dimensional virtual worlds, and, on the other hand, visualised and recreated by such technology (for further details of these and other such projects, see <http://www.richardbeacham.com/index.html>). *Ekphrasis* and *phantasia* together, asserts Beacham, were able to add to the work of art “the quintessential theatrical elements of time, action, sound, sequence, and embodiment: the same elements that figure now so prominently and persuasively in computer games and virtual environments” (74f). Calling attention throughout the chapter to the permeability between the various realms or “spaces” (material, imaginative, social, and spiritual) of Roman theatre in antiquity, in the latter part of the chapter Beacham focuses on the relationship between scenic painting in the theatre and wall paintings in the Roman *domus*, both of which drew heavily on the pictorial creation of illusion (82ff).

In Chapter Three, David Wiles uses early twentieth-century theorist, Mikhail Bakhtin’s notion of the “chronotope” to understand the space-time axis in Sophocles’ *Oedipus Tyrannus*, and by extension that of Greek tragedy in general. Wiles identifies the particular fusion of space and time

in Greek tragedy as the intersection of the linear, historical space-time of the *personae* of tragedy with the mythological, non-linear space-time of the chorus. This fusion is especially clear in *Oedipus Tyrannus*. As Wiles argues, “Oedipus spends the play constructing a kind of history, a history that explains the present crisis” (99). Aeschylus’ *Oresteia*, in particular, exemplifies this kind of linear, historical time, which constitutes “a journey to a destination” (98). But the chorus of *Oedipus* and the forewarnings of the oracle in regard to Oedipus constitute “a mythological-time world;” the pronouncements of the chorus and their dance, marked by the repetition of strophe and antistrophe, as well as the Doric inflection of their language, is “thick with memories...concrete and metaphorical, not linear and agonistic” (100).

In Chapter Four, Mary-Kay Gamel uses a specific variation of the chronotope of modern theatre to by-pass and correct what she sees as a blind-spot in the contemporary understanding of Greek tragedy. Gamel’s argument is that seeing ancient Greek tragedy through the lens of contemporary *professional* theatre is deceptive; more traction is gained, she argues, by imagining Greek theatre through the lens of modern *community theatre*, because “production at Athens was a communal experience, deeply rooted in the social and political life of the city” (105). Drawing on her experience, as she puts it, on both sides of the curtain as a theatre-maker, audience member, and scholar, Gamel presents three case studies in contemporary community theatre: the Palio of Siena, Teatro Povero di Monticchiello, and her own production with students of *The Buzzzzz!!!!*, a version of Aristophanes’ *Wasps*. The aim of these case studies is to allow us to “go into the *imaginative* space of ancient theatrical performance” (107). To achieve this aim, the case studies have had to meet the criteria that they emerge “from a *communal context*,” involve a reciprocal relationship between artists and community participants, and consist of both “multiple disciplines–aesthetics and something else, such as education, community building, or therapy–and multiple functions, including both efficacy and entertainment” (Cohen-Cruz 2005, 97). Finally, each case study reveals an “*active culture* which recognises that ‘everyone has artistic potential’ and that people ‘get more out of making art than seeing the fruits of other people’s labors’” (111, citing Cohen-Cruz 2005, 99). In her conclusion, Gamel offers the reception scholar numerous insightful recommendations.

While Section One draws on modern understandings and techniques to illuminate the physical, cultural, and imaginative spaces of ancient theatre and theatricalism, *Section Two: Spaces in Modern Time*, explores a

number of ways those various spaces and spatial practices of ancient Greek and Roman drama and theatre have been recreated, reimagined, repurposed, and transformed in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

In Chapter Five, Dmitry Trubotchkin examines the “Close Relations” between avant-garde Russian theatre at the beginning of the twentieth century and the physical and ideational spaces of Greek and Roman theatre in antiquity. Trubotchkin places particular emphasis on the way in which Meyerhold and Tairov, both under the influence of the theories, lectures, and acting classes of Symbolist philosopher, poet, and playwright, Vyacheslav Ivanov, used Greek (and in Meyerhold’s case, also Roman) theatre spaces and spatial practices as inspiration for their creation of a “theatre of the future” and a Russian Renaissance. Ivanov, notes Trubotchkin, “saw the country covered by *orchestrae*, *thymeles*, and dancing amateur choruses” (138). Indeed, in an example of the kind of large-scale community involvement described in Section One of this book by Gamel, the proliferation at this time in Russia of performances on a vast scale with huge choruses, in either massive natural landscapes or similarly imposing urban architectural environments, might provide insight, writes Trubotchkin, into similarly large-scale Roman theatrical settings with their monumental architectural environments (139-41). Meyerhold and his circle are known to have been interested in the Roman comedies of Plautus and Terence, *commedia dell’arte*, and specific Greek tragedies, but what is most important for the Russian avant-garde’s reception of ancient theatre, argues Trubotchkin, was the *idea* of the ancient theatre and its use of a specific kind of physical space. While Tairov insisted on the physical separation of performers and spectators, and focused his efforts to recreate the ancient theatre on dynamic and multi-level floors, Meyerhold consciously sought to return to a version of the ancient theatre space by eliminating the footlights, covering the orchestra pit, and by various other means designed to bridge the gap between performers and spectators.

Lorna Hardwick, who has been instrumental in forging the field and the methodology of Classical Reception Studies (see, for example, her 2003 *Reception Studies*), focuses in Chapter Six on what she terms “cultural space,” a variation of Homi Bhabha’s “Third Space,” and one in which “both ancient and modern spheres of reference can meet.” A “cultural space” of this kind offers dynamic encounters between cultures and the possibility of “forging new understandings and relationships” (152). Drawing on two productions, one a version of Sophocles’ *Antigone*, the other a new play created around motifs in Sophocles’ *Ajax*, Hardwick

offers here a four-pronged approach to examining the way in which “the ancient writer and context...migrate to the Third space,” thus allowing “their part in the agency of cultural interaction to be re-examined” (153). Hardwick’s close attention to the language and imagery of Sophocles’ original play and the way it was handled in Timberlake Wertenbaker’s English version, allows her to propose specific ways in which the absent Sophocles was present in the 2002 Cairo production of this version, directed by Frank Bradley. Her second case study, Colin Teevan’s monologue *The One Within*, performed by Greg Hicks in 2005 and 2006, offers a very different but no less compelling example of how the absent playwright can make his presence felt in a modern “cultural space.” Her specific focus here is “how Teevan uses Sophocles’ play and the extent to which Sophoclean resonances activate Teevan’s artistic form, the monologue” (162). The results of Hardwick’s detailed and close examination are characteristically insightful. The cultural spaces that she examines here, as she notes, “allow the ancient dramatist’s voice to speak not just through the text, in dialogue with the translator or modern dramatist, but also in the staging, in dialogue with the director, designer, and actors” (168).

Jane Montgomery Griffiths focuses in Chapter Seven on what she terms “spatial ontology in the acting process,” that is, experiential aspects of the dialectic between inside and outside the modern tragic actor’s body. In pursuing this focus, Griffiths draws, in part, on her own performance of Sophocles’ *Electra*. Arguing that “the body in performance is never stable, and that in its instability, the spatial definitions of inside/outside, near/far, on/off endlessly mutate in the melding between actor and character” (175), Griffiths focuses on the way that the shifting “mask” of the actor’s body generates a perception in the audiences’ imagination of who *Electra* is and the significance of the action that swirls around her. The process, however, inevitably involves what Lacan calls “anamorphosis,” or perceptual distortion, where the interior experience of the actor, her exterior appearance, and the gaze of the spectator merge. The result of this process is that each member of the audience perceives not *the*, but *an* identity of *Electra*. For the actor, the process of performing a demanding role like *Electra* involves a strongly physicalised merging of inside and outside, self and other. But when the actor watches a recording of herself performing the role, “[t]he actor who has ‘been’ *Electra*...now becomes the spectator of herself *as Electra*, and is unable to identify her self with the replayed body she is watching. The roles become multi-layered and endlessly confused” (180; see also Rogers in this volume). Griffiths finds a similar dialectical blurring of inside and outside, *oikos* and public space,