

Consideration of the theatrical concepts at the Bauhaus: Schreyer, Gropius and Schlemmer

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Introduction

The Bauhaus stage workshop was in operation for nine years from 1921-1929, and was not just a temporary or brief experiment in the life of the Bauhaus itself (1919-1933). In the discussion of this workshop, Oskar Schlemmer (1888-1943) - a master of the workshop - plays the central role. But at the foundation of the workshop in 1921, the first director, Walter Gropius (1883-1969) called up on Lothar Schreyer, who was a member of *Der Sturm* circle in Berlin at that time, and a dramaturge of the German Theater (Deutsches Schauspielhaus) in Hamburg [1]. Though Schlemmer had also been involved in theater work at that time, his appointment to the Bauhaus was because of the reputation of his paintings, so he took charge of the wall painting workshop [2]. Knowing that Schlemmer was devoting himself both to stage works and to paintings, Gropius first entrusted the stage workshop to Schreyer.

However, Schreyer's lead didn't last long as he resigned in 1923. This issue has not been mentioned a lot so far in the literature, and when his name does come up alongside Schlemmer's, it often concerns only the discord between Schreyer's work and the Bauhaus' direction. Rarely do we hear about Schreyer's installation and resignation as a master, much less his theatrical concept. The author of a comparatively new study on the Bauhaus (1990), Magdalena Droste, has indicated that Schlemmer had a relationship with the stage workshop even when it was under the direction of Schreyer, but no other details are given there [3]. Admittedly Schreyer's works are essentially of *Der Sturm* style, and of course, Expressionistic; hence the reason his works were not necessarily accepted in the Bauhaus. However, it is undeniable that he elaborated visual effects in theatrical design, and also had no small interest in the problem of elemental forms in art. To understand such conceptual flux and shifts in the workshop, Gropius' turnabout can be traced to his statements by necessity, while Schreyer's theatrical concept, which has not been paid much attention in the shadow of Schlemmer, should be reexamined in comparison with the Schlemmer's.

As indicated above, the aim of this paper is to redefine the theatrical concept in the Bauhaus, which is now a decoupled path from Schreyer to Schlemmer, and nobody but Gropius can be its bridge. Clearing up each concept and attitude, and bringing up new clues to reconsider the stage workshop itself is the writer's intention.

1. The Bauhaus Stage as stated by Gropius

Gropius himself was an architect and created no theatrical works, but as the director he

mentioned the stage workshop several times. The text in 1922 [4], which was the first one among them, was written to introduce the activity of the workshop. It begins:

The collective work of the Bauhaus derives from the effort, within the limits of space and its design, to participate actively in the building of a new concept of the world, the outlines of which are beginning to appear. (...) Our field of endeavor embraces the whole range of the visual arts under the guidance of architecture.

We are also working on the development of the stage. To purify and renew today's stage, which, it seems, has lost its intimate ties to the world of human feelings, is a task for those who, starting from a common point, are devotedly working to accomplish a fundamental clarification of the all-embracing problem of the stage, both in theory and in practice, unaffected by personal considerations and free of the limitations of the commercial theater. In its origin the stage derives from an ardent religious desire of the human soul (theater=show for the gods). It serves, then, to manifest a transcendental idea. The power of its effect on the soul of the spectator and auditor is therefore dependent on the success of the transformation of the idea into (visually and acoustically) perceivable space.

In this exordium, Gropius suggests the basis of setting up the stage workshop in the Bauhaus is that the stage is one of the fields which can be held within architecture, like other areas of art. He regards the stage as having much more connection to architecture, especially because the stage is the realm that includes three-dimensional space and all the elements involved. And in the next paragraph, he continues that the task of the progressive workshop is to cut itself free from the format of commercial theaters, which was then dominant and seemed to be the issue of conventional theaters. At that point in time, this would generally be considered a departure from the naturalistic drama. In Germany, works regarded to be from Expressionism theater [5] could be in the spotlight, and these played an important role in that they knocked the bottom out of the concept of existing illusionistic theater work. And this Expressionism theater can be subsumed into the stream spreading all over Europe since the end of the previous century, that every element on the stage should not be a representation of nature, and should contribute to the content of the work. It is possible to interpret the underlined portion as expressing this idea. Furthermore in the latter half of this paragraph, we must focus attention on Gropius' point of view which was, in the beginning of his discussion, that "stage" comprehended all the phenomena in it, and which is now replaced by "theater" (or drama) in the end [6]. And the discussion goes to the structural matter on the stage.

The phenomenon of space is conditioned by finite limitation within infinite free space, by the movement of mechanical and organic bodies within this limited space, and by the oscillations of light and sounds within it. To be capable of creating moving, living, artistic space requires a person whose knowledge and abilities respond to all the natural laws of statics, mechanics, optics, and acoustic and who, in having command of all these fields of knowledge, finds sovereign means of giving body and life to the idea which he bears within himself.

This approach to the stage art from the side of “movement in space” is the viewpoint of Gropius, and of the Bauhaus. That is to say, to define finite limitation within infinite free space is the very synonym for architecture, and he places much value on the fact that movement is executed based on the other elements such as lighting and acoustic effect. In this respect, the stage concept of Gropius has a different phase from contemporary Expressionism theater.

2. The starting point

(1) The Sturmbühne and Schreyer's activity

Before joining the Bauhaus, Lothar Schreyer had assumed a leading role in the Sturmbühne, which was a division of *Der Sturm* and set up by Herwarth Walden (1878-1941?) and Schreyer in 1918 [7]. Like them, other artist groups also got involved in stage works, which was one of the simultaneous movements in Europe [8]. Although Schreyer had worked in theater before then, he still had not had a chance to direct works by himself, and the Sturmbühne gave him the first one. It was, however, not his original script, but «*Sancta Susanna*» [9] by August Stramm (1874-1915) [10] in *Der Sturm*. The story of this play is set: in an eerie atmosphere inside the temple of a convent, Susanna commits profanation. The other characters rebuke her, threateningly pressing her to make penitence, and the franticness comes to a climax. Then suddenly, the curtain falls. The stage seems to have filled with an indecent and mystic mood [11]. In this work, he painted walls loudly in black, yellow, green, and red, and masked one of the actors. Moreover, he made geometric costumes with bright colored cardboard, but the geometric form was not such a rigid or precise form derived by pursuing form to the maximum. In perspective of the quality of form, Schreyer's theatrical design may have been too primitive. Yet one must take into consideration that the starting point of his activity was originally theater, and not fine art, and also his subject, mask and costume that veil actors' expression and gesture were unquestionably from his awareness of the theater in

the new era, and it aimed at creating visual effect not relying on representation. Schreyer should be valued in this respect.

Then let us turn to the work of 1917 «*Mann (Man)*» (performed in 1920) to see more of Schreyer's own theater work. In this play, three characters appear: «*Mann*», «*Erde* (earth)» symbolizing woman, and «*Trommeln* (drum)» that probably played drum on stage. The story is told in a monologue by «*Mann*», with words strung with meaning in themselves that were not enough to make sentences, as if they were a part of poetry. Of course there was screaming in it, though the theme was life and death, and love [12]. In this work, the symbolic function of the geometric costume has been enhanced more than the first work (fig. 1). In other words, the new and “expressive” way coming from the theater became close to the one found in fine art. The theatrical design was attractive enough to convince Gropius to call

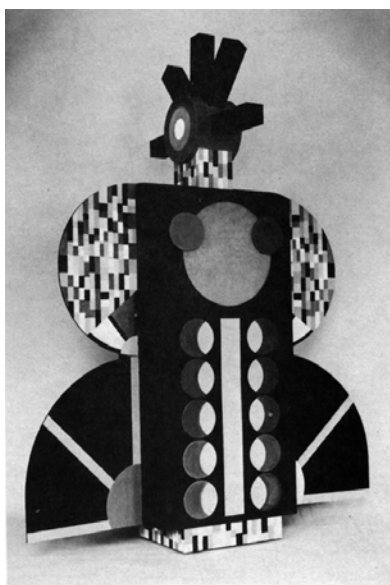


Fig. 1 «*Erde*» from «*Mann*»,
1920 (Reconstruction in 1986)



Fig. 2 «Grunewald hunting palace», 1912

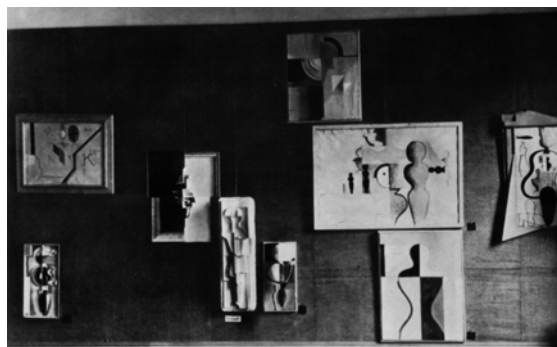


Fig. 3 Wall display in the Strum Gallery, 1920 (Lines of wall or frames and horizontal or vertical lines inside the paintings are related each other.)

upon Schreyer to join the Bauhaus. Although only the religious and eerie side of Schreyer's work is often covered, he also promoted the approach to plastic art in the theatrical circle.

(2) Connection between Schlemmer and Stage

Although Schlemmer began his artistic training first in painting, he showed his interest that later led him to stage creation even when he was still in the Realschule (secondary school in Germany) [13]. After graduating from that school, he worked as an apprentice in an inlay workshop, and eventually he entered the Academy in Stuttgart. However, besides the assignments there, he was also experimenting with contemporary paintings by himself, and ended up acquiring his own original Cubistic language of forms (fig. 2). His viewpoint of exploration gradually shifted itself to outside the frame, extending the space of painting [14] (fig. 3). Experiments like this, in addition to his interest in stage or spacial design of form, led him to develop the principle of the stage, which he later completed. It is also important to remember that his subjects were human.

Incidentally, it was at the charity performance in 1916, when he was in military service, that he first performed the prototype of «The Triadic Ballet» (fig. 4). His first plot which is later transformed into «The Triadic Ballet» goes back to the fall of 1912 [15]. In



Fig. 4 «The Triadic Ballet», 1922 (Left: Elza Hötzel, Right: Schlemmer or Albert Burger)

that year, Schlemmer got to know the two solo dancers of the Stuttgarter Königliches Hoftheater (Stuttgart Royal Theater), Albert Burger (1884-1970) and Elza Hötzel (1886-1966), who were just back from Hellerau after studying the theory of modern dance from Emile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950). It is easily conceivable that their experience in Hellerau, which broke down the rules of classical ballet [16], conformed to Schlemmer's plan, for he was interested in creating groundbreaking ballet. And the première of Arnold Schoenberg's «Pierrot lunaire» (1912) in Stuttgart stimulated them to create a performance together.

This work is in the earliest stage of Expressionist music, and made a great impact on the people then with screechy voice-like screams. As shown above, various efforts for new theatrical expression having been made in Stuttgart at that time, may have set the background for them to make the concept of new ballet. The first concept of “transition from conventional to new”, in other words, “exuviation from conventional ballet to new ballet”, gained by his encounter with Burger and Hötzel, and involving the development of the image of Expressionist music, transformed itself little by little into the work partly played in 1916 [17]. And the work of that time became *«The Triadic Ballet»* which was modified again and again and performed until later. This first *«Triadic Ballet»* was not poorly evaluated, and in a letter one year later he looks back on it, saying that he felt sure of the potential in ballet and pantomime [18]. It was because of the narrative-independent quality, because of the attribute of using the body directly, and because their novelty as a genre was freer from the historical fetters and “independent as a stage work, more so than theater plays or operas”. This adoption would be a logical conclusion for Schlemmer, as he was focusing on the human body as a subject in paintings. Additionally in the same letter, he describes paintings or sculptures as being always posing in the present time, in contrast to the sentience of music or dance as “the succession of moments”. Here are the grounds of his parallel creation of stage works and paintings or sculptures. He was naturally aware that their fundamental principles differ, and on the acknowledgment, he was devoting himself to the realm of dance like pantomime or ballet, which depends on physicality in the shifting time axis. Schlemmer’s stage was different from Schreyer’s right from the start.

3. The theatrical concepts

(1) Schreyer

Now the stage or theater Schreyer conceived is taken up in his writings on stage. In 1917, he delivered the function of stage explicitly in “Das Bühnenkunstwerk (the stage works of art)”[19], which is on the metaphysics involved in stage. In his view, ‘die Sehnsucht nach Geistigkeit (longing for the spiritual) is the way of humans’, and ‘das Reich des Geistes (the spiritual kingdom)’ is defined as being the ‘die unerfüllte Sehnsucht (unsatisfied longing)’ as in romanticism. And ‘the spiritual kingdom’ is a reality as well as this materialistic world, which is, rather, perceived through the spirit. Here it shows that his awareness is not rooted in this world that is a visible and outer reality, but rather in the human spirit or in the inner world. In addition, the only way to recognize the spirit directly is called ‘revelation’, which is acquired through form. In this ‘form’, not only the elements of form, such as colors and shapes, but also sound and light are included. Schreyer thought that it was the task of artists, to announce the experience: ‘revelation’. And it was meant to be executed through the theatrical art, and on the stage called ‘das Menschenhaus (the house of human beings),’ thus he needed the theater in terms of the architecture, though this direct means of ‘revelation’ seemed religious and mystical.

Nevertheless, Schreyer never failed the contemporary theme, ‘the synthesis of artistic elements’. He describes it this way: The house of human beings is art work. The house is

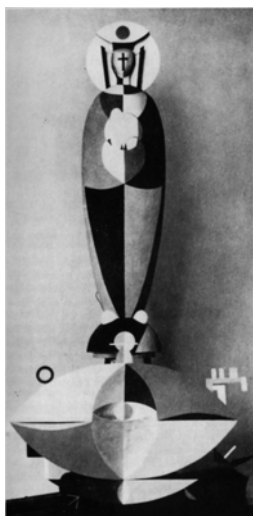


Fig. 5 (Maria in the Moon)
from «Montspiel», 1923

architecture. The architecture includes form, color, and art of movement. The rhythmical architecture is colorful and full of motion [20]. These few lines would be enough to encourage Gropius to notice him, however, Schreyer's interest in forms that concerned the theatrical space as a container, and the relationship to the 'act' made within has not been mentioned. For Schreyer, the constructive senses, for the theater structure and the theatrical work, are separated.

After developing his original theatrical concept as described above, Schreyer finally began working on the «Mondspiel (Moon play)» (fig. 5) in 1923, which is reported to have received unfavorable criticism. Indeed, this was a 346-syllable masque (a theater piece with masks), with not a little cultish mood. The mask and costume of Maria embodying the sanctity in the play, had symbolic but obviously religious elements, which might be a good reason for it to be unacceptable by itself. However, Schreyer was trying to create the stage by means of geometric forms as symbols, with the help of their meanings and images. And yet, it is undeniable that such an attempt remained to be a symbolic construction of geometric forms, and that he never tried to analyze the principle of stage, interweaving his original theme or motives.

(2) The theatrical concept of Schlemmer – by comparison with Schreyer's

Theatrical elements can generally be divided into acoustic effect, lighting, costume, script and so on. In Schlemmer's stage works, the theatrical space, the movement and costumes are inseparable.

As described above, Schreyer's concept of the theatrical space was considered to be the place where the 'revelation' was 'announced', and it was not a matter of the forms in three-dimensional space. That is to say, the space extends infinitely from the actor outward, so the shape of the stage is not his subject. Instead, the container of the most important element, actors, is primarily the costume [21]; the theater space in itself does not have an effect directly on the play. The geometric forms of the costume, emphasizing the image and characters of

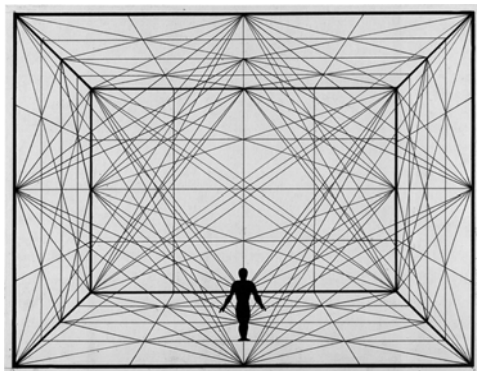


Fig. 6 A graphic in 『Man and Art Figure』

roles, amplify the announced energy. Although the space of the theater can help set the situation or dramatize it, it would not determine the very work.

On the other hand, Schlemmer regards the rectangular solid space as the given principle, when thinking about the theatrical space (fig. 6). And therein, invisible threads make the web, linking each vertex obtained from the proportion. Dancers on the stage (or in the space) move around along the spacial stitch, tracing the white lattice on the floor, which also helps spectators picture the space Schlemmer configures. In

this way, every time just a little movement stirs the rectangular space, the dancer – the center of gravity – renews the tension with all the vertices. The marionette-like sense of tension in Schlemmer's stage work arises from nothing but this limitation of the space. If it were an unlimited space, the movement would be felt unstrung [22]. Moreover, this movement itself is also interdependent with the forms of costume. Namely, one role moves in accordance with its costume's geometric forms, and for a certain movement, it wears a certain costume. In sum, even though both Schreyer and Schlemmer employ geometric forms, the meaning and function are completely different. Schreyer's costume is to convey an image of a role, or to determine the characteristics of the role symbolically. In contrast, Schlemmer defines each geometric form as the basis of every movement, in order to give it a necessity. The self-contained quality of elements under such an inter-influential relationship can be concluded to be one of the features of Schlemmer's stage.

Moving ahead, the thematic aspect remained strong on Schreyer's stage, regarding each character in a universal context, and also human existence as its subject enhanced the dramatic impression. But it had novelty in speech crossing the border between voice and the acoustic effect, as well as working for communication of the story and for an effective rendering.

But in Schlemmer's work, there is no subject matter in the same dimension as Schreyer's. That is because it is in the area of dance, not of the dramatic theater, and also it is not essentially aimed to deliver the story. Performance on the stage spread to the audience's sight, or the movement itself exists for our eyes to enjoy, and the unpurposed performance was his purpose. The burlesque mood, puppet-like costumes, and masks veiling the expression or expressionless faces: all these prevent the audience from evoking personal sympathy or empathy. Persistently, the act on the stage remains just an event, which has no connection to us in this actual world. As with Schreyer's, performers in the shape of human beings are on Schlemmer's stage. It is reasonable to call them dolls or puppets, but they are not completely mechanical beings. As his human figures do not act, rationally or economically, for one purpose like machines. The movement is rather wasted or nonsense, purely aiming only to move. It would be here that we feel the human context, and even humor.

The last issue is sound. The reason why I use the term 'sound', not 'music', is their materials are different. Schreyer employed mainly voice, which he discusses in his essay "Drama"[23]. Speech, sound and also noise are all significant for Schreyer as they are fundamentally different from the written text so far as they have tone. Of course they are distinctive whether they have the function for communication or not, and they all have rhythm and promote the emotion, even if the speech is incomprehensible. The words with meaning convey themselves, and senseless or incoherent words which become a sound fire up the audience's imagination.

In that respect, sound on Schlemmer's stage is not basically voices, and it does not work for communication in the first place. The sound is music or rhythms, which provide the movement of the dancers on the stage. This principle is the same as with costume. Every element that constructs his stage acts as a cue for the event on the stage = movement, like a linkage. Here is the definition of the two. That is: the constituent elements on Schreyer's stage have, in his intention (aside from whether it is successful or not), a direction toward outside, to

the audience. On the stage, which is the place for ‘revelation’, every single element contributes to the purpose. This can be concluded to be “a function to transmit implications.” And Schlemmer’s stage is self-contained in the given rectangular solid space. Each element keeps having an effect on each other, as if it has no frictional resistance. The term “internalization of principles” can be the definition for his stage.

4. The theatrical concept of the Bauhaus traced in changes of Gropius’ attitude

Here again, Gropius’ text in 1922, which was referred in the exordium, needs to be reexamined. This text appeared anew in a chapter of the brochure “Idea and Organization of State Bauhaus” entitled ‘The Stage’ in the following year 1923 [24]. It was also published in the catalog of the Bauhaus exhibition at MoMA in 1938 [25], with no modification from the last one, so that his statement then was maintained as the concept of the Bauhaus stage.

Gropius mentioned the theater as that which could be held within architecture, indicating the relation to architecture, yet the idea does not crossover with Schreyer’s. That means Schreyer did not possess the prerequisite which Gropius asked for in the logical placement of the state. This beginning part was changed in the article in 1923:

Theatrical performance, which has a kind of orchestral unity, is closely related to architecture. As in architecture the character of each unit is merged into the higher life of the whole, so in theater a multitude of artistic problems form a higher unity with a law of its own.

In this version, the connection between stage and architecture is much more clearly expressed as unit and unity. This concept overlaps with Schlemmer’s idea that every element is associated with each other to build up a stage, not Schreyer’s that all the elements diffuse to the outside. Gropius’ idea can certainly be regarded as being influenced by Schlemmer, but the author indicates another possibility: «The Triadic Ballet», the prototype of which he conceived by the stimulus of the frantic Expressionist work, «Pierrot lunaire», was, at its very beginning, aspiring for the atmosphere on the stage, and the performances later became less Expressionist and more logical. It is more than probable that the transformation is the very influence that he received from Bauhaus.

And in the first excerpt, the passage “In its origin the stage derives from an ardent religious desire of the human soul. It serves, then, to manifest a transcendental idea”, which is thought to be the influence by Schreyer, is rewritten in the next version as: “In its origins a theater grew from a metaphysical longing; consequently it is the realization of an abstract idea”. Gropius avoided using the word ‘religious (religiös)’ and instead used ‘metaphysical (metaphysich)’, besides he erased ‘the human soul (menschlich Seele)’. These revisions most clearly demonstrate elimination of the influence by Schreyer, however the passage itself is actually left, which means Gropius did not totally renounce the Schreyer’s stage concept. Moreover, Schlemmer defined stage, in “Man and Art Figure”[26] which he wrote in a Bauhaus Book *The Theater of the Bauhaus*, as: the realm lying between religious cult and naïve popular entertainment. He does not include the religious cult in his concept of the stage, yet

admits that they are connected with the same axle.

As observed above, revisions in these texts are partial, and it is not too much to say the concepts of Schreyer's and Gropius' were not unfit from the very beginning, or rather, Schreyer affected Gropius. Consequently, the direction of the stage workshop was actually not a fixed one, as is now thought only from Schlemmer's point of view, but was a result of a mix of influences. Gropius simply had to build the concept in the context tied to architecture [27], for that reason he needed to emphasize that the theatrical space is similarly three-dimensional. The internal space, newly created by carving out the blank space, and the events that every element contributes for the spacial structure, were called 'stage'. And in this respect, Schlemmer's concept could realize the position of the stage, as Gropius demanded.

Conclusion

Schreyer's resignation has easily cleared up for now with the reason being his variance from the direction or the poor reputation of his work. It is because the elimination of Schreyer is easily figured whose work was very Expressionistic, for the timing overlaps the change of direction of the Bauhaus from Expressionism to Constructivism. Admittedly, that his works never went beyond the Expressionistic, or rather the tendency rose, was the biggest reason. The changeover from Schreyer to Schlemmer was, however, not a linear cut-off of the period. And as discussed above, Schreyer's theatrical concept was clearly in Gropius' text of 1922, not completely being swept away in 1923, furthermore in 1938 when the Bauhaus was already closed. Above all, it echoes in the stage theory of Schlemmer.

Meanwhile, the significant similarity for Gropius between stage and architecture was shown in the «The Triadic Ballet», which was first performed completely in Stuttgart in 1922, when Schreyer was still at the Bauhaus. That means the roots of the new direction were already there before 1923. But Schlemmer also had an inspiration from Expressionism theater, at his starting point. Nevertheless he gathered the direction asked in Bauhaus acutely, he made the three-dimensional theatrical concept his own, with the assistance of painting. The author considers the «Mondspiel (Moon play)» was just a trigger, and there was a fundamental inconsistency of the concept much earlier, or from the beginning. If the argument above is accepted as presented, then Droste's allusion may well turn out to be more than just a suggestion, but in fact an accurate explanation of Schlemmer's influence on the stage workshop. And yet, it is also true that Schreyer casts not a little its shadow in the theatrical concept of the Bauhaus.

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Notes

[1] Actually, Schreyer was back in Berlin in 1920. See Mel Gordon (ed.), *Expressionist Texts*, PAJ

- Publications, New York, 1986, p. 210
- [2] Schlemmer became a member of Bauhaus in December 1920, but it was in May 1919 that Gropius approached Schlemmer for the first time. See Oskar Schlemmer, Hrsg. Tut Schlemmer, *Briefe und Tagebücher*, Hatje, Stuttgart, 1977, p.35
- [3] Bauhaus Archiv, Magdalena Droste, *Bauhaus 1919-1933*, Benedikt Taschen, 1990, p.101
- [4] Walter Gropius, "Die Arbeit der Bauhausbühne", in Hans M. Wingler, *Das Bauhaus 1919-1933. Weimar - Dessau - Berlin und die Nachfolge in Chicago seit 1937*, Verlag Gebr. Rasch & Co., Bramsche, 1962, pp.70-71 (This citation is from the English translation: Walter Gropius, "The Work of the Bauhaus Stage" in: Joseph Stein (ed.), *The Bauhaus: Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, Chicago*, The MIT Press, 1969, p.58)
- [5] It is difficult to define Expressionism theater, and that is because Expressionism was a spirit of a certain time, and because to define all Expressionism movements is almost impossible. But only in the cases of theater works, Expressionism theater tends to feel pessimistically that each individual gets crushed by the "modern" change, in contrast with Futurism, for example, which acclaimed the change and stressed the external aspect of things. The German one is of course related to Nietzschean thought. Additionally in works in later phases, characters are called by appellatives not by names in order to subject human fate to universality or eternity, thereby reducing their emotion. About this discussion, see: Tatsuji Iwabuchi, "About dramas", Tatsuji Iwabuchi (ed.), *Expressionism Theater and Movie, German Expressionism 3*, Kawade Shobo Shinsha, Publishers, 1971, pp.347-378
- [6] Let us now differentiate the terms "stage", "theater" and "drama". The name of the workshop discussed here, is originally "die Bühnenwerkstatt". In German, "die Bühne" means the stage, but when this word was translated before, the term "the theater" was often applied: the title of a Bauhaus Book is "The Theater of the Bauhaus" (1961), being originally "Die Bühne im Bauhaus". Like this text (1922) by Gropius, people in the Bauhaus may not have had a precise differentiation between "Bühne" and "Theater", nor researchers for that matter. Yet recently, there is a conscious separation between these words, Bühne/stage and Theater/theater, and the workshop is called "The stage workshop". In this paper, besides the definition above, the word "theater" is used when it is leaning to the narrative, and it is close to "drama". By contrast, "dance" refers to the movement of bodies in itself, and as a result, whether it has speech or not helps to make a distinction. "Ballet" intrinsically, like classical ballet, has both narrative and body movement without speech. And including all these, what indicates all the phenomena occurring on the stage is called "stage".
- [7] Schreyer was born in Blasewitz near Hamburg in 1886, and studied art history and law at the Universities in Heidelberg, Berlin, and Leipzig. He gradually became interested in poetry and theater, and worked as a dramaturge and an assistant director at the Deutsches Schauspielhaus (German Theater) in Hamburg from 1919 to 1918. During World War I, he got to know Herwarth Walden (1878-1941?) and joined in *Der Sturm*. In 1914, his poetry was published in "Der Sturm", and he came to edit the magazine in 1916, once back from military service. Around that time, the circle in itself tended to show its interest in theater work, as other members began writing plays. Early dramas by Oskar Kokoschka, William Wauer's "Four Deaths of Fiametta" with music by Walden, Wassily Kandinsky's abstract stage work "The Yellow Sound", Rudolf Blümner's recitations which are aware of acoustic and rhythm effects, and August Strumm's dramas, who was killed in the Eastern Front in 1916 and never saw his works performed, all helped to shape the form of theater in Expressionism. See: Lothar Schreyer, *Erinnerungen an Sturm und Bauhaus*, Albert Langen, Georg Müller, München, 1956, p.22
- [8] It is well known that many artist groups tried stage works in every part of Europe. In Futurism in Italy, Fortunato Depero created puppet works, modern ballet in Russia experimented mechanical movement with human bodies, and it goes on and on. This trend seems to have

emerged in such complex realms as literature, theater, fine art and music. It is important to note that we often find an interest in human-beings facing the progress of technologies. Though it cannot be adequately discussed in this paper, it is a key to think about that era.

- [9] Its scenario and some critiques are translated in Japanese in: Koichi Kondo, "On the Theater Art", Tatsuji Iwabuchi (ed.), *Expressionism Theater and Movie, German Expressionism 3*, Kawade Shobo Shinsha, Publishers, 1971, pp.371-372
- [10] Stramm kept writing plays and poetry from 1902 to 1915, one year before he died, but most of his works are now lost. It was by Schreyer in 1918 that his play was presented on the stage, though he never saw it. Mel Gordon, *op.cit.*, p.38
- [11] Also in later works by Schreyer, such religious themes or mystic atmospheres with franticness can be seen, and his inclinations already existed in that early time.
- [12] Wee see when consulting the text in: Lothar Schreyer, *Mann*, 1917, *Rekonstruktion der Auf-führung von 1920 in der Halle für Wechselausstellungen, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf*, 1986
- [13] His marks in drawing were good in Realschule, and he was already hoping to be a painter. But in letters at that time he reported the activity at school with words like "sparkling induction machine", a marionette made of cork and an electric roundabout, which tells us that he was already interested in machine or acrobatic things before the age of fifteen. And it was not an experiment to apply to something else, but to amuse Schlemmer with those effects. See: Karin von Mauer, *Oskar Schlemmer, band I: monographie*, Prestel-Verlag München, 1979, p.19
- [14] Schlemmer arranged his paintings constructively on the wall, experimenting how he could extend the structure on the surface of paintings to the outer space.
- [15] This first plot is in his diary and in the letter to his friend, Otto Meyer-Amden, saying that his main theme was finding a way from conventional ballet to a new dance. In its expression, a distraught atmosphere has been brought in, there the image of «Pierrot lunaire» described later is clearly seen. See: Dirk Schaper, *Oskar Schlemmer, das Triadische Ballett und die Bauhausbühne*, Akademie de Künste, Berlin, 1988, pp.18-19
- [16] Burger felt he could decisively break the chain of rules of classical ballet in which he had been steeped. See: *ibid.*, p.18
- [17] Schlemmer was intermittently in military service and performed «The Triadic Ballet» partly in the charity event of his unit.
- [18] A letter to Otto Meyer-Amden, dated 11. February 1918. See: Oskar Schlemmer, Hrsg. Tut Schlemmer, *op.cit.*, pp.27-28
- [19] Lothar Schreyer, "Das Bühnenkunstwerk", 1917, in: *Der Sturm, Wochenschrift für Kultur und die Künste*, Reprint ed., v.8, Kraus Reprint, 1970, p.18-22 (When consulting the full translation in Japanese by Kondo Koichi, see: Tatsuji Iwabuchi (ed.), *ibid.*, pp.258-268)
- [20] Lothar Schreyer, "Die Bühnenkunst im Menschenhaus", 1917, in: *Der Sturm, Wochenschrift für Kultur und die Künste*, Reprint ed., v.8, Kraus Reprint, 1970, pp. 36-40 (When consulting the full translation in Japanese by Ikuo Inada, see: Tatsuji Iwabuchi (ed.), *ibid.*, pp. 268-272)
- [21] Actually, most of Schreyer's drawings are not the plans for the whole stage, but sketches for costumes.
- [22] In paintings, Schlemmer tended to base the construction on the rectangle of the canvas, which he applied to this theatrical principle.
- [23] Lothar Schreyer, "Das Drama", 1917, in: *Der Sturm, Wochenschrift für Kultur und die Künste*, Reprint ed., v.7, Kraus Reprint, 1970, p. 119 (When consulting the full translation in Japanese by Ikuo Inada, see: Tatsuji Iwabuchi (ed.), *ibid.*, pp. 278-280)
- [24] Walter Gropius, "Idee und Aufbau des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar", *Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar 1919-1923*, p.17
- [25] Herbert Beyer, Walter Gropius, Ise Gropius (eds.), *Bauhaus 1919-1928, The Museum of Modern*

Art, New York, 1938, p.29

- [26] Oskar Schlemmer, “Mensch und Kunstfigur”, in *Die Bühne im Bauhaus*, Albert Langen, München, 1925 (When consulting a Japanese translation, see: Schlemmer, Moholy-Nagy, Molnár, *The Theater of the Bauhaus*, Isao Toshimitsu (ed.), Chuo Koron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1991)
- [27] When we consider theater and architecture with the name of Gropius, the “total theater” is easily recalled, the idea which Gropius invented for Erwin Piscator in 1926. But the reason why it is not discussed in this paper is that the question considers abstract theatrical space, not the actual theaters.