Theatrocracy (1)

**Bruno Cariou** on April 20, 2015 by Elements of Racial Education

A nation is at the show

like a woman in front of her mirror;

she looks at herself and studies herself with pleasure,

sometimes she recognizes herself and approves of herself

in her beauty, often out of depravity

she takes pleasure in her vices and

she applauds her ugliness

Latour Saint-Ybars

The proud Romain needed nothing but

shows and bread;

But to the French more than Romain,

The spectacle is sufficient without bread.

Anonymous

Originally, the rite, in cults of Indo-European origin, was, to use the definition given by J. Evola, a constraining action on invisible forces and interior states, similar, in his mind, to that which is exercised today on physical forces and states of matter. What comes into play here are forces that must be qualified, even if the term is hackneyed, as spiritual: forces of a superhuman order. As soon as they withdraw because those who are responsible for practicing it are no longer qualified to do it, the rite degenerates into a ceremony, as happened in antiquity in Greece and Rome.

The case of the three Abrahamic theistic religions, particularly Christianity and Islam, is different; founded on devotion (1), that is to say a sentimental element, specific to the human state, they know of the rite only the "envelope": the ceremony, "a manifestation comprising a greater or lesser extent. deployment of an external pump, whatever the circumstances which provide the occasion or the pretext for it in each particular case ”(2). Now, it is from the ceremony that the theater arises; ceremonial uses and not ritual practices.

The theater represents less a degradation of the ceremony than an extension of a playful or educational nature, an extension, but also exteriorization. The language reflects it: the word "theater", which originally designates the building designed for the presentation of shows. , also comes to signify the particular framework in which certain events take place, certain manifestations of human life. We speak in the figurative sense of political theater, of social theater and, always in the figurative sense, those who are there are “puppets”, “puppets”, “actors”, “actors”, etc. .

We propose here to take them literally and to consider the historical processes that have made our continent what it is today as a progressive theatricalization. The very state of things invites us to do so. Everything, thanks first of all to the media, then to multimedia, is nothing more than spectacularization. There is no longer an event, a fact, which, mediatized, is not transformed into a spectacle. Thus, the spectacular is privileged, the emotion cultivated to excess in its crudest, most frenzied instantaneity.

The first part of our study will focus on pre-theatrical forms and the theater in Greco-Roman antiquity: popular drama, aristocratic drama and especially hieratic drama as well as the festivals in honor of Dionysus, of which he is issued. The second part, by far the most edifying, will take us from the “middle ages” to the modern era. Where a theistic religion informs and penetrates all social life, all the existence of each of its members, that, therefore, all social life, all the existence of each of its members, is punctuated by the ceremonies of this religion , the way is inevitably open to the theatricalization of life, public and political. Such was the case with the Judeo-Christian civilization of the “middle ages”. We will see that it was however only at the end of the 18th century, with 1789,that the process of theatricalization experienced a brutal acceleration, before reaching its end under representative democracy, which from Judeo-Christianity has retained the spirit, the law and the morality, that is to say its most dangerous for white civilization, that this process comes to an end.

Since the term “theatricalization” is taken in its specific sense, we will endeavor to take into account exclusively the cases where we are dealing with a formal identity, whether potential, in the process of becoming or complete, between the theatrical scene and the political world. The relations, the interferences, the reciprocal influence between political power, society in general on the one hand and the theater on the other hand will only retain us within this framework.

Theatricalization should not be confused purely and simply with tittytainment , a set of multimedia entertainment designed to appeal to the masses, with the aim, as its critics define it, to "prevent them from thinking (by themselves). ) ”. The tittytainment , far from being a facelift of panem and circuses, properly constitutes a perversion. Not only evergetism consisted in offering the plebs free shows, food and buildings, while, it seems to be recalled, the wand is paid, game consoles are paid, subscription to a cable or satellite television provider is chargeable, a subscription to an internet service provider is chargeable, the “contribution to public broadcasting” is chargeable, and so on. ; but also because the masses are naturally predisposed to entertainment and that, when they exist, any government must take it into account; make the masses think and even flatter them by making them believe that they can think and actually think for themselves, through education and media coverage,on the contrary, this is what the Republican clique did as it came to power and, one hundred and fifty years later, the psychological result is impressive: democracy has also become sentimentally and emotionally essential to the masses. than the media that punctuate their schizophrenic drives. Critics oftittytainment are based on the Marxist theme, largely irrigated by the crocodile tears of the prophets of Israel, of the almost ontological opposition between two frozen entities: a fundamentally good and healthy humanity and a ruling class which can only be fundamentally wicked and corrupt (that, in parliamentary democracies, the latter is maintained in power by the former by way of suffrage does not seem to disturb the supporters of this stupidity).

Then the tittytainmentis only one aspect of theatricalization. Disagreeing with the assertion of Marxist historiography and its epigones that politics is in itself a spectacle and politics has always been a stage, we will argue that politics began to become a stage in the theatrical sense. from the moment it was emptied of its substance because real power had passed from the hands of those officially charged with running the state into those of the economic "agents" who distribute roles and for whom they serve as a screen. The theatricalization of political life is synonymous with depoliticization. A single historical example will undoubtedly suffice to make the reader sense this: before the conquest of Greece by Rome,several Greek cities had confederated and held political assemblies at certain times. When Greece came under Roman domination, these assemblies, if they could continue to exist, were deprived of all political freedom and forced to confine themselves to the administration of games and shows.

I. The theater in ancient Greece

A. Parties and shows

The theater, as we know, was born in Greece, at least on our continent (3). He found there a favorable ground, because the inhabitants of Greece were fond of spectacles. “… Is 'Mediterranean', says J. Evola in a remarkably penetrating description of this racial type, the taste for exteriority and gesticulation. The Mediterranean type needs a scene, if not in the lowest sense of vanity and exhibitionism, at least in the sense that his commitment and enthusiasm (even for noble, worthy, sincere things) often proceed from 'a rapport with those who watch him, and concern for the effect it will have on them plays a significant role in his conduct. Hence, precisely, this inclination to "gesture",that is, to give to his action characteristics which draw attention to it and mobilize it - even when the one who acts knows full well that he has only himself as a spectator. In Mediterranean man, therefore, there is a certain duplication between an "I" which performs the role and an "I" which looks at it from the point of view of a spectator or a possible observer, and takes pleasure in it. : more or less like the actor does. These characteristics of this racial type should not be lost sight of in this chapter.and takes pleasure in it: more or less as the actor does. These characteristics of this racial type should not be lost sight of in this chapter.and takes pleasure in it: more or less as the actor does. These characteristics of this racial type should not be lost sight of in this chapter.

1. Taste of demos for shows

Solemn performances were expensive, not all cities could have a large theater and subsidize the performances. Moreover, those who were not of free status were excluded from the great theatrical solemnities. "It was therefore necessary for the needs of every day, of all conditions and of all places, that there should be actors of an inferior order, responsible for continuously and inexpensively providing the emotions of the drama to all. the classes of inhabitants ”(4): itinerant singers and dancers, ventriloquists, goblers and rope dancers, jesters, pranksters, mimes, who officiated in the streets, in the squares and at the crossroads. All were associated in brotherhoods.

2. Taste of the aristocracy for shows

The princes of the monarchical states were not to be outdone. They opened their palaces to all kinds of shows, in two particular circumstances: days of mourning and banquets.

Plutarch reports that it was customary to solemnize the funerals of kings and princes through the struggles of actors. For the immolations, forced or voluntary, around the tombs, fictitious combats were substituted: pyrrhics, since it is the name which was given to this spectacle, was born in the Bronze Age in Minoan Crete, that is to say - say pelasgic (5)

The mourners, kinds of actresses specializing in funerals that already existed in the monarchical era, are more present in the so-called republican era (509-31 BC). The same name ( θρύλοι ) designated the funeral laments and the songs of tragedies. In addition, funeral hymns were sung by hired actors, who differed from tragic actors only in costume. From the 6th century BC, tragedies were represented at the funerals of tyrants, who had returned to power at that time. In Homeric times, singers celebrated the exploits of heroes, not only in public assemblies, but also in royal palaces, "always preferring the newest song" ( L'Odyssée, I, v. 350-352); cubistics, or pyramidal dance, which it seems to have been originally dedicated to Cybele, is introduced into these festivals, before becoming popular.

Music, dance, and poetry continued to entertain citizens in the so-called classical era; many were the slaves and courtesans admitted to aristocratic feasts to engage in all kinds of dances of oriental origin. "Finally, when the luxury of Asia had completely invaded Greece, we saw rich voluptuous people calling to their feasts naked dancers, naked singers, naked harpists" (6). Besides the dancers and actors, the guests were entertained with jesters, trick-makers, hoop players and, like the Persian kings, madmen. The maintenance of mad servants was a custom which originated in Persia; another fashion peculiar to the East was the maintenance of domestic buffoons, the employment of dancers, musicians and musicians of all kinds.On the old paintings which decorate the tombs of the Heptanomide one sees rich Egyptians accompanied by counterfeit dwarves. These entertainments continued into the 19th century in Persia, India, Egypt and all Muslim countries. And, in antiquity, with the exception of the castle of Alexander, tyrant of Pheres, it is true Pelasgic, it was especially in the palaces of the kings of countries located on the outskirts of Greece, in Syria among the Attales, in Egypt at the court of the Ptolemies, in Sicily at the court of the Hierons, in Macedonia at that of Archelaüs, Philip and the successors of Alexander (7), which they had current. One of these entertainments was to choose a "king of the feast", to whom all the guests were required to obey. In the so-called republican era, he received the name of symposiarch. Here again,this practice turns out to have its origin in the religions of the Near East and, more particularly, in the Phoenician and Canaanite institution ofmarzeah (8). At regular intervals, the dead were honored, by the more fortunate members of the tribes, at elaborate funeral banquets which took place in a building called bet marzeah (house of marzeah ), under the supervision of a rb marzeah ("prince of the marzeah") (9) elected" democratically "by all the guests; these also elected the “deputies” of the “prince”, in a parody of the hierarchy which we will see below that it will be found in certain European brotherhoods in the “middle ages”. If we are to believe Posidonius, this form of worship of the dead was only a pretext for feasting and drinking. The fact remains that the voluntary and democratic character of this institution was fully preserved and even accentuated when it went to Greece, since, here, it was not uncommon for the guests who had elected the "king of the feast" and who, theoretically, owed him obedience, theatrically accuse him, during the feast, of excess of power and tyranny. Greek festivals, such as Cronies and Pelories,where the slaves played the role of free men and sometimes even masters, also find their origin in an oriental festival, more precisely Persian, that of Saceus, during which a slave, in each house, was dressed in a royal robe and exercised sovereign authority (on the last day of the feast, he was beaten with rods and placed on the cross).

Most of the spectacles which the inhabitants, peasants or nobles, of Greece gorged on were of exotic origin.

B. Influence of mysteries on the theater

1. The primitive Dionysiac festivals

If imitation is characteristic of man conceived in abstracto and the mimic instinct, the source of the drama, is found in all places, all times, all civilizations, it is therefore universal, it cannot becomes art only in contact with an irrational element. It may be that the Dionysian element is not the only one at the origin of the theater, but everything shows that it had a determining influence on its birth, at least on our continent.

Until the beginning of the 6th century BC, there were three festivals in honor of the pre-Hellenic god Dionysus: the rustic Dionysias, in the month of Poseidon; the Lenae, in the month of Gamélion and the Anthesteries, in the month of Anthesterion. They all gave rise to ceremonial representations, hymns, tumultuous and grotesque processions of bacchants and bacchantes, in which appeared, often evoked by rudimentary masks, the deities of the earth and of fertility. In the main one, the rural Dionysias, extreme freedom reigned; even the slaves entertained themselves there with full license. It is in this festival, in the jokes and antics in which the peasants indulged there, that the origin of the comedy would be to be sought. In any case, the first trestles and, soon,the first theater was erected during the Anthesteries, the only festival in which the secret ceremonies in honor of Bacchus took place, public in the other two. However, it should be noted that the representations they hosted “were not intended to… imitate realities and create illusions; they remained an amusement without any serious thought, and did not become for anyone a truth. The theaters isolated on trestles one or two meters from the ground had no decoration which suited them to their destination, and could serve as a framework for the play; the pine branches and the ivy garlands with which they were adorned,remembered at all times that it was only a matter of celebrating Bacchus and having fun after drinking ... The spectators were therefore perfectly aware not to see on the stage gods stripped of their divinity and vilified, but transvestite actors, and their pleasure came mainly from the contrast between the superhuman nature of the characters and their bad life, between their real role in the play and the one they were supposed to fulfill in the world ”(10).

In any case, these representations "counterbalanced the brilliance of the secret representations of the sanctuary" (11), about which, after all, little is known. “As traces of this mystical origin, we see the main priest of Bacchus occupying a place of honor on the first steps of the theater of Athens, much as we will see later our clergy in the person of the confreres of the Passion, keep for a long time a grilled box at the Théâtre-Français, under the title of Lodge of the Masters ”(12).

The temple of Eleusis itself opened up to increasingly scenic representations. According to Strabo, it could contain as many people as a theater. Of all the mystery cults, only that of Eleusis became a state institution, particularly under the two anti-aristocratic regimes that were tyranny and democracy, both of which made it a great plebeian cult: “In many cities the advent of tyrannies, which are based on the people, raised the mysteries to the rank of official worship; the democratic regimes that would follow would give them ever greater importance. The mysteries are, in fact, the true democratic Greek religion (13). »Hellenic art sought to realize an ideal,while the art carried by the mystery cults "wanted to fake reality and deceive the eye of the spectators": "usually, if not always, the Mystes, plunged in a frightening darkness, were transported in imagination to the underworld, and the sight of the tortures of great criminals absolved divine justice of its slowness. Without at least a momentary illusion, these phantasmagorias would have been nothing but puerilities unworthy of preoccupying the intelligence: the spectators had to be impressed strongly enough to suspend their common sense and persuade them that the staging was the truth itself, and the spectacle, a reality ”(14). In general, whatever the mystery cult, the goal was to stir the imagination, (to) amaze the eyes, (to) charm the ears ”(15), as was later the case with the theater .It is notable that a certain number of tragedians have been linked in one way or another to the mysteries: it is in a cave, place where the mysteries of Bacchus were celebrated, that Euripides is reputed to have composed most of them. of his pieces, several of which have the theme of Dionysian worship; according to Aristotle, Aeschylus was accused of having revealed to laymen on the stage the secrets of the mystery ceremonies, without knowing that it was forbidden. Nietzsche, it will be remembered, links the birth of tragedy to the orgiastic festivals of Dionysus.several of which have as their theme the Dionysian cult; according to Aristotle, Aeschylus was accused of having revealed to laymen on the stage the secrets of the mystery ceremonies, without knowing that it was forbidden. Nietzsche, it will be remembered, links the birth of tragedy to the orgiastic festivals of Dionysus.many of which have the Dionysian cult as their theme; according to Aristotle, Aeschylus was accused of having revealed to laymen on the stage the secrets of the mystery ceremonies, without knowing that it was forbidden. Nietzsche, it will be remembered, links the birth of tragedy to the orgiastic festivals of Dionysus.

2. The theater and tyranny

Pisistratus (circa 600-527 BC), when he came to power, established a fourth festival in honor of Dionysus, celebrated around the 12th of the month of Elaphebolion: the urban Dionysias, which soon became the most important of the four and which, unlike the rural Dionysias, were open to foreigners. If it has been suggested, although no text or credible source mentions the theater before the beginning or the middle of the 6th century BCE, that theatrical performances took place during the rural Dionysias, it is certain that Pisistratus put the theater, perhaps tragedy, certainly comedy, at the center of the urban Dionysias. Pisistratus was himself, in his own way, an actor, judging by Herodotus' relation to his buffoonish schemes:“… In [s] a quarrel between the Paralians or inhabitants of the maritime coast, commanded by Megacles, son of Alcmaeon and the inhabitants of the plain, having at their head Lycurgus, son of Aristolaïdes, to clear a road to tyranny, [he] created a third party. He therefore assembled this party, under the pretext of defending the Hyperacrians. Here is the ruse he imagined: having injured himself and his mules, he pushed his chariot towards the public square, as if he had escaped from the hands of his enemies, who had wanted to kill him when he was going to battle. campaign. He conjured the Athenians to grant him a guard: he reminded them of the glory with which he had covered himself at the head of their army against the Megarians, the capture of Nisee, and cited several other traits of value to them. The people, deceived, gave him for guard a certain number of chosen citizens,who followed him, armed with sticks instead of pikes. Pisistratus caused them to be raised, and by their means seized the citadel. From that moment he was master of Athens… ”It has been argued that Pisistratus instituted the Dionysia not so much to worship Dionysus as to celebrate the prosperity of Athens, the determining cause of the advent of tyranny; however, the two motivations are not mutually exclusive. What is obvious is that their establishment corresponds to a determination to unite the people, through a collective celebration, around this political regime, which was carried by a large bourgeoisie enriched by trade.From that moment he was master of Athens… ”It has been argued that Pisistratus instituted the Dionysia not so much to worship Dionysus as to celebrate the prosperity of Athens, the determining cause of the advent of tyranny; however, the two motivations are not mutually exclusive. What is obvious is that their establishment corresponds to a determination to unite the people, through a collective celebration, around this political regime, which was carried by a large bourgeoisie enriched by trade.From that moment he was master of Athens… ”It has been argued that Pisistratus instituted the Dionysia not so much to worship Dionysus as to celebrate the prosperity of Athens, the determining cause of the advent of tyranny; however, the two motivations are not mutually exclusive. What is obvious is that their establishment corresponds to a determination to unite the people, through a collective celebration, around this political regime, which was carried by a large bourgeoisie enriched by trade.which was carried by a large bourgeoisie enriched by commerce.which was carried by a large bourgeoisie enriched by commerce.

3. Democracy and the theater

a) The so-called civic character of the Athenian theater

From Pisistratus, the theater would have taken on a civic character, which would have been accentuated under democracy. Three institutions mainly testify: the choreography , the theorikon and the competition. The city entrusted the richest citizens with the task of maintaining a dance choir with their funds for dramatic or musical competitions: it was the choreography. An allowance was paid to the poorest to enable them to pay the entrance fee to the theater: this was the theorikon, which quickly became a real show fund. The contests, organized as part of the Dionysia, were subsidized by the polis, which paid the actors, poets and musicians, at least those who had received its approval - Needless to say that the dramatic contests were "controlled from start to finish. end by political power. The content of the exhibits had to receive prior approval, for which one applied, as one and only criterion, “what was suitable to say in public”.

Under democracy, the theater effectively took on the dimension of a collective demonstration, in which the whole polis participated and which, even more than under tyranny, had the objective of uniting and "educating" citizens; in the absence of racial homogeneity, the link could only be external, artificial, let's say social. Participation in choirs - originally, the choir is the group of people who perform religious dances in the thymele, the altar, dedicated to Dionysus, which is at the center of the orchestra (16), then the group of people who present the action and comment on its development - was a civil and religious duty. The citizens discharged it all the more voluntarily since, according to Demosthenes and Ulpien, various privileges were attached to it: the choreutes were exempt from military service; their person was inviolable during their term of office; and, a little later, they even seem to have received a cash salary. Defamed persons, slaves and foreigners were excluded from these choirs.

However, the audience that attended the performances was not made up only of citizens, but also of metics, foreigners, women (allowed to watch tragedies, but not comedies) and even slaves and they had it all. captivate them, since, at least as far as tragedy was concerned, their themes, which revolved around the human condition, were intended to be universal. The theater can be seen as the keystone of the cosmopolitan project of the tyrants and, after them, of the Democrats. Indeed, it was not by chance that Pisistratus decided to have the urban Dionysias celebrated on the aforementioned date: the reopening of navigation in the month of Bellerophon attracted many foreigners to Athens and the urban Dionysias constituted for them an additional incentive to do so. the trip and,for the many foreigners and metics that Cleisthenes had admitted to the bourgeoisie, an invitation to settle there. Pisistratus in the 6th century and his successors had organized the theater with the aim of "attracting citizens from all over Attica to the heart of Athens, to the Acropolis, during the major festivals of the Panathenaea and the Dionysia ... The theater Greek was therefore a place of mass acculturation. This is evidenced by the very large capacity of the buildings, always dug into the hillside: 14,000 places in Epidaurus or Dodona, 17,500 in Athens and Corinth, 24,000 in Ephesus, 5,000 in an Attic deme or a small city ”( 17). When, under the Archontate of Callias, fortunes having been exhausted, partly because of the Peloponnesian War, it was necessary to authorize two citizens to unite their efforts to pay the cost of a choir (synchoregia),foreigners were also allowed to finance choirs on behalf of citizens unable to bear the expense.

The assertion that the theater had a “civic” character must therefore be seriously qualified. It is symptomatic of Hellenic decadence and of the correlative recrudescence of Pelasgic influence that the drama, originating from a foreign land, from a foreign spirit, ended up becoming a "national genre" (18), to which all Greeks identified themselves.

b) Theater, democracy, woman

Democracy was, as it still is, founded on what has come to be called “public debate” and, more generally, on logos, henceforth conceived only as “speech”, “discourse” (19) and it is therefore not difficult to understand why this political regime did everything to promote the development of an art where the word is king. Citizens were encouraged not only to participate fully in political institutions, but also to speak out openly on matters of “public interest”. They could do this in three places the assembly (it is interesting and symptomatic that once a year the assembly met, not in its usual place, the pnyx, but in a theater, which is what it is. alluded to in Aristophanes' Acharnians), the tribunal and, precisely, the theater. As,according to Aristotle, the assembly and the tribunal did not play a real role in this regard before the beginning of the fifth century BC, the theater was until this time the privileged place of public speech and, correlatively, the theater was the privileged place of democratic ideology. Theisegoria , the “right to speak”, was fiercely claimed in Euripides and the concept of popular sovereignty first appeared around 480 BCE in Aeschylus. The theater even gave "the floor to voices that were normally excluded from political life, in particular to women ..."

Women, in Greece, were not allowed to go on stage, but nevertheless they invaded it, because the woman and, more generally, the feminine values, were at the heart of the theater, as shown by an author whose insightful reading of Greek tragedies partially, albeit in a more analytical way, the considerations developed in section 361 of Gai savoir: "Women, if one believes [the] tragedians [Greek], not only invented personal freedom, but brought something special to its expression ... In all Greek dramas, tragic or comic, women vigorously defend and exclusively personal independence… which is universal and natural, as opposed to human justice; they also fight for the freedom to worship their own gods and to love the people of their choice. "" It is significant that the tragic heroine is often a slave: Cassandra in 'Agamemnon', the loyal Techmessa in Sophocles ' Ajax , and, most markedly, the Andromache and the Hecubus.of Euripides. This is even truer for many supporting female roles, but, in many of these dramas, the most important role is undoubtedly that of the choir of female slaves, especially that of the captive Troyennes in Hécube and Les Troyennes.… In Greek myth [which, as R. Graves has shown, can be read as a presentation of the transition from a Pelasgic matriarchal society to an Aryan patriarchal society], in Greek life and Greek theater, not only the "Servile power and female power are linked", but still the two are linked to the thirst for complete personal freedom and the dangers that it entails ... almost all of the women in the tragedy, especially those who are slaves, express a strong penchant for personal freedom (20)… ”In the Choéphores, "What is remarkable about the choir is that it is made up of female slaves who participate in a plot to assassinate their master and mistress in an attempt to achieve what they explicitly call freedom, both for free and semi-free men and, consequently, for themselves ”(21).

The importance of women in tragedy is naturally accompanied by the emergence of subjectivism: “… the study of interior life - debates, hesitations, contradictory feelings - takes on an importance hitherto unheard of. In Euripides' theater, a new concern is expressed to bring to light the real motives of the characters. The emphasis is on violent, contradictory feelings; psychological concerns thus take precedence over ethical considerations. And the personal involvement of the agent in the occurrence of the fault appears more and more clearly. The fault is now interpreted in the light of individual psychological dynamics, and no longer in reference to divine intervention, which, on the other hand, could possibly be invoked as a mitigating circumstance.The passage from exteriority to interiority of evil takes shape there, in the assumption of personal responsibility: little inclined to refer to the divine will, the hero of Euripides, prey to all human weaknesses, carries his destiny in his own heart (22). "

The hero thus leaves the battlefield for the stage, abandons living values ​​for feelings, action for states of mind, external battles for purely psychological internal conflicts.

d) Critique of the theater

The theater seems to have attracted the support of all the thinkers of the time in Greece. Aristotle, as we know, even praised the tragedy for its supposed ability to accomplish, "through pity and fear ... the purgation of the passions." Experience shows on the contrary that it would have rather the opposite effect. On the other hand, it is permissible to ask, without playing with words, whether "the imitation of a noble action" - assuming that, for example, the action of the Bacchantes, where, after being ridiculed and disguised as a woman, Pentheus, the king of Thebes, birthplace of Dionysus' mother, where the latter has just arrived to establish his worship there, is delivered to women made mad by Dionysus - would not be ignoble. All tragedies did not pay homage to the first of the virtues of the Athenian woman,namely modesty; “By one exception that was noticed, Euripides forgot that he spoke to mothers, wives, young girls. Sophist with the soul of a poet, incredulous with a lively faith in the religion of the beautiful, he pushed tragic emotion beyond the limits prescribed by a law that Aristotle had not yet written, but which lived in the depths of all consciences. He outraged the women by the oratorical invective, but still more by the frank portrayal of the most ardent passions. It was tearing the veil in which an austere modesty was enveloped. "(23).he pushed the tragic emotion beyond the limits prescribed by a law which Aristotle was not yet drafting, but which lived at the bottom of all consciousnesses. He outraged the women by the oratorical invective, but still more by the frank portrayal of the most ardent passions. It was tearing the veil in which an austere modesty was enveloped. "(23).he pushed tragic emotion beyond the limits prescribed by a law which Aristotle was not yet drafting, but which lived at the bottom of all consciousnesses. He outraged the women by the oratorical invective, but still more by the frank portrayal of the most ardent passions. It was tearing the veil in which an austere modesty was enveloped. "(23).

Unlike Aristotle, Plato criticizes the theater and he does so in several ways. First, he condemns imitation ( nemesis). The actor, like the poet, is blameworthy insofar as he is an imitator of the sensible and not of the being, a "maker of ghosts" cut off from reality and as a creator of imitators, capable of provoking a mimetic contagion, due to the Dionysian intoxication which transports it and which it can transmit to spectators. Each individual soul that succumbs to it comes to confuse ghosts with reality. Based on the confusion of identities, the theater tends to blur the perception that each individual soul has of its own identity and, ultimately, to dispossess it of its own form, causing it to alternately identify with different roles. that the actors play on stage. It follows that, in the theater, each individual soul can thus learn modes of behavior foreign to its nature,to become other and to be where it should not be, both literally and figuratively; literally, because Plato excludes "both the idea that artisans can be elsewhere than in their 'own' workplace, and the possibility that poets and actors can play roles other than their 'own' identity "(24); in the figurative sense, because the theater leads the amateur of shows to get used to taking a place which is not his in the polis. Its danger “comes from the power with which it invests spectators, without taking into account their delimited place in society” (25). Thus, the theater participates in the dissolution of laws and the destabilization and disorganization of the political space that these laws presuppose and allow to maintain.It was until this time the privileged place of the public speech to such an extent that Plato qualified the Athenian constitution of the time of “theatrocracy”, the government of a public assembled in a theater.

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At this stage of our study, it is important to come back to the figure of Dionysus, to underline that he was first looked at with suspicion by the Hellenes, not only because he was a foreigner and was known to have precipitated more than one crisis in Greece, but because his cult involved on the one hand the liberation from prohibitions, the violent manifestation of individual or collective feelings without guilt or restraint and on the other hand the emancipation of the lowest fraction of society as well as of women, one of the audiences to whom, moreover, this cult was specifically addressed; Dionysus is "a god who dissolves identity in general and differences between the sexes" (26). In addition, the ancient feasts of Bacchus, the Agrionies, during which human victims were sacrificed,had left memories of murderous fury (27).

The birth of the theater in Athens signals the re-emergence of the pre-Hellenic Pelasgic substrate of Attica. It was the same in Rome, since, according to Livy, the Romans were initiated into the theater in the fourth century BC by Etruscan actors; Valére Maxime, Tacitus and, later, Tertullian and Augustin are of the same opinion.

II. The theater in Rome

The arts and poetry, which in Greece had flourished within the priesthood in primitive times, only to spread rapidly in civil society, did not have the same success in Rome.

On the one hand, they came up against a racial type who "had a fundamental aversion to pictorial thought. Thus, in the secular realm, one of the reasons for the contempt the Romans had for the artist was the pride originally given to them in being distinguished by very different ideals of image-making and of marble sculpture ”(28). Cato the Elder resolutely opposed the introduction of the arts and sciences into Rome, out of a fully justified fear that the luxury of Greece and Asia would encourage softness and sybaritism. The echo of this distrust of the arts was repeated until the empire; in the 1st century BC, Virgil could still write: “Romain! Remember to command the world! Your arts, here they are: to impose peace, to forgive the vanquished and to tame the superb. "

On the other hand, in Rome, priestly power was subordinated to political authority. The subordination of the priesthood to the imperium partly explains the rarity of initiation cults, of which the little that we know of their rituals indicates that they were strongly dramatized. No evidence exists of male initiations in early Rome, when women were already called to celebrate many nocturnal and mysterious festivals in honor of Bona Dea. The mysteries of Bona Dea took place until the end of the "Republic", in the presence of the vestals, in the house of the consul, the praetor or the great pontiff. Men were excluded, with the exception of the Grand Pontiff.

A. Dramatic religious festivals and shows

1. Cults of a mysterious nature

a) The cult of Cybele (and Attis)

The arrival of the stone of Cybele in 204 had given rise to games which were partly hieratic, partly popular, which had been called megalesians; ten years later, around 194 BC, according to Livy, actual stage games were for the first time celebrated on their occasion. The Pseudolusde Plautus was given there in 191 BC, in front of the temple of the goddess which had just been inaugurated in the Palatine; four pieces of Terence, between 166 and 161. It is important to note that the exotic fanaticism which characterized the oriental cult of Cybele had been circumscribed as much as possible, once it was transplanted to Rome: “… the lenders [there] appeared in parade clothes, sacrificed to the goddess, and celebrated games in her honor; but in this celebrity, they did not deviate in any way from the ancient customs, and were confined within the limits prescribed by the laws. Thus, the ceremonies, which were observed in these days of solemnity, were stripped of all the chimeras, which the fable had mixed with the cult of Cybele.The Romans abandoned the practice of these foreign superstitions to a priest and a priestess from Phrygia… They were allowed to walk through the whole city, and to make, according to their custom, a quest for the mother of the gods ”. This part of the ceremonies was strongly dramatized: “The two ministers carried on their chest, images which represented some of the adventures of the goddess (29) During their march, they performed angry dances, to the sound of flutes, cymbals and tambourines. What was bound to happen happened: the cult of Cybele, who by the end of the "republic" had made great progress among the plebs, gained further popularity under the empire. Thea quest for the mother of the gods ”. This part of the ceremonies was strongly dramatized: “The two ministers carried on their chest, images which represented some of the adventures of the goddess (29) During their march, they performed angry dances, to the sound of flutes, cymbals and tambourines. What was bound to happen happened: the cult of Cybele, who by the end of the "republic" had made great progress among the plebs, gained further popularity under the empire. Thea quest for the mother of the gods ”. This part of the ceremonies was strongly dramatized: “The two ministers carried on their chest, images which represented some of the adventures of the goddess (29) During their march, they performed angry dances, to the sound of flutes, cymbals and tambourines. What was bound to happen: the cult of Cybele, who had made great progress among the plebs towards the end of the "republic", gained further popularity under the empire. Thethe cult of Cybele, who by the end of the "republic" had made great progress among the plebs, gained further popularity under the empire. Thethe cult of Cybele, who by the end of the "republic" had made much progress among the plebs, gained further popularity under the empire. Theludi megalenses , originally intended neither more nor less than to commemorate the arrival of Cybele in Rome, took on a whole new dimension, returning to their Phrygian sources, when Claudius introduced there the ceremony called Arbor Intrat, mourning feasts for the death of Attis, consort of Cybele. She staged, in five days, from March 22 to 27, the story of a mother saddened to have lost her son and who rejoices when she finds him. Finally, Antoninus Pius (138-161), organized the complete cycle of the feasts of the death and resurrection of Attis and granted him the status of official deity (30). At that time, the party, accompanied by self-mutilation and bloodshed, had fully recovered the orgiastic and savage character that had always been its own in Asia Minor (31).

b) Isiac religion

The Isiac religion spread to Italy around the middle of the 3rd century BC Ennius, the first Roman author to mention the presence of Isiac priests in Rome, compares them more or less to crooks. They won't be much better for Virgil two centuries later. These priests relied on the strangeness of their ceremonies and their costumes to attract the curious and obtain alms. Their hieratic spectacles were not part of the national cult. Their temples, private temples, if they were not destroyed as soon as they were built, were thrown outside the urbs. Only matrons, according to Properce, were admitted to their mysteries. In Rome, only women were allowed to meet to practice nocturnal and secret rites, while any participation in such a meeting was strictly prohibited for the Romans. The most vigilant magistrates had understood that the mysterious societies, under the pretext of religion, had in view of modifying the civil establishment, offered to the most seditious and the most corrupt individuals of the "republic" the opportunity to meet to plot. , had severely repressed them.

2. The semi-religious festivals

Whereas, in Greece, the citizens took an active part in the spectacles, the combats of the amphitheater, long the only profane spectacle in Rome, were left there to the only slaves. While, in Athens, many were the citizens who took part in the scenic performances, either as choreographers, or as actors or choreutes, well, in Rome, with the exception of a few farces from Campania, reserved for the patrician youth and prohibited to the histrions, only the slaves and the freedmen appeared on the scene. However, the participation in choirs of young men and young girls of free condition was allowed during certain semi-religious and semi-popular festivals (secular games, quinquatries, apollinaries). Certain festivals gave the Romans the opportunity to play a dramatic role.During the Cerealia, semi-mystical and semi-public celebrations, they staged the adventures of Ceres and Proserpina. The courtesans had an important role in three semi-religious festivals: one of the two vinales, orgiastic festival dedicated to Venus, the liberals, equivalent of the Dionysias, the florals, celebrated in honor of the goddess of Sabine originFlore: The maids themselves had a feast and this feast was indicative of a certain dramatization of life: the day of the caprotine nuns, theancillae sacrificed in the company of women of free status in the chapel of Juno caprotine, where they appeared dressed in the stole, the distinctive garment of the matrons. This privilege had been granted to ancillaeby the Senate as a reward for the devotion they had shown to their mistresses at a time of extreme danger for Rome. After the retreat of the Gauls, several nations of Italy had joined forces against Rome and one of them, encamped at its gates, declared itself ready to make peace with the Romans, on condition that the latter surrender to them. matrons, in order to renew, by marriage, their old alliance. A slave named Philotis then proposed to the Senate to go find the enemies with some of her companions, decked out as matrons. Once in the enemy's camp, they intoxicated them, then, when they were asleep, they gave the Romans the signal to attack. To preserve the memory of this event, the caprotine nuns were instituted.

3. Saturnalia

The representation of equality was at the center of another holiday, which the Romans celebrated in honor of Saturn: the Saturnalia, equivalent in Lazio to the Cronies and Pelories in Greece. Macrobe traces the institution back to the times of Tullius Hostilius, while Livy places it under the consulate of Aulus Sempronius and Mr. Minucius, in 257 BC. The Saturnalia, preceded, like all Roman feasts, by sacrifices, were followed by a meal, frugal, but joyful. At first limited to one day, its duration continued to be extended, until it reached seven days. During this festival of primitive equality supposed to have existed under the reign of Saturn, the slaves not only sat at the same table as their masters, but they were served there by their masters. Augustus bids on this practice, when,following a vision, he felt it necessary to exchange a faith in his dignity of emperor for the role of beggar. Later, Heliogabalus, dressed as a coachman of the green faction (at the circus games, there were four kinds of factions (factiones ), who stood out among themselves by the color of their costume; they represented the four seasons. The green faction ( factio prasina ) represented the spring) had chariots run inside the palace in front of his family and the people of his household and, in order to play his role to the end, he asked for money and saluted to the way of the coachmen, the agonothetes and even the soldiers on guard.

4. The festivals of the trades and craftsmen

To these celebrations were added the festivals of trades and craftsmen. An anecdote relating to that of the musicians, which took place at the Ides of June, shows that the congenital immunity of the Romans to refinements had weakened. Around 83 BC, as the musicians gradually softened Roman mores, the magistrates took it into their heads to restrict their privileges. As a result, the musicians collectively decided to leave Rome and refuse to participate in the sacrifices, where their presence was deemed necessary. The senate, by employing a stratagem, succeeded in making them return to Rome and restored them their privileges, so that they again attend to the sacrifices.

5. The triumphs

In the early days, the Romans' taste for reality still clearly prevailed over representation, as evidenced by the physiognomy of their triumphs. The Greeks, especially since Alexander, honored the return of their victorious generals with a pomp more bacchic than warlike. Nothing like it then in Rome, where it was not until the time of the first conquests for the triumphs, until then of great simplicity, to take on a dramatic character. The procession, which entered the city by the Triumphal Gate, to join the Capitol, was made up, among others, of soldiers, or public slaves, who carried on stretchers, either plans of the cities which had been taken, or paintings representing the battles that had been won, the rivers, the animals,the plants and the simulacra of the divinities specific to the lands of the conquered peoples. However, the Romans always preferred the sight of conquered remains, weapons taken, kings and princes conquered and hostages, and the presence of foreign animals. In fact, the only truly theatrical element of the triumph was made up of grotesque figures who, like themanducus , a mannequin with enormous jaws, his mouth open and his teeth moving with a loud noise, who, either at the head or following the procession, were responsible for entertaining or frightening the multitude; it is difficult to know with certainty when they were incorporated into the triumphs; what is certain is that the atellane, a buffoonish farce of Osque origin in which the manducus was one of the main characters, dates back to the 4th century BC.

B. Development of stage games

It is from 364 before our era, time of the introduction in Rome of the stage plays, that the beginnings of the theater itself date. He was subjected to two very unequal influences: Etruscan influence and Greek influence.

1) Etruscan influence

Latin authors attribute an Etruscan origin to the theater in Rome (by which we must understand that the theater in Rome would come from rituals of the Etruscan religion, in particular from necyomancy, the art of evoking the dead to predict the future) (32). According to Livy, followed later by Valerius Maximus, the plague had raged in Rome around 363 BC And, to prevent its return, the Senate decided to institute a feast of a new kind , that is to say, scenic games and, for this purpose, "jugglers were brought from Etruria who danced to the sound of the flute and performed, in Etruscan fashion, movements which were not without grace. … ”; and, as "bateleur" was called (h) ister in Etruscan, the actors took the name of histrio. According to the historian Cluvius Rufius, whose testimony is reported by Plutarch, “in the early days of the republic, under the consulate of C. Sulpicius and Lic. Stolon, the plague destroyed all the actors, without excepting one. Several very able men were brought from Etruria. The most famous of them, the one who had the most talent and experience in his art, was called Histrus; and it was by his name that all the actors were called histrions. This testimony therefore differs from the first in that it implies that Rome hosted actors before the arrival of an Etruscan element in the urbs . Be that as it may, another argument would argue in favor of the thesis of the Etruscan origin of the theater in Rome, if it turned out that larva is indeed, as the inscriptions (33) tend to show, of Etruscan derivation: the fact that this term (which originally meant “wandering spirit”, before taking on the meaning of “evil spirit”) also designated a mask scenic (34).

2) Greek influence

The "Greek" influence, direct or indirect, resulted from the immediate contact between Rome and the arts of Greece. In the study of the influence of the arts of Greece on Rome, we must distinguish two periods: the first, which begins with the capture of Taranto in 272 BC, sees the customs and poetry of Greece begin to be known and appreciated in Rome, some Greek actors called in the urbs , to appear in public games; the second, which followed the capture of Corinth in 146 before our era, is remarkable for the borrowings that the writers of Rome made from Greece in terms of staging.

Greece, orientalized, directly influenced the theater in Rome, while it indirectly influenced it through an art that the Romans brought back from it: eloquence, which moreover only appeared in Greece the end of the fifth century BC, that is to say under the democratic regime. Eloquence is the art of expressing oneself with persuasive elegance, of moving and persuading by speech; when it comes to moving and persuading the demos , it is demagogy, the search for the favor of the demos to obtain its votes. However, the demos , which does not reason, as Lamy reminds us following Aristotle, “is subject to being wrong… This is why, to persuade the [ demos] that we are telling the truth, it suffices to speak with more boldness than his opponent j all we have to do is shout louder, and say more insults to him than he says, complain about him more bitterly, to propose everything that one puts forward as oracles, to mock his reasons as if they were ridiculous, to cry if necessary, as if one had a real pain that the truth which one defends was attacked and obscured. These are the appearances of the truth. The people hardly see anything but these appearances, and it is they who persuade them. (35) By whom was the first treatise on eloquence co-written? By two sophisticated rhetoricians, Corax of Syracuse and Tisias of Syracuse, both considered to be the founders of rhetoric (36).

The comparison between speaker and actor is made implicitly in the passage just quoted. In fact, the similarity of the speaker and the actor is obvious: hypokrisis , which, in Aristotle, even if he does not yet have the modern meaning of "hypocrite", is a pejorative term, means at the same time the theatrical interpretation and oratorical interpretation; likewise, in Latin, actiodesignates "the interpretation of a speech, by voice and gesture, and more particularly the art of the actor" (37). In Greece, actors and orators used the same terminology to describe their art. ; the same will be the case in Rome, where, however, the orators, apart from Cicero, were not without a certain nervousness regarding the similarities between their profession and that of actor, while in Attica they merged together : Demosthenes had been trained in declamation and oratorical action by the actor Satyrus (38), Aeschine (387-312 BC) had started by being an actor in a traveling company (39), before become a lawyer, then secretary of the People's Assembly. Quintilian, in Institutio oratorio, constantly insists on the fact that the good speaker must be careful not to behave like an actor (40). If some actors admitted to finding a certain inspiration in the performances of the speakers, laughing does not prevent the thinking that they could have been secretly inspired by the play of those, since, according to the Syrian epicurean Philodemus of Gadara, most actors were reluctant to take lessons from orators; "We know that Cicero learned from the two greatest actors of his time, the tragedian Aesop and the actor Roscius, and conversely Aesop and Roscius went to observe Cicero's rival, Hortensius, to transpose some of his effects to the theater oratories ”(41).

The indirect influence of Greece on the development of the theater in Rome lies in the fact that it transmitted to the Urbs oriental customs which, due to their ostentatious character, favor a theatricalization of private life and of life. public, once a sufficient number of Orientals had settled there. This, basically, is why Tacitus considers that the theatrical tradition of Greece has a corrupting influence on the Romans.

It was at the beginning of the second century BC, when the first table bed was brought back from Greece, that oriental luxury first appeared in Rome. Until then, the Romans, like the ancient Hellenes, had their meals seated. Frugal meals were followed by banquets, then feasts ( dubia ) and the cook, who was previously only a second-rate slave, became the most esteemed servant of a large house and what was until then - where a vile profession was considered an art. Syrian musicians and harp players, as well as jesters ( ridiculi) were not long in being introduced there (under the empire, the feasts themselves offered, in this period of unbridled luxury, entertainment of all kinds. Heliogabalus sometimes invited to supper eight bald, eight one-eyed, eight gouty eight deaf, eight giants and eight obese, which, for fun, he made lie down in a bed which could not contain them. Commode one day had two stunted hunchbacks covered with mustard served in a large dish, for, immediately after, clothe them with dignity and cover them with silver. As for Domitian, his black banquet remained in all memories, particularly in those of the guests, for its impeccably macabre character. (42) The little convivial drama was also imposed. whose existence we have reported in Greece and, previously,in the East and which consisted for the guests to choose among themselves a king of the feast; However, the democratic element specific to the original and its Greek copy was missing.

From Sylla to the fall of the "Republic", luxury was evident and, with luxury, corruption. The excesses of the aristocracy were only surpassed later by the imperial orgies. One of the proconsular festivals described by Salluste ( ap. Macrob., Saturn., II, 9) recalls, by its theatrical extravagance, the narcissistic debauchery of Alexander. Sylla lived surrounded by actors, Antoine only traveled with actors. Not only did the debauchery surround themselves with actors, but they themselves took part as actors in saltations. These saltations had nothing to do with the serious and military dances which had taken place among the first Romans. The libertine nobles of the last years of the “Republic” practiced foreign exercises the use of which had infiltrated Rome at the time of Scipio Emilien and which had until then been reserved for slaves. Caligula dressed as Mercury, Neptune and Jupiter, played the roles of Bacchus, Apollo and Hercules, disguised herself as Diana, Juno or Venus. Commode who, from his childhood, had been practiced in pantomime,once an adult, not content with dressing up as Hercules and Mercury, vice pushed so far as to show himself as an Amazon. Caracalla was content to dress as Bacchus.

All the dramatic rituals practiced in Rome at burials, with the exception of gladiatorial shows, were borrowed from Greece. Solon's Law and later the Law of the Twelve Tables tried in vain to restrict funeral expenses and to prevent women from bruising their faces on this occasion. In vain did they also seek to put limits on the signs of false pain which mingled with true pain: the mourners continued to make revenue, so much so that some of these actresses succeeded in raising enough money to hire mourners. at their own funerals: not only mourners, but also musicians, dancers, buffoons and actors, who came after them. The funeral looked like a stage performance. The actor in charge of the main role,that is to say, of the role of the deceased, anticipated the coffin, striving to imitate the approach and the language of the deceased. Doubtless, however, this usage dates only from the Empire.

C. The "Republic" and the theater

1. Pantomime

Until the middle of the 1st century BC, the scenic games took place on a mobile stage temporarily raised in the enclosure of the circus. In 154 BC, the attempt to build a theater built in stone and in Greek form aroused such opposition that it was destroyed, by order of the Senate, at the insistence of P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica who, not happy to demand its demolition, asked that, henceforth, the Romans attend the theatrical performances standing up, so as not to fall into the effeminacy in which the Greeks were delighted. It was not until 55-54 BC that Pompey had a permanent stone theater built in Rome; “He deceived the Senate, saying that he was raising an altar to Venus, below which a few steps had been made for shows; gold,the stands held twenty-seven thousand spectators, and the temple which rose above was no larger than the imperial box of the circus ”(43). If it was a lie, it was probably only partial. Be that as it may, certain scenic games continued to be given in circuses and amphitheatres, often even in the Champs de Mars or in the middle of the forum, on trestles.

The construction of this first permanent theater coincided with the development of a particular theatrical genre: pantomime (44), which quickly came to almost entirely supplant tragedy and comedy, which until then had dominated. Pantomimes were appreciated and even adored by Roman youth; they lived in the privacy of knights and senators. Some of them won the favor of the emperors, dabbled in the intrigues of the palace, seized important offices. The racial chaos that began to reign in Rome at the time of the end of the "Republic" explains the vogue for pantomime. This art could serve as a universal language and therefore a factitious link between the various ethnic groups and races of the imperial mosaic. The flattering verses that Martial slavishly addresses to Domitian reflect this: “Caesar,what nation so far away and so barbarous does not have some of its own seated as spectators in your city? To contemplate Rome, the inhabitant of Thrace comes from the summit of Hemus, home of Orpheus; we see the Sarmath rush there, who feeds on the bloody flesh of his steeds, and the one who drinks the waters of the Nile at their source, and the one whose shore is beaten by the last wave of Thetis. The Arab and the Sabean flock there; the Sicilian, in your amphitheater, thinks he is wet with the mists of his country; one sees the Sicambre, with curly hair, meeting in this place; the Ethiopian, with frizzy hair. All speak various languages; but they have only one language to name you the Father of the Fatherland! "(the inhabitant of Thrace comes from the top of Hemus, home of Orpheus; we see the Sarmath rush there, who feeds on the bloody flesh of his steeds, and the one who drinks the waters of the Nile at their source, and the one whose shore is beaten by the last wave of Thetis. The Arab and the Sabean flock there; the Sicilian, in your amphitheater, thinks he is wet with the mists of his country; one sees the Sicambre, with curly hair, meeting in this place; the Ethiopian, with frizzy hair. All speak various languages; but they have only one language to name you the Father of the Fatherland! "(the inhabitant of Thrace comes from the top of Hemus, home of Orpheus; we see the Sarmath rush there, who feeds on the bloody flesh of his steeds, and the one who drinks the waters of the Nile at their source, and the one whose shore is beaten by the last wave of Thetis. The Arab and the Sabean flock there; the Sicilian, in your amphitheater, thinks he is wet with the mists of his country; we see the Sicambre, with curly hair, meeting in this place; the Ethiopian, with frizzy hair. All speak various languages; but they have only one language to name you the Father of the Fatherland! "(The Arab and the Sabean flock there; the Sicilian, in your amphitheater, thinks he is wet with the mists of his country; one sees the Sicambre, with curly hair, meeting in this place; the Ethiopian, with frizzy hair. All speak various languages; but they have only one language to name you the Father of the Fatherland! "(The Arab and the Sabean flock there; the Sicilian, in your amphitheater, thinks he is wet with the mists of his country; we see the Sicambre, with curly hair, meeting in this place; the Ethiopian, with frizzy hair. All speak various languages; but they have only one language to name you the Father of the Fatherland! "(Of spectacular, 3) Scenic pleasures were the only way to bring together the diverse and varied races, impossible to unite, which made up the Roman Empire, as artificial and volatile as this bond was. The second reason which prompted Augustus to favor the propagation of pantomime is that it apparently lent itself less to political criticism than tragedy or comedy. The histrions, a term that was assigned to pantomimes from his reign, nevertheless found a way to surpass themselves to scratch the power by certain particular gestures or, since the pantomime was not entirely silent, by the text ( canticum) which was an integral part of it. If they ended up being repressed and punished under Augustus, it is above all because the frenzy they aroused among the Romans led them, whatever their class, to take sides with one or another of them and thus forming factions which "sometimes degenerated into parties as heated against each other as the Guelphs and Ghibellines may have been under the emperors of Germany" (45).

Like all the arts we have mentioned above, pantomime was not originally from Rome; it had been imported there from Etruria and brought to its perfection under Augustus by Pylades, a freed slave of this one, born in Cilicia and by Bathyle, pupil and rival of Pylades, former slave freed from Maecenas. An interesting fact in this regard, which corroborates what we have already pointed out about the link between theater and the emancipation of women, is that, while in the tragic and in the comic, in Rome as in Greece, female roles were performed by men, women were allowed to perform in both mimes and pantomimes.

Under the "Republic", the theater played a central role in the religious rituals of the Urbs.. The theatrical performances were an integral part, not only, as we have seen, of the funeral games commemorating the death of a notable and the celebration of triumphs, but also of the consecration of the temples. On the other hand, the theater had become an outward sign of power and wealth. The magistrates were to provide, in addition to games, theatrical performances as well as the theaters in which they took place. The number of days the Romans could entertain themselves in the theater continued to increase, reaching hundreds around 350 BCE. Members of the upper class were required to attend plays, especially magistrates and, subsequently, emperors themselves. The place occupied by spectators in theaters depended on their social status. As in Athens,the theater mediated between the government and theplebs , whose influence grew in the economic, military and political life of Rome from the mid-fourth to the middle of the third century BC: it is therefore not surprising that the theater experienced spectacular development during of this period. The theater was, like the circus, a double-edged sword for power: by attending a theatrical performance, the representatives of authority were supposed to show the plebsthat they shared his tastes and, therefore, reconciled it and, on the other hand, they exposed themselves to criticism from plebeians, because the theater was, with the circus, the only public space where a " public opinion " ; she did not deprive herself of it, whistling or applauding, depending on her mood, such or such dignitary when she arrived in the audience. Suetonius reports a number of cases where spectators expressed their disapproval of an emperor. The plebs' resentment could be better contained, controlled, and channeled inside a theater than in the streets.

2. The actor

Like many other professions in the empire, acting was hereditary. The association that many Roman authors made between the theater and foreign influence was well founded: the actors were foreigners, captives, or, more frequently, slaves who had been able to buy their freedom.

Whereas, in Greece, the actors had always enjoyed a good reputation and a great respect; their condition was initially mean and contemptible in Rome. The actors were deprived of civic rights and excluded from public office, for a reason provided by Cicero: people were deprived of the honors of the Roman citizen; and even more, that the censor drove them ignominiously out of their tribe ”( Treaty of the Republic, IV, X) Laws prohibited civil servants from marrying actresses. Livy teaches us that the actors did not have the right to become soldiers, because they were concealers, individuals who pretended to be what they were not. They were viewed as dangerous misfits and were associated with idleness, license, effeminacy. While the Greeks admired the actors, the fact of showing off on stage, of performing, was considered shameful by the Romans (46). Ovid, in the Fasti, observes that theatrical performances are not proper honors on Mars. In the same vein, Tacitus puts his finger on the main problem posed by the profession of actor from the point of view of civilization, by judging that the theater is foreign to those who are warriors by nature. The virile character of the ancient Roman was not maintained only among the few members of the elite who still proved themselves worthy of their rank and their functions: a soldier, placed in the presence of Nero after his participation in the conspiracy of Pison had been discovered, told her that he had been loyal to her until one day he learned that he was a parricide, a matricide and an actor.

The image of the actor in Rome began to change, under the unconscious impulse of corrupt members of the elite. As in Greece, the actors, under cover of their profession, enjoyed a freedom of expression, which many, even in the senatorial and equestrian orders, envied them. They had made "freedom of expression" fashionable.

The actors formed corporations (47), brotherhoods that were both “religious and professional, bringing together, in their ranks, various specialists in the scene, endowed with a certain know-how. The objective of their members was to put their artistic practices at the service of divine worship, and more particularly to honor the god Dionysus, under whose patronage they had placed themselves. At least that was their stated objective. The fact that these artists' corporations were "organized on the model of the poleisof their time… endowed with their magistrates, even with their own coinage (if one is to believe a recent discovery) ”(48) leads one to suspect that they did not stop there, because any association endowed with institutions and a hierarchy parallel to those of the potentially subversive civilian establishment. In fact, we learn, unsurprisingly, that “They carried out a political activity which brought them into contact, through their ambassadors, with the various powers of the time: kings, dynasts, cities and towns. the peoples, to use the well-known formula of diplomacy at the time, to which we should add the Romans, from the 2nd century BC ”(49). Suffice to say that they were engaged in what is now called lobbying; and they did so with impunity.Rome understood that mysterious societies, under the guise of religion, were working to destroy institutions, providing plotters with the opportunity to come together to secretly prepare their criminal designs; she had understood it and had repressed them. She had also felt that corporations of actors potentially exposed her to the same danger; this is why, whereas, in Greece, the brotherhoods of actors "had become like the refuge of individual freedom", it subjected them to a tight and strict control. Of course, nothing could eradicate the seditious and vain character of the members of this profession. Accius, a renowned Umbrian actor, is known to have refused to stand up, when Caesar entered an assembly of poets in which he was participating, arguing that in such a place,pre-eminence is due to talent rather than dignity (Valère Maxime, II, 7) (50).

In the second century of our era, “The actors became in the State a powerful body, honored by all, sponsored by the emperor, whose name they take”; "The theater enjoys all the favor, and the brotherhoods are associated with public worship": "there is no longer an actor who is despised because of his profession" (51). From Scipios to Augustus, famous actors were honored and showered with riches. Tiberius tried to put an end to this prevarication. Following a serious incident which had taken place at the circus games between the various factions which supported such or such squads of gladiators, a decree was issued aimed at condemning the actors of the theater, the circus and the amphitheater to the flogging and thereby suffocate the factions which they raised, but a tribune of the people opposed it.The emperor however succeeded in passing laws modifying the privileges of the actors, he limited the sums that could be spent on theatrical performances, gave the lenders the right to punish unruly spectators from exile, forbade any senator to put the foot in the house of an actor, forbade all citizens, particularly women, to associate with actors and "suppressed the senseless honors which the young nobility of Rome rendered to these Kings of the Theater" (52). His successors were much less informed in this regard, some of them, it is true, much less Roman in origin as well.forbade any senator to set foot in an actor's house, forbade any citizen, particularly women, to associate with actors and "suppressed the senseless honors which the young nobility of Rome rendered to these Kings of the Theater" (52 ). His successors were much less informed in this regard, some of them, it is true, much less Roman in origin as well.forbade any senator to set foot in an actor's house, forbade any citizen, particularly women, to associate with actors and "suppressed the senseless honors which the young nobility of Rome rendered to these Kings of the Theater" (52 ). His successors were much less wise in this regard, some of them, it is true, much less Roman in origin as well.

5) Nero: a representative case of the softening of a certain part of the Roman nobility

Nero, initiated into the theater by his tutor, the Stoic Seneca, himself performed on the stage. It is perhaps no exaggeration to think that he spent more time there than in the Senate, where, moreover, he could not help acting as well. Suetonius gives him the image of a man who constantly moved from the role of emperor to the role of actor, regardless of his audience. This had several serious consequences.

The first was the spectacular degradation of the imperial function. The episode Suetonius relates of the triumph of Nero in Naples is when the triumph was the supreme honor bestowed on a general having achieved a great victory, Nero obtained the honors of the triumph for having been crowned at the Olympic Games and, instead , like any general having won a badge of victory, to make a solemn entry into Rome at the head of his army and followed by prisoners and booty, he entered Naples surrounded by musicians and actors from all over the world, preceded by "ten- eight hundred and eight crowns which he had won in the various Games in which he had taken part ”(53) and followed by Augustans, "Hired applauders (54), shouting, as in ovations, that they were the companions of his glory and the soldiers of his triumph" (Suetonius, Néron , XXV)

The second was, by ricochet, the spectacular degradation of the patriciate. All Rome was seen by Nero as an audience: his youth, that is to say the descendants of the great patrician families, “was divided… into two troupes: one engaged on stage with him, to assist him, the another seat for the orchestra to applaud him (55) ”. When he encountered her reluctance, he forced her to go up there. Whether she performed there willingly or under duress, she offered the opportunity to the plebs, as Juvenal deplores it, to make fun of the nobility at will. Gone were the days when a well-stocked Roman who took the stage was covered with infamy. A complete reversal had taken place in the space of a few generations: after having long despised the histrions, of plebeian extraction, the nobility, because some of its members took themselves for histrions, could henceforth be held in contempt by the plebs. Regarding the audience of Nero, the descendants of the patrician families who formed his audience, the scenic escapades of the emperor-actor forced him to hypocrisy: “because of the length of the pieces in which he played, it would seem that, in the audience, it happened that women simulated the pains of childbirth, men pretended to be on the verge of death,in order to leave the theater before the end of the performance ”(56).

According to some accounts, emperors of non-Roman origin like Heliogabalus used to blur the line between fact and fiction by demanding that acts that were normally simulated in the theater actually be performed there. If Nero was not there, the theatricalization to which he subjected Rome naturally had the effect of blurring the line between reality and fiction, as evidenced by this striking anecdote "It is said that at the performance of" Hercules furious " , a young soldier, who was on guard at the entrance to the theater, seeing him loaded with chains, as the subject demanded, came running to lend him a hand. "(Suetonius, Nero, XXI) In fact, this young soldier had confused spectacle and reality only insofar as he did not know what the spectacle was or, at least, insofar as it had not occurred to him that an emperor can put on a spectacle. play a role.

The fourth disastrous consequence was an intensification of the Asianization of Rome: "Nero dramatized reality and installed mythological fiction at the center of his individual imagination," but "by proposing the fantasies of his Greek culture as a model of life to the Romans. . Mythology then ceased to be a cultural language in order to analyze reality: it identified itself with it in order to invest it with all its monstrosities ”.

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When the emperor became a Christian, it was no longer the same. He must henceforth enforce what it is agreed to call Christian morality. However, Tatian calls for the theater to be banned because the actors "on the stage teach adultery" ( Discourse to the Greeks, XXII); Tertullian attacks the “obscenity” and the “license” that reign in theatrical performances (57). Besides the accusation of immorality and indecency, the theater had to face that of "paganism". And "... How then the influence of Christian orators is very great ... how they demonstrate very well to the emperor that these are not feasts of God, but of gods, feasts of the polytheism of these pagan divinities who 'they cut down, and which the Emperor himself has sworn to abandon, he is forced to respect the scruples of the Church and to act accordingly. Thus he is led to deprive corporations of a large number of their privileges,at the risk of upsetting the people (58) ... "Chrysostom affirms that the theater" is the plague of cities "and" it is from there that all seditions and all troubles are born "(59). Much more interesting is the comparison he draws between theater and magic, despite the fact that the term only has in him the meaning of "diabolical methods" which it has in Christian rhetoric (60). He does not see that this should be understood to mean the art of the illusionist, of the one who produces illusionary effects by various mechanical and psychological processes and, more recently, due to technological progress, by various special effects ( 3D image synthesis, digital processing, pixilation, makeup, etc.).in spite of the fact that the term has in him only the meaning of "diabolical methods" which it has in Christian rhetoric (60). He does not see that this should be understood to mean the art of the illusionist, of the one who produces illusionary effects by various mechanical and psychological processes and, more recently, due to technological progress, by various special effects ( 3D image synthesis, digital processing, pixilation, makeup, etc.).in spite of the fact that the term has with him only the meaning of "diabolical methods" which it has in Christian rhetoric (60). He does not see that this should be understood to mean the art of the illusionist, of the one who produces illusionary effects by various mechanical and psychological processes and, more recently, due to technological progress, by various special effects ( 3D image synthesis, digital processing, pixilation, makeup, etc.).).).

With the fall of the Roman Empire, the theater gradually decayed until it disappeared behind the scenes in the 6th century, only to be taken out by the Church, several centuries later. The theater was reborn from its ashes in contact with the Christian liturgy. This is hardly surprising, for, as we have seen, in antiquity there was something profoundly theocratic in the origin and development of theater ."Middle Ages", as in decadent antiquity, the lords and the princes will welcome the scenic games as an object of luxury and of parade, the people will abandon themselves to them with frenzy, but only the clergy will seize the instinct dramatic, cultivate and develop it for a specific purpose. From the beginning of the period which extends from the 6th to the 12th century, scenic games and even the use of masks will be introduced in certain monasteries of women; in the 8th and 9th centuries, the funerals of the abbots and abbesses ended with small funeral dramas, in which the monks and nuns shared the roles; in the 10th century, the lives of the saints and the legends of the martyrs will be represented in the convents. Finally, in the 11th and 12th centuries,the ecclesiastical drama will unfold in the cathedrals on the days of great festivals, supported by music, sculpture and painting, in “tragic” as well as comic representations.

BK, 2015

(1) "It is high time," said R. Guénon in "Reform of the modern mentality" ( Regnabit , June 1926), to show that there is in religion something other than a matter of sentimental devotion, something also other than moral precepts or consolations for use. minds weakened by suffering, that we can find there the "solid food" of which Saint Paul speaks in the Epistle to the Hebrews ". Twenty-four years later, when he died, had he done so?

(2) René Guénon, Insights on initiation , Les Éditions Traditionnelles, Paris, 1946, p. 103.

(3) Religious theater existed in Africa long before the invention of the alphabet, mythological tragedies accompanied by song and dance were frequently performed in India during the Bronze Age; the Indus Valley civilization (2700 - 1500 BC) had a god of actors and dancers, called Siva. In China, ritual performances by dancers, singers and imitators were given under the Zhou dynasty (1122 - 256 BC); in the current state of research, it seems that the first tragedy was performed in Egypt around 2000 BC: its theme was the sufferings and the triumph of Osiris and it is reminiscent of the "passions" "Middle Ages" Christians (see 'Egyptian' Passion'Plays "[ <http://www.theatrehistory.com/origins/egypt001.html>]; Eric Csapo and Margaret C. Mille,The Origins of Theater in Ancient Greece and Beyond: From Ritual to Drama , Cambridge University Press, 1st ed., 2008, chap. 13, which provides an update on the matter; Christine Schnusenberg, The Mythological Traditions of Liturgical Drama: The Eucharist as Theater, Paulist Press, 2010, chap. 1, which explores the theater which, long before entering and settling in Greece, flourished in Egypt, Babylon, among the Canaanites, Israel and Syria; see also Christianne Desroches-Noblecourt, Etienne Drioton, "The Egyptian Theater [report]", Journal des savants, vol. 4, n ° 1, 1943, p. 166-176 [it is, however, advisable to introduce precise reservations on one of the arguments advanced by the author to conclude that the Egyptian theater would not have arisen from the mysteries, namely that the Egyptian mysteries "do not include spectators : the assistants are priests or faithful who all take part in the action ”. The argument is anachronistic. Indeed, the distinction between actors and spectators, as surprising as it may seem, does not date,as we will see in the second part of our study, appeared only recently; see especially Peter Ukpokodu, “Egyptian origins of the Western theater: scholastic obscurantism or culpable ignorance? », L'Annuaire théâtral: journal québécoise d'études théâtrales, n ° 15, 1994, p. 9-20, available for consultation at the following addresses;http://www.erudit.org/revue/annuaire/1994/v/n15/041193ar.pdf, accessed April 17, 2015). Regarding the controversial title of this article, it should be noted that Eurocentric literature which, since the nineteenth century, has endeavored to pass off as a product of white civilization a culture that was not originally its own and center of which are fetishized the by-products of action that are the sciences and the arts, whose progress only reflects the growing internal and external agitation of the geniuses who allow them and accentuates the general agitation of those who are the paying guinea pigs; it should therefore be noted that this Eurocentric literature is generally the work of cosmopolitan globalists; The Europe of their dreams, whether they are aware of it or not, is the Negro-Semitic society that is being built there,on the ruins of traditional Rome, since the advent of Christianity.

Regarding the cosmopolitan, a case little studied by psychiatry, the conclusions of the research of a Swedish psychiatrist, presented by Levi-Strauss ( Le regard loiné, chap. 12), are worth quoting: “… at the origin of the disease, we find an abnormal family configuration, characterized by a lack of maturity of the parents and more especially of the mother, or that the latter rejects her child or that on the contrary, she does not resolve to imagine him separated from her. If, for the newborn, the world is reduced first to a solidary body where he and his mother merge, then gradually widens to their perceived and accepted duality, then into a family constellation, later finally to society as a whole, it is conceivable that the persistence of an initial pathological situation can be expressed in the schizophrenic by the oscillation between two extreme feelings: that of the insignificance of the ego in the eyes of the world, and that of his disproportionate importance in the eyes of society,resulting in a fear of nothingness in one case, in the madness of grandeur in the other. So the schizophrenic would never gain the normal experience of living in the world. For him, the part would be equivalent to the whole; unable to establish a relationship between his ego and the world, he could not perceive their respective limits: "While the normal individual has the concrete experience of his being-in-the-world, the experience of the schizophrenic is that of itself as a world. »At the four successive stages of the apprehension of the world - own body, mother, family, society, grasped as worlds - there would be the same indistinction which, depending on the stage to which the patient regressed, would result in different disorders always affecting the double aspect. , contradictory only in appearance, of cleavage or confusion:from echolalia and echopraxia, to the alternating feelings of being entirely controlled by this or that whole perceived as a world, or of being able to exercise a magical and sovereign control over it. Particularly interesting, from a point of view far superior to that of psychiatry, is the view that schizophrenia arises from an abnormal relationship with its mother, when one relates it to the lunar, undifferentiated and leveling worldview that is. peculiar to religions which, such as Christianity, arose from the matriarchal cult of the grandmother or, in modern times, to the various egalitarian ideologies that arose, by “secularization”, that is to say, to put an end to it. this catch-all term, by tactical adaptation to the conditions of a given period, of these religions.up to the alternating feelings of being entirely controlled by this or that set perceived as a world, or of being able to exercise over it a magical and sovereign control. 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(4) Pierre Magnin, The origins of modern theater or the history of dramatic genius , vol. 1, L. Hachette, Paris, 1838, p. 138.

(5) Regarding the chthonic religions of the mother goddess and the racial substratum of the peoples linked to them, see Julius Evola, Révolte contre le monde moderne , chap. "The civilization of the mother".

(6) Pierre Magnin, op. cit. , p. 187.

(7) The following testimony amply confirms the overall negative judgment that can be made on the historical role of the Macedonian sovereign: “Often, Alexander would sit at table dressed as a god; sometimes he took on Ammon's purple robe, his slashed shoe and his horns, as if he were that very god; sometimes he dressed as Diana and climbed thus dressed, on his chariot, wearing a Persian robe and showing on his shoulder the bow and javelin of the goddess. He still sometimes dressed as Mercury. But her everyday garment was a crimson chlamys and a white-embellished tunic; her hairstyle was a headband topped with a diadem. In meetings of friends, he wore a winged petasius and heels like Mercury, and held a caduceus in his hand.Often also we saw him covered with the skin of a lion and armed with the club of Hercules ”, Ephippus,On the death of Alexander and Hephestion. Cited in Athen. , lib. II, p..537, EF

(8) Patrick E. McGovern, Uncorking the Past , University of California Press, 2010, p. 179; Shalom M. Paul, Michael E. Stone and Avital Pinnick (eds.), 'Al Kanfei Yonah: Collected Studies of Jonas C. Greenfield on Semitic Philology , 2 vols., Brill, Leien, 2001, p. 910.

(9) It seems that some of them carried the title of high priest.

(10) Édélestand Du Méril, History of comedy , Didier et Cie, Paris, 1864, p. 279.

(11) Pierre Magnin, op. cit. , p. 94.

(12) Ibid.The presence of the main priest of Bacchus in these places is among the elements that invalidate the author's thesis according to which the different arts have escaped the hands of the representatives of the mysterious institution, in which they had emerged, to fall into profane hands between which they would have merged in theater.

(13) Jacques Pirenne, Ancient Civilizations , Albin Michel, Paris, 2013, p. 424.

(14) Édélestand Du Méril, op. cit., p. 236-37.

(15) Ibid. , p. 234.

(16) <http://jfbradu.free.fr/GRECEANTIQUE/GRECE%20CONTINENTALE/PAGES%20THEMATIQUES/theatre/schema-theatres.php3>

(17) Marie-Françoise Baslez, The literary sources of Greek history, Armand Colin, Paris, 2003, p. xxii.

(18) Marius Sepet, The Christian Drama in the Middle Ages , Slatkine Reprints, 1975, p. 10.

(19) See, for Heidegger's etymological reflections on the term “logos”, Michel Fattal, Logos, thought and truth in Greek philosophy , L'Harmattan, Paris, Montreal, Budapest and Turin, 2001; see also Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya, La notion de nomos dans le Pentateuque grec , Biblical institute Press, 1973.

(20) Orlando Patterson, Freedom in the Making of Western Culture , 1991, Basic Books, p. 109-10.

(21) Ibid. , p. 111.

(22) See Évelyne Pewzner, Jean-François Braunstein,Histoire de la psychologie , Armand Colin, Paris, 2010 (see also <http://www.armandcolin.com/upload/Histoire_de_la_psychologie.pdf> , p. 11, consulted on April 15, 2015).

(23) Émile Egger, Memoirs of Ancient Literature , A. Durand, 1862, p. 438.

(24) P. Hallward, “Jacques Rancière et la théâtrocratie ou The limits of improvised equality”, available at the following address: <http://www.marxau21.fr/index.php?option=com_content&view=> article & id = 97: p-hallward-jacques-ranciere-et-la-theatrocratie-ou-les-limite-de-legalite-improvisee & catid = 47: ranciere-jacques & Itemid = 7 , accessed June 15, 2015.

(25) Casiana Ionita, “L'Insoutenable Théâtralité de la Commune”, Théâtre (s) Politique (s), n ° 1, March 2013, available at the following address: theatrespolitiques.fr/wp-content/uploads/2013 /03/CI-PDF.pdf , accessed April 19, 2015).

(26) In Martina Handler, Retelling the Nicaraguan Revolution as a Dionysian Ritual , Lit Verlag, 2011 p. 28.

(27) Charles Victor Daremberg and Edmond Saglio, The Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities , Article “Dionysia”, t. 2, part 1, 1877, Hachette, p. 230-46.

(28) EA, “Sul sacro nella tradizione romana”, in Introduzione alla magia , vol. II, Edizioni Mediterranee, 1994, translated from Italian by BK

(29) François Catrou,Roman history from the founding of Rome to AD 47 , t. 9, Paris, 1727, p. 289-90.

(30) See Marcel Van Doren, “The evolution of the Phrygian mysteries in Rome”, Classical antiquity, vol. 22, n ° 22-1, 1953, p. 79-88.

(31) See Ludwig Preller, The gods of ancient Rome , Didier et Cie, Paris, 1865, p. 484-85.

(32) The necyomantic oracles seem to have used statuettes with springs; see, for example, Cicero, De divine. , II, 41; Martial, V, Epigr. I, v. 3.

(33) <http://www.maravot.com/Translation_ShortScripts_e.html> .

(34) Pierre Magnin, op. cit., p. 326: “We seem to have originally given the name of larvae or manias to the imprints of clay or flour which one took on the faces of the dead and which one sometimes buried with them. Often to appease a lemur who frightened his parents and complained of not being admitted into the larorum, his mask was removed from the tomb and placed on the face of one of the familiar lares. When a house or a village was threatened with some danger, the danger was averted by placing above the door, or by hanging from the neighboring trees, larvae or masks intended to replace the heads of men that on such an occasion was offered. once to Saturn to redeem himself. These hanging heads were called oscillated ”.

(35) Bernard Lamy, La Rhétorique or the art of speaking, Paris, 1757, p. 385-86

(36) Twenty-four centuries later, unsurprisingly, it is eloquence that will be "the architect of the Republic". <http://www.fabula.org/acta/document9190.php> .

(37) <http://www.lycee-chateaubriand.fr/cru-atala/publications/conferences09_10/NavaudOrateurActeurAntiques.pdf> , p. 2.

(38) Athanase Auger and Joseph Planche, Complete Works of Demosthenes and Aeschines in Greek and French , Volume 5, Paris, 1820, p. 517.

(39) Clément Plomteux and Henri Agasse, Methodical Encyclopedia , Tome 6, 1804, p. 627.

(40) Whitney Shiner, Proclaiming the Gospel , Bloomsbury T&T Clark; 1st ed., 2003, p. 84.

(41) Françoise Desbordes,Scripta varia , Peeters, Leuven, 2006, p. 131.

(42) see Émile Lefranc Histoire romaine , Meyer, 1833, p. 432.

(43) Latour Saint-Ybars, Néron: his life and his time , Michel Lévy, Paris, 1867, p. 234.

(44) It is not uninteresting to note that Lucien, in his dialogue on dance, compares the Pythagorean rule to pantomime.

(45) Encyclopedic or universal journal , t. 8, 1778, p. 16.

(46) To suppose, as some do, that the hostile attitude of a certain part of the Roman elite towards the theater and the actors was due to the poor quality of the plays in Rome is a rather ridiculous one. to serve as the subject of a vaudeville.

(47) It should be noted that the first corporations of this type were formed in the third century BC in Ptolemaic Egypt and in Asia Minor, from where they then spread throughout the Hellenistic world and the Roman Empire (John Marie Pailler, Les mots de Bacchus , Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2009, p. 102). Originally, they brought together traveling artists who moved on demand, according to festivals and competitions.

(48) Brigitte Le Guen, “The association of Technites of Athens or the springs of a successful cohabitation”. In J.Ch. Couvenhes and S. Milanezi, Individuals, groups and politics in Athens from Solon to Mithridates , Presses Universitaires François Rabelais, Tours, 2007, p. 339-364.

(49) Ibid.

(50) It is from a line of one of his tragedies that Caligula borrowed his motto: “ Oderint, dum metuant ” (“ May they hate me, as long as they fear me”). Another sign, not yet of theatricalization, but of the feeling felt by the Roman elite that life was a theater, Augustus, on his deathbed, asked his friends "if he had played the comedy of life ( mimum vitae ) and that, their answer having been affirmative, he added, citing a Greek tragedy: "If you have taken a liking to these recreations, do not refuse them your applause" (Suetonius, Augustus , 99).

(51) Émile Egger, op. cit., p. 419.

(52) François Catrou, Histoire romaine: Tibére Empereur , J.-B. Delespine, 1737, p. 198-9.

(53) Henri d'Escamps, Galleries of ancient marbles of the Campana museum , 2nd ed., Vol. 1, p. liii,

(54) The hired applauders would have been invented by the emereur of Syrian origin Caligula.

(55) Latour Saint-Ybars, op. cit ., p. 243.

(56) William Missouri Downs, Lou Anne Wright and Erik Ramsey, The Art of Theater: Then and Now, Cengage Learning , 3rd ed., 2012, p. 292.

(56) Paul-Augustin Deproost, Laurence Van Ypersele and Myriam Watthee, Mémoire etidentité , p. 110

(57) Gourcy (abbot of), The Apologetics and Prescriptions of Tertullian, Rivoire, Lyon, 1825, p. 583 - It is true that the arguments advanced by the Roman literati of the time, including Ovid, against the theater hardly exceeded this level.

(58) Émile Egger, op. cit. , p. 419-20.

(59) Chrysostom was well placed to pass this judgment, since the various Christian sects never ceased to fill the empire with troubles and sedition.

(60) Homilies and Sermons of S. Jean Chrysostôme , Pierre le Petit, Paris, 1665, p. 229-30.