Foreword

In 1996 I was working in what is now known as the Republic of North Macedonia. I was invited to participate in a conference about European masked rituals in Struga. Here I met a group of actors from a Polish theatre company called Teatr Wiejski "Węgajty" (The Village Theatre of Węgajty). Two years later I was invited to perform with my theatre group at their theatre in northern Poland and two years later I began anthropological fieldwork for a PhD (Edinburgh University), studying their work. I submitted the thesis in 2003 under the title of *Travelling Theatre as a Technology of Self*.

For various reasons (largely stylistic), the dissertation was not successful and I was offered a chance to rework it and resubmit it, however, life got in the way and it was never rewritten. Despite a few attempts over the years to revive it, it basically spent over twelve years gathering dust on my bookshelf and I got on with steering my career in another direction.

In recent years, I was contacted by some researchers who are, at the time of writing, studying the history of the theatre. I was amused to find myself considered a "primary source" and agreed to some interviews. I was also approached by somebody at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn about reviving the thesis, however, as years had passed and history overtaken us, a lot of the subjects were now dated. When I was in the field, a lot of the political and social aspects which were in progress had scarcely been written about (such as the recent inclusion of Poland into NATO and the impending membership of the EU). Likewise, the rise of certain political parties and the huge emigration of Poles to UK and Ireland was far away. What seemed like

“cutting edge” interviews with farmers who worried about EU, were now practically ancient history and there was now a wealth of literature on these subjects and those anthropological trends which were relevant at the time of my research were now “old news”. Still, I heard enough comments from others to learn that some of my research work was still of use, especially to theatre historians and theorists.

With this in mind, and as it appeared that no progress would be made on revising it, I decided to publish the work for whoever it might be of use to rather than leave it another decade on a dusty shelf. For this reason, the contents of this book are mainly the dissertation as I submitted it in 2003 (flaws and all!), with some additional material, mainly in Chapters 1 and 2. Two of the articles listed below (Hill 2017, 2014) are largely from extracts of the dissertation.

Theatre Wiejski “Węgajty” is a small independent Polish theatre organisation which grew from an alternative arts movement in Poland at the end of the 1980s and has since become noted in certain theatrical circles both within Poland and beyond. The company has developed a lot with the twenty years of its existence, moving from artistic “happenings”, through musical ventures and recreating traditional caroling forms to performing plays and theatrical performances in various venues and eventually separating into two different branches of the organization which have differing styles and aims. Over that time the artistic focus and the theatrical practices have changed in the face of new circumstances and challenges and some authors, such as Joanna Kocemba-Żebrowska (2019) suggest that the internal working of the group and their creation process has also changed accordingly. Kocemba-Żebrowska and certain members of the company have stated that a particular period at the beginning of the Twenty-First Century was

a pivotal point in the development of one particular branch of the association, Projekt Terenowy (personal communications 09/2018). The period of 2000-2002 saw the group attempt new ventures and begin a process of artistic exploration due, in part, the the internal situation within the association but also to new possibilities which Poland's approaching EU membership was generating. This dissertation will examine this period and explore the working practices of the Projekt Terenowy group and events related to this particular period in their history.

The group are known for their use of traditional, often ancient, forms of music and performance drawn from a variety of cultures within and beyond the geographic and cultural boundaries of Poland. These materials include songs in Polish, German and minority Slavonic languages, such as Łemko, as well as elements of physical performance styles found in European folk practices, such as the Warmian hobby horse and Polish/Ukrainian goat figures connected with certain winter carolling rituals. As such, despite not enjoying the wider attention of such companies as Gardzienica Theatre, a number of critics and authors have found the group's work of great interest on a number of levels (eg. Mikulska 1999, Kolankiewicz 1999, Kornaś 2014). Joanna Kocemba-Żebrowska even goes so far as to refer to "Węgajty" as "one of the most interesting and important Polish alternative theatres of the last thirty years, particularly in the context of multiculturalism in Poland" (Kocemba-Żebrowska 2018b).

It is important to note, however, that for a number of years Teatr Wiejski "Węgajty" has not been a single unit with regards to performance. In 1995, a second group was formed, Schola Teatru Wiejskiego Węgajty, (Schola) which put a greater focus on European

medieval and liturgical singing and drama, such as Passion Plays, which included some members of the core theatre and "external" members who, as well as their own projects, worked solely with *Schola*. The remaining members of the core theatre group continued to work with more folk-based motifs and focus on such activities as dance workshops and traditional caroling expeditions in various regions of Poland. This part of the company is known as *Projekt Terenowy* and was formed in 1996. For a period, the theatre operated as a three part unit, performing as Schola, Project Terenowy and as Węgajty Theatre (performing new joint work or past repertoire)[i] but in the year 2000 it was decided that while the two groups, Schola and Projekt Terenowy would continue to work alongside each other independently there would be no further combined projects of new material. The "break" in the company allowed both groups to focus on their own work to a greater extent and, at least in the case of Projekt Terenowy, develop in new ways and new directions. The period of the split in the company and the new developments of Projekt Terenowy coincided with the main fieldwork period in which the majority of this dissertation's material was collected.

While "Węgajty" already had a national and international reputation for their work when I commenced with my fieldwork, they have consolidated this reputation and, in the work of Projekt Terenowy, explored new paths. The association currently hosts a theatre and arts festival each summer which attracts performers and artists from around Europe and beyond. The work of Projekt Terenowy (see below) has has moved in new directions, focusing less on the previous "Węgajty style" (although Wacław Sobaszek, the co-founder and director once commented, "I wish someone would tell me what this supposed 'Węgajty style' is supposed to be!"

In recent years the focus and style of Projekt Trenowy has changed in a number of significant ways, as shown in the work of Kocemba-Żebrowska, Hasiuk and Kocemba-Żembrowska (2019), Kwiatowska (2008) and Paprocka (2014). Some of these changes, such as the international summer theatre festivals happened after the fieldwork period and this author's direct involvement with the company. However a number can also be seen to have been influenced by events which took place between 1999-2001 and, in some cases, by the presence of the author himself, as shall be explained below.

This dissertation is based largely on research which was carried out by the author (largely as an active participant-observer) between 1998 and 2001[ii]. It examines the activity of Projekt Terenowy during the years 2000-2 and seeks to analyze their working methods and philosophy, as well as the wider effect upon the audience and various people who worked with them during that period. The current work shall also provide an illustration of the work of Projekty Terenowy at a significant period in both the life of the group and the country of Poland itself, being just prior to the nation's entry into the European Union and immediately before the founding of PiS, with the subsequent events following both. As such, the research explores, in part, certain social and political views which surrounded the work of Projekt Terenowy at that time and bridges a gap in the available literature concerning both Theatre Węgajty and Projekt Terenowy, much of which is primarily focused solely on the artistic nature of the theatre.

Current Literature about Węgajty Theatre.

A list of publications about Theatre Wegajty and Projekt Terenowy specifically (not Schola) compiled by the Polish Academy of Sciences[iii]

contains fourteen examples of post-graduate research which range from 2000-2014, most being written after the fieldwork period of this dissertation. The majority of other written sources available are small articles, interviews or newspaper reports written for predominantly art and theatre based publications as well as a number of ethnographic and folk-lore journals. Around thirty-five of the items are to be found in the above-mentioned types of publications, of which around ten are written or published by the theatre company itself. Additionally there are over eleven articles specifically about Schola.

During the main field research period of 1999-2001 academic literature upon the work of Projekt Terenowy itself was sparse, particularly in English. The majority of literature about the theatre dealt either with the group as a whole or, increasingly, with Schola. Even an article for the Polish edition of *National Geographic* focussed on the early history of the company and Schola, with no in-depth exploration of Projekt Terenowy's work (Koziara, *W teatrze zycia*, 2001). While the PAN bibliography does show an increasing amount of academic focus upon Projekt Terenowy, it is noticeable that Schola still have a fatter bibliography. A quick look at such on-line resources as Google.scholar (searched February 2019), of over thirty documents and articles which mentioned Węgajty, over twenty five either referred predominantly to Schola rather than Projekt Terenowy, as such it can be convincingly argued that a greater focus has been placed academically on the work of Schola.

An important contribution of this dissertation will be its coverage of a period of the history of Węgajty Theatre and Projekt Terenowy which is sparsely covered by existing literature. It will also be the first major piece of work about the subject in English. While the relevant

written information is, understandably, almost totally in Polish, there are significant gaps in the overall literature. In 2000 one of the only significant English language publications which mentioned Węgajty Theatre was Kathleen M. Cioffi's 1996 work *Alternative Theatre in Poland, 1954-1989* (1996, 216) which mentioned the company in a single sentence in relation to their connection to Gardzienice Theatre. Even as late as 2017, Andrea Hensel mentions Schola and Theatre Węgajty by simply citing Cioffi (2017, 196). To date, the most significant texts in English are based on this current research (Hill 2003, 2014a, 2014b, 2017) as well as the 2001 article by Katarzyna Regulska, *Węgajty or Celebrations*. Of those texts dealing with Projekt Terenowy specifically, or as a continuation of the earlier work of Theatre Wegajty there is also a lack of in-depth, academic works up to the period which this dissertation covers. These gaps are being rectified by Magdalena Hasiuk and Joanna Kocemba-Żembrowska who are, at the time of writing, publishing new papers in both Polish and English.

This is greater emphasis is the main reason why this dissertation focuses almost exclusively on Projekt Terenowy, as a significant amount of literature has already been devoted to that subject. Secondly, the intensity of the rehearsal and practical work by both of the Węgajty groups demanded the research focus be limited to one of the groups in order to gain greater insight, rather than an overall, more superficial view of both groups.

The most relevant works about the history and work of Theatre Węgajty include Aldona Mikulska's *Odszukiwanie zaginionych form: "Węgajty"* (1999), Anna Kuligowska-Korzeniewska's *Folklor w Teatrze: Od Leona Schillera do teatru Wiejskiego Węgajty* (1998) and Grzegorz Kumorowicz's *Węgajty:- impresje* (2000), which will be

examined at detail throughout the dissertation. These works are, however, from a period before the fieldwork and do not cover that period.

Of the fourteen post-graduate works in the PAN bibliography less than a third deal specifically with the research period and largely refer to the carolling and workshops and little about the creation of a theatrical play (e.g. Pajda 2003 and Rakoczy 2004). The majority of the academic work in this group of writings deal with periods between two to fifteen years after the research period covered in this work (e.g. Kwiatowska 2008 and Paprocka 2013). This lack of material is a further reason why this dissertation focuses predominantly upon the research period and the creation and initial performances of the *Kalevala* project. The most significant developments in the work and practices of Projekt Terenowy in the last fifteen years have been explored by writers such as Kwiatowska (2008) and Paprocka (2013) and refer to changes and developments which have occurred in Węgajty since the period covered by this dissertation. As such this dissertation now acts as a linking device between those works pre and post this research period.

TREV HILL (January 2021)

Foreword Bibliography

Bartnik Magda (2006) *10-lecie Węgajt*, 2006

Braun, Kazimierz (1996) *A History of Polish Theatre, 1939-1989: Spheres of Captivity and Freedom*, Greenwood Press. Westport CT.

Brauneck, Manfred (2017) *Independent Theatre in Contemporary Europe: Structures- Aesthetics- Cultural Policy* (transcript of TV broadcastITI Zentrum Deutschland, 31/03/2017).

Hasiuk, Magdalena & Kocemba-Żembrowska, Joanna (2018) *Węgajty Theatre or building community* (forthcoming paper from Belgrade Conference).

Andrea Hensel (2017) "*Independent Theatre in Post-Socialist Contries of Eastern-Europe"* in *Independent Theatre in Contemporary Europe: Structures- Aesthetics- Cultural Policy*

Hill, Trevor (2017) "The Borders of Reception: Differing expectations and reactions to the work of Teatr Wiejski 'Węgajty' in various locations" in *Regiony i Pogranicza* 5/2017 (160-173), Ośrodek Badań Naukowych, Olsztyn.

(2014a) "Teatr Wiejski Węgajty: Travelling Theatre, the Urban and the Rural" in *Ethnoanthropozoom* 11(pp 41-61) UKiM Skopje,

(2014b) "Winter Carolling with Teatr Wiejski 'Węgajty'" in *Context* Vol 12 (pp 199-214), Institute of Macedonian Literature, Skopje

Jarzębowska, Ewa (2006) "Magia Masek w Węgajtach" in *Gazeta Wyborcza (Olsztyn nr. 27)* 13/02/2006

Kocemba-Żebrowska, Joanna (2018b) "A foreigner in the village: caroling practices by Węgajty Theatre

(Conference paper from European Association for the Study of theatre and performance- EASTAP-First ConferenceParis2018Decentering the vision(s) of Europe: The Emergence of New FormsDécentrer notre vision de l'Europe: l'émergence de nouvelles formes25 –26 –27 OCTOBRE)

Kolankiewicz Leszek (1999), *Dziady. Teatr Święta Zmarłych*, słowo/obraz terytoria, Gdańsk, s. 317, s. 557.

Kornaś Tadeusz (2014), "Węgajckie listy z nieba" in *Teatralium. Malarstwo, literatura, teatr*, Dagmara Stanosz (red.), Muzeum Śląskie – Muzeum Rejestrowane, Katowice.

Koziara, Andrzej (2001) "*W teatrze zycia."* In *National Geographic* (Poland) 1 (16) January 2001, pp 124-130.

Kuligowska-Korzeniewska, Anna (1998) 'Folklor w Teatrze: Od Leona Schillera do teatru Wiejskiego Węgajty.' In *Tygiel Kultury* no. 9, Oct. 1998.

Kumorowicz, Grzegorz (2000) "Węgajty:- impresje." In *Borussia* no. 22/2000; pp. 95-102.

Mikulska, Aldona (1999) '*Odszukiwanie zaginionych form: „Węgajty".'* In *W stronŕ rytuału: Od Yeatsa do Węgajt.* (ed) M. Sugiera, Księgarnia Akademicka; Kraków.

Pajda, Lidia (2003) *Rola Teatru Wiejskiego "Węgajty" w życiu kulturalnym społeczności lokalnych* UAM Poznan, Unprinted, 2003

Rakoczy, Anna Emanuela (2004) *Widz w Teatrze Wiejskim „Węgajty",* praca magisterska na kierunku filologia polska w zakresie specjalności literaturo-językoznawczej, praca wykonana pod kierunkiem prof. dr hab. Leszka Kolankiewicza, Warszawa 2004.

Regulska, Katarzyna (2001) "Węgajty or Celebration" In *Le Theatre en Pologne/ The Theatre in Poland No. 3*, Polski Ośrodek Międzynarodowego Instytutu Teatralnego (ITI), Warszawa

Polish Carolling with Projekt Terenowy of "Wegajty" Theatre: Active Theatre and the Technology of Self (1998-2001)

Introduction

Theatre in 'Polish' anthropology

Despite a strong interest in the ethnographic nature of certain styles of theatre within Poland (and the influence on a section of theatrical practice worldwide) there appears to be very little focus on theatre within Poland by non-Polish anthropologists[iv]. Texts that dealt in any depth tend to be within the field of ethno-musicology or theatre/ Cultural studies[v]. Even noted specialists in the field of anthropology of East/Central Europe, such as Christopher Hann and Frances Pine, were unable to direct me to many relevant texts in English (personal correspondence)[vi]. Those texts that deal with the practice of theatre in Poland often deal with it in some form of isolation from the society (see, Grimes 1981). Paul Allain's text on the Gardzienice company (1997), while written as a theatre studies text, is the nearest I have found to an anthropological examination of theatre in Polish society. This thesis aims (at least partly) to rectify the lack of focus, by anthropologists, upon the practice of theatre in Polish society.

Encounters with Polish Theatre and Music

Polish Theatre has for a long time been synonymous with a thriving avant-garde of supposedly radical forms of performance and presentation[vii]. These include methods of training actors, techniques of performance and direction. Polish directors such as Jerzy Grotowski and Tadeusz Kantor had, often during the restrictions of the Communist regime, been responsible for creating what many observers felt were new ideas and possibilities within the practices of Theatre. Much of this was at the expense of the text, which was often reduced to an aspect of the work that was secondary to the physical and the visual. This was, in part, due to the development of heavily coded aesthetics that aimed to avoid censorship in a way which written text could not, scripts having to be submitted to the authorities for approval. It was therefore said that only Poles could fully understand such performances (see Cioffi 1996).

That theatre groups such as Teatr Osmego Dnie (Theatre of the Eighth Day), Teatr Laboritorium and Kantor's Cricot 2 theatre might be seen as being forms of ‘resistance’ and ‘subversion’ under Communism illustrates how the political climate of post-war Poland left an imprint on Polish theatre which has, allegedly, been hard to shake off. Indeed, Some theatre professionals and academics that it has proved hard for some Polish theatre practitioners to develop beyond the form of theatre which developed under political oppression to a provide new expression in a post-Communist Poland (personal communication). Ironically, the very things that certain sections of Polish Theatre spoke against were the very things that allowed it to exist. Indeed, with the fall of the Communist system Kantor observed, “I have always worked with a wall in front of me. Now I no longer have a wall” (quoted in: Allain 1997, 1).

Since the fall of the Communist regime, under which such work developed, there have again been changes within Polish Theatre. The great innovators Kantor and Grotowski[viii] are both now dead and, as Paul Allain has pointed out, the theatre has, like the society around it, had to face changes. Crises of funding and arguably of identity of what was Polish and what was Polish Theatre have become more apparent as Poland itself tries to find a new identity free from past restraints. The art form now needs to find new forms of expression to address new problems. These problems might range from areas such as Poland's relationship with the European Union and the other post-Soviet Republics to sexual politics or ethnic tensions within the country (see: Filipowicz 1995). The theatre now exists in a different social and economic climate than before.

However, despite the alleged ‘radical’ aspect of some Polish theatre and examination of theatre history in Poland shows a recurrent reliance upon what may be called ‘traditional’ or ‘folk’ forms of performance, such as ‘folk’ music and ritual. These motifs have been used by a number of influential practitioners particularly, it may be argued, at points where the question of, and search for, national identity was particularly pertinent.

It is aspects of this search, through the activities of a small group of theatre practitioners and musicians, which I shall explore within this work. This thesis will examine relationships within a small theatre company based in northern Poland, the

relationships with (potential) audiences and the relationship between the company, audiences and the performance material in connection to a possible fashioning, or crafting, of identity. Through this work I also aim to examine some of the apparently 'blurred boundaries' of contemporary Poland, particularly 'blurring' between the alleged polarity of the urban and the rural. I shall argue that the continuing relationship between the urban and the rural population(s) of Poland is, rather than the polarised relationship portrayed in anthropological literature (amongst others), comprised of a number of inter-dependent relationships which blur these alleged boundaries.

First Contact

In 1996, whilst working in the Republic of North Macedonia, I attended a symposium on masked rituals[ix]. Part of symposium involved attending a local carnival, said to be over 2000 years old. Some participants of both the symposium and the carnival were a theatre company from Poland who were performing elements of Polish carnival practices alongside the Macedonians and other international guests (see; Fig. 1). The group were part of a company called Teatr Wiejski Węgajty (The Village Theatre of Węgajty, henceforth referred to in this thesis as TWW).

Teatr Wiejski Węgajty are based in a converted barn on the edge of a forest in rural Warmia, Northern Poland. The core members live either at the theatre or in neighbouring villages. They train together frequently (although less so than in the past) in techniques of theatre, music and singing. The group is made up of a number of different nationalities, Polish German and Ukrainian (and occasional co-performers from a variety of places). Their work includes theatrical performances in the theatre building (and other venues), carolling and musical and theatrical workshops which are attended by a variety of different people, from local villagers to urban-based students, intellectuals and performers, as well as dances in the garage of the village fire brigade.

In 1998 I was invited by Teatr Węgajty to perform, with a Scottish-based theatre company called BestKept Sekret (BKS), at their theatre in northern Poland. BKS had produced a theatrical piece based on Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, as had TWW. We (BKS) found ourselves in totally unfamiliar territory. In sub-zero

temperatures and snow we drove along an unsurfaced, unlit road, through trees and arrived at a dark farmhouse. In the converted barn nearby we found the group rehearsing. We were serenaded with a Polish welcoming song and, as it was my birthday, I was presented with a bottle of vodka. We were then taken to a neighbouring farm where we were to be accommodated.

As the group had not seen our performance and nobody knew if the audience would understand the English, nobody was sure how to present the piece. We were, however, told it was inappropriate to use recorded music (it does not fit with the group's ethos). We were invited on a night-time run through the forest (which we missed because our hosts at the nearby farmhouse had cooked us dinner and our Scottish manners would not allow us to risk offending our hosts; this took some explaining to the theatre group). The night of the performance saw us following TWW's performance of *Canterbury Tales* and a performance by a Ukrainian hurdy-gurdy player. We had decided to just play our piece completely, including the partial nudity, despite the children in the audience. The audience enjoyed the piece immensely and discussions ensued throughout the weekend about the nature of different styles of theatre and the use of traditional and historical motifs.

TWW subsequently invited us to accompany them on a carolling expedition, during Easter 1999, to a remote village in the far north of Poland. This experience highlighted many differences between our groups, both as performers and differences of cultural behaviour and expectations [x]. It also involved learning Polish songs and drinking a lot of vodka. BKS were later invited to perform carolling in the Carpathian Mountains during winter 1999-2000.

For members of BKS the carolling brought a variety of reactions. Several of us felt as if we were taking part in something ancient, a form of early theatrical practice which stripped away a number of theatrical practices considered 'conventional' (like a stage area, curtains, division from the audience). Others felt curiously familiar with this kind of work, perhaps due to having been buskers or having done street theatre. Several of the group, knowing about comparable practices in the British Isles felt it somehow 'connected' them with an aspect of their own national heritage which was all but lost to them. Noting such feelings about identity and practice amongst my colleagues, and also myself, I wondered if (and how) the

work had a similar relevance to the Polish practitioners. Was there a relationship between those villagers they performed to and the urban academics they performed to in the theatre space?

First performances

Although my initial interests were the different spaces and 'theatres' in which the group could operate, one of the most intriguing things was the make up of the group itself and its associates. How, I wondered, did such a group come together from such diverse backgrounds and operate as a collective, forming, I assumed, some kind of collective identity while maintaining their own individuality. Likewise, how did this identity appear to adjust itself to different audiences and, indeed, how did the audiences perceive the group in their different guises? How was the group different (if it was) to a different type of audience? Their use of 'traditional' forms of 'folk-theatre', music and song is central to this question. The group's use of historical and multicultural forms produced a variety of feelings and observations from performers and audiences. It also demonstrated how the performers could apparently move from different settings and surroundings, both physically and intellectually. From performing to young, educated urban dwellers to octogenarian peasants, as a group and as individuals, the group appeared able to maintain and adjust, as a collective or as individuals, a level of communication that seemed appropriate to the time and place. What, I wondered, was the relationship between the performers, the material and the audience? Another point of interest was how this group of players forged some kind of group identity from the diverse individual identities that the company comprised of. This, from conversations, seemed to come from a mutual idea of what theatre (and performers) should be. Likewise, I was intrigued as to what connection members of workshops (often young urban students) felt with the group and their material. Did exposure to the theatre group and such material function simply as entertainment, or were there some aspects which related to notions of identity in a similar way to which affected members of BKS? What became apparent was that somehow the practice of theatre and the exploration of 'traditional' performance practices somehow aided certain individuals in creating and expressing some form of

identity, be it a professional one or a 'national' one. This was where I saw the possibility of theatre-work being used as a tool of identity crafting.

Theatre and the 'creation' of 'identity'.

The predominant theme of this thesis is how a certain form of theatrical practice may be considered as a form of identity crafting. I shall suggest that this can happen on a number of levels, not only the crafting of the 'performer's identity' amongst theatre members but also how the work of the group may be used by others not directly involved in the active production of performances (I include such people as villagers, audiences, academics and associates of the theatre). While I shall examine these *Others*[xi] in relation to the performers I shall also consider the actors own work which may be seen as a physical and psychic form of self-crafting.

One of the central theories I shall focus on is Foucault's discussion of *Technology of Self* (1988) which, amongst other things, explores the process of crafting *Self* through a process of self-awareness and control. The performers themselves undergo (or have undergone at some time) considerable training and study which is aimed at a form of self-crafting based on awareness of *Self*. In many cases, the initial theories related to this training can be traced back to such theatre practitioners as Jerzy Grotowski (if not further). These theories and practices also form some part of the basis of workshops run by TWW with visiting participants (some of whom may take part in performances). I shall examine how such practices may fit into Foucault's notion of *Technology of Self* but I shall also consider how *theatre* itself may be considered a tool in this *technology*, one which can be applied to and utilised by both individuals and groups. Likewise, I shall consider how *theatre* itself may be seen to utilise various tools and techniques in its own *Technology of Self*. One of these tools might be considered 'tradition'.

The Questions of 'tradition'.

The term 'tradition' and 'traditional' were ones which I brought to the field with me, but were also present in their own form once I arrived. These terms are exceedingly problematic. The question is frequently asked, "What is 'traditional'?*"* and it, the notion of *traditional* is frequently used a form of degradation or legitimisation of

practice (see: Agyrou 2001). As well as the well-known discussions of *invented tradition* (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992), there are also varied ideas about whether *tradition* refers to something 'living' or staid, codified and unchangeable (as illustrated in Handler's work on Quebecois nationalism, 1984, 1985, 1988).

My focus on 'traditional' is not so much on trying to define it, but attempting to examine how concepts of 'tradition' are used by various groups and individuals. As I shall demonstrate in Chapters Three and Five, the performance of (apparently) 'traditional' forms and motifs sometimes finds itself questioned when faced with notions of a 'more authentic' form, particularly from those observers who remember earlier performances.

Theatre and Tradition as 'Network'

The work of Annelise Riles (2001) was useful in helping me reassess my 'field-site (as I shall illustrate below), by considering the theatre group as part of a *network*, one which involved not only other performers but also social scientists, villagers, academics and workshop participants. By viewing the theatre and its works in this light it was possible to observe a number of practices taking place which may be similar to those Riles discusses in her analysis of 'networks'. These included the focus and flow of 'information', a continued discussion of aesthetics related to both presentation and transmission and forms of continual self-reproduction.

As Riles points out, much of the function of the network involves the transmission and collection of 'information'. We may consider the 'information' which the theatre network focuses on as being such things as music, texts, 'traditional' motifs and so forth. If we consider the actual performance material as 'information', we may also consider the audiences as parts of *the network*. The audiences may, as I shall demonstrate in later chapters, extend the network further and, through increased contacts, create new flows of information and fresh processes of re-production within the main body of the network (the theatre group itself). It is also possible to observe how individuals and groups may utilise their relationship to (and relationships within) the network as a means of creating some form of self-identity both within and without the network itself. Such utilisation will be part of my examination of the use of theatre in identity crafting. This will also be considered

using the idea of *Tradition as Network*, whereby the practice of 'tradition' on a number of levels may be seen as admitting a practitioner into a network of like-minded individuals and groups, perhaps allowing the creation and strengthening of an identity based upon a relationship to (a) 'Tradition'.

History and Change

An important part of my research has been the exploration of historical events in Poland. This is partly due to the utilisation of 'traditional' and historical motifs by Teatr Węgajty. If, as I shall suggest, the historical relevance of certain *informations* performed by the group may be instrumental in creating a relationship with some form of identity, it is necessary to understand possible social and historical relevances. The decline of Communism has, in recent years, allowed a revision of histories that were often manipulated and controlled by the governing powers. One result of this has been a revision of the engineered concept of a post-war, homogenous Poland. It has also allowed a deeper exploration of the existence and (in some cases) fates of several cultures and societies, which once made up significant sections of 'Polish' society; in particular, German, Jewish and Ukrainian.

My own research revealed to me the history of Poland and the complexities of the society throughout the 20th Century. The changing face of the national populace and the relationship between this history and the performance material also became more interesting to me. The use of motifs from various ethnic groups, by TWW, may be seen as illustrating a reaction against censored and controlled views of both history and Polish society. It may also demonstrate the relevance of history for contemporary Poland and Poles. The relationships between the work of theatre groups (prior to TWW) and the question of national/ethnic identity have also become points of focus in my research. The, apparently, recurrent reliance upon 'folk' music and performance style within theatre movements throughout the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries to explore questions of national identity may be seen as an example of addressing the frequently changing questions of identity within Poland.

Poland in 'transition'

The concept of 'change' was not (perhaps unsurprisingly) new to my field-subjects and was readily used and acknowledged as a process they were part of and a concept they worked with. That the technique of using 'traditional' or 'folk' motifs appears to be recurrent may illustrate that such questions are not new. This demonstrates that change is nothing new to Poland (or anywhere else) and that to speak of *transition*, as many contemporary writers have done (and continue to do so) is questionable. If we consider that *transition* as a "process of changing from one state or stage to another" (Collins College Dictionary, 1995) then it assumes we can define the two states or stages which the subject is changing between. It also suggests a Latourian notion of being able to declare a state of 'modernity' through defining a definite 'break' in history that divides the pre-transitional period, the transitional period and the post-transitional period.

Since the decline of the Soviet Union, it has been possible for anthropologists to create an academic region of the *transitional* Central/Eastern Europe. This type of academic regionalisation may be seen as a form of Orientalising. One illustration of this is the introduction to Buroway and Verdery's *Uncertain Transition.*

> [The] contraction of time horizons in the aftermath of 1989 gives unaccustomed validity to the ethnographic research whose temporal constitution now more closely approximates that of the actors whose behaviour it reports (1999, 4).

It would appear, by this comment that only Central/ Eastern Europe is changing. One must ask if an ethnographic focus on Britain (for example) would find no changes. Would ethnographic focus on the huge economic changes of the European Union in the last year not reflect West European *actors whose behaviour it reports*? We are led to believe that Eastern Europe is *the* place to research *transition* (presumably *post-colonialism* out-dated now?) yet an examination of Polish history (see Chapter 1 of this thesis) would question whether the country has ever been stable enough to have fixed points to make transition between[xii]. As Wydra (2000) points out, if one is to refer to a *transition* in Poland it should be seen as *Poland's permanent transition*. Burawoy and Verdery suggest that,

> When we speak of transition, we think of a **process** connecting the past to the future. What we discover, however, are theories of transition often committed to some pre-given future or rooted in an unyielding past (1999, 4).

This suggests, as I feel, that no matter where one takes a point of transition to begin, it is actually traceable to a point further in the past, which itself is influenced by previous histories. As such, to dictate points of transition is either suggesting an elitist knowledge of where the finishing point will be or, in a Latourian sense, trying to make one's self modern by controlling history, stating where this transition not only begins, but where it will end. As Filipowicz points out,

> The concept of transition seduces with its promise of a reward at the end of the tunnel. Seduction depends, as we know, on deception and misrepresentation. In this case, the ever popular concept of transition fails to alert society that life is not necessarily going to be easier, more orderly, more predictable and manageable once the transformation is over. (1995, 123)

For this reason, I treat the concept of *transition* with some scepticism. I shall, however, explore how the idea of *change* (or of *non-change*) may be used in a search for, and crafting of identity.

The Rural and the Urban Polarity

Just as it has recently been possible for anthropologists to create an academic region of the *transitional* Poland, historically much ethnography focussed on rural Poland and the political situation that was unique within the wider academic region of Eastern Europe. Much of the (English language) anthropological literature dealing with Poland is concerned with economy, and particularly with the agricultural aspects of Polish society. As I shall suggest in a later chapter, this may be seen as a continuation of a form of *polarising*, reinforcing notions of a Poland that consists of the rural and the *urban*. In many cases the (perceived) polarity was utilised in the conversation of my research subjects (*the village* and *the town*) and we may also consider that the practice of utilising 'folk' and rural motifs is often one which is (historically) often used by urban-based intellectuals (including artists, politicians and ethnologists/ anthropologists) for a variety of purposes. This utilisation, or even 'appropriation', of the image of the village is something I shall explore in later chapters.

Just as the vogue for *transition* (arguably an examination of how Western economists showed amazing cultural insensitivity with shock-treatment economics; Buroway and Verdery, 1999) may be seen as a form of regionalisation, I feel this focus upon the rural and village culture of Poland not only reinforces notions of Poland's poverty and rurality (which undoubtedly exist) but also reinforces the village/town divide and notions of perceived polarities between the two. Hann specifically refers to a gap between the town and the village using economic polarities of the Socialised sector of the town against the private sector of the village (1985, vii). Nagengast refers to an essential paradox of Poland of *Industry* and *Agriculture* (1991, 7). The focus upon the rural fails to explore more closely the connections and relationships between the village and the town in a way that critiques these perceived polarities. Such exploration can reveal points of contact where perceived differences were either bridged or exploited (members of TWW themselves being one example).

Both Nagengast and Hann point out that a number of farm workers and rural villagers also have work in towns and regularly commute (or reside in the village while retaining village holdings). Pine (1998) points out that the Górale Highlanders have historically practised both migrant labour and commuting to towns, as well as their historic pastoral lifestyles. However, it seems less attention has been paid to these people once they are in the town and their roles within urban society. The role of urbanites that move to the village can be seen to illustrate certain attitudes towards identity etc, as I will examine briefly in the cases of urban in-comers to villages, but predominantly in the instance of TWW. Here I feel my own work will be able to contribute to a greater illustration of points of contact and relationships between these perceived polarities and further explore how notions of these polarities may influence not only notions of identity about *Other*s but also about Self. Furthermore, I shall explore how these conceptions may be utilised to craft one's own Self.

The work of TWW, I suggest, illustrates how an utilisation of an image of the rural not only reiterates an imagined polarity between village and town but also critiques it at the same time. The attraction of urbanites to the village and the exposure of the villagers to a wide variety of Outsiders arguably act as a form of contact between the two groups. However, the utilisation of what may be perceived

as *traditional* motifs, based on a notion of village culture, also objectifies the *village* as the home of *tradition*. This in itself raises questions in that not all villagers are seen as having access to these traditions. I will ask, therefore, whether a perceived relationship with a culture or tradition may be used as a basis for an identity? If so, is this how TWW helps individuals craft an identity, by allowing them to gain some kind of contact with a perceived 'traditional' lifestyle?

Fieldwork and Placing One's Self.

As part of my research, I undertook fieldwork in Poland between 2000-1. During this time, I predominantly worked alongside the company as a performer and workshop leader. This gave me access to their working methods, expeditions and archives. Following initial reconnaissance trips during winter 1999-2000. I entered the field in April 2000, in time to attend the Easter expedition. I attended a further Easter expedition in 2001 as well as several winter carolling expeditions throughout 2000-1. These took place in a variety of locations within Poland. In addition, I also accompanied the group (as a performer) to Spain. Further research, including interviews with local (Olsztyn-based) musicians and villagers throughout Poland, was carried out.

My entry into the field, and longer exposure to the workings of the field created new problems with concerns to the target of my research. It soon became clear that those theatre members who lived 'in' Węgajty were not as active in the village society as I may previously have imagined. Other members lived in neighbouring villages and only appeared to come to Węgajty when they had work at the theatre. My own residency in the area was outside the central area of the village, lodging with some local farmers. When it became necessary to relocate accommodation was found for me in an isolated cottage on the boundaries of two villages. This meant my contact with villagers was not particularly frequent. I soon realised that in-depth research about the villagers of Węgajty would be difficult. This, however, raised another question; just what was my area of study? This confusion was cleared somewhat, as I previously note, by the work of Annelise Riles and her theories of *network*.

It soon became apparent to me that it was both easy and hard to draw boundaries and definition of my subject. While I was studying the work of the theatre, this consisted of regular contact and work with less than a dozen people. While the members of the workshops could be included, these were often a transient group that changed members frequently. In many cases, I would not meet these people again. There was also the wider network of associates, other theatre groups, musicians and artists whom Teatr Wiejski Węgajty communicated with. I was occasionally able to meet these people and utilise their contacts. This led me from one end of Poland to the other, but it still did not strengthen my connections with Węgajty villagers, many of whom rarely came to the theatre. This is not to say that I did not meet any, or forge relationships but those contacts were predominantly due to the contact certain villagers had with the theatre[xiii]. While ethnography about the villages may be thinner than expected, it reflects the contact I had with the village as a theatre practitioner and also reflects how little the theatre actually had to do with the day to day life of the village, and vice versa.

In some ways it might be considered that my own displacement and alienation was replicating that of the theatre itself. Arguably, my relationship with villagers was not unlike that of a number of the theatre members. While they obviously had closer relationships with people, these had been built up over a number of years. Several of the theatre members had, at times, lived in remote, sparse houses some distance from the main village, in the same way I was doing[xiv]. In the case of some of the villages in northern and southern Poland the theatre members (now) rarely visited outside of the carolling seasons more than one or two times a year. The isolation and transient nature of contact and relationships was not unlike that of the theatre group. The lack of contact and isolation was heightened by my lack of Polish language, as I shall examine below.

The majority of my research was carried out as an observer-participant, being an active member of the theatre company. This allowed me access to the processes of work-creation and a certain amount of decision making (of which I was a party). I was also able, as a member of the theatre, to meet a number of villagers and associates of the theatre. This in itself gained me some acceptance and access to areas that might have otherwise been difficult to obtain. It did, however, also mean

that I was associated closely with the theatre and therefore any enquiries might be met with this in mind. The association with the theatre was coupled with my own 'identity' as an *exotic*. A lone, linguistically inept Briton is something of an unusual commodity in rural Warmia, however the association with the theatre seemed to contextualise this nicely (after all, weren't half of the actors foreign?). Curiosity often seemed to open doors for me.

Research was largely carried out through observation and conversation, although I did make several formal interviews with members of the theatre and several interview expeditions (alone or with a translator) to several villages where the company had worked.

Language

Before entering the field I had had some minimal language training in Polish. This was partly due to a change in direction in my research subject, which left little time for extensive training[xv]. Although I took further training whilst in the field I was not able to reach any great degree of fluency or comprehension of the language. As most of the theatre members spoke English, communication was less of a problem than it was with villagers. Often I was able to communicate with villagers in a mix of (very) elementary Polish and (basic) German. (several villagers in Węgajty being bilingual). Interviews with villagers were conducted with translators (or, usually, people who could speak English a little bit). Because of this it was not always possible to utilise 'sophisticated' English vocabulary and many of the terms utilised are either basic English equivalents, or words used by my research subjects when speaking English[xvi].

Names and Identities

I have, for the most part, protected the identity of individual interviewees, villages and villagers as I feel few of these people invite outside attention. In the case of the theatre members I have used their real names as there are a number of published works about (and by) the members of the theatre and their work which make no attempt at secrecy. It would therefore be a pointless exercise to apply aliases to the core members of the group.

Outline of Thesis

The thesis will attempt to show the operation and utilisation of theatre as a Technology of Self, examining the contemporary work of Teatr Węgajty against the backdrop of Polish history and the changing attitude towards identity and the *Other*.

Chapter One will explore the history of Poland and the utilisation of rural imagery in the expression of national identity. This chapter will show the changing attitudes to national identity and relationships with *Others* throughout the last two-hundred years. The second half of this chapter examines the practice of theatre in Poland and the recurring utilisation of rural motifs from the writings of Mickiewicz and the music of Chopin, to the ethnographic presentations of Gardzienice and TWW. The chapter will conclude with a brief history of TWW upto my entry into the field.

Chapter Two explores the work of TWW in the villages, their relationship to and utilisation of the concept of 'village'. This will include an exploration of their relationships with the villages where they work and an examination of social and political conditions in rural Poland. This section will explore a number of anthropological texts.

Chapter Three examines the working practices of TWW, including training, workshops and performance. It examines some of the theories and philosophies behind their work and the relationship with workshoppers and co-performers.

Chapter Four explores the techniques of TWW further, particularly with relation to the carolling expeditions. It examines further their relationship with, and approaches to 'traditional' performance practices. This chapter also begins to specifically examine the use of theatrical technique by TWW as a form of identity crafting in relationship to Self and *Other*.

Chapter Five outlines part of my theoretical approach to the questions of this thesis. Utilising a number of ethnographic and historical texts I shall examine the concept of

Technology of Self, demonstrating how Foucault's theories may be illustrated by the theatrical work examined in Chapter Three. This is followed by an examination of the identity of the actor/performer in relation to that of the anthropologist. Both, I feel, express themselves and their professional identity through the portrayal of others. This discussion leads into an examination of how representations and classifications of 'modern' and 'traditional' may be used as forms of objective and subjective identity crafting and othering. This is followed by a consideration of the role and use of 'tradition' in identity crafting and othering in a number of ethnographic instances.

Chapter Six returns to the practice of TWW and examines how their utilisation of certain motifs may be seen as an attempt to redress particular notions of otherness and therefore act contrary to particular notions of national identity. This may involve the performance of the image of *Others* in a situation which allows self-examination by an audience.

Chapter Seven continues an examination of the audience and how the work of the theatre may be seen to influence their attitude towards identity matters. It also examines how audiences may see the theatre group and the problems the company may face in influencing and controlling representation of themselves.

Chapter Eight examines how the theatre may be seen as a form of network and how this too may be seen as a form of identity crafting, both by the theatre and by members of the network itself. Also examines how tradition and theatrical practice may be combined as tools in identity crafting.

Chapter Nine examines how the theatre performance may affect the audience and allow them access to a temporal network. It will also conclude this thesis through a summing up of the main points.

Chapter One

1.1 Polish History: Fluctuating Identities

Poland, Self-Identity and 'The Other'

It is important to consider Teatr Wiejski Węgajty in the context of historical practices of theatre within Poland. Likewise it is important to note the historical events surrounding and influencing particular theatre movements within Poland. There has for many years been a section of theatre activity in Poland which has related to representations of the rural, there has also been a variety of movements within theatre circles which have been actively involved in political 'resistance', be it against Imperial Russia, Nazism or the Communist authorities. I wish to explore the history of such movements and place TWW within a historical context. The bearing of Polish history is also important to the context of the work of TWW, as I shall examine in later chapters. This chapter will explore the relationship between certain forms of performance based art, such as music, dance and theatre, as a form of expression during, and a response to various periods in Polish history[xvii]. I shall also examine the recurring representation of the rural village as an aspect of Polish identity within Polish theatre[xviii]. Daniel Gerould considers that, "Modern Polish theatre is the direct outgrowth of an alliance between a nationalistic romantic movement with deep political resonances and modernist stagecraft and design" (1986, 91). It is necessary to examine theatre and performance within this historical context for as Halina Filipowicz (Professor of Slavic Studies, University of Wisconsin) writes,

> These circumstances are part of the context in which Polish theatre communicates with its audiences. To ignore this context would be to imagine, as no one can, that the process of communication between actor and spectator takes place in a vacuum (1995, 122).

It is also necessary to examine the question(s) of "Polish" national identity and the changing status of "*The Other*' throughout Polish history. This is particularly relevant when we consider the use by TWW of motifs and materials related to

minority groups within contemporary Poland. When writers as diverse as the British historian and journalist Neil Ascherson and the anthropologist Chris Hann (1985, 33) state that post-war Poland was one of the most homogenous nations in Europe it is interesting to ask why, as Filipowicz has commented,

> When Communism collapsed, a need for clear-cut identities of "us" and "them" became especially urgent, and a demand for scapegoats was (and still is) at its highest to feed the totalizing desire for order, stability and control (Filipowicz 2000, 4).

If there is/was such an urgency then what was the threat to this alleged homogeneity? Part of this comes from the almost hidden *Others* within Polish society, the Jew, the Białorussian, the Ukrainian, the Lithuanian and the German, historical dwellers within Poland who have often been displaced or (sometimes forcibly) assimilated, making the misconception of a homogenous ethnic Polish state a recurring and popular notion (see Grossman, Forthcoming).

As Elwira Grossman (Dept of Slavonic Studies, University of Glasgow) points out, in the post-war communist Poland the existence of minorities was down-played and,

> …[T]he image of a "pure Pole" was successfully fabricated for almost half a century- a totalising, homogenising drive to create such uniformity has been a defining factor in the construction of modern Polish identity... [But] It does not mean… that "the Other(s)" did not exist or that the strong impact its/their cultural and historical legacy disappeared altogether (7).

It is this legacy of artistic culture which Teatr Węgajty (and others) may be seen to utilise. Both their carolling and more theatrical stagings utilise musical and lyrical material from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, including Jewish (Yiddish), Ukrainian, German and Polish. It may be seen to illustrate the complexity of a historical Polish nation (if not the present one). To understand just how complex this matter is it is necessary to examine Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Polish history from a viewpoint of the changing nature of Poland, 'Polish' identity and '*The Other'* It is also necessary to examine the role of certain elements of the theatre in addressing this matters. In such an examination, we may note a recurring use of a concept of *the rural* by writers and theatre practitioners to explore matters of national and ethnic identity.

1.2 A History of 'Polish' Identity and the Other

What is important to note in a history of Polish identity is that Poland has been attempting to define its own identity for over two centuries through a succession of differing political situations, territorial fluctuations and external aggressors. As Wydra suggests (2000), there has yet to be a time when Poland has not been in *transition*. From the beginning of the Twentieth Century (and before) the country has found itself in what Wydra calls a state of *permanent transition*, not being in one state long enough to be considered stable. Even the apparent stability of Communism experienced constant fluxes and changes, experimentation with free-market economics and changing statuses of political thought and ethnic minorities.

When examining history the problem is often where to start. We find ourselves playing the role of Latour's *Modern* by designating a cut-off point for history and modernity. I find that it is necessary to begin an examination (albeit briefly) from a point that the Romantic Movement saw as a definite severance point in Polish history, the dissection of the state by Russia, Austria and Prussia in 1795. Under the three different states, Polish cultural identity experienced different attitudes that arguably shaped different aspects of national identity. The partitions of Poland by the Prussian, Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires in 1795 signalled the end of a Polish nation for the next one hundred and thirteen years. During this time there were a number of failed uprisings, the Napoleonic Wars and, eventually, World War One, which saw the restoration of Poland as a political and geographical state. There followed twenty years of political struggle within and without Poland, including border wars and insurgency campaigns, to establish exactly what the new Poland would be. This period of exploration was interrupted by the Second World War and subsequently by the imposition of Soviet communism. Eventually Communism fell apart in the late 1980's and an independent Poland was re-established in 1989. Over the next decade the country struggled to develop a free-market economy (the subject of much anthropological research). Throughout this period notions of 'Polish' identity have changed and shifted, as have attitudes towards *The Other*.

Despite the post-war portrayal of a mono-ethnic Poland, historically Poland was a multi-ethnic state, one which was renowned for a level of (legal) religious and

ethnic tolerance ahead of much of Western Europe (see: Ascherson 1987; Brock 1981; Hann 1985; and Le Moal 1981). We must examine how changes in attitudes to ethnicity, religion, identity and *Otherness* were connected with changing political circumstances and a changing notion of the Polish identity itself. The development of a Polish identity led to a development of the identity of The Other. Brock (1981) and Walicki (1982) both point out that before the partitions Polish national identity (if we can speak of one) was based on membership of the nobility and did not include the peasantry. Likewise, it was not based on language, religion or ethnicity. Miłosz (1995) illustrates this when he considers the situation of Lithuanian identity,

"'I am a Lithuanian' was not opposed to 'I am a Pole', but meant 'I am from here' as opposed to 'He is from there,' namely, the Kingdom of Poland" (1995, 250).

Following partition the rise of a Romantic based nationalism led to the development of a notion of identity based more on ethnicity and religion[xix], the idea of a Polish ethno-nation became more prominent. Walicki (1983, 72) writes that many 19th Century Polish thinkers considered it of vital importance to cultivate a culture of art, philosophy and literature that would be consciously Polish. Such artists as Chopin and Mickiewicz became vital to the development of a consciously *Polish* high culture that would be used to express Poland's national and cultural consciousness and right to nationhood. The use of 'folk' motifs was important for this high culture, as seen by Mickiewicz's work and works of Chopin based on village dances.

1.3 The Partition Period

Developing the national identity

Romanticism deals strongly with matters of identity and difference. Walicki points out, whereas conservative Romantic thought saw *history as a slow, organic development* (76), and disapproved of interventionist activity, Polish Romantic thought *considered a radical break with the immediate past* (76), as through revolution, a necessary, even desirable thing if it helped the nation to achieve its mission from which it may have deviated. In conservative Romanticism difference and separate-ness are to be emphasised and encouraged. While progressive

Romanticism stressed interaction there was also the problem of identifying a national character with which to express one's self.

One aspect of this development of cultural consciousness involved defining *who* members of the nation were. Historically Polish national identity was based on social class. Suffrage was limited to the gentry and a state of near serfdom existed amongst the peasantry. However, the new movements in Polish thought, driven by Romantic nationalism, saw importance of *the folk* and awareness grew that a restored Poland, through a strengthened national consciousness, would have to include the peasantry. An interest in the folk-loric arose and led to such mammoth collections of 'traditional' songs and melodies as the works of Oskar Kolberg (1814-90), which are still hugely influential and a source of material for musicians and singers such as TWW.

Here we may begin to consider the problems of defining not only a national identity but also a geo-national identity. Poland (which formerly had incorporated regions such as Lithuania, Byelorussia and Ukraine) was now split between three different powers, each ruling in a different way. What, in the post-Poland period was a Pole? Previously it was possible to refer to oneself as a "Pole" when one did not speak Polish and was not Catholic[xx]. The development of a new definition of *Polish-ness* would provide Poles with an ideal against which to create themselves and with which to judge others, particularly those who wished to assimilate. It would also create an ideal against which others could create their own identities.[xxi]

While many thinkers in this period felt Poland's power had been in the diversity of the population, and often sought a return to the old republic both geographically and socially, there was a problem, as Walicki points out, in that most of the writers were writing in Polish (73). Discussion and expression of Poland became greatly reliant on the Polish language. This led to a linguistic narrowing in the discussion of identity and to a flourishing of the Polish language. It also had the effect of stimulating nationalist movements amongst other linguistic groups, who often denoted *Polish* as being connected to the nobility, particularly amongst Ukrainians. Polish nationalists now had the problem of defining a national identity whilst attempting to discourage the sprouting of other nationalisms. By defining themselves, they had allowed the definition of others.

The Nineteenth Century saw attempted suppressions of Polish identity under both Russia and Prussia/Germany with the Russian Empire beginning a campaign of attempted Russification (particularly following a number of attempted insurrections by Polish nationalists) and Bismark's *Kulturkampf*, aimed at undermining the power of the (Polish) Catholic Church in Prussia and restricting the use of Polish amongst the Polish community. However, in the Austrian territory, particularly based around Krakow, the late 19th Century saw the rise of an intellectual and artistic nationalist movement known as *Młoda Polska* (*Young Poland*). A leading member of this group was Stanisław Wyspianski whose play 1900 play *Wesele* ("The Wedding") is considered a masterpiece of Polish theatre.

1.4 Between the Wars (1918-1939)

The Second Republic

With the end of World War One the three divisions of Poland were partially reunited. A period of geographic fluctuation followed over the next few years due to military campaigns involving Poland, Lithuania and Russia. It was also a period where the new Poland, the Second Republic, was trying to define itself not only on the international political scene but also internally, defining what the new Poland would be, who would be its citizens and who, indeed, was Polish.

Throughout WWI, Poles were serving on all sides, Russian, German and Austrian[xxii]. Following the military shifts of power in 1915, each side began to consider and discuss the possibility of certain concessions to Polish independence. The (re)creation of the Polish State was one of President Wilson's Fourteen-Point war aims in 1918[xxiii]. However, whereas the Polish general Józef Piłsudski had envisaged a Poland which was based on the pre-partition multi-national commonwealth (consisting of parts of Białorussia, Lithuania and Ukraine- including the Jewish populations), Wilson spoke of, "*territories inhabited by an indubitably Polish population"* (Ascherson 1987, 51). This was closer to the nationalistic (and anti-Semitic) Roman Dmowski whose National Democrat party (*Endecja*) embraced the notion of *Polska dla Polaków* (*Poland for the Poles*), a phrase still used by right-wingers today[xxiv]. Piłsudski's desire for a Polish *jus soli*, as opposed to Dmowski's

desire for a Poland based more on *jus sanguinis*, was to be a major source of tension between the two men.

Following the war, with Piłsudski as head of state, Poland found itself in military conflict with most of its neighbours. Much of this was due to the ethnically mixed populations around the new borders and a desire to reclaim historic 'Polish' territory (and a desire by the neighbours, including Czechoslovakia, to control the drawing of borders). These ethnically mixed regions, such as Silesia, Lwów (Ukraine) and Lithuania would feature in ethnic conflicts in later years. Poland also sought areas in Silesia and East Prussia (today the Polish region of Warmia-Mazuria where Teatr Wiejski Węgajty are based). Despite an active Polish populace and independence movement, these ambitions were thwarted due to a plebiscite voting to remain part of Germany (aided, but not necessarily decided, by large numbers of Germans transported in for the occasion).

New republic and new identities

The coming together of the restored Poland was not an easy experience. As well as different currencies, legal systems and administrative languages, "Poles who had lived all their lives in Russia, Prussia or Austria had developed quite distinct habits and could not adapt to each other overnight" (Davies 1984, 120). The new Republic also contained large communities of groups who linguistically and/or culturally were not Polish (some of whom were against a Polish state)[xxv]. These included groups such as Białorussians, Germans, Jews and Ukrainians.

Whilst areas such as Silesia had been German before the partitions of 1795, there was a significant Polish populace. It was not easy, however, to define *Polish* and *German* as the two communities had lived closely together. Much of the workforce of this industrial region being Catholic Germans and Catholic Poles many of the population were Germanised Poles or of Polish descent with relatives who claimed to be Polish (Ascherson 1987, 16). Germans made up a comfortable urban middle-class in the Silesian regions, as well as a rural population. It was the alleged persecution of such farmers that Germany used for initial military operations in Poland in 1939. Discontent eventually led to an embracing of the Nazi movement amongst some sections of the German population. Sixty four per cent of the

population were peasantry and a further ten per cent were agricultural workers. During the inter-war period the Polish Peasants Party became particularly strong, winning three terms in government under the leadership of Wincenty Witos, whose party periodically struck an alliance with the right wing *Endecja* in an attempt at land reform. Dmowski's notion of aiding Polish farmers was based on xenophobia. Greater restrictions should be placed on the Ukrainians and Polish farmers would be placed in their land (it never came to much).

The frontier wars had supposedly reclaimed territories but had also been effective in dividing populations of non-Poles, particularly the Ukrainians, Białorussians and Germans, from their perceived nations. Such groups were often resentful, seeing this as an act of suppression and the inter-war period saw a rise in active nationalism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism amongst all cultural-ethnic groups. Much of the nationalism of the minorities was decidedly anti-Polish. Both Ukrainian and Białorussian waged terrorist campaigns (Ukrainians were funded by Germany) in the face of perceived Polish oppression and attempted Polonization (Ascherson 1887,79). Polish authorities sought to combat Ukrainian nationalist ideology amongst small groups such as the Rusyns in South-East Poland. This group included minorities such as the Lemko, Boyko and Hutsuls. The Lemko had not yet developed a strong nationalistic consciousness but due to their linguistic and religious identity being considered close to Ukrainian (Orthodox/ Greco-Catholic Christianity and an East-Slavic linguistic variety) it was possible for Ukrainian nationalism to make in-roads. As Hann notes, during the 1930's Polish ethnographers went to a great deal of effort to prove conclusively that these groups were really Polish and attempts at *Polonization* were made (Hann 1995, 86 & 157).

The Jewish population “were typified by both a small and wealthy bourgeoisie and by a mass of urban artisans living by trades and crafts” (Davies 1984, 120), although the Depression had hit many of them hard. Amongst the Jewish populace there was concern at some of the more right wing political rhetoric but there was also the worry of attacks based on misplaced ideas of retribution due to pre-war propaganda that Jews were supposedly either pro-Russian or pro-German (either way, anti-Polish). This continued the old stereotype of the Jew being linked to the ruling elite or the local Szlachta at the expense of the ordinary Pole. Hertz cites

an old Polish proverb, "The Jew and the noble contrive to ruin the peasant" (1988, 200). Jewish emancipation movements had grown in Poland during the 19th Century, particularly with the rise of Zionism. Integration of Jews into mainstream Polish life had also risen (often treated with suspicion as an attempt to infiltrate Polish society for dubious motives)[xxvi]. The role of Jewish intellectuals in the Marxist movement also drew suspicion from anti-Communists. The Jew, it seemed was attempting to take over the world (as the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* suggested). Marxism might be seen as a Jewish plan for world domination therefore the Jew might be seen as being a Communist or, as Russia was the home of Communism, pro-Russian. Either way, the Jew was anti-Polish! The rise of Nazism in Germany was able to play on the fear of Communism and a distrust of Jewry. This portrayal of the Jew was to have strong resonance even up to today. Following the death of Piłsudski in 1935 there was a notable rise in anti-Semitism, including a rise in physical attacks.

The shifting boundaries of the new republic, both physical and political, also brought fluctuations of notions of identities. Questions of political direction, socio-cultural integration and economic orientation, due to Poland's poverty, may be seen as similar to those of today, the nation having not long regained some kind of post-colonial status, worries about economies, minorities etc. However, before these questions could be properly addressed they were to be replaced with greater problems before the end of the decade.

1.5 The Second World War

The invasion of Poland on September 1st 1939 was a climax of tensions between Germany and Poland. Germany claimed to be invading Poland to protect ethnic Germans who had been (allegedly) harassed by Poles, and to 'reclaim' German territories granted to Poland under the Treaty of Versailles. By September17th the Soviets had invaded from the east, claiming to do so to protect the ethnic minorities of Ukrainians and Białorussians. The realities were actually a joint agreement between the Nazis and the Soviets, made in August 1939 (Nazi-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression, the so-called *Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact*), to carve Poland up between them. Both powers began systematic exterminations of Polish political and intellectual elite, forced population shifts and the deportation of civilians to labour

camps in USSR and Germany. Thousands of Polish army officers were imprisoned and later massacred in the Katyn forest by the Soviets (Zawodny 1962). The Nazis utilised execution squads throughout Poland. Both powers sought to wipe the memory of Poland from the map of Europe. As Molotov commented "Nothing is left of Poland, that hideous offspring of the Versailles Treaty" (Ascherson 1987, 93), while Hitler referred to Poland being "swept off the face of the earth" (96). There also came a new attempt at colonisation, with 350,000 Germans being brought into the occupied territories (98). The Nazi philosophy of race was strictly applied within the occupied Poland. Slavs in general and Poles in particular were considered sub-human. Special rules were drawn up for Poles as well as Jews. Poles were issued 669 calories in food rations per day, as opposed to the 2,613 calories issued to Germans. Jews were only issued 184 calories (Bourke 2001, 158)[xxvii].

Both Nazi and Soviet powers were extremely skilled in utilising historical grievances between different ethnic groups and allowed Lithuanians, Ukrainians and Białorussians to settle old scores with the Poles. Fierce paramilitary warfare was also common in border areas (see: Lotnik 1999) and the usual atrocities prevailed. The treatment of Poles by other nationalities was to strongly influence attitudes in the future. The Treaty of Potsdam and the shifting of the Ukrainian/ Polish/ German borders brought about further population shifts and allowed the basis for the(alleged) mono-ethnic post-war Poland.

1.6 Post-war Poland Communism and Population Shifts

Stalinism, Civil War and Social Realism

The immediate post-war years saw the attempted implementation of Stalinism upon Poland and a vicious civil conflict between the Soviets and the nationalist forces of the AK (Home Army: *Armii Krajowa*) who waged a doomed guerrilla war for several years. There was also the added problem of Ukrainian insurgency in the south of Poland and Soviet imposed political controls and censorship upon everyday life in Poland in an attempt to introduce and enforce Communist doctrine. Political adversaries of Communism were rooted out and prosecuted. This blanket imposition of Communist doctrine also affected the theatre and other performance arts.

Post-War Poland in Turmoil

The wartime events led to a number of actions in the immediate post-war period which make the work of Teatr Wiejski Węgajty pertinent, particularly when discussing questions of identity and ethnicity in relation to theatrical performance. Historians have pointed out that post-war Poland was engineered into an apparently mono-ethnic state, largely through ethnic cleansing, population swaps and assimilation policies carried out by the Communist government. Some of the attitudes and rhetoric of the immediate post-war period are still echoed today.

Removal of Germans[xxviii]

One of the major events following WWII, and one which has direct bearing on the work of Teatr Wiejski Węgajty, is the forced removal of the majority of the ethnic German population of Poland[xxix]. The 'Big Three' allied leaders (Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill) at the Potsdam and Yalta conferences had agreed that following the end of the war the USSR could absorb the formerly Polish areas of Białorussia, Lithuania and Ukraine while Poland would be granted the eastern lands of Germany, including Silesia and East Prussia (modern day Warmia-Mazury). This would mean the forced expulsion of the ethnic German populace, in part to make room for the Polish populace which would be moved into Poland from the former territories.

During the five years following the war over 12 million members of the ethnic German population of Eastern Europe were forcibly moved into Austria and Germany (de Zayas 1994, 1). In Poland allegedly over one million were subjected to expulsion[xxx]. The expulsions were not always as orderly as the allies would have liked and Germans were often were apparently considered 'fair game' for abuse, being subjected to robbery, physical abuse, rape and even murder, which often shocked even the Russians (Naimark 2001, 127). The authorities seem to have done little to stop it and seem to have deliberately stirred up the already high anti-German feelings (see Naimark, Ch.4 and de Zayas 1994). Many expellees were contained in concentration camps and shipped by train into the German territories. Many died from the harsh treatment and conditions involved. The lands and property confiscated from these people were later granted to Polish exiles from the former

territories of Białorussia, Ukraine and Lithuania (2.1 million, see: Naimark 2001, 132 and Kochanowski, 2001, Subtelny 2001). A number of 'Ukrainians' who were moved from the south-eastern territories of Poland under *Akcja Wisła* (Operation Vistula) were also given land in these areas.

Under the new post-war government of Poland a programme of *Polonization* was implemented. As well as the forced use of Polish as an official language of administration and education amongst the Germans items like German language newspapers were stopped, German place-names and street-signs were replaced. Priests were especially considered dangerous as perpetrators of nationalistic feeling (especially Protestant ones) and were removed. In methods reminiscent of the Nazi treatment of Poles and Jews Germans were forbidden to attend the theatre or to use taverns and restaurants and were made to wear a letter N (*Niemiec*: German) on their sleeves (128). This may be seen as an actualisation of Stalin's advice to the Polish communist leader Władysław Gomułka that the Poles should "…create such conditions for the Germans that they want to escape themselves" (quoted in Naimark, 109). One could leave, or declare one's self as Polish, as many Poles had taken on German citizenship to survive the Nazi terror (although this was not always so simple, as one Polish governor of Silesia stated, "We won't allow any covering over of German meat with Polish gravy" (ibid 135).

Citizens were required to declare their nationality as Poles (or Polish Jews), however a large number of ethnic Germans refused to declare themselves *Polish*. Such incidents could lead to imprisonment, or expulsion. As Saxon (1997[xxxi]) points out, it was possible to be declared Polish by the State, despite ones own wishes (1997). This was because a significant number of 'Germans' number were able to stay as autochthons. These communities were officially designated "Germanized Poles and encouraged to "re-Polonize" and remain" (Naimark 1997, 131). Kraft (2001, 108) considers that the Polish authorities manipulated and mis-represented such notions of a regionalised identity, not least in an attempt to prove the historical *Polishness* of areas of the *recovered territories.* Other reasons, as Naimark states (previous citation), were related to there being no substitute workforce of ethnic Poles available to do the industrial and agricultural work which the *Germans* would do. It was therefore advantageous to the authorities to keep some of the population

by officially designating them *Poles*. The ethnic cleansing of Poland and the Polonization of the remaining elements of Germanic culture was leading to an image of a homogenous Polish society.

The use of ethnicity as an ideological tool may be seen in two ways in this case. Not only does the more blatantly Nationalistic nature appear but also the use of ethnicity as a weapon in a Marxist class-war can be seen. Stanisław Mikołajczyk, deputy prime-minister of the new government and leader of the Polish Peasants Party, saw the expulsions under a banner of ridding the Polish peasantry of the German landlord and exploiting middle classes[xxxii] (Naimark 1997, 124). Naimark (124) and Curp (2001, 595) both point out the irony that the Communist government which had outlawed the *Endecja* party had all but realised Dmowski's dream of *Polska dla Polaków*.

Subsequent government rhetoric was very anti-German and helped instill, if not just to strengthen, fears of a German threat to attempt reclamation of the *Recovered Territories*. Relationships between Poland and Germany often reflected the tense situation concerning the *Recovered Territories* and Germany's possible territorial claims upon them. Likewise, the founding of societies and representation groups for the expellees (and their descendants) within Germany caused considerable friction with demands for compensation and recognition of minority status for those 'Germans' remaining in Poland (see Naimark 2001, de Zayas 1994, Kurcz 1997a and Lebioda 2000). During the 1950's and 1970's there were programmes activated by the west German government to allow passports for ethnic Germans from East Europe to emigrate to BDR as economic migrants (something many took advantage of). In recent years, since the early 1990's there has also been a significant rise in *German* associations within Poland (see Kurcz 1997a), many of whom aim for greater representation of German heritage and identity within Poland.

Ukrainians, Lemko and Akcja Wisła

The immediate post-war years also saw the displacement of thousands of people designated *Ukrainian* by the Polish authorities, however a number of these people came from groups such as the Lemko and Hutsul whose identification with Ukrainian national identity is debatable even today (see: Hann 1995, 87). In such

cases ethnicity was decided through language and religion (Greco-Catholic), often in an ironic reversal of the *Polish* designation granted to them by Polish ethnologists in the inter-war period. Under the Potsdam Treaty the population swaps between Ukraine and Poland resulted in around 485, 000 Ukrainians being transported to Ukraine during 1944-6 (Subtelny 2001, 156)[xxxiii]. This left around 200,000 Ukrainians and members of minority groups in South Eastern Poland.

War-time Ukrainian fifth column and paramilitary activity continued after the war, being focussed on both the Soviet and the Polish authorities. In 1945 the nationalist Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA: *Ukrainska Povstanska Armiia*) sent units to South Eastern Poland. The already tense situation escalated with attacks on Polish forces and reprisals against Ukrainian villages (including village priests and Greco-Catholic Churches). The situation came to a head in March 1947 when Ukrainian insurgents killed the famous Polish general (and hero of the Spanish Civil War), Karol Swierczewski. By April 24th the Polish authorities declared and activated *Akcja Wisła* (Operation Vistula) to disperse the remaining Ukrainian and Lemko elements throughout Poland (predominantly into the *Recovered Territories*) with an aim to assimilation and further enforcing the homogenous Poland[xxxiv]. Those deported were often given only a few hours warning (two or three) to pack everything and move to a place of embarkation. The deportees were moved to areas in Silesia and northern Poland (around Olsztyn), where many were contained in concentration camps and labour camps. Some were given land in the new territories to begin a new life. Unfortunately, war-time (and pre-war) Ukrainian activities, left many Poles with an idea of *Ukrainian* and *terrorist* being interchangeable, which did not make things easy for the deportees. In some cases this led to a desire to assimilate. It was ten years before they were allowed to return to their former homes. Many of those who did found them destroyed or occupied by Polish settlers.

The alleged Polish plan of Ukrainian assimilation certainly happened in some areas but, as Subtelny points out, it (169) in other cases it actually strengthened or confirmed Ukrainian identity. Some of those deportees who had formerly been unsure of their national identity now found themselves labelled as *Ukrainian* and aligned themselves to it. In some cases, like the non-political Lemko, who had previously been designated Polish (and in many cases were loyal to Poland), the

experience created a new identity as Ukrainian, if not in their own minds then in those of my Poles.

Jewish Society post-war

By January 1946 there were around 86,000 Jews living in Poland; this number grew to around 244,000 with the return of those who had gone into exile before or during the war. The post-war period saw an attempted regeneration of Jewish life under the auspices of the Central Committee of Polish Jews (CKŻP: Centralny Komitet Żydów Polskich), including the establishment of Yiddish schools, clinics, orphanages and cultural institutions, including two theatres (Steinlauf 1997, 46). The Communist authorities declared a 'new epoch', with the separation from the 'old Poland', including features of the old, like anti-Semitism. Steinlauf points out that 1950's Polish schoolbooks devoted a considerable amount of space to a history of anti-Semitism (49), and suggests (70) that the Jews were being used by the Communists as a propaganda tool to benefit from Western money to rebuild Poland (and undoubtedly as an example of how Communism treated them better than capitalism). Unfortunately amongst many Poles such apparent favouritism reinforced many of the pre-war suspicions of Jews being linked to Communism. This is arguably why by 1956 Krushchev suggested a purge of Jews from the Party Committee might increase the Party's popularity.

Arguably the Communist authorities utilised populist stereotypes of non-Polish groups to their own advantage. By playing on historic grievances and contemporary political events to justify their ethnic cleansing programmes the Soviets were able to express themselves as friends of the Polish people, defending them from the alleged threat of German expansionism and Ukrainian terrorism. Arguably the development of a somewhat nationalistic style of Communism was useful in attempting to make the Soviet Communism seem more agreeable to the Polish nationalists. Social realism had been adopted by many of the pre-war generation (including theatrical practitioners like Leon Schiller); however the tide was turning and, with the death of Stalin in 1953, new ideas were coming to the fore, along with an increased dissatisfaction with Stalinist society.

Post Stalinism: The Gomułka Years

Stalinist Poland had seen much in-fighting amongst the Communist leaders, resulting in the disgracing of Władysław Gomułka (former government minister for the *recovered territories*). In 1956 Gomułka returned as Poland's leader following Kruschev's denunciation of Stalin, the 1956 workers riots in Poznan and the death of his political adversary (and leader of the Party), Bolesław Bierut. The purge of the Old Guard of Communism had a decidedly anti-Semitic streak (Ascherson, 1987, 157) as it would also have 11 years later. Under the new style of government there were partial relaxations on the restrictions of the Stalinist period, concerning both civil liberties and artistic ones. The Gomułka years saw increased international communication, including loans from America to purchase grain. The attempts to increase collectivization of farms, as opposed to private ownership, led to major problems in the agricultural sector that resulted in low domestic production and food shortages. Other international communication related to the matter of attempting to get NATO and West Germany to recognise the inviolability of Poland's post-war borders with Germany. Although the Germans eventually recognised the borders during Gomułka's rule this agreement was signed by his successor, Edward Gierek.

By the mid-1960's discontentment with Gomułka's reign led to protests and a political opposition. A group within the Party, known as the Partisans (led by General Mieczysław Moczar) began creating an anti-Russian and an anti-Semitic atmosphere, suggesting a purge of Jewish elements in the Party. This was furthered by Gomułka speaking of *Zionist Fifth Columnists* celebrating in the wake of Israel's victory of the 1967 Six-Day War. The anti-Semitic climate got incredibly ugly and resulted in purges and the emigration and expulsion of large numbers of Jewish citizens. This effectively finished any real Jewish community within Poland. It also generated international criticism and engendered a notion of Poles as being inherently anti-Semitic. (Ascherson 1984, 175 and Steinlauf 1997, 76).

In an interesting reversal of opinion, the mid Seventies saw groups of young people of Jewish heritage rediscovering and professing their Jewishness (Steinlauf 86) This was coupled with intellectuals and young people beginning to explore Jewish culture as a kind of exoticism, listening to klezmer music and researching

Jewish culture in Poland. As Steinlauf points out, many young Poles had not *experienced* Jews. This exoticism is arguably still active today and can be seen in events like Kraków's festival of Jewish culture and the regeneration of the old Jewish quarter as a centre of nightlife. The rise of popularity of klezmer music was perhaps instrumental in the adoption of the form by TWW. Interestingly, such exoticism, while acknowledging Jewish culture probably also propagated old stereotyped images (both negative and amiable) as seen in contemporary tourist merchandise.

The heavy atmosphere, which had furthered feelings of discontentment amongst many ordinary Poles, students and intellectuals exploded with student riots in 1968[xxxv], after the banning of Kazimierz Dejmek's Warsaw-based production of Mickiewicz's *Dziady* (with anti-Russian sentiments). The student protests were eventually crushed with excessive police violence. Workers refused to be drawn into the riots. Gomułka appeared to be losing power and his popularity fell further as the economy declined. This, coupled with his bad health, brought about his end. He was replaced in 1970 by Edward Gierek.

The Road to Solidarity

Gierek's period in office began with sweeping reform. A former miner (something he played on in his discussions with striking workers), he appealed to both the Polish people and the Western politicians. His economic and foreign policies were bold and brought about increased wealth and spending power. Tourism, especially of Polish Americans, increased and relationships with Germany improved (including an agreement to allow ethnic Germans to emigrate to Germany). Gierek also expounded his notion of *Polonia*, appealing to members of the Polish diaspora to visit or return to their homeland, start businesses or give donations for the refurbishment and rebuilding of historic sites (like Warsaw's Royal Castle). He also offered pensions and medals to those war veterans in exile. State support was given to farmers but there was also an increase in food imports. A radical reform of agricultural policy and practice was introduced, including pensions and cheap farm machinery. However, the fuel crisis of 1973 caused disruption to the wide programme of reforms and brought economic chaos to Poland.

With the rising discontent and opposition also came an increase in censorship and a return to Soviet style propaganda and greater bonds with Russia. Gierek's reign, like Gomułka's before him had started as a reaction to a decaying government and public discontent. Starting with a flush of optimism it came to increasingly resemble the previous regime. Along with protests and riots at price increases there also came the development of the Committee for the Defence of the Workers (KOR), a fund-raising body for victims of government aggression. During this period of harsh censorship a number of theatrical groups, such as Theatre of the Eight Day, began to embrace more political stances. An underground press and publishing houses appeared as well as an underground education system.

In 1978 the Polish Cardinal Karol Wojtya became Pope John Paul II. The significance for Poland was huge. In 1979 the Pope visited his native land and spoke passionately against totalitarian regimes and about the need for a spiritually free Poland. With the high profile spiritual leadership of a Polish Pope, one who spoke out against the oppressions within his home country, resistance to Gierek's government and Communism increased. The strikes and protests finally led to the Gdansk shipyard strikes and the formation of the Solidarity trade union. However this also led to the imposition of Martial Law in 1981[xxxvi]. Although Martial Law was lifted in 1983, and the communist government limped on it eventually fell with the advent of the Soviet *perestroika* movement. Following free elections in 1989 Poland became a fully independent, democratic country.

Throughout the history of Poland (from 1795) performative arts and theatre have played an important pert in shaping national identity and expressing ‘resistance’ to anti-Polish activities by a number of regimes. Throughout this there has been a marked use of the ‘rural’ as a motif for the expression of national identity. I shall now give a detailed history of some of the movements utilising this motif throughout the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, leading up to a history of such contemporary practitioners as Teatr Wiejski Węgajty. As such we may see this company as continuing a ‘theatrical tradition’.

1.7 Theatre the Rural and Polish Identity

Theatre, Nationality and the Rural

It is possible to trace a relationship between Polish national identity, the rural and the theatre at least as far back as the 19th Century Polish Romantics, when exiled writers such as Mickiewicz, Słowacki and Krasiński began to write about Poland in Polish, particularly in opposition to policies of *Russification* in the Russian-held regions of Poland. Mickiewicz particularly aided this new focus of Polishness through his use of folk motifs in works such as the play *Dziady* (*Forefather's Eve*[xxxvii]) and his epic poem *Pan Tadeusz*. What is particularly interesting about the dramatic works of such writers is that they knew there was no possibility of them being staged in Poland due to censorship. Such was the power of these pieces that even post-1945 Communist governments often found them too uncomfortable to be staged regularly, as can be seen by the closure of Mickiewicz's *Dziady III* in 1968 (Ascherson 1987, 175)[xxxviii]. Mickiewicz also influenced future generations of theatre practitioners with his call for a *Pan-Slavic* theatre that utilised elements of the Slavic rural song, music etc (see Gerould, 1986 and Mickiewicz, 1986). His writings have influenced such theatre groups as Teatr Wiejski Węgajty and Gardzienice.

Stanisław Wyspiański, a painter and playwright whose play *Wesele* (The Wedding) is one of the most important in the Polish canon, was a leading figure in the *Młoda Polska* movement of the late Nineteenth, and early Twentieth Centuries, which was based very much in the expression of nationalism through high culture, philosophy and art. The significance of the movement and Wyspianski's play is the development of *Ludomania,* or *Chłopomania*, a craze for peasant culture. This was particularly focussed on the Górale of the Tatra mountains who came to be seen as an example of *pure* Polish folk culture (see Cwizewicz 2000, Schama 1996, see also Kroh 1999 for a critique of the continued representations of Górale culture). This craze even went as far as some artists and intellectuals marrying peasant girls in a kind of cultural experiment to bring the purity of the peasant together with the Polish intellectual. Despite being married to a peasant, Wyspianski was critical of this fashion. *Wesele*, partly based on the wedding of one of his associates, is a critique of the trend. While utilising peasant dress and folk imagery (and written in rhyming couplets in the style of *szopka*[xxxix]) the play points out how generations of both

intellectuals and peasants had/have consistently failed to support Polish nationalism successfully. The reference to the 1846 peasant uprising of Galicia, where Polish peasants had slaughtered their Polish *Szlachta* landlords less than sixty years previously, critiques the idea of the peasantry being the spirit of Poland which held the flame of liberty burning and which would join with the upper classes and intelligentsia. As well as its political commentary the play is also notable for the detailed representations of 'folk' costumes which are used in the staging. During 2001 the ethnography museum of Kraków housed a special exhibition demonstrating the ethnographic costume design which had been a hallmark of the play for a century. On the official centenary of the play I personally witnessed a number of 'Krakowiak' clad members of the local theatre walking around town!

The works of Mickiewicz and Wyspianski are arguably two of the most important and influential examples of Polish literature and drama, being frequently performed today and being strongly connected with Poland's struggle for independence. Likewise they illustrate the use of rural culture as an aspect of national identity which was to continue into the Twentieth Century. Following the re-establishment of a Polish state following the First World War, it is still possible to note the recurrent use of the rural as a means of inspiration for the artist and the patriot.

1.8 Performance and the New Republic

It is important to remember that as well as the avant-garde theatre that I shall focus on, there is always, has always been, a more mainstream theatre present in Poland. Often it is reactions against such mainstreams which creates the radical theatre. This may be due to a perceived notion that the mainstream is somehow corrupted or de-spiritualised in some way (like the town), thus having no guiding role, no positive function other than a form of spoon-fed entertainment which is concerned only with superficial image and the pursuit of profit (see Peter Brook's term *Deadly Theatre*, Brook 1968). It can also be related to a notion of the mainstream being corrupted as an expression of a national culture. Mickiewicz's dream of a Pan Slavic theatre was, in part, a reaction to the over adoption of western elements of theatre at the expense (and impoverishment?) of a rich source of Slavic

culture (see: Mickiewicz 1986). Likewise, Polish theatre practitioner Leon Schiller (1887-1954) considered one of his goals the…

> Setting a monumental theatre against pseudo-literary, pseudo-Polish and pseudo-realist rubbish so common on the Polish ground, still poisoning the audiences of our "eclectic" theatres - this idea deepened in me and strengthened my aesthetic stance (Kuligowska-Korzienewska 1998, 4).

One way that artists like Schiller attempted such things was to draw inspiration from village practices and music. This would later feed into his productions of the Romantic classics. The fascination with folk practices was connected with the independence movement and a search for a notion of Polish identity. The purifying of an *eclectic* theatre of the foreign elements, thus showing a more *Polish* expression of culture, could arguably be sought through a return to the perceived purity of the village. It should also be considered that there was a particular interest in *Primitivism* within the art-world in Europe and America at this time and we may consider the peasant as being seen as a form of home-grown *primitive*.

From 1917 (prior to Polish independence) Schiller staged plays based on religious folk repertoires. Many of these he wrote himself and adapted historical forms of music and song[xl]. One particular piece, *Pastorałka* (*Christmas Carol*), performed with members of the influential Reduta theatre, was later published as a piece for amateur village groups by the Folk Theatre Institute. This institute was founded by Jędrzej Ciernak, who wished to create and develop an amateur country movement and revive rural rituals along the historic agricultural and pastoral ritual calendar. Such ideas may be seen in the publisher's notes to the piece,

> …thanks to its outstandingly Polish character [...] we shall not only play our Pastorałka each Gody (Yuletide), but also in Polish families it shall commonly be sung and with sincere, pious emotion read out as "the book of the poor", simple, but in its simplicity beautiful, near and dear to the Polish heart (ibid 3).

Arguably the search for a new identity (or rather a return to a perceived one) for the new Poland was instrumental in such work. It is notable that the Folk Theatre Institute was attempting to introduce material created by a writer and artist as a means of revitalising (or recreating?) folk traditions. Here we may note an instance

of almost standardization of folk-material to be served up to the very people who allegedly influenced it in the first place[xli].

The Reduta theatre, founded by Julius Osterwa (1885-1947) in 1922, was strongly influenced by the work of Stanislawski, the Russian director of the Moscow Arts Theatre. Stanislawski's theories on acting (still hugely influential) were based on intense training of both a psychological and physical nature. His approach saw acting as a way of life. Likewise, Osterwa's Reduta was based on practices of intense training and a communal lifestyle[xlii] and a notion of *Polish Citizen Theatre* where the role of the actor was that of service to the public and the nation. Osterwa, a devout Catholic, believed that theatre should be seen as a spiritual act of creation that embraced values of spiritual, moral, social and patriotic nature. He later wrote of his plans to establish two branches of artistic-religious orders of actors, living in a monastic style and serving God and the Nation through the practice of theatre. The projects never came to be (Braun 1996, 136-7). Schiller and Osterwa were to continue their influential roles in Polish theatre and society throughout World War II.

1.9 Theatre of war: cultural weapons & artistic "resistance".

Theatre and Performance under the Nazis.

Following military occupation in 1939 the Nazis utilised another weapon against the Poland, the degradation of culture. As well as the extermination of their intelligensia (historically linked with nationalism) Poles were forbidden education (above the level of primary and technical). Libraries and museums were closed and cultural and artistic activities were outlawed. The Nazis noted the connection between artistic performance and national identity, "Because of their great national significance, theatres, cinemas and cabarets should be kept under tight control and on the lowest possible level" (Hubner 1992, 112)

There were, however, certain types of entertainment Poles could attend with the Nazis blessing. A 1940 circular from the Propaganda and Education Section of the General Government stated that Poles were only allowed *primitive entertainment*. Work was to be found for performers to prevent intellectual circles from engaging in *political conspiracy* and potentially inciting activities. Only performances of theatre

and music that were solely for entertainment, not likely to provoke thought or discussion, were permitted,

> Poles have no right to produce any serious drama or opera… Where Polish artists are concerned, no limits are to be set on the vulgarity and sexuality of the programs. No performances of any kind imbued with the spirit of Polishness are to be tolerated (Hubner 1992, 112).

The notion of *culture* was being used as a target and as a weapon. The degradation of Polish arts was a tactic aimed at degrading the culture and identity of Poland and the Polish. However the Polish underground fought against such tactics. As well as organising a highly complex and efficient system of underground education and universities, cultural activities such as theatrical and musical performances were organised in a variety of venues including private houses. This included acting schools as part of the Clandestine School of Drama. This was exceedingly dangerous and potentially fatal under Nazi laws.

As well as the underground performances the Polish Actors Union (ZASP), in association with the underground authorities called a boycott of venues and work which was connected to the Nazi declaration. Attendance of the *official* (Nazi sanctioned) cinemas and theatres was also boycotted, occasionally performances were sabotaged with tear gas, destruction of equipment etc. Apart from those actors who performed under the orders of the resistance, anyone who broke the boycott on work, especially those working directly for the Nazis, were sentenced by underground courts for punishments such as public humiliation, flogging and head-shaving. Braun (1996, 15) describes the boycott as

> A phenomenon of singular importance in the history of Polish theatre... [which] helped define the ethos of Polish theatre artists as highly aware citizens and patriots, ready to undertake sacrifices for their country (15).

Hubner notes that despite the boycott the theatres continued to function and were attended by members of the Polish public (it was forbidden for Germans to attend Polish theatres), including many members of the resistance (117). Eventually the boycott failed. It would seem that members of the public felt it more important to go to the theatre as a way of withstanding the Nazi occupation. Trying to lead as normal a life as possible may have been seen as a more positive act of resistance.

Performance under the Russians

The situation under Soviet control differed from that of German control. According to Braun (1996, 21) Polish theatres under the Soviets were considered some of the last bastions of Polish expression, surrounded by Soviet control and censorship. Whereas Polish Theatre repertoire under the Nazis forbade anything that reminded people of the Polish identity, those under Soviet control were able to perform a limited repertoire of serious shows (although subject to political censorship by the Soviets). While not necessarily being used as an anti-Polish tool, as with the Nazis, Braun suggests that the tolerance of Polish theatre was part of a "false façade of cultural life" and eventually became a potential indoctrination tool for Soviet propaganda. Here was where the struggle for the theatre as a form of national expression, as opposed to a censored element of Soviet control, began to develop, which was to continue beyond WWII.

The period of the inter-war demonstrated the connection between theatre, performance and ideas of nationality and a further use of the image of the rural. It is possible to note that an emphasis on nationality and identity occurs during a period when the question of identity and ethnicity is at a vital stage. Likewise the actions of the occupying forces of Nazism and Communism illustrate an awareness of the potential power of theatre as a political tool, and a generator of national identity. That theatre appears to have been an important part of the resistance movement demonstrates its potential for expressing identity of self and opposition against the *Other*. With the post-war Soviet occupation of Poland art and performance would continue to be tools of ideology.

From a theatrical point of view, the Stalinist era introduced greater censorship and the imposition of an aesthetic form known as *Social Realism*. Former radicals of Polish theatre, like Schiller, embraced this movement (finding they could not continue with Romantic works and other styles of presentation) while artists like Tadeusz Kantor challenged it both theatrically and visually, with his painting. However, there were other happenings within the traditional side of performance, particularly related to the villages and the social climate of the time.

1.10 Post-war performance: "Fake-Lore" and Censorship.

"Rural" Performance under the Soviets

The expulsions of the Germans and the deportation of the Ukrainian/ Lemko population had a damaging effect on traditional lifestyles. Forms of music and performance, like carolling, declined and, in many cases, vanished from certain areas[xliii]. My own interviews with Lemko and Ukrainian survivors of *Akcja Wisła* revealed the decline in certain practices. In many Lemko villages I was told carolling stopped after the war with the deportations, "Nobody was thinking of doing it, there was nobody left to do it". Likewise the political climate made expression of certain cultures difficult. A Ukrainian woodcarver who had been a caroller and *szopka* puppeteer before the war found he was unable to continue afterwards (prior to being deported), "It wasn't a good time to be doing it, being Ukrainian". Likewise, expression of Ukrainian culture by non-Ukrainians was not always possible. A female singer spoke of having a repertoire of Polish language and Ukrainian language songs but not being able to sing the Ukrainian ones after the war, particularly at festivals. She began to translate her Ukrainian repertoire into Polish. Even now some communities are wary about singing in non-Polish languages in mixed company.

It was not just the minority societies where practices like carolling suffered. The post-war authorities actually banned the practice under the banner of it encouraging begging and religiosity (we may also consider the potential military aspect of such a ban during a time when there was significant insurgency). The ban was not lifted until 1956, and in many areas the practice did not reactivate. However, informants tell me that in areas like the southern mountainous regions the practice continued unabated due to the remoteness of the villages and the difficulty in policing it. Professor Anna Szyfer (Poznan University) believes that the ban was not necessarily implemented very strictly (personal communication) although Cieśla-Reinfussowa writes that practitioners were fined (1995, 167).

During the late 1940's and 1950's there was a large development of musical folklore ensembles, such as Mazowsze and The State Ensemble Śląsk. Following a Soviet pattern (many of these ensembles were "government approved") these ensembles built on the early ensembles of the inter-war period. With a visual

emphasis on dances and colourful 'traditional' costumes they transferred the performance of music and dance from the village onto the stage. A circuit of festivals was also established. Czekanowska (1990, 122) points out that some aspects of these ensembles have been criticised, such as the inclusion of inauthentic elements and occasionally the utilisation of practices and instruments that had actually died out, as well as artificial stage effects and lighting. Likewise, the emphasis on ensembles produced a more standardised (and occasionally codified) style, which were actually the opposite of the individualised performances and styles of 'authentic' village performance, inspiring the term "fake-lore".

Jan Bernad, a leading singer, actor and researcher of East European singing, points out that this development also affected the old ways of performing.

> It has been noticed, that women born in the twenties sing in the traditional manner, and those who were born just before the war have lost this ability. This is because after the war records were played on the radio of "folk" ensembles, like Śląsk, or Mazowsze, who sung with "nice" voices. Instructors would come to villages and say: open your mouth wide, chest out, stand erect, don't lean. And, when the grandmas went to a contest, they organised a course of bowing for them (Pawlowski 1999).

Arguably the *new* style of the traditional became the tradition to some extent. As I will examine in Chapter 3, this practice is still influential.

Czekanowska also points out certain positive aspects of the ensemble movement, not least the renewed interest in folklore and village traditions (albeit in a sanitised form) and the documentation and preservation of many dying practices. Likewise, an ensemble often became a focus point of pride for a village, workplace or area where it was based, often providing chances for travel and cultural contact at home and abroad. In this way they can be seen as having an important role in Polish society (1990, 123). Hann also points out that such ensembles allowed expression of creativity and became a focus for quality. They also allowed village practices (and symbols of national identity) to be sanitised and de-contextualised from the more religious contexts in which they might normally be performed (1995, 61). Here we might see the Communist authorities utilising a practice, which began under a more nationalistic programme, as a tool for their own ideological programme; the image of the peasant being reworked from the *pure Pole* of Polish nationalism to the peasant worker of Communist legend[xliv].

Performance in the Gomułka Years

The post-Stalinist period saw an increase in developments away from the Socialist Realist school of thought. New experimentation saw new styles, although strong censorship still existed. Student theatre became particularly noted and experimental. Being a non-professional form it was less constrained by a need for revenue and became a haven for radical experimentation and political voice. Two particular styles of theatre became prevalent, the Polish Visual Theatre and the Polish Staging Theatre. The former developed under artists like Tadeusz Kantor and reflected the influence of non-theatrical arts like painting (of which many exponents were skilled). Staging Theatre developed from exponents like Schiller, influenced by radical forms of theatre theory of the early Twentieth Century, like Edward Gordon Craig and Stanislawski. Over the following two decades a form of theatre developed which came to be seen as synonymous with Polish theatre (see Cioffi 1996). It was a form of theatre that was multi-layered and relied on strong visuals. This had developed as a means of evading censorship of the written word. Amongst the new practitioners, one of the most influential was Jerzy Grotowski whose influence on contemporary Polish theatre is immense.

1.11 Grotowski, Gardzienice and ethno-theatre.

Grotowski, Poor Theatre, "Active Culture" and a return to "source".

Previously known as a political activist for progressive Communism, Grotowski studied theatre and began working towards changing the accepted concepts of the art. He became less political and started working in a small theatre in 1959 (Theatre of Thirteen Rows), implementing a regime of strict physical and psychological training amongst his actors. The results of his work gained huge international acclaim and became hugely influential within and without Poland (although primarily the interest came more from outside Poland). The early phases of Grotowski's Theatre Laboratory , the so-called *Poor Theatre* (Grotowski 1968), put emphasis on the work and physicality of the actor. It also highlighted a search for a spiritual relationship between the figure of the actor and the audience. The performer

was supposedly seeking to commit the *total act*, sacrificing themselves for the spectator. This supposedly comes about through hard training and a stripping of the mundane aspects of the supposed self in an attempt to reveal the true self of the actor. This was the basis of Grotowski's notion of the *Holy Actor* (Grotowski 1968, 43). The political implications of such work being obvious, the theories of Grotowski became influential to several generations of radical theatre practitioners world-wide, directly influencing groups like Gardzienice and Węgajty. (see also: Braun 1996, Cioffi 1996, Schechner 1985. Schechner & Wolford 1997).

Already highly regarded for his productions throughout the 1960's Grotowski declared that he was unable to continue with conventional theatre work following his final 'play' *Apocalypsis cum Figuris*. This work allegedly developed a style of performance which breached barriers between performers and audiences. Grotowski felt that this work had begun to illustrate that the generally accepted relationship of *performer* and *spectator* was a problematic one as it was possible to blur these distinctions. When a member of the audience interacted spontaneously with the performance (and the 'performers' watched) could one still be considered as *either* performer or spectator. Another aspect of Grotowski's work involved the realisation of the importance of the work as a process rather than a finished product. A piece of work was just as, if not more, important during the creation process, the changes and developments, than the final performance.

Grotowski began to explore something called *para-theatre*, or what he termed *Active Culture.* This in itself was a reaction against the notion of a passive audience being served up a show, the audience would now be encouraged to become active in this creation of culture. Cioffi explains *Active Culture*,

> He felt that society (both capitalist and Communist) was set up in such a way as to force people to become either producers or consumers of artistic products. These roles degrade both the artist and the recipient of the cultural product. The artist…because he is forced to produce products either to the needs of the artistic market… or on the orders of the state. The recipient is degraded because he is made into a consumer rather than a witness and co-participant in the artistic creation (1996, 92).

In 1970 Grotowski declared his aim to follow a new course, experimenting with interactions between performers and audiences which were based on spontaneity and communion, rather than coaxed interactions which he felt did not work. He began

holding workshops with small numbers of students and interested parties. This branched into large gatherings and workshops, education programmes, lectures etc. Many foreigners and eventually large numbers of young Poles (mainly students) attended these events, also known as the *Special Project*[xlv]. The training often took place in remote areas, like the group's premises in a small village called Brzezinka (40 kilometres from Wrocław, where the company was based). Training took a very physical form and included long runs in forests, singing, working in silence. Amongst these students was a young Wacław Sobaszek. This work was to influence the future Teatr Wiejski Węgajty (for further information on *Active Culture* see Kolankiewicz 1978).

As well as students, intellectuals and theatre practitioners from within and without Poland attended these events. The influence on both Polish student theatre (and other groups) and foreign theatre groups was immense. Cioffi (92) cites Elżbieta Matynia writing about the extent of this influence in other areas,

> It is worth remembering the immensely mobilising role of Grotowski in Polish intellectual life in the last years of the decade [the seventies]. And the kind of example he gave others: transcending, going outside the patterns of work, life, and creation for the educated in our culture. (Cioffi, 92)

Following the para-theatre phase, Grotowski began to study and research what he called *Theatre of Sources*. This involved researching (perceived) ancient forms of cultural practice in various communities (occasionally bringing entire communities to his place of work for students to work with them). His search for *essential* techniques and universals is reminiscent of Eugenio Barba's work in *Theatre Anthropology* (see Barba 1979, Barba & Saverese 1991, Hastrup 1996). However, the term *Theatre of Sources* meant less about a source of theatre, than an idealised *source of self,* as if by finding the *essential* of performance and culture one might find the *essential* in one's self, by (re) connecting with one's roots or *source* (Grotowski 1987).

Although Grotowski left Poland with the declaration of Martial law and disbanded his company in 1984[xlvi] the period leading up to the imposition of Martial Law saw some theatre groups become highly politicised and frequently risk police intervention at their performances (Cioffi 1996, especially Ch. 4). During Martial Law the actors union, ZASP, called a boycott of state run theatres (which also

affected television). Like the wartime boycott, unofficial underground performances took place, always under threat from the police. There were, however, other forms of theatre which were active in a subtly political way. In particular one which worked with minorities and *Others*, the theatre of Gardzienice.

Gardzienice

Allain points out that as Gardzienice often worked with minorities or marginalised groups the encouragement to perform their culture (perhaps one that had been suppressed by the authorities in the past) could be seen as a political act,

> Gardzienice choose to emphasise the cultural values of these meetings rather than the encouragement of political identity, though the two are inseparable… Gardzienice's rural activities assumed a political, anti-authoritarian nature by working with such people on the periphery of society (39).

The importance of Gardzienice is related to both their practice and their presence in Poland during the Martial Law period. With both Grotowski and members of Theatre of the Eighth Day abroad (having emigrated)[xlvii] or working underground and Kantor's Cricot 2 theatre often touring abroad, Braun considers Gardzienice to have been the only high level theatre research centre active during the 1980's which maintained a creative experimental programme.

Gardzienice Theatre Association was founded by Włodzimierz Staniewski, who previously helped co-ordinate the para-theatrical events for Grotowski's *Special Project* in a small southern village called Gardzienice. Influenced by Grotowski, Staniewski developed Gardzienice Theatre on similar lines to Theatre Laboratory, with a small group of performers living communally in hard conditions and undertaking a demanding routine of training and exercise. The group also began to study old songs, dances etc from villagers throughout Poland, particularly those from minority groups and communities, such as the Lemko and Old Believers (a sect of the Russian Orthodox Church). Staniewski considered such groups to be illustrative of a *native* culture (rather than *folk*) and the uncovering of these cultures was a reaction against government sponsored watering down (and spoon-feeding) of *folk* music and dance (with groups like Mazowsze). Two particular aspects of the groups work were the field research and the gatherings. Allain explains that the group often

travelled into villages and sought out songs, music and dances (as well as stories etc). These materials were later incorporated into the group's work. Such practices were adopted by a number of other groups and individuals, including TWW. This kind of research, Allain notes (54), was similar to Grotowski's search for *source theatre*. The Gatherings involved a meeting of the villagers and the performers, engaging in an exchange of material as a form of social interaction and celebration. Food and drink were supplied (usually by the villagers). As well as performance from members of the group, villagers would also be encouraged (sometimes they did not need to be) to take part with singing etc.

While Gardzienice have not continued with this form of work, groups like Teatr Węgajty have, It is partly this idea of the theatre work as a form of 'empowerment' which I wish to explore in relation to TWW. That groups like TWW are involved in such work may be considered an effect of the wide influence of Gardzienice and Grotowski's *Theatre of Sources*. This is particularly evident in the case of TWW, who were not only heavily influenced by Gardzienice (as well as Grotowski) but also worked alongside the company in the early years of TWW. TWW were later joined by two members of Gardzienice.

1.12 A Brief History of the Węgajty Theatre

In the early 1980's the Sobaszeks came to Olsztyn from Warsaw. With some friends they formed the Interdisciplinary Centre for Creative Exploration, *Pracownia*, a multi-disciplinary arts group whose activities included activities unauthorized by the Communist authorities; theatrical and musical gatherings and the circulation of certain restricted literature. Mr Sobaszek had previously been studying art history at Warsaw University but had also become involved with the Teatr Laboritorium of Jerzy Grotowski, taking part in both the Special Projects and the Theatre of Sources. Wacek explains that the group's insistence on resisting official censorship, staging events without official permission etc. was considered suspiciously by the authorities. Eventually the authorities closed their premises under the guise of renovation and then did not re-open them. The group was offered space in the local 'Culture House' (a government controlled community arts centre). However, this would have brought them directly under the supervision and control of

the authorities. The decision was made to move out of the city. The social situation and population movement of the 1970's, amongst the ethnic German populace, meant that there were a number of empty farmhouses in the Warmia-Mazuria district. A site was found on the outskirts of the village of Węgajty, where the current theatre now exists.

The *Pracownia* period, and the subsequent relocation to Węgajty took place during the time of the Solidarity campaign. Tensions and suspicions were running high. It is perhaps not surprising therefore that in the initial Węgajty period, the authorities were suspicious about this potentially subversive entity out in the woods. The company director speaks of being considered a potential drug dealer, amongst other things, and of the local Police Chief declaring his ambition to "demolish the theatre and plough it into the ground!" Press coverage of the group's work was non-existent during this period. The group and its associates considered it an important event when a local newspaper included a small notice of their work in 1989.

The majority of *Pracownia* members did not wish to move to the village and the group effectively disbanded. The Sobaszeks chose to move to this remote farmhouse and, for a while, lived alone organising meetings and artistic gatherings, theatre workshops etc. The work brought them into contact with people from around Poland and occasionally new members. They later were joined by Wolfgang Niklaus and his Polish wife, Małgorzata (who had both been working with Gardzienice). By 1992 they had been joined by Serhij Petryczenko and Nelya Lubyantseva (who adopted the name "Marika", by which she is referred to throughout this work) from Ukrainian and (Polish) Monika Paśnik (who later married Serhij) who had all been introduced to TWW through workshops and performances (se Kocemba-Żembrowska's *Foreigner in the Village*, 2018). While these are the core members of the group at present there have also been several other members at various times throughout the history of the theatre, some of whom still participate regularly. Likewise, there are a number of students who regularly attend workshops and seminars at the theatre (see individual and joint works of Hasiuk and Kocemba-Żebrowska 2018-2020).

The first play performed by the group, in 1988, was *Historie Vincenza* ("Vincenz's Stories"), Hutsul - Jewish stories based on the book *Na wysokiej*

połoninie, by Stanisław Vincenz. This piece utilised music and songs from the Hutsul village communities of the Carpathians as well as Jewish tunes, village instruments (such as the *Ligawka*, a long wooden advent horn; fig.2) and puppets inspired by traditional *szopka* puppets[xlviii]. In March 1992 they premiered *Gospoda ku Wiecznemu Pokojowi* ("Inn of Eternal Peace"), based on the Czesław Miłosz novel, *Dolina Issy* ("The Issa Valley"). This work, being based in a village in the Polish Lithuanian borderlands, utilised old songs and a staging aesthetic that suggested wooden huts and a village tavern (using barrels and wooden tables etc). 1996 saw an adaptation of *The Canterbury Tales*. This piece made a greater use of medieval music, reflecting the increased interest by members of Schola (see below). My own entry into the field in 2000 led to the creation of a multi-lingual piece based on *The Kalevala*. 'Research expeditions' were frequently held during this period, in a similar vein to those of Gardzienice. In 1990 the first Easter carolling expeditions to villages in the Suwałki region (north Poland), which have become an annual activity, were undertaken. In 1995 a Christmas carolling expedition (Kolęda) was undertaken in Węgajty village itself. Carolling expeditions to Suwałki and the Carpathians have become regular fixtures of the group's work.

The move to Węgajty, while being seen as a move to allow greater freedom, also raised awareness of the group and generated some different kinds of attention (including more suspicion from the authorities). The local villagers were apparently unsure of these *in-comers*, not sure who they were or what they wanted, particularly because of the mixture of languages being spoken. Apparently an early rumour in the village was that these outsiders were *Jews* and the locals sometimes referred to the theatre as *the Synagogue.* The Kolęda expedition to Węgajty village was seen as a vital point in the relationships between the theatre and the village. Having undertaken research in the village amongst some of the Warmiak families the group undertook a 14-hour carolling expedition around the village. Sobaszek later referred to the relationship with the villagers, "Our bond with the inhabitants of Węgajty is a permanent one". (Kuligowska - Korzeniewska, Pg 5). Erdmute Sobaszek also pointed out that prior to the Kolęda expedition there was no contact with the people of the village.

Around 1995 there occurred a major division in the group when the several of the members began to explore the theatre of Liturgical drama and old Church music. This developed into a musical research and performance group known as *Schola,* which has been very successful, producing and performing several pieces, touring extensively in Poland and abroad and collaborating with international groups. The Sobaszeks (and other members) continued to work with traditional *village music*[xlix] and dances, carolling etc. under the title of *Projekt Terenowy*. Although the two parts of the group worked together as Teatr Wiejski Węgajty, continuing to do so when performing the old repertoire, they have effectively developed as two different entities, although both utilise the space of the theatre building. By the end of my fieldwork period it seemed that no new theatrical work would be done between both groups.



Fig. 1: Węgajty Theatre's carolling figures (including Szymel hobby horse), Vevchani, North Macedonia, January 1996. (photo: Trev Hill)



Fig. 2: *Ligawka* Advent Horn (used by TWW in performances & carolling) (Photo: Joanna Zbiegien)

Chapter Two

2.1 Węgajty; Village of Theatre

Węgajty Village

Warmia and Mazuria is a northern district (wojwodia) of Poland. Until 1945 it was part of German East Prussia (Ost Preusse). It was an ethnically mixed area with a large German population but a significant Polish minority and a Jewish community. The post-war period saw many of the ethnic Germans displaced to Germany and the area largely resettled by Poles from (former Polish) Ukrainian and Lithuanian territories, as well as some 'Ukrainians' relocated under Akcja Wisła. Twenty kilometres from Olsztyn, the capital of the Warmia and Mazury, is the little village of Węgajty. Węgajty is approximately 650 years old. As with many of the villages in this area, it has seen (Old) Prussians, Poles and Germans residing there. Prior to, and following, the war the village was seen as a "German" or a "Warmiak" village (German speaking Warmians, inhabitants often of German descent). Currently it is inhabited by a number of families who have German heritage, some of whom can trace their recent ancestry back to specific places in Germany. In the last thirty years a number of these 'original' inhabitants have left, many to Germany, and more newcomers have moved into the village who are of (ethnic) Polish descent. The 'incomers' who have been longest established speak of how the *old Warmiaks* were nice people and kind to them when they first came to the village. Many of the inhabitants are land-owning peasants. Some have good jobs in Olsztyn and have moved out of the town to live in the village. Although there is little work in the area, and farming is not a prosperous industry at present, some people may travel to work in neighbouring villages or perhaps Olsztyn to jobs in factories or the service sector. On the surface Węgajty village is much like other villages in this area. There is a shop, run by the Sołtys, and a number of houses. There is a *remiza* (garage for the village fire-brigade, housing the fire-wagon; fig. 3) but no telephone box. An edition of National Geographic describes Węgajty as having 162 inhabitants (37 families), no bus-stop[1], no church, no library and no bar; however, what it does have is a theatre (Koziara, 2001).

Teatr Wiejski Węgajty: a description

Teatr Wiejski Węgajty, the Village Theatre of Węgajty, is situated about a kilometre from the main village. The buildings are surrounded on three sides by forest (containing wild animals and timber workers) and, within the next few years, may be almost fully enclosed. As such, it can only be reached by travelling the unsurfaced road from Węgajty (fig. 4) or the network of (unlit) pathways through the forest. In winter, if the snows are heavy, the snowploughs cannot get down the narrow road to the theatre and so it cannot be reached by car. The Sobaszeks, who live in the house next to the theatre building, often has to leave their car at a neighbouring farm during the winter and walk between there and their home. The theatre building is a converted barn (fig. 5), next to the old farm-house where Mr Wacław (Wacek) Sobaszek lives with his German wife, Erdmute (Mutka), and, until recently, their two teenage sons.

The name of Teatr Wiejski Węgajty is connected with both their location and theatrical practice and is a homage to an earlier practitioner of theatre in villages, Ewa Benesz (director of *Village Theatre of Ciechanowiec*). The theatre's name is not really representative of its location. It is as far from the main village as it is possible to be without being in the next one. It is actually based close to the borders of three different villages. This is fitting when one considers the group's interest in what they refer to as "Borderlands", *where a 'meeting of cultures' is apparent*. This may not actually be a geographical borderland (but often it is). Borderlands are the shifting points between regions and cultures where it is not always possible to define who is what and what is whose. *Borderlands* is also a useful concept to describe Węgajty Theatre itself. Wacław Sobaszek was quite taken with a quotation I read him from Stefan Otwinowski's play *Easter* (in Polish: *Wielkanoc*) which seemed to some up the shifting identity of TWW and its work,

> **Stanisław**: In case we need you, where can we find you?
> **Twardowski**: For the time being, I live in Borderlands.
> **Ewa**: Is that on the Otwock line?
> **Twardowski**: No, it's on the moveable line. Between one forest and another. Sometimes between Warsaw and the woods. (Cited in Filipowicz 2000, 68. Translation by Halina Filipowicz).

However, it is not only the "Borderlands" where Teatr Węgajty base their identity, it is also in "the village".



Fig. 3: Węgajty Village (showing the *remiza*)



Fig. 4: Węgajty Village Theatre



Fig 5: The Road to the Theatre. (Photos: Trev Hill)

2.2 Conceptualising the Village

The Village in the Theatre's Practice.

The environments in which TWW operate range from urban theatres and festivals to reasonably prosperous villages and impoverished villages that have often endured less than idyllic existences. In such villages where TWW has worked a great deal, and has established itself, it has attempted to re-create, and has occasionally replaced, certain historic practices whilst creating a particular relationship with the villagers and the village. This relationship may be seen to fluctuate between a form of romanticism and a form of social reality. This fluctuating relationship reflects the role of the village in the theatre's practice. The village may be seen as both a conceptual tool and a sociological aspect of the group's work. Bogusławska (1998a) notes this reality, commenting that the work of the theatre is researched through reading ethnographic texts and by exploring a literary map of *the village*. This includes such collections of songs and musical materials as Oskar Kolberg, and such novelists and poets as Czesław Miłosz and Stanisław Vincenz, both of whose works inspired TWW theatre pieces. As such, the village may be seen as a concept created through ethnography and literature as well as being a physical place where the theatre (both building and practice) is based, the members reside and where the audiences are found or to where they come. It is also a place where the source of data is searched for (and found).

We have noted the historical use of the image of the rural to suggest a form of 'pure' ethnicity and 'national identity'. However, the focus of TWW on both Borderlands and the village do not suggest a notion of 'purity' so much as a notion of hybridity, arguably a 'pureness (or "naturalness") of hybridity'. The materials utilised and portrayed by TWW come from a variety of sources and cultures. As such, the image they portray can be seen as a conceptual village of inclusiveness. All cultures are to be found in this theatrical village; the Jewish *klezmorim*, the Polish farmer, the Lithuanian woodsman etc. The theatrical village stands outside time but within a period before the multiculturalism of Poland was wiped away by Nazism and Stalinism. In one way the village is a link to a past but at the same time, it is a link with the present for fading cultures. Here is where living fragments of the past

reside currently (and are still occasionally practised). This idealised concept of village is both a tool of the theatre and a focus point for (potential) audiences. To some, the theatre may represent a store of village lore (a village of the mind) as well as an actual village.

The village may be considered both a conceptual and physical opposition to the town. The town destroys village culture, absorbs and homogenises. The village provides the theatre with an identity, despite most of the members not being (originally) ruralites. The theatre has, to a point, crafted itself as a village entity through methods that go beyond merely locating itself within a village. It has also become a focus point for people within and without the physical village(s). The aim of the company is, by their own admission, to create meetings and contacts with people and to create meeting points between individual people, groups and cultures. The work often appears to explore the co-habitation and possible symbiosis of different groups. The company's identity, as the name suggests, is strongly bound with a notion of *the village*, as both a concept and a location. Not only do members of the group live in a village (or rather in several villages) but also the source of much of their artistic work can be traced to village practices. A significant body of their work is carried out in villages throughout Poland. Thus, we may consider that the *village* is not only a physical place but also a place of the mind. It is important, therefore, to examine the place of the theatre within its own village and those in which it works. Before this, however, we should examine differing notions of 'the village' in differing forms of literature., including those of anthropology.

Poles Apart? Conflicting Images of the Town and the Village

Considering the relationship between the theatre members and the village, I have commented about possible links between artistic expression and national identities. It is important to examine views about the village (as well as those of the town by the village and 'anti-urbanites') within Poland. I shall pay particular attention to the image of the village in Polish national identity. This will help illustrate the relationship between the village and certain identity crafting. I shall also explore the notion of village and town being polarised concepts. Although it is one I am uncomfortable with it is certainly one which in notable both within literature and in

everyday conversation both in the town and the village. It also is influential to the work of such groups as TWW. During my fieldwork I encountered conversations where the village and the town were expressed as 'pure' entities, however when pressed most informants admitted that each contained elements of the other and, as such, a 'pure village' (without urban elements) or town was impossible. However, these concepts were still utilised, often as a form of criticism against the *Other* (ruralite or urbanite) or even as a self-critique, as seen previously.

Notions of Town vs Village

The image of the rural village is strong within Polish imagination. Artistically and politically, it has been used in conjunction with notions of national identity. The image of the village and the countryside has long been a major fixture in Romantic nationalism. In Poland this can be traced at least as far back as the early Polish ethnologist/ folklorist, Zorian Dołęga Chodakowski who forwarded the notion of the *pure* Polish peasant (see: Brock 1992, pp 1-22). We have previously noted Mickiewicz's role in forging a Polish identity grounded in an old rural lifestyle and ideas of *Młoda Polska*, which influenced the *ludomania*, folk-mania, of the late 19th Century. Even today, the image of Górale Highlanders is used to sell beer, butter etc as a symbol of purity and *traditional* quality and values. As Jackson points out, "The peasant has become the repository of all virtues of man throughout the course of history" (1966, 44)

Raymond Williams (1973, 9) considers the image of the countryside to the urbanite is like riding an escalator whilst looking back, trying to find Eden (something I will argue is fundamental to how the work of the theatre is accepted by some of its audience and collaborators). I suggest that to some urbanites, brought up with an education stressing the rural essence of Poland, the countryside may seem an alien world. This may generate a need to make contact with this world, although often at a safe distance (like a holiday… or perhaps a theatre group). Likewise, those who have been brought up in the city but have had family connections, and perhaps childhood memories of the countryside, may seek to reconnect with these 'roots'. With this in mind it is perhaps not surprising that there is a continuing history of town-dwellers buying property in villages, often as summer houses (although, as my

informants often pointed out, *They run back to Warsaw as soon as winter sets in!*). In some cases, these urban in-comers may be accepted but there is also a certain suspicion of them amongst many villagers. This is partly an apparent fear of their motives and financial power (as I shall examine below). However, other reasons may be the apparent attitude of some urbanites towards their rural counterparts, "These town people come here and buy houses and they think they are better than us. They come into our village and look down on us"[li]. These tensions, related to perceived power, may be further demonstrated in the changing image of the countryside and the apparent degradation of the countryside by the urban.

Nagengast points out how the urbanite's image of the countryside in Poland has shifted throughout history, according to how it suits them to see it (1991, 8). At certain times, particularly under socialism, the farmer/peasant might be seen as the embodiment of freedom and resistance because of perceived independence from state control. Owning private land could be seen as symbolically possessing Polish earth and keeping it from Soviet control. Farmers could be seen as the guardians of Polish soil. Citing Raymond Williams, Nagengast suggests etic notions of the rural shift between positive and negative. In times of stress, the rural becomes the essential core to notions of *traditional* (8). However in easier times steadfastness and traditional may be seen as stubbornness, and 'old-fashioned-ness'. The bastion of tradition can be seen as a bastion of ignorance and backwardness. This image is presumably reinforced by the lack of education in many areas of rural Poland. Stadtmuller (2000, 28) notes that by the late 1990's only one-third of the nation's population over the age of 15 had completed full basic education and only 7 per cent had undertaken higher education. This reflects Hann's findings in his fieldwork in Bieszczady where few of the villagers had completed full education and nobody had gone to university (personal communication)[lii].

It is possible to consider Dunn's dichotomies (based on Ladislav Holy) between capitalism and socialism (1999, 128) as applicable to those of the rural village and the urban town.

Village	***Town***
Backwardness	Modernity, Civilisation
Stasis	Dynamism, movement
Inadaptability	Flexibility
Age	Youth
Drabness	Colourfulness
Deprivation	Satisfaction of wants
Obedience	Critical self-reflection
Collectivism	Individualism
Gifts	Sales
Personalization relationships based on 'connections'	Impersonal relations based on rational calculations

My personal research shows that both ruralites and urbanites may hold such notions. Often young people in villages spoke of their desire to embrace what they saw as a more *modern* lifestyle, including CDs and Internet, which they saw as being synonymous with the town. However, such viewpoints may also have alternative interpretations. What might be seen as *collectivism* may be reinterpreted as *community* as opposed to the selfishness and isolation of the *individualism* of the town. Likewise, the colourfulness of the town may be seen as superficiality whereas the drabness may be seen as a form of simplicity and honesty. The duality of these labels may also be demonstrated in a way that critiques notions of modernity. Dunn illustrates what is often considered as old-fashioned and inflexible is actually more suitable to the perceived methods of modernity. The works of Dunn and of Creed (1999) demonstrate how villagers and factory workers may both address modernity through seemingly modern applications of old fashioned (traditional?) practices (such as voting communist in elections). Thus they may be seen to be critiquing notions of modernity and tradition as being total polarities and also demonstrating a resistance to their own degradation at the hands of the *Moderns*.

It is apparent that outsiders impose certain negative views of the rural (which are sometimes adopted by members of the emic populace, often the young). Such notions and labels may also be negative while appearing positive. Just as

Romanticism imposes over-simplistic views of positive rural attributes, Modernist views of the rural may also reflect a similar simplistic misreading. This may be illustrated in the neo-liberal economists seriously mis-calculating Polish farmers' reactions to shock-therapy economics in the post-1989 reforms (Zbierski-Salameh, 1999). Their notion of the uncomplaining, hard-working and enduring farmer who would willingly suffer the hardships of the supposed transition appears to have been as misguided as that of the romantic ideals cited by Jackson above (although it is interesting how the 'traditional' farmer was used to spearhead the 'modern' economic programme)..

Urban 'appropriation' of the Village.

As previously noted, reactions to urbanites moving into the village can vary. The initial suspicion of Węgajty residents to the theatre is comparable with that of the man who felt urbanites looked down on villagers (above). The practice of urbanites buying holiday homes is by no means new and can be traced back at least as far as the late 19th century and the *ludomania* (or *chłopomania*) which Wyspiański observed in South Eastern Poland. This interest in the rural by the urbanite poses interesting questions which are relevant to notions of identity and the work of TWW. We might consider that the urban has a long 'tradition' of exploiting the rural (or an image of the rural) for its own needs (as Nagengast suggests). This may include the urban using the rural as a positive aspect of their own identity or turning the rural into a form of *Other* in either a positive or negative way (as it suits them). Such practices may be seen in the activities of tourists wanting an exotic holiday amongst the Górale (listening to Highland music played by 'traditionally' clad musicians), anthropologists and ethnologists (perhaps wishing to find themselves a niche in the discipline) and even theatre companies.

Considering Nagengast's theory that the image of the rural is prone to urban subjectivity it is important to consider how some urbanites might choose to see the village. As well as the negative elements listed above, it is possible to see the village as an escape from the town, a cleaner and healthier place to live and a freer, more relaxed pace of life. It can be a place where one might be able to pursue dreams and business opportunities. It can also be a cheaper house than in the city. Of course it

might also be the place where some people choose to work, like ecologists, agricultural students from the town etc[liii]. This is not to suggest that it is necessarily a negative process. In many cases, particularly around Olsztyn, such incomers had brought new ideas, such as ecological farming techniques, sensitive Eco-tourism and organisation skills which could promote local cottage industries (although some villagers also learned these at college etc). As we have seen with TWW, a revised identity and potential financial income (at least for some villagers) was brought to the village. Likewise some incomers integrated fairly successfully into the local landscape as fellow farmers. As one female farmer told me, "Once the people in the village started seeing me as a fellow farmer and not as some stupid tourist they began to trust me more".

Possibly some urbanites accept the idea of the polarities because it creates a drive to make connections with the village; it is their escape, it is also possible for some to exploit the desire of other urbanites to escape the town by opening holiday camps and adventure holiday centres. However, that they are bringing new ideas, money and lifestyles into the village may be seen as a form of pollution or hybridisation of that which they seek. It may also be seen as a form of appropriation (in some cases) whereby having gained a part of the countryside they then choose to craft it in their own image. An example, noted by a colleague in Warmia, was when urbanites bought the classic red-brick Warmiak house and then decorated in a 'rural style' using such embellishments as Górale wood carving (from the Tatra mountains) and centrally heated bathrooms. Arguably, by making the village house fit the sanitised (urban) image of the countryside makes it a more sanitised place for urbanites to live.

2.3 "The Other" and the Village

Attitudes toward "The Other".

Considering the theatre company's work with motifs of *Others* (by this I mean minority groups such as Lemko, Jew, Białorussian etc), and the group's own composition, it is important to consider attitudes of some audiences to minorities. While it would be both incorrect and unfair to say that all villagers (or Poles in

general) are xenophobic and anti-Semitic (despite an apparently popular notion of some of my non-Polish acquaintances, including some anthropological colleagues) the image of the xenophobic, uneducated villager is arguably a popular one. It is certainly one that the members of the theatre and others who work within the rural environment have had to face. In some cases exposure to this aspect of rural life is unsettling to those who might have a more sanitised view of the countryside (at least two of my translators were disturbed at the level of xenophobia displayed by some interviewees). I shall examine below how members of the theatre and their associates attempt to deal with it.

It is necessary to contextualise some of the attitudes towards *Others*. As noted in Chapter 1, the image of the *Other* in Poland has often been manipulated for political ends. The Jew has long been a symbol of *Otherness* and almost routinely demonised. Likewise the image of the German as the potential conqueror of Poland has been played on heavily since the war. Such long-established stereotypes are hard to dispel, particularly when they are constantly enforced by certain sections of the media and political voices. They are also, apparently, easy to rekindle. Since the fall of socialism it has been easier for minority groups in Poland to express themselves. Saxon notes a rise in Polish-German associations and Hann notes the greater ease of Lemko expression. In 1989 the first ethnographic symposium in Poland to deal with national minorities was held. The rise in minority expression worries more nationalist thinkers as it may represent a threat to Polishness as old grievances may be voiced. As Filipowicz reminds us (see earlier quotation) the post-Communist period brought about a need for clear identities and scapegoats (who was to blame for Poland's historic/contemporary plight?). In most cases the old scapegoats were still available. What is apparent is that the changing political climate allows these stereotypes to be revised to suit contemporary situations. In this way opposition to something like the European Union can be fuelled through an exploitation of ancient prejudice against Germans in a more modern context. Often the fear of *Others* is based on a fear of anti-Polish intention and a threat to Polish identity. This is seen through concerns of Polish farmers about the European Union[liv].

The Outsider and the EU

Whilst Poland has, since 1989, steadily increased its movement towards EU membership (scheduled now for 2004) and entry to the EU is widely supported, it has not been wholly supported by all Poles. Elzbieta Stadtmuller (2000) points out, Polish attitudes towards the EU have ranged from enthusiasm that sees it as a move towards Poland being accepted as part of the West (and arguably a further distancing from the former Soviet bloc), to a fear of the Union as being a tool of Poland's enemies (particularly the Germans and the Jews, also see: Lebioda 2000) which will enable them to gain greater control of Poland and erode perceived Polish ideals, morals and culture. EU may be seen as a threat to the Polish identity. A leading member of the National Christian Union (ZChN) commented of the EU that, "The method of the Brussels' socialists is based on levelling all that does not fit a common pattern…they build unity on money and by killing identities" (Stadtmuller, 35). Stadtmuller and Lebioda both pinpoint the relationship with Germany as hugely significant. The fear that German financial superiority will enable them to gain land in Poland is amplified by fears that the post-war expellees and their families will be able to reclaim land and property which has been granted to Poles (similar to Jews who reclaimed lost property in recent years). The threat that the sacred Polish soil may once more fall under foreign ownership is particularly frightening to farmers who are already feeling threatened by EU imports and economic difficulties (see Zbierski-Salameh, 1999).

The greatest resistance towards Poland's joining of EU can be found amongst older members of Polish society, particularly those on low-income, those with poor education and amongst rural dwellers and those in the east of Poland. This contrasts with a greater acceptance of EU amongst those who are from a professional or academic background, including students (Stadtmuller 2000, 38). Stadtmuller's findings suggest that a mixture of isolation and a lack of education may fuel xenophobia and racism in rural Poland. This can be coupled with historical processes that have influenced older generations, such as personal experience of individuals and their families and official views of authorities and government bodies. Lebioda's work on Polish-German relations (2000) illustrates how successive anti-German

rhetoric from the post-war Communist governments, and a lack of education about contemporary Polish-German government policies, is still influencing anti-German distrust within large areas of Poland (particularly within the *Recovered Territories*).

Such fears were apparent during my fieldwork. On learning I was living in Warmia (former German Ost-Preusse) one villager commented, "It is good that you speak German then, you'll be living there soon!" Although such suspicion of the EU was not surprising to me my translator was shocked, "I didn't realise that the EU was such a big deal for these people." The image of the dangerous outsider seems to loom large. Like the German (absent through expulsion) the Jew has metamorphosed into the faceless *Other* which threatens Poland. Absent through genocide and expulsion the Jew is yet omnipresent through the silence of absence[lv].

Radio Maria

The isolation and lack of education within rural regions may also provide fertile grounds for the contemporary rhetoric of nationalistic and right wing Roman Catholic conservative bodies. Amongst such groups it would seem that a radio station called Radio Maria is particularly influential. Radio Maria is an ultra-conservative Roman Catholic broadcasting organisation which operates via satellite from the city of Torun. Founded in 1991, through the efforts of Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, RM had reached approximately forty per cent of the country by 1997, including a hard-core listener-ship of around five million people. The station broadcasts religious services (including Mass) and often extreme nationalist rhetoric. Although frequently running foul of both the Church and government authorities, due to often blatant anti-Semitic and anti-government rhetoric, the station has not only managed to maintain its status but has also proved its significant influence through campaigns. These include raising funds from the listener-ship (who also largely fund the station) to help buy a Gdansk shipyard and the infamous campaign to plant crosses at Auschwitz in response to a Jewish protest about Christian symbols (and a Carmelite monastery) near the Jewish memorial (Millard 1999, 120).

Members of TWW consider Radio Maria an influential factor in the propagation and perpetuation of xenophobic views. The almost captive audience, particularly old, lonely villagers listen to the radio station for some comfort,

particularly as it provides spiritual comfort through the broadcasting of the Mass. Unfortunately they are then constantly bombarded with negative views which were not necessarily contested or debated in the village environment. Existing prejudices might be strengthened and new ones nurtured. During my interviews in some villages I was aware of interviewees being listeners of RM, sometimes by their own confession but also because often the radio station was playing in the background. When certain xenophobic or anti-Semitic views were voiced it was occasionally backed up with reference to having heard such things on RM. The theatre company has focussed their work upon challenging such prejudices through an image of inclusion and multi-culturalism (not least through the mixed make-up of the group) as I shall examine further in Chapter Five.

2.4 The Theatre's Work in the Village.

Time, Space and perceptions of Identity.

A brief examination of the history of the group illustrates several aspects of the relationship between Self, *Other* and perceptions of identity. I shall consider the notion that objectively and subjectively identity may change as one changes locality. Likewise, the effect of time and circumstance upon one's location may change the identity again. The level of suspicion surrounding the initial foundation of the *Pracownia* group may have been partly due to being seen as potential political activists from *the big city*. The authorities saw the subsequent move to the village as suspicious. Presumably the apparent desire to operate away from prying eyes meant the group were up to something. Likewise, the wariness of the villagers towards these (often non-national) in-comers suggests an idea of the strangeness of town people (unusual even by town standards!) coming to live on a farm when they weren't farmers (and were doing strange practices in the forest!). This contrasts with the aforementioned reports by other in-comers of the friendliness of the villagers, however it must be remembered that these in-comers were generally farmers or wives of Węgajty men[lvi]. This attitude to the theatre has apparently changed over time and it is noteworthy that whilst interviewing villagers only two mentioned the original attitude towards the theatre. When asked about the early relationships the majority of villagers spoke of how welcoming they had felt towards the actors. The

acceptance of the group has undoubtedly come from the increased contact and the dances and shows which the theatre organises and performs in the village fire station (a small garage), as many villagers mentioned. The group is now not only established, but vital to the identity of the village. This may be seen to demonstrate how the passing of time (involving events and practices taking place to confirm a relationship) may change or consolidate a perceived identity, both in the minds of the subject and the objective parties.

Current Relationships

Whatever the villagers and local authorities may have thought about the theatre group they have become established and recognised as a part of the cultural landscape around Olsztyn. Several members of the group are employed at the central culture house in Olsztyn and members of both Projekt Terenowy and Schola organise workshops for students and for children, occasionally working in local schools. Guest artists from a variety of different backgrounds perform at both the theatre and the *remiza*. The group is regularly featured in local media and, occasionally, national media, both television and print (such as the Polish edition of *National Geographic*). Several filmmakers have made documentaries about the theatre also. As such the villagers are perhaps more used to outside attention and foreigners than most other villages in the area (or even Poland).

The relationship between the theatre and the village of Węgajty spreads further than the area of the village itself. Villagers point out that the media attention the theatre brings has also brought attention to the village itself. The village is now known in the surrounding area as a place of interest. Several of the villagers, both old and young, spoke of their pride when people in the city, or other villages reacted when they heard they were from Węgajty.

> Before the theatre there was nothing, nobody knew who we were. Now people say, "Oh, you are from Węgajty, we saw it on the television". I feel proud to think my village is so well known[lvii].

The villagers are particularly fond of the dances that the company holds at in the *remiza*. Not only do these dances serve to entertain the villagers and cement

relationships between the villagers and the theatre but they also serve as a marker to define the village identity[lviii].

Despite the notion of the theatre group that their work is for everyone, and despite the feelings people have for the theatre, few of the villagers attend the theatre very often. For many of the older ones the location of the theatre makes it difficult, if not impossible, to attend. For others there is also the feeling that the theatre *is not for them*. A number of those interviewed commented that they felt the work that took place at the theatre was more for connoisseurs and outsiders than for farmers. The music and dancing at the *remiza*, when the group comes to them, was for the villagers. Thus the identity of the village may be seen as being at the heart of the village. Likewise, the theatre, being away from the village, is a place where the outsiders go. Just as the village gives an identity to the theatre the theatre has given an identity to the village, particularly in a period where its former identity as a Warmiak village was weakening due to immigration and incomers. The formerly dubious incomers are now part of the fabric and identity of the village.

It is obvious that the identity of the village and theatre of Węgajty are intertwined, however the work of the company also involves other villages throughout Poland. In some cases the relationship may only be a fleeting one, perhaps one visit. In other cases the relationship has built up over a long time. I shall now examine some of the other villages where TWW work and explore these relationships.

Home and Away

The two main villages with which TWW have long-standing relationships are based in opposite ends of the country, one in the Suwałki district of north Poland and the other in the southern region of Poland in the Carpathian mountains. Like Węgajty, both areas may be considered cultural (and geographical) *Borderlands.* These are areas where historic performance practices have declined and have (in many cases) ceased. It is this that has started the group's relationship with both villages. The group's search for *archaic* and *village* music and performance practices took them to a Lemko village in Bieszczady (Nowice), where they learned songs and music (including techniques) from an old *master*. This man provided them with

many tunes, songs and stories about old forms. The group began performing music and undertaking Kolęda expeditions. These expeditions have been carried out for over ten years (although not every year). The village in Suwałki (Dziadówek) was brought to the attention of the group by an ethnologist who, following one of their performances, suggested they visit the area because of an old form of Easter carolling. Once existing widely in the area it has now all but vanished. The group made initial expeditions to visit an old master in the region and learn about the practice. Holding the first expedition in this village in 1990 the company have continued carolling annually..

The two regions and villages have different histories and situations but each in its own way represents aspects of the Polish village. Many of the problems are similar to those of villages across Poland, falling population, unemployment, poverty, young people looking towards the town and a decline in the old lifestyles. A villager from Nowice commented,

> The village is dying because there are not many young people. They are only coming for Christmas from schools and towns. It is very sad, because some years ago they would have a zabawa [dance] every Sunday in the 'Jewish Tavern' and sometimes there were three zabawas in the same evening; one in the neighbouring village, one in the upper part of our village (from school up) and one in the lower part (Jews Tavern)[lix].

Nowice: A Lemko Village

Nowice (fig. 6) is predominantly a Lemko village (although there are a number of Poles also living there). It is remote, being in the mountains, has no surfaced road and in some buildings, no running water. Prior to WWII the village had around 140 houses, it now has around 65. The majority of the population was moved out during Akcja Wisła and houses were sold or given to Poles in a way similar to that described by Hann in other villages (1985, 37-8). Some of the villagers returned after 1957 but the village is, according to many, still in decline. The land, I am told, is not good for farming and the village appears not particularly prosperous. Unemployment in the surrounding region is high and many look to work in the neighbouring town. There is, however, a small industry for making wooden spoons for the tourist market. Teatr Wiejski Węgajty visit Nowice for the Orthodox Christmas season in January (the majority of the village are Greco-Catholic[lx]) to

perform Kolęda, and occasionally use the village as a base for rehearsing projects (as was happening at the time of writing).

The village school (fig. 7), like many in Poland, was recently the target of a planned closure. While authorities pointed out there were schools in other villages nearby, the locals of Nowice pointed out that transport was poor and wolves inhabited the forests, which lay between the villages, especially in the winter. While the school managed to stay open the number of children attending it is only around 20 and several villagers did not feel it would function for very long, as there was little money to pay the teachers[lxi].

Many of the houses in Nowice are of the old Lemko style (fig. 8), which has both livestock and humans under one roof. Many of the inhabitants are aged, a high percentage being in their seventies and eighties. There are also younger families and the occasional new building being constructed. Towards the lower end of the village are two houses that are inhabited by Polish families who, for want of a better description, are hippies. A young female musician, who often spends a part of the year abroad, inhabits one house. The young Polish families have been particularly instrumental in organising music festivals and education programmes within the village. They are also instrumental in plans to develop a cultural centre (probably in the school) to encourage the growing interest in agro-tourism within Poland, and the village's position in some beautiful countryside.

These families have also encouraged their children to learn the Lemko language in the village school, although the adults are not particularly adept in it themselves. A teacher of Lemko lives in the village and teaches occasionally at the school, however some of the older inhabitants do not see the use of learning the language. During an interview one old Lemko woman asked what was the point of the children learning Lemko,

> The young people will leave here. What good is it to them when they leave? Why not teach them English or German, something which will be of use? Besides, it is not a written language, you can't teach it in a school.



Fig. 6: Nowice



Fig 7: Schoolhouse in Nowice.



Fig. 8: Lemko house.

(Photos: Trev Hill)

Not all the villagers hold this view, particularly the teacher of Lemko. While people do seem to care about their Lemko heritage and identity, the approach to the old traditional lifestyle is mixed within the village, as it appears to be within Lemko society generally. Whilst in a nearby village there is a young Lemko music group and a noted singer of traditional Lemko songs, the villagers in Nowice do not appear to generate musical or performance within the village themselves and seem reliant on visiting groups[lxii]. At one dance organised for the theatre's expedition one old man asked to play the drum for (he said) the first time in over thirty years.

The carolling customs appear to be long dead, older villagers telling me that they rarely took place after Akcja Wisła, although (as noted above) dances were regularly held in the village. These too, however have all but died out. Several people told me of a village schoolteacher who had, some years ago, produced a theatrical piece based on a Lemko wedding ceremony. However, they said, it was the last time such a thing had been generated within the village, apart from the small nativity play done by the children in the school at Christmas.

> Teachers were working with old and young people about the reconstruction of a Lemko wedding. This was the end of the history of the real (Lemko) "Nowice". It all has ended and it will never happen again.

The village is, however, used to visitors and tourists. It has been the subject of several documentaries and films (not all about the theatre's visits) and has also been visited by groups such as Gardzienice. However some villagers are sceptical about some of this attention.

> After Akcja Wisła everything changed. Television was coming to see how we were making these famous handicrafts, making this wedding (maybe two television teams). I don't know what they were making the films for, as it isn't real anymore.

Conversations about *the old ways* brought, in some cases, revealing responses. One old woman commented that her daughter's death meant that she had nobody to pass the old ways onto and so they meant nothing to her and would die with her.. My translator pointed out to me that many of the older villagers seemed surprised that I was asking about such things, "They seem puzzled as to why anyone

wants to know about things that are so long gone. It is so long ago, it is like another world for them". The Lemko language teacher agreed with such observations. She knew of such divisions within the Lemko community. In some villages, however, there are also Lemko scholars and intellectuals, who are eager to propagate Lemko culture.

Dziadówek: Rural Suwałki

Dziadówek is a small, very remote, farming village around 50 kilometres from the town of Suwałki. Unlike Nowice, which is based predominantly on one road, Dziadówek is spread across a wide area, consisting of individual houses rather than grouped housing (fig. 9). There is no road surfacing and no central water supply. Many of the houses still rely on wells for the water and many still have outdoor earth toilets. Farming is not profitable in this village and several farmers complained to me about the rising costs and the low sale prices for their goods. Prior to WWII the area was part of German East-Prussia and was not far from the Polish and Lithuanian borders (it is now close to the borders of Lithuania and the Russian enclave). The population was a mixture of German (Volksdeutsche) , Polish and Lithuanian people. I was told the village still has both Protestant and Catholic inhabitants.

Two major figures in the village are the Sołtys (elected head of the village) and an elderly woman known as *Babcia* (Grandmother) who is a kind of matriarch of the village. It is through the Babcia and her (now dead) husband that the theatre began their work in the village. A former wedding singer in the area, she is knowledgeable about village history and historic traditions. It is in her house that the theatre group stay whilst working in the village. The Sołtys is an active woman who, as well as running her farm, tries to improve life around the village. When the Babcia was ill the Sołtys visited her and helped arrange for her to be taken to hospital. She later visited her in hospital. During an interview she mentioned the problems which the village faced. The villagers had decided to get the village connected to a water main. The money had been found and the Sołtys had arranged for the work to be done. Several months later they were still waiting. A recently built hotel in the neighbouring area had, however, been connected, apparently jumping the queue. Some villagers suspected money and shady deals. It reinforced the feelings of many

that poor villagers were treated with contempt when rich businessmen could buy preferential treatment. Some villagers spoke of their distrust of the invisible outsiders who seemed to have power over their future. Bank presidents who allegedly earned more money than the president of Poland were particularly singled out. "Why do they earn all that money? What do they do with it? They should give some of it to the poor". The impression many villagers gave me was the feeling that they were forgotten by the outside world. Even if they were considered, it was not very highly. This makes the relationship with the theatre all the more interesting. It was commented to me several times that the villagers valued the visits of the group very highly, not least because it made them feel less neglected by the outside world, as I shall examine below.

The Village and the Youth

Such concerns, noted previously, were heightened amongst some older villagers because of the lack of interest by many young villagers towards a life in the village. Several old villagers felt that the young people were destined to leave the village and the old way of life would go forever. However, some felt that the young people did not realise the importance of traditional values in life,

> The young people do not want to stay here. There is nothing for them. But, they do not realise about having to work. They do not want to work. They see people on the television with cars and money and they do not realise that they have to work for them. They are only interested in these things. They do not care about the village anymore. They don't care about the country [nation]. But, without my country, what am I?

Here we can see two differing notions of the town and the modernity related to it. Rather than the honest, hard-working life of the villager, the youth appear to desire the (apparently) easy prosperity of the town which is (dishonestly) portrayed by the television. Likewise, the young people seem to embrace the self-interest of the town and reject the community of the village. This is by no means a new thing as emigration from the village, particularly for economic reasons, has been historically practised for well over two centuries (see Davies 1981 vol. II, Ch 5 & 11, Pine 1998, Słomczyński and Krause 1986, Wesołowski & Słomczyński 1977).

While the migration of the young people is a fear of many parents it certainly does not necessarily represent a total rejection of the village and its ways. In a small village where TWW have recently begun working I interviewed two young brothers. Both spoke of wanting to leave the village however they expressed differing notions of why they wished to leave the village. The eldest wished to have a career in the army (as opposed to just National Service) and to serve his country. When asked about the importance of old traditions he felt they were important, "Tradycje jest kraj!" *(Tradition is the country)*. His younger brother felt that the village had nothing for him and he should leave to make something of himself, "When you are brave, the world is yours!" His mother commented that it was the brave who stayed in the village.

A musician from Olsztyn, who researches village music, voiced other attitudes to the village. She spoke of how young people in the village often found it hard to understand why a town-dweller would want to learn village music which they themselves had no interest in.

> Sometimes they think we are crazy. They are from the village and have no interest in such things. We are from the town and want to learn this music to know who we are. They are from the village and know who they are. They know what it means to be from the village. It means poverty. They do not want to be reminded of such things. It has a different meaning to them than it does to us.

This suggests not only do many young people adhere to some of the negative notions of rurality that certain towns-people may hold but they also seek to craft an identity of themselves in opposition to their village identity. If young people are really rejecting traditional values (as suggested above) it may be because they see little reward in the old ways. This also highlights that it is not possible (if it ever was) to talk of a total polarity between village culture and town culture. Not only do urbanites apparently want to embrace a village identity, but many ruralites desire a lifestyle more aligned with a perceived town identity. As such more aspects of culture which might normally be seen as town-culture are increasingly entering into village culture. This is illustrated to me by a village musician, in response to a question about village music. Speaking of the young villagers' desire for computers,

video games and pop music he laughed, "There is no village music now. Disco-Pola [Polish pop-music] is village music now!"

It is evident from such factors that there is, and has been for several centuries, regular traffic between the village and the town, often related to economics and desire for a different identity. As well as this, examples from songs and village performance arts illustrate that incomers in villages were an established feature of village life historically, as well as in contemporary times (see Ch 4, below). It is interesting to consider whether groups and individuals who constantly cross the perceived boundaries (such as migrants) develop a fuzzy identity regarding their *place* of belonging (I shall examine this in chapter 4). I suggest that the work of the theatre, far from being new in itself is actually a continuation (albeit perhaps in a novel form) of a long-standing symbiotic relationship between the village and the town in Polish society. Likewise, as I shall suggest later, I feel the work of the theatre can be seen to allow a bridging of fuzzy boundaries for particular groups and individuals to make contact with these perceived polarities.

The "Need" of the Village

The work of Teatr Wiejski Węgajty in these villages has been carried out over a number of years. Villagers are now very familiar with the group, both as performers and as individuals who they may see as friends. The effect on both villages has differed in a number of ways, due to the differing situations within each village. Perhaps one of the most important differences concerns the premises used for the main performance and dance at the end of the expedition. Nowice has a schoolhouse that is used both as a school and for cultural activities within the village, like dances etc. Dziadówek has no such premises. However, one of the older inhabitants, living with his adult son, decided to demolish a wall inside of his house to create a large room. This is now the annual scene of the evening performance and dance, which is the highlight of the Easter expedition (fig 10). Members of the theatre mention that this raised the status of the man within the village, as his is the house that allows a dance to be held. Likewise, visitors from other villages come to his house for the evening. This is not without problems, as occasionally young men from other villages can be aggressive and seek to cause damage to the property (as

happened on at least occasion I was there). The increasing age and wear of the building is also an increasing problem. On each the three occasions I was present at dance evenings (over three years) I witnessed floorboards being damaged and repaired during the evening. On one occasion a young woman I was dancing with disappeared in front of me. Upon looking down I realised she had fallen through the floorboards! The following year (when I was not present) members of the village made a concerted group effort to repair the floors of the house to ensure that the building was safe for use by the group and their audience. Such forging and strengthening of communal identity is considered part of the group's work. As we have noted, the village of Węgajty has found a new identity based on the presence of the theatre. Dziadówek, likewise appears to have found a new identity through the activities of the theatre. As noted, there appears to be a feeling within the village of being overlooked by the outside world. The coming of the theatre, and its continued visits, has brought a new sense of being to the village over the last decade. Like TWW's home village, Dziadówek has become a point of interest for television and film-makers and is now known, both locally (in neighbouring villages) and throughout Poland, as the village which has the theatre visiting. This boosts the status of the village in the surrounding area. Likewise it has provided a greater sense of occasion, particularly for those members of families who had moved away and returned for the Easter holiday. Locals spoke of their pride that the group came to them, especially as they had to travel all the way from Olsztyn (over four hours' drive). Several of the villagers commented that they believed the village might have died without the theatre. Now the Easter expeditions provided not only a point of interest for the villagers themselves but also provided contact with outsiders who were bringing something to the village (not trying to exploit them). The contact with the theatre also brings interested outsiders and foreigners, many of who may bring new and 'exotic' forms of theatre and music to a village that would otherwise be unable to access such things[lxiii]. For their part, the members of TWW feel a responsibility towards the village after such a long period of work. Wacek has commented how the continued work in, and growing relationship with the village has forged a kind of link with the old-time carollers and, as such have taken on the responsibility for continuing the tradition. One theatre member told me of her

concern about the necessity for continued work. “I cannot imagine not going to that village at Easter. The people preparing food and expecting us. How would they feel if we did not come? I cannot imagine it”. In both villages the theatre are now greeted by many as old friends and villagers have, according to Sobaszek, referred to the group as *Our Theatre*. Interestingly, following the performance BestKept Sekret, one villager shouted to me the next morning, “Your spectacle was very beautiful. Now you belong to us!”

That the theatre is well received by these two villages is without question. However the reception is based on several years of work and a developing relationship. This is not always the case in 'new' villages (see: Chapter 5). In the case of several villages the work of the theatre is being utilised by the village to craft a new identity based on the interest of outsiders. I have examined the relationship between TWW and the villages in which they work, examining social conditions and notions of a conceptual village (and an opposing conceptual town). This illustrates the conditions and the background to their work, as well as some of their aims. I shall know focus upon their work in greater detail, examining their practices, training and performance techniques and theories. Through this I shall begin to examine how such work may be seen as a form of identity crafting for the performer which may then be utilised by a potential audience as well.



Fig. 9: Landscape around Dziadówek (Photo: Trev Hill)



Fig. 10: BestKept Sekret's performance in Dziadówek (Photo: Waldemar Czechowski)

CHAPTER 3

Theory and Practice of Teatr Węgajty

One of the aims of this thesis is to argue that the practice of theatre may, in some cases, be seen as a form of Technology of Self, in that it allows an individual to undergo a certain amount of training which may allow physical and ethical crafting of the self. As well as this the practice of theatre and performance allows the performer to display themselves to an audience through forms of expression. This form of expression may involve displaying and communicating one's beliefs (for example through a performance of political theatre, or religious performance). It can also be a way of expressing one's self through a display of skill in the art of communication and/or illusion (in that one becomes somebody else). The training for certain forms of performance may involve a great deal of training and self-observation to attain a level of self-awareness to perform. Part of this awareness may involve recognising personal habits and traits and suppressing them.

Another aspect of the crafting of self is the assessment and recognition of one's relationship with various entities, for example other groups and beliefs, and one's relationship to space and time. I shall therefore examine some of the techniques of training which Teatr Wiejski Węgajty utilise and compare this with performances to attempt an illustration of how these can be seen as forms of crafting of Self in that not only may they require the performer to understand and develop a (possibly) new understanding of their bodies but also their relationship to space, time and to others. This practice can be found in the theories of Grotowski who considered that an actor should strive to be *himself or herself*. By this, the actor discards any outer masks that may stop them reaching their inner-self. It is this inner self which Grotowski deems necessary to be exposed. Grotowski's actor- the *holy actor*- is one that gives themselves to the audience. This means that they do not give the audience a display of techniques, they give *themselves* on a spiritual level. To do this the actors must be able to know what constitutes *themselves.* To do this the actor must undertake a form of training which allows them to know themselves better, physically and psychically.

Like in the theoretical theatre writings of Edward Gordon Craig, the actor unable to shed everyday habits, fears and external facades risks not being able to find an inner, psychic relationship with the audience because they are too busy obstructing the psychic with the physical and social. In order for a performer to do this they must be able to discard daily practices and habits. Craig suggests one method of helping the performer is to put on a mask, which allows the discarding of one's own persona. This means that the defensive techniques one uses in everyday life are no longer needed. In a sense, we may consider the highly detailed work on character that Stanislawski advocates as a form of mask which the performer may 'wear'.

Here we have the paradox of acting. The actor becomes somebody else. This is the actor's job. The mark of a good actor may be seen as somebody who can be someone else. The less of them which the observer sees the better the actor. Therefore actors define themselves by being others. They also exhibit their own discipline and skill by not being themselves. We may therefore consider that the training of an actor can be seen as a Technology of Self, in that not only does the actor have to train to develop a discipline but also a significant aspect of that discipline involves an observation and a control of the displaying of Self.

3.1 Theatre Training as a Technology of Self

The above-mentioned workshop practices and exercises may be seen as part of the Technology of Self practised by the theatre. Participants, as we will see, may be placed (through their own volition) in an environment different to that of their everyday surroundings (except in the case of the long-term members) and expected to perform practices which may also differ from their everyday routine. Some of these exercises require an examination and possible reassessment of the physical and mental abilities of the individual, one which they may have to (and are expected to) push themselves beyond. In some cases this may also involve trying to readjust one's own physical practices from habits learned over a number of years. The training also involves an individual beginning to develop an awareness of space and surrounding in a way which may differ from that which they may have in an urban environment. It may also be seen to enable an individual to be aware of necessary adjustments to

physical behaviour in different environments. It also introduces the individual/ performer to potentially new physical techniques that may eventually form part of a repertoire of performance techniques. That long-term artistic-collaborators and members of the group are experienced in similar exercises and practices suggests that an awareness of inter-personal rhythms and physical movements will benefit performance work over a long period.

One aspect of the training that I was unable to verify was to what extent it served as a substitute for physical training through everyday life. This question arose when one local musician, known to the theatre and myself, complained to me about throat problems she had developed following a series of workshops with a singing master who specialised in teaching regional forms of *archaic* singing[lxiv]. The method of singing involved pressure being put on the upper resonators and the chest. Apparently, this creates increased blood pressure around the head. She complained of suffering sore throats because of this technique. On mentioning this to members of the theatre I was told, "Of course, she is doing village singing and she isn't from a village. She isn't working in the fields and doing the same kind of physical work".

Could the training of the theatre be, in some way, a method of training the body to be able to perform tasks that an urban student may not be familiar with? Running and dancing may help in strengthening the lungs and body to perform these tasks (for instance, running several kilometres with a wooden hobby-horse strapped to your shoulders). A rural farm-worker would develop certain muscle groups and physical attributes through physical work that might be unknown to some of the workshop participants. My questions were, unfortunately, met with mild amusement. It would seem that if the exercises do this then it is not by design of the theatre group[lxv]. What is apparent is that for some guest members of the group the exercises and running are extra to whatever exercise they may normally do. In this way it does serve for training to do types of dancing and performance work which they are perhaps otherwise unfamiliar with.

3.2 Projekt Terenowy and its Practices

Throughout my fieldwork period, I was predominantly connected to *Projekt Terenowy*. During this period I took part in a number of Kolęda expeditions

(approximately seven), in a variety of regions. I took part in the Easter carolling twice and participated as an active member of the group in the creation of a theatrical performance piece, as well as being a percussionist in the band. As time progressed I also began to assist in the teaching of exercises and techniques during workshops, as well as holding several workshops of my own on a variety of subjects, such as *Commedia dell Arte* and mask making. It is useful to outline the various practices that the group undertakes. I particularly wish to consider how some of these practices may be considered as influential on the crafting or maintaining of the group's identity, as well as those who may work alongside them.

The work of the theatre can be divided roughly into six parts:

1) Research Expeditions
2) Songs and Music
3) Dances
4) Workshops and Seminars
5) Plays; rehearsal, devising and performance
6) Carolling: rehearsal and performance of Kolęda and Easter Alilujka[lxvi]

Serious Play

A major factor in the work of TWW is the notion of *serious play*. This is a form of playful interaction with a serious intent. The intent is to assist the performer to strip down any external barriers, social and emotional, in order to allow them to access their inner self. The practice of serious play may also be seen as similar to that of putting on a mask, in that it allows the participant to behave in a way which everyday inhibitions may not allow. Inhibitions allow a person to pretend to be somebody (or something) other than they are which is against what TWW believe an actor should be (as we have seen with Grotowski). If the participant is able to do something apparently ridiculous or frivolous (such as rolling over and around a group of other people in the middle of a muddy field) in a non-judgmental atmosphere then it is supposed that they will be able to shed certain fears or inhibition. Through this they may make better contact with their inner self and, just

as importantly, they will be able to make contact with others without having to utilise the social masks they might normally use.

According to Mrs Sobaszek, play, to some extent, removes a feeling of responsibility, where as *serious play* retains an element of responsibility while also making the practitioner an observer of their own actions, as well as that of others. There is also the matter of *intention.*

> Very often people are led by conscious intention; I want to do something, I want to be good, whatever. They are somehow in a false relationship with themselves and want to be something other. Work with play helps not so much as to put away responsibility, but to help put away intention. Intention is not now what leads you, you allow yourself to be led by more chaotic impulses, there's more space for unconscious things.

Mutka also pointed out that the use of *Serious Play* is an important factor in teaching and workshops, however also admits that it is not always helpful in certain areas. If serious play removes intention, it may also remove the need for *effort*, which is perhaps led more by intention. It is this *effort* which can allow one to cross their own borders. This is another aim of training in this theatre. This, claims Mutka, means that there is also a necessity to find an impulse, or stimulus within the play situation which can lead to effort. *Serious play* within the training at TWW may be found in such practices as playing games during workshops, greeting one another with sexy winks and raspberries, unusual physical exercises and movements being practised in workshops and rolling around in the forest during a run. These practices will be examined in greater detail below.

'Research Expeditions'

Research expeditions are less frequent now in the work of Teatr Wiejski Węgajty than at previous times (I never took part in one). These involve(d) a kind of ethnographic fieldwork whereby members of the company would travel into villages to find (usually old) *masters*[lxvii] and to learn songs, tunes, recitations etc. These would then be incorporated into the group's repertoire (and those of individual members). This practice was utilised within Poland by both Grotowski (during the *Theatre of Sources* period) and Gardzienice (Allain 1997). On a wider scale it has become fundamental to the work of Eugenio Barba and his field of *Theatre*

Anthropology (see Barba & Saverese, 1991 and Hastrup 1996). Although their contact with Gardzienice was very influential to this kind of research, members of TWW had undertaken fieldwork expeditions themselves before this period. Marika had actually undertaken a number of expeditions with her group in Ukraine before becoming a member of TWW. This practice was undertaken often in the early days of TWW, particularly in the Hutsul and Lemko areas of the Carpathians and the Suwałki district (where Easter carolling is now performed by TWW). Some of the major sources of material have since died and their photographs hang in the theatre lobby.

Whilst TWW rarely do these expeditions now (none took place during my fieldwork) there are young musicians in nearby Olsztyn who still undertake them. Likewise, several of the students who attend workshops and expeditions study ethnology and undertake field research of their own. Wacek explained that there is, in his mind, a significant difference between such expeditions when undertaken by ethnologists and when undertaken by performers and musicians. In his opinion, the knowledge that a researcher was a musician allowed a certain type of contact to be made which differed from that of ethnology students.

Songs and Music

Music and dance are an integral part of the practice of Teatr Węgajty. All members speak of their relationship to music being important to their work and relationship with theatre. The use of music and song has been vital to the work of other theatre practitioners both within and without Poland, such as Peter Brook, Grotowski, Odin Teater and Gardzienice. The latter particularly was a major influence on TWW's approach to the use of music, song and dance as a theatrical tool. According to the Mr Sobaszek the initial approaches of the group were to treat music “as a kind of yoga”, in that it acted as some kind of meditative practice while allowing the performer to experience rhythm(s). Common work with music also allows performers to experience their partners' rhythm and develop a form of communication based on differing rhythms. It was decided early on in the life of the group that all members would play some kind of instrument, with the result that

many of the members are multi-instrumentalists, playing a variety of instruments including accordion, fiddle, clarinet, drum and hurdy-gurdy. Likewise, the use of music and song was, according to the Sobaszeks, important in the theoretical approach of Limanowski (of Reduta Theatre). Actors, he felt, should be familiar with a variety of singing styles, music and singing being vital to good acting. Once more, not only is rhythm learned, developed and understood but there are also physical benefits to singing (breathing, muscle control and vocal development).

Singing is often practised and performed as groups, often as part of a workshop. Multi-tonal singing is often practised and participants must learn to develop a discipline of singing different *voices* or harmonies. The singing may also take place as part of a game, for instance children's singing games, following the idea of *serious play*. Songs are an important part of both the theatrical plays of TWW and the Kolęda (see below). In recent years the section of the theatre known as Schola has developed a number of performances based on medieval liturgical dramas, which are sung. It is in relation to theatre work at Węgajty that Schola has delved heavily the practice of singing. They have developed a network of performers and teachers throughout Europe who specialise in singing styles ranging from Gregorian chant to *archaic* styles of Slavic and Lithuanian singing. Many of these members play little if any role in the (current) work of Projekt Terenowy.

Dance

A major feature of the work of TWW is the use of 'traditional' dances from Poland and other countries (including Scottish, Breton and Lithuanian dances). The use of dance is connected with the practice of music. However, it also has other uses within the work of TWW, particularly from the perspective of making contact and of teaching. Like music it involves a certain amount of emphasis on rhythm but also involves aspects that are more physical. From a teaching perspective dancing may be seen to teach rhythm, timing and physical technique. This was demonstrated to me when a colleague from Scotland came to attend some workshops. Following the workshops my landlady asked what we had been doing and I replied that we had done, "Nothing much, just dancing". My colleague, Judith, disagreed, we had learned

and practised, “Movement, space and spatial awareness, weight distribution and how to move through changing rhythms”, all of which, she assured me, could be applied to performance in different areas. Mutka agreed with this, to a point (although it was not necessarily a designated aim).

None of the dances are ‘solo’ dances, that is, they all involve at least one partner. This is in tune with Theatre Węgajty’s apparent philosophy of group communication but also works with the notion of self-exploration. Students and workshop participants often are not familiar with the moves and techniques of certain dances and the co-ordination required can be testing. Participation in dancing can develop awareness of physical co-ordination and build up physical fitness through a non-self-conscious form of exercise. This also relates to the theories of *serious play* in that the social contact developed through dancing in a non-formal atmosphere allows the participant to strip down certain social barriers. They may engage more freely with others (touching, eye contact etc) thus allowing them to access their own *self*, with less inhibition. Dance is also a part of the post-theatrical performance. Often, when a theatre performance has finished, the group leaves the theatre and returns to play music and encourage dancing. In some cases (particularly after performances at festivals etc) there might also be a dance workshop where members of the audience are encouraged to learn and perform dances (which some may already know). This creates a different atmosphere from that of the performance as I shall discuss below.

Dancing is also a teaching tool to familiarise the participant to working not only to a specific rhythm but also to a number of changing ones whilst performing specific movements. This might not only involve memorising and performing dance movements, but actually retraining the body to perform some moves differently. This became apparent from my own experience of learning to polka. I found it hard to keep the rhythm and timing, despite apparently performing the necessary foot movements correctly. Part of the problem was due to hopping too high and staying in air a fraction of a second too long, effectively slowing my dance rhythm. This was due to my having trained in martial arts for over eight years and training to spring from the ball of the foot, whereas in polka a lower positioning of the foot was more

desirable. Once this was discovered, I was able to train myself to utilise a different foot position than before.

Seminars and Workshops

Workshops and seminars take place sporadically throughout the year. These are generally held in the theatre itself and may take place over a weekend or a longer period of a week. These may also involve performances, talks, films etc from guest performers, ethnologists, filmmakers and academics. People from outside the village predominantly attended presentations but often a few villagers came too. These events are attended by a variety of individuals and groups, many of whom have been specifically invited. Others may have responded to advertising or word of mouth. The participants usually include other performers, academics, students and other interested parties from all over Poland. Participants must pay a small fee of around 20PLN. During the sessions they may stay at neighbouring houses, camp around the theatre or even sleep in the theatre itself. Communal meals, the price of which is included in the fee, are held at one of several houses in the neighbourhood.

There are two general formats for these events. Often the theatre will perform a piece on a Friday evening. This is usually followed by music and dancing, led by TWW and their guests. This can go on until early morning. Saturday may see a number of workshops or presentations. This leads to another performance in the evening, usually by a guest company or performer. This may also be followed by more dancing. Sunday usually sees the final presentations and perhaps more workshops. The event may finish on the Sunday or, if it is part of a longer session (one of the seasonal *schools* which TWW hold) it will continue in a format similar to that described below.

The other format is predominantly for performers and students wishing to train with TWW. These usually correspond with rehearsals for expeditions or similar events, such as the mid-summer dance in Węgajty village. When not a continuation of a weekend these sessions usually begin on a Thursday or Friday evening and start with dances. The second day sees workshops in theatrical practice, both physical and vocal (including singing). The second evening usually sees a run take place through the woods, which the participants are expected to take part in. Workshops and

training continue for the next day(s) and may either culminate in some kind of performance event or (if connected with Kolęda expeditions) finish and recommence later. During my time with TWW, I participated in (occasionally instructing[lxviii]) around a dozen such events. Those sessions involving training generally took the same basic format and timetable. They would begin, as noted, with dances from Poland, Lithuania, Brittany, Scotland as well as Jewish dances. This serves to create group cohesion (particularly when there are first-time participants) and 'acclimatise' participants to their environment.

The first morning workshops are led by Wacek and followed by a communal lunch at a nearby house (or in the theatre barn). There may be singing or performance workshops. These are usually held by Mutka and/or Marika. Specific songs are demonstrated and sung and singing techniques, such as *parts* and *voices* are highlighted and practised. Some of these may be in a non-Polish language (particularly Ukrainian) and will need to be written down for private practice (tape-recording is rarely allowed). Mutka's voice workshop (usually on the second day) consists of a very physical set of exercises designed to loosen most body parts and develop some co-ordination of voice with movement. This might include visualisation, isolation of movement of certain areas of the body and loud calling to warm the vocal chords. This workshop is almost immediately followed by a singing session.

Each workshop lasts between ninety minutes and two hours. The exercises rarely varied in all the session I attended, however there were a variety of exercises performed throughout all the workshops. Wacek's workshops involve physical exercises, such as stretching with a partner, shoulder stands and movements of a gymnastic nature. There are also a number of exercises involving movement and noise (such as stamping, winking and ‘blowing raspberries’). The session usually starts with a game where participants run across the room to spaces on different walls, leaving one person in the centre of the room (who then has to beat someone else to a free space). Clapping exercises follow this game. These exercises and games are supposed to break down barriers and inhibitions among participants and create suggestions of how sounds ('music') and physical actions may be connected. Other

exercises require and build trust (trust-exercises) between participants, helping to give them greater knowledge of their own capabilities and boundaries.

One example of this is the exercise where two participants hold hands and stand back to back. One party then bends forward, stretching the second party backwards, over their back. The second party then performs a backward roll to bring themselves off the partners back and into a standing position, facing their partner. The exercise requires a trust between both partners and sensitivity to the other's physicality. It also requires a certain amount of self-confidence to roll backwards off your partners shoulders. During one workshop a large bodied girl pulled her legs up to begin the roll, but panicked at the unfamiliar physical feeling and sat up so both her head and feet were in the air. She then fell heavily onto the floor. Having been told that such an action could be dangerous for both herself and her partner, she attempted to perform the exercise a second time. She then complained that she was not able to do it, despite encouragement from several members of the workshop. As she was so adamant (and frightened) that she was unable to do it the matter was left for the day. The following day, with the help of four members of workshop standing around the couple, she managed, slowly, to perform the exercise. Her reaction (relief and happiness) was coupled with a new realisation of new abilities in her physical ability and the knowledge that she was now not the only person in the group who had not completed the task.

Many of these exercises are derived from similar ones in Gardzienice, Teatr Laboritorium, Odin etc. However, they are seen as specific *Węgajty* exercises, illustrated by Wacek's reaction when one girl (my workshop partner) began to perform advanced exercises before being shown them. Wacek told me not to show them or allow them to do advanced exercises until he had demonstrated. I pointed out that this young woman had already known these exercises and performed them without any hesitation or notice. His reply was that this was common practice by participants who had undergone workshops with groups such as Gardzienice. However, Węgajty had different practices and they should observe these. The exercises are always shown specifically when observers or filmmakers wish to record the group's practices.

The Run

A major feature of training at Węgajty was the evening run through the forest. This was performed regularly through my time in the field and was part of both the workshop routine and that of rehearsals for performance. Like other techniques and practices, the run was part of training at both Grotowski's Teatr Laboritorium and Gardzienice (see: Kolankiewicz 1978 and Allain 1997). Wacek Sobaszek first encountered running at workshops with Teatr Laboritorium.

The run takes place through the forest surrounding the theatre and in almost any weather and state of light. Often it is undertaken in almost total darkness. In the case of workshops Sobaszek may stress to participants, the importance of the event and that it must be done in silence. This meant no speech, although sounds (shh) and laughter might be used at times controlled by the run leader[lxix]. The run was usually led by Wacek (during the workshops) although Mutka and Marika also led it occasionally. I was once invited to lead as well. It is generally held at a moderate jogging pace and may follow whatever path the leader decides, both on and off the paths through the forest. This can be uncomfortable for those participants wearing shorts, especially when the run goes through brambles etc. Likewise, at night it is not easy to see overhanging branches. There is also a potential risk of encountering the wild animals which live in the forest (wild pigs being common) and even illegal hunters[lxx]. The run might be interspersed with stretching exercises, spinning and rolling. Although it is desirable that the group should keep together, it is not uncommon for members of the group to fall behind. In such cases the leader will circle and allow a regrouping. On the return to the theatre, the evening work will begin.

In his 1997 book about Gardzienice, Allain explains the significance of the night-run by relating it to Van Gennep's notion of a pre-liminal phase, "It removes the participant from the everyday, encouraging an altered consciousness and preparing those involved for the rest of the night's work" (66). Like Allain, I relate to the run primarily from a personal standpoint. It was rarely, if ever discussed by anybody during workshops and I only recall it being discussed once during a *rounda*. From a personal view (which also corresponds to some comments passed in the *rounda*), I found the run an invigorating experience. The temperature change moving

from the theatre into the open air (particularly in winter) and the realisation that the run is about to start, creates a feeling of anticipation. This fades as the run is underway. Due to the lack of talking and overt communication, the runner has a variety of ways to utilise the mind. It is possible to concentrate on the run itself or to 'switch off' and run on 'automatic' or however else an individual runs. What does become apparent is a growing awareness of the environment and one's own physical and spatial relationship with the surroundings and the other participants. Again, many participants will find their own boundaries of physical ability being pushed.

This spatial awareness is a vital part of the work of Teatr Węgajty and especially important when performing in things like the Kolęda expeditions, where the performance space is constantly changing from house to house. In this way the run can be seen to be part of the physical and mental reconditioning of the performer to be constantly aware of the surroundings and conditions whilst undertaking a physical task. The concept of different spaces is important in the group's work, not least because they might find themselves playing anywhere. This does not only refer to spaces such as theatre buildings and houses, the relationship with the temporal/ historical space is also something which is emphasized through the group's work. This is something I shall examine in the following chapter.

Chapter Four

4.1 Spaces and Performance.

Performance of Plays

The performance of plays takes place several times through out the year. It is hard to say how often as this depends on whether a new piece has been produced, however I judge the average to be about six times a year. This may include shows from the repertoire or new work. Performances may also be part of a special programme where visiting artists are being received. Performances may also take place beyond the theatre, on tour etc[lxxi]. In keeping with theatrical practices of groups such as Teatr Laboratorium and Gardzienice, TWW generally maintain the practice of rehearsing for long periods, constantly revising and adapting the work. This can be done over a long period (the work for *The Seventh Seal* had been going on for over a year when it was scrapped). My own experience of creating one piece saw the first performance shown as *work-in-progress* after about four months. This period began with common work-shopping and discussions about the text and which performance materials would be utilised. Generally, work might take place sporadically, over a longer period, perhaps for a week at a time. The piece is usually performed for only one night at a time. However, performances are also undertaken at festivals throughout Poland and abroad and may be performed over two evenings[lxxii]. It is useful to examine a typical theatre performance, particularly when compared with a Kolęda expedition (as I shall do at a later point).

4.2 Performance in the Theatre Building

A performance in the theatre generally takes place on a Friday or Saturday evening, around seven thirty or eight o'clock. There will have been a small amount of poster publicity in Olsztyn and Jonkowo, as well as a poster in the Węgajty shop. There is occasionally a notice in the local press and radio. The company also sends

out a number of invitations to both regular patrons and groups and individuals that may have expressed an interest in attending a performance. Preparations are made the day before hand, buying in food and refreshments, setting up the auditorium by arranging benches and seating (the theatre space is usually empty of audience seating) and finalising the props and set for the performance. The work is done by members of the group and, occasionally, friends that have agreed to assist or have come to the theatre for the performance. The performers may continue rehearsals until just prior to the actual performance, while whoever is attending to the front of house arrangements advises visitors where they can leave rucksacks etc, and takes entrance money (usually about 10 złotych).

The audience has to travel to the theatre, often from beyond Węgajty village (Olsztyn and even further). Some will travel by bus to Jonkowo and walk the three kilometres to the theatre whilst others may arrive in nearby Gotki by train or travel by car. The drive up to the theatre, leaving the surfaced roads of the main village to negotiate the rough dirt tracks can be even harder when there is snow. The feeling of remoteness becomes stronger as one gets nearer to the theatre. From my own experience, and comments made by informants, reaching the theatre on a dark evening, away from any other lights (there are no street lamps) can give one a feeling of reaching a remote sanctuary, where is warmth and safety. Audience members meet and mix in the foyer of the building, perhaps look at an exhibition on display in the barn or stand outside in the fresh (sometimes cold) air. Some may take a short walk in the forest before the show begins. When the performers are ready (and have had the customary pre-performance toast of vodka) they will unlock the door and the audience is allowed to enter and find a seat (Generally unreserved). Those who do not find a seat on a bench or stool will sit on the floor or even stand. It is not uncommon for the theatre to be very crowded and a good audience is around eighty people. What is noticeable is that students and 'young people' are more prepared to sit on the floor. Children are more likely to sit on the floor at the front. When all are inside the door is closed and the performance begins.

The hall is usually lit with candles during a performance, which assists in creating a different atmosphere to that of the electric light of the foyer. It was mentioned to me by audience members how it seemed to create an atmosphere of an

older world, a more primitive or primal experience than that of electric lights. Candles are important to the atmosphere of the performance and Teatr Węgajty, like Gardzienice, use a lot of them[lxxiii]. The performance begins and generally lasts around forty-five minutes without a break and will feature music and songs as part of the dramatic action. The performances are almost totally without audience inter-action and are performed in *traverse* (audience on either side of the performance space)[lxxiv]. The audience usually sits and watches the performance (although occasionally people may walk out and back into the room) in the way that is considered 'normal' for mainstream European theatre. At the end of the performance, the company leaves the room through the door to the foyer. They may return for a bow or they may not. They do, however, go over to the Sobaszek house and perhaps change their clothes and have a drink. They then return to the theatre and may engage in some music making and dancing or just join the general socialising which goes on after a show. Music is often played after a show and dancing often takes place. Visitors may bring their own instruments and the evening turns into a *zabawa*. Sandwiches, cakes, tea, and coffee are prepared and served (free of charge). If the night is a long one then alcohol may eventually appear. As some of the visitors will be camping near to or even sleeping in the theatre then the night may go on until the very early hours (sometimes until around 7am). Most people, however, would have left and returned home by midnight.

What we may note from this brief description of the ritual of a theatre performance is the type of stratification that takes place amongst those people present and apparent shifts in identity. As well as this there is also the differing types of contact at different stages of the evening between different parties. Perhaps the most obvious stratification would be that of performer and audience, a third grouping could also be the front-of-house. Although many of the audience know the members of the troupe personally they are restricted from contact with each other before the show. By the time the majority of the audience has arrived the performers are in the locked theatre hall and (generally) only communicate to the front-of-house.

When the audience enters the performers may be in one of several states. They may be hidden from sight before starting the show or they may be in position on the set and *in character*. In the case of *Kalevala* the performers were stood in the

hall guiding the audience to their seats. The first two states continue the isolation and lack of personal contact with the audience whereas the third one allowed a certain amount of non-characterised (non-acting) contact with the audience. The ending of the show and the performers exit also continued the 'isolationary' contact between the two groups. However the return and bow demonstrates a return to two-way communication in that the performers thank the audience for their attention (and applause) while accepting the audiences gesture of thanks and appreciation for the performance. This itself shows a shift in apparent power between the two groups. I shall examine this further when comparing the theatre performance with the Kolęda.

Following this return to open communication we may consider the post-piece playing of music and dancing. Whereas the performance has involved an audience being largely passive and receiving the performance, the dance session allows a more *face-to-face* contact and a breaking down of possible anonymity amongst the performers and the members of the audience. The audience now becomes part of the performance, particularly as many of the audience stay to watch the dancing. In the case of the Węgajty theatre building (as opposed to receiving theatre spaces where time might be limited) the 'former' audience are encouraged to join in with the music and dancing. This kind of interaction and breaking down notions of barriers between *performers* and *audience* may be considered as a form of para-theatrical activity.

4.3 Carolling; differing spaces.

Kolęda Carolling expeditions.

The carolling expeditions, like the Research expeditions, were an early aspect of the group's joint work. Currently they are predominantly the territory of Projekt Terenowy, although members of Schola do partake in Kolęda[lxxv] with local school children[lxxvi]. Carolling in Poland takes several forms (see: Szyfer 1975, Koziel 1996). Historically it was widespread throughout Poland and East Europe (and parts of Western Europe). Winter carolling would take place after Christmas, it being forbidden by the Church to indulge in dancing and music throughout advent[lxxvii]. Over a number of days, following Christmas (often a couple of weeks), groups of

carollers would (and still do in certain areas) go out into their own village and neighbouring ones to perform songs and music, short sketches, recitations. Sometimes short plays based on mystery plays about King Herod are performed (see: Frys-Pietraszkowa 1995). This practice might involve the carollers being dressed as a variety of different characters, such as Herod, Death or the Devil and perhaps having large puppets and masks of characters such as a goat or *Turon* (wild ox). In some areas portable puppet theatres (szopka) were also used (see Waszkiel 1993). The carollers would go from house to house and, if allowed inside, would perform in order to get rewards of food or, occasionally, money. Early in New Year and around Epiphany the carollers might change their characters and masks and continue the practice. The Epiphany period gave way to the Carnival period (Zapusty), following Candlemass. In certain areas (such as the Suwałki district) there was also a historic practice of Easter Carolling, or Alilujka.

Teatr Węgajty began researching old carolling practices early in its existence. Expeditions were first undertaken in villages in Suwałki in 1989 (later to become a regular site of the Easter expeditions). Initially they began to experiment with a handful of carols and tunes. Later they had a meeting with a resident of a village near to Węgajty, Kawkowo. "Dziadek" ("Grandfather") Tkaczuk was a former caroller from the Lwów region of Poland (now in Ukraine) who was able to supply verses and songs from Kolęda *spectacles*[lxxviii] in which he had participated. This material formed the basis for the current format of the Kolęda spectacles performed by Teatr Węgajty. In 1995, following Kolęda expeditions to the Hutsul regions and the Lemko districts, the group first performed Kolęda in Węgajty village. The result of this was a greater acceptance of the group by the villagers but also the rediscovery of various props and puppets used by the local Węgajty *kolędnicy* (carollers)[lxxix], including a goat puppet (*Koza*) and a *Szemel* (hobby horse)[lxxx]. The group also began a greater research on ethnographic materials relating to local carolling.

In 1990 Teatr Węgajty began to undertake Easter expeditions to the small, remote village of Dziadówek, in the Suwałki district, in Northern Poland, having been approached by an ethnologist who told them of a localised practice of Easter carolling which had all but disappeared. Seeking out local *masters*[lxxxi] and former (in some cases, contemporary) performers of the practice, the group undertook their first

visit to the village (where the practice had already stopped). They have continued to perform there every Easter since (fig 11). The Alilujka differs from the Kolęda predominantly in the form of content. The songs of Easter, not Christmas, and the Kolęda has more theatrical/dramatic elements[lxxxii]. The period of time the group has been performing there has also meant that relationships differ to those villages where they only occasionally visit (as I shall discuss later). I shall now describe the co-ordination and practice of a Kolęda expedition with a note to the reader that, superficially, much of what constitutes the framework of these expeditions is similar to that of the Alilujka and, performance material aside, the practice is similar.

The Kolęda Expedition

The current format of the Kolęda expedition is based on several songs, scenarios and motifs. It may also include any elements that are of interest to the performers, especially if there are guests with specific skills or, if they are from abroad, foreign songs and tunes. It is difficult to explain exactly what takes place on an expedition. I will, however, explain the working process for the training and rehearsal. I shall then attempt to outline a basic Kolęda expedition . Further, more detailed explanations of songs and practices can be found in the work of Lidia Pajda (2003) and Anna Rakoczy (2004), both of whom were frequent participants during my fieldwork.

Format

The Winter Kolęda is based on several motifs, combining those materials provided by Pan Tkaczuk and other materials gathered through research. These materials include seasonal songs, songs and set dramatic routines with interactions of mask and puppets and certain improvised forms. The songs include Polish and Ukrainian pieces (and sometimes English and German) which are both well-known and more obscure ones. Certain tunes are sung when walking from house to house, others when entering or leaving the houses and some inside the house (fig. 12). Other songs are sung to the actions of particular characters and puppets. These include those connected with the figures of the Goat, the Stork and the Jew. Often the ensemble will sing whilst one of the members performs with the puppet or mask. Interaction with other members and the audience is frequent. These routines and

songs are fairly set in their outcome but are often able to incorporate improvisations, particularly when audience participation takes place. The running order of this format is fluid and flexible, often being dictated by circumstances and/or Wacek.

Members of the group may change characters from house to house and some elements may not be played at certain points. There is also the occasional tune for the carollers and the householders to dance to.

The Expedition

Any expedition only takes place at the invitation of a particular village or after the theatre (or its representatives), have approached the village and gained permission from the heads of the village[lxxxiii]. A date will be arranged, giving the theatre time to prepare and, presumably, the villagers to be informed that the Kolęda will be taking place. The theatre arranges a number of rehearsals, often over one or two weekends before and after Christmas (or New Year). Before this any special songs will be selected. Workshops begin, as ever, with an evening of dances which also incorporates demonstrations of the masks and puppets by the more experienced performers. The participants set out seats and create a simulated space of a room. Each participant then takes a turn with each mask, getting advice and direction from Wacek and the senior members. This type of training and rehearsal takes place several times throughout the weekend.

The songs and texts of some of the sketches are learned by oral/aural means (although participants can write the words down and practice in their spare time). One, or more, of the group sings the songs, and the participants are expected to be able to learn them. Another exercise involves walking around in circles chanting sections of the text. This is intended to assist the newer members to learn the words. Following the final workshop-rehearsal arrangements are made to travel to the place of performance, either by car or by train, depending on distance and numbers.[lxxxiv] Depending on the time of arrival the group may then start that evening or the next morning. The group is generally based in the house of an associate or, in some cases, a building such as a village school. This was the case in Nowice.



Fig. 11: Easter carolling (photo: Trev Hill)



Fig 12: Christmas carolling in Nowice (Photo: Joanna Zbiegien)

Songs and Scenarios

The songs and scenarios used in the Kolęda have various significances and histories. Some of them are specific to certain regions whereas others may use different languages. It is necessary to briefly describe the main elements to illustrate the work of TWW.

The Songs: As noted, these are seasonal songs. The more well-known Christmas songs are known by most of the Polish members of the group (and those non-Poles who have lived in Poland for some time). In addition to these there are specific songs such pastorałki and walking songs (sung whilst walking). There are also a number of Ukrainian and Lemko songs (usually taught by Marika). Some of these are taught to the group, such as particular carols and chorus songs, whilst others are sung specifically by the main members of the group, with the guests doing the chorus. In cases where the songs are from a specific region and associated with a particular singing style it is attempted to teach the different melodic lines of chorus.[lxxxv] If an individual wishes to learn a specific song for solo performance then this is encouraged, likewise if collaborations are agreed upon they are actively encouraged. As with other aspects of the work, individuals are encouraged to expand their horizons both practically and philosophically.

Some of the songs may be religious, others comic. Other ones, which are specific to Kolęda performances, sing about the Kolęda itself and the participants, often dropping less than subtle hints for food or drink! Some may give blessings and wishes for good luck. The following bids thanks and farewell, with a promise to return next year,

Za kolędę dziękujemy
Zdrowia szczęścia winszujemy
Byście sobie długo żyli
Zdrowi i szczęśliwi byli
Na ten Nowy Rok.[lxxxvi]

The Stork (*Bocian*): This figure is known to have been performed in the Warmian region and as elsewhere. It is a puppet of a stork head; made from wood and having a handle approximately one metre long, around the handle is a white sheet (fig. 13). The performer covers themself with the sheet and holds the stork above head height (thereby becoming the stork). They are then able to walk around, manipulating the beak with a string. They may also interact with the audience. The accompanying song (sung by the group) tells of leaving breakfast for the stork. At some point somebody (usually another performer) 'feeds' the stork by putting a piece of food (bread, cake… or even a pair of trousers, on one occasion) in range of the beak and allowing the stork to bite it. This can involve a certain amount of care and precision because the stork-performer may not be able to see through the sheet (the performer should not show their face). It is also possible for a piece of cake to disintegrate under the pressure of the beak. What is considered more serious is if the stork actually drops the food, it being seen as bad luck. On several occasions when the stork has dropped the bread there is a collective gasp of horror from the other performers. It is considered even graver when it happens in-front of an elderly audience, for whom the significance is assumed to be known. Following the first song the stork will stand before the group while another stork song is sung in a German dialect. Mutka found this song in a book, although it may not be connected with any known Kolęda rituals. Its inclusion emphasises the rural German aspect of certain areas of Polish history and society.

The Goat (*Koza*): The goat puppet comes under the family of mask/puppets known as *turon*. These include figures of goats and wild oxen (the Tur is an extinct species of wild ox). Like the stork, they are wooden heads (in this case often covered with skin) on a stick, with snapping mouths operated by a string (fig. 14). The performer also covers themself, hiding the face, with an inside out jacket (sleeves in)[lxxxvii]. The performer will run around the room loudly, bleating and stamping.

The goat has several characters, often relating to where it is from (although only one will be performed per house). The Ukrainian Goat is, when played by TWW[lxxxviii], more aggressive than the Polish Goat, often crashing through the room, overturning chairs and chasing people. It is accompanied by a song and fiddle tune (predominantly sung and played by Marika) in which the lyric tells of it being shot by hunters (at which point the goat falls down on the floor) but revived by a doctor (it jumps up and goes wild again). A garishly attired Gypsy (*Cygan*: fig. 15) accompanies the milder Polish version. This time the goat is running around but being steered by the stick-wielding Gypsy while the group sing a different song. In this case the ill goat collapses to be revived by the Gypsy, singing about food. The revived goat is then paraded to the audience with the Gypsy begging and cajoling for money to take the beast to a doctor (if money is actually given all the better!). The Gypsy may also do a dance for the audience as the goat leaves.

A third incarnation of the goat sees it being chased by an old Jew (to a Jewish tune). The goat is quite aggressive but eventually keels over unconscious, where upon the Jew milks it and either drinks the milk or attempts to sell it to the audience. The enraged goat gets up and begins to chase him once more. This scenario was specifically used in the Zapusty performances rather than the Christmas/New Year expeditions.

The Jew (*Żyd)*: The Jew is a familiar character in Polish literature and culture, as we have seen. The character also appears as an integral feature of Kolêda and the Herody (including Szopka puppet shows). As well as the role noted above he has two more styles of performance. The Jew (fig. 16) is generally dressed in a long black coat, a hat and a big bushy beard (although a straggly one was also available). In one of his guises he comes into the house to a Jewish dance tune and the

performer has free rein as to what the character may do. This may include dancing with a lady (the character is always male although the performer might be female) or trying to sell things to the members of the household. The later practice is to be undertaken with extreme caution because if a sale really is made it may be considered binding. Wacek would warn potential Jews not to try to sell anything that was valuable to the group, like a prop or instrument. I was also told of a former member of the company who was such an accomplished Jew that he managed to sell a lake near to the theatre ("…although being a good Jew he sold it without the fishes!"). Historically the performer of the Jew was often one of the best performers in the group, having to have quick wit.

The other Jew is also a trader (perhaps not surprisingly), who is asked, by the chorus, whether he is going to Bethlehem to worship Jesus. In a question-and-reply interaction with the choir he tells how he does not understand this new God, (*God is great, what is he doing in a stable?*) and that the Three Kings bought their gifts in his shop. The final verse sees a peasant come in to beat the Jew in an effort to *teach* him. Following some protest by a new member of the troupe, this scenario was later changed to have the goat coming in and singing at the Jew before chasing him out. I shall examine this in more detail at a later stage.

Herod, Death (Śmierć) **and Devil:** This scenario is based on the ancient passion plays and the *Herody* plays of the Kolęda. Herod, portrayed by an actor in a simple cardboard mask, sings about how bad life is and how he has to send soldiers to slaughter the innocents. Death, dressed all in white with a white hood/mask, comes in and tells him how evil he is. Death proceeds to behead Herod with a scythe (fig. 17). The devil then appears and argues with Death over Herod's soul. The choir then sing a song (from the Kolberg collection) about Death coming for somebody.

Hobby Horse (*Szemel)*: Although TWW do not use the Szemel in their Kolęda performances anymore (it being used primarily for Zapusty and theatre performances), the figure was historically a familiar part of Kolęda practice in Warmia and throughout Poland. It is familiar to many people in the form of the Krakowian *Lajkonik*. The Szemel used by TWW is one which originally was used by Kolędnicy from Węgajty village. It is a wooden framed figure, worn around the

performers waist. The figure is rather heavy after a while and is quite hazardous in icy conditions (one theatre member almost broke a leg when operating it outdoors). This is partly the reason it is no longer used in TWW kolęda.

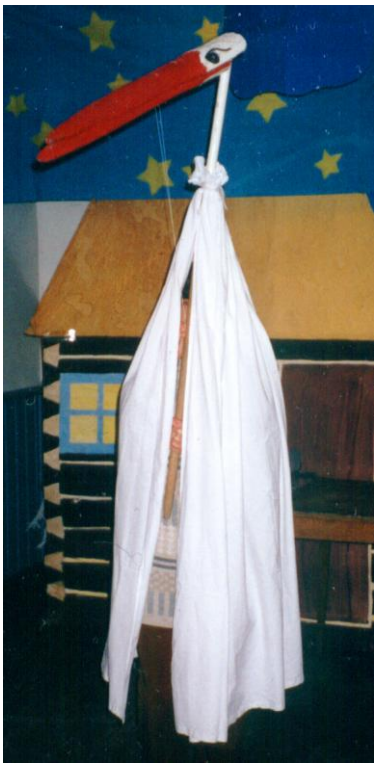


Fig. 13: *Bocian* (Stork)



Fig. 14: *Koza* (Goat)





Fig. 15 *Cygan* (Gypsy) Fig. 16: *Żyd* (Jew) (Photos: Judith Milligan)

The Kolęda Performance

Once the group has established a base for the expedition, often with a local to act as a guide[lxxxix] then they may either travel to a nearby village or, if in the midst of it, they will simply begin (fig. 19). This involves the performers walking (whilst singing and playing) to a house and knocking to gain entry. If the door is answered and permission is given, the troupe enter the house and begin the performance, although it may also be performed outside. Following the performance the audience may offer the players refreshment, usually tea, coffee and cakes but also cooked meats. Alcohol, usually vodka (occasionally home-made) may also be offered. The host (*gospodasz/gospodyni*) may also make a gift of money and/or food for the players to take away (*Kolęda*). The length of time the group stays in a house varies. It may depend on the reception and the familiarity of the host to the group as well as what stage of the day the meeting takes place. Often, when the group have been working a long time and are tired, the rest may last longer. In some areas this appears to contrast with historical practice where visits seem to have been more structured about when to leave (often immediately after getting the Kolęda!) and it was commented on during several of my interviews with older informants. This illustrates a tension between the work of TTW and their historical counterparts. This tension is apparent throughout the work and will be examined later on.

The houses in many of the villages differ and so the performers may find themselves playing in spacious modern house at one point and then moving into an old peasant house, with a low roof and a kitchen which can barely contain the entire troupe. Likewise performances may take place on earthen floors, carpeted lounges and a variety of different venues[xc]. Having finished in one house the troupe moves to another and repeats the process. This continues for as long as necessary, often into the late night and even the early morning. In certain villages, the final day of carolling also involves a dance being organised in a local building (the village school in Nowice). This meeting will involve locals and their guests, the troupe and possibly

local musicians. The following day the troupe departs either to Węgajty or possibly another village (or in the case of some participants, back home).



Fig. 17: Herod and Śmierć (Death) (Photo: Judith Milligan)



Fig. 18: *Szemel* Hobby Horse (Photo: Waldemar Czechowski).



Fig. 19: Start of Kolęda. (Photo: Judith Milligan)

Conditions and Physical Hardships

Kolęda, as done by Teatr Węgajty, can be an extremely arduous practice[xci]. A combination of long hours, often harsh weather conditions and (in some cases) copious amounts of alcohol mean that it can be a physically demanding experience. On several occasions members of the troupe have been injured and occasionally attacked. It is, in comparison to the work in the theatre space, a very extreme form of performance work. The length of the day also differs but is generally very long. Twelve-hour days were not uncommon. One morning the proposed time for carolling was about three hours, in able to prepare for the dance which the group were to play at. However we returned over six hours later! On occasion the troupe has worked in two villages in one day (in one case visiting around one hundred homes). Depending on the length of the expedition and the size of the village (and whether they are regulars to the village) the troupe will attempt to visit the whole village, although in some 'occasional' villages this policy was not carried out.

A consideration of the weather is also important. Not only might conditions and temperatures fluctuate (one night there was a fierce snow-storm and the temperature dropped to around -20C) but the performers have to enter houses which will be considerably warmer than outside. This means that while the performer is outside consideration must be made for cold weather and several layers may be worn. However, entering a warm house and performing produces a lot of sweat. The hot, wet kolędnicy then have to return to the cold outdoors having perhaps eaten and drunk.

The consumption of food and liquid refreshment throughout the day can be a double-edged sword for performers. While it is necessary for nutrition it can also cause the occasional problem when a performer is dying for the toilet in a sub-zero snowstorm. Alcohol can also be both help and a hindrance. Experienced performers generally hold that the consumption of vodka actually helps them cope with the long hours and fatigue. From experience I can say that it does seem to help, despite

medical evidence showing alcohol consumption actually lowers body temperature drinking vodka does seem to provide a warming effect while doing Kolęda. However, one of the problems is the risk of over-consumption. On several occasions members of the troupe, particularly newer members and guests, have misjudged their consumption (especially when drinking the powerful home-made *bimba* vodka). This can be problematic when one has to perform. Such excesses appear to have been a common feature of the historical kolędnicy. Older informants in villages told of performers (particularly the Devil) getting very drunk and often behaving in what would normally be considered objectionable. TWW tend to play down such practices and they are not encouraged (although not necessarily discouraged). Once more there appears a tension between the Theatre's practices and those of historical kolednicy. I shall now examine these tensions.

4.4 Tensions and 'authenticity'

The 'new' and the 'old'; Differing ideas of Kolęda

As noted above, there are various points where the practices of TWW conflict with perceived notions of historical practice. However, there are also points where historical practice in a contemporary context also creates tension. These tensions, I will suggest raise questions about both the performers and the practices which challenge notions of their own identity. It is apparent that the practice of Kolęda involves certain suspensions of everyday practice and protocol, such as removing shoes before entering a house, and yet there are some marked differences between historical kolędnicy and TWW regarding levels of acceptable behaviour. The character of the Devil can illustrate one particular example of this. The Devil is a common character in historical Kolęda practice. As well as playing a vital role in the Herody he also appears to have a role as a ritual clown, often granted some kind of ritual licence to take the performance to extremes. These extremes are not established to any great degree with the theatre's work.

Historically it would seem that performers kept a single character throughout the day, something that is not always done with the theatre troupe. It is partly because of this that the costumes in TWW's expeditions are simpler than many

historical performers would have had. The Devil in TWW wears a knitted cap with goats' horns[xcii]. As with other costumes, this may be passed around the troupe to allow other performers to use it in different houses. Historically the old carollers had more elaborate costumes that, in the case of the Devil, could be red or black. The costume might also have adornments such as a tail or wings[xciii]. The lack of detail in the costumes was a particular criticism many older informants voiced about TWW. In one house, whilst I was playing the Devil, I sat quietly whilst others sang. The *gospodyni* commented, "You may have the horns but you are rather quiet for a Devil". I asked what a Devil should do. I was told that, historically, the Devil in this village would behave in a rather unruly manner; jumping around the house, onto the tables, stealing things and telling rude stories and jokes[xciv].

> "Did he chase girls?" (I asked)
>
> "Oh! And how! The thing was that sometimes he would be very drunk and be very rude and sometimes nasty to people."
>
> "Did anyone throw him out or try to control him?"
>
> "No, never. It was all part of it." [xcv]

I asked Wacek why Teatr Węgajty Devils were not encouraged to be more outrageous.

> Well, you can try it if you like, but one actor decided to do so once. He thought it would be a good idea to steal a horse and cart… it would be in keeping with the tradition. The thing was he didn't know there was another tradition in this village, that of beating people. They used to have a reputation for fighting…he found out. That's one tradition you can keep, thank you very much!

In other villages I also heard tales of the rowdiness of kolędnicy. In Węgajty village itself one former kolędnik told how he used to tell his own wife not to let the group in because of the mess and damage they might cause.

The practice of Kolęda by TWW differs from such historical practices in that it is more subdued. There are several reasons for this, perhaps the most relevant being that the troupe are rarely locals in the regions they visit. As such codes of behaviour may differ from historical kolędnicy. Historical kolędnicy were from the regions, if not the villages, that they visited (something commented on by old

villagers). Although they were often masked, villagers would have some idea of who they might be. It was apparently permissible for these men to cause damage and disruption in the houses, scaring children etc. Likewise, it was not uncommon for rival Kolęda groups to fight if they met. This kind of behaviour is reminiscent of descriptions of carolling in Newfoundland (see especially Faris, in Halpert and Story, 1969). As with Faris's account, it seems that such behaviour was tolerated by villagers and accepted as part of the practice.

Teatr Węgajty, however, are performing Kolęda within a different context. In some ways their work is both geographically and temporally detached from the villages where they work. Those villages where TWW work have been separated from the historical practice of carolling for some years (often decades). As such the practice is not as vital to the local lifestyle as it may have once been, many of the families and individuals in these villages having never experienced the historical practice. In at least one village where we performed, the practice was apparently alien to the residents. Even some of the older villagers were unsure what it was we were doing[xcvi]. In such cases we had to be careful about introducing the practice to new audiences. The alienation from the practice suggests that householders would be unfamiliar with the more rowdy forms of Kolęda and probably not in favour of such behaviour. Likewise, parents are not always happy if their children go into terrified screaming fits when a giant goat storms into their house. This and the fact that the troupe are often strangers in the villages, leads to a more cautious approach regarding behaviour. While it might be argued that some villagers are familiar with the group, it should also be considered that the pattern of performance and behaviour has already been established in these villages. As such it would, perhaps, be inadvisable (and undesirable) to change it now.

As part of the pre-expedition training performers are reminded of several codes of practice which should be observed, such as the wiping of feet on entering a house (even if footwear is not removed). There is also an established practice of striking an offender who seems to be overstepping the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. This is reinforced during the rehearsals. Wacek also warns performers against scaring children too much in case they become traumatised. On several occasions the performers acted quickly to usher out a character that was scaring

children during the performance, even to the point of showing the child exactly how the masks and costumes worked. Alcohol consumption was not warned against and seemed to be left to the discretion of the individual performers. However, occasionally fellow performers might comment on a colleague's over-consumption, particularly through the medium of the *rounda*. On one occasion, following a night of heavy consumption, I was warned to drink less because of my own performance commitments that evening (I was doing a solo puppet-show). I was later struck at one point for taking a large glass of vodka. There is a problem in that it can be offensive to the gospodarz if drink is refused too much. Techniques are used to avoid unwanted drinks, such as tipping it into a tea-cup and then not finishing the tea or covering a glass with the fingers to hide the fact it is empty. Another favourite technique is to get somebody else to drink it (usually me!).

It is evident that TWW practice a calmer style of Kolęda than did some of its historical counterparts. Likewise, as noted, there are a number of other features that differ from the historical practice. This raises questions of *authenticity*. If the practice of theatre is to be considered as a Technology of Self then can we also consider *tradition* as a form of Technology of Self? It is necessary to examine these questions and tensions. Further more, in light of the fact that the theatre utilises what may be seen as traditional motifs and material, it is necessary to consider the relationship between TWW and notions of tradition and modernity.

4.5 Tradition and Self-crafting.

Tradition as Technology of Self?

The work of Teatr Wiejski Węgajty is based on the practice of old forms of singing and performance and also theatre practices developed over the last forty years (which themselves can be traced to earlier practices). The workshops are a mixture of theatrical training techniques and older forms of dancing, singing etc. It might seem therefore that *tradition* is an important tool in their work. However it is not very easy to define their relationship with tradition, or indeed, modernity. This was made apparent to me when Wacek returned from an interview puzzling over a

question he had been asked, *Do Węgajty belong to the past or the future*? On the surface it was a straight question about the group's own place in theatre practice. Could they still be seen as a radical group with new things to offer or, like Gardzienice, had they become *Old Guard* and were now following an old fashioned form of theatre? The group may now be seen to face a new question about their own identity which, having been established over several years has developed a changing relationship with those who follow their work. Perhaps ironically, the type of theatre which TWW began making over fifteen years ago was strongly influenced by Gardzienice who were considered radical because of their utilisation of old forms of music and singing, particularly those of minorities from within Poland (see Allain, 1997 and Cioffi, 1996). It might seem that in some circles the old was the modern. Likewise, that which was once the radical is now the old and itself may be seen as *traditional* (see Allain, page 163)[xcvii]. While the identity of the company members is based upon their practice of theatre, it is also possible to consider that their *style* of theatre also influences their identity. Having noted historical use of rural motifs in theatre we are able to see TWW as being part of the 'tradition' of theatre, but also as part of a 'tradition' *within* theatre, one which is based upon the use of 'traditional' forms. We may now consider how a perceived relationship with a notion of 'tradition' may be used in identity crafting.

A foot in each camp; TTW and practising 'tradition'

The matter of *tradition* is rather hard to define in TWW, not least because of differing attitudes to what it means and entails to be *traditional*. Likewise, the performers' relationship with the material they are using may be ambiguous with regards to how it should be treated from a viewpoint of *tradition*. I suggest that it is this ambiguity which not only raises tensions as to matters of *authenticity* but also allows the work of the theatre to function, as I suggest it does, as a mediating device for *fuzzy identities*. What became apparent from my communications with members of the theatre was the awareness of the ambiguity of notions of tradition. Likewise, how their own practices may be seen in different ways by others. Likewise, the use of what are seen by many as traditional forms also was seen as having different

meanings to different audiences. These uses became clear to me when interviewing not only the members of the main theatre group, but also some of the students and musicians who worked alongside them.

As noted previously, Marika joined TWW from Ukraine, where she had been involved with a Kiev-based theatre company. During the late 1980's and early 1990's she had learned Ukrainian (being a first-language Russian speaker) as a way of embracing her Ukrainian identity. Her expeditions into villages to discover songs and music were also borne partly out of a desire to know more about 'her' Ukrainian culture. This interest in Slavic village performance practices was what eventually brought her to Węgajty. Marika is philosophical in her thoughts about tradition and her use of the songs and music in her work.

> I know I am not a real Kolędnik… I know as well that some of the songs we do, that I sing would not have been done the way we do them, or sung by women. But I think, what is better, a girl sings them or they die out? At least if I sing them then the songs still live.

However, she can be very strict about singers following the correct voice when performing polyphonic styles, as I found out when my choral skills proved less than disciplined. One might not be the right person to sing it but Marika wants them to sing it correctly! One of Marika's roles as a performer is also as a teacher and an active practitioner of certain materials in an attempt to keep some form of continuity. The matter of whether it was suitable for somebody to be playing or singing something was not generally a concern during rehearsals and workshops and, as role-switching in the carolling sketches often involved gender switching, it rarely appeared an issue in performance either. Gender did enter some debates on tradition, as I shall illustrate later on.

The notion of working with traditional forms was often seen to be useful in helping a person connect with some aspect of an identity which they may have otherwise been unable to make contact with. Several of the young students who worked on the Projekt Terenowy expeditions spoke of how taking part in the carolling expeditions helped *put me in touch with being Polish.* It was notable that many of those who spoke this way had been brought up in towns and cities. However some also spoke of their own relationship with *the village*.

> I was born in a village and lived there for the early years of my life. We moved to Warszawa when I was very small. I had forgotten about some of these things like Kolęda. It felt strange when we started doing this work with the theatre. I felt kind of uncomfortable… it is hard to say but this work was like getting back in touch with part of me which I had forgotten about… it brought me back to the village.

One Olsztyn-based musician, who occasionally collaborates with TWW, explained her own reasons for exploring *village traditions*, as a form of identity seeking,

> We went on a trip to Brittany to learn circus skills. While we were there we heard Breton music and liked it. When we returned we started trying to play Celtic music on our instruments. After a while we began to look at traditional Polish music to see if we could find the things that we liked in Celtic music in Polish music… We began to study about Polish music to find out who we are.

The young musicians then went on to form a band. They sought out old *masters* in villages to study under and now occasionally organise dances and concerts for these old musicians in Olsztyn. Eventually the band members went their different musical ways. Whilst continuing to play and research village music some of them had disputes about the level of 'tradition' they should adopt in their work.

> [One of the male band members]…wanted us to play in a very traditional way, with archaic singing, which is hard to do. We argued about how traditional to be. Should we be like Teatr Węgajty, kind of part way, or like Muzykanci (well-known Polish folk-music group) which is more like a show band, or really traditional. I said if we were going to be like village musicians, then I wouldn't be able to play the accordion because women don't play accordions in the village.

What is notable about this account is the idea that there may be levels of *tradition* that can be applied. Like with Marika's comments, there is an awareness of a tension between what may be seen as *traditional* practice and what might be seen as *modern*.

Conflicts with Tradition

As I stated earlier, although the group utilise certain notions of *tradition* these can fluctuate according to certain situations. Performances like the Zapusty utilise a

wider catalogue of performance techniques and scenarios than the carolling and there is less emphasis on trying to keep it 'traditional'. One might say that as Zapusty is still widely practised and, one imagines, moves with the times then the changing face of the Węgajty show is traditional by its very changing. The Carolling occasionally faces different challenges. While the format and contents of the Kolęda is acknowledged to be a hybridised formulation of the theatre, based on several different regional and historical forms, there is still a certain emphasis on attempting to do things properly and in a way similar to that of the old carollers. Certain rules are applied which old carollers (or ethnologists) have noted, such as wiping ones feet on entry to a house, not letting the Stork drop the bread etc. Likewise, certain singing styles and harmonies are expected to be learned and abided by. While the scenarios in the Kolęda are generally the same each year (Herod, Jew, Goat etc) there is a certain amount of freedom to experiment with the form of delivery. This is very much in keeping with Wacek's desire for improvisation and personal exploration. However, I occasionally witnessed incidents which grew from tensions between personal views and attitudes towards *tradition*. One particular case was that of the Jew.

As noted above, one of the scenarios performed during the carolling is that of the Jew's song. This song involves a question and response between a choir and the Jew and results in the Jew being chased away by an irate peasant. Initially I had serious misgivings about this song and the use of a stereotypical Jew in the carolling. I had broached the subject of the representation with Wacek, might it not be seen as anti-Semitic?

> "How do you justify this character of the Jew? Is there not a danger that it can be seen as anti-Semitic?" (I asked).
>
> "It could, of course, but what is the harm in recreating an old ritual and including the traditional aspects of the Jew and the Gypsy in it?"

That, I suggested, would depend why you wish to recreate it! I was at pains to point out that I did not wish to subscribe to a seemingly popular notion that Pole equals anti-Semite, however I would need to ask such questions if I was to represent such aspects of Polish culture to western academia.

> Ah yes, it is this 'political correctness', isn't it? Maybe there is a good focus for your work… the problem of political correctness and performance.

Political Correctness now appeared to be as worrying a demon to Wacław's Jew as anti-Semitism was to "my" Jew.

> How about the fact that be it a positive or negative representation it at least represents and gives evidence of a Jewish culture that no longer exists? It tells that Jews were once a major part of Polish culture. Besides, I have Jewish friends who take part in Zapusty and play the Jew.[xcviii]

It was explained to me that when I learned the words to the song I might realise that the group's interpretation of the scenario was aimed more at highlighting peasant ignorance and xenophobia than making the Jew a figure of ridicule. The figure of the peasant was deliberately portrayed as stupid. This was further demonstrated when, during a workshop, Wacek criticised one performer for not being 'stupid' enough.

While not wholly convinced of the effectiveness of this interpretation I accepted it as part of the group's work. However during one rehearsal a new member of the workshop pointed out his dislike of the final section of the action. It was not right, he said, to ridicule others for their faith. This provoked a heated debate. Both Wacek and another member of the group (a trained ethnologist) began defending the song from both a viewpoint that it was written down and it was not right to change something that had been written down as this could be seen as altering a recorded historical form[xcix]. Wacek also pointed out the aim of the work. At one point Mutka intervened and pointed out the group had occasionally omitted certain verses from Christmas carols which would now be considered sexist towards women. Furthermore, such cuts took place when there were women there to protest but there were no Jews here to protest. This event suggested that other members of the group may have held differing views about certain aspects of the work. The piece was changed so that at the end a (singing) goat came into the room and chased the Jew away. The lyric was also changed for both the Jew and the (former peasant) Goat.

This incident also suggested a further tension within the group's relationship(s) with 'traditional' material. In one point there is a certain reverence of printed word that suggests a written version of a song has a certain legitimacy which should not be tampered with. This proves awkward when a personal (modern?)

belief[c] and a perceived necessity for change challenge the aspect of historicity. This is surely how traditional practices themselves change. That it took a convicted stand to change the performance also suggested that the subtle meaning of the piece was not as evident as certain members of the group may have thought. The changing of the material also provoked differing reactions from individual members. When asked her views about the new scenario Mutka was not wholly satisfied. It was not necessary to change the final verse in this way, which she felt was not artistically pleasing. The offending verse could just have been omitted without altering the humour of the piece.

This incident, for me, further highlighted questions of perceived notions of authenticity. It also suggested tensions between the image of village culture which the group may have sought to portray and interpretations which others may have drawn from the material. What are the relationships between the performers and the material and between the audience and the material? Might the relationship with the material also be significant in attempting to express a particular identity to others? Likewise, how might others perceive the performance of such material? To begin an examination of these questions I shall consider how the question of perceived notions of authenticity may influence notions of identity amongst TWW and other performers.

'Authenticity'

During one Kolęda expedition in a Lemko village the Węgajty troupe found they were performing at the same time as a group of village children was also performing Kolęda. The children's performance proved an interesting juxtaposition with the theatre group, causing a variety of responses amongst the troupe. Unlike the 'stripped down' costuming of the theatre group (fig. 20) the children had made and were wearing very detailed costumes of the stock figures of the Kolęda (the Jew, Angel, Herod etc: fig. 21)[ci]. As well as this the performance did not involve the theatrical sketches of TWW but just Lemko Christmas songs[cii]. The performance (at least the one we saw) also only lasted a short time (about ten minutes) and as soon as the children got the money and gifts they left, unlike TWW who often stayed for over thirty minutes.

We had encountered the children, walking along the road, as we first drove into the village. We later met them as they exited one house as we were going into it. The third time we encountered them was when we were already in a house (the mother of our guide) and were resting after a performance. The children called at the house and seemed surprised and wary to see us there. They performed around three songs and, as soon as the money was handed over, left. It seemed apparent that they were unsure of our group, and while it was possible that they were too self-conscious to perform in front of adult kolędnicy our enquiries found that they only sang songs. The juxtaposition saw an adult group which performed both songs and sketches but were not local, not Lemko and did not speak Lemko, opposite a group of local Lemko children who were performing songs from their own culture.

During the post-expedition rounda the subject of these children arose. Whilst everyone agreed that it was good to see the children performing several of the troupe voiced discomfort. One guest musician commented, "I made me feel what we were doing was fake. They were doing something genuine, something from their culture. We shouldn't have been there." The comparison of the children doing something 'more genuine' was also voiced by other members. However, it raises the question of just how one might (if one can) approach the matter of 'authenticity' or 'genuineness' when discussing the theatre's work? It is also important, if considering theatre work to be related to constructions of identity, to consider how this relates with ideas of identity. The question may be asked, what are these members of this group? Are they *traditional,* are they trying to be? TWW are a theatre company. They play old music that is often considered by audiences to be traditional. They have learned music both in formal academies and from old village masters. The masters have been content to teach them. They live in villages. But can they be considered *traditional*? Such questions were often unfruitful. However occasionally they revealed evidence of further tensions in matters of identity, particularly when the question of a performer's relationship to the performance material. A local musician commented, "I wouldn't say Węgajty are traditional musicians, they are kind of part-way between theatre, traditional and folklore".

When asked if they consider themselves traditional musicians members of TWW tend to skate around the question. Different members seemed to consider it

differently (if they considered it at all). While Wacek is somewhat evasive about self-classification, Mutka suggests that whether they may be seen as traditional musicians is a constantly changing state. At certain times to certain audiences they



Fig. 20: Nowice Kolęda (photo: Judith Milligan).



Fig. 21: Children's Kolęda (Photo: Trev Hill)

may be seen as different things, including being seen as traditional musicians. What is often voiced is that when two musicians meet they meet as musicians and make contact as fellow musicians. It does not seem to matter whether a musician has been trained at a conservatory if they play the music well and are able to exchange with old village players. However, some other musicians have differing views about identity and relationships with material.

One young male musician pointed out how his alleged playing style betrayed his identity, but this could be changed.

> Some of the old guys in Kurpie tell me they think I am good but they can tell I am from Warmia by the way I play. They say I will never be able to play exactly like them. I disagree but it'll take me ten years to prove them wrong.

In such a case the alleged birthmark of his technique was something which could be overcome. He doesn't want to be a Kurp, he just wants to be able to play like one. However, in the ten years he takes to achieve this will the Kurpian style have changed?

A female musician cited above (who lives in Olsztyn) and has learned music from village masters considered that, "I am not a traditional musician. I don't live in the village. I don't have that connection with the village. We don't call ourselves 'traditional musicians', we aren't". Wolfgang, however, pointed out that if she moved to a village she would be a 'Village Musician'. In years to come these young musicians might be seen as the carriers of the tradition. While they themselves might not consider themselves *traditional musicians* others might. Time can change identities.

As previously noted, Marika had developed a relationship with Ukrainian songs and music partly in an attempt to enhance her relationship with her Ukrainian identity. The performing of certain materials in a way she knew was not 'traditional' was something she obviously thought about as she was concerned both with matters

of continuity and transmission but also of perceived correctness (see above). However, questions about identity also influenced her decision to leave Schola.

Following the split between the main group, into Projekt Terenowy and Schola, Marika had worked with Schola and their liturgical dramas. However, she began to feel uncomfortable with certain aspects of the work that created conflicts between her notions of what was proper and what was theatre. When Schola perform in Church buildings they attempt to (re)create the performance styles of the original medieval performances[ciii]. At certain points the drama may involve a Mass (a real one is performed). Large sections may also involve a choir standing before the altar to sing or performing devotions to Icons. Taking part in such performances began to make Marika uncomfortable.

> I'm not a person who goes to Church a lot, but coming from an Orthodox background I think people who are at the front of the Church are good people…maybe they are not, but they are supposed to be trying to be good. I know I am not that kind of person… I should not be there, with other people looking at me thinking maybe I am.

Other members of Schola tried to reassure her that this was 'just theatre' and nobody had to be so pure. However, Marika felt that the reality and the drama were too close to be distinguished and her path lay elsewhere.

Other members of Schola have differing relationships to the material and performance. Wolfgang stresses to anyone wishing to work with Schola that they do not have to be(come) Roman Catholic, although several of their number are in the Church themselves. Several members come from Eastern Orthodox and Greco-Catholic backgrounds. That Schola perform what are essentially Roman Catholic rituals may create differing reactions amongst these members. One female member of Schola commented that she finds *it can be hard* taking part in RC ceremonies when she is from a GC background.[civ] Sergei, however, being from a Ukrainian Orthodox background had no problem with it. Under the USSR, he claims, his Church choir in Kiev was not allowed to sing songs in Ukrainian. However, they were allowed to sing songs in Latin, Italian etc. Apparently, the authorities felt the congregation would be less likely to understand religious songs in these languages. Singing Roman Catholic songs in a Romance language was a way of expressing a

Ukrainian Orthodox identity. Sergei was quite at ease with his relationship with the performance material.

Marika's experience raises an interesting point. In an attempt to lessen her concerns, she was told “It is only theatre”. Here we may consider that to declare the performance *Theatre* in some way neutralises certain aspects of authenticity. Marika wasn't really a member of the Church, she was an actor… it was just theatre. Marika however considered that to the audience it was not just *theatre*. By adhering to a desire for authenticity it was not possible for the performance to be treated as *just theatre*. A similar situation may be found with the Kolęda performances. Historically many carollers carried a large star that could spin around. TWW have used these in the past but do not do so now. One performer during an expedition considered that the reason the star was no longer used was because it suggested a more religious aspect to the performance. By avoiding the star the carolling could distance itself from the more religious aspects of the historical practice and therefore the performances were *just theatre*, thus having less requirement for total *authenticity*. Any charges of non-authenticity could be deflected by the claim that this was just a theatre company doing a performance based on traditional Kolęda.

This highlights the identity of TWW… they are a theatre company. Individually they may (and do) have differing views of who and what they are but, when all is said and done, as a group they are a theatre company. This, I suggest, raises questions about the nature of their kind of theatre. While the group may have differing ideas about what they are performing and to whom they are performing, their work may actually have differing interpretations for the audiences. At this point we may consider that the practice of theatre may not only be seen as a tool of identity crafting for the performers but possibly also by the audience. This subject will be explored in Chapter Six. Before examining the audiences with which TWW are connected with to explore differing reactions to their work and material I shall discuss the question of tradition and Technology of Self in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

As noted in previous chapters, the use of ‘rural’ and ‘traditional’ material and motifs in the expression of Polish identity is common both in Polish literature and theatre. I suggest, therefore, that it is possible to see Theatre as a type of Technology of Self in that it provides a way for individuals and groups to create some form of self-identity. As we have noted, the utilisation of rural elements may be seen to suggest a link with a ‘purer’ aspect of identity which is less tainted by the ‘Babylonian’ urban. It is possible to argue that the utilisation of Others in such work as Teatr Węgajty perform may also suggest a ‘return’ to an ‘epoch’ when not only was there a ‘purer’ identity, but a time when Selves and *Other* co-existed openly. As such, the material may be utilised both by the performer and the audience in several ways.

The use of material which is representative of *Other* groups raises the question of how the group wish to illustrate their idea of what is Polish. Likewise how does this relate to the audiences or the participants of workshops? What is the relationship between a historic past and contemporary audiences, which contains a number of different generations (some of whom might remember the lost cultures)? What do the young urban Poles get out of taking part in rural songs and performance practices? Does this have some role to play in a realisation of their own identity and, if so, how might the act of performance be connected to the creation, maintenance and expression of both group and individual identities, both from the concern of the performers and their potential (and actual) audiences. With this in mind, I aim to explore the use of performing arts as a form of Technology of Self.

5.1 Technologies of the Self and creation of identity.

When discussing the question of national identity it may be pertinent to ask how an identity might be produced. Writers such as Anderson, Gellner and Nairn write about how certain elements as socio-economic factors and political engineers encourage 'the masses' to embrace nationalist identities but do not really examine

how and why these identities may be embraced at the various points throughout society or, in the case of writers such as Hobsbawm and Ranger, how and why practices might be adopted and performed. It may therefore be advantageous to examine how an individual may fashion themselves into the image of self they require, bearing in mind that this may then be extended to an examination of possible practice by a larger number of people, perhaps fashioning a group identity. The crafting of identity is particularly interesting when one considers that actors and performers often spend a large amount of time working on themselves both physically and psychologically to enable them to create an identity for the stage. In such a case the group identity might be seen as being formed through a search for individuality. It is necessary, therefore, to examine how an individual may fashion oneself into an image of a self which they require (bearing in mind that they might not be autonomous in this crafting). This in turn may be extended to an examination of such practices by a larger number of people, perhaps fashioning a group identity. With this in mind, I will consider 'Self' on two levels, that of the 'member of the group-Self' (such as national identity) as well as that of the individual (including 'professional') Self. It should be noted that both of these entities may exist as concentric circles which occasional overlap.

In his later years, Foucault focussed more upon the creation of identity, particularly through various 'Technologies'. While he may have considered these more from the viewpoint of the creation of a 'social' identity, I feel (as, indeed, his examination shows) that it is possible to consider the Technology of Self from the point of view of the creation of an individual self as well as (often simultaneously) a social/ group self. Foucault outlines four major 'technologies' with which humans may understand themselves (1988: 18-19). These technologies, he points out, are rarely operating in isolation and usually function in combination. They are:

Technologies of production (by which to create and shape things),
Sign systems
Power (to objectify the subject)
Technologies of Self.

It is these Technologies of Self which,

> … permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality (ibid.).

We may consider that these 'operations' may involve working on a variety of aspects of the self, including the physical, spiritual and intellectual. It is also important to consider that these ‘operations’ may involve a questionable amount of agency in that the individuals may not be wholly conscious, or (initially) accepting of the changes taking place. As Foucault points out, not needing the forms of material production as objects, “they are often invisible techniques” (1984, 369). Furthermore, it is important to consider what these ‘states’ may be. Having noted some of the training techniques of Teatr Węgajty we may consider the physical and vocal training as forms of technologising (training to do something one couldn’t previously do, or, more importantly, *wasn’t aware* they could do). Practising to become perfect, or to expand one’s abilities or to gain acceptance as a practitioner may all constitute forms of technologising. I shall explore some of these operations, as presented by Foucault.

Foucault himself examines ways in which these technologies were applied and developed from Classical Greece into the early Christian Church (1988). While neither he nor I suggest that these techniques are exhaustive, I feel it is important to examine them in that they give rise to vital points of interest which I will present as being instrumental to my later examination of identity crafting in relation to performing arts. In the writings of Jerzy Grotowski one of the prime objectives of the *Holy Actor* (1968) is the recognising of one’s self, one’s abilities and limitations and the need to discard certain behaviours which block the realisation and expression of the true self. We may compare this with Foucault’s writings.

Foucault's examination of Ancient Greek philosophy and its relevant practices focuses on the notion of *Concern of Self or Taking Care of Oneself*. This, he writes, involves the examination of oneself and, as Plato writes, being concerned with “wisdom, truth and the perfection of the soul” (1988,19). Through a comparison of Socrates and Gregory of Nyssa, Foucault creates an interesting image that he strangely does not elaborate on. Gregory, writing on virginity, discusses the

renunciation of the world of flesh to regain immortality. Referring to the parable of the drachma he likens the examination of the soul to that of the cleaning of the house to find the coin (21). Socrates, however writes about his mission to get people to be concerned with themselves as being done from benevolence but also from a concern for the city, "because in teaching people to occupy themselves with themselves, he teaches them to occupy themselves with the city" (20). We might consider this from a point of the need for self-discipline but also from the need to align oneself with a higher ideal, or an ideal encompassing the group. To be concerned with oneself is to be concerned with those around you, realising one's place in the chain and making sure there are no weak links. Your own welfare and success is tied to that of the group.

While the image of the Self as a bounded entity such as a house or city is interesting, what is also important is Socrates' suggestion that the *individual* is also *the group*. Individual self is also group-self. This contrasts with Gregory's isolation, although this in itself leads to a reconnection with God[cv]. It is interesting to consider Foucault's mention of rural retreats where individuals might go to try to 'discover themselves', as if leaving the city (constructed self?) or group allows one to rediscover the individual again, "A retreat into the country becomes a spiritual retreat into oneself. It is a general attitude and also a precise act every day: you retire into the self to discover" (32). Such philosophies certainly influence the practices of such groups as Teatr Laboritorium, Gardzienice, Reduta and TWW (see Chapter 1). The distancing of oneself from the town is a fundamental aspect of their practice. We may therefore consider the crafting of Self to consider the relationship with the group from a number of viewpoints.

Foucault does focus upon the different approaches to what might be considered undesirable aspects of self and being. Gregory writes of renunciation, rejection and isolation. However an examination of Ancient Greek practices illustrates a different approach to the self. Senecan practice involves an examination of self with an aim to improvement and purification through an assessment and adjustment of Self (34). This is not the renunciation technique of the Christian practices but a form of examination to understand and correct, not to reject. Here we find two types of self-crafting being applied through self-examination. One involves,

"a certain renunciation of the self and of reality because most of the time your self is part of that reality you have to renounce in order to get access to another level of reality" (35). This is in contrast to the practice that calls for

> ... the progressive consideration of self or mastery over oneself, obtained not through the renunciation of reality but through the acquisition of knowledge and assimilation of truth (ibid).[cvi]

I feel it is important to consider these two strategies, not as merely archaic but as currently active. It might be considered that two methods of crafting self may include either a rejection of a former self or, instead, an examination and control of self. These practices can be found in a variety of self-crafting, including identities of ethnicity and as an important tool in the crafting of the actor and performer. Furthermore, I feel that it is possible to speak of the 'technology' in two ways. Just as Riles' network can be simultaneously the environment one is a part of but also a tool with which one works when one is in the environment, I consider it possible that the 'Technology" can be both an environment/ institution which one is in as well as being a tool within that environment.

5.2 Creating and Expressing the Self.

Training and Disclosure of Self

A further consideration should be made about the nature of training and letter writing which is attached to the Stoic tradition, the latter which, Foucault suggests, is a disclosure of self (34). The training and schooling (31-33) involve the student(s) listening to lessons in silence, something we may draw parallels to when considering certain types of theatrical training (An important aspect of the work of Grotowski's Holy Actor is the giving of themself to the audience in a kind of sacrifice). Likewise the Christian act of confession (also a disclosure of self?) also reminds us that the crafting of self may be done with the assistance (be it invited or imposed) of others. Is the theatrical performance, a display of technique and adherence to a discipline, also a "disclosure of self"? Perhaps the "technologising of self" necessitates a performance of self. Hadot (du Gay et al, 2000,), discussing the work of Foucault, comments that Foucault's notions of work on self do not actually go far enough. Hadot believes that the work on the interior may lead to a psychic state whereby,

> one encounters another kind of exteriorisation, another relationship with 'the exterior'… which consists in becoming aware of oneself as a part of nature, and a part of universal reason… In this way, one identifies with an 'Other' (376).

It is then possible to consider the act of performance as a form of 'disclosure of self' in that it allows the performer to demonstrate their skill, professionalism and, to some extent, their notions of the world through interpretation.

The pedagogical relationship raises the matter of student/master relationships. Despite their differences both Seneca and Cassian demonstrate that the relationship between disciple and master is related to the master being able to lead the disciple to the desired state of being and realisation of self. Cassian's citing of the old oriental maxim "Everything the monk does without permission of his master constitutes a theft" (44) echoes what Alter was told about the guru/disciple relationship, by wrestlers in India (1992: 42). Alter describes this relationship as being related to the notion that the guru represents the ideal towards which the disciple should strive (67-68). The guru may be seen as an embodiment of the ideal, "A guru is a conduit to a higher state. One must dissolve oneself into the image of the guru in order to achieve this state" (69). The other person can occasionally be the embodiment of the ideal. This brings together two aspects of the technologies of self which I consider vital; the relationship to others and the pursuit of an *ideal*.

Distancing, retreat and the Return..

The practice of 'retreat' to the countryside in the crafting of Self is a multi-faceted one. In the first instance we may see it as leaving the distractions and complications of the 'polluted' city and attempting to return to 'nature'. This may allow the individual to shed the trappings (material, physical and psychological) of the town and rediscover the 'natural' self. However, if we consider the image of the rural as being a purer form of identity from a national sense, then we may also consider that moving to the rural allows an individual to become closer to the 'source' of nationhood/ national identity. This may also involve a form of temporal retreat, in that returning to the 'source' of nationality (or even to a state of pre-nationality?) can involve stepping out of history and attempting to return to an

'epoch' before political technologies were being applied to people (I consider political rhetoric a form of technology of Self in that it creates an environment which people must align themselves to, or against).

For instance, to 'return' to the forest in Warmia, may be seen to involve making contact with land which is older than 'Polish' identity. Contact with the land involves a kind of spiritual contact with 'source' and with all those who have gone before (Old Prussians, Germans, Balts, Slavs etc.). In doing this one is moving into a temporal region which is before and beyond the political technologies of Polish Communist anti-German rhetoric of the Nineteen Forties and Fifties, before the social and political upheavals of the Twentieth Century, before the 'creation' of 'Polishness' during the partitions of Poland, before the Teutonic Order and even before the coming of the Slavs. It involves attempting to move back to a 'time' of 'natural' behaviour, before the application of Technologies of Self. Perhaps this is a time when *Others* are other individuals, not other 'races'. In such an environment, the results of the 'operations' we may have performed on ourselves may be useless to us. As such, we may now operate again and counteract them if necessary. The retreat, particularly in the sense we see in this theatre practice, is also reminiscent of aspects of initiation practices like those outlined by Maurice Bloch (1992). Here we may see the retreat as a *rite of isolation* from society which may involve stripping of individual identity by bringing the 'initiate' closer to a 'natural' state. The work during the retreat may involve some kind of specialised training on the physical or psychological self and may be considered a form of *rite of transition.*

Regarding the 'confessing' aspect of Foucault's theories, we may consider the theatrical performance. The re-integration (*rites of incorporation*?*)* may be seen in any kind of final performance resulting from the period of isolation. This integrates the actor/workshopper back into the wider society, making them at once a member of the society and a specialised individual (within a particular group), showing (physically) what new aspects of self have been developed during isolation. It is interesting to note Schechner's suggestions that the 'retreat' work of Grotowski's para-theatrical phase (*Special Project*) not only resembled initiation rites (1985, 105) but, due to the lack of a public performance at the end, perhaps failed to reintegrate the 'new' people back into society,

> Participants were left hanging: they were separated, stripped down, made into tabulae rasae; they had deep experiences, were "written upon," made new; but these "new selves" were not reintegrated into the ordinary world (106).

Wacek Sobaszek agrees with such ideas, TWW did not wholly adopt the Laboratory Theatre practice, considering it too artificial and not focussing upon human contact enough. We may note then, that the technologising of Self necessitates not only an ideal, but also an audience to display self to. In this case it may be that the language of 'self-making' is not the most apt. I consider that an examination of 'self-enactment' is more suitable. I shall therefore consider the matter of en-acting self.

Performing the Self

It is very apt that a common anthropological term for those we study is *actors*. It is interesting but also potentially problematic in that theatrical actors, by their very craft, generally have an idea about the character they are playing and how to play them. Theatrical actors are also aware that they are being observed and generally invite the observation. I feel the use of the term *actor* suggests that a field-subject is not only aware of themself but portrays to observers that which they have spent time working on for display purposes. This suggests the use of Technology of Self in several possible ways. Not only may the individual have worked on themself to attain the states Foucault suggests, but may have also worked on themself so as to be able to (consciously?) portray a particular image to those around. This possibly creates an environment where it is safe(r) to be 'one's self'. This may be seen as providing a form of 'self' for others' consumption.

The notion of 'self' consumption (consumption of 'selves') is central to Wagner's work on the advertising industry. Here he opines that there is a difference between consciousness of 'self' and the acting of 'self' (self-action). Where as the previous may have been a result of the kind of self examination and operating which Foucault explores, the 'self-act' is an action which relies on one's (and presumably others') own reaction to itself (60). Battaglia suggests that ,

> ...self-enactments are realised in self-consumption, where agents reveal not their effectiveness as "hidden persuaders" so much as their capacity for persuading themselves of their effectiveness in shaping an identification with their audience. (1995, 6)

I shall explore these ideas more in the following chapter, however for now it is important to consider that the 'enactment' or 'portrayal' of self may be seen as necessitating some kind of audience (even if it is one's self). As I shall examine later in this chapter (when I examine the use of 'tradition'), this may also involve a deliberate performing of an image for the consumption of *Others*, to (perhaps) influence their own self-image and self-enactment. This is the kind of thing which theatrical actors do 'professionally'[cvii] with, perhaps, one slight difference. A theatre performer is someone who (generally) performs somebody else. Arguably they are performing their own relationship with an other. It is their skill at interpretation and their skill with manipulating or relating to their audience which is seen as an expression of their professional self (arguably an extension of their personal self?). Arguably this skill (like Wagner's advertisers) may (occasionally) be persuasive enough to make theatre a form of Technology of Self. To explore further the professional self of an actor (particularly the kind of actors I have been studying) it is, interestingly, useful to compare them with ethnologists/ anthropologists.

5.3 The Anthropological and Theatrical Technology of Self

The anthropologist and the actor

> "I sometimes think that they spend so much time studying others because actors and anthropologists are two groups of people who don't know who **they** are".
>
> "I agree with you, but I'd also say that actors and anthropologists **know** that they don't know who they are". (personal conversation with an actress in a minibus, Edinburgh 2002)

Initially it might seem strange to consider theatre actors and ethnologists/ anthropologists as having similarities but even superficially, we may note that the ethnologist/ anthropologist demonstrates their craft through the research, interpretation and exposure of a group (or at least the exposure of their interpretation) to a wider audience. The skill of the researcher in interpreting the 'characters' is then held up for scrutiny whereby the audience will pass comment upon the skill of interpretation (often saying how they would have done it better!). This is in no small way similar to the craft of the theatrical actor/ performer for whom (as mentioned

previously) the representation of others is perhaps the most obvious part of their work. An actor is somebody who plays other people. The measure of their skill is often seen as how well they can do it. They too are then exposed to critique. The playing of characters and interpretation of theatrical texts also creates a (historical) discourse of whether the interpretation was correct, in the eyes of critics. I shall examine the professional identity of the anthropologist, reminding the reader that I feel much of this can also be applied to the actor.

Pels (2000) utilises Foucault's theories in an interesting exploration of a creation of the self of anthropology. Pels argues that the use of ethics as a guiding (governing) set of rules constitutes a form of technology of professional self. This professional self, he tells us, is

> …directed at a specific ideal of anthropological publicity, and second, that this public persona is only one of the ways in which anthropologists have constituted themselves as subjects (136).

As Pels points out, citing MacIntyre (*After Virtue; A Study in Moral Theory*: 1984), Foucault's technologies correspond with the triad of Aristotelian ethics of an untutored self which is operated on through the elevation of ethics to a realisation of its potential; in other words, the crafting of an individual towards an *ideal*. Ethics, says Pels, constitute a form of Technology of Self (138) in that it involves a reassessment, historicising and politicising of anthropological methodology and motive. This also leads to anthropology finding itself in a constant state of negotiation between differing parties. The discipline attempts, through a liberal approach to de-politicise itself yet it is forever aware of its political character that it must attempt to dispel (or even portray). Anthropology finds itself caught between audiences and masters, research sponsors and research subjects, what Pels refers to as, the *trickster's dilemma*, walking between worlds and having to forever show a different face to a different party, being all things to all men but not being able to show a true face (137). Theatre, I shall suggest, may sometimes face a similar dilemma. Performers may find themselves caught between, censorious authorities, artistic ideals (self-expression) and the need to generate funds from a demanding public and self-interested funding bodies. Likewise, we may consider that certain types of theatrical performers may find themselves aligning with a certain notions of ethical behaviour which represents their craft, as such the philosophies of the craft

(for example, doing something 'for art's sake') may answer any critique or question, shielding the performer themself from any attack.

An example of the similarities between the two disciplines, which is close to my research, is the matter of the researching actor. One of the problems the contemporary fieldworker faces is the researching of groups which 'speak our language' and utilise techniques and terminology similar to the ethnographic researcher, partly through exposure to ethnographic and academic literature. This is similar to Riles's point of finding one's self 'inside the network' (2001, 1-6). Historically (since at least the early Twentieth Century) theatrical (and film) actors have had very systematic theories of researching 'characters' for performance. The works of the Russian director, actor and theorist, Konstantin Stanislavski (Stanislavski, 1946 and 1949) illustrate how an actor should research the 'subject' character, perhaps inventing a history for the character and motivational drives for the behaviour in the drama. It is a common practice for actors to research the history of plays, the historical and contemporary background of the action, visit places named in the texts and even train in certain practices which the character may do. By doing this, the actor not only *builds* the dramatic character but simultaneously adds new aspects to their own character. The professional self leads to the development of the personal self. If we consider the work of groups like Gardzienice and Teatr Węgajty then the practice of research may be seen to go even deeper, researching practices and techniques utilised by villagers as well as researching historical practices, backgrounds and so forth. This may produce a situation whereby the ethnographic researcher comes to study the identity of the actors and finds that their professional identity as performers already means they have undergone a considerable amount of self-research and much of the analysis has already taken place. The actors have already moved on to analysing their audience, the 'subjects' of their work (as I shall do in following chapters).

Art and the Crafting of Identity

Having considered the notion of Technologies of Self from the position of the performer it is important to examine how art may be used to craft identities, particularly of an audience. Art may be considered capable of contextualising a

number of concepts and ideals in a way that also allows transmission to wider audiences. Anderson (1983) makes much of the role of print and education in the creation of national identities. It is with his works in mind I shall examine how art, particularly literature, may be seen not only as instrumental in creating a notion of an ideal identity but also of creating that important figure of the *Other*.

Although primarily music and theatre are performance based arts it is important to remember that much theatre (particularly Western Theatre) is text-based and that the scripts (and perhaps the actions) are readily available in a textual form that allows it to travel and be transmitted in an authoritative form, as writers like Goody (1977), Finnegan (1970, 1988) and Whitehouse (2000) have noted. This may also, to some extent, be said of a particular body of music and song (particularly in the light of folk-loric collections of songs etc). Secondly, representations of historical practices and performances that appear in literature (ethnographic or artistic) may be seen to provide a possible source for inspiration by readers in the sense that Anderson writes of when he demonstrates how supposed national traits and images of 'community' can be expressed in a book (1983, Ch 1).

The necessity of audience is important when creating art as the artist, presumably, desires to express something to somebody. This raises the question about how wide the consideration of the identity of the audience should be. It is evident that the artist might wish to communicate something to a particular audience but there is the added consideration of what is expressed to those who are not necessarily part of the intended receptive group (or whether the intended group agrees to receive the art). A historical example of such works may be seen during such periods as the 19th Century certain Polish writers, like Adam Mickiewicz, wrote with a dual audience in mind. In one sense they were writing for Poles, particularly those living under 'foreign' rule in the former Poland. These works aimed at creating solidarity and national consciousness, however they were also intended to be evidence to other nations that there existed a Polish national and cultural identity which should be preserved, developed and liberated. Mickiewicz's images of a rural Poland, describing many folk-practices and rituals were all written in Polish and helped forge the image of a Polish-speaking, Polish national identity.

Mickiewicz's use of (highly detailed) descriptions of folk-practices is partly based on a knowledge of local ethnology. The works of scholars such as Oskar Kolberg (collections of Polish songs) may be seen to further reinforce and legitimise a Polish culture in a way Nineteenth Century ethnologists, and later, Twentieth Century anthropologists could legitimise a particular culture or practice through their scholarly representation of it. We may see once more that the 'standing proxy' of a practice by a group is important for legitimisation in the eyes of others. The question of *Others*, audience and legitimisation is particularly important when considering the work of Teatr Węgajty in making representations of, and working with certain (often impoverished) sections of society. This is even more important when we consider the use of rural motifs and practices which can be considered 'traditional'. It is necessary to examine the role of 'tradition' in representation of self and other, as well as the use of 'tradition' as a tool in othering.

Likewise, the technologies of self, as we have seen, may involve techniques of renunciation (perhaps a creation of a new self by discarding the old) or of self-examination which leads to self-control (a crafting of self through incorporating techniques of domination to limit undesirable aspects of self). These practices are based on a notion of ethics and an ideal to aspire to (become). I suggest that this ideal (or ethics) may be seen as *the Other* that one may set oneself against, whether to reject or to aspire to. At this point it is necessary to consider *the Other* and how it may contribute to the notion of Self. Rather than the soul having a mirror relationship to the Self (Foucault, 1988; 31) then perhaps the mirror of the Self is *the Other*. This suggests that one may craft an identity by *Othering* oneself through a process of renunciation. The presentation of how different we are to others may also include a presentation of how different we are now to what we ourselves once were. We ourselves become the *Others*! By considering this point we may begin to consider how a sense of tradition and/or modernity may contribute to the crafting of self.

5.4 Modernity, Tradition and Self-Identity

My focus on Tradition and Modernity is based on various dichotomies and paradoxes observed whilst in the field. The study and performance of practices and music generally regarded as *traditional* in nature by a variety of people generates a

number of questions regarding the very notions of *tradition* and *modernity* and the identities and motivations of those who performed them. These perceived polarities are widely used in theoretical literature and, as writers such as Argyrou and Poppi (see below) show, anthropologists have been active in various ways of utilising these distinctions, both for and against. As I shall illustrate below, various imagined polarities were evoked, voiced and apparently illustrated by my informants as major factors in their everyday life and their life-philosophies. These included imagined polarities of village: town, active culture: passive culture and tradition: modernity. Often, such comments as those voiced predicated a difference, an *Otherness*, between certain parties. Comments illuminated perceived cracks in continuity. My focus on tradition and modernity are not an attempt to define the phenomena but rather an examination how the notions, or concepts, are considered and utilised by the subjects of the research, particularly in relation to the crafting of identity. However, it is necessary to consider certain writings on the concepts of Tradition and Modernity.

Traditional Tensions and Modern Causation

Argyrou (2001) considers that,

> Tradition and Modernity are European inventions. They are conceptual tools and therefore also cultural weapons that different groups in European societies have used to understand themselves and to fight battles whose stakes are identity and power (1).[cviii]

These concepts, he writes, were/are used by dominant European classes to universalise their culture and distinguish European culture from the *Other* beyond Europe (2), also serving to distinguish from the *Other* within European culture; the high culture from the low culture (rural and urban?). In comparison, the dominated cultures seek to re-invent and re-interpret their culture as a valorised Tradition to defend themselves against Modernity (the West) in an anti-modern stance. Argyrou argues that these concepts denote the possible limits of a universe of discourse in that it is not possible to discuss anything between these two polarities, one is either modern or traditional. Through this discourse something may be marked both culturally and temporally, as belonging to a different way of life and from a different

time. In his view this automatically means that the traditional is “placed in humanities past, which from a modernist point of view, carries lower cultural value”. (3)

Citing the work of Jane Collier, Argyrou points out that it is almost impossible for the researcher to discuss the *Other* without resorting to a reaffirmation of such polarities as village/urban, agrarian/bourgeois and traditional/modern (5). In her case, Collier became a representation of the modern world, a status which it was beyond her power to control. This, Argyrou suggests, demonstrates that ones status within the polarities is not decided by oneself, but by others. Traditional people were not aware of being Traditional until the Modern people told them they were,

> This, of course, is not to say that before the advent of modernity… [they] did not have a tradition, understood as a way of life or culture. It is to say rather that they were not yet designated as "traditional". [It] was not tradition because it was not aware of itself as modernity's devalued opposite (14).

Modernity, it would seem, creates an impoverished *Other* that then uses the model of the Modern to elevate and reinforce its own identity, thus reinforcing the discourse itself. The *Other* will decry other *Others* through negative comparisons with the Modern. The search for Modernity can mean casting off (renouncing) such an identity by crafting oneself into a modern being and creating a partisan alignment with Modernity (the West), like the village children who wish to become urbanites[cix] (While the village may serve as an ideological link between nationalist identity with the past and evidence of the continuity of the culture, the image is still one of being out of date [9]). However this is an operation fraught with peril as one risks being rejected by the modern as a second-rate imitation which has discarded its own *authentic* culture (deemed *authentic* by the Modern, of course) (10). Argyrou argues that tradition (as a by-product of modernity) may be adopted and utilised as a form of defence boundary by the dominated parties, however, this often shows itself as an inverted form of Modernity, with Modernity itself being seen as the barbaric and inferior.

This raises an interesting point about the legitimisation of *Others*' practices by elite groups, such as ethnologists, through a process of interpretation (for other members of the elite) which may not sit readily with the views of *Others* themselves.

> Ethnographers, then, are prepared to authorise native tradition but only insofar as it does not take supernatural powers at face value- for they have rejected the reality of these powers long ago (20)[cx].

Argyrou seems to ignore that an impoverished *Other* may seek alignment with a more powerful party as a means of othering an-*Other*. If we consider the Polish situation then we might consider the historical struggle of certain Poles aligning with either Russia or Germany as a way of acting against the *Other* (see Ch. 1). To be aligned with the West was not to be Russian; to be Communist was to disassociate from the Capitalist West. I might compare this with the desire by many Poles, and other East Europeans under Communism, to embrace Western fashion as a form of 'resistance', even though Communism may have been viewed as a form of modernity by many[cxi]. Is this 'traditional' or 'modern'?

Latour critiques modernity by stating that *We Have Never Been Modern* (1993) and portrays the notion of Modernity as a form of domination that is often connected with Westernism. Latour considers that being Modern is connected with an attempt to break time and create a distance between ourselves (if we choose to consider ourselves as *Modern*) and others. Often the idea of a modern period is noted from a particular event (French Revolution, end of a war, the fall of Communism). In effect we may see a declaration of Modernity as a way of attempting to stop history, or even to declare it beginning anew. However, says Latour, if only we could realise that this act of declaration is part of a continual process which has always been there then our past may change and our relationships with *Others* may change (10).

Essentially the declaration of Modernity also is a declaration of non-modernity, or *Primitivity*. Once this is declared then relationships between cultures are unequal. Modernity signifies an ideal of superiority, all that went before (or is connected to it) is primitive. Modernity is an idea which gives credence and reason to behaviour (40). Arguably this also works for the notion of *primitive* or *traditional*. As such a notion of modernity creates the context for ethics to work as a Technology of Self. Latour suggests that an invention of polarities allow domination. A polarity of Nature and Society is necessary to counter-balance. This creates a notion of two polarities of Purity. However a creation of Purity suggests the existence of

Hybridisation, something undesirable to certain parties (let us consider extreme Nationalist ideologists, for example). As such the possible existence of hybrids within the poles of Purity are often ignored or denied, thus allowing their existence and (re)production. Only to those with no concern about the notions of Purity (i.e. non-Modernists) that are not bothered by hybridisation, "To undertake hybridisation, it is always necessary to believe that it has no serious consequences for the constitutional order". (41) I shall argue that the hybridised image of Polish society, as portrayed by TWW, may be shown in an attempt to argue that such a hybridised society is of no threat to a real Poland (although it may be to the purity seeking nationalist).

Modernity and the Control of History

Latour considers that *Moderns* do not consider themselves separated from the past by time, but by events. By creating this stop-start image of history they attempt to control time and history but, as Latour also notes, they cannot really do so as this is all part of the continual process (68-9) [cxii]. This may all sound strange if we consider some nationalist approaches to a reconstructed past[cxiii] but,

> Historical reconstruction and archaism are two symptoms of the moderns' incapacity to eliminate what they nevertheless have to eliminate in order to retain the impression that time passes (69).

Latour also introduces us to the notion of the *anti-modern* whom, he suggests, wishes to reverse time to protect the purity of the past from degeneracy(72). This is also an important consideration if we are to examine the practice of practices that declare themselves *traditional*. Here I must ask if we should consider a *Traditionalist* as some kind of cultural Luddite who wishes to move the clock backwards, more slowly or to stop it totally… or is this merely a reversal of the Modern? Tradition may actually be seen historically as a constantly developing phenomenon (perhaps developed through hybridisation?), "One is not born traditional; one chooses to become traditional by constant innovation". (76)

This challenges Argyrou's constant referral to Tradition as the devalued opposite to the Modern. By considering that Tradition may be re-vitalised, re-interpreted and valorised (predominantly by anti Moderns) we may explore the

notion that tradition might become *revalued* to find a place in its new world, not only by the Traditionals but also by the Moderns. Likewise, if the modern construct of the Nation is to be considered as an *invented tradition*, might not the utilisation of an idealised past (and its traditions) be seen as Tradition legitimising the Modern? Tradition, I shall argue may actually be seen as an element of Modernity that allows the Modern to exist, rather than being a by-product of Modernity.

5.5 The Traditional practice of Modernity & the Modern practice of Tradition

Having just laid out a critique of the notions of tradition and modernity I find myself in a position of still having to utilise them, aware that many of my subjects do. I shall attempt to address a different view which recognises the reliance of each upon the other and shows how hybrids may be comfortably used in a discussion of tradition and modernity. Both concepts may be seen as ideals by which individuals and groups choose to relate. Both are really unobtainable goals. Tradition as a form of anti-modernity, means denying development and the historical process. Likewise, to be Modern also suggests being frozen in a position of time. After all, modernity only lasts for the moment and then it is the past. To be modern is to be forever changing which, as we have seen, Latour considers an aspect of traditionality. Tradition and modernity may be seen as forms of an ideal that may be part of a Technology of Self, connected with notions of national/ethnic identity. Not only does each involve a relationship with an ideal but also they involve creating a relationship with an *Other*. However, as I have noted, this may be seen as a simplified image of the situation. I shall examine the use of traditional practices and I shall argue how these practices may be seen as being instrumental to identity crafting, but also how these practices may illustrate differing tensions concerning the ideals of modernity and tradition.

One example from my fieldwork was that of the transmission of music and song lyrics. Members of TWW had often learned materials from old musicians and singers they were reluctant to provide tape recordings of songs to members of BKS. It was explained that they felt the results would not be satisfactory as songs should be learned face to face in the way of oral tradition (despite the fact many members of

the group learned tunes and songs from written texts). One member of BKS pointed out that TWW had been impressed with the traditional music of our group they failed to realise we had learned much of it from recordings, "We live in a city and we don't have the time to sit at the feet of a master in the forest somewhere. This is how we do things!" This reinforced the fact that none of BKS considered themselves from a traditional background where their music was concerned. However, amongst circles of traditional musicians in Ireland and Scotland members had found the use of recorded music as an educational tool widespread (if not always approved of). Later, in Poland, I found several musicians who readily admitted to learning tunes from tapes (even some members of TWW). With a decline of old musicians and less accessibility it seemed that listening to recordings was the new oral tradition. Both village dwellers and urbanites had access to traditional material that was being presented in a modern form. In this way old practices were apparently able to continue and spread[cxiv].

Due to the nature of some of the work of the Polish actors and musicians amongst whom I worked, questions of authenticity, (re) invention of Tradition and appropriation of traditional practices are occasionally evident. I shall therefore examine a number of works that may be seen in the light of the above subjects of identity crafting and notions of Tradition and Modernity to illustrate the tensions and dichotomies related to such practices.

The collection of essays, *Revitalizing European Rituals* (Boissevain, 1992) examines a number of European celebratory practices and events that are considered 'traditional' The decline of the various events are similar to many of the practices TWW work with. Many suffered a decline following World War II, partly through demographic factors, emigration and a lack of interest amongst locals, particularly the younger generations that desired a more modern lifestyle. Eventually a new interest developed through the interest of ethnologists and later of tourists. This has resulted in revitalisation for several of the practices and increased patronage of the villages and their events by visitors. In some cases the rituals have drawn the interests of nationalists. In most cases increased interest has led to increased tensions (should we ask if these are new tensions?) within and without the villages particularly relating to aspects of identity, tradition and modernity.

The increased interest in revitalised rituals, particularly amongst tourists and ethnologists, has generally led to an increase in financial interactions but also to a renewed sense of identity amongst a number of the villagers. The practices begin to form the basis for an identity connected with the village based greatly upon the interest of outsiders (similar to some of the villages connected with TWW). The villages utilise notions and interests in tradition to generate prosperity and self-value. However, the resulting tensions within these scenarios create a blurring between the suggested polarities of traditional and modern. What becomes apparent throughout these works is the role of an outside party in legitimating the practice. Likewise there appear to be frictions and (apparently) contradicting views about the nature of what is authentically traditional. There are areas where both insiders and outsiders raise the question of the legitimacy of new elements being incorporated into the practice. Ironically, the attraction for the tourists and ethnologists is the traditional but major aspects of it are actually sacrificed to accommodate their presence.

Poppi's examination of the Ladin carnival of Val di Fassa (Ch. 6) illustrates this well, demonstrating a particular practice that is used to express a specific ethnic identity through a utilisation of the traditional. The acknowledgement of their distinct culture by *Others* serves such a purpose but, as Poppi states, to consider traditions as being found or invented as a formation of self-identity belies the complexities of the processes involved (114). The society utilises aspects of its own culture and tradition to construct and image of difference which is then demonstrated to (and accepted by) the tourists. The media focus on both the practices, and the tourists themselves, further enforces a notion of difference in the wider world (including anthropological literature?).

Following a post-war decline, partly from the disinterest of the young who were more interested in more modern past-times, the festival eventually began to become a focus point for the community and later to attract tourists, the appeal for many being the ‘traditional’ however, just what was to be considered traditional differed between the observers (tourists and residents) and the practitioners. For the tourists the event was much more traditional and unchanged than it was for the villager's (124). This raises the question of what does constitute traditional and to what extent does *change* constitutes tradition? Poppi demonstrates how a major

practitioner of the carnival, a Jester, criticises one person for not being traditional enough yet, when somebody argues with him by citing tradition he dismisses such things as being potentially damaging to the continuation of the carnival (124). Likewise, the time served practice of ritual license has suffered a decline because tourists are less likely to accept it (121). Tradition, it seems, changes to suit the situation, " 'the past' is called into play when current usage's are to be justified in response to criticism and summarily dismissed when it becomes a hindrance to the very same practices" (125).

What becomes apparent is that such rituals have historically undergone change and continue to do so. These changes are often in response to changes in the circumstances of the community. If change is needed to help the practice survive, prevents stagnation and boredom, serves the interests of the community or if change simply improves then change may happen. The continuation of a traditional practice may be seen to illustrate a link between the present and the past through a practice which undergoes metamorphosis in response to (apparent) modernity. In this way the adoption of the notion of being traditional may be seen not only as a form of recreating ones domination but as a way of being modern. As Cruces and de Rada note,

> By reproducing customarily sanctioned practices, the participants build a ritual image of social continuity, while by adopting new ones they enact their engagement with trends of social change (64).

This may be compared with Poppi's observation that oral tradition is frequently popularised (and standardised?) through published text. In some cases the traditional carnivals are so adherent to a form legitimised as traditional that they are no longer traditional because there is no historic precedent to such a strict adherence to form (128). We might ask if, in such cases, adherence to form becomes the 'new' tradition? As Poppi points out,

> Not interested from the outset in keeping it 'frozen and 'authentic', the villagers have found themselves custodians of a heritage they did not care to preserve- as such- in the first place (125).

While comparisons between these revitalised rituals and the work of TWW may be made, it is important to consider that in many of the villagers where TWW work not only are they part of the outside world which legitimates the practice but it is also

they outsiders who are actually revitalising practices. In might be that the villagers have passed a mantle onto *Others* to maintain the heritage.

It is possible to see a reverse of the situation whereby that the work of the theatre company is accepted by many of the villagers (or they would not let it continue) creates a legitimisation of outsiders by the villagers. The practice is legitimised by the villagers, this in turn allows outsiders to study the work of the theatre, thus further legitimising it in the eyes of other outsiders. This may bring greater focus upon the village but may also legitimise the work of the theatre as an apparently authentic form (seen to be legitimised by the villagers "standing proxy for it"). Such perceptions by *Others* may have a number of consequences. This raises two points that should be addressed, what is the role of the *Other*-observer and what is their own perceived relationship with tradition?

5.6 The Others' Tradition

I hope to demonstrate how enactments of practices which are presented as traditional may be used to achieve and express a desired identity. However, the attainment and expression of this identity may rely on an external perception. I have stressed the importance of an audience, particularly if we are to consider the apparent need and desire for some form of legitimisation. Why does a practice need legitimisation? Legitimisation is useful to demonstrate to others that what you do is authentic. This, as we may see by examining writings on tourism[cxv] is often considered important to tourists. Such legitimisation may endow individuals or groups within the village society with new (?) identities and social roles such as (perceived) guardian of the tradition, as such it may be seen as an alternative way of being modern. But what is it about Tradition that attracts certain people and what is the relationship with Modernity?

A particular aspect of the work of TWW is their ability to appeal to, and perform to very different audiences, ranging from old peasants in their houses to academics in university conferences. Their work attracts observers and participant observers from a variety of backgrounds, including theatre practitioners and academics, ethnologists and urban-based students. Part of their interest is the group's use of historic rural music and practices. Some of these people are part of the number

of Polish urbanites who, for whatever reason, have bought houses and reside, at least part of the year, in a village. The (possibly) idealised image of the village appears to hold some fascination for a number of urbanites (albeit they may also be former ruralites). Why might these urbanites have such an interest in these rural practices and those who perform them. In a country which, historians tell us, has been brought up on an idea of ethnic homogeneity what might be the significance of an interest in the (apparently) lost cultures of a historic Poland? Some of the participants and audience-members spoke to me, about a need for this kind of contact with village culture and perhaps a historic Poland. In some cases it was a renewal of a contact they had had in earlier years, for some it was a contact they felt they lacked. In some ways it might seem to put them in touch with a notion of Polishness. But why in a modern Poland which was attempting to stress its modernity on a world stage might some people feel comfort in tradition, particularly one they had little (if any) previous experience of?

Cruces and De Rada make one suggestion for the need of certain people for Tradition, in that for some lost souls, "a search for knowable communities in a world characterised by constant change" (103) apparently provides some kind of comfort. Tourists (audiences) are, in part, accepted into the community (as part of the hospitality which Traditional societies are famous for!) and, we may assume, feel that they too are part of the tradition. It would appear that an oasis of *the past* in a sea of Modernity is both refreshing and life-giving to some. This is particularly relevant in the case of those who emigrated from the villages and appear to be between worlds. To them the festivals of the village (or a performance of the theatre) may offer a chance to return to their roots while living a (modern/) urban life for the majority of the rest of the year.

It is interesting to consider that emigrants from the village are literally in a form of limbo in that they are no longer a part of the villages they left, indeed they are part of the past. However, they are not necessarily fully a part of the urban world in which they live, as *Others* may consider them ruralites who do not fully meet the requirements to be Modern urbanites. It is interesting to note that in some cases these emigrants who return to the villages for the festive events become the butt of the carnival humour[cxvi]. However, it should also be considered that these returning

emigrants bring aspects of modernity back (such as money, expensive commodities etc) to the village and, as such, provide a bridge between the two worlds. Their financial status and their desire to embrace the Modern world (whilst trying to embrace those aspects of their traditional background that are more legitimised in the eyes of *Others*) illustrates the fuzzy borders of their identities and the apparent to desire to retain something the idealised urbanite does not have (and has no solid claim to).

This desire to embrace the traditional may not just stop at watching and experiencing but may extend to actually *doing*, even more than the original practitioners. As Mary Crain illustrates in her description of an Andalusian pilgrimage members of certain brotherhoods (occasionally returned emigrants) not only wish to take part in the procession but wish to demonstrate their ability to be Traditional and poor, "Its elite members have money to invest in an 'authentic' look, whereas members of poorer brotherhoods may forego the expense of covered wagons" (110). The poorer brotherhoods cannot afford 'authentic' wagons and so rely on tractors! This illustrates a particular tension within the poles of Tradition and Modernity. Tradition has moved to reflect the times. Farmers no longer use covered wagons; they use tractors. However, being Modern allows a certain measure of financial power. This financial power allows one to pay to be poor and old-fashioned. Modernity is about allowing somebody to be traditional while allowing traditionals to be modern..

But what is it that makes individuals and groups wish to demonstrate that they are *more traditional*? Likewise we may ask what attracts certain groups to embrace a tradition which is not historically theirs? Is there some connection between notions of identity and the desire to create an identity that may be linked to ideals of Tradition and Modernity but cannot sit comfortably at either end of the polarity? These are also questions that I shall explore at a later stage. However, for the present I shall suggest that there may be a link between self-identity and national/ regional identity that is fuelled by outside influences and requires fulfilment through a form of contact with a (sometimes) mythical history and culture.

The Development of Tradition as Change

Traditional culture, as we have noted, may be portrayed (if not invented) by intellectuals, writers, etc. and professed by both artists and artisans. However, it is still adopted and utilised by 'ordinary' people. What might be a drive behind this process? Why might people feel a need to embrace Traditional culture? The work of Richard Handler gives some explanation of this, along with an illustration of the dichotomies and tensions this process engenders. Examining Quebecois society in Canada, Handler (1988, Ch.3) considers how rural society has, to some extent, undergone a process of Cultural Objectification. Government and Tourist organisations have created a tourist environment in areas of 'traditional' rural Quebec by placing urban families with local families to allow them to experience 'authentic' rural Quebecois culture. The ruralites are not required to do much more than their everyday existence but this is perceived, objectified and marketed as being part of the genuine basis of Quebecois national identity.

As Handler points out, the ruralites may not intentionally create a folklore performance for the tourists but attempt to carry on their everyday practices in an unselfconscious way. However, the fact that their way of life has been noted and signified as being special and worthy of observation makes them aware of being considered as folk-loric in some way. This situation is also instrumental in changing the nature of society in such areas in that the supposed practice of everyday life now becomes a commodity that can generate income for the locals. Certain practices that historically have been free and open to all, such as dances, now become more orchestrated with tourists in mind (and paid for). Likewise the practice of certain things deemed traditional which have previously suffered a decline in interest, such as traditional music and dancing, are now in a state of apparent revival due to the renewed interest of tourists and ruralites alike. Handler is at pains to point out that much of what is deemed to be traditional is that which academics, ethnologists and writers have studied, found to be of interest and have isolated. In this way they have hoped to preserve. However, this preservation is actually changing the state of being for many of these practices in that they were never historically subjected to such a condition of objectification, codification and preservation. The notion of timeless, unspoiled culture and tradition is, however, a myth as Handler considers that Quebecois society *has never been in a fixed state and has been constantly shifting*.

The development and metamorphosis of the society has actually been a constant process which has involved contact with *Other* groups (such as the Irish and Scots influence on Traditional Music) and emigration and return of seasonal workers etc.

The latter cases are illustrated through a brief examination of past-times such as dancing and music in some rural villages. Rather than being the isolated villages of idealised imagination many of the villages supplied migrant workers for USA. These returning workers brought new music and dances which, it seems were greatly appreciated and in demand. Arguably some of these new materials would be incorporated into local repertoire and later identified as folklore. Handler demonstrates how cultural cross-pollination occurs through social change but also suggests that rather than the apparent codification of practices being anti-Traditional the classification and attempted preservation is actually part of the continual process of change in that it actually changes the significance of those things objectified,

> Paradoxically, the attempt to preserve traditions through objectification brings change. New criteria for the classification of social experience are brought into play which discriminate as meaningful entities what were before unmarked practices, or which assign new meanings (for example, "traditional") to practices previously objectified and marked in other terms. To the degree that these new interpretations become incorporated into the "things" themselves- that is, become part of the understanding that the folk have of their lives- to that degree will the objectifiers change folk culture by creating it as "tradition" (77).

Handler's examination of the connection between Quebecois folk-lore studies and the intellectual drive for a Quebecois national identity illustrates in part the complex relationship between academic studies and a creation of ethno-cultural identity. It also illustrates how those who have been *Othered* by the folklorists may adopt this to declare their own identity. It also supplies a section of the group (in this case, the urban tourists) with an ideal to set themselves against and a handy set of features and practices to align themselves with to craft their own identity from a culture which they have had little, if any, association with previously. This is a similar situation to that which I believe is apparent in certain practices found in my fieldwork in Poland. The notion of a traditional lifestyle may be deployed, or appropriated, by urbanites who have little or no experience of this lifestyle as a way of helping them align themselves with a romanticised national identity.

However, as both Handler and McDonald (1989, 1994) illustrate this form of identity crafting may also create tensions with those authentic members of the alleged folk-society. The idealised notion of just what the national identity should involve often leads to differences between the creators and adherents of this codified identity and those who are brought up in the rural communities which the intellectuals and academics use to illustrate this very identity[cxvii]. Through a process of othering, academics and activists may be seen to categorise the Traditionals and then use their own categorisation to cast themselves as Traditional. Those who are objectified by the process subsequently adopt this ideal[cxviii]. However, as we see in Poppi's work, the tourists also share the image of the Traditionals that has been created, whilst perhaps wishing not only to observe this but also to embrace it and align with it.

One of the major considerations of such relationships is the question of power of the representation of both the ethnologist, academic or artist and the group which they may (claim to) speak for. This may involve the right and desire to portray oneself (as an individual or as a group) as one sees oneself, or as one may feel another sees oneself, perhaps ironically. This representation might be for the group itself or for the *Other* (if not both). Likewise the artist may portray the other, perhaps in a sympathetic light or in a derogatory one. The struggle for power over the actual form of expression may also be seen to take place in some situations. It is with this with in mind, I shall explore the potential use of theatre as used by Teatr Wiejski Węgajty as a Technology of Self. This technology may be applied not only by the performers, but also by the audience, using the theatre as a form of reference for self-examination. It may also see interested parties utilising the theatre-company and its work as a form of representation for themselves to others. In addition I shall argue that the use of certain traditional motifs by TWW and other performers may be seen as a critical tool against the perception of a homogenous ethnic Poland and as a potential form of protest against certain forms of nationalistic expression and notions of *Other*ness.

Chapter Six

In previous chapters we have considered the crafting of identities on both national, local and individual levels. This has often involved some form of Technology of Self, utilised by either state or small group/ individual. What we have also seen in a number of forms is the (re)action concerning "*The Other*", and, as a crafting or declaration of Self involves a consideration of *Other*, it is therefore important to examine the varying attitudes to '*Other*-ness' in Polish history and the expressions of *Other* within artistic practices (particularly theatre). It is also necessary to consider how the figure of the *Other* is also used amongst larger groups to those inside. These examinations shall lead to a consideration of how ideas of "*The Other*" relate to the practices of Teatr Węgajty. This Chapter shall examine how the notion of '*Other*' is actually necessary for the work of the theatre (and indeed, anthropology/ ethnology). I shall then examine how the theatre's representation and alignment with 'the village' may constitute a form of othering which also suggests 'sameness'. This will lead into an examination of how the theatrical performance may be considered as counteracting a number of negative attitudes against a variety of *Others.*

6.1 Relationships of the Other and the Self

Historical 'Othering'

As noted in Chapter One of this work, notions of Polish identity have undergone a variety of changes throughout history and continue to do so as Poland gears up to becoming a full member of EU and afterwards. As Brock (1981) and Walicki (1983) point out, *Polishness* prior to the Nineteenth Century was much different to the 'mono-ethnic' state portrayed after WWII. We have noted the long-standing *Otherness* of the Jew in Polish society which has shifted through such stances (although sometimes occupying several at once) as Communist, collaborator, enemy of the working-classes and peasantry (Hertz 1988), Zionist and "hidden

subversive" (such as Wyspiański's assimilated Jews or the elusive, powerful banker) as well as (perhaps) more sympathetic status as exotic, victim (see, Steinlauf 1997), faithful friend of Poland (Mickiewicz's Jewish taverner in *Pan Tadeusz,* see: Mickiewicz 1999, Schama 1996) or 'Pole of the Jewish Faith' (Konwicki 1984). Likewise we have noted the figure of the German being at times, the settler-farmer, the landlord, the industrialist (often aligned with the Jew), the oppressor, the tourist, the Nazi, the neighbour and the 'Germanised Pole' (in need of reorientation). Similar shifts of identity may also be seen for groups like Ukrainians and Lemko. Have also looked closely at the othering of the rural by the urban and how images and representations have fluctuated.

The attitude towards *Others* in Polish society may be seen in different periods to have altered in form, if not necessarily in content, through historical processes. Such processes, whether one is aware of it or not, may influence contemporary attitudes for or against the *Other*. As we have previously noted, the fiercely anti-German rhetoric of post-war Polish governments still has power today in German-Polish relationships (as seen by the fear of expellees and claims for compensation). It may also be seen in the behaviour of certain parties towards the publication of an article discussing the Jewish connections of Adam Mickiewicz[cxix]. Alternatively, a reaction against such historical prejudices is also noticeable, particularly amongst younger Poles who wish to shed the stigma of an ethnocentric Poland and embrace a more cosmopolitan, multicultural identity. As one sixteen-year old female student told me,

> There is a certain period of Polish history where there were groups who thought of themselves as superior to everyone else, including some Poles. These people were like the Szlachta in Sienkiewicz's books. The problem is that there are still people like that now in Poland who think we should all be like that, and it really pisses me off!

It is against these varying attitudes that one should view the work of Teatr Węgajty, particularly with its use of motifs which are recognised as '*Other*'. It is also necessary to consider how such work may be seen to work against certain notions of the *Other* while, perhaps ironically, maintaining some notion of the existence of *Otherness.*

Self and Other; a symbiotic relationship

In her introduction to the groundbreaking work *Examining the "Other" in Polish Culture* (2002), Elwira Grossmann cites Foucault, " the forceful exclusion and exorcism of what is *Other* is an act of identity formation" (Grossmann 2002, 4). If we accept that a notion of Self also requires a notion of *Other* then we may also consider the necessity of changing the other to suit one's Self. The changing of one's attitude to, and also displaying one's attitude to *Others* is therefore an important part of crafting self and performing it to those around. The refusal to use language, which may be considered racist, the openly demonstrated acceptance of *Others*, or perhaps the opposite forms of the behaviour, may be seen as both a portrayal of one's self-image to others and *Others*. It not only demonstrates something to those who might be considered 'non-*Others*' but also informs *Others* of one's attitude towards them (or at least the attitude one wishes to suggest). It may be tempting to consider and acceptance of the *Other* as working against the notion of *Other* but, as such writers as Boyarin and Boyarin (1995) show, demonstration and performance of Self may also lead to a form of 'self-*Othering*' by drawing attention to aspects of self which may be considered as differences. *Otherness* does not disappear, it simply reassigns itself.

The symbiotic relationship of Self and *Other* are problematic in that whichever way one turns one is stepping in one of the categories. It is therefore problematic to suggest that one may work *against Otherness* because, as Argyrou points out (2000, 200), to discuss 'sameness' is either to attempt to find the Self in the *Other*, the *Other* in the Self or to acknowledge 'difference' in form but 'sameness' in content. To stress "Sameness" is to acknowledge an awareness of difference. To suggest *Otherness* does not exist may also suggest the same for Sameness. With this in mind, I wish to make it clear that I do not consider it is possible to talk of such work as Teatr Węgajty's as working *against* the *notion* of *Other* but rather as working against *certain perceptions* of particular forms of *Otherness*. Indeed, I shall demonstrate that rather than working against othering the theatrical form necessitates the use of it (as do other disciplines such as anthropology) for its own (theatre's) existence.

Everybody needs Somebody

My earlier suggestion that the actor and the anthropologist are very similar may be considered from the assumption that both need the *Other* to express themselves. As Argyrou (2000) points out, despite 'ethnologists' (his favoured term) going to great length to disprove *Otherness* the fact still remains that much of the practice of 'ethnology'/anthropology involves researching *and portraying* those which are often considered 'different' to the reading audience. Despite any arguments that the discipline of ethnology/anthropology seeks to diminish *Otherness* the practice still depends on locating an *Other* to allow the scholar to disprove it. I suggest that regionalisation within the discipline may also be seen as a kind of othering which then allows 'us' to show how other regions are similar. One might also consider that to the popular audiences outside the discipline (viewers of ethnographic documentaries, the Discovery Channel, readers of ethnographic books) that part of the appeal is observation of 'exotic' *Others*. One might also suggest that an examination of historic titles of ethnographic works, many of which have catchy, exotic titles, demonstrates a utilisation of the exotic to attract a (wider) readership (for example: Malinowski's, *The Coral Gardens and their Magic*). One might say that the ethnographer (like the actor) expresses themself through *Others*. Having noted similarities between the two professions, we may consider how the *Other* is used by both ethnologists and performers to express themselves. To do this we may consider two points; firstly, the apparent *need* for the *Other* to express Self and, secondly, a need for the *Other* to be provided. We may also consider that the artist needs an audience as much as the audience needs a provider of a product. This in itself is a form of othering. To explain this I shall refer to Wagner's work on advertising.

In his essay, *If You Have the Advertisement You Don't Need the Product* (1995) Wagner suggests that Self-awareness (awareness of one's Self) is not necessarily the same as a performance of Self. He goes onto suggest that much of the power behind advertising is based on a recognition, not for a *need*, but for "the need for a need" (66). In this way advertisers (may we say 'artists', 'performers', 'writers'?) function by creating some kind of communication with their audience through giving them what they feel they need. Self-act is based, Wagner suggests,

upon a consumption of imagery which allows one to feel they are part of something (a nation, a group, a 'Pepsi Generation').

> The self-act is a contagious image of consumption, something that can easily be seen to imitate almost anything else, and depends upon one's own reaction to it, and thus one's own self-action, for its interpretative scope (60).

If we relate this to a theatrical production (or even an ethnographic text) we may consider the kinds of needs which an audience might have. The audience may (feel itself to) need some form of emotional or psychic experience, ranging from assurance, disruption to sheer escapism. The observer may have a need to identify with the characters on stage (or on the page) or the narrator of the piece. S/he may wish to be the fearless Indiana Jones or Bronio Malinowski, exploring rainforests full of 'savages', the spectator may feel a need to sympathise with the wronged Shylock on stage or empathise with Shirley Valentine in her escape to sun-kissed Greece. Likewise they may feel a need to hate the evil Nazi. Each reaction may illustrate to them an aspect of their own self. The character on stage, the actor, is not the member of the audience but is an image in which they may try to find an aspect of themself or an aspect of *Other* which they may contact or reject in themselves. This recognition, alliance with or purging of certain elements by a spectator/audience is has been a central part of theatrical theory (at least) since the time of Ancient Greek theatre and more recently in the Artaud's *Theatre of Cruelty*.

As I will suggest later in this chapter, what the theatrical performance may do is provide the audience with an *Other* to weigh themselves against. What we may consider is that the writer or performer utilises the audience's need to satisfy their own need for an audience. As such the *need for a need* is able to be seen as an audience's need for an artist's need or vice versa. This further demonstrates that despite efforts by theatre practitioners and theorists (such as Grotowski; see Grotowski 1968, Kolankiewicz 1978 and Schechner and Wolford 1997) to suggest it is possible to reject the division of performer and audience such othering is still necessary. A performer needs somebody to perform to and an audience needs somebody to consume. However, there is also the question of the legitimising force of the *Other* which is vital in this relationship. As we have seen with the work of ethnologists/ anthropologists and the question of 'tradition', the legitimisation

(through acceptance or rejection) by an *Other* group is important for certain aspects of identity. This does, however, cause problems with aspects of representation as and by the *Other*. As Wagner points out the problem with an image which is presented as an image is that some aspect of the responsibility is taken from both the performer and the audience,

> ... the image is a contested vision claimed at the peril of public responsibility. It is not the viewer... or the producer or public figure is its proxy. It is rather that each "side" of the image is trying valiantly... to get the other to stand proxy for it. (68)

6.2 Representing the Other

Performing the Other; problems of representation.

A major consideration of artistic portrayal of *Others* is the use to which it is put and the resulting interpretations of the work.. Schama considers two differing portrayals of Jews by Mickiewicz, one showing them as separatist, self-interested and unwilling to help a Pole in trouble, the second showing the pro-Polish Jankiel playing mazurka's to the Polish general in *Pan Tadeusz*. One, he considers as *classical... Polish anti-Semitism* while the other has a more sympathetic face. However, we may ask if the 'sympathetic' image of a Jew who is an innkeeper is propagating a further stereotype?

The most obvious example in the work of TWW is, as mentioned previously, the figure of the Jew in the kolęda and Zapusty performances. As I have previously noted, this has caused some discussion during my time as to whether it may be considered as anti-Semitic. The answer was often given that it acknowledged a Jewish presence in historic (if not contemporary) Poland and the aim was to play it in a sympathetic way. However, this way still revolved around the old stereotypes of the Jewish merchant and the bearded, Orthodox Jew. I pause to make any judgement about such things due to an awareness that I am undoubtedly watching with a particular pair of Western eyes which may see offensive things where the subjects of the portrayal may not. Such things became evident during a performance by Węgajty I witnessed some time after completing my fieldwork.

Following the Zapusty workshops of 2003 (I was not a participant) the group showed a performance utilising a number of new masks (the old ones had been stolen

the previous year). During the piece the figure of a 'Negro Mammy' was shown. This was a (mask of a) fat black woman with fat lips, a head-scarf and a large buttocks, stirring a mixing bowl of food. Both myself and a visiting Scottish friend felt very uncomfortable amidst the happy laughter of the audience. We later discussed whether we were right to feel so, knowing the act was more of a naive comic sketch than an intentionally racist statement. This situation was made more complex for me following the visit (and participation in the Easter expedition) by the black, French boyfriend of one of the theatre members. During the expedition the group showed the sketch again, in a situation where the visitor was not only the only black in the audience, but also the first black many of the villagers had seen 'in the flesh'[cxx]. When the 'Mammy' appeared I felt my educated Western liberal buttocks clench in embarrassment only to note that the reason for my embarrassment was (apparently) genuinely amused and enjoying this scene. Was I now guilty of some form of racist othering by expecting him to be offended? Later I learned that his first reaction to seeing the figure (at the theatre) was to declare delightedly, "Oh, just like my mammy?". Arguably the lack of a black -rights struggle in Poland (due perhaps to a lack of a large black community) may make the question of black-targeted racism in Poland a little pointless. However, it does raise the question what may be considered 'sympathetic' representation of the *Other* and the double-sided problems of representation, particularly when the *Other* is not present within the group.

Representation; a double edged sword

Paul Allain (1997, 39) suggests that the work of Gardzienice Theatre with rural and minority communities was instrumental in giving these groups some form of voice which they were previously denied. It might also be argued that the work of TWW does likewise. Certainly we have noted how the residents of Dziadówek, in rural Suwałki, consider the work of the theatre as both instrumental in giving the village an identity but also bringing more external attention to it. Likewise several village projects (such as campaigns against school closures) have used the theatre company to raise their own profile. Informants mentioned to me that the work of the theatre showed village culture in a good light. However, it is important to consider various implications of such representation which I will expand upon below.

Theatre, by its very nature, decontextualises the material it shows. It often works by removing the material from one area, working with it and then (re)presenting it elsewhere. In such cases the practitioners may be selective about which part of the 'culture' they are portraying is shown. As such the emphasis on certain areas may result in a form of sanitising or grotesqueing of the subject. One simple example may be seen in the works of groups like Mazowsze who portray rural songs and dances in exquisite 'peasant-esque', 'national' costumes, perhaps creating the image that all villagers wear/ wore such costumes, particularly when dancing. However, as Kroh demonstrates (1999, 23-4), this was certainly not the case. It may be considered then, that the theatre portrays those aspects which it wishes the audience (and perhaps the performers) to consider and relate to.

A second consideration about the problems with representation is the reaction of the audience to the material and the use to which they put it. As Ginsburg shows, the question of who is doing the producing and performing is not always instrumental in changing the image of *Other* which may be portrayed, and indeed, it may enhance the image or create new forms of othering. In her examination of Aboriginal film-making and television in Australia (1995, 1997) Ginsberg examines how indigenous film-makers have been able to work with material such as tribal and traditional practices in a way which is culturally sensitive to aboriginal needs and social practice. However, while this may ensure that the material being screened is representative of Aboriginal culture (without possible distortions non-Aboriginal film-makers may make[cxxi]) it does not necessarily mean the non-Aboriginal perceive it the same way. Indeed, in some ways the quality of Aboriginal filming of rituals and traditional lifestyles may actually reinforce the notions of Aboriginal as 'tribal' and 'primitive' peoples. Even representations of 'modernised' Aboriginals may be seen as a kind of post-modern 'mirroring' of the mainstream Australian society. As such, increased representation of Aboriginal culture, however ethical and sensitive, may still allow the appropriation of the image of the Aboriginal culture by the mainstream (urban) society to be used as a commodity in representing "Australian 'national imagery' (1995, 124). Battaglia makes similar suggestions in her work about yam festivals in Papua New Guinea, where Trobrianders fear an appropriation of their culture as a tool to express a form of homogenised 'national' culture

(Battaglia 1995, 90-1). With this in mind, one may consider whether the constant representation of 'Village culture' by groups like TWW may result in receptions of the work which are less sympathetic than the group intends. Does the continued practice of portraying the rural on stage simply reinforce a notion of the village which is 'traditional', 'non-technical' and apparently 'closer to nature', while avoiding showing the rise of urban settlers, unemployment, migration and a desire for computers and 'urban' trappings?

There may also be the possibility, as with the Aboriginal and Trobriand examples that a representation of local practices, such as the use of the Stork and Szymel, be viewed as evidence of 'universal' 'Polish' practices, rather than the regional ones they are based on (particularly when performed abroad). As such, despite the theatre group claiming to represent a Warmian heritage the work may be seen (and used) as an interpretation of a 'national image', reinforcing ideas of Poland as a rural country with an identity based on 'primitive' practices. Such possibilities were noted, following a presentation of the Zapusty performance in Spain, when the Polish ambassador in Barcelona complained about the company. Whilst it was never ascertained what provoked his displeasure it was suggested within the group that he may have been embarrassed by a representation of Polish culture based on rough-and-ready village ("Perhaps he expected something a little more 'cultural'").

It is not possible to ascertain the effect of such representations without a thorough questioning of a wide and varied section of the group's audiences. However, it was rare (if at all) that such concerns were voiced by those members of the audiences which I spoke to. The question arose more amongst my academic colleagues in Britain than it ever did in Poland. It is possible, however, to consider the work of TWW against the backdrop of the village and suggest some of the 'positive' and 'negative' aspects of working with an image of the (rural) *Other*, both for the audiences and the performers themselves. The members of TTW all claim that their work is aimed at promoting understanding of *Others* and this is particularly relevant when one considers that only about fifty per cent of the core group are actually Polish. The mixed nationalities which make up the other half (German, Ukrainian) may be seen to represent persecuted minorities in Poland and, as such, may legitimise the use of 'ethnic' materials from these groups. However, it is also

important to consider the character of *Other* in another way, that of the *Other* in the Self. By this I refer to the *Other* Pole, the rural dweller.

6.3 The Rural Other and the Urban Other

We have noted previously that a certain section of Polish art has focussed upon the image of the rural, often in opposition to an image of the town. Part of my argument is that the image of the rural may be used within the Technology of Self which the theatre provides and utilises. The idea of a national identity which is based, or can be located, within the rural is central to the work of many theatre practitioners throughout the Twentieth Century (as we saw in Chapter Two). This relies on a notion of *Otherness*, or Polarity, between the rural and the urban. I have already suggested that both artists and ethnologists are instrumental in reinforcing this perceived polarity, which is then replicated by the urbanites and ruralites themselves. Considering Nagengast's suggestion that the town sees the village how it suits it to see it (1991, 8) we may also consider a reflective situation where as well as the theatre group and certain Urbanites utilising the image of the rural *Other*, the ruralites may also be seen to create an image of the urbanite *Other*. This may have its own role to play in the work of TWW and similar groups.

Rural Crafting of Identity through the Urban Other

Teatr Wiejski Węgajty base much of their work on a form of aesthetic derived from village culture and performance practices. It is apparent that some of the imagery connected to their work relates to idealised notions of *the village* that no longer exists (if it ever did). We have noted that the use of the rural in Polish theatre is a recurring one that often relates to examinations of national identity. I shall argue that the work of TWW may be used as a tool in the search for, and the crafting of, identity both by practitioners and others. With this in mind I shall now examine some of the group's uses of notions of the rural village but also notions of the town utilised by villagers.

Rural villagers also appear to be able to utilise connections with town dwellers and performance groups such as TWW for their own benefit and to enhance and express aspects of their identity to wider audiences. This is seen in the case of

the media attention given to villages like Węgajty and the sites of the carolling expeditions and how certain villages use the presence of the theatre as part of politically motivated expressions within the media (as I shall examine in later chapters). It is important to consider that in such interactions the village may utilise a connection with the town as evidence of the rural having access to perceived urban virtues. Examples of this may be seen in the experience of an associate of TWW, a musician from Olsztyn who found a female singing group in an East Polish village. The group apparently sang in a very 'authentic', traditional manner but had recently put itself under the tutelage of a woman from the nearby city of Białystok. This woman, said the musician, was teaching these women to perform in a way synonymous with the 'socialist-approved' folklore groups, like Mazowsze, rather than the more 'authentic' style in which they already sang.

> This woman is killing them. They seem to think that because she is from the city she has some special knowledge. They are excited to think they will get special costumes and such. They don't realise she is teaching them bullshit and they are already very good. It is because they think what comes from the town is better in some way.

The musician cited another case where she was hoping a village accordion player would agree to be her *master* and instruct her in traditional music. He, however, found her style of playing interesting and hoped she would be his teacher (despite him being her senior in age). It seemed that whereas she wanted to learn tunes and techniques based on his traditional village style, he found her style more sophisticated. She felt he was blinded by the idea that what came from the town was superior to the village. Here we can see examples of villagers attempting to utilise aspects of the town to increase their own stature and craft their identity in a way they see as favourable through an alignment with the (superior) town. Likewise, as we shall see, certain town-dwellers seem to feel the need to align themselves with the village as a way of enhancing their own identity crafting. In both instances we may note reliance upon perceived notions of town and country, often set in direct opposition.

The urban, the rural and the Theatre

Many of the urban associates of TWW seem to find the contact with village culture which they obtain through the company's work (particularly through workshops and carolling) somehow connects them with a notion of Polishness. A common theme noted in the rhetoric of the theatre practitioners is that of a perceived polarity between the rural village and the urban town. A particular aspect of this is the different form of personal communications and relationships which villagers have as opposed to those of their urban counterparts[cxxii]. The popular view voiced is that the rural village, being small, possesses a community in which many of the members know each other personally at are able to interact on a face-to-face basis. The communication of the village is that of the oral culture, as such there is a certain 'honesty' and immediacy to communications unlike the distant and impersonal relationships of the town and its literary culture.

It is the perceived immediacy and *honesty* of the oral culture that is of particular interest to the theatre group and many of its followers. This form of communication might also be seen as reflecting aspects of the *para-theatrical* experience. In the oral culture (it is felt) there may be a more active relationship between performer and spectators, rather than the perceived passive ('spoon-fed') audiences that receive entertainment in the urban society (which I shall examine in Chapter 6). This immediacy is experienced in the carolling work which the theatre group undertakes, where boundaries between the audiences and performers (in people's houses) are blurred in a way different to a more *fourth-wall* performance in a designed theatre area. Likewise, group singing and, more specifically, dancing, lead to close, face-to-face contact between individuals and groups. It is this contact the theatre members seek to develop. Work with voice and body, as I shall examine in Chapter 3, using forms felt to be derived from this oral culture of the rural is felt to be beneficial to the performer and to those who may take part in workshops.

Many workshop members are from an urban background, often having little, if any, experiences of these forms of village-style performance and interaction. Training in such techniques and practices may be considered as a form of de-familiarisation with one’s own physical being, an attempt to dis-locate the bodies practices from the regimented, impersonal physicality of the town and (perhaps)

attempt re-location in a more *natural* environment, connected more to the source of one's identity. This kind of work relies upon notions of polarity, or at least a notion that there is a difference between the town and the village which relates to social interaction and lifestyle. As noted, this is something the theatre members and many of their associates subscribe to. Phrases such as, "village people are simple people" (meaning, *uncomplicated* and/or *straightforward*, as opposed to the multi-faced urbanites) were widely used. It is also common that whilst speaking of the villagers (particularly when explaining practice or discussing things in the rounda) a *them-and-us*, or *them-and others*, categorisation takes place.

While not necessarily intended to be negative towards ruralites this kind of language suggests an idealisation of village life over the urban[cxxiii]. It is possible that this might border upon a form of romanticism that the group claims not to want. Wacek appreciates that some of those who see the work of TWW, as well as some of those who may take part in workshops, may have a romanticised view of the village and the group's work. He feels that many people also see beyond the romanticism and understand the work not as an idealisation of the rural but as a portrayal and a representation of forms of Polish culture, which have otherwise been denied representation. As such, aspects of Polish culture and aspects of cultures within Poland (such as Ukrainian, Lemko and German) are being represented theatrically in a way that has only recently been possible. This may enable people to experience these cultures in a way that could allow audiences to reassess their notions of identity and Polish-ness.

Naive idealism and romanticism are often challenged by direct encounters with conditions and people during the work. Members of the expeditions may come face to face with harsh weather conditions, adverse political views and, occasionally physical violence and unwanted sexual advances. The clash between the ideal and the reality of the village was illustrated to me during various carolling expeditions. The older members of the group, as was pointed out on several occasions, often distanced themselves slightly from total contact during encounters as they had already witnessed such things in the previous ten years. As such they were aware of the possibility of such manifestations and were better able to read the situations and to identify the likelihood of unsavoury behaviour. Occasionally it was still beyond

their control and they were still able to find themselves surprised by aspects of village life that challenged their own views of themselves, their work and their relationships with the village. Things which they 'suddenly' realised existed (which may have been there previously) made them question their own ideas of the village and the work. A prime example of this is the apparent rise of xenophobia in the countryside and the feelings of the group members towards it. If this aspect of the group is to be explored it is necessary to examine and contextualise some aspects of contemporary xenophobia in Poland.

6.4 Performing the Other to address Otherness

The Theatre and Xenophobia

Soon after my entry into the field I was present at a rounda where Wacław spoke of his increasing awareness of anti-Semitism amongst certain villagers. Throughout my fieldwork the question of xenophobia and anti-Semitism was often raised when discussing the group's work. What became apparent was the unease that the group felt about having to recognise an apparent increase in these attitudes amongst people who they might like as individuals. It appeared to disturb some notion that they had about the villagers amongst whom they worked. I also witnessed other examples, with other people where this element reared its head to the discomfort of certain individuals who otherwise had a great respect and love of rural culture. Erdmute commented that,

> We find we are becoming less tolerant of some things in the village. Very often there is a conflict between us and the villagers. In recent years we have noticed more the Nationalistic feelings in the village and more aggression. Maybe we weren't able to see it before.

Wacław also commented that he had noted such things. This, he felt, created a tension between his ideas of the village and his ideas about himself. I asked whether he felt uneasy about this element of village culture, and indeed Polish culture. Did it perhaps sit awkwardly with his idea of his own identity as a Pole? Although, he said, he was not anti-Semitic he felt that this was an aspect of Polish and village society that he felt it necessary to confront. In a way he felt he was confronting something

which could have been part of him. It became something he had to try and address through the work of the theatre.

It was also felt that the apparent xenophobia might not be as strong as is popularly imagined. It was considered by several of the group that those villagers and friends of the theatre who apparently espoused such views might only do so when they thought it was suitable to the company but perhaps did not believe it themselves.

> Often when we have talked with some of them they do not speak like this, and I wonder if they really believe it. I think they maybe do not when they are at home. But when they go drinking with their friends in the bigger town, where there is more tension with minorities, the talk is stronger and they get to think that way.

The reaction of villagers to outsiders was also cited in their defence.

> They are very kind to those foreigners we bring with us. Those we stay with have welcomed foreigners and been kind to them. They have had Jews in their houses and have been pleased to have them as guests.

This observation, while perhaps a valid one, also raises the question as to whether the identity of an individual is considered differently when they are under the wing of the theatre. None of the company spoke of receiving xenophobic treatment themselves. Is one granted an honorary Polish identity in such a case?

Considering the villagers were open to outsiders and foreigners when they came into contact with them, albeit under the umbrella of the theatre, suggests this aspect of the groups work could be seen, in some way, of attempting to counter the rhetoric of Radio Maria by introducing positive contact between outsiders, foreigners and villagers. Another aspect of the theatre's response to this is the continued use of material from minority cultures within Poland, such as Jewish, German and Ukrainian tunes and songs. Arguably this is a subtle way of reinforcing the notion of Poland as a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society, despite years of it being portrayed as a mono-ethnic state.

Another aspect of the use of such material is that it creates a point of contact when performed in areas where such minorities make up the audience. As Allain points out (in the case of Gardzienice), the interest of the group, and their own playing of the material, allows a particular type of atmosphere to develop where

groups and individuals who have, for years, felt uncomfortable about expressing their culture to etic groups feel more able to do so. As a result, local musicians and singers occasionally join in with theatre group, performing songs in their own language etc. It is hard to define exactly when the performance of multi-cultural repertoire became politically motivated. The group themselves are unsure of when they started to notice the apparent rise in xenophobic rhetoric amongst the villagers. Erdmute comments that they have noted it more in the last few years. It is not certain whether this is a genuine rise in such feelings or whether the members of the group have just become more aware of it. Erdmute wondered whether the awareness of such feelings was related to them being previously overlooked in the search for other things,

> Maybe we were so busy looking for songs and music we were not looking for such things. After ten years there is not much more to talk about concerning music.
> They have told us all there is to tell.

While these things might be considered everyday, current discourses the visits of the company, whether as research or performance, were not *everyday* events. The villagers may have been more guarded in their conversation. Erdmute considered that after so many years of contact the villagers trusted the group more to be able to discuss such things in their presence. It is also possible that the group themselves had pre-conceptions and romanticised idealism about the village culture. Erdmute agreed partially,

> Of course, there is always the possibility of such unconscious behaviour. I tried always not to glorify the people in the village… but it was a new area for us when we started, we tried to investigate the traditional culture…we were not interested in talking about such things. I think it might be that we were not concerned with glorifying the people, more the traditional culture.

It remains to be seen what developments will take place in the light of this new development in the relationships between the theatre and the villagers.

I have examined the relationship between TWW and the villages in which they work, examining social conditions and notions of a conceptual village (and an opposing conceptual town). This illustrates the conditions and the background to their work, as well as some of their aims. I shall now present an imaginary scenario

of how this work may function from the point of view of presenting images of *Others* and the possible reactions which it might provoke

Evoking the Other through Performance.

I have noted that one of the aims of TWW is to explore the pluralist society and ethnic cultures of Poland, both the historic and the contemporary. In many cases, the contemporary society has little evidence of old cultures such as the Old Prussian, the Hassidic Jew or the German farmer other than some museum relics, oddities in antique shops, old photographs or the elderly lady living alone in the small cottage in the corner of the village. As Wacek commented about the kolęda Jew, a portrayal of a lost culture at least gives evidence that it was once there. Considering this I intend to examine how the work of TWW may continue to influence an awareness of a pluralist Poland and challenge the post-war notion of a mono-ethnic society. In examining how such performances may address contemporary concerns about *Others* in Poland I shall utilise the ideas of Gerd Baumann (1992) and his work on the implications of '*Other*' in ritual. I feel this can be applied usefully to performance work both in the theatre space and (especially) to Kolęda.

Baumann suggests, through a re-reading of Durkheim, that rather than ritual being solely about one group 'celebrating itself' it can also be used to convey a message concerned with *us* reformulating the cleavage between *them* and *us* (98). As such, ones behaviour at a ritual not only demonstrates divisions within the group in which it takes place but may also implicate *Others* through their participation (or non-participation) in the event. In this way, I feel that an application of these ideas on the work of the theatre may reveal certain aspects of *Otherness* that can be acknowledged as a result of a performance.

The performance of kolęda, as performed by TWW, often involves visiting all the houses in a village. In this sense, the carollers seek to create an atmosphere of inclusion within the village. To not be visited by the carollers might be seen as signalling an exclusion from the village (at least in the eyes of the performers). This might suggest the carolling is an act of communion between the villagers. As the performance takes place within the village, and there are no observers invited, it

might be seen in a classical Durkheimian sense (as suggested by Baumann) as the village celebrating itself within itself.

Baumann points out that in many cases events not only implicate the *Other*, but actually involve the *Other* (99). This is certainly the case where TWW are concerned, as they are usually outsiders to the village (although it may be argued they are granted a form of ritual membership of some villages). The *Babcia* in Dziadówek, when asked about the theatre group's Allelujka, "Apparently it looks the same as in the old times, but it is not the same mainly because they are not from this village" (personal communication). Even if we consider the historic carolling, we may contest that it was solely a form of marking group membership through ritual. As a number of interviewees commented, carolling was often performed from groups from outside the village and those from within the village might also visit other villages (as TWW do).

The villagers might also invite guests to see the carolling, and residents of other villages often attend dances. In this sense the village may be seen to express itself to others through the presence of the theatre but it is not simply a case of the village celebrating to itself. As we have noted, those villages that TWW visit regularly now derive some status from the connection with the theatre. This makes them different from their neighbours and so acts as a form of identity marker. Baumann also suggests that ritual might actually emphasise divisions within the ritual group, rather than emphasising unity. We have already noted that some performance material may illustrate divisions based on generation and experience within audiences and households. It is also possible to note gender differences in that it is primarily the women in mixed households who prepares and serves refreshments to the carollers.

What is particularly useful to me analysis of this performance work is Baumann's suggestion that ritual implicates *Other*. Through his analysis of ceremonies and rituals in an Indian community in London, Baumann demonstrates how such recently adopted practices within the British Indian communities, such as birthday parties and Christmas celebrations may be practised with reference to the 'invisible *Others'* of Anglo-Christian culture. Baumann considers that the observation of such practices, through including and excluding those elements of practice which

are not appropriate to Indian culture (such as Christian carols), "… can be seen, thus, as concerned essentially with these '*Others*' in that it negotiates, within each family, the relationship with these '*Others*' and their customs and values" (1992, 105).

Baumann's work suggests that rather than unify, the ritual (performance) may actually illustrate potential divisions within the group. I suggest that the utilisation of historic and ethno-cultural motifs within a performance may do likewise. The performance of either a play, music or carolling by TWW presents images and motifs which directly confronts the audience's memories and notions of *Polish* culture and history. The presentation of minority groups and the playing of tunes associated with *Others* (such as Jews and Gypsies), the singing of old localised songs in languages which have largely vanished from the local cultural landscape (such as German) automatically invokes the *Other*. The *Other* is presented to the spectator who must relate to that *Other* in their own appropriate way (even if it involves covering up a dislike of that *Other*). This may illustrate divisions within the audience based on things like upbringing, generation or experience. As Pahl and Thomson demonstrate (1994) even within a single household, the perception and experiences of history can vary amongst individuals and generations.

Different Histories, Different Reactions

If we imagine a village household receiving kolęda we may envisage (for example) an old Grandmother that remembers the Jews of her village from before the war. She may have played with their children and may have seen them led away by German soldiers. The same Germans who also lived as friends in her village until the war had them designated as *Volksdeutsch*, who received better rations than the Poles. These Germans may have been deported to Germany by the same Communist authorities who killed her brother for being in the resistance while providing her son with a job and teaching him to hate Germans. This son may have worked in a government run factory and heard about the Jewish 'Communists' who were a threat to the party until they were expelled, like the Germans who, the Party said, were ever ready to steal back the land which was rightly Polish. Father never met a Jew, but he has heard of them. As a family man he may have sent his eldest child to school where they would learn the Russian language of the oppressing Soviets. By the

1990's, the second child did not have to learn Russian, but perhaps English or German, the same German which she reads upon the neglected gravestones at the bottom of the local cemetery. Why, she might wonder, are their German gravestones with Polish names? What is the funny writing on the broken, sunken gravestones in a neighbouring field?[cxxiv]?

One night a carolling troupe calls at the house. Grandmother remembers these troupes, Father has heard about them and once did a performance of one at school. The children have heard of these things but are shocked at these strange people, the wild Goat that frightens the baby and the white death waving a scythe at King Herod. Father and Grandmother seem to know some of the songs and aren't at all frightened. Some of these people sing in strange languages the children might only partly understand. They don't know it might be the Ukrainian language that Grandmother still thinks of as the tongue of terrorists. Why do they sing in German? We are Polish? Perhaps the reminder that this house once belonged to a German farmer makes father think of those expellees who might want to come and claim it back when the EU takes hold. Maybe it makes mother think of her brother who is currently working in Germany and her own mother who once spoke German even though she was Polish.

The young children may think, “Here is an old man with a beard. He is trying to sell us something and speaking in a funny voice”. Grandmother thinks, “Oh, here is an old Jew like those we used to buy things from”. Do the children know he is a Jew? The eldest daughter, who has been to university, knows that there used to be such people. She has attended classes in Polish history and seen exhibitions in museums about both the German expellees and the Jewish people who were killed. Still, even she has never heard these kinds of songs or seen such instruments as the long wooden horn, well maybe in the ethnology museum. Is she interested in finding out more about such things? Why are these people doing this, travelling all the way from a city like Olsztyn? Does she like the music that appeals so much to her Grandmother?

Although somewhat idealised (and perhaps stereotypical) this imaginary description of a kolęda performance hopefully illustrates the varying tensions within an audience (it need not just be a carolling audience). By bringing the *Others* into the

house the performance not only portrays them but may also emphasise the fact that these figures are not present anymore in local society. The *Other* is made visible by its absence and a reminder of that absence. It may also provoke a realisation that such things are still present when seemingly lost or hidden.

In several cases when the troupe found that a person was, for example, an old German-speaking Warmian then songs might be song specially in their honour and some members of the troupe would speak German. This might be unusual for the person concerned as they might have learned to avoid speaking German in front of Poles, saving it only for the home. In some cases villagers reacted excitedly and embraced the chance to speak German (I found this particularly when doing interviews with old Warmiaks in Węgajty village). In the old people's home in Jonkowo one old lady used to seek me out during performances and dances so she could speak German with me. In some cases older people who were cautious about publicly singing songs in languages such as Lemko (or even speaking the language publicly) were reassured by the behaviour of the troupe and there use of certain linguistic varieties or songs. These people might suddenly begin to sing. Such reactions often come about when the company are 'performing *Others'* to the *Others* in question. As such it is possible that the audience do not see a performance of *Others*, but a performance of Self (by *Others*). This in turn may provoke an act of Self-performance (either as a form of 'national' or 'individual' self). This brings us back to Wagner's theory of the self-act of consumption. A performance of a Self by somebody (even an *Other*) may, if done in a suitable manner, allow a realisation of Self, leading to a performance or expression. Having examined some of the possibilities connected to the theatre company's work with images and notions of *Other*, it is now necessary to examine further the (possible) effects of such work upon audiences; examining both how they receive the work but also how the audience may use the act of othering upon the theatre company itself, perhaps as a form of their own self-act.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7.1 Audiences, Spectators and Participants

Those who watch TWW make up a broad cross-section of people. There are, amongst others, village farmers, academics, students and theatre connoisseurs. The range of different relationships which different people have with the performances is also broad. Some wish to watch and experience the performance as passive spectators, others may wish to observe, as a form of research, while some may wish to interact and take part. Considering this it is problematic to speak of a single type of audience just as it is problematic to speak of a single type of performance. This is further complicated in that a particular venue does not necessarily ensure that any audience is wholly from that environment. An urban audience may incorporate villagers and vice versa. Likewise, a village audience may consist of people who know less about the performance material than many urbanites.

The concept of audience is also problematic when considering some of the actual performers and participants of carolling expeditions are often observing the work of the theatre-company through this act of participation. This is particularly the case for visiting ethnologists and theatre academics wishing to observe the carolling. During my period of fieldwork, Projekt Terenowy decided to only allow observers to accompany expeditions if they were prepared to participate in the carolling[cxxv]. It was felt that non-performing observers created a tension in the contact between the group and villagers when present in village homes. We must therefore consider that participants within the group may also be spectators of the performance. The utilisation of a concept of para-theatre by Teatr Wiejski Węgajty also makes it problematic to speak of an *audience* and *performers* as events such as spectator

participation may create a shift in the dynamic of interaction. In some situations, the carollers become the spectators to the actions of the audience member.

It is also important to consider that the work of TWW is also studied and scrutinised by journalists, theatre writers and academics. It has also been the subject of several films and television programmes. As such the audience for the work goes beyond the physical space of the performance. The work of the company may be studied for a variety of reasons, such as an interest in theatrical performance, ethnological studies of carolling forms and anthropological studies about identity. In such cases the company are represented to different audiences in ways which are often beyond their total control, the writers and film-makers often having their own criteria about what they wish to show and why. Likewise TWW may be used by individuals or groups to demonstrate something about themselves to a third party, such as villagers using the work of the theatre as a basis for their own identity or during publicity campaigns against school closures. In such cases, we might consider that the audience is not necessarily that to which the group is immediately performing for. I shall examine such points later in this chapter.

I shall attempt to examine this variety of audiences, spectators, observers and their reactions to the work of TWW, while recognising the weakness of my own categories. I recognise that I am utilising the notions of urban and rural polarities that I have previously argued against. Considering this I must point out that my categories of *town* and *village*, in this case, refer to my observations from the environments where certain performances took place, the different types of materials performed and the responses from those audiences in each environment. *Town audiences* refer to those who attend performances within a town. These performances are generally either musical, from the repertoire of plays or a Zapusty performance. As carolling is, in my experience, only done in villages it is easier to speak of *village audiences* in relation to this practice. Prior to examining the nature of the audiences, it is necessary to make a comparison between the two types of performance mentioned (the theatre performance and the kolęda) with an aim to exploring the shifts of identity and power that may take place. These may also help to demonstrate relationships of the participants to certain perceptions of modernity and tradition.

7.2 Comparative performances

If we consider the performances undertaken by TWW we can see several obvious differences.

1) The space (where the performance takes place)
2) The immediate audience (to whom the group perform)
3) The time span of the performance

The initial difference we may note is that whereas the Theatre performance happens in the theatre, the carolling takes place in the houses of the audience. This difference raises a number of other important points.

Performances in the theatre space may be seen as the TWW inviting people into its own home. Of course, the space was specifically designed for such meetings, unlike that of a domestic house. The group has worked in this space for a number of weeks, preparing the show and shaping the space to suit their activities, including the placing of the audience. The audience has been invited, either personally or through advertising (Polish advertising generally uses the word *zapraszamy*: "*we invite"*) and, should they choose to accept, must make their own way to the theatre at an appropriate time. The majority would also be expected to pay for a ticket. Once at the theatre building the audience must adhere to the wishes of the troupe and not enter the main hall until allowed to do so. During the performance, there is a tendency (perhaps an understanding) to abide by certain accepted norms of behaviour at a theatre; stay in your place and be generally quiet during the performance and applaud at the end. After the play, the audience members are able to leave without highlighting their departure and disturbing the show (as they would if they left during the play).

The Theatre must, in the role of host, allow the guests somewhere to shelter and await the performance. They are also expected to perform some form of entertainment. The length of the performances may differ. The initial piece will generally be about forty-five minutes and the dancing will take as long as it takes, depending on the joint enthusiasm of the performers and the audience. It is unlikely that members of the audience would walk across stage and interfere with the

performance. It is unlikely that audience members would engage in noisy conversation during the show, although when there are children in occasionally this is not observed and, interestingly, adults do not always attempt to silence them. Wacek Sobaszek stresses that should they respond in this way it is their right to do so, they have paid to see a show.

We can note that the identity of two groups, audience and performers endows each with some accepted powers and responsibilities regarding their behaviour, should they wish to be seen in a certain light. The audience does have the option of breaking these conventions (as do the performers) but generally these conventions are observed[cxxvi]. We may also consider that within the boundaries set in this meeting certain individuals might be seen to suppress their personal identities and actually become just a member of a group. A professor or local politician becomes just another member of the audience once the performance starts. Likewise, a student or a farm hand will receive the same standard of performance as those who, outside the theatre, are socially higher. Following the performance the audience may leave or stay and, if there is any, take part in the dancing and music that, as noted above, creates a different form of interaction and relationship. Arguably, the theatre performance creates a more anonymous interaction in that the audience is largely passive, receiving what the performers offer them, and individuality is lost to outward observation, whereas the performers are the centres of attention. This changes when dancing occurs.

Carolling

In comparison to the theatre performance the carolling involves the troupe travelling to the place of performance and walking from performance to performance. In addition we may note that the troupe has to gain permission twice to perform. The first permission is gained by contacting the village association or Sołtys for the expedition to take place. The second permission is from the individual householder who may or may not agree to the performance entering the house. In this way the troupe are the guests, rather than the audience, however the ritual of carolling actually leads to a reformulation of accepted practices which might be considered proper of a guest. As noted, kolędnicy are allowed a certain ritual licence

and may ignore certain modes of behaviour, such as removing shoes or respecting the social space within the house (entering bedrooms and jumping on stoves and tables). The space itself, in contrast to the theatre, is not one which has been designed and set as a place of performance. The kitchen or lounge of a village house differs from house to house but I have yet to see one with seating similar to a theatre space. Likewise, unlike the theatre, the performers must assess and utilise what space they have at a moment's notice. This spatial difference to the theatre produces another aspect to the performance that is very different to that of the theatre space, in that an obvious division of the space (performance area and audience area) does not separate the performers and the audience. The contact is, rather than the more anonymous relationship in the theatre space, more *face-to-face*.

Several factors come into play in this situation. Firstly, the audience has more freedom to move and make noise than in the theatre building (often some are preparing refreshments for the troupe during the performance), after all, it is their house. Secondly, the face-to-face style of theatre also allows the audience more of an influence upon events in the space, even to the point of interacting with the performance. In several cases when members of the audience actually entered the performance, interacting with the performers physically. This usually occurred with the feeding of the Stork or buying from a Jew. Occasionally the group find themselves surprised by audience participation. In one case, upon entering a house, the Goat began to dance around the table. The Grandfather of the household leapt up, laughing, and began to pretend to saw off the goat's horns with a knife. Mutka Sobaszek, unable to see the knife was turned blunt-side down, ran forward to try and stop him. Realising the situation she then stepped back and allowed the performance to continue. A second incident occurred when the carollers entered a cottage of two unmarried brothers. The Stork, played by a female performer, began to dance around the kitchen but then crossed the threshold into the bedroom. One of the brothers grabbed the Stork and pulled her onto the bed. The performer continued to perform but also struggled to move away. Returning to the kitchen, she finished her sketch and the performance continued. The carollers had not interfered during this incident, as they had not realised the potential nature of the man's act. We were also unsure of how to respond. Wacek later admitted that he was unsure if this wrestling the Stork

was not part of a local tradition, of which he was ignorant. Some days later the man apologised and admitted he was surprised by his own actions, he claimed to have got carried away by the excitement of the occasion.

These incidents illustrate the different nature of the carolling performances to those of the theatre performances in that the definition of performer and spectator becomes blurred. It also brings into question the matter of controlling the situation and the utilisation of convention, in some cases the convention of *tradition*, as a form of control during the performance. In one case a household member's interaction is considered potentially disruptive and an attempt is made to check it. In the second the carollers do not interrupt a more serious interaction in case it is part of a tradition which they are unaware of. In such cases the theatre-company appear to subject themselves to the authority of (supposed) *tradition*. Whereas in workshop situations and in certain performances they may be seen to hold some (perceived) authority relating to the practice of certain materials. However, within an environment where the villagers' knowledge of tradition may be greater this authority may be (partially) relinquished at times. That TWW choose to alter and play with certain *traditional* performance materials while, at other times, observing a strict observance to alleged traditional method of practice appears to depend on the status of the audience in relationship to the material. Those who would be most knowledgeable (old people, carriers of tradition etc) are given more authority as an audience through this action.

This apparent recognition of authority to *tradition* is not total, however. We have noted the eclectic nature of the carolling performance and the forms of theatrical experimentation the company work with. This occasionally leads to comparisons being made by older villagers between the historic carolling and the work of TWW. I shall examine below some of the reactions of village audiences to this work and how ideas of tradition are invoked in discussions about it. Before doing so, I shall examine the relationship between TWW and various types of audiences encountered through their work.

Audiences.

I find it more productive to discuss the audiences of TWW by relating to the types of venues played and the type of piece performed. Generally, during my time in the field, carolling was done only in villages (hence my reference to *village audiences*) while plays were done in both the theatre and at theatre venues around Poland. These I will refer to as *theatre audiences*. *Zapusty* performances were done in a variety of venues, including hospitals and prisons and seemed to bridge two styles of performance in that they were done in a style similar to carolling (encouraging audience interaction) while being in a more controlled environment similar to that of a theatre. Another type of audience is that of the Schola performances which were in churches[cxxvii].

7.3 The Views from Off-Stage

Theatre Audiences

Due to the wide variety of people making up theatre audiences, reactions to the work of TWW varied amongst them. Members (as noted) might include students and academics (of various disciplines), theatre practitioners, media representatives and theatre connoisseurs, as well as *ordinary people*[cxxviii] who like to visit the theatre. Some of these audience members might be familiar with TWW while others might not. Some may be familiar with different styles of theatre and, having a wider frame of reference, may receive the work differently to those who are not. We may compare this with the reception of carolling by those villagers who are familiar with the practice and those who are not. Some spectators may have a particular criteria or agenda for seeing the performance whilst others may just come for the fun of it. The diversity of audience members means that it is impossible to collect or focus on all aspects of audience response[***cxxix***]. There are however common traits I found in the experiences and thoughts of many of those I interviewed. This, as I shall demonstrated, is reflected in a section of the literature upon TWW. It is upon these things I shall focus predominantly while noting that they are perhaps not illustrative of all audience members.

Audience feedback and the search for meaning

Occasionally, at theatre festivals particularly, there were question-and-answer sessions between the TWW performers and members of the audience. On two occasions these occurred after performances of *Kalevala* (in which I was a performer). This piece, being very different from previous works, provoked mixed reactions. Some reactions were based on knowledge of the group's earlier work (something I shall discuss later) while some was based on reception of the theatrical style of the piece. The multi-lingual nature of the piece was a major question in the minds of many members of the audience(s). While some found it an exciting aspect of the work others were not happy and complained that it made the work hard to understand. In one case, somebody commented that they thought we did not wish to be understood. Wacek pointed out on several occasions that multi-lingual presentations had always been part of the group's work. All the earlier plays and the carolling have included multilingual materials. In one exchange a member of TWW suggested that it was not the inability to understand which was the problem, it was the disorientation of understanding *some* of the text. Would the audience, he asked, complain if the work was performed by a foreign company and wholly in a language they did not understand? Amongst some performers, there was a feeling of some audience members being lazy and wanting to be *spoon-fed*. A suggestion was made at one point by a colleague of the theatre that there was a constant risk TWW being used as an 'exotic' experience, that allowed the audience-participants to be *spoon-fed* village culture in a sweet form with no effort on their part to discover it themselves.

A comparison can be made to the reception of this piece in Germany where it was performed under the auspices of a Polish-German cultural organisation to a multinational audience[cxxx]. The piece was well received and the multi-lingual audience (as many of the Polish audiences were) spoke warmly about the work, while also talking about Poland and Germany in Polish, German and English. I was mistaken for a Pole at least twice on this occasion and asked where I had learned such good English. A Polish theatre practitioner commented on the different attitudes towards the multi-lingual presentation in Poland and Germany.

> I think it was better received here [Germany] than in Poland because the Polish only think they are an open, multi-cultural society. Here in German they are more multicultural and more open to such things. Here they have to

> speak different languages and they hear different languages on the street. That doesn't happen so much in Poland these days.

While it is arguable that Poles do not hear different languages on the street (Ukrainian immigrants, German tourists, English language music etc) this comment might suggest that the modernity of Poland is one that suffers from the historic attempt at rejection of multiculturalism. In contrast, Germany, with its Polish immigrants, Turkish *gastarbeiter*, British and US soldiers reflects multicultural modernity created from the ruins of an attempted mono-culturalism. However, as TWW were promoted through a multicultural organisation which works for mutual understanding between Germans and Poles it is of little surprise that the audience was (arguably) more open minded to multi-lingual performances. This also raises the question about what audiences may expect when they attend the performances and how the theatre is represented to these audiences through publicity and literature.

Representation of the Theatre

As well as performing to live audiences, TWW occasionally faces a need to represent itself to *potential* audiences and observers. Likewise, it occasionally has a need to control representation of itself by other parties. In some cases this may cause a tension between what one party wishes to express about the group and how the group wish themselves to be represented. Often this is related to clashes between artistic and financial requirements. Two particular examples I witnessed illustrate such tensions and the problems TWW faces when attempting control of its own portrayal. The first incident took place during performances in Frankfurt, Germany. TWW were performing an early work, *Gospoda ku Wiecznemu Pokojowi*. Several members of the group were also travelling down to Spain to perform at a conference and to take part in a carnival.

At Frankfurt the group found the publicity generated by the venue described TWW as *a group which follows the teachings of Jerzy Grotowski.* Wacek protested that while there was a connection with Grotowski, the group does not subscribe wholly to his theories and do not consider themselves a Grotowskian theatre company. They were therefore uncomfortable about such labelling (*Othering?).* The

organiser pointed out that the *people have heard of Grotowski, they haven't heard of you.* The fact that the group was Polish and connected to Grotowski made them a more interesting commodity and would (hopefully) generate more ticket sales. By this point the publicity material was already printed and circulated so the group had to accept it. This scenario was further complicated in that the members of the group who travelled to Spain played a performance based on *Zapusty* (Carnival) to a conference about Grotowski. The performance was given as an example of *Theatre of Sources*[cxxxi].

The second incident involved a theatre festival in Torun, Poland. The members of Projekt Terenowy were performing a performance of *Kalevala*. The group had informed the organisers that the publicity should read *Projekt Terenowy Teatru Węgajty* ("Projekt Terenowy of Theatre Węgajty"). The organiser, however, protested that it should read *Teatr Wiejski Węgajty*, despite the group pointing out that it was only the PT section who were performing. The organisers complained that the wording would not fit on the poster (later shown to be incorrect) and eventually admitted that he felt nobody would know who the group was if they changed their name (*Teatr Wiejski* presumably being more recognisable than *Węgajty*). Wacek explained to me that part of the problem (as he understood it) was due to people having their own perception of what TWW is (or was),

> People talk to me of a Teatr Węgajty "style" and they don't seem to want to accept another style. I wish they would explain to me what this style is because I do not know! Nothing we have done has been the same, our work is always changing.

This apparent subjectification of TWW by observers is something which many theatre groups suffer. Paul Allain's 1995 TDR article about Gardzienice (a fore-runner to his 1997 book) was criticised by (at least) two correspondences, who accused him of subjectifying the company in a way to suit his own academic needs. In particular Bill Reichblum accusses Allain of apparently wishing, *"* [T]o look back, with some nostalgia, to an earlier period of the company's work which he never witnessed" (14). He suggests that Allain wishes to create an apparent golden age of *greater integrity* in Gardzienice's work in order to reinforce his own thesis that the company is currently (1995) in crisis. Both Reichblum and Hodge (1995) stress that the company has constantly changed technique and membership throughout its

existence. As such it is not fair to speak of this golden age. I use this as a comparative example of the type of nostalgic viewpoint TWW is apparently subjected to by certain spectators. I heard a number of comments from several spectators about changes in the groups work or apparent stagnation. If this is the case then we might ask why such a view might be held and whether certain spectators have a particular need for a particular image of TWW. Perhaps it is to fulfil some requirement of their own.

Images of TWW

What becomes apparent through discussions with some spectators of TWW is an air of romanticism (as in, idealised but unrealistic) about the company and their work. Comments received during feedback sessions occasionally revealed similar sentiments. This is also apparent in much of the writings about the company. Conversation with several students and performers who attended workshops revealed feelings such as this response from a 26 year-old music student, "I really like them and their work. I like the way they live what they do, living in the village and this lifestyle". Whilst not denying that the work of TWW is also one of lifestyle it is interesting that this spectator found it so attractive, suggesting that it was somehow more genuine how the group lived in a village. The emphasis was that somehow the village had a genuineness about it, which may not have been so attainable in the town (presumably there are urban companies who also *live what they do*).

Some audience members commented (both in Q-and-A sessions and in general conversation) that they found this particular work inspiring and mystical. Much was made of the *spiritual* nature of the work due both to the subject matter (the supernatural tales of *Kalevala*) and the presentation (partially done in candlelight with shadows). Some spectators enthused at length about the *primal* nature of the piece. This reference to the mystical and the spiritual nature of the work of TWW (not just *Kalevala*) was common amongst audience members to which I spoke. Following a performance of *Gospoda*, some young students (around eighteen years old) told me how much they had enjoyed the archaic music, commenting how *mystical* it sounded. Likewise, a noted theatre academic from Warsaw University

gushed praise upon performances of *Canterbury Tales* (by both TWW and BKS), referring to the *spiritual*, *metaphysical* and the *primal*.

A number of spectators have written about the work of TWW and this consideration of the spiritual and primal is also present in a number of writings. Bogusławska (1998), Kuligowska-Korzeniewska (1998), Kumorowicz (2000) and Mikulska (1999) all make significant references to it. Links are also drawn to the work of earlier theatre practitioners such as Schiller and Osterwa who apparently explored village culture in an attempt to connect with some (perceived) form of purer spirituality (Kuligowska-Korzeniewska, 1998). References are often made about the roots of theatre, particularly carolling, being linked to Dionysian ritual (Bogsławska, 1998)[cxxxii] and how TWW attempt to reconnect with old and lost rituals. The relationship with ritual suggests, and often encourages, a link with an archaic past which is often considered purer and somehow more genuine. We have noted this trend through Romanticism. It is also a popular one in art and theatre circles. Bogusławska utilises the term *The truth of antiquity*. Writings about TWW frequently stress the archaic nature of the work. Much is also made of the remoteness of the theatre and the harsh winter environment one must brave to attend a performance. Strangely, I have not read any article which mentions going to Węgajty in the summer. While it is possible that these writers have not been to Węgajty during the summer, I suspect that the experience of the summer is not as 'exotic' a description as that of winter.

Such writings illustrate the effect which attending performances and expeditions has on some observer and participants (all four writers have at some time participated in carolling expeditions). There is a tendency to *exoticise* both the Węgajty theatre and its performers. This also extends to an *exoticising* of the experience of attending a performance at the theatre building. My own tales of the Węgajty theatre, and those of my Scottish colleagues, knowingly emphasise the unusual and 'exotic' (drinking vodka in lonely wooden shacks in the snow-covered Carpathian mountains, surrounded by dark, wolf-filled forests) and the audiences to our tales make much of these features. Indeed, it was the 'strangeness' of the theatre that attracted me to it both as a theatre practitioner and as an anthropological researcher. I therefore feel it is necessary to examine some of the accounts (romantic

and ‘exotic’ as they may be) as evidence of the response of certain audience members. We may also consider that the audience of these works, who may not have experienced TWW first hand, may form an idea of the group through the constant reiteration of such themes mentioned above.

Kumorowicz (although perhaps contesting the romanticisation of TWW) describes a journey to the theatre (apparently his first) utilising imagery of a misty, moonlit night and the act of leaving “the safe bell jar of the city” to venture into the dark (literally) unknown. His description of fellow audience members, young students walking to the theatre (he is driving) reiterates the notion of an escape from the town as a spiritual retreat, “We found the rucksacks, the clothes and the characteristic appearance of those pilgrims deeply reassuring” (2000, 95). The experience, for Kumorowicz, brings to mind questions of a lost people searching for a home, be it real or imaginary. He suggests that both the work of TWW portrays an ideal village of the mind to which all are welcome, this is symbolically embodied in the theatre building itself. It is, suggests Kumorowicz, a utopian idyll for those members of society who feel lost or rootless (102). This suggestion, and those of writers such as Bogusławska and Mikulska, who suggest some form of search back to a purer past, are reflective of the feelings of a number of interviewees who felt that the work of TWW allowed them to connect with some form(s) of Polishness which they felt they lacked. In some cases this connection might be achieved through watching the plays and hearing the music. For some, as we saw with the young actress in the previous chapter, this (re)connection came through taking part in the carolling work.

When considering *audiences* carolling is more problematic than a theatre based performance. In carolling work it is fair to say that everybody is observing each other; villagers are watching the theatre people, theatre performers are watching each other and the villagers, ethnologists are watching everyone and the patterns of performance and communication fluctuate throughout the numerous performances. I shall, however, attempt to examine audience within villages, basing my observations predominantly upon those of carolling expeditions.

7.4 The Village Audience

One of the leading philosophies of TWW is that their theatre is for everyone and particularly for the people in the village. It is apparent that the group do attempt to make themselves accessible to a village audience, both by being based in a village but also by taking some of their work to other villages, performing music, carolling and occasionally extracts of other (theatrical) work in village venues. It is necessary, therefore, to examine some of the reactions to the groups work by villagers[cxxxiii].

Village audiences can be roughly separated into three categories:

A) Local (Węgajty and neighbouring villages),
B) Established (such as Villages 1 and 2),
C) Non-established (where the group have rarely, if ever, performed).

These categories may account for differing reactions to the group's work. However in the case of group C the villages may have relationships with other villages, performers or organisations that means they are familiar with such work already. Likewise, the village may have a connection to the theatre through a third party or earlier contact in a different context.

Węgajty Village

As noted in Chapter Two, Węgajty villagers have a long relationship with the theatre whereby they value the presence of the group and the recognition it brings yet few regularly attend performances. This is in spite of the group's declaration that their theatre is for everybody. The group also feel that their performance material gives villagers a chance to see a form of theatre which they might be unfamiliar with, and not usually able to experience (as with visiting companies). Of those who attended the theatre performances more often many were the younger members of the village. This was approved of by many of the parents as it gave the youngsters something to do and was a distraction from drink and the disco which had recently opened in nearby Jonkowo[cxxxiv]. Some of the parents also commented that the workshops for children, run by both Projekt Terenowy and Schola (these were known as *Mała* [Little] *Schola*) were something positive. There were (usually)

annual kolęda workshops undertaken with village children. This resulted in performances around the village. During the year I spent in the village no such project was held. Erdmute explained that this was purely due to a lack of time. However, several villagers felt this was because other villagers were not opening their doors to the children[cxxxv].Of the adults who attended more frequently, several were connected to the theatre through either social status or economic connections. These included the Sołtys, (who is also the village shopkeeper) and villagers who occasionally made food for the workshop groups and provide accommodation. There were some that went out of an artistic interest too. These people, perhaps being more familiar with the style of work, were able to discuss performances subjectively and expressed interest and opinions in the development of the group's repertoire and on visiting artists.

At least one company member felt contact was being lost with a section of the village. During the last year the regular carolling project with village children had not gone ahead and another project (run on the theatre's behalf by a volunteer) had not been a complete success. This was echoed by at least one interview in the village, despite everyone saying they liked the theatre and its members. I asked one group member if the villagers might feel that the theatre was for *Others,* while the remiza dances were for them, "I think they feel the zabawas are for them, while the theatre is for them AND other people". Interviews with some villagers suggested otherwise. At least one couple, incomers, never attended the *zabawas* but said they were well attended and people seemed to like them. Several of the older people mentioned they had no real interest in the theatre, and anyway, it was too far to get to without a car. Some villagers felt their neighbours were perhaps too lazy to go to the theatre or felt they would not understand. *Others,* as noted, felt that the work at the theatre was not *for farmers* and was more for the *outsiders* and *connoisseurs.* The matter of performance material was a source of comment amongst several villagers. Some wondered why the group did not perform "a nice comedy to cheer us up in these grey days". Several of those interviewed, perhaps unfamiliar with the emphasis on process rather than finished result, were puzzled as to how the theatre could exist almost fifteen years and only produce four plays.

The tensions between a notion of the theatre for the villagers and one for the Outsiders was demonstrated following an open air performance (based on Mickiewicz's *Dziady*) which was the result of a summer workshop project. Despite circulating publicity within the village suggesting it would be better for the villagers to come and enjoy an open air performance rather than sit in front of their televisions, few villagers did attend. The performance was, however, attended by a large crowd of 'outsiders' who had read publicity in the local press (much to the annoyance of the group[cxxxvi]). Afterwards, as they attempted to return to the theatre, several villagers (who had not seen at the performance) demanded the theatre group perform music for dancing. This resulted in an impromptu zabawa being held in the middle of the road.

The success and popularity of the zabawas in the village and the carolling (a third *adult* Kolęda was held during Christmas 2001, after my return from the field) illustrates an interesting tension between the theatre performances and the village performances. Whereas the theatre performances are ostensibly open to all it appears that the material (and distance) actually deters those who the theatre seeks to serve, the villagers. This contrasts to the occasions where the theatre travels to the village and performs material which the villagers appreciate and expect. This is further complicated by the restrictions on incomers during events such as Kolęda, where the theatre are invited into people's homes (as an audience may be invited to the theatre). The open-ness of the theatre, which attracts outsiders with its material deters the same villagers who allow the theatre company to enter their village and houses. In such cases though, the group themselves restrict outsiders taking part[cxxxvii].

Far off fields

The group's work in villages away from Węgajty provoked a variety of responses. The villages I visited and conducted interviews were mainly those that had received carolling expeditions. As noted some of these were villages where TWW were established, some were aware of the group's work and others were totally new venues. In each case, however, village chiefs and associations would have been contacted prior to the expedition. In villages familiar with the troupe much of the reaction appears positive. People appear to genuinely enjoy the group's carolling.

Dances that are held in some villages are popular and well attended. Carolling was generally received at the houses with much enthusiasm, the troupe being greeted like old friends (a phrase occasionally used by villagers during interviews), even if some members are not familiar to the hosts. In some cases villagers complained to Wacek and Erdmute that the carollers had not called at their houses (usually they had called when the householder was out, or asleep).

Responses were occasionally more cautious, or simply curious, in villages where the group were not known. Some villagers were excited and surprised that the carollers were adults and not children. Other reactions (in several villages) included a puzzled or bemused householder allowing us in and watching the performance, after which the group might leave quickly. In one event (I was not present) the carollers were threatened by a man with a knife. Other villagers told me of how happy they were that the group came and how it made the season a little more special. Reactions also varied depending upon knowledge or experience of carolling, particularly amongst different generations of the household. This matter of generation differences is something I shall explore in greater detail later in this chapter. The difference between reactions was illustrated during an expedition to several villages in north-west Poland (as guests of Szamocin, a local theatre organisation). Working with boys from the youth club organised by Szamocin theatre TWW carried out carolling in three villages. The differences in reaction were extreme. Whereas in one village, which we visited at night-time, the group was generally met with amused interest and no little excitement, the earlier village was much different.

The first village was formerly a collectivised farming village that, since the decline of Communism and government purchase of produce, was suffering economic hardships. The carolling began in early afternoon, in broad daylight. What became apparent during the carolling was the lack of familiarity with carolling. While a number of people looked on amusedly, even bemusedly, and apparently enjoyed this strange group of people in funny clothes doing little sketches and songs in their yards or doorsteps (only rarely were we invited into houses) others were very unsure of us. In some cases we observed villagers going into their houses and closing doors and curtains when they saw us approaching. The also peeped out to see what we were doing after we passed their houses. At one point, a middle-aged man came

out of his house shouting, asking what we were doing. The carolling needed to be explained to him. Of those who allowed us to perform for them many of the spectators did not seem to know what to do regarding giving kolęda. An elderly man, who seemed very familiar with the conventions, owned one of the few houses we were invited into. After watching the performance, his wife brought refreshments and he donated money. He then commented that he had not seen any carollers in the area since before the war, and then there were about three groups in the area.

It seemed, from discussions with TWW about other expeditions, that the experience in this village was fairly unique. Previously carolling had been carried out in villages where a tradition was known (if long dead). It seemed that as many of the inhabitants of this village were not familiar with historical carolling, perhaps because many were from incoming families and any carolling traditions of their forefathers had been forgotten. While some of them would presumably have known of carolling the actual experience of it was sometimes unsettling for them. A conversation with an inhabitant of Nowice confirmed this. On hearing of the above events she commented,

> I think I can understand their behaviour. I mean, I know about kolęda but the first time I saw it was when the theatre came. I was at home and I heard the horn from far away. It was frightening, my stomach turned… I thought 'What is that?' Even when they came to my house and I saw them… they came and played, it was still a strange, frightening experience. Even now, when I know them, I still get a strange feeling when I hear them coming.

7.5 Old Eyes and Young Minds

Responses of Different Generations

Pahl and Thomson (1994) illustrate how the perception of history may differ amongst those who experienced, especially those of different generations. This is important when considering differing views and reactions to kolęda amongst different audiences. Many of the older people might have memories and experiences of carolling the younger generations do not. Intermediate age groups (middle aged etc) might have partial knowledge, passed down from elder family members. However, children may have experience of such things from school, television etc. The level of knowledge and experience might dictate recognition and reaction to various aspects of the carolling, including certain figures (such as the Jew). The

eclectic nature of TWW's kolęda occasionally meant that a figure such as the Stork (familiar in Warmia) was not recognised in other areas (such as Bieszczady). Historical figures might be recognised more by one generation than by another. This became apparent during interviews with villagers.

The figure of the Jew (described in Chapter 4) is perhaps the most problematic. As noted, there is occasionally some question about the use of this character due to its stereotypical nature and potential for an anti-Semitic reading. The group argues that they are attempting to subvert anti-Semitism through a more sympathetic use of the material, however I am not wholly convinced of the efficacy of this. As Steinlauf notes (see Ch. 2), by the late 1970's there were generations of young Poles who had never *experienced* Jews. While many of the older audience members might recognise the figure, few of the children I interviewed knew it supposed to be a Jew or understood the imagery connected with the character[cxxxviii].

Amongst children and young people reactions to the carolling (and occasional performances in village venues) ranged from excitement to curiosity. Occasionally the reception was influenced by *generational* tastes. Some villagers in their twenties and thirties commented to me that they did not personally like the type of music played. Wacek recalls some young people complaining that, "You don't play folk music, you play music our grand-parents like!"[cxxxix] Some teenagers liked the carolling. Two village girls (about 14 years old), wearing fashionable clothes and heavy metal t-shirts, said that they thought the kolęda was *very beautiful*. In another village where TWW performed kolęda two years running (but were also known for playing music at a summer camp) one mother insisted that I should persuade the group to take her boys carolling the following year. The boys liked the idea[cxl].

Carolling and memories

The carolling produced reactions from a number of the older villagers related to memories connected with their own experiences of kolęda. As noted, those with a knowledge of the conventions knew what was (traditionally) expected of a host. Reactions were also provoked from memories of earlier kolęda. Sometimes this could produce interesting information from the spectator. What became apparent in some cases was how the carollers could evoke memories from villagers and engage

in a close form of contact. One several occasions old people would begin to talk of earlier memories of kolęda. This might extend into memories of life in the past as well as personal and family experiences. The theatre group might engage in the conversation, thus creating contact with people but also learning more about local history etc.

On one occasion, in a Lemko village which TWW were playing for the first time, an elderly woman (living alone) admitted us into the house. After the performance and some songs she brought us refreshments and began to chat with us. Eventually she began (unprompted) to talk about her experiences during *Akcja Wisła*. She spoke of how she and her family were moved to Silesia and how her family still lived there. She went on to talk about having to travel to see them, but also about her health problems and the trouble with travelling alone. This information was revealed to a group of strangers she had only met. In other cases older members of households might begin to talk of old times in a way that some of their own family had not heard them speak. Young people who knew little about old traditions might suddenly hear about things they had previously not been told about. Arguably this might create an interest amongst younger members of the village (frequently accused of not caring about the old ways) in old practices of their fore-bearers and a greater notion of (historical) identity[cxli]. In some cases discussion about kolęda might reveal aspects of social history. A member of the house might reveal that they were a caroller (or remembered carollers) in their youth before they were made to move from their home (as happened in several cases). Likewise a reaction to a particular tune or sketch might bring more information. On one particular occasion myself and another caroller noted a man apparently stiffen as a Ukrainian song was sung. When it finished he politely (if restrainedly) asked if it was Ukrainian, making no further comment on it[cxlii].

During an expedition in a Lemko village one old woman joined in the singing of a particular Lemko carol, *Wo Weflejemi*[cxliii]. During the last verse is the line,

Hlan okam szczyrym o Boży Synu, na naszu zemliu na Lemkowynu
(Look nicely with your pleasant eye, Son of God, upon our Lemko earth).

While the woman sang almost the entire song she stopped singing only for the word *Lemkowynu* ("Lemko earth"), after which she continued. During (later) discussions with a Lemko teacher I pointed this out asking whether it was possible there were alternative lyrics that may have been politically awkward to sing. I was told that it is also possible to sing *Ukrainu* (Ukraine), suggesting a possible national identity linking with Ukraine (as many Lemko do). Such revelations illustrate Wacek's thoughts about how performance of theatre and music may be a powerful tool in research and produce deeper insight than ethnological interviews (see Chapter 3 about research expeditions). I consider it comparable to Bovin's concept of *provocation anthropology* (1988) whereby a form of performance provokes reactions which may be studied by the researcher.

The reactions of some spectators to the performance does not always tell the whole story. As interviews showed, it is possible for the performance to be taken on several levels. Most of those interviewed were pleased that the performances took place. Performances were appreciated because they broke the monotony of village life, they entertained the children, they reminded the old people of the old days. However, some spectators commented how they occasionally had certain reservations about what they perceived the performers were attempting to do. This often related to comparisons with the old carolling and thoughts about modern life and the relationship with tradition. It is necessary to examine how villagers, especially those who recall such practices as carolling, view the work of TWW in relationship to the historical practices.

Tradition; the 'new' and the 'old'.

A major question which the work of TWW posed (to me, at least) was the comparisons between the 'old traditions' and the 'modern' work. The apparent appeal to a number of participants and observers is, as I have noted, some connection with notions of Polishness which seems to be accessible through a connection with *village culture*. Amongst a number of the village audiences, especially those who are originally from the village and are not relocated urbanites, the relationship with tradition may be different. Having noted possible a generation gap between those villagers who have experience of old traditions the views of comparison between the

work of TWW and the *original* forms of practice were taken mainly from interviews with old villagers, predominantly those born before WWII. There were also a number who recalled (and indeed, practised) such traditions until fairly recently. The comparisons, I feel, illustrate tensions between notions of modernity and tradition as well as tensions between generations and continuity of tradition. While it is not uncommon to hear old people anywhere saying how much better things were in the old days I shall ask (in the next chapter) whether we might see this as a form of identity marking amongst generations and whether generational relationships with traditional practices might also be seen as markers in notions of identity and perceptions of ethnic and national identity.

In Nowice most of the interviews I held were with the older residents. Here there was general agreement that the theatre group's visits were appreciated,

> We are welcoming them warmly. We are not only giving them money, but pancakes and whatever else we have. They are coming from a very far off place. We have nothing against them and we don't have any bad thoughts, about them and the programme they are making.

However, occasionally there were reservations about the style of presentation. Many did not consider the new kolęda to be as good as the old one. Many comments referred to the lack of attention paid to the costumes, "Our kolędnicy were always so well dressed. These new ones do not have the right clothes. The clothes are not rich enough". These sentiments were echoed by another villager, "Aah, they are polite, but compared to our kolędnicy… they are not as good".

There were also more concrete criticisms of the group's work as well as puzzlement about the nature of those doing the carolling. Some of these raise questions about the notion of authenticity in the eyes of those old enough to recall the original carollers. Upon learning I was connected with TWW, and that I had taken part in the carolling, one old woman pointed out, "Kolędnicy who were going on the kolęda were very poor and you had to give them something. And you, are not poor... so what do you want?" Several commented that much of the world's ills came from a decline in religion. They pointed out that religious observation had declined since Akcja Wisła. This decline in religious standards also related to the kolęda. Whereas previously kolęda had some connections with the Church one man felt that, "The

kolędnicy that are walking now are people who left God and are looking for some ceremony".

Although he let them perform in his house, for this gentleman what the group performed was an empty ritual, devoid of God. In another house lived an old couple who were Jehovah's Witnesses. This was the one house in the village that TWW did not visit, having been asked not to as the kolęda figures (such as the goat) offended their beliefs[cxliv].

The notion of the ritual (as performed by TWW) being empty may be seen to contrast with other comments about the spiritual nature of TWW's work. However, the suggestion that those taking part in the carolling might be in search of something might be considered in the light of those participants who felt that TWW allowed them to access something they felt they needed. The above comments illustrate that while villagers may welcome the carollers and enjoy their coming the appreciation is not always without reservation. This appears to be the case particularly when there is a comparison with memories of the historic practices. This challenges Kuligowska-Korzeniewska's suggestion (writing about kolęda in Węgajty) that, "If the Węgajty dwellers accepted this new ritual it must be because they don't practice, or exactly remember, the old Christmas customs" (1998, 5). She makes no reference to the fact that for the second expedition villagers from Węgajty were consulted about aspects of the local practices, particularly the use of the *Szemel* (the one used by the theatre is an original one once used by the village kolędnicy). My own interviews showed that not only did many of the older residents remember the kolęda but several had practised it until the 1970's (they gave up the practice when several members of the carolling group emigrated to Germany). One former *kolędnik* had mixed thoughts about what the kolęda performed by TWW represented, in relation to the tradition that he had practised. The first time he had seen it, he was a little disappointed that he was not seeing the kolęda he had practised. However, he felt it at least gave the old ways a chance to live on, "The theatre has mixed everything, mixed the tradition. In some ways it is a continuation of the old tradition but with new elements. It lets people remember what it looked like". Such comments demonstrate how rather than excepting these performances because of a lack of knowledge, the villagers may also choose to accept the performances on their own merit, without necessarily making

comparisons with the old practices. I suspect that had I not asked such questions directly they would not have mentioned it outside their own circle.

A musician living in Węgajty echoed the recognition of the contemporary carolling being an illustration of the old ways. However, he considered it more as a form of entertainment than a serious *cultural practice*.

> It is a kind of theatrical fun. It has nothing in common with reviving tradition and it is not the way to go about it. It ***is*** a chance to understand what the tradition was about and what it looked like.

With reference to the role of the theatre in the village he commented,

> It is artificial. The zabawas are OK and people from all over the world come to Węgajty but it doesn't cause any cultural results, it will always be people from the town. It's good that people get a chance to see new things…but the kolęda has no cultural meaning for the people, although it is good fun. It is more important for those who do it than those who watch it.

The references to both the urban incomers and the importance of carolling for the practitioners brings us back to the matter of urbanites searching for something in the rural. This continued interest in the rural by the urban as well as the exposure to international performances, different musical styles and foreign people challenges the assumption that the work of the theatre *does not cause any cultural results* either within or without the village[cxlv]. We should ask, therefore, how the work of TWW might have cultural significance for villagers and urbanites.

7.6 "Travelling" in search of culture

The search for culture

I have suggested in earlier chapters that the work of TWW has some significance for various observers in relation to a historic Poland of many different ethnic cultures. It has also been suggested that, in some way, the work might be seen as a form of revisionist historicism, disputing a notion of a mono-ethnic Poland that has been propagated for over fifty years by successive Communist regimes. I suggest that the utilisation of an image of a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic Poland provokes a variety of reactions amongst audiences (as we already have already noted above). Depending upon the awareness, perceptions and experience of history audience members have, the significance of certain motifs provokes different

responses. Having noted the reactions amongst some elderly villagers to various *ethnic* materials we can begin to understand the significance of history to the work of TWW. This significance of history may also, I suggest, be important to younger spectators and participants. As previously noted, many young people appear disinterested in historical practices while some appear to be actively disassociating themselves from them (see Ch. 4). This contrasts with a number of young people who appear to be actively exploring and attempting to (re)connect with such practices.

As noted in Chapter 2, even musicians within the village note that so-called *Village Music* is losing ground to the technology of pop music. Young people have less of an interest in old forms of music than in previous generations and the number of young traditional musicians within the villages appears to be declining[cxlvi]. Due to social changes and political and historical events, many of the younger generations are not familiar with old traditions (which have often ceased to be practised before their birth). In some cases, it is the work of groups like TWW and some young musicians in Olsztyn which introduces younger people to these fading practices (albeit in a stylised form). We may also consider that many of these people might have little or no experience or knowledge of ethnic minorities within Poland. Some may actually be from families of ethnic minorities who have assimilated. In such cases, the work of TWW might be a step in familiarising themselves with certain aspects of these cultures. It might also be argued that attempting to create an awareness of minority cultures and portraying a multiethnic, multicultural Poland is a positive cultural contribution. I suggest that the work of TWW (and other practitioners working in the same field) may be seen to problematize notions of *Polishness,* which have been reinvented throughout recent history. In particular the work may be seen to highlight and problematise notions of *The Other* through questioning contemporary and historic notions of *Poland* and *Polish*.

Previously I have examined how a certain style of presentation through performance may address notions of Self and *Other* through an utilisation of historic and contemporary images and noted the reaction by older people to the carolling and suggested that somehow the music and performance stimulated some form of contact whereby memories could be activated and accessed. Considering this I shall now

examine how music and performance might not only implicate the *Other* but might also implicate, or create the spatial and temporal *Other* world. This, I will suggest may be instrumental in allowing some spectators to mentally relocate themselves temporally and geographically while it may also allow others to create a temporal and geographic space and place of the mind, that of the idealised village.

Location, Relocation and Performance.

It is, however, important to consider whether the spectator remains in the venue when exposed to the material. By this I do not mean physically, I mean temporally and, to some extent mentally. Might a spectator's reaction to the work lead to the form of *relocation* that Stokes (1997) writes of? Stokes, citing Giddens, writes of how modernity may be seen as a separation of *space and place.* This leads to a need for *relocation.* Stokes suggests that music might be seen as aiding such relocation as it, "informs our sense of place" *(3).*

> Amongst the countless ways in which we 'relocate' ourselves, music undoubtedly has a vital role to play. The musical event… evokes and organises collective memories and present experiences of place with an intensity, power and simplicity unmatched by any other social activity (ibid).

If, as Stokes suggests, the evocation of place may be brought about by music (a vital part of the work of TWW) then we might consider that the *place* evoked by certain tunes, the memories organised and activated, might also be connected with a different time. As such the audience member may undergo momentary relocation to a different temporal (as well as physical) place. Such a mental relocation might explain the tears in the eyes of an aged wedding singer, recalling dances in the village when she was a young girl, or the changing physique of a ninety year old former szopka puppeteer, his old hands suddenly becoming lively as he replays scenes (with empty hands) from a show he has not performed in over fifty years.

If we accept Stokes' theory of relocation through music we should consider that such a process might take place in any form of environment, be it ones own home or a theatre space. As such, the spectator may have to travel some historical distance to relocate. But what might happen to those who do not have a physical historic connection with a different place or time?

Stokes writes that as well as creating a form of marker to our environment it can also preform our notions of a different environment. Referring to clichés found in advertising campaigns and documentaries etc, he points out that,

> They preform a knowledge of other places that is borne out by subsequent experience, and this knowledge has a distinct role in the definition and control of problematic 'others' (ibid, 4)

Just as Stokes demonstrates how a stereotyped form of *oriental* music used in Turkish delight adverts is used to conjure up images of a mystical, imagined Arabesque world, in Poland the image and music of Górale highlanders is used to conjure up a delightful rural mountain region where people drink Tatra beer and eat fresh country cheeses (now available in a shop near you). I will suggest that the continued utilisation of idealised rural imagery in Polish literature, television and films allows the urbanite, with little experience of village culture, to create their own rural world which they can relocate to when an evocative melody is played. The distinctive sound of *Otherness*, found in archaic Polish music may further dislocate the spectator from their present space and relocate them in a world of the mysterious village, close to the pagan past and Mickiewicz's ancient Polish-Lithuanian forests; a world contain the mysterious others which the spectator has only heard about, the German speaking farmer, the old Jewish inn-keeper or the Lithuanian wood-cutter. Alternatively, the performance may present the spectator with a world about which they know nothing, perhaps stimulating them to explore further and to find out about their own heritage and national history. This desire for self-education may be seen as one aspect of Technologising of Self, brought about by the work of the theatre company. I shall examine this more in the next chapter.

Summary

In this chapter, I have examined the work of TWW with consideration of the audience. As well as considering how different performances work I have also attempted to find common themes and reactions amongst differing audiences. I have also highlighted differing responses and attractions to the work of TWW amongst a variety of spectators. I have noted how some members of the audience find different points of relation with the performance and performance material. I have considered

whether it is possible that the work has a *cultural value* within the village or whether, as one interviewee claimed, it is of more value to the urbanites attending the theatre. Noting that some of the spectators become participants, I have considered the role of romanticism and idealism of the rural in creating an attraction to the village theatre. This is something I shall now examine at greater length in the next chapter, where I shall also examine the role of 'tradition' as a tool of identity crafting and how both theatre and tradition may be considered as forms of network which assist identity crafting.

Chapter Eight

8.1 Finding Your Place: Identity through Tradition

Throughout this thesis, I have considered how theatrical work may be seen as a form of identity crafting, particularly through the use of a concept of *tradition*. I have also considered how important the role of the *Other* may be in such performance-based work as I have examined here. Throughout this work knowledge and consideration of history and the changing status of *Others* has been important, particularly in relation to the performance materials of groups like Teatr Wiejski Węgajty. Likewise, we have noted that at various points in the last two hundred years, certain branches of Polish theatre have discussed questions of Polish identity and that of the *Other*. What has been apparent is that the major works relating to such questions have occurred during periods when Polish identity was a vital question on the political stage. Mickiewicz's seminal works, and his influential views on pan-Slavic theatre, were written during a time when the Polish (geographical) nation did not exist and a new Polish identity was being forged. Wyspiański's work, as part of the Młoda Polska movement (and the *chłopomania* which accompanied it) occurred during a time when intellectual and political drives for Polish independence and identity were reaching new peaks. The work of Osterwa and Schiller, with Reduta theatre, was performed during a vital period in Polish history, when the nation itself

was coming back together and facing harsh questions about its own identity and existence. Following the fall of Communism, new questions about identity, although no less vital, may be facing contemporary Poland; questions which, Halina Filipowicz writes (1995), modern Polish theatre must begin to address. It is with this in mind that I consider the role of TWW (and other groups) as possibly serving as a focus point for those with questions about identity.

We have noted that a recurring feature of certain areas of Polish theatre and art has been an utilisation of images of the rural and (supposed) village culture and practice. The links between nationalism, Romanticism and notions of the *pure* rurality have also been well noted. It is apparent that the use of such motifs and materials by groups such as TWW is not only a recurrent and established practice amongst Polish theatre practitioners, but it is also one which has firm roots in a discussion of national identity. I suggest that this constant use of the rural as a symbol of national identity may create tensions in a changing Poland, both the Polands of the past and the Poland(s) of the present. These tensions may arise out of the struggle to define a national identity which has historically utilised the rural imagery whilst also attempting to stress its cosmopolitan, advanced nature, particularly on the international stage.

In writing poems and plays that drew extensively on rural and peasant cultures, Mickiewicz was attempting to woo the sophisticated elites of Western Europe to the Polish cause. Chopin, playing to the European elites, utilised village dances. The energetic young intellectuals of the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries highlighted the quality of Polish education, philosophy and art while frequently using images of the rural (in particular the Tatra Highlanders). In some ways, we can see a Poland which reflects Argyrou's concepts of Cyprus, a country constantly stressing its sophisticated urban society, in relation to the West, while caught in a historic relationship with the rural. I suggest that contemporary Poland finds itself in this recurring predicament. Whilst attempting to embrace Western economic culture and emphasise the sophisticated nature of modern (urban) Poland (tourism, education etc) Poland still finds itself attached to images of the rural (Górale Highlanders, *Pan Tadeusz*, carved wooden furniture and boxes). The country which stresses its historical relationship with the West, and has long considered itself

part of Western Europe (predominantly through the Roman Catholic faith), may be seen by outsiders as an impoverished rural country. This is something which is often reflected in anthropological literature.

This tension between village and town is one which is iterated within conversation (as well as literature) within Poland. As I demonstrated in Chapter 2, notions of a polarised society, urban and rural, were frequently used by the subjects of my research. Villagers would talk about "people from the town", while urbanites would talk of "village life and culture". Such images of polarisation were, however, deceptive and, when questioned, many informants would admit that the polarities were not as solid as they appeared to be. Villagers would admit that town culture and urbanites had long infiltrated the villages. Likewise, a group of urban intellectuals discussing how to save *village culture* grudgingly admitted that rural movement into the towns, and their own intervention in village life was another example of how it was not possible to speak of a *pure village*, or *pure town*. That such cross-pollination between the rural and the urban occurs is one of the sources of this research. TWW themselves are a product of this cross-fertilisation. While admitting this readily, the members still emphasise a notion of a polarity between rural and urban. Artistically (and geographically), the group is based very much in an image of the rural. That some audiences have to leave the town to come to the village emphasises this gap between urban and rural in a physical way. Artistically, then, the work of TWW may be seen to reiterate the image of the rural and reinforce a notion of *Otherness* and polarity. I will suggest, however, that through their great focus on rural Poland, anthropologists also create a form of polarisation within the literature.

The contact between town and village is often represented by the legal and official bodies that seek to legislate against farmers, be it the Socialist authorities (see: Hann, 1985 and Nagengast, 1991) or the post-1989 governments and neo-classical economists (Zbierski-Salameh, 1999). The *town* requires produce from the *village* and urban-based authorities seek to control this production and also use the countryside as an escape from the town (such as tourism). It may also (see: Hann 1985, 74) use the countryside as a way of excluding individuals from the town by building prisons. Cwizewicz (2000, 286) also points out the contact of tourists and its role upon local economy and music performance in Górale society. While such

things are generally pointed out from the effect on locals, rather than tourists and in-comers, this is evidence of forms of contact and, perhaps cross-fertilisation between town and village. However there appears to be little examining the role of urbanites (particularly artists and intellectuals) who choose to settle in villages (for example, like McDonald's work on Breton activists in rural Brittany or Handler's work on Quebecois nationalism). Here I feel my own work has been able to contribute to a greater illustration of points of contact and relationships between these perceived polarities, and to further explore how notions of these polarities may influence not only notions of identity about *Others* but also about Self and the crafting of one's own Self.

The work of TWW, I suggest, illustrates how an utilisation of an image of the rural not only reiterates an imagined polarity between village and town but also critiques it at the same town. The attraction of urbanites to the village and the exposure of the villagers to a wide variety of Outsiders arguably act as a form of contact between the two groups. However, the utilisation of what may be perceived as *traditional* motifs, based on a notion of village culture, also objectifies the *village* as the home of *tradition*. This in itself raises questions in that, as we have seen, not all villagers are seen as having access to these traditions. I will ask, therefore, whether a perceived relationship with a culture or tradition may be used as a basis for an identity? If so, is this how TWW helps individuals craft an identity, by allowing them to gain some kind of contact with a perceived traditional lifestyle? I shall examine how a relationship, or connection, with *tradition* might signify a form of identity and how it might be used in a crafting of Self. Firstly, however, I shall examine how it might be both possible and advantageous to consider both theatre and tradition as forms of networks which may be used in identity crafting.

8.2 Theatre as Network

I have suggested that part of the attraction and use of the theatre company to audiences and participators is the possible connection it may give them with a particular aspect of a national identity. This suggests that the theatre company itself may be considered as part of a wider system than just the performers and the audience. As such I feel it is helpful to consider the theatre as part of something we

may call “a network”, which Riles defines as, “a set of institutions, knowledge practices and artefacts thereof that internally generate the effects of their own reality by reflecting on themselves” (2000, 3). Having already noted the relationship between TWW and several other theatre groups and performers it is easy to refer to TWW as being part of a “theatre network”, whose members utilise similar practices and beliefs. This network may be broadened to include those media critics and academics who not only follow the work of TWW but also utilise them in written works about this kind of performance practice (thereby enforcing the “reality” through “reflection”). We are able to draw up a variety of borders for this network (Polish theatre, international theatre, musicians etc) but as TWW specialise in crossing borders we may consider them as part of several networks which, through them (in this case), ultimately converge. This, as noted, may happen through the introduction of new members, associates or interests which lead to new areas of interest and new contacts. This leads to an ever-expanding network. How might we use this idea of “network” in an exploration of identity crafting?

In her exploration of Networks, Riles shows a copy of a leaflet (Fig 19, pg. 128) illustrating a woman utilising “the network” through the internet. “The network” is shown as being both something which contains the tools for the job but also as being a tool itself. It is important to consider that when this woman “plugs into” the network she also becomes a part of it and must contribute to it to be able to utilise it. One aspect of this contribution is the acknowledgement of the network, which thereby reinforces its existence. This may be seen in a similar way to the audience which the theatre needs to exist. The utilisor of the network, in whatever form, must take on a new identity in relationship to their place within/out the network itself. Likewise, the associate of the theatre company may take up an identity ranging from a one-time observer, a regular observer, a participant, an associate with knowledge/ contacts and a full-time participant. This identity may then function within or without the theatre network, being produced (or not) reflectively by the individual and/or the theatre company themselves. An example may be seen in BKS (amongst others). Having spent one week in Węgajty the musicians in the group learned some Polish/ Jewish tunes and incorporated them into their band in Glasgow. The band was known as people who had performed in

Poland. TWW were mentioned in Polish press as having had a Scottish theatre group visit. Members of the wider TWW network knew of BKS as fellow associates.

Considering the earlier point about acknowledgement and reinforcing identity we have noted how critiques and texts of TWW continually refer to various aspects of the groups work and stress notions of "the spiritual". This aids in (re)creating an image of the theatre which attracts audiences to see performances which may reinforce the image(s) which they themselves may further reflect upon. Likewise, the constant utilisation and reworking of certain performance materials may be considered to reflect on the groups own past, thus reinforcing a perceived character or reality. That the group continually performs "old" shows from their repertoire may suggest they still practice things which they did over ten years ago. This may suggest non-change, or allow audiences to imagine they are able to observe an older, more original form of TWW's work (in the way Allein apparently considers Gardzienice's earlier work). The replication is furthered through collaborations with other, like-minded performers and artists which creates a wider image of network as well as enforcing perceived identities. In some ways this is borne out of necessities, which actually emphasise the idea of network. The company not only has a core membership, but a wider "pool" on which to draw. Mutka explained,

> The thing is we can only work with who you have and what we've got. Sometimes somebody is busy or not able to come and we have lots of little groups of people we know who can work with us doing different things, sometimes bringing in new people, sometimes it is the same old faces. There are lots of little concentric circles all around us and we have to work with what we have in these circles.

As the work may rely upon who can do what, or upon the utilisation of a particular talent, the work often looks the same to the untrained eye. This in itself may contribute to an image of unchanging, "traditional" character. It is this image and perceived network which may be used by individuals to craft their own identity someway, as we have seen, by drawing them closer to aspects or 'artefacts' which they feel a need to access.

The mention of artefacts allows a further allusion to "network" through the consideration of the theatre company functioning in a way similar to the "focal points" which Riles explores in her work,

> The focal points might be a person, a piece of technology, a symbol, or all of these. What defines a focal point, however, is... "the catchy part"- the aesthetic attraction, the desire to captivate that it evidences (2000, 130).

The theatre company can be seen both as a focal point in itself and being made up of focal points. The image of the little barn-house theatre in the forests is, as we have seen, a powerful image for many observers, suggesting some kind of 'authenticity' to the company's work. The members of the company may also be envisaged as specialists or experts in certain fields (as indeed, many of them are). The history of certain members may (symbolically?) attract interest, as we have seen with the Grotowski/ Gardzienice relationship. However, there is also the work of certain members which allows them to be considered as 'focal points'. Members of the group may find themselves being sought as specialists to speak at meetings (as both Wacek and Mutka were, when invited to a meeting on cultural projects). This may include speaking about the type of work the group does but also in relation to the type of material they use. For some people this may make them focal points for a network which they wish to be part of... one which allows a gateway to the world of "tradition", be it "theatre tradition" or "folk-loric tradition".

My early trips to Poland with BKS illustrated this to me. When I told students in Warsaw that we were going to Węgajty, the reaction was almost one of awe. "They use old instruments which nobody else does anymore... they learn from the old guys in the village!" It was further illustrated when, following a show during my fieldwork, a young Olsztyn student asked, enthralled, "I wonder where they manage to find these old, ancient songs!" (my colleague pointed out that several of the songs she had heard were readily accessible in songbooks). The group was seen as being part of a network which reached into closed areas. They were the gateway in some cases into the (perceived) closed world of the "traditional". To work with TWW was to gain access into this closed, mysterious world. To access this you had to become, at least a little, part of the network.

The closed nature of the network was made apparent to me several times during talks and feedback sessions, belying the alleged openness of the theatre-group's work. In a similar way to that mentioned by Riles (52), often the "network members" and "focal points" would work with a notion of the anonymous audience

in the outside world ("them", the audience). The restriction of observers to the unfinished work also emphasised the closed nature of the theatre work. Likewise, during some 'public' discussions about the group's work one member declined to speak about certain aspects by evoking restricted codes of language, "I do not wish to speak of these things in this way, there is a more precise language to speak of them!" However, just as Riles's focal points litter their speech with 'closed shop' acronyms and references, he did not attempt to initiate the audiences into this restricted code. The theatre 'focal points' also shared a similar quality with Riles's focal points in that they seemed able to gather a lot of information but seemed to share only a restricted amount. This is not to suggest that they greedily held onto the information, but there were apparently certain levels of access to different people. The group has often had to work hard to gain some material and technique and it is not just there to be handed away for nothing. This raises the question of how such transmission may operate and questions of 'ownership'.

Transmission of material and 'ownership'

As illustrated above, one aspect of watching or working with TWW is an exposure to apparently 'restricted' materials which might be termed 'archaic' or 'traditional'. Closer contact with the group allows closer access to this material. The theatre focal points may be seen as collectors and stores of this restricted knowledge and to work with them allows a participant to gain this material. This access is not without a price (albeit, perhaps, a small one). Access involves an agreement on the part of the participant to subject themselves to certain types of training in the TWW way of doing things, allowing, with the help of others, a certain amount of the operations involved in the Technologising of Self. This allows the participant to gain some kind of knowledge or experience which they feel might provide something which they feel they need. Part of this may be the exposure to certain materials and information.

The transmission of material within the group (network) can depend upon the level of access a person has. For those with lower access levels, there was a general form of information and data readily shared (such as audiences), this increases as one commits themselves more to the theatre. Workshop participants are allowed further

access to information and project participants even more. Associates, filmmakers and media (those who publicise the theatre/network) are allowed a different level (often under the guise of being allowed into otherwise inaccessible areas). Fellow artists may be seen to operate in the field of a wider network of "artists" and often become involved in an exchange of material/ technique. No matter how accessible things seem there is often some kind of commitment price required for any information, even if it is only the commitment of asking and undertaking the training seriously (as we have seen).

The material which is transmitted can vary from that which is readily accessible, for example, through books, through songs and dances which have been acquired by the group through interactions with other artists, to specialised regional varieties of songs, techniques, tunes and dances which have been acquired through fieldwork. Sometimes this material might take on a perceived 'pure form' (from which there is no deviation allowed) or a basic form which encourages improvisation (as we have seen with kolęda materials). This, arguably, further illustrates the network aspect of the theatre in that it demonstrates wider boundaries from which the material is gathered. What becomes apparent is that the use of such materials reinforces the image of TWW as being a (possible) gateway to a world of 'tradition'. Also, by utilising these materials they reinforce their own image by reiterating their past explorations and their contacts with different groups and cultures. By 'passing them on' they also enhance (perhaps unintentionally) an image of being 'tradition bearers'.

The repetitive use of certain materials illustrates Riles's point about the 'fading of ownership' related to materials over a period of time (88). Riles points out how new materials and vocabulary in 'her' networks were introduced with quotation marks (acknowledging a previous source) which eventually disappeared over time as the material was adopted more widely and used more frequently. Over time, the phrases became standard and 'belonged' to the network, and as such, to everyone. Materials used by TWW experience a similar process. Songs which are learnt by workshop participants are not always acknowledged from a particular source (although if asked the group could name some sources). Many regular participants will be familiar with certain tunes from previous work. New participants come to

learn them as part of their ‘initiation’ into TWW. As such many of these tunes and songs may be referred outside of the theatre as ‘Węgajty tunes’, even though they are regularly performed by other musicians and singers, some of whom, as part of the network, may have actually provided them to TWW! While the group never refers to them as ‘our tunes', they have become associated with TWW. While there might be a question of moral ownership of such materials, the process arguably lessens this as the theatre group have often acquired materials directly from tradition bearers or from other artists who may (or may not) have also done so. That these artists then choose to pass the material onto the theatre group (and so onto the participants) suggests a certain understanding that they have ‘permission’ to do so, the moral obligation is therefore with the initial transmitter[cxlvii].

This process also occurs with performance techniques, such as those in the carolling. In the dramatic sketches, such as the scenario with the goat and the doctor, or the goat and the Jew, a certain new element comes into play. This may be used by one person and adopted by another and eventually becomes a set piece in the sketch (with no author) and may then be copied by other performers. One particular illustration of this process involves the goat-and-the-doctor. When BKS originally worked with TWW on a kolęda project, the doctor revived the dead goat by blowing on it. One member of BKS began to use a whistle instead, and played the goat back to life (who responded to the whistle). This was then copied and utilised by other players. I have since seen this used by workshop participants who were not present three years ago when this was first done. I suspect that if any of them do a kolęda project outside of TWW then this may find its way into the repertoire. Indeed, Wacek once commented about one particular performance group who, having worked with TWW went away and ‘created’ a kolęda performance based very much on TWW’s. Just as the quotation marks around phrases disappear in text, allowing the originality and authorship to fade, but so too can those around certain performance materials. One performer acquires some material and gives it to another, the responsibility for that material is then passed on, along with the material. The ownership of the material begins to fade. This is, after all, how TWW’s own carolling performances have developed, through titbits given to them by old carollers, bits collected from books and other performers. If we consider that TWW’s own performance is made up of

other people's ideas and inspiration (as well as historical research) then we may stretch the idea of network a little further.

Riles quotes Lipnack and Stamps, "[Networks reach] back... before simple human relationships became obscured by hierarchy and bureaucracy" (quoted on pg. 2). While I take it to mean that the practice of networks 'reaches back', I wish to consider a different interpretation of this. Not only do networks utilise contemporary connections, but they may also utilise historical connections. As such, they reach back into the past to make contact with materials and focal points from earlier times which may still be used to effect today. We may consider such a thing as a temporal network. Such a thing can be envisaged through a network such as that surrounding TWW. Not only does entry into this network provide contacts with contemporary practitioners and materials but also with historical ones. There may not be any Warmiak kolędniks still performing, but TWW have been given material by old carollers to use. Are they then the nearest thing, currently existing, to the old ways? To get as close as one can to the old practice somebody may feel that contact with TWW can give them this. The network allows a participant contact with shreds of history. A connection with practice and history might be considered as something else... as tradition.

Tradition as 'network'

In previous chapters, we have noted the use of 'tradition' as a form of identity marker. It is therefore possible to consider that connecting one's self to a 'tradition' may be seen as a form of identity crafting. Tradition, as we have seen, can be an ever fluctuating (expanding, or indeed, contracting) entity which can change itself according to the needs of the participant or observer. It is the "present perfect" of culture, that which links the past with the present (and may have an effect on the present). It is therefore possible to consider tradition as a form of temporal network which one might wish to be part of. By becoming part of the contemporary practice of 'tradition' one is aligning one's self, and forming a kind of contact, with those figures and practices of the past which (may) influence the present.

Tradition as a network may be seen to involve practitioners of the contemporary forms but may also allow access to practitioners of other traditions,

using the language of ‘tradition’ as a common lingua franca, or a Pax Romana which allows partial access to other tradition networks (as a fellow ‘traditionalist’). This is most obvious in the case of musicians who, ideally, approach another tradition with an air of respect which they desire for their own tradition. This may allow them to communicate with other musicians, play with them, perhaps exchange technique and tunes. It also allows a certain amount of authority and protection in that one may perform something without fear as it is ‘your tradition’. We have already noted such possibilities in the work of the theatre group.

Considering the changing status of performance material in the theatre work we may also consider how tradition as network allows ‘traditional’ material to develop and adapt in the way that we have already seen material within a network does. In a similar way to the terminology and jargon of Riles’s networks, the material of a tradition can be adopted as new, noted as new and then utilised to a point of familiarity where it is considered a ‘natural’ aspect of the practice. We have noted the changing form of different practices in Chapter 5 (such as Handler’s examination of cross-pollination in Quebecois culture) and how social change may cause the introduction of new elements into old forms (not without contention). There are also more closed networks of tradition, like the Górale music which Cwizewicz examines, where although musicians recognise and can play other traditional forms, they do not mix them with their own.

The human focal points of this network of tradition may be the practitioners considered the ‘tradition bearers’. Like the members of the theatre, the practitioners of a tradition, especially those which are seen as especially knowledgeable or just old suggest some connection with the historic or ‘purer’ forms. It is important to consider that members of the theatre can be seen as focal points for a theatrical tradition (such as the ‘Grotowskian’ or 'Stanislavskian' tradition) as well as having links and connections to the old tradition bearers of music and folk-culture. Human focal points are linked to the symbolic focal points which may symbolise an aspect of national identity which some people may wish to relate themselves to as a form of identity crafting. That being said, the focal points may also act as gate keepers, restricting access and entry into the network. This is something I shall examine below. This consideration of both theatre and tradition (as I’ve said, theatre may be

seen as a tradition in itself) as networks which not only furnish necessary physical and temporal connections but also provide a 'place' where identities can be formed is important for the examination of the crafting of self through 'tradition'

8.3 Making One's Self Traditionally

In Chapter Four, I began to examine how performers of TWW might utilise aspects of *tradition* or *traditional* performance materials as tools in identity crafting. The learning of particular forms of music, playing styles, songs and dances might not only require a performer to physically retrain their body but it might also require mental retraining and philosophical readjustment as the performer (re) considers their relationship to the practice, the material and the tradition. By considering ones relationship to the tradition one must assess what the implications of a notion of tradition and what are the implications connected to certain *traditional* practices. For instance, does the performance of a particular type of music, or a song in a particular language, have political implications and what is the performers status and belief concerning these. Does the performer see them as a carrier of the tradition, a part of the tradition or do they see the material simply as a commodity that enhances their repertoire and potential appeal to an audience. Depending on their views on this they might also consider how they approach the performance of this material. We noted such considerations amongst the young Olsztyn musicians in Chapter 4. The style in which a musician plays certain material may be seen as expressing their own beliefs concerning, and relationship to, tradition.

To illustrate this we may consider the attitude to *folk-loric* renditions of village songs and dances expressed by several informants (Chapters 3 and 4). Certain styles of performance, such as that of *Mazowsze-esque* folklore groups may be seen (as some Polish musicians do) as artificial and bearing connections with Communist ideology. These styles of performance which may have once been seen as modern interpretations (or corruptions) of traditional forms have, in the eyes of some people, come to be seen as *traditional* themselves. Other people see them as anti-traditional, in that they were a political innovation that sought to codify (and so control) Polish village customs. By controlling and restricting the organic development of a *'natural'* culture, which was so often used to express the spirit of Polish identity, the

Communist authorities might be seen to be stifling and controlling (and perhaps killing) the roots of Polish culture. This would appear to be consistent with the Communist notion that everything before the advent of Communism should be considered pre-history. The *folk* culture of Poland becomes a museum piece. Decontextualised from its original purpose it develops a new one as theatre.

In Chapter 2, we noted that certain historic practises and performance styles lapsed with the advent of new techniques and styles, such as singing and demands for changes in performance styles. As I have suggested at various points throughout this work, such developments may signify tensions between generations. In a cross-section of three generations we may have people who recall an earlier form, as well as the folk-loric style of the post-war. The middle generation may have been brought up with this folk-loric style and see it as *the* tradition. The younger generation may attempt to reject this notion of folk-lore and embrace a post folk-loric outlook, whereby they might try to rediscover forms perceived to be more authentic or explore traditional music through, for example, fusions of rock, jazz and traditional. Alternatively, they may reject traditional music outright[cxlviii].

In some cases, such as the Górale musicians of the Tatra mountains, a tight control of the transmission, practice and performance of *traditional Górale music* appears to have been maintained over the last century (see; Czizewicz, 2000). This apparently ensures some notion of authenticity and purity is maintained within the tradition. Young musicians are trained and, one could argue, indoctrinated in the ways and means of an authentic Górale musician. The relationship to the practice of Górale musicianship is, according to Czizewicz, very much connected with ones recognition as being a Górale. The music and wider Górale tradition is then seen as ones birth right, to some extent. Being a non- Górale severely limits ones access and acceptance within circles of Górale musicians[cxlix]. In such cases, we can see a notion of *tradition* being utilised as a boundary marker amongst a particular regional socio-cultural, or perhaps *ethnic*, group. The relationship with the group dictates the relationship with the tradition.

We might also ask whether a relationship with *tradition* could be used to signify some form of identity within other groups. I refer not necessarily a regionalised cultural group, but more to groups within groups. In particular, I refer to

different generations. Can a particular relationship with *tradition* be used as an identity marker for people of a particular age? If so, might this identity based on age be seen as a particular form of national identity concerned with an individual's relationship to national history?

Age, Tradition and Identity

Throughout this thesis, it has been frequently noted that many old people (usually from villages) consider that the young people have no interest in the old ways, no interest in the village and want a modern, urban lifestyle. Often, this (perceived) lack of interest (respect?) for traditional lifestyles and a decline in social behaviour and standards are considered a symptom of modernity. The old lady cited in Chapter 3, considered that images on the television gave young people a false impression of town life. She felt they did not understand how important the values of the old village society were. Many other interviewees felt a similar way. We have also noted the tendency amongst some of the old people to compare the kolęda of TWW unfavourably with that of the historic practice, from their younger days (although it is perhaps common of old people everywhere to make such unfavourable comparisons between the past and present). At the same time, these people often say that such practices are no longer performed because the young people have no interest. This has also been suggested by the Olsztyn musician who spoke of how village youth could not understand her interest in musical forms they wanted to disassociate from.

There are, however, several factors which might contest this notion that these practices die simply because the youth have no interest. As we have seen, younger Poles from both towns and villages do sometimes show interest in old practices. Likewise, as in the Lemko village, young children organise themselves to do carolling. There is also a certain amount of education about such things in schools. It is a popular practice by schools and cultural groups (at least in the Warmia region) to develop history projects which encourage enquiry by the younger observer-participants about the historical culture of their ancestors and predecessors[cl]. This may involve interviewing old villagers to learn about the history and historical practices (traditions) of the village and surrounding region. The project may also

involve learning old songs and, as in several projects I witnessed and participated in (which had very eager children taking part), it may involve a performance. The teaching of tradition in schools and cultural organisations seems to be a time-honoured practice. Residents of Nowice spoke of a teacher who had organised a children's performance based on a Lemko wedding. We also noted the teaching of songs and routines to villagers by Jędrzej Ciernak's Folk Theatre Institute (see Ch. 1). This practice raises an important question about the teaching and transmission of *tradition*. Is the decline of certain historic practices due to the disinterest of the young or is it connected to older generations not transmitting the knowledge of such things? If this is so, does it demonstrate a greater possibility of an identity being crafted through age and relationship to history and historic traditions? May we consider a different generation, to some degree, as a different culture, or perhaps a sub-culture? In such instances, does a generation whose sense of national identity was forged under different historic circumstances represent a (potentially) different national identity to those of subsequent (or previous) generations?

8.4 Transmission and Non-transmission

We noted in Chapter 4 certain differing attitudes to the transmission and continuation of certain aspects of historic or *traditional* lifestyles. One old lady felt that, as she had nobody to pass her knowledge of *the old ways* on to, the old ways would die with her. Likewise, we noted the woman who thought that teaching Lemko was pointless because she felt it was not important to the young people. One lady commented, *It is better to forget the hardships of the past*. Old Lemko lifestyle for her, seemed to equate with hardships, as modern village life suggests poverty for many younger people. There is a suggestion in such cases that an aspect of identity, in these cases, language and traditional practices, may be seen as being connected with a certain period of Lemko history. This period is now coming to an end and so Lemko identity may be moving to a point where such markers are no longer needed or required.

There are those who would not agree with such ideas. There are a number of musicians and singers (both young and not so young), who wish to explore and express certain forms of Lemko music and singing. Some of these (such as those I

met in Bielanka) appear to consider it important to continue the practice of old songs and the Lemko language. There is also a small, but energetic Lemko intelligentsia. Some old villagers had even stronger views concerning matters of identity, language and customs. During the discussion about the teaching of Lemko language, an old man gave a long and impassioned monologue about how, for him, there was no longer a Lemko people, the Polish state had destroyed it all. Lemko culture, he said, no longer existed, "One day you will read in the history books that there were people called 'Lemko'." The post-war propaganda of the Polish state had, he felt, meant it was not safe to speak Lemko in public (as he claimed to have been warned once) and the children had to learn Polish. Learning Polish and Russian, what need was there for Lemko? Language and practices declined through lack of use and, to some extent, a lack of need. A *cultural animator*[cli] who works in villages pointed out to me,

> When you have to worry about the farm, whether it will make any profit, whether you will be able to hand it down to your children… whether they will want to take it… You aren't worried about telling them about tradition and such things. But don't forget, much of what you might see as our traditions we do not think about… things like the hay under the cloth on the table at Christmas… we don't think of it as a tradition, we just think of it as something we do.

It might seem that the idea of *traditional Lemko culture* is something that these people have themselves relegated to the past. As such, they see no need to transmit it to a new generation. It may seem that there is a perception within the communities, amongst many old people about what an old Lemko was and what a young Lemko is. However, as the above quote suggests, might it be that certain practices are just not thought about anymore or not actually thought of as being integral to an emic notion of Lemko identity? At the time of writing it may be seen that the decline of one lifestyle is (perhaps) coming to completion, whilst the other (or should I say *others*?) is (seemingly) developing. Can we say that Lemko society is in *transition*? If so, where do we define the boundaries of the transition as being?

What is important to note with the decline in the transmission of, and the practice of things like carolling and music is that if, as many informants said, the young were not interested in them, when and why did the practitioners themselves stop. Some performers, like the Ukrainian puppeteer in Chapter 1, ceased to perform

due to the political climate of the post-war years. Others, like some Warmian *kolędnicy,* stopped when members of their troupes had emigrated. One man (not from Węgajty) told that he and his friends had practised kolęda for over ten years after the war. Following the departure of his brother to Germany in the 1960's they had continued for around two years and then stopped. “It just wasn't fun anymore”. It seems that while villagers told him that they missed the carolling, nobody decided to take it up themselves.[cli]

What becomes apparent through studying the history of TWW is that some old villagers decided to teach and transmit old knowledge to somebody. These people were not villagers; they were the theatre members. A number of old musicians, singers and carollers have provided information to the theatre members (and other groups and musicians). These might be musicians who were still actively playing. Others might have been inactive and taught what they remembered when asked. According to some musicians, students of village *masters*, there may be several reasons for the master agreeing to teach. In some cases these musicians may be very renowned and have a number of potential students, in other cases they might be partially inactive and not have any students. For some, the musicianship can be used as a commodity to supplement a lifestyle, as researchers and students may bring gifts, or do small tasks etc for the *master*. In the impoverished village, an ageing farmer, with little income may profit greatly from small things. In other cases, there may be a desire, by the musician, for some last hint of recognition as a master, or simply a chance to pass on what they knows (perhaps achieving some kind of 'immortality'). Local prestige may also be attained (or retained) through having people travel from across Poland to visit you. However, it should not be thought, I was reminded, that these people are unaware of their own status as musicians or that they are desperate to teach *just anyone*.

> Some of these masters are very selective about who they teach. You have to have some kind of ability. One master we know, had a group of people come to him for a few months but he then said, 'No, we are wasting each others' time'.

The matter of prestige is worth considering. These musicians may have been noted (at least locally) in bygone days[cliii]. Now, in a world where they increasingly find their style of music being considered 'out of date', and ignored by young people,

interest by young(er) musicians can provide some sense of purpose. Suddenly, those practices which had long been considered dead (such as carolling), and some things which were normal everyday practices, are considered *traditional* and are of special interest. One can be considered special just by being old and knowing about things that the modern people do not. Once more, we may consider identity being connected with history and age. This, arguably reinforces the notion of tradition, being connected with age, also being a form of network. In this way, perhaps national identity is also conceivable as a form of network. If we consider that these networks may all link up at various points (for some members, anyway) then we may consider the role of the theatre in linking these networks and assisting access to various levels. The next chapter will examine how performance may do this and how the work of the theatre may be utilised by others, including spectators and spectator-participants to craft their own identities, particularly in relation to Others

Chapter Nine

9.1 The search for Identity

We have noted that a number of people connected to the work of TWW may be attracted to the work through some personal need to *make contact* with a form of Polishness they feel they need to experience. Through watching or even participating in the work of the theatre, some individuals have commented that it seems to allow them to *get in touch* with something they feel is essential to their sense of identity. In some cases, these are people who are from urban backgrounds, although some may have relatives who are from the village. Others may be from the village but have moved to the town at a young age (as mentioned in the previous chapter). As we have seen with the performance material, certain forms of music and singing are seen by some as being part of a notion of being Polish and of expressing *who they are*. Things like carolling and learning old songs are also used in education projects with young children and teenagers in villages and towns (as members of TWW do). The subject of some of these projects is *who we are*. It is possible, therefore, to note some connection between the notion of the village, and village-based practices, and a notion of Polishness, as well as (possibly) some other regional and ethnic identities. As Nagengast (19991,8) points out, the countryside has long been subject to objectification by the urban (and presumably vice-versa). Handler also points out (as I mention in Chapter 5 of this thesis) that part of the *creation* of this mythic ideal of

the rural comes from the othering, and, perhaps, *legitimisation* of the rural by ethnologists, folklorists and other academics as a basis for national identity. This othering may be seen to lead to a need for some members of society to try and connect with the *Other* to try and prove they are the same.

Historically (see Ch.1) the objectification of the rural as an essence of Polishness has been frequently reiterated throughout the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries in art, literature and theatre. This is also coupled with a retrospective focus on Polish history in such works as those of Mickiewicz, Sienkiewicz (see, Daniells, 1981) and even Miłosz. This practice can still be seen in recent Polish film epics such as *Pan Tadeusz* (based on Mickiewicz's epic poem) and the hugely successful (and expensive) *Ogniem i Mieczem* (*With Fire and Sword*), based on the Sienkiewicz novel about the Cossack uprisings[cliv]. I suggest that such constant reiteration emphasises the importance of the idealised rural in Polish national identity and may also create a feeling amongst *some* people that this relationship with the rural is necessary for a full sense of being Polish.

For some this connection with the rural may simply involve visiting the countryside, mushroom picking, touring the forests, mountains and lakes etc. Others may feel a need to gain a different form of contact, such as experiencing music and traditional customs of the village. We may compare this with Handler's work in Quebec (1988), where the image of the rural Quebecois farmer is set as the ideal of historic Quebecois culture. Handler suggests that urban-based tourists visiting *traditional* Quebecois farmsteads as part of organised holiday programmes, are often attempting to familiarise themselves with the idealised (and mythologised) notion of Quebecois culture. These people, says Handler, are, "in search of their roots, or [they] want their children to experience country life as they imagine their grandparents had experienced it" (1988, 52). I suggest that the work of TWW can provide a similar function for a number of people. I shall now examine how I believe this may be achieved.

9.2 Theatre; Transportation over boundaries

Theatre's fuzzy boundaries

One of the major features of theatre is that it generally relies upon a performer pretending to be something, or somebody that they are not. Theatre works through a utilisation of fantasy and a distortion of the boundaries between reality and non-reality. As Schechner points out, "Truth is what acting is all about; once you can fake truth you've got it made." (1985, 121). Schechner suggests that theatrical performer operates,

> in the field between a negative and a double negative, a field of limitless potential, free as it is from both the person (not) and the person impersonated (not not). All effective performances share this "not-not not" quality (123).

The performer is, Schechner writes, not the character but is also not not the character, "[H]is performance is between a denial of being another (= I am me) and a denial of not being another (=I am Hamlet) (ibid.)".

This situation between realities may put the performer in a trickster's dilemma, whereby the identity of the individual before the audience shifts between and fulfils several roles. The performer may be a friend of the audience member but, at some point, the spectator must deny this identity and allow the figure to assume another face (a suspension of disbelief). We might say that the performer's identity is in the eye of the beholder. Recalling Marika's words about not being a *real* kolędnik, we may ask what she is when she performs the kolęda? As few of the villagers I spoke ever commented that these kolędnicy were *not real* (different or inferior, but not *not real*) it is necessary to ask whether TWW may be considered as *real* kolędnicy by some of the spectators. The question may also be asked, what are the criteria for being a real kolędnik? If there are no other people performing the carolling then who or what are these performances to be compared to? If compared to the historic practices, we have frequently noted that practices are recognised as changing over time. It can be argued that if the old practice of locals performing the practice has died, then the *new* practice of outsiders, theatre groups, performing some form based on an approximation of an historic practice is the current reality[clv]. As such, might some spectators consider such practices authentic? In a contemporary situation, for some this might be as real as it gets, for both performers and spectators.

An *invented tradition* it may be, but it is perhaps the only one available which can give some spectators an idea of the *real* tradition (as the musician commented in Ch. 5). What is perhaps important here is that members of TWW refer to carolling more often as a *ritual* than as a performance. It is perhaps more appropriate to say they *perform* kolęda rather than *do a performance* of it. How then, might such a performance work?

Schechner categorises two types of performance; *transportative* and *transformative. Transformative* performances involve the performers themselves being changed through the performance (such as in initiation rituals). *Transportative* performance involves the audience and the performer coming back to a starting point and re-entering *ordinary life* at a similar point to where they left it (125-6). Schechner points out that such performances may be categorised as *theatre* (transportative) and *ritual* (transformative) but this, he says, is an awkward classification as both types of performance may coexist in the same event (130).

We may consider that a theatre-based performance by TWW is obviously a *theatre* performance. Here is a scripted show, in a designated theatrical space where certain conventions synonymous with *the theatre* are observed and (largely) conformed to. Certain spectators may be experiencing such styles of performance, and such performance materials, for the first time and may find themselves affected by the experience (some members of BKS were profoundly moved and inspired by the first viewing of a TWW performance). Others may just acknowledge the piece as something they liked or did not and consign it to the mental filing cabinet. Arguably, the piece will be predominantly *transportative* for most of the audience, although it may affect some in a changing way. Performers, likewise, may find themselves undertaking new tasks and experiencing new things, such as performing in Polish for the first time, performing before a Polish audience, singing a certain style of song. The performance is perhaps more of a *transformative* one for them. For other performers it may be a case of *business as usual*, another performance that feels little different from another. In the case of a theatre performance, it is acknowledged that this is a theatre company and this is a theatre performance.

In the case of carolling, we have a different scenario. As I have commented, there is a blurring of identity here. Is this a group of kolędnicy or not? While

members of TWW may state that they are *a theatre group performing kolęda*, the matter of who and what they are may be out of their hands. Using Schechner's theory, if the group is *performing* kolęda then while they may feel they are not *real* kolędnicy, they are not *not real* kolędnicy. As such a spectator may choose to ignore any question of their authenticity, as may a performer in the group. If, as I proposed earlier, a spectator-participant of the expedition feels that they have some need to connect with a notion of a rural aspect of Polish identity then this may be a way for them to do it. The participation in a kolęda performance may be seen as a transformative event in some cases. Based upon my own experiences of performing carolling and certain conversations with accompanying participants (both Polish and non-Polish) of expeditions, it is possible to make a number of observations concerning this. Likewise, I shall make some suggestions about the possible transformative nature of the performance for certain spectators.

The first expedition that myself and members of BKS undertook with TWW was an Easter carolling event in Suwałki. At this time, I was there as a performer, not as an anthropological researcher. Because of this I think my mind was asking different questions and making different analyses. The initial training for the expedition involved learning songs and routines in Polish. We were also asked if we knew of any Easter songs from the British Isles which we could perform ourselves (and perhaps teach TWW). Throughout the preparation and the expedition, we were asked how we felt about this form of performance (carolling) and whether we found performing in people's houses strange. For most of us (in BKS), the idea of performing in houses was not strange as we all knew of Christmas carolling (although my own experience of it was it being performed on doorsteps). Some of us also knew about mumming traditions in Britain. As a puppeteer, I had performed frequently in strangers' houses, for children's parties, etc., but even I had not done this kind of thing before (in any language!). My Scottish colleagues had less experience than myself, but were not unfamiliar with the idea.

During and following the expedition my Scottish colleagues and I discussed our own reactions to this style of performance. We all felt that it gave us some wider idea of our own (historic) Anglo-Scottish culture, knowing that such practices had once existed in the British Isles. Each of us felt, and more so after the Christmas

expedition, somehow closer to, and more aware of, some aspect of rural British culture which we had only heard of. In one way I personally felt closer to a rural past which I had only read about than at anytime previously when I had been performing Traditional Scots and Irish music. My knowledge of British mummers plays was that most, these days, are performed in town squares or pubs, rather than in houses as they used to be. Yet here I was, doing something similar, for real. Here I was walking through mud and snow, singing and getting alcohol for my troubles. I felt as if I knew how British mummers felt, in the *days of old*. I felt I was now somebody who had done mumming, I could now talk as somebody who had experienced it. My colleagues expressed similar feelings.

What was also significant is that several of us began to feel less aware of being non-Polish (none of us spoke Polish at this time). This is not to suggest that we felt Polish in any way. It is more that the initial discomfort at being foreigners, performing somebody else's *traditions*, gave way to a feeling of being performers doing a job (which we were enjoying, for the most part). During one expedition to Nowice Wacek commented that he was actually the only Pole in the group, it being made up of four members of BKS, Mutka (German) and Marika (Ukrainian). On the same expedition, Wacek was congratulated on his training of us. Of one girl in particular, villagers commented that, "We knew she was foreign but she was almost perfect with her singing". A realisation of our *Otherness* declined, but was activated occasionally for performance value when we sang English language carols. Combining these reflexive observations with the comments from Polish participants, I suggest that some of them may have similar feelings; the initial intrepidity that one is about to undertake this work; the feeling of excitement as you begin and the realisation you are actually doing something you had only heard of. Now you are doing what the old people used to do. You are playing to people in small cottages, "people who have cows in their houses",[clvi] you are drinking vodka and eating home-killed meat grown on this farm. Here are people who lived through history, people who have a link with a lost time, lost traditions, people who may be the last practitioners of a certain lifestyle, or speakers of a certain language. You, as a performer have made contact with them. To some of the participants, they felt they were making contact with an aspect of Poland which might soon be gone forever.

My style of writing at this point may be considered somewhat *exoticising*, perhaps overly romanticising, however I feel it is justified. Perhaps my own anthropological training has not cleansed me of such tendencies but if I felt such things as a performer, how else am I to explain them? My own reactions, I feel, help me to understand those of others and to attempt to explain them. Thus, I feel that, using Schechner's description, the initial participation in such an expedition can be *transformative*. Indeed, later expeditions increased my knowledge and made me feel an *old hand* at carolling (I even helped instruct during some workshops and was hailed by Wacek as a master of performing Herod)[clvii]. This may be compared with one female Pole who, although an experienced performer in her own right, spoke to me of feeling "half-baked in this style of theatre", after two expeditions. A Macedonian ethnologist who has carried out much research into Slavic carolling and carnival rituals accompanied TWW on one kolęda as a lantern carrier. He commented that he had learned more about kolęda through this one expedition (as a participant) than he had in years as an academic researcher and filmmaker.

Audiences transformed and transported

While we may consider the possible effect of this kind of performance upon a practitioner, how might it effect a spectator? I suggest, using Schechner's model, that both transportation and transformation may also affect spectators of the work. By considering how a performer may feel some connection with a perceived ideal of Polishness through this kind of work, then it is possible to consider that an audience member may do so too. We have already noted some reactions to experiencing kolęda for the first time, in previous chapters. I wish to consider such reactions alongside my observations about identity being crafted through a relationship to tradition and history. I shall suggest that for the older members of some audiences the performance of the kolęda may be a transportative experience, in that they watch it, (hopefully) enjoy it, offer some refreshment etc and then close the door as the troupe leaves. They are returned to a state not unlike that which they were in prior to the visit of the troupe. Perhaps (as happens) they have been waiting for the troupe's coming and the performance has given some anticipated satisfaction (a partial

transformation?). However, as I suggested earlier, perhaps the performance itself *relocates* them for a period and brings them back at the end (or not).

The familiarity with the practice (albeit, perhaps, historically), and the anticipation of the troupe coming, suggests that older members of the audiences may see the kolęda performances more as representations or as simple shows than anything potentially transformative although, as we have seen, it may provoke memories or responses which suggest the type of relocation of which Stokes writes. We have noted, however, the possibility of a perceived relationship with history and *tradition* being utilised in a process of identity crafting. In such a case it is possible that the experience of a practice such as Kolęda would be part of this. However, for the member of the audience who has never experienced such an event the performance possibly has the ability to take on transformational properties. For children seeing a kolęda Devil, or Goat for the first time, the experience can be very traumatic. For some of the older children, or teenagers (and perhaps adults too), the performance can also be disorientating; who are these people, why are these strange things happening in our house? However, I suggest that a realisation of what it is they are seeing may also provoke a feeling of empathy with the older members of the audience. They may now not only have heard about kolęda, but they have also experienced it in some form. While not the same as that which the adults might recall (bearing in mind that not all the adults have experienced it), it is still an experience of a form of carolling. As such, I suggest, it may allow the audience members to understand certain aspects of historic village culture which they had not previously had the chance to experience.

Of course, this does not mean that every member of the audience has this experience. Some may just watch and forget, others may wonder what the hell these idiots are doing dressed in strange clothes, playing grandfather's music (as some suggested to me that they did). In such cases it might be feasible to suggest that a rejection of such practices might be related to their own sense of identity, possibly an identity based on a contemporary culture which disassociates from the past which their grandparents lived through. Just as old people may think the past was better, young people may know it was not. Their concept of Poland is perhaps based in a modern, cosmopolitan world, not the old-fashioned world of folk-culture.

Tradition as Modernity in the performances of TWW

The emphasis I put upon the utilisation of *tradition* as a tool in technologising of Self may suggest a desire to be, as Latour suggests, anti-modern. However, I suggest that the work of groups such as TWW, and the appeal to their work to a certain section of people, may be seen as a form of using a notion of tradition to express a form of modernist identity. In this case, I refer specifically to a notion of ethnic tolerance and multiculturalism. Many of the people I met attending theatre performances of TWW were interested in the arts. There was also an interest in international forms of performance and different national and ethnic performances and culture. TWW have a reputation for receiving international performers and participants, as well as minority groups from within Poland, at their theatre. These included, during my period in the field, British performers, Serbian and Macedonian musicians, Singaporean theatre groups, Jewish and Gypsy musicians, as well as Russian and Ukrainian performers. Following my departure from the field, Schola organised a major project involving seminars and meetings with choral groups and singers from across Europe. Meetings and presentations organised by TWW also include videos and talks about different traditional performance practices at home and abroad.

Such interest in different national and cultural is not restricted to Węgajty. The regional culture house in Olsztyn regularly receives performances and workshops from international artists, including Butoh dancers, Aztec dance workshops (from Mexico), Indian performance groups and American theatre performers and workshops. Olsztyn also has a central theatre (with three staging areas); a small venue dedicated to pantomime[clviii] and an open-air amphitheatre where international festivals of music often perform. For a small provincial city, Olsztyn is not starved of international performances[clix]. There is also wide interest in *ethnic* and *world* music in Poland, including African, Latin American and Celtic music. This was demonstrated to me early in my fieldwork by the enthusiastic interest in the Scottish country dancing which I was asked to teach (something which BKS had previously done). I encountered Irish dances clubs in Warsaw and also at a small village school near Olsztyn and there are several successful Polish music

groups playing Celtic music (mainly Scots-Irish). One village based theatre group in northern Poland had begun teaching Brazilian Capoeirra to young people in the village (with great success)[clx]. *Ethnic* clothes were also popular and Olsztyn has several shops selling Asian-style commodities. Asian food is also popular. The *opening up* of Poland and the former Soviet Bloc has allowed more contact with international cultures. This, coupled with expanding tourism to and from Poland and access to wider media, has undoubtedly influenced a rising interest in world culture(s). As such multiculturalism may be seen as being equated with a modern, cosmopolitan lifestyle.

There has been a tendency in recent years, not least since the expulsion of Jews from Poland in the 1960's but also with the recent renewed interest in WWII history and the Holocaust, to consider Poles as (historically) anti-Semitic and intolerant. This was something I frequently heard in conversation in Britain, and occasionally in comments from colleagues. This is disputed by some writers, who stress Poland's historic multiculturalism prior to the annexation of 1795 (see; Brock 1981 and Le Moal 1981). There has also been a significant interest in (re)discovering the multicultural aspects of historic, and now contemporary Poland by groups like Borussia. One way of doing this is to research old practices and aspects of minority culture. While this may be seen as a form of internal Orientalism or Exoticism, it may also be seen as a way of demonstrating an identity based on tolerance and a belief in multiculturalism. If this is seen as being something historically practised in Poland, it is also something that may be seen as related to modern, Western culture. Certainly it may be seen as a reaction against the artificially created image of a homogenous Poland, and as such a form of *post-modernity*, where Communism was consider *modern*. Arguably, then, the work of such groups as TWW may function as a focus point for some people searching for such connections.

TWW's use of motifs from national minorities (from within Poland) seeks to demonstrate the historical multicultural landscape of Poland and challenging the notion of a homogenous mono-ethnic Polish culture. The Pole who approaches TWW in an attempt to connect with some notion of Polishness may find the notion of Polishness is one of a mixed Poland. The spectator is challenged to accept that *Polish* is not necessarily solely ethnically Polish. This may also allow the spectator to

show themselves being a *tolerant* person. Making a statement of association with such work may illustrate ones identity as a tolerant, cosmopolitan person. Arguably a large number of young Poles are reacting against the old image of Poland as a closed country and are seeking to embrace a Polish identity based on being part of the open West. The modern Poland, aiming to show its identification with the internationalism of the West, is apparent in tourist brochures and high street boutiques in cities. This, as we have noted, may be demonstrated by a rejection of historic aspects of a *traditional* Polish lifestyle, particularly amongst some young ruralites. However, it may also have the result of leading some people towards a greater interest in such things, perhaps as a reaction against going too far into the *brave new world* of globalisation.

Kumorowicz (2000) suggests that Węgajty's theatre may actually serve as a kind of grounding point for *lost* individuals. In a country where population shifts and political oppression may have led to a severance with one's family history and cultural heritage, then something which creates an image of the idealised rural may be at least a starting point to attempt a reconnection with that which one may feel they have lost.

> This is not finding any local folklore, this is not recalling a particular area. This is a world for people who don't have their own place. A world for the lost at the end of the century, for those who lost their own land (2000).

While the description may seem a little romanticised, Kumorowicz's thoughts on TWW illustrate how some people may view this work as a form of focus point for identity crafting. I shall now consider how the performances may be able to create this image of being a *world for lost people.*

Dislocation, decontextualisation and recontextualisation

Kumorowicz's description of TWW as being a place for the lost or the displaced is interesting and, I feel, particularly relevant when considered alongside the earlier discussion of *relocation,* as used by Stokes. An audience may be transported to a place or time through performance and returned to where they departed from. In some cases, as we have seen, it may be that a member of the

audience (or the troupe) undergoes some kind of transformative event. While it would be questionable to suggest that this is a planned result of the work, or a universal one (which it certainly is not), some of my data suggests that it is a possible result of the work. The theatre is, however, an art form which relies upon a certain measure of ambiguity, as Schechner suggests. The theatre work may find itself in something of a Trickster's Dilemma in that it must show different faces to different spectators. As such, it may be seen to play with the images and signals, which it communicates. I suggest it does this through a process of decontextualisation and recontextualisation which is then reliant upon the spectator for interpretation. As such the spectator may create the meanings of what is seen and utilise them accordingly. It may also allow the theatre performance, or the carolling to be used as a safe *buffer* for the performer and the spectator to seek a communication with whatever they seek.

If we consider both the training and creation process of the performer then we may see it relies upon a use of decontextualisation and subsequent recontextualisation (often through exposure to an audience). There is also a need to operate between boundaries, as Schechner points out,

> Performer training focuses its technique not on making one person into another but on permitting the performer to act in between identities; in this sense performing is a paradigm of liminality (1985, 123).

I have commented previously that part of the actor training with TWW involves learning to recognise physical and psychological aspects of oneself and, if possible, attempt to control them. This then allows a certain retraining to be attempted (I see this as a kind of recognition and control of personal habitus). The training may allow an actor to temporarily 'disconnect' from one Self and to adopt another liminal self for the duration of performance. In the case of TWW it is also necessary to consider that to some extent they employ a 'laboratory' style of working in that they are largely isolated, and work on projects over a (sometimes long) period, testing and re-testing it through constant work-shopping. Following a performance the efficacy of the work is assessed and perhaps adjusted. Erdmute Sobaszek explained,

> You can get a piece of music, maybe you learn it by ear or from music. You play and practice it but it is not until you actually play it to people and make some contact that it begins to live and you understand how it works.

It becomes clear that, for TWW, the contact with an audience (whatever the outcome) is the deciding factor in making the work work.

I suggest that the creation and rehearsal process works through a process of decontextualisation. Material, such as carolling material, is taken from one environment and isolated (for instance, it is taken by the performers from villagers and taken to the theatre) where it is changed, shaped and put into a context within a performance piece. This may involve changing ways a tune is played, adding new elements to a sketch, blending practices from different regions or countries (such as the Stork routine), or allowing females to sing songs normally sung by boys. This material is eventually is presented to an audience where the changes are demonstrated within the context of a performance piece. The audience themselves may then contextualise what they see and here. The audience may experience the material as perhaps an illustration of an imagined village, or as a pretty way of illustrating a classic text or however else they may interpret it. The context of the performance may then change with the venue and the audience. A performance of a Lemko song may find a different context when being performed in a Lemko village (where the performers are not Lemko) than in a meeting in a cultural centre where nobody is Lemko.

The ambiguity of the theatre is what I feel allows some audience members to use it to align themselves with a notion of village culture. Arguably they may allow themselves to see the work as illustrative of an aspect of real village culture and therefore feel they are experiencing it. The physical location of the theatre building may add to this and perhaps the knowledge that these performers have actually gathered information and received material from *real* villagers, gives a suggestion of an unbroken line of transmission. This was the impression I got listening to some spectators before and after shows. It may be that the performance acts as a kind of buffer, allowing the spectator to experience their perceived village through a safe filter of the ambiguous theatre production, or the carolling, while remaining at a comfortable distance from the cow-dung and the poverty (why spoil a nice image?). It is interesting to note that the position of the performer and the

material can also change under different contexts, such as when TWW encountered the children's kolęda in the Lemko village. Until that moment, some members of the group were comfortable with performing the carolling. In a situation where their own status was challenged by something they felt was more *genuine,* their own status and performance material suddenly was revealed as being *artificial*.[clxi]

9.3 The expression of Self through expression of the Other

I have suggested that the spectator may use the work and performance of TWW as a tool in crafting an identity and creating connections and relationships with aspects of a national identity in which they might feel lacking. As such we can see the performers being used by spectators to assist in the crafting of identity. It is possible to consider that the spectator might use the performers and their work to show something to themselves (the spectator) but might also be able to express an image of themselves to other spectators. The message might be, "Look at me, I am 'cultured', I go to the theatre", or, "I watch Teatr Węgajty and have an interest in Polish traditions and Village culture". Such a utilisation of the theatre we have already noted with the villages which enjoy (and relish) attention they receive due to their relationship with the theatre.

I have witnessed several other instances of groups exploiting a relationship with TWW, and other performers, as a way of presenting themselves to a third party in a positive light. In two cases these were related to publicity campaigns against school closures. One school in a Lemko village was staging a Christmas pageant, which was going to be covered by a local television news programme. TWW were asked to perform during the pageant as it was felt that the presence of a nationally renowned company might raise the profile of the pageant and thus the publicity campaign. Another campaign, near Olsztyn, utilised local musicians and historians in a campaign to highlight the threat of potential school closures. Olsztyn-based musicians played at pageants and fun-days (also covered by television) which were part of the publicity campaign. TWW became involved in work with the head teacher of this school. Through my involvement with TWW, I found myself being utilised as well. The head teacher of one particular school was active in highlighting the threat of school closures within villages. She was also leading a local project to promote the

image of village schools, under the title of *Village School, a Good Place for Success*. An Olsztyn-based dramaturgist and myself were asked to produce a play with village school children from a number of local schools. This play was to be performed in English and was to be part of a daylong event, which showed how important, and successful, the teaching of English was in village schools. The day included the reading of students' essays in English, a Big Band from the Olsztyn music school (American music), Irish Dancing, from a neighbouring village school which had contact with an Irish school, and our play[clxii]. What was apparent was the use of the English language as a status symbol. The village children and their schools were being promoted through their ability to do something special, speak an *Other* language. Their own identity was being (hopefully) enhanced, by showing spectators (both in the hall and through media coverage) how well they could be like *Others*. I was also aware that the status of the project was being raised through its association with a real native English speaker and theatre director (and member of TWW) who had several sets of letters after his name and was researching his PhD in Poland. The project was using me to represent itself to the outside audiences.

In some ways, the practice of theatre is based upon using *Others* to represent oneself. An actor trains to be able to represent someone else. Therefore the mark of quality in an actor may be considered as how well they express *Otherness*. Actors express themselves, their skill and discipline, through being an *Other*. They also make themselves *Others*, in opposition to an audience, in order to achieve this. An expression of Self through *Otherness*, either one's own *Otherness* or by utilising an *Other* is what I shall now consider.

Creating the Self through the Other.

I have commented previously how, to some extent, groups like Gardzienice and TWW have been undertaking similar work to anthropologists and ethnologists in researching and displaying aspects of minority cultures within Poland, particularly during a period when it seems such ethnographies were discouraged. I feel that there can be useful comparisons drawn between the work and status of the actor/performer and the anthropologist. Each in some way expresses themselves through an interpretation and expression of 'an other'. Argyrou (2000) suggests that

anthropology/ethnology is in a paradoxical dilemma in that in its own efforts to promote a notion of *Sameness*, it often has to present an image of *Otherness*. If the work of TWW is aimed at promoting a notion of a multicultural Poland, it does it by promoting Otherness to challenge alleged homogeneity. However, by attempting to demonstrate that many cultures make Poland it also emphasises differences in *Polishness*.

Roy Wagner's theory of *Creation of Culture* (1981) illustrates the creation of other and the realisation, or creation, of self. Wagner argues that the anthropologist (or performer?) entering the field for the first time encounters *the Other*. In an effort to understand the practices of the *Other* the fieldworker attempts to rationalise the new world through that which is already known, their own.

> Before this he had no culture, as we might say, since the culture in which one grows up is never really "visible"- it is taken for granted, and its assumptions are felt to be self-evident (4).

This involves a process of self-examination to find something with which to make the comparison. The anthropologist works as if *culture* exists. The need to realise the one results in him inventing his own too. Wagner suggests that as individuals are, to an extent, unaware of their own culture, until they are forced to examine it by comparison to another, then this attempt to understand and rationalise leads to an *invention of culture*. They come to know themselves. However, this process also involves the *Other*, as they also experience it. This means that they also become more aware of their own culture through a (re-) examination of it[clxiii]. However, to protect themselves from the newcomer, subjects may create difficulties for the researcher as a form of defence. The community tries to protect itself although the anthropologist is also a figure of curiosity, however the community tries to control the anthropologist. This it does in part by domesticating of the newcomer (7). This may be seen as constructing or utilising boundaries, such as language etc. to restrict contact and access, thereby identifying and expressing *Otherness*. Perhaps a classic illustration of this is when the subjects, knowing the researcher has limited skills in 'the other' language, code-switch in their presence, sometimes when the discussion focuses on the researcher, thus making the researcher the subject of the other.

Here we can see the tension between the need or desire to make contact with the other and the need or desire to isolate one-self. Wagner points out, however, that rather than isolate oneself in the way a missionary etc might, "thus reinforcing his or her own elitist self-images", an anthropologist/performer objectifies that which we are adjusting to. (8) The problem is that an anthropologist/performer is not learning this culture like a child, with no prior knowledge of anything, it is not experience of new things as opposed to different things. 'Culture is a 'prop'. (9)

> The anthropologist cannot simply "learn" the new culture and place it beside the one he already knows, but must rather "take it on" so as to experience a transformation of his own world… It is naïve to suggest that going native is the only way to really "learn" another culture, since this would necessitate giving up one's own (9).

Thus, says Wagner,

> … the invention of cultures, and of culture in general, often begins with the invention of one particular culture, and this, by the process of invention, both is and is not the inventor's own (ibid.).

The researcher must, however, try to get inside the informants' world while staying out of it to observe. He becomes a 'professional stranger' who appears to both groups to be outside of the one culture while embracing the other. As a bridge between the two cultures the anthropologist may seek to liberate themself from his own culture, creating an illusion that this is possible.

> This point accounts for much of the power anthropology has over its converts, its evangelical message: it draws people who want to emancipate themselves from their culture (10).

I would suggest that, to an extent, emancipation from one's culture could be seen as (a partial) emancipation from a (former) Self. Is it not also something which acting can do? We may also consider other notions of the term *culture* and how this may also create *Otherness* within a culture or society.

Culture as Creation, Culture as Creator.

Wagner suggests that the notion of *opera house culture* may also be seen as a form of disciplining of oneself according to ideas of high-points and history,

> The contemporary "opera-house" sense of the word [culture] arises from an elaborate metaphor, which draws upon the terminology of crop breeding and improvement to create an image of man's control, refinement, and "domestication" of himself. So, in the drawing rooms of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one spoke of a "cultivated" person as someone who "had culture," who had developed his interests and accomplishments along approved lines, training and "breeding" the personality as a natural strain might be cultured. (21)

Foucault has noted (1976/1978) that in order to dominate a society or culture may resort to censorship, which involves classification. The classifications of that which was previously unclassified may be seen, in effect, as a form of creation similar to that which Wagner writes of. Culture itself may be seen as a form of creativity; it is part of a culture to create and to interpret.

Art may be seen as an interpretative tool of Culture in that it seeks to represent the world about and portray it to an audience. Wagner suggests that Interpretative Culture, as seen in advertising and theatre, creates a metaphoric approximation of culture at large (61). We may therefore consider that both advertising and theatre may be seen to work through representation of a notion of a particular culture. The power of the medium may be most effective through the possible subversion of that which may seem normal.

> The entertainment world… is all the more interpretative for the fact that the image of life it projects is one of fantasy: its caricature, mimicry, and dramatisation succeeds as the very opposite of sober "fact." It interprets through the actor's, singer's, or comedian's licence to "be" what others may not be, and its "personalities" in their everyday lives are surrounded by the aura of this metaphoric "being"... The "show business" tradition incorporates (rather self-consciously) something of the same aura, that of professional interpretation through fantasy. (62)

We may consider that an actor's identity is based on being *an Other*. In a sense we may consider the actor/performer as expressing self through an expression of *Otherness*. Likewise, the audience may denote the actor from an ability to "become somebody else".

The consideration of *opera house culture* raises another aspect of creation; the preservation of that which is created. The classificatory practices which period such as The Enlightenment brought about, and the increase of rise of museums and galleries, may be seen as a vital instrument in the technology of self. Having

classified differences, they can now be displayed. The presentation of how different we are to *others* may also include a presentation of how different we are now to what we ourselves once were. We ourselves become the *others*! By considering this point we may begin to consider how a notion of *modernity* may further contribute to the crafting of self.

9.4 Conclusion

Throughout this theses I have considered how a particular type of theatre might be used as a form of Technology of Self. At the heart of my argument has been the utilisation of rural imagery as an illustration of national identity. This includes the use of the *idealised* village as a symbol of the utopian Poland of a mythic past (and future?). The image of the ideal village, as against the contaminated town, has arguably, been instrumental in promoting a notion of the polarities between the village and the town. I have, however, suggested that these are not as strong as popularly imagined, not least because of the two-way traffic of rural migrant workers to the towns and urbanites seeking a rural-esque lifestyle, or individuals and groups from the town undertaking such projects as TWW.

I have examined how certain forms of literature, and of theatrical practice within Poland have frequently utilised images of the rural as a basis for an ideal of national identity, perhaps to the alienation of some contemporary spectators. An uncertainty of identity amongst a number of Poles, concerning their relationship with this idealised national rural spirit, or a desire to acquaint themselves with a historic aspect of Polish identity may lead some to explore through avenues which groups like TWW provide. The importance of history has been, I have shown, a key factor in the work of TWW and may be seen as a vital component in forcing reassessments of ones knowledge. The performer must acquaint themselves with some knowledge of history and social change in order to gain a closer understanding of the performance material. This may involve a reassessment of one's relationship with the material it self and the *tradition* it may represent. The audience too, may then be confronted with imagery that challenges or reconfirms their notions of Polishness and the historic culture(s) of Poland. The person, raised during a period of official silence, regarding minorities, and being exposed to the official image of Poland as a

mono-ethnic state, may now be experiencing the uncertainty of identity which Filipowicz speaks of (see Ch. 1). The Old person of pre-war Poland may recall (albeit with rose-tints) an idealised past. As such, the theatre performance may allow a connection to be made between generations through the transportation of the audiences into the theatrical image of the historic village. As an observer of my work mused,

> This theatre, it is almost a kind of bridge which allows the young people to cross into a world they don't know and meet the old people in a world the old people remember.

What is tantalising, through an examination of history, is the apparent recurrence of such forms of theatre practice at times when Polish identity has been in crisis (as Filipowicz suggests it currently is). However, while I am not prepared to suggest that such theatre appears because of a crisis in national identity, I will say it is apparent that such practices become more noticeable during these times, or at least in retrospect they seem to have done.

Much of my discussion of this subject is, admittedly, subjective and is based upon conversations and observations. However, much of these conversations at least partly confirm my theories. It has been hard, however, to discuss such things with members of the theatre group as they rarely spoke with me in an in-depth way about such things. When I broached such ideas with them they liked the sound of them, and agreed. But, as true theatre artists, left me with that air of ambiguity. The aim of TWW, as they outline it, is to create a theatre for all people and explore the communications and contacts between different cultures and people. They attempt this by exploring and depicting notions of Borderlands, where differences meet and blend and blur. Through this meeting, they aim to promote understanding and tolerance. The inclusion of interested parties, such as students, is one technique they use. Training such parties through workshops and expeditions leads to a need for the participant to, (sometimes radically) make changes to their physical and psychological self. There is also a possibility that once the interest is stimulated the participant-spectator will take steps to go and learn and explore on their own.

The work of TWW takes place against a backdrop of great social change, following the decline of the former regime. While I do not wholly subscribe to the contemporary notion of *transition*, it is possible to say that current political events in

Poland and Europe have increased feelings of uncertainty. Some people, particularly Polish farmers, may find themselves caught between a fear of the past (historic grievances of Germany, for instance) and a fear of the future (the EU). In such times, as Filipowicz points out, a search for hidden enemies, scapegoats and certainty become prevalent. I suggest that part of the efficacy of groups like TWW in working in villages is that it may help create a different climate in villages that consider themselves forgotten. Villagers may feel (as my research shows some do) that their lifestyle, history and culture is being legitimised in the eyes of the wider world by this interest from a theatre company from near a big town. As such a certain point of pride and contact with the wider world may provide a necessary moment of relief in a crazy, threatening world in which one feels they have no power or status.

Of course, as we have seen, not everybody agrees or appreciates the work. To suggest my theories are universal would be foolish. What is apparent however, is that TWW are able to do that which they set out to do. The group do not set overtly themselves up as saviours of Polish identity or guardians of tradition. As Mutka commented, "We are not ethnologists, it is not our job to teach people about these things". Such things are incidental and additional, although certainly considered, to the prior aim of the work which is to create contact with people. Questions of authenticity are answered by the reply that this is a theatre group and these people are musicians and actors. It should not be forgotten that at moments of intense theatre one is not always thinking about politics. At the moment one is dancing an oberek in a village shack with rotten floorboards one is more concerned with enjoying the room spinning around and trying not to fall through the holes in the floor (it happened!). Whatever interpretations I may put on the work of TWW and those other performers, who undertake similar work, I shall leave one of the participants of a carolling expedition to conclude (with whom I was dancing in the house in Dziadówek).

> I come to these workshops to learn, to do things I would never be able to do elsewhere. I come to meet people, to make friends, to find out about my Polish culture and especially to have fun![clxiv]

At which point, she fell through the floorboards!

Notes

Foreword

[i] This is an important point which is not always made clear in the relevant literature and Theatre Węgajty and Projekt Terenowy are often used interchangeably. This distinction (Schola, Theatre Węgajty and Projekt Terenowy) shall be utilized throughout the work unless otherwise stated.

[ii] The research was carried out as part of a post-graduate research project with the University of Edinburgh and funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). While the research has not formed part of any awarded degree, parts of it have been published in various international journals and will be cited accordingly when used. In addition, permission has been granted by the University of Edinburgh for the use of the research material in this current dissertation.

[iii] At the time of writing I was cooperating with members of the Polish Academy of Sciences, who are carrying out the currently on-going project "Węgajty Theater - 35 years of anthropological theater and socio-cultural search" which is financed by the National Science Center (Project numer: 2017/26/E/HS2/00357). As the project is ongoing, the bibliography is still considered a work in progress.

Introduction

[iv] By this, I refer to available texts in English.

[v] In particular I refer to the works of writers such as Allain (1997), Cioffi (1996), Cwizewicz (2000), Czekanowska (1990) and Filipowicz (1995, 2000, 2001).

[vi] I am grateful to Frances Pine for guiding me to the unpublished ethno-musicology thesis of Krzystof Cwizewicz about Górale music (2000) and recommending Paul Allain's book on the Gardzienice company (1997). Likewise, I am grateful to Christopher Hann for his advice and copies of texts that he supplied to me.

[vii] It should be noted that there has always been a thriving mainstream theatre, showing classics and new work, as well as government approved dance and music ensembles.

[viii] While it might be argued that as Grotowski left Poland during the period Martial Law his later work could hardly be called Polish theatre his work prior to, and following his departure remains hugely influential.

[ix] This was organised by the Museum of Macedonia, Skopje. It took place in Struga and the village of Vevchani, where the carnival took place.

[x] At one point, a member of BKS almost punched a drunken Polish villager for putting his arms around the Scottish girls.

[xi] Originally, one of the criticisms of this work was the use of a capitalised "Other" (without inverted commas) to refer to a conceptualised notion of a different group/ethnicity etc. For this purpose, I now use italicised and capitalised *Other*.

[xii] As I shall illustrate, it may be too simplistic to consider a *transition* from Communism to *Democracy/ Free market* because Communism itself (in Poland or anywhere else) has constantly been changing. Likewise, if the alleged *transition* is thought to be between a communist command economy and a democratic free-market, which kind of free-market are we aiming for? The mere fact we have *neo-classical* economics suggests the nature of free-market economics is also continually changing. Therefore, the very point that the transition is heading for is also continually shifting.

[xiii] Very often the villagers themselves were not only aware of who I was (or who they thought I was) but were also aware of specific details. One woman whom I met for the first time whilst conducting interviews congratulated me on my recent engagement (knowing who my fiancée was, as well).

[xiv] I exaggerate slightly, as my residence was quite well furnished (with a centrally heated bathroom floor!).

[xv] I had previously been researching wrestling in the Balkans. Due to the political situation at the time, it was considered unwise to enter the field. Most of my pre-fieldwork preparation had been geared to this (including language training in Macedonian). The change of direction left only a short time to prepare for entry into the field in Poland.

[xvi] This is not to suggest a level of 'unsophistication' amongst research subjects. The point is that discussion could only be held at a certain linguistic level whereby it was difficult, if not impossible, to expand on certain subjects.

Chapter One

[xvii] Much of the information concerning Polish history is taken from Ascherson 1987, Davies 1981 & 1984. My main sources for Polish Theatre are Allain 1997, Braun 1996, Cioffi 1996, Goldfarb 1980, Schechner and Wolford 1997 & Segel 1997.

[xviii] I shall use the term *theatre* very broadly, including not just text-based dramatic forms, but also dance-based performance and music.

[xix] Both Brock (1981) and Walicki (1982) criticise the notion that Polish nationalism is included as a 'secondary' nationalism by certain historians when Poland was a recognised state prior to the rise of nationalism in Europe. Walicki particularly criticises Anthony D. Smith for uncritically accepting Trevor-Roper's classification of Polish nationalism as 'secondary', alongside Ukrainian and Białorussian (393, footnote 1). Walicki is also critical of Hans Kohn's theories of 'western' and 'eastern' nationalisms, considering it biased in favour of western nationalism, *In a word: Western nationalism was 'good', humanitarian, and progressive where as the Eastern variety was 'bad', pathological, characteristic of backwardness, and doomed to produce the disasters of the twentieth century.* (67)

[xx] This is not to say that the matter of language was not considered in nationalistic discussions (See, Walicki 1982, Ch.4, esp. pp 64-72).

[xxi] Hertz (1988) poses interesting points concerning Jewish assimilation during this period. He also suggests that Jewish assimilation into Polish society may have lead to greater developments of a Jewish nationalism (especially pp 133-168). .

[xxii] This is famously illustrated by the case of Malinowski and his childhood friend, the artist and playwright Stanisław Wickiewicz. Both were Polish, both brought up around Kraków however Wickiewicz was a citizen of Russia whereas Malinowski was an Austrian citizen.

[xxiii] According to Ascherson, Wilson had been charmed by the piano recitals of Ignacy Paderewski who was an advocate of Polish independence.

[xxiv] Dmowski may be seen as the father of modern Polish Nationalism. Davies points out that the hard-line racism of Dmowski contrasted greatly with the more leftist views of Piłsudski. (See: Davies, 1984, 129-148)

[xxv] Davies writes that approximately two-thirds of the population were Polish by language. The remaining third was made up of Ukrainians (15 per cent), Jews (9 percent) Białorussians (5 per cent) and Germans (2 percent). Ukrainians and Białorussians were, for the majority, the most impoverished of the rural dwellers, concentrated in the east of the country (118-120).

[xxvi] See Krasincki's play *The Un-Divine Comedy*, where Jewish converts are seen as agents for revolution and posing as converts so as to bring about the fall of the old order (i.e., Catholic and aristocratic). Interestingly this predates such works as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* whilst suggesting a similar idea of a 'Jewish conspiracy'. In 1904 Jeske-Choinski published a book, *Polish Converts*, (*Neofici polscy*) which 'unmasked' many notable Polish families as having Jewish ancestry (Hertz 1988, 87).

[xxvii] One interviewee told me she remembered the Volksdeutsch in her village receiving more food than the Poles.

[xxviii] The term *German is problematic*. As Rogers Brubaker (1992) points out, successive German regimes since the 19th Century have considered German-ness a citizenry of descent. However, historically a number of Poles had undergone *Germanization*. As Kurcz (1997a) points out, *As for the terminology, I am mainly using the term 'German minority', and I do not consider such terms as Germans, German minority, original inhabitants, or people of local origin as synonymous.* In spite of agreeing with Kurcz, (or perhaps because of it) I shall use the term *German* to refer to those German speaking inhabitants of Poland who either considered themselves as German or, for the sake of expulsion, were designated such by the post-war Polish authorities. I shall also use it guardedly to refer to groups like the Warmians and Masurians who may or may not have considered themselves German but spoke German.

[xxix] Sources for this section are taken predominantly from de Zayas 1994, Lebioda 2000, Naimark 2001, and the contributors to Ther and Siljak 2001

[xxx] Jankowiak (2001, 89) states that Polish researchers estimate between 20,000 and 1.3 million, whereas de Zayas writes that prior to the war there were approximately 1,371,000 Germans living in Poland and around 1.5 million in East Prussia. However, it should be noted that a large number of Germans had already attempted to flee the onset of the Soviet Red Army.

[xxxi] The sources from Andrzej Sakson (1997) and Zbigniew Kurcz (1997a) were supplied to me by a friend in Poland who translated them from the Polish edition of Kurcz (ed), (1997) *Mniejszosci Narodowe W Polsce*, Uni of Wrocław. At the time of writing this thesis I was not able to obtain page numbers or similar references. Therefore I cite only the year and source of the text.

[xxxii] Leboida points out how the expulsions were incorporated into a historiography of a long pattern of Polish resistance to Germanic aggression (2000, 168). That the Soviets now helped Poland finally repulse the German threat showed their friendship and good intentions towards the Poles.

[xxxiii] Subtelny (2001, 156-7) points out that whereas the 2.1 million Poles who came from the former eastern territories (re)occupied the former German territories of Poland, many Ukrainians were sent to Siberia (around 200,000) and the regions emptied of Poles in Ukraine were often repopulated by Russians.

[xxxiv] Although Polish authorities justified the operation on military grounds (to destroy the UPA), Subtelny points out that some Ukrainian scholars believe the Poles were more interested in furthering their goal of a homogenous state and had spoken of such actions prior to the death of Swierczewski, his death being used as an excuse (2001, 166).

[xxxv] Steinlauf considers 1968 a turning point in post-war Polish history and, *the birth date of forces that would overthrow Polish Communism* (1997, 76).

[xxxvi] I do not intend to focus much on the events of this period due to lack of space. Also, I feel these events are well documented. Readers may consult (amongst other titles) Ascherson 1987, Chapters 8-9, Kubik 1994.

[xxxvii] This is the title as used in translation by Segel (1997).

[xxxviii] For information on Polish Romanticism and nationalism see; Hertz 1988, Schama 1996, Segel 1997, Walicki 1983.

[xxxix] Szopka (see Waszkiel 1993) is a form of Christmas puppet-show, which was often carried from house to house, along with the kolęda. The characters of the shows are similar to those of the Herody performances.

[xl] For more detailed information of Schiller's work with songs and tunes see Kuligowska-Korzeniewska 1998, page 3.

[xli] Georgina Boyes (1993) notes similar patterns and practices occurring in the English folk-movement, particularly through the strict control of scholars and practitioners as Sweet.

[xlii] Actors of Reduta lived as a community, even wearing uniforms. Working as both a school and theatre (travelling and resident) the company existed until the outbreak of WWII when its premises were bombed.

[xliii] This cessation of practice was not universal. In Warmia, around Olsztyn, carolling amongst the 'German' Warmians continued in several villages until the 1970's. It appears to have declined after economic emigrations to Germany during the 1970's.

[xliv] Such ensembles still exist but post-1989 (if not earlier) interest in village music has resulted in a kind of post-folklore movement that dislikes such romanticisation of village customs. Informants spoke to me of *Communist approved folk music* and *fake-lore*. Wacek, of Teatr Węgajty, told me, "You can actually scare people with Mazowsze, really you can!"

[xlv] Cioffi cites one source (Aldona Jawłowska) as reckoning over ten thousand people attended these meetings (91).

[xlvi] He worked for several years in America, Italy and France before his death in 1999. A Centre of Jerzy Grotowski is active in Wrocław and his theories are still extremely influential.

[xlvii] Theatre of the Eighth Day was closed in 1984 by the authorities and a number of the members, including the director Lech Raczak emigrated.

[xlviii] The puppets used by TWW were inspired by an old Ukrainian wood-carver from south-east Poland.

[xlix] The term *village music* is a term used by the theatre, partly as opposed to *folk music*. The use of such terms demonstrates the use of polarities of *town* and *village* as used by the group, but is also a useful term (although still problematic) rather than *folk* or *traditional*.

Chapter Two

[l] This is not strictly correct as there is a bus-stop that serves Węgajty but it is over a kilometre away from the main village centre, on the furthest periphery of the village. The main village of Jonkowo is only 2 km from Węgajty in another direction. However, it does emphasise the remote image of the theatre.

[li] This comment was made by a village man at a presentation-meeting about Wyspianski's *The Wedding* and contemporary village/town relationships.

[lii] I found these findings interesting as I was often told by informants that it was easier for the children of villagers to gain entry into university during the 1970's than it was for a more well-off town family to send their children to university.

[liii] In Węgajty I knew of one ecologist working from her house in the village and one farmer who moved into the village from a sea-side resort

[liv] The farmers' feelings of having been abused by outsiders, town dwellers and faceless foreigners may be summed up in the title of the political party that rose to represent them, *Samoobrona* (Self-defence).

[lv] One informant, a Polish-American Jew who played Polish music and resided in Krakow, explained to me three notions of 'The Jew' which he found in Poland. 1) The ethnic/religious figure of the Jew. 2) The figure of insults and abuse, which may not actually refer to actual Jews, whereby a person (not necessarily Jewish) was referred to as 'a Jew' with negative connotations 3) The Jew as a controlling, financially powerful individual who may threaten non-Jews. I do not know how widespread these definitions are but I have found it useful to acknowledge them in my research.

[lvi] Throughout this work I have decided to refer to members of the theatre group as 'Theatre Members' (bearing in mind the membership of the group can be quite fluid) and those inhabitants of villages which are not members of the theatre as 'locals' or 'villagers'. I use these terms purely for my own categorising and it is not meant to imply any acknowledged social categories unless otherwise stated. The Sobaszeks, being resident in the village for around 20 years are, as far as I can tell, considered 'locals'.

[lvii] I experienced this myself several times when telling people I was connected with the theatre. On one occasion a nurse at a doctor's surgery got excited after seeing my address on a specimen bottle and spoke about seeing a documentary on television about the theatre.

[lviii] I learned that after one Midsummer dance the Sołtys of the larger village of Jonkowo (where the Parish Church was) was offended that he had not been invited.

[lix] The building known as the *Jewish Tavern* is now a house owned by a young female incomer musician. In previous times the building was used as accommodation for youth groups holidaying in the region. According to locals the house was also used for dances and music during the 1960's. The name seems to be a joke referring to the historic role of Jews in running village taverns and inns under the auspices of the local *Szlachta*. None of the interviewees I spoke to, including the present owner of the house, actually knew if there had ever been any Jewish inhabitants in this building.

[lx] There are also some Roman Catholics and one old couple who are Jehovah's Witnesses.

[lxi] In at least one case a village close to Nowice was performing a pageant which was being filmed for local television. This pageant was partly motivated as a protest against the proposed closure of the village school. The organisers requested the theatre group to take part as a way of raising the profile of the event.

[lxii] This statement is based on information from interviews. My own time spent in the village was minimal and was generally connected to the carolling expeditions, although I did travel to the village during one week in the summer to hold interviews. Villagers commented that there was very little of an artistic nature happening in the village other than TWW.

[lxiii] Two examples of this may be the Scottish music and dancing provided by the visiting BKS company from Glasgow and a Punch and Judy show.

Chapter Three

[lxiv] The term *archaic singing* refers to traditional 'folk' singing techniques and styles which are recognised as having long histories.

[lxv] When I asked Mutka she laughed, “If that's what you need to write to finish your doctorate, then I'll say ‘yes’!”

[lxvi] Although the term *carol* specifically means a Christmas song, I shall use the term a little more broadly and use it to refer to any seasonal religious song. Likewise I shall use the term *carolling* to refer to the practice of visiting houses to sing (and perform) within the context of a seasonal religious holiday.

[lxvii] The term *Master* was generally used in English to describe somebody who was highly skilled in a practice, including both artists and artisans. Whilst it is predominantly used to refer to males I shall use it in a non-gendered form to refer to anyone (male or female) who is considered a specialist in some form.

[lxviii] I gave workshops in Commedia dell Arte and, during longer sessions, mask-making.

[lxix] The only times I witnessed the silence being broken was when there was a singing practice during the run or when one participant was injured whilst rolling down a hillside. Occasionally new participants might also break the silence.

[lxx] On one occasion the run was disturbed by gunshots, however it was believed that these were local pig-scaring machines that set off charges at regular intervals. Wacek told me of several occasions when he had re-routed a run when he smelt the wild pigs nearby.

Chapter Four

[lxxi] During my time with the group the Sobaszeks, Marika and myself worked on a new piece based on *The Kalevala*. The initial work-shopping and rehearsal lasted around three months before a performance of the work 'in-progress' was performed. Following further work on the piece it was performed over 12 times more before my departure from the field, including three performances at festivals outside of Olsztyn.

[lxxii] There was one occasion when, due to greater than expected interest, "Kalevala, Fragmenty Niepisane" was performed twice in one evening.

[lxxiii] The *Kalevala* piece provoked a strong discussion with other members of the group because half of it is lit using the main light in the theatre hall, before going into darkness (lit by one candle) behind a screen, to allow shadow play. Some members of the main group (who were not in the piece) felt that the use of electric light was not really suitable.

[lxxiv] *Kalevala*, however, was performed *face on* or in *fourth wall* (audience are face-on to the performance, as if watching through an invisible wall) but also had moments of interaction with the audience and characters entering the audience space.

[lxxv] The term *Kolęda* can mean several things. The word means 'Carol' as a song and as an activity. It also refers to the reward for performance. The lyrics to one song demonstrate, *Za kolęda dziękujemy* (thank you for the 'reward').

[lxxvi] During my period in Węgajty, I took part in three Easter Alilujka expeditions and two seasons of Kolęda and Zapusty expeditions. These involved a number of expeditions to several different locations, utilising a number of different performers (as well as the core group of myself, Wacek, Mutka and Marika). I was also involved in smaller projects being carried out using children. One of these I took part in as part a member of Projekt Terenowy and the other as a guest of Schola.

[lxxvii] At this point I am referring specifically to Roman Catholic practice.

[lxxviii] In Polish the term *spektakl* means a theatre performance. I find it a useful phrase to use to contrast with the term *play*, which to me suggests a more scripted performance piece. I shall generally use the term *spectacle* to refer to any performance piece not taking place in the theatre.

[lxxix] The term *kolędniks* is an anglicised plural. In Polish this would be *kolednicy*.

[lxxx] Some of the villagers told members of the theatre that the old hobby horse was still in existence in one of the local houses. After some time searching various farms and barns the Szemel was found and donated to the theatre. It is now mainly used in zapusty performances and theatre performances (*Canterbury Tales*).

[lxxxi] The term *Master* was generally used in English to describe anyone who was highly skilled in a practice, including both artists and artisans.

[lxxxii] Whereas the Kolęda incorporates all the figures noted below, the Alilujka uses none of them. The troupe has, however, devised a masked routine around the songs of St George, who is also celebrated around this period. This involves one of the performers wearing three dragons' heads (one on the head and one on each hand) and being confronted by St George while Wacek and the chorus sing a song about St George. Unsure as to how *traditional* this routine was, I eventually asked if it was historical or the group's own. Mutka laughed, "It's ours, didn't you know?" The routine is, however, an established part of the Alilujka expedition and may be thought of as a tradition in its own right in this context.

[lxxxiii] I was never a party to these discussions.

[lxxxiv] In the case of expeditions to the Lemko region the journey involved and overnight train journey to Krakow, followed by two bus journeys to reach the nearest large village. Then we either were met by a driver or walked several kilometres to the village. Expeditions to Suwałki usually involved car and bus (sometimes different members travelling different ways). Easter expeditions also involved hired cars or minibuses.

[lxxxv] This was something I was hopeless at learning. Generally the singing adhered to the 'traditional' style, although at least once I saw a foreign guest (Scottish) sing different harmonies. Whilst Marika initially made to stop this Wacek allowed it to continue as he found it artistically interesting.

[lxxxvi] *For the kolęda we thank you,*
Health and happiness we wish you,
May you all have long life
Health and happiness
For the new year

[lxxxvii] I was told this was *traditional.*

[lxxxviii] The group utilises certain characteristics for the *Koza* which allegedly correspond with how the character was performed historically. These characterisations are based on their personal research and certain ethnographic texts (however it would be unwise to consider them universal). These characterisations are those of the theatre company but I use them to illustrate the differing styles of performance.

[lxxxix] In the case of the Easter expeditions one local boy had acted as a guide since the early years. He is now an established part of the expedition, as important as the performers.

[xc] One expedition saw performances take place through a small apartment block with the troupe walking up stairs and along corridors.

[xci] I emphasise *as done by Teatr Węgajty* for a number of reasons. While I have little experience of other Kolęda groups I am aware that some have different practices than TWW.

[xcii] This cap, along with a number of Kolęda and Zapusty masks has since been stolen from the theatre. A new mask made from plaster is now used.

[xciii] One elderly man remembered with vivid detail a Devil from his childhood which had a tail made from barbed wire which would cut the hands of those who pulled it!

[xciv] I was also told of another practice which happened in Nowice where groups of Devils came around spreading soot inside the houses, even when they had just been cleaned.

[xcv] This conversation took place through a translator.

[xcvi] The village, in north-western Poland, had been an agricultural collective-farming village. Most of the villagers, we were told, had come to the village after the war. One old resident told us that prior to WWII there had been several kolęda groups active in the region.

[xcvii] It is interesting to note that even such figureheads as Grotowski, who is considered both radical and innovative referred to themselves (and are referred to) as belonging to the *tradition* of *Stanislavski* (a Russian director and theatre theoretician 1863-1938). Mutka Sobaszek also referred to the work of TWW as belonging to a *tradition of the theatre*. The notion of *tradition* in this case refers to a link with schools of thought and practice through which one can trace a source.

[xcviii] Here I find another juxtaposition. In a world where the westernised notion of political correctness is not widespread it might appear to be objectified as an irrational foreign creature which attacks the innocent and the traditional. Likewise, the entry into my *"Other"* world might lead Wacław's Jew into a trap of accusations of anti-Semitism.

[xcix] The debate was in Polish and I received a summarised translation as it was happening.

[c] This is certainly not meant to suggest that anti-bigotry is a modern concept.

[ci] We were told by a local woman that the children had designed and made the costumes themselves and organised themselves to perform around the village.

[cii] The songs performed at the performance I witnessed were Lemko carols. I do not know if they also performed Polish songs.

[ciii] Wolfgang Niklaus admits that this is problematic as there are few, if any accounts of how these were performed. Even the manuscripts of play text have little information relating to staging details.

[civ] Sadly she had to leave the conversation and failed to elaborate these points for me.

Chapter Five

[cv] This in itself may be compared to the Romantic notion that the ideal was pure spirit, however as this was not consistent with a practical reality then it was necessary for Spirit to base itself within an object, sacrificing its perfection to attain. Isolation and rejection of impurities may be seen to lead to purity.

[cvi] It is interesting to note that while Hadot (see: du Gay et al, 2000, pp 371-7) finds some discrepancies in Foucault's analysis certain of his comments actually confirm my points here. Seneca, he says, was less interested in self than the transcendence of self (372).

[cvii] I use the term 'professionally' in the sense of a level of skill and practice rather than meaning "paid".

[cviii] Agyrou particularly blames the West for the invention of these concepts. It is interesting to note that the Polish word for tradition is a loan word from the Latinate and Slavicised to tradycijne.

[cix] For another example of this practice see Stokes 1996: 27.

[cx] This statement is questionable if one considers anthropologists like Michael Harner and his work with Shamanism (see; Harner 1980)

[cxi] See Reid & Crowley (2000).

[cxii] I feel that Latour's argument is interesting from the point of critiquing notions of transition which, as we shall see, are currently influential in ethnographies of Eastern Europe (such as Bridger & Pine, 1998, & Allein, 1997). If, as Latour suggests, time and history are continual processes which cannot be separated and isolated then we may consider that to refer to something as being in transition suggests being positioned at an advantageous viewpoint, either temporally or ideologically.

[cxiii] Such as illustrated by A.D. Smith, (1995)

[cxiv] It is interesting to consider whether new medias play a similar role in the dispensation of tunes, songs and practices as travelling performers and migrants did in previous (and contemporary) years.

[cxv] See; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett & Bruner (1992) and Schechner (1977, 1985).

[cxvi] See; Cruces and de Rada (109).

[cxvii] See Handler's discussion of the preservation of Quebecois culture, (1988, esp. Ch.6) and McDonald's work in Brittany (1988). Both illustrate in several cases how the politicised histories of these groups often differ in perception between the academics and nationalists and the rural subjects of the histories. Likewise, McDonald (especially 280-293) notes several instances where first-language speakers of Breton often code-switch with French and use Latinate loan-words whilst speaking Breton, whereas the politicised Bretons, many of whom are second-language speakers, often refuse to speak French or use loan words, preferring to invent new words from Breton bases. This sometimes is seen by the peasants as proof they themselves are somehow inferior to the nationalist activists (286). Likewise, those newcomers who come into the villages intending to live as 'real' Bretons often are at conflict with the real lifestyles of those ruralites they apparently wish to emulate.

[cxviii] For further illustrations of this process the work of Boyes (1993) superbly illustrates how the notion of 'Folk' and 'Tradition' were utilised through the English Folk Movement of the 19th and 20th Century, leading to a redefining of the ideas of who and what the 'Folk' were and are and just who were the guardians of tradition.

Chapter Six

[cxix] Filipowicz (2001) writes about the successful action by a number of Mickiewicz scholars to halt publication of Jadwiga Maurer's article about the poet's ties to Judaism.

[cxx] I was unable to interview this man, due to lack of time and a lack of lingua franca. Colleagues at Węgajty told me that the visit was of great interest to all concerned. Apparently, while the villagers were very interested in the 'real' black man they acted politely most of the time. However, the visitor was offended at one point when a villager examined the (pink) palm of his hand. The apparently

innocent gesture highlighted his status as an exotic *Other*. Members of the theatre pointed out that tensions were increased due to the fact that this was the first time that the visitor had been a lone black person and he found it hard to accept that the villagers had simply never seen a black person in the flesh.

[cxxi] For further examples of the problems of representation by film, and the distortions which non-indigenous film-makers may make, see Schechner 1985, 55-65.

[cxxii] This often seems to reflect ideas such as those of Jack Goody in his work *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (1977).

[cxxiii] It should be noted that this language was often in given in translation or second language to the speakers.

[cxxiv] I acknowledge that I may exaggerate the lack of the child's knowledge. Although I was unable to find out the level of education in the subject, I was told that since 1989 schoolchildren are taught more about the war and the post-war years, particularly with regard to the treatment of minorities.

Chapter Seven

[cxxv] Such participation might only be an act such as carrying the lantern during the carolling, as happened with a Macedonian ethnologist during one Carpathian expedition. The ethnologist later said he learned more about the kolęda through this participation than he did from mere observation.

[cxxvi] One example where the performers may be seen to defy convention might be my own work during Kalevala. Following what may have been seen as the end of the piece, I, still in character and masked, entered the room and began 'checking out' the women in the audience until I finally sat next to one, embraced her and began attempting verbal seduction in a number of different languages. In several ways the act defied various conventions including social and linguistic ones (telling an older lady you have never met before that you love her, in 2nd Person familiar form of address, and asking her to sleep with you flouts a few recognised linguistic formalities in Polish). The ladies in question were nearly always embarrassed but accepting of the event as part of the show. As such it was enjoyed by most of the audience. On one occasion a young lady actually responded in kind to me and caused some problems as it meant a restructuring of my own lines and cues to other performers.

[cxxvii] Due to the work of Schola and Projekt Terenowy often occurring at the same time I only saw two Schola performances. Both of these were in churches, although Schola also perform in other venues.

[cxxviii] I use this term to define people who are not part of the other groups and whose interest in the theatre is not connected directly to their work. In particular those who may have office jobs, factory or manual work etc.

[cxxix] It was hard to gain much information from members of these audiences because as I was generally engaged as a performer or assisting front-of-house. I was not always able to engage in conversation. My lack of Polish was also a problem as there was not always a translator available. Depending on the venue such audiences also dispersed quickly after the performance and dances. Most of the conversations (and occasional interviews) were done with those members of the audience who stayed after shows and were perhaps attending workshops or talks at the theatre.

[cxxx] It is important to note that while in Poland Mutka (who is German) speaks the majority of the Polish text. For the German performances, she relearned her whole part in German. This actually increased the ratio of linguistic variety within the piece, as previously the amount of German was restricted to songs.

[cxxxi] The Barcelona performance was also subject to differing representations. While members of the conference appeared happy with the piece (including a personal friend and collaborator of Grotowski, Ludwik Flaszen), and the local newspaper reported the work favourably, the Polish consulate later

wrote to various people in Poland about how the piece was *unprofessional*. Members of TWW suggested to me that perhaps he was not happy with Polish theatre being represented by Village culture.

[cxxxii] Much of the post-war interest in ritual may be linked to the work of the French artist and writer Antonin Artaud (1996). Andreas Lommel (1967) has also had a major influence on art and theatre with his very attractive theories about the links between Shamanism and art. For further reading on the modern relationship between Shamanism and art see; Kirby (1975), Taylor (1985) and Tucker (1992). The relationship between theatre and ritual is one which has been played on heavily, particularly since the 1960's when theatre practitioners such as The Living Theatre, Grotowski, Schechner and Brooke attempted to utilise ritualistic elements and re-emphasise the relationship. Groups such as Gardzienice and Eugenio Barba's Odin Teater have been instrumental in organising seminars and research into forms of *ritual theatre* and it is with this that TWW is heavily associated, see; Sugiera (1999).

[cxxxiii] It should be noted that my connection to the company (and often being recognised as a member of the company by villagers) may have resulted in guarded replies by the interviewees. That being said, several were often very open about their feelings towards the company.

[cxxxiv] Within two weeks of this discotheque-bar a Węgajty teenager was killed in a car accident (apparently returning home from the disco) and several motor accidents were reported in the area (allegedly drunken drivers returning from the bar).

[cxxxv] Members of Schola carried out similar workshops in neighbouring villages, and a school. These expeditions occasionally met with similar problems. In one case a lady who had helped during the workshops refused to open her door to the children.

[cxxxvi] As I was not party to this project (although I saw the performance) I base my information on accounts of those involved. The workshops were organised in association with a cultural organisation and saw Projekt Terenowy (and collaborators) running ten days of workshops which would culminate in a demonstration of the result of the workshops, not a performance of a finished piece. Apparently, against the group's wishes, the cultural organisation released information to the press suggesting it would be more like a completed piece.

[cxxxvii] One example of this is the restriction on observers of the carolling. Anybody accompanying the carolling must take an active part in the process. Observers, particularly academics and ethnologists may only attend as members of the carolling troupe. This was voted on by members of Projekt Terenowy (myself included). Despite knowing nods from some of my academic colleagues, who suggested I was simply guarding my field, there was a sound reason for this decision being made, in that householders feel more uncomfortable about being observed in their houses and non-participant observers create a tension within the performance space.

[cxxxviii] It should be noted that I only interviewed around ten children (under 16 years of age). Wacek disagreed with my suggestion, saying younger generations were now more educated in such things than some previous ones.

[cxxxix] Interestingly this also suggests a changing concept of folk music in different generations.

[cxl] Children and teenagers involved in several workshops and carolling expeditions also liked the work and experience (not least getting sweets and cakes for free). Sometimes these expeditions were several hours long and in very cold conditions.

[cxli] This was also the case with projects in villages with children and young people. A musician from Olsztyn told me of organising carolling workshops in one village near Olsztyn. The children were unfamiliar with this strange idea of going house to house and singing however after a few days they had begun asking older members of the village about it and found that some had been carollers in their own youth. The children brought new ideas and knowledge to the workshop.

[cxlii] The expedition took place in northern Poland. While it was known some of the families in the village had been moved there during Akcja Wisła it was also known several had assimilated as Polish. It seemed (although I never confirmed) that the caroller had thought this man might be one such person (he was not). Later interviews with this man suggested he may have had a dislike of Ukrainians for historical reasons.

[cxliii] This title (*To Bethlehem*) and the lyrics would normally be written in the Ukrainian Cyrillic alphabet. Here I use Polish alphabet and (approximate) pronunciation.

[cxliv] This couple were both in their eighties. They had embraced their faith whilst in America with their families in the 1920's.

[cxlv] A further example of how the TWW stimulated some cultural aspect of the village was when they invited a Capoerra group from another village. This group was a theatre-based project from a northerly village which had started using the Brazilian dance/ martial art to attract young people. Following a display by this group young people in Węgajty village started their own group (independent of the theatre).

[cxlvi] I use this model in a wider context than that of the Górale culture shown by Krzystof Cwizewicz, (2000).

Chapter Eight

[cxlvii] I was often asked by anthropological colleagues, to what extent TWW might be considered to be 'appropriating' the materials they use? I take this to mean to what extent are they 'exploiting' their sources. Just as anthropologists work in the field and enhance their discipline, as well as their own reputations (and occasionally their bank-accounts) through the material they 'gain', the theatre company seek out materials and utilise them to enhance their discipline. Is this exploitation/ appropriation? To be truthful, I cannot say. However, from what I have seen of the relationship with their living sources, there seems to be no problem. The sources are aware that the group performs in other places, using the material. Several of the sources are themselves performers and are aware of the nature of theatrical work. Likewise, even those sources who are not are aware of the practice of collecting material seem to realise it will be used elsewhere. For many sources the material may be used as a form of currency and a bringer of status. I suggest that to assume that sources have no concept of the use which materials will be put to (especially when the company perform for the villagers) is to possibly suggest some form of intellectual weakness on the part of the sources, perhaps suggesting an elitist attitude on the behalf of some enquirers.

[cxlviii] The youngest of the Sobaszek boys actually performed in an electronic rock band with some other local boys. He also experimented with computerised mixing and sampling of music, gaining some modest success as a performer and with recording.

[cxlix] It is important to consider that, while it is recognised that the style of playing and singing in Górale music is the result of a long development of cross-fertilisation from a variety of different sources, the distinctive style is now considered as an *unique* tradition which must be carefully guarded and maintained to ensure purity. Considering this through the theories of Argyrou (2001) and Hobsbawm and Ranger (1992), we may observe how a long standing, organic, developing practice of music in a particular area became a *tradition* through the attentions of Polish academics and intelligentsia towards the end of the 19th Century. Once designated as a *unique tradition*, efforts were made within the Górale society to control and maintain the uniqueness of their own lifestyle and music. As such a tradition was invented by a rural life-style being labelled as traditional by an urban elite, for its own (nationalist) benefit.

[cl] I use the term *predecessors* as in some villages the Polish populace replaced groups such as the Germans. Therefore an enquiry into old Warmian culture (for example) might involve a period before the first generations of the current populace came to Warmia

[cli] This was a term used by the woman herself. Her work (with a local NGO) involved creating *cultural* projects, such as arts projects and history projects etc within villages.

[clii] It is also worth considering that around Węgajty area, kolędnicy performed in groups of seven, so there was little encouragement for new members. In fact, youngsters who followed the group were often beaten and sent home. Therefore we might consider that in some cases there were no people to continue the practice as there were few, if any, taught how to do it. It might also be considered that if the practice was synonymous with certain people then it might not have been considered in good taste to take up a mantle which had not been passed to you.

[cliii] Of course, they may not have been, which can make this potential recognition all the more important.

Chapter Nine

[cliv] At the time of production (1999) this film was reputedly the most expensive in Polish history. It is a lavish and highly detailed work, with great cavalry charges of Polish Hussars etc, which is over three and-a-half hours long.

[clv] Although I use the term new, we have noted that performances based on kolęda were part of the Reduta repertoire and other groups before TWW have performed (and currently perform) carolling.

[clvi] This was a reaction one of my colleagues had when we found that some Lemko houses incorporated animal enclosures underneath the main roof of the house (although not actually in the human living space).

[clvii] I was frequently worried that throughout the fieldwork I found it incredibly difficult, and often impossible, to write detailed field-notes about the experience of carolling. Occasionally I was surprised that fellow BKS members recalled events that I did not. I was reassured when Mutka admitted to me that she rarely recalled more than the most significant events from expeditions, saying all the houses had a tendency to blur into one. Perhaps my increasing experience made me less observant and more able to *operate on automatic* throughout the expedition.

[clviii] In this case I use the word *pantomime* in its original sense, as a silent, mimed form of theatre, not the British form of seasonal comedy play.

[clix] Much of the performances at the Culture House are connected to what I dubbed *The Grotowski Trail*; a wide international network of performers and practitioners who worked with, or were influenced by Jerzy Grotowski. Many visit venues connected with his work in Europe (such as his centre in Italy, Odin Theatre in Denmark and the Grotowski centre in Wrocław, Poland). A number of these venues keep contact with each other and are able to supply a tour route for visiting performers. Olsztyn's regional culture house is one such venue on this route, as certain members of the organisation were involved in Grotowski's work within Poland (and were early members of the Pracownia group from which TWW developed).

[clx] This group came to perform in Węgajty village and later held workshops with the young people. The director of the group told me that prior to the introduction of the Capoeria they had had limited interest from the young people. Now they had a group of over twenty.

[clxi] This was not the case with all the performers.

[clxii] I wrote a short comic piece based on the stories of Robin Hood, as this literature was well known. The play involved around 25 children aged between 6 and 14 years of age.

[clxiii] Consider Bourdieu's discussion about informants often not knowing about their own culture when quizzed (1977).

Bibliography

Alford, Violet
(1978) *The Hobby Horse and other Animal Masks.* Merlin Press, London

Allain, Paul
(1997) *Gardzienice: Polish Theatre in Transition*, Harwood Academic Publishers.
(1995) "Coming Home: The New ecology of the Gardzienice Theatre Association of Poland". In *The Drama Review* 39, 1 (T145), Spring 1995, pp. 93-121.

Alter, Joseph, S.
(1992) *The Wrestler's Body: Identity and Ideology in North India*, Berkley, Uni. of California Press.

Anderson, Benedict
(1983) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and spread of Nationalism.*Verso: London

Argyrou, Vassos
(2000) "Self-accountability, ethics and the problem of meaning". In *Audit Cultures: Anthropological studies in accountability, ethics and the academy*. (ed.) M. Strathern. Routledge, London.
(2001) *Tradition, Modernity and European Hegemony in the Mediterranean*. Unpublished, University of Hull.

Artaud, Antonin
(1996) *The Theatre and Its Double*, John Calder Publishing, London.

Ascherson, Neal
(1987) *The Struggles for Poland*, Michael Joseph, London

Barba, Eugenio
(1979) *The Floating Islands*, Thomsens Bogtrykkin, Holstebro.

Barba, Eugenio & Savarese, Nicola (eds)
(1991) *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: The Secret Art of the Performer,* Routledge, London.

Bartnik Magda (2006) *10-lecie Węgajt*, 2006

Basiura, Ewa (1997) *The Jews of Poland in Tale and Legend*. Storyteller, Krakow.

Battaglia, Debbora (ed.)
(1995) "On Practical Nostalgia: Self-prospecting among urban Trobrianders." In *Rhetorics of Self-Making*. ed. D. Battaglia. Berkley, Uni of California Press.

Baumann, Gerd (1992) "Ritual Implicates 'Others': Re-reading Durkheim in a Plural Society." In *Understanding Rituals*, D. de Coppet, Routledge, London

Baumann, Richard (eds.)
(1992) *Folklore, Cultural performances and Popular Entertainments: a communications- centred handbook.* OUP, Oxford/NY

Bharucha, Rustom
(1990) *Theatre and the World: Performance and the Politics of Culture.* Routledge, London.

Bloch, Maurice
(1992) *Prey into Hunter: The Politics of Religious Experience*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Bogusławska, Magdalena
(1998) "Ku Prawdzie Starowieku". In *Borussia* No. 17, 1998-9, pp 250-8.

Boissevain, Jeremy (ed.)
(1992) *Revitalising European Rituals*, Routledge, London
(1992a) "Play and Identity: Ritual Change in a Maltese Village." In *Revitalising European Rituals*, ed. J. Boissevain. Routledge, London.

Boyarin, Jonathan & Boyarin, Daniel
(1995) "Self-Exposure as Theory: The Double Mark of the Male Jew." In *Rhetorics of Self-Making.* ed. D. Battaglia. Berkley, Uni of California Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre
(1991) (edited by J.B Thompson), *Language and Symbolic Power*. CUP, Cambridge.
(1984) *Distinction: A social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. CUP, Cambridge.
(1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. CUP, Cambridge.

Bourke, Joanna
(2001) *The Second World War: A People's History*, O.U.P. Oxford.

Bovin, Mette
(1988) "Provocation Anthropology: Bartering Performances in Africa." In *The Drama Review* 32, (1) (T117): 21-41

Boyes, Georgina
(1993) *The Imagined Village: Culture, Ideology and the English Folk Revival*. Manchester Uni. Press, Manchester.

Braun, Kazimierz
(1996) *A History of Polish Theatre, 1939-1989: Spheres of Captivity and Freedom*, Greenwood Press. Westport CT.

Brauneck, Manfred
(2017) *Independent Theatre in Contemporary Europe: Structures- Aesthetics- Cultural Policy* (transcript of TV broadcastITI Zentrum Deutschland, 31/03/2017).

Bridger, Sue & Pine, Francis (eds.)
(1998) *Surviving Post-Socialism*: *Local Strategies and Regional Responses in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Unions*. Routledge, London.

Brock, Peter
(1992) *Folk Cultures and Little Peoples: Aspects of National Awakening in East Central Europe*, East European Quarterly, Columbia Uni. Press.

(1981) "The Polish Identity." In *The Tradition of Polish Ideals.* Stankiewicz, W.J.(ed.). Orbis, London.

Brubaker, Rogers
(1992) *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*. Harvard Uni. Press. Cambridge MA.

Buraway, Michael & Verdery, Katherine (eds)
(1999) *Uncertain Transition: Ethnographies of Change in the Post-socialist World*. Rowan & Littlefield Publ. Inc. NY/ Oxford.

Burton, Pauline, Dyson, Ketaki, Kushari, & Ardener, Shirley (eds)
(1994) *Bilingual Women*: *Anthropological Approaches to Second-Language Use*. Berg, Oxford.

Caraveli, Anna
(1985) "The Symbolic Village: Community Born in Performance." In *Journal of American Folklore* 98; 259-286

Chandler, Keith
(1993) *"Ribbons, Bells and Squeaking Fiddles": The Social History of Morris Dancing in the English South Midlands, 1660-1900*. Hislarlik Press, Middlesex.

Ching, Barbara & Creed, Gerald (eds.)
(1997) *Knowing Your Place: Rural Identity and Cultural Hierarchy*. Routledge, London/ NY.

Cioffi, Kathleen M.
(1996) *Alternative Theatre in Poland, 1954-1989.* Harwood, London.

Cordell, Karl (ed.)
(2000) *Poland and the European Union*. Routledge, London/NY

Cohen, A.
(1974) *Two Dimensional Man.* Tavistock, London.

Cowan, J.K.
(1992) "Japanese Ladies and Mexican hats: Contested symbols and the politics of tradition in a northern Greek Carnival celebration." In *Revitalizing European Rituals.* ed. J. Boissevain. Routledge, London.
(1990) *Dance and the Body Politic in Northern Greece.* Princeton Uni. Press, NJ.

Crain, Mary
(1992) "Pilgrims, 'Yuppies' and Media Men: The transformation of an Andalusian pilgrimage." In *Revitalizing European Rituals.* ed. J Boissevain. Routledge, London.

Creed, Gerald W.
(1999) "Deconstructing Socialism in Bulgaria." In *Uncertain Transition: Ethnographies of Change in the Post-socialist World*. (eds) M. Buraway & K. Verdery, Rowan & Littlefield Publ. Inc. NY/ Oxford.

Crowley, David
(2000) "Warsaw's Shops, Stalinism and the Thaw." In *Style & Socialism: Modernity & Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe.* S. Reid & D. Crowley (eds.), Berg, Oxford.

Cruses, Francisco & de Rada, Angel Diaz
(1992) "Public Celebrations in a Spanish Valley." In *Revitalizing European Rituals.* (ed.) J. Boissevain. Routledge, London.

Csordas, T.J. (ed.)
(1994) *Embodiment and Experience: The existential ground of culture and self.* Cambridge U.P. Academic Publishers

Curp, T. David
(2001) "The Politics of Ethnic Cleansing: The P.P.R., the P.P.Z. and Wielkopolska's Nationalist Revolution, 1944-1946." In *Nationalities Papers* Vol. 29, No. 4

Cwizewicz, Krzystof
(2000) *Musical Rites of Entertainment among Górale of the Polish Tatra Mountains*, Unpubl. PhD Thesis, Goldsmith's College, Uni. of London.

Czajkowski, Jerzy
(1999) *Studia nad Lemkoszczyzna*, Muzeum Budownictwz Ludowego w Sanok.
(1995) (ed.) *Lemkowie w Historii I Kulturze Karpat*. Muzeum Sanoku

Czekanowska, Anna
(1990) *Polish Folk Music: Slavonic heritage- Polish tradition- contemporary trends*. Cambridge U.P. Cambridge.

Dabrowska, Grazyna
(1995) "Dance in the Transformations of the Harvest Customs in Poland." In *Dance, Ritual and Music*, Polish Society for Ethnochoreology.

Davies, Norman
(1984) *Heart of Europe: a Short History of Poland*, Oxford U.P. Oxford.
(1981) *God's Playground: A History of Poland* (2 Volumes) Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Daniells, Roy
(1981) "Sienkiewicz Revisited." In *The Tradition of Polish Ideals*. Ed. W.J. Stankiewicz. Orbis, London.

De Certeau, Michel
(1986) *Heterologies: Discourse on the Other*, (trans. By Brian Massumi), Manchester Uni. Press. Manchester.

De Coppet, Daniel (ed) (1992) *Understanding Rituals*, Routledge, London

De Zayas, Alfred-Maurice
(1994) *A Terrible Revenge: The Ethnic Cleansing of the East European Germans, 1944-1950*, St. Martins Press, NY.

Dominguez, Virginia, R.
(1989) *People as Subject, People as Object: Selfhood and Peoplehood in Contemporary Israel*, Uni. of Wisconsin Press.

Driessen, Henk
(1992) "Celebration at daybreak in southern Spain." In *Revitalizing European Rituals.* (ed.) J. Boissevain. Routledge, London.

Du Gay, Paul, Evans, Jessica, & Redman, Peter (eds.)
(2000) *Identity: a reader*, SAGE Publications.

Dunn, Elizabeth

(1999) Slick Salesmen and Simple people: Negotiated Capitalism in a Privatized Polish Firm." In *Uncertain Transition: Ethnographies of Change in the Post-socialist World*. (eds) M. Buraway & K. Verdery, Rowan & Littlefield Publ. Inc. NY/ Oxford.

Dybczynski, Andrzej
(2000) "The European Union and Ukrainian-Polish Relations." In *Poland and the European Union*. (ed.) K. Cordell, Routledge, London/ NY.

Ekiert, Grzegorz & Kubik, Jan
(2001) *Rebellious Civil Society: Popular Protest and Democratic Consolidation in Poland, 1989-1993,* Uni. of Michigan Press

Epstein, A.
(1978) *Ethos and Identity: Three studies in Ethnicity*. London:Tavistock

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland
(1993) *Ethnicity & Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, Pluto Press.

Faris, James C.
(1969) "Mumming in an Outport Fishing settlement: A Description and Suggestions on the Cognitive Complex." In *Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland*. H. Halpert & G.M. Story (eds), Uni of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Fassman, Heinz & Münz, Rainer (eds.)
(1994) *European Migration in the Late 20th Century: Historical Patterns, actual trends & social implication*, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Laxenburg.

Filipowicz, Halina
(2001) "Taboo Topics in Polish and Polish/Jewish Cultural Studies." *The Journal of the International Institute*, 4. Fall 2001.
(2000) "Jews and Poles on the Barricades of Warsaw: Two Polish Plays on the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising." In *The Phoney Peace: Power and Culture in Central Europe 1945-49*. (ed.) Robert B. Pynsent, School of Slavonic & East European Studies, University College London.
(1995) "Demythologizing Polish Theatre." *The Drama Review* 39, 1 (T145), Winter 1995, pp 122-8.

Finnegan, Ruth
(1992) *Oral traditions and the Verbal Arts: A guide to research practices*. Routledge, London/NY.
(1991) "Tradition, but what tradition and for whom?" In *Oral Tradition 6*
(1988) *Literacy and Orality: Studies in the Technology of Communication.* Oxford; Blackwell
(1970) *Oral Literature in Africa*, Oxford; Clarendon Press

Foucault, Michel
(1988) "Technologies of the Self." In *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault.* Martin et al (eds,), Uni of Massachusetts.
(1984) *On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress.* In Paul Rabinow (ed.) "The Foucault Reader", 340-372. New York, Pantheon Books.
(1976) (translation 1978), *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge*, Penguin Books.

Fox, Richard G. & Starn, Orin (eds)
(1997) *Between Resistance and Revolution: Cultural Politics and Social Protest*. Rutgers State Uni.

Fulbrook, Mary
(1999) *German National Identity after the Holocaust*, Polity Press.

Gellner, E.
(1983) *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Camberwell Press

Gerould, Daniel
(1986) "Introduction" to "Adam Mickiewicz's 'Lectures on Slavic Literature Given at the College de France'." In *The Drama Review* 30 (3), TIII, Fall 1986, pp 91-2.

Ginsberg, Faye
(1997) "'From Little Things, Big Things Grow': Indigenous Media & Cultural Activism". In *Between Resistance and Revolution.* R. Fox & O. Starn (eds). Rutgers State Uni.
(1995) "Production values: Indigenous Media and the Rhetoric of Self-Determination." In *Rhetorics of Self-Making.*. D. Battaglia. Berkley (ed), Uni of California Press.

Goldfarb, Jeffrey C.,
(1980) *The Persistence of Freedom: The Sociological Implications of Polish Student Theatre*. Westview Press.

Gomułka, Stanisław & Polonsky, Antony (eds.)
(1990) *Polish Paradoxes*, Routledge, London.

Goody, Jack
(1977) *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*, CUP, Cambridge.

Grimes, Ronald
(1981) "The Theatre of Sources." In *The Drama Review* Vol. 35, 2 pp 67-74.

Gross, Jan, T.
(2001) "Neighbours." In *The New Yorker* (March 12) (pp 64-77)

Grossman, Elwira, M. (ed.)
(2002) *Examining "The Other" in Polish Culture: Studies in Language, Literature and Cultural Mythology*, Edwin Mellen Press, Ceredigon.

Grotowski, Jerzy
(1968) *Towards a Poor Theatre*, Methuen, London.
(1987) "Tu est le fils de quelqu'un", in *The Drama Review* 31 (Fall 1987) 30-41.

Guibernau, Montserrat & Rex, John (eds.)
(1997) *The Ethnicity Reader: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Migration*. Polity Press.

Halpert, Herbert and Story, G.M. (eds)
(1969) *Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland*. University of Toronto Press, Toronto.

Handelman, Don
(1998) *Models and Mirrors: Towards an anthropology of public events.* Berghahn, NY/Oxford.

Handler, Richard.

(1988) *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*, University of Wisconsin Press.
(1985) "On Dialogue and Destructive Analysis: Problems in Narrating Nationalism and Ethnicity." In *Journal of Anthropological Research* 41 (pp171-82)
(1984) "On Sociocultural Discontinuity: Nationalism and Culture Objectification in Quebec." In *Current Anthropology* 25 (pp 55-71).

Hann, Chris & Dunn, Elizabeth, (eds)
(1996) *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models*, Routledge London/NY

Hann, C.M.
(2002) (ed) *Postsocialism: Ideals, Ideologies and Practices in Eurasia*, London, Routledge
(1995) *The Skeleton at the Feast: Contributions to East European Anthropology*. CSAC, Uni of Kent at Canterbury.
(1994) (ed) *When History Accelerates: Essays on Rapid Social Change Complexity and Creativity.* Athlone Press, London & Atlantic Highlands, NJ.
(1985) *A Village Without Solidarity: Polish peasants in years of crisis*. Yale Uni Press, New Haven/London

Harner, Michael
(1980) *The Way of the Shaman*, Harper & Row, San Francisco.

Hasiuk, Magdalena & Kocemba-Żembrowska, Joanna
(2020) *Expanded collectivity of Węgajty Theatre – towards participation*
(forthcoming)

(2018) *Węgajty Theatre or building community* (forthcoming paper from Belgrade Conference).

Hastrup, Kirsten & Hervik, Peter (eds)
(1994) *Social Experience and Anthropological Knowledge*, Routledge, London/NY.

Hastrup, Kirsten (ed)
(1996) *The Performers' Village: Times, Techniques and Theories at ISTA*, Drama, Holstebro.
(1992) *Other Histories*, Routledge, London/ NY

Hertz, Aleksander
(1988) (trans. Richard Lourie), *The Jews in Polish Culture*, Northwestern University Press, Il.

Herzfeld, Michael
(1977) "Ritual and Textual Structures: The Advent of Spring in Rural Greece." In *Text and Context: The Social Anthropology of Tradition*. (ed) Jain, Ravindra K. Institute or the Study of Human Issues, Philadelphia.

Andrea Hensel (2017) "*Independent Theatre in Post-Socialist Contries of Eastern-Europe"* in *Independent Theatre in Contemporary Europe: Structures- Aesthetics- Cultural Policy*

Hill, Trevor (2017) "The Borders of Reception: Differing expectations and reactions to the work of Teatr Wiejski 'Węgajty' in various locations" in *Regiony i Pogranicza* 5/2017 (160-173), Ośrodek Badań Naukowych, Olsztyn.

(2014a) "Teatr Wiejski Węgajty: Travelling Theatre, the Urban and the Rural" in *Ethnoanthropozoom* 11(pp 41-61) UKiM Skopje,

(2014b) "Winter Carolling with Teatr Wiejski 'Węgajty'" in *Context* Vol 12 (pp 199-214), Institute of Macedonian Literature, Skopje

Hobsbawm, Eric & Ranger, Terence (eds)
(1992) *The Invention of Tradition,* Cambridge U.P. Cambridge.

Hodge, Alison
(1995) "Demythologizing or Betraying?" (letters in response to Paul Allain, 1995), *The Drama Review* 39, 4 (T148), Fall 1995, pg. 10.

Hughes-Freeland, Felicia (ed)
(1998) *Ritual, Performance, Media*, Routledge, London

Jackson, George D.
(1966) *Comintern and Peasant in East Europe, 1919-1930*. Columbia U.P.

Jasiak, Marek
(2001) "Overcoming Ukrainian Resistance: The Deportation of Ukrainians within Poland in 1947." In *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe 1944-1948*. P. Ther & A. Siljak (eds), Rowan and Littlefield, Lanham MD.

Jain, Ravindra K. (ed)
(1977) *Text and Context: The Social Anthropology of Tradition*. Institute for the Study of Human Issues, Philadelphia.

Jarzębowska, Ewa (2006) "Magia Masek w Węgajtach" in *Gazeta Wyborcza (Olsztyn nr. 27)* 13/02/2006

Jean-Klein, Iris (2001) "Nationalism and Resistance: The Two Faces of Everyday Activism in Palestine during the Intifada." In *Cultural Anthropology* 16 (1) 83-126

Kapolka, Gerald T.
(1990) G.T. "Introduction" to *The Wedding* by Stanislaw Wyspianski (translated by Kapolka), pp 11-22, Ardis, Ann Arbor

Kersten, Krystyna
(2001) "Forced Migration and the Transformation of Polish Society in the Post-war Period." In *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe 1944-1948*. P. Ther & A. Siljak (eds), Rowan and Littlefield. Lanham MD.

Knab, Sophie Hodorowicz
(1993) *Polish Customs, Traditions and Folklore*. Hippocrene Books, NY.

Kocemba-Żebrowska, Joanna
(2018) "A foreigner in the village: caroling practices by Węgajty Theatre (Conference paper from European Association for the Study of theatre and performance- EASTAP- First ConferenceParis2018Decentering the vision(s) of Europe: The Emergence of New FormsDécentrer notre vision de l'Europe: l'émergence de nouvelles formes25 –26 –27 OCTOBRE)

Kochanowski, Jerzy
(2001) "Gathering Poles into Poland: Forced Migration from Poland's Former Eastern Territories." In *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe 1944-1948*. P. Ther & A. Siljak (eds), Rowan and Littlefield. Lanham MD.

Kolankiewicz Leszek
(1999) *Dziady. Teatr Święta Zmarłych*, słowo/obraz terytoria, Gdańsk, s. 317, s. 557.
(1978) (ed) *On the Road to Active Culture* (unpublished) Wrocław, Teatr Laboritorium. (This is a pamphlet from a symposium, June 4-6 1978, organised by Jerzy Grotowski. The pamphlet notes that it is not for publication)

Kornaś Tadeusz (2014) "Węgajckie listy z nieba" in *Teatralium. Malarstwo, literatura, teatr*, Dagmara Stanosz (red.), Muzeum Śląskie – Muzeum Rejestrowane, Katowice.

Konwicki, Tadeusz
(1984) (trans. Richard Lourie), *The Polish Complex*, Penguin Books Middlesex.

Korcelli, Piotr
(1994) "Emigration from Poland after 1945." In *European Migration in the Late 20th Century.* H. Fassman & R. Münz, International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, Laxenburg.

Koziara, Andrzej
(2001) "*W teatrze zycia."* In *National Geographic* (Poland) 1 (16) January 2001, pp 124-130.

Koziel, Anna
(1996) "Carolling in the Polish Country." In *Rituals with Masks: proceedings from the symposium held in Vevchani & Struga, R. Macedonia*, Museum of Macedonia, Skopje.

Kraft, Claudia
(2001) "Who is a Pole, and Who is a German? The Province of Olsztyn in 1945." In *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe 1944-1948*. P. Ther & A. Siljak (eds), Rowan and Littlefield. Lanham MD.

Kroh, Antoni
(1999) *Sklep Potrzeb Kulturalnych*. Prószynski i S-ka, Warsaw

Krzyzanowski, Julian
(1978) *A History of Polish Literature*. PWN (Polish Scientific Publishers) Warsaw.

Kubik, Jan
(1994) *The Power of Symbols against the Symbols of Power; the rise of Solidarity and the fall of State Socialism in Poland*, Pennsylvanian State Uni.

Kuligowska-Korzeniewska, Anna
(1998) 'Folklor w Teatrze: Od Leona Schillera do teatru Wiejskiego Węgajty.' In *Tygiel Kultury* no. 9, Oct. 1998.

Kumorowicz, Grzegorz
(2000) "Węgajty:- impresje." In *Borussia* no. 22/2000; pp. 95-102.

Kuncewicz, Maria (ed.)
(1962) *The Polish Mind*. Secker & Warburg; London.

Kurcz, Zbigniew (ed.)
(1997) *Mniejszosci Narodowe W Polsce*, Uni of Wrocław
(1997a) "German minority in Poland: origin, structure, expectations." In *Mniejszosci Narodowe W Polsce.* Z. Kurcz (ed.), University of Wrocław

Latour, Bruno
(1993) (trans. Catherine Porter) *We Have Never Been Modern.* Harvard Uni Press, Massachusetts

Lebioda, Tadeusz
(2000) "Poland, **die Vertrieben,** and the road to integration with the European Union." In *Poland and the European Union*. K. Cordell (ed.), Routledge, London/NY

Le Moal, Francoise
(1981) "Tolerance in Poland: political choice and tradition." In *The Tradition of Polish Ideals*. (ed.) W.J. Stankiewicz. Orbis, London.

Linek, Bernard
(2001) "'De-Germanization' and 'Re-Polonization' in Upper Silesia, 1945-1950." In *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe 1944-1948*. P. Ther & A. Siljak (eds), Rowan and Littlefield. MD.

Linke, Uli
(1999) *German Bodies: Race and representation After Hitler*, Routledge, London/NY

Llobera, V.A., J.R. & Shore, C. (eds.)
(1996) *The Anthropology of Europe: Identities and Boundaries in Conflict*. Berg, Oxford.

Lommel, Andreas
(1967) *The World of the Early Hunters*, Evelyn, Adams and Mackay.

MacAloon, John, J. (ed)
(1984) *Rite, Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals toward a Theory of Cultural Performance*, Institute for the Study of Human Issues, Philadelphia.

Mach, Zadzislaw
(1997) "National Anthems: The Case of Chopin as a National Composer." In *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place.* (ed.) M. Stokes, Berg, Oxford.
(1992) *"Continuity and change in political ritual: May Day in Poland."* In *Revitalizing European Rituals.* (ed.) J. Boissevain, Routledge, London.

Martin, Luther H., Gutman, Huck & Hutton, Patrick H. (eds.)
(1988) *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, Uni of Massachusetts.

McDonald, Maryon
(1994) "Women and Linguistic Innovation in Brittany." In *Bilingual Women.* (eds) P. Burton et al. Berg, Oxford.
(1989) *'We are not French!': Language, culture and identity in Brittany*, Routledge, London.

Menhennet, Alan
(1981), *The Romantic Movement* , Barnes & Noble, NY.

Mickiewicz, Adam

(1999) (trans. Mackenzie, Kenneth, R.) *Pan Tadeusz or The Last Foray in Lithuania.* Polish Cultural Foundation, London.
(1986) "Lesson 16: 'Slavic Drama'." In *The Drama Revue*, 30 (3) TIII Fall 1986, pp 93-97.

Mikulska, Aldona
(1999) 'Odszukiwanie zaginionych form: „Węgajty".' In *W stronŕ rytuału: Od Yeatsa do Węgajt.* (ed) M. Sugiera, Księgarnia Akademicka; Kraków.

Millard, Frances,
(1999) *Polish Politics and Society*, Routledge, London/NY

Miłosz, Czesław,
(1995) "Vilnius, Lithuania: An ethnic Agglomerate." In *Ethnic Identity: Creation, Conflict and Accomodation.* Romanucci-Ross and DeVos (eds), Walnut Creek, Altamira Press.
(1983) *The History of Polish Literature*, Berkley, Uni. of California Press.

Moszynski, Kazimierz
(1968) *Kultura Ludowa Slowian* (Vol I & II). Warsaw

Nagengast, Carole
(1991) *Reluctant Socialists, Rural Entrepreneurs: Class, Culture and the Polish State*. Westview Press

Naimark, Norman M.
(2001) *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth Century Europe.* Harvard Uni Press, Cambridge Mass/London.

Pahl, Ray & Thompson, Paul
(1994) "Meanings, Myths and Mystifications: The Social Construction of Life Stories in Russia." In *When History Accelerates*. (ed) C.M. Hann. Athlone Press, London & Atlantic Highlands, NJ.

Pajda, Lidia (2003) *Rola Teatru Wiejskiego "Węgajty" w życiu kulturalnym społeczności lokalnych* , MA dissertation under the supervision of Prof. Anna Szyfer, University of Adam Mickiewicz, Poznan (unpublished).

Pawlowski, Roman
(1999) "Muzyka, Która Bolie" (an interview with Jan Bernad). In *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Thurs Feb. 25th.

Pels, Peter
(2000) "The trickster's dilemma: ethics and the technologies of the anthropological self." In *Audit Cultures: Anthropological studies in accountability, ethics and the academy*, (ed) M. Strathern. Routledge, London.

Piecuch, Adrzej (1998) *Nad Sekowka*, Gorlice .

Pine, Frances
(1998) "Dealing with fragmentation: The Consequences of privatisation for rural women in central and southern Poland." In *Surviving Post-Socialism*: *Local Strategies and Regional Responses in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Unions*. S. Bridger & F. Pine (eds.), Routledge, London.

Poppi, Cesare

(1992) "Building Differences: The Political economy of tradition in the Ladin carnival of the Val di Fassa." In *Revitalizing European Rituals.* ed. J Boissevain. Routledge, London.

Pynsent, Robert B.
(2000) *The Phoney Peace: Power and Culture in Central Europe 1945-49*, School of Slavonic & East European Studies, University College London.

Rakoczy, Anna Emanuela
(2004) *Widz w Teatrze Wiejskim „Węgajty",* MA dissertation University of Warsaw under the supervision of prof. dr hab. Leszka Kolankiewicza (unpublished).

Reichblum, Bill
(1995) "Demythologizing or Betraying?" (letters in response to Paul Allain, 1995), *The Drama Review* 39, 4 (T148), Fall 1995, pp. 11-14.

Reid, Susan E, & Crowley, David (eds)
(2000) *Style and Socialism: Modernity and Material Culture in Post-War Eastern Europe*. Berg, Oxford/NY.

Reinfuss, Roman
(1999) *Sladami Lemkow*, Wydawnictwo PTTK "Kraj", Warsaw.
(1998) *Lemkowie, jako grupa etnograficzna*, Sanok

Regulska, Katarzyna
(2001) "Węgajty or Celebration" In *Le Theatre en Pologne/ The Theatre in Poland No. 3,* Polski Ośrodek Międzynarodowego Instytutu Teatralnego (ITI), Warszawa

Riles, Annelise
(2001) *The Network Inside Out*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press.

Romanucci-Ross, Lola & DeVos, George (eds)
(1995) *Ethnic Identity: Creation, Conflict and Accomodation* (3rd Edition). Walnut Creek, Altamira Press.

Sakson, Andrzej
(1997) "The secret plan of the 1952 displacements of the original inhabitants of Mazury in the light of documents from the New Files Archive in Warsaw." In *Mniejszosci Narodowe W Polsce*, Wrocław. Kurcz (ed), Uni of Wrocław

Schama, Simon (1996) *Landscape and Memory*, Fontana Press.
.

Schechner, Richard
(1985) *Between Theatre and Anthropology* University of Pennsylvania Press.
(1977) *Essays on Performance Theory; 1970-1976*. Drama Book Specialists NY.
(1973) "*Environmental Theatre.*" Hawthorn Books Inc. NY

Schechner, Richard & Schuman, Mady (eds)
(1976) *Ritual, Play and Performance: Readings in Social Sciences/Theatre*. Seabury Press, NY.

Schechner, Richard & Wolford, Lisa (eds)
(1997) *The Grotowski Sourcebook*, Routledge, London.

Scott, James C.
(1998) *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed.* Yale U.P., New Haven & London

(1985) *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance.* Yale U.P., New Haven & London

Segel, Harold B.(ed)
(1997) *Polish Romantic Drama: Three plays in English Translation.* Harwood Academic.

Słomczyński, Kazimierz M. & Krauze, Tadeusz K (eds.)
(1986) *Social Stratification in Poland: Eight Empirical Studies*, M.E. Sharp Inc

Smith, Anthony D.
(1998) *Nationalism and Modernism: A critical survey of recent theories of nations and nationalism*, Routledge, London & N.Y.
(1995) "Gastronomy or Geology? The role of nationalism in the reconstruction of nations." In *Nations and Nationalism* 1,1 (pp3-23).
(1991) *National Identity*, Penguin Books
(1986) *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* Oxford, Blackwell

Srapickal, Jacob
(1994) *Voice to the Voiceless: The Power of People's Theatre in India*, Hurst & Co. London.

Stanislavski, Konstantin
(1946) *An Actor Prepares.* Theatre Art Books, New York.
(1949) *Building a Character*. Theatre Art Books, New York.

Staniszkis, Jadwiga
(1999) *Post-Communism, the emerging enigma*. Inst. Political Studies Polish Academy of Sciences.

Stankiewicz, W.J. (ed.)
(1981) *The Tradition of Polish Ideals*, Orbis, London.

Steinlauf, Michael C.
(1997) *Bondage to the Dead: Poland and the Memory of the Holocaust*, Syracuse Press.

Stokes, Martin (ed)
(1997) *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*, Berg.
(1997a) "Introduction: Ethnicity, Identity and Music" In *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*. (ed) M. Stokes. Berg, Oxford.
(1996) "Strong as a Turk: Power, Performance and Representation in Turkish Wrestling." In *Sport, Identity and Ethnicity*. (ed) J. MacClancy, Berg, Oxford.

Strathern, Marilyn (ed)
(2000) *Audit Cultures: Anthropological studies in accountability, ethics and the academy*. Routledge, London.

Subtelny, Orest
(2001) "Expulsion, Resettlement, Civil Strife: The Fate of Poland's Ukrainians, 1944-1947." In *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe 1944-1948*. P. Ther & A. Siljak (eds), Rowan and Littlefield, Lanham MD.

Sugiera, Malgorzata (ed)
(1999) *W strone rytualu. Od Yeatsa do Wegajt* Ksiegarnia Akademicka, Krakow.

Sygietyński, Tadeusz
(1961) *Mazowsze* P.W.P, Warszawa.

Taylor, Rogan
(1985) *The Death and Resurrection Show*, Anthony Blond.

Ther, Philipp & Siljak, Ana (eds)
(2001) *Redrawing Nations: Ethnic Cleansing in East-Central Europe 1944-1948*, Rowan & Littlefield, Lanham MD

Tighe, Carl
(1990) *Gdansk: National identity in the Polish-German Borderlands*, Pluto Press

Tucker, Michael
(1992) *Dreaming With Open Eyes*, Aquarian/ Harper, San Francisco.

Turner, Victor
(1986) *The Anthropology of Performance* PAJ Publications NY.

Urlich, Jakub
(2001) *My maszkary z piekla rodem*, 'Twoj STYL'

Wagner, Roy
(1995) "If You Have the Advertisement You Don't Need the Product." In *Rhetorics of Self-Making*. (ed.) D. Battaglia. Berkley, U. of California Press.
(1981) *The Invention of Culture*. Uni of Chicago Press

Waskiel, Marek
(1993) "How Did the So-called Szopka Appear in Poland." In *Polish Art Studies* VIII.

Watson, Ian
(1993) *Towards a Third Theatre: Eugenio Barba and the Odin Teatret*, Routledge, London.

Werbner, Pnina & Modood, Tariq (eds)
(1997) *Debating Cultural Hybridity: Multi-Cultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism*, Zed Books. London/NY.

Wesołowski, Włodimierz & Słomczyński, Kazimierz
(1977) *Investigations on Class Structure and Social Stratification in Poland, 1945-1975*, Inst. of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Whitehouse, Harvey
(2000) *Arguments and Icons: Divergent Modes of Religiosity*, OUP.

Williams, Raymond
(1973) *The Country and the City*, Chatto & Windus, London.

Winiecki, Jan (ed)
(1997) *Institutional Barriers to Poland's Economic Development: The Incomplete Transition*, Routledge, London/NY

Wooton, Carol

(1981) "Frederic Chopin and the Polish Ideal." In *The Tradition of Polish Ideals*. (ed.) W.J. Stankiewicz. Orbis, London.

Wronka, Zofia (2012), *Teatr – terapia czy sztuka? Na podstawie działań Teatru Węgajty/projektu terenowego*, praca licencjacka na kierunku Pedagogika w zakresie Animacji społeczno-kulturalnej, praca wykonana pod kierunkiem dr Adama Grodzkiego, Warszawa 2012.

Wydra, Harald
(2000) *Continuities in Poland's Permanent Transition*, St. Martin's Press.

Wyspiański, Stanisław
(1998) (Trans. Noel Clark) *The Wedding*, Oberon Books, London

Yelvington, K.
(1991) "Ethnicity as Practice? A comment on Bentley." In *Comparative Studies in Sociology and History*: Vol. 33 (1) pp 158-68.

Zawodny, J.K.
(1962) *Death in the Forest: The Story of the Katyn Forest Massacre*, University of Notre Dame Press, Indiana.

Zbierski-Salameh, Sławomira
(1999) "Polish Peasants in the 'Valley of Transition': Responses to Postsocialist Reforms" In *Uncertain Transition: Ethnographies of Change in the Post-socialist World*. (eds) M. Buraway & K. Verdery, Rowan & Littlefield Publ. Inc. NY/ Oxford.

Zygadlo, Mark
(2002) *Lying Down With Dogs: A Personal Portrait of a Polish Exile*, Iynx Publ.