

PUPPETRY AS RHETORIC: AN EFFECTIVE FORUM FOR ARGUMENT

By

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Wise men seeking for
truth
Look up at the tent of
the sky
Where the Great Showman
of the World
Has long ago set up
his Shadow Theatre
Behind a screen he is
giving a show
Played by the shadows
of men and women
of his creation.

Birri,
Anatolian Poet of the
13th Century

ABSTRACT

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While published current literature reveals how the inanimate figure, the action given by manipulation, and the voice performance are perceived by the audience, it does not show how the puppet functions as argument.

This thesis seeks to determine if one dramatic form, the puppet play, "The Adventures of Peer Gynt" is an effective forum for argument. "The Adventures of Peer Gynt" is analyzed according to Walter Fisher and Richard Filloy's critical methodology for examining dramatic texts. This analysis reveals that Peer Gynt functions as an effective form of argument. The play argues, through the character of Peer Gynt, that we have choices when confronted with evil, either to follow evil or stay true to our good self. The play teaches us, but children especially, that one must develop the discernment to go beneath the exterior finish to the underlying substance.

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INTRODUCTION

Puppets hold a special fascination for scholars and audiences of all types. Today's puppet has been seen as a "guest" at fairgrounds, schools, libraries, and birthday parties, in addition to its role in more formal theatrical settings. While puppets are entertaining, educational and fun, they also convey effective argumentative messages.

Theorists interested in the puppet's ability as a communicator of messages have discussed the various types of puppets and their objective features, such as the material they are made of and techniques involving the puppet's vocal powers and movement. They have discussed the dramatic function of the puppet in its role of object as actor, in addition to discussing the puppet's role in narrative performance. With respect to argument and fictive forms, other than traditional theater or novels, Fisher and Filloy state "Attention should be given to other fictive modes of communication."¹

¹Walter R. Fisher and Richard A. Filloy, "Argument in Drama and Literature: An Exploration," Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research, ed. J. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard (Carbondale: Southern Illinois, 1982) 362.

Even so, while theorists have defined the types of puppets and their objective material features and have also explored the puppet's vocal and movement powers, they have not explained how the puppet functions as a form of argument. Therefore, this thesis examines puppetry as a form of argument. The purpose is to make a contribution to the literature on the relationship between argument and fictive forms.

The first chapter is a review of the communicative aspects of the puppet. These studies reveal how the inanimate figure, the action given by manipulation, and the voice performance are perceived by the audience. The communicative aspects of puppets include voice, movement and physical character, and human interaction with puppets. Those factors are important because they not only illustrate how the puppet is perceived by the audience, but they provide important clues to the puppet's argument.

The second chapter contains a discussion of relevant argument theory that will be utilized in analyzing argument in Jim Gamble's puppet production, "The Adventures of Peer Gynt." This chapter serves to define argument according to Perelman. The general relationship of the audience to argument is set forth. The discussion of Perelman focuses on the particular and universal audience, the concept of presence and how we reason about values. Perelman's approach is concerned with claims in which value-based absolutist opinion is questioned.

The second chapter also provides a framework for analyzing argument in drama and literature first articulated by Fisher and Filloy.

The third chapter is an analysis of the use of argument in James Gamble's "The Adventures of Peer Gynt" based on Fisher and Filloy's approach. The analysis demonstrates how argument is communicated through the characters and the text of the play. The analysis includes the arguments of the character as communicated by the narrator, puppets, text, and all of the stagecraft elements of the play.

The conclusion summarizes how all of the components of puppetry, when taken together, provide a particularly effective arsenal in the conveyance of argument.

CHAPTER ONE

PUPPETRY--CONTEMPORARY DEFINITIONS AND COMMUNICATIVE ASPECTS

Puppetry is of interest to semioticians and students of cultural semiotics and communication. Part of the puppet's attraction is:

...they frequently involve special uses of the communicative systems of everyday life, or the development of entirely new systems. They exploit resources that are inherent in these systems yet that normally go unexploited in daily life...existing only as unrealized potential.... These genres are important as semiotic treasure troves, simultaneously utilizing a wide range of codes, channels, and systems: these may complement or contradict one another in the dynamic performance.²

To initiate an analysis of puppetry as rhetoric, within the context of argument, it is necessary at the outset to first define puppet.

²Frank Proschan, "The semiotic study of puppets, masks, and other performing objects," Semiotica, Vol. 47, ns. 1/4 (1983): 4-5.

What is a Puppet?

Frank Proschan's introductory essay entitled "The Semiotic Study of Puppets, Masks, and Performing Objects,"³ provides important definitions and context about puppetry. Proschan includes the puppet within his definition of performing objects.

Performing Objects

Performing objects are "material images of humans, animals, or spirits that are created, displayed or manipulated in narrative or dramatic performance."⁴ These images may have moveable parts, but moveable parts are not necessary to obtain the status of "performing object." Many puppets are manipulated or moved directly or by a mediating device. If the object is displayed there must be some type of reference to it in the performance. Performing objects may be created or even destroyed within the confines of the performance.⁵

"Performance" is defined as "a special kind of communicative event evidenced in part by the spatial-temporal coherence of performer and audience, and in our case [the puppet as a] material object."⁶

³Frank Proschan, "The semiotic study of puppets, masks, and performing objects," Semiotica, Vol. 47, ns. 1/4 (1983): 3-44.

⁴Proschan 4.

⁵Proschan 5.

⁶Proschan 5.

In addition, performance is further defined as including "narrative or dramatic performance [which] involves the recounting or reenactment of a sequence of past, present, future, or potential actions or events."⁷ Drama is more broadly defined to include roles played by actors or objects.⁸ Furthermore, "narrative or dramatic performance"⁹ may include rituals, festivals, and other events of life.

Cultural Phenomenon

Proschan also identifies the puppet as a cultural phenomenon seen worldwide. While puppets may speak different languages, they all share common attributes, as expressed in Proschan's preliminary definitions of the puppet within the category of performing object. As such, these attributes apply to all types of puppets and include the puppet's role in dramatic and narrative performance.

Therefore, Proschan defines the puppet as a performing object situated as a cultural phenomenon, each culture with its own audience.

Communicative Aspects of Puppets

To develop desired audience perceptions of puppets, puppetry uses a number of communicative aspects of the puppets, including voice, movement and physical character, and human interaction with puppets.

⁷Proschan 6.

⁸Proschan 6.

⁹Proschan 6.

Voice

Bogatyrev indicates it is the voice of the puppet that unifies puppeteer and puppet. By contrast, in live theater the actor's performance is unified with the other sign systems.¹⁰ Thus, Proschan, quoting Bogatyrev, states:

In the puppet theater an actor does not exist as a live person. There the movements of the puppet actor are pure sign of sign. In the puppet theater where puppets speak, voice is all that remains from a live person, and it is through voice that puppets approximate living persons.¹¹

Proschan, with Bogatyrev, identifies the puppet's voice as being the primary communication dynamic of the puppet. There are two important features of the puppet's voice. The first is that the language of the puppet is of a specific culture.

The language of the puppet reflects its nationality and class. For example, the puppet might speak in a dialect that would identify the puppet with a specific ethnic group or class. If the puppet speaks a language, such as Ukrainian, before an audience of Russian speakers, as Bogatyrev suggests, an audience might perceive the language as "distorted or corrupted Russian."

¹⁰Proschan 15.

¹¹Proschan 15.

Second, the puppet's personality itself may be identified by its own unique language and voice. The puppet's voice is composed of paralinguistic features which include volume, rate of speech, and the quality of the voice (rhythm, pitch, articulation, and resonance).¹²

To illustrate, a puppet may speak with a very high shrill voice or a very loud voice. A high shrill voice may also possess certain other paralinguistic qualities which affect perception of the puppet's personality, such as rhythmic cadence, or a resonance of the voice. The quality of the human voice may be altered.

Green and Pepicello point to the use of the "voice modifier," associated with the English puppet, "Punch." In addition to the distortion of the voice in achieving puppet characters and the use of the swazzle mentioned by Green and Pepicello, modern electronic recording devices designed to amplify the human voice may result in distortion of the actual human voice associated with the puppet.

Puppetry incorporates the use of repetition in the dialogue, the operator's creation of different "character" voices to help indicate which puppet is speaking, and the combined kinesics of the puppet figure to help clarify the puppet's speech and to indicate which puppet is speaking.

¹²Saundra Hybels and Richard L. Weaver, II, Communicating Effectively (U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill 1992): 111-112.

Movement and Physical Characteristics

In addition to the voice of the puppet, the movement of the puppet is of great importance in determining how the puppet is perceived by the audience. The elements of movement include bodily movement, facial expression, and the interrelationship between movement and design, including color scheme, size and distance.

Puppet Animation. Veltrusky states that the puppet is perceived by the audience as an "inanimate figure." Much of the puppet's success is judged by its ability to animate, its ability to create the illusion of life.

Veltrusky observes that the actor's physical presence on the stage is distant from the character he or she plays. In contrast, the puppet is composed of only the intentional features of the character. There is no separation between the puppet's physical appearance and the characters played because the puppet is the character.¹³

Interestingly, when puppets speak, they move their jaws and may gesture, but the source of the sound is not the puppet, but instead the puppeteer.¹⁴ Moreover, puppets do not "walk," but instead engage in movement articulated by the puppeteer.

¹³Jiri Veltrusky, "Puppetry and acting," Semiotica, Vol. 47, ns. 1/4 (1983): 72-73.

¹⁴Thomas A. Green and W.J. Pepicello, "Semiotic interrelationships in the puppet play," Semiotica, Vol. 47, ns. 1/4 (1983): 153.

The puppet's facial expression is also of particular importance. This is especially so of puppetry gestures in Japanese bunraku.¹⁵ The furi, "as signs of psychological states,"¹⁶ are facial gestures organized in two ways. First, by changing the heads of the puppet the different moods of the character are displayed. Second, the puppet's eyes, mouth, and eyebrows may be designed such that they are capable of articulation.¹⁷

Design. Hence, a puppet may be designed so that its movement capabilities are fascinating to watch. This is the case of the trick marionette. Historically, marionette theaters performed plays that were adaptations of Baroque and Romantic theater models.

From this type of popular theater, trick puppets evolved.¹⁸ Trick puppets are seen as spectacular objects, even when playing characters, and they captivate the audience by

¹⁵Green and Pepicello 154.

¹⁶Green and Pepicello 154, from Malkin 141.

¹⁷Green and Pepicello 154, from Malkin 141.

¹⁸Henryk Jurkowski, "Transcodification of the sign systems of puppetry," Semiotica, Vol. 47, ns. 1/4 (1983): 134-138. Even today, trick Marionettes exist, although centuries old. In a special exhibit on trick puppets at the Center for Puppetry Arts, Jim Gamble, in Trick Marionettes: The Ultimate Illusion, sets forth different types of trick marionettes. They include marionettes that sing, dance, play musical instruments, skate, juggle and balance, breakaway (one that comes apart and reconnects), the trapeze/acrobat, the flip marionette, in which skirt will reverse revealing a second figure, and marionettes that transform their figures in a variety of ways.

their abilities to overcome their material limitations by accomplishing magical or incredible feats.¹⁹ As such, the movements of the puppet are dependent on their design.

The design of the puppet includes the material the puppet is made of, such as whether it is constructed of wood, paper mache, polyurethane, plastic or even whether it is part human, such as when a human hand reaches from behind the booth, acting as the puppet's hand, perhaps even pointing to the puppet's head to indicate the character is thinking.

Another element of the puppet's design is the puppet's color scheme. How certain colors are perceived by the audience can provide clues to the culture the puppet is derived from and may indicate the intentional character of the puppet. For example, in Chinese puppet theater certain colors have conventional meanings. White denotes treacherous figures, red means loyalty, and green is akin to devils.

Size may also indicate the puppet's character or the importance of the character's role in a performance. For example, a large marionette indicates nobility in Sicilian puppetry.

Closely related to the size of the puppet is the concept of distance. By distance, I mean the physical distance between the puppet(s), (the colors, foreground and background), objects, and all parts of the setting. The

¹⁹Steve Tillis, Toward an Aesthetics of the Puppet: Puppetry as a Theatrical Art (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1992) 60-62.

distance of the puppets in relation to the proportions of various aspects of the set and actors affects perception of the size of the puppet.

Distance is an important concept in the puppet theater because it involves the relationship between the performing object and the source of its movement.²⁰ Meyerhold hints at the effect of the puppet on the audience. Regarding distance, he states:

When the puppet weeps, the hand holds the handkerchief away from the eyes; when the puppet kills, it stabs its opponent so delicately that the tip of the sword stops short of the breast; when one puppet slaps another, no color comes off the face; when puppet lovers embrace, it is with such care that the spectator observing their caresses from a respectful distance does not think to question his neighbor about the consequences.²¹

Human Interaction with Puppets

The puppet is judged by its ability to animate and, because of this, techniques are employed simply to create the impression that the puppet has life. These techniques are

²⁰Stephen Kaplan, "Signs of Life: An Analysis of Contemporary Puppet Theater in New York City." Master's Thesis, New York University, (1989): 16.

²¹Bogatyrev, Petr, "The interconnection of two similar semiotic systems": The puppet theater and the theater of living actors," Semiotica, Vol. 47, ns. 1/4 (1983): 53-54.

particularly effective when the puppet is on stage with a human.

There are techniques to help "blur the distinction between the stage figure and characters, but they also help to create the impression that the puppets are acting spontaneously."²² For example, a puppeteer may receive a blow from a puppet. This type of action stands outside the plot and is simply employed to create the impression that the puppets have life.²³

Jurkowski observes that human interaction with puppets occurs when a narrator, storyteller, or some other type of human intermediary is present.

Furthermore, Jurkowski argues that a puppet, when placed beside human beings, effectively emphasizes both the puppet's puppet-like characteristics and human qualities. This is because of two aspects related to the puppet and its potentials.²⁴ They are "the opalescence of the puppet" and the "opposition of the puppet, versus human beings."²⁵

Opalescence and Opposition. The first of these--the "opalescence of the puppet"--describes a two-part vision of the puppet both as a material object and as a dramatic

²²Veltrusky 72-73.

²³Veltrusky 72-73.

²⁴Jurkowski 141.

²⁵Jurkowski 141.

character.²⁶ The puppet appears to be self-aware. An illustration is when the puppet's strings get tangled and the puppet requests help, in effect indicating awareness of its puppet existence. The second aspect is illustrated by the presence of the operator's naked hand being shown to the audience. The assumption of the human being's existence is also an attribute of this type of opposition, in which the puppet is seemingly aware of its existence.²⁷ In essence, the puppet is aware of the human existence and its own puppet-like existence, while it is playing a dramatic character.

Opalescence and opposition have two functions: (1) "...To stress the artificiality of the puppet theater, [and] (2) [To illustrate] "...powerlessness and control by external forces, a metaphor applied as frequently to human existence as to puppet existence."²⁸

The Principle of Mediation. An important distinction between live theater and puppet performance is illustrated by the principle of mediation.²⁹ In live theater "presenters" may serve as mediators, though they play no role, they may perform other functions, such as clearing the stage or introducing the action of the play. Some may interact with

²⁶Jurkowski 141.

²⁷Jurkowski 141.

²⁸Jurkowski 142.

²⁹Green and Pepicello 155-159.

the audience.³⁰ These figures "force the audience to oscillate between the perception of the ongoing activity as artifice to be observed and 'life' in which they are caught up."³¹

The role of the mediator in the live human drama does not reach the same level of complexity as that of the mediator in the puppet performance.³² In the puppet performance humans may play a direct role, as illustrated in television shows and movies. There are many other examples, but emphasis is often placed on Jim Henson's Muppets. Specific illustrations are Sesame Street, the Muppet Show, and two puppet films, The Muppet Movie and The Great Muppet Caper.³³ An example in the Muppet Movie includes a chase after Kermit by a restaurant owner who wants to turn him into "frog legs."

Humans may play a direct role in traditional puppetry as well.³⁴ An example from the Russian Petrushka play is as follows:

The Russian organ grinder plays a definite part in a Petrushka Show... the voice [of Petrushka] was loud and shrill but the words were not always very understandable, so the organ grinder always cross-examined Petrushka, whose lines he repeated wholly

³⁰Green and Pepicello 155.

³¹Green and Pepicello 155.

³²Green and Pepicello 155.

³³Green and Pepicello 155.

³⁴Green and Pepicello 155.

or in part. A dialogue would develop, but apart from its purely auxiliary function of increasing the intelligibility of Petrushka's squeaky voice, this dialogue also had a dramatic function--a full and remarkably fascinating contact was established between Petrushka and the organ grinder. He would warn Petrushka of any danger, give him advice, scold him for indecorous behavior or question him about his future intentions. He was a living link between the audience and Petrushka, since he was a representative of both sides; as a human being he considered himself part of the audience, and as an actor he was professionally on the same level as Petrushka.³⁵

The human mediator in traditional puppet theater serves two important purposes. The first is to provide clarification of the puppet performance by direct explanation. The second is to provide a focal point, contrasting the puppet with the live person.

The effect is different when a visible puppeteer plays no role, but instead manipulates the puppets in full view of the audience. This is so in the case of the Japanese bunraku.³⁶

Green and Pepicello 156, quoting Sergei Obratsov, The Chinese Puppet Theater, trans. J.T. MacDermott (London: Faber and Faber, 1961): 20.

Green and Pepicello 156. It is important to note that Bunraku has not been placed in Jurkowski's definitions of the puppet and does not share this history of being compared to

Even so, in the bunraku, presence of the puppeteer is de-emphasized. The manipulators are seen by the audience, but their presence is diminished to some degree by the fact that they stand behind a partition, reaching to the waist of the master puppeteer with the junior puppeteers wearing black hooded costumes.³⁷

Yet, the presence of the puppeteers cannot be discounted entirely and indeed is perhaps best perceived as follows:

A realistic perception of this relationship would be to perceive the audience's attention as oscillating between the object as actor (i.e., having life) and acted upon (i.e., an inanimate thing). Thus we find a juxtaposition of illusion and reality again, but one that differs from those previously noted. For when human intervention takes the form of an actor or interlocutor, it contributes to the flow of performance in dramatically proscribed ways. However, if human

live actors theater. Commentator Steve Tillis states, "It is significant to note that Bunraku puppetry has no place in Jurkowski's schema, for although Bunraku 'may be compared with the most advanced artistic puppet theaters of Europe and America of our time,' it differs in being centuries older, and in being a closed system, while the contemporary theater is 'obviously an open system.' This inability to encompass Bunraku arises from the scheme's basis in European models. How seriously are we to take a diachronic approach as it is practiced in three-quarters of the world?" Steve Tillis, Toward an Aesthetics of the Puppet: Puppetry as a Theatrical Art, Westport: Greenwood, 1992): 75.

Green and Pepicello 156.

intervention takes the form of a visible, silent puppeteer who is not a part of the drama, but who merely manipulates the puppets that are part of the drama, we must see this juxtaposition of illusion and reality as a semiotic relationship that speaks to the very nature of puppetry.³⁸

As such, when the visible puppeteer is not directly involved, the mediation is more subtle, and we are reminded "of the base from which the performance is drawn."³⁹ With the presence of human dramatis personae, the mediation is more aggressive, in which the human agent is an instance of "normalcy,"⁴⁰ straightening out the distortions and serving as "the reality signified in juxtaposition to the puppet performance."⁴¹

Green and Pepicello conclude that when the human is present with the puppet the audience's perception of the puppet is de-emphasized and the audience will balance the tension between "life" and "object." The final result of this balancing is one in which the audience's reception of the puppet as life will predominate.

Green and Pepicello 157.

Green and Pepicello 159.

Green and Pepicello 159.

Green and Pepicello 159.

Summary

In summary, voice, movement and physical characteristics, and human interaction with puppets are three categories of communication aspects which function as rhetorical strategies for developing argument in puppetry.

In the second chapter I define the particular and the universal audience within the context of relevant argument theory, and I introduce method for analysis of argument in "The Adventures of Peer Gynt" based on Fisher & Filloy's method.

CHAPTER TWO

WHAT IS ARGUMENT?

In this chapter, I discuss concepts of argument as set forth by Perelman to help develop a focus for analysis of a puppet performance as argument. Additionally, I provide a framework for analyzing argument in drama and literature taken from Fisher and Filloy.

Among major contemporary argument theorists, Perelman believes all types of speaking, including dialectic, could be assessed by values. Perelman's theory of argumentation,⁴² with its focus on the assent of the audience, is particularly relevant to understanding how the audience in puppetry plays an important role in constructing the play's argument.

Chaim Perelman

Perelman distinguishes argumentation from demonstration, or formal logic. Demonstration (formal logic) is impersonal in that it involves assessing arguments according to set rules and these assessments do not involve "person-centered"⁴³ activities. Argument, on the other hand, focuses on the

⁴²Foss, Foss, and Trapp 123.

⁴³Foss, Foss, and Trapp 123.

achievement of the "meeting of the minds."⁴⁴ To illustrate how argument is dependent on a meeting of the minds, Perelman makes reference to Alice in Wonderland,⁴⁵ in which the character of Alice is unable to communicate with the inhabitants of Wonderland because her world is so different from theirs.

Alice, in an attempt at conversation with the caterpillar, states, "I think you ought to tell me who you are first." The caterpillar then replies, "Why?" As illustrated, a person who wishes to persuade must have cooperation from the audience.⁴⁶

The audience, according to Perelman, does not necessarily mean the actual physical audience present. An audience, then, is composed more of a speaker's "mental conception of an audience."⁴⁷ According to Perelman, all types of argumentation must be planned in relation to the audience.

Perelman's concept of audience may be divided into two types. They are the universal, which "is composed of all reasonable and competent people,"⁴⁸ and the particular -- "any

⁴⁴Foss, Foss, and Trapp 124. Perelman states that it involves: "formulation of an effective community of minds."

⁴⁵Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland (New York: Bantam 1988) 32. Quoted in Foss, Foss, and Trapp 124.

⁴⁶Foss, Foss, and Trapp 124.

⁴⁷Foss, Foss, and Trapp 124.

⁴⁸Foss, Foss, and Trapp 124.

group of people, whether or not they are reasonable or competent."⁴⁹

The Universal Audience

Perelman states of the universal audience: ". . . every philosopher addresses himself to the universal audience as he conceives it, even in the absence of an objectivity which imposes itself on everyone."⁵⁰

The universal audience is the "audience of the philosopher."⁵¹ This concept of audience is not interested in fact, but what is "right for all mankind."⁵² The universal audience is composed of "a universal system of values based upon rational thought and deliberation."⁵³ Perelman, in The Realm of Rhetoric, points out that "the universal audience may be all humanity or those competent or reasonable."⁵⁴ The speaker has a universal audience in mind while developing the message. The audience could be composed of people from a certain culture. It could also be one's self as long as the

⁴⁹Foss, Foss, and Trapp 124.

⁵⁰Chaim Perelman, "The New Rhetoric and the Rhetoricians: Remembrances and Comments," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 70 (1984): 191.

⁵¹John R. Anderson, "The Audience as a Concept in the Philosophic Rhetoric of Perelman, Johnstone, and Natanson," The Southern Speech Communication Journal, 38 (1972): 41.

⁵²Anderson 42.

⁵³Anderson 42.

⁵⁴Perelman, The Realm of Rhetoric 14. Quoted in Foss, Foss, and Trapp 125.

speaker perceives the ideas. The universal audience, then, as composed by the speaker, provides a standard for differentiating between good and bad arguments.⁵⁵

The Particular Audience

The particular audience is those people who are influenced by their "experience and group affiliation."⁵⁶ The speaker may write a speech based on appeals to a particular audience. This may include a group the speaker is addressing or just one person in a group, such as a doctor speaking to a patient, the particular audience, although the family may be present. A politician may be speaking to a whole precinct as the particular audience, even though actually addressing certain groups, such as the League of Women Voters.⁵⁷ A speaker alone, may constitute a particular audience, according to Perelman, a speaker may address one's self and may reveal one's thoughts to one's self.

In Perelman and Olbrecht-Tyteca's The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation⁵⁸ they describe the importance to the particular audience of the concept they term presence:

A process by which the speaker makes "present by verbal magic alone, what is actually absent but

⁵⁵Foss, Foss, and Trapp 125.

⁵⁶Anderson 15.

⁵⁷Foss, Foss, and Trapp 125.

⁵⁸Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation (Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame P, 1969).

what he considers important to his argument or, by making them more present, to enhance the value of some of the elements of which one has actually been made conscious."⁵⁹

It has been stated that "figures make the object of discourse present to mind."⁶⁰ "Stylistic techniques"⁶¹ in any type of human communication, whether in drama or any conversation to oneself or others, help promote an argument.

For Perelman then, an argument is valued by the audience's perceptions. Perelman states that rhetoric should be "the study of the discursive techniques allowing us to induce or to increase the mind's adherence to the thesis presented for its assent."⁶²

In Perelman's theory, rhetoric is given jurisdiction over all practical reasoning--informal logic and argumentation.

⁵⁹From The New Rhetoric 117. Quoted in Walter R. Fisher and Richard A. Filloy, "Argument in Drama and Literature," Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research, ed. S. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1982) 345.

⁶⁰Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, from The New Rhetoric 174. Quoted in Fisher, "Argument in Drama and Literature" 345.

⁶¹Fisher 345. Fisher lists the stylistic techniques relating to presence in Perelman and Olbrecht-Tyteca's The New Rhetoric as "hypotaxis or demonstration, anaphora, conduplication, adjectio, amplification, sermocinato, dialoguism, onomatopoeia, personification, apostrophe, and prosopoeia."

⁶²Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, The New Rhetoric 14, quoted in Walter R. Fisher, "The Narrative Paradigm: In the Beginning," Journal of Communication, 35 (Autumn 1985): 85.

Perelman's theory, then, could be said to be a perspective that rejects formal logic as the basis for all decisions which involve argument. His approach questions expert opinion and instead privileges audience opinion.

Perelman's argument theory has particular relevance to puppet performances. That is, in such a performance, important audience considerations enter into the picture. In terms of the betterment and well-being of society, generally these audience-based components may predominate and outweigh absolute notions of formal logic.

Walter Fisher

Walter Fisher, in his essay, "Toward a Logic of Good Reasons", points out that "humans as rhetorical beings are as much valuing as they are reasoning animals."⁶³ Fisher agrees with Perelmans' stance that formal logic is inappropriate when applied to "rhetorical reasoning." Fisher states, "The general inappropriateness of formal logic to rhetorical reasoning has been well demonstrated by Toulmin and Perelman."⁶⁴

In "Toward a Logic of Good Reasons" Fisher states that one of his goals was to explore the "modes of proof in drama, literature, and film."⁶⁵ In the essay "Argument in Drama and Literature", Fisher and Filloy explore modes of proof through

⁶³Fisher, 376.

⁶⁴Fisher, 377.

⁶⁵Fisher, 378.

dramatic and literary works. They describe four aspects of their analytic method. First, determine the message, the overall conclusion of the work. Second, decide whether the "message is justified by the reliability of the narrator(s), the words and actions of other characters, and the descriptions of characters, scenes and events. . . ." These descriptions are "verbal in literature", while in drama they may be represented non-verbally "as well as in words." Third, note "the outcomes of the various conflicts." For example, "whose values [are more] powerful and/or worthy?" Are "events controlled by characters or forces outside them?" Fourth, the critic should determine whether the story is true by "the truth it makes known." That is, what is the truth it makes known? Then the critic should weigh "this 'truth', the set of conclusions advanced by the story, against one's perceptions of the world." In doing this, the following questions should be asked: (1) "Whether the message accurately portrays the world we live in?", and (2) does it provide "a reliable guide to our beliefs, attitudes, values and/or actions?"⁶⁶

Fisher and Filloy state: "Argument has been conceived traditionally in terms of clear-cut inferential structures. So viewed, its essential constituents are claims, reasons, and evidence, whether conceptualized as logical product,

⁶⁶Fisher and Filloy, 360.

rheterical process, or dialectal procedure."⁶⁷ Traditional definitions of argument in dramatic and literary forms occur as inferences which the audience is called upon to make. Fisher and Filloy further point out that the audience relies on suggestion to make argumentative claims.⁶⁸

In chapter three, then, I analyze the argument in the puppet performance "The Adventures of Peer Gynt" according to the four methodological guidelines and conception of audience articulated by Fisher and Filloy.

⁶⁷Walter R. Fisher and Richard A. Filloy, "Argument in Drama and Literature: An exploration "Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research", ed. by S. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard (Carbondale: Southern Illinois) 1982 343-362.

⁶⁸Fisher and Filloy, 343.

CHAPTER THREE
ANALYSIS OF ARGUMENT IN A PUPPET PERFORMANCE,
JIM GAMBLE'S THE ADVENTURES OF PEER GYNT

This chapter is an analysis of argument in a puppet performance according to the framework set forth by Fisher and Filloy. This approach follows Perelman in that it rejects formal logic as the basis for human thought. That is, this methodology involves thought based not just on formal reasoning, but value-based claims as well.

As previously indicated, a puppet performs in a play or drama. For the purpose of this analysis important elements are plot, character, diction, melody, spectacle and thought. Aristotle classified thought as being a part of rhetoric. He stated in the Poetics, "We may assume what we said of it [thought] in our Art of Rhetoric, as it belongs more properly to that department of inquiry."⁶⁹

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's concept of presence is related to thought as it involves our consciousness. Presence involves "the value of some of the elements of which one has

⁶⁹Aristotle, The Poetics, Trans. I. Bywater, (Modern Library, 1954) CH XV.1456b (as stated in Fisher and Filloy, 344).

actually been made conscious."⁷⁰

Fisher and Filloy in their essay "Argument in Drama and Literature" state that "poetic discourse is rhetorical when it advances a lesson with a moral."⁷¹ They also state that they focus "on audience response, the mental moves made by auditors in interpreting a work."⁷²

As discussed in chapter two, modern rhetoric is concerned with audience response. This analysis of *Peer Gynt* is based upon my response (as a universal audience member) to the puppet production "The Adventures of *Peer Gynt*."⁷³

Following Aristotle's direction and modern notions of rhetoric, this analysis focuses on the thought process in terms of the puppet character and how that character communicates value-based arguments with respect to the verbal and nonverbal text of the performance. As addressed in chapter one, communication in a puppet performance is accomplished through application of a number of different components. For purposes of this analysis, the following topics are sequentially addressed in separate sections, all in chronological order:

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, The New Rhetoric, 1969, 117. See also "What is Argument," 49.

Fisher and Filloy 346.

Fisher and Filloy 346.

The Adventures of *Peer Gynt*, Prod. Jonathan Bogner, Dir. David Touster, Jim Gamble Puppet Productions, Bogner Ent. Inc., 1992.

1. Role of the Narrator in "The Adventures of Peer Gynt".
Due to the importance of the narrator in the context of the overall analysis, the narrator's role is addressed at the outset in step by step detail. The purpose of this section is to establish the narrator's reliability.
2. Commentary by Narrator and Verbal Communication in "The Adventures of Peer Gynt." The narrator's commentary which helps explain "the words and actions of other characters"⁷⁴ and the puppets' verbal communications (the overall dialogue) are intertwined and thus collectively analyzed. The "description of characters, scenes, and events"⁷⁵ are presented. Analysis of the commentary and verbal communication in this context is particularly appropriate since the starting point is provided from which the analysis is effectively allowed to proceed.
3. Nonverbal Communication in "The Adventures of Peer Gynt." This includes how the puppet speaks, design of the puppet, and physical appearance (involving costuming and any special intentional features of the puppet, such as moving mouth, or articulated eyes).

Fisher and Filloy 360.

Fisher and Filloy 360.

In addition, the size and actual distance of the puppet in relation to other characters and settings are addressed as a separate sub-section relating to nonverbal communication.

4. Interpretation. Interpretation based on Fisher and Filloy's analytical method.

5. Conclusion. The Conclusion provides a condensed capsule of the overall analysis with certain key components specifically highlighted.⁷⁶

Through those components the ostensible or apparent thought (since a puppet in reality cannot think) of the puppet is revealed. That is, thought is revealed through what the narrator says, what the puppet says, what the puppet does, or all of these. The thought of the puppet in turn reveals argument. This analysis focuses on how the puppet communicates that argument.⁷⁷

Role of the Narrator in "The Adventures of Peer Gynt"

The narrator in "The Adventures of Peer Gynt" serves a series of functions. First, he plays a dual role--that of

⁷⁶Fisher and Filloy 360.

⁷⁷See Walter R. Fisher and Richard A. Filloy, "Argument in Drama and Literature: An Exploration", Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research, eds. J. Robert Cox and Charles A. Willard (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1982) 343-362, in which Fisher and Filloy discuss argument in Death of a Salesman and The Great Gatsby.

narrator and puppeteer. Moreover, he is an active participant in the cast itself and the actions of certain of the puppets, for example, Peer and his mother indicate they are aware of his presence. In addition to playing this dual role and interacting with certain of the puppets, the narrator also introduces the action of the play and interacts with the audience.

Further, the narrator as a human being is representative of the audience and is indeed part of it. He is on the same level as the puppets because he is visibly performing in the play itself. In effect, the narrator serves to clarify the puppet performance by direct explanation, and his presence contrasts the puppet with the live person.

Even though Mr. Gamble's presence is de-emphasized by his wearing a black costume,⁷⁸ when he speaks or is spoken to as part of the performance he becomes part thereof dramatically.⁷⁹

However, when not actually part of the drama, Mr. Gamble's role is more subtle in that he is taking the form of a visible puppeteer manipulating the puppets. The effect is to highlight the relationship between puppeteer and

⁷⁸Which as an aside is similar to bunraku except in bunraku the puppeteer, though not directly involved in the play, does manipulate the puppet in view of the audience.

⁷⁹See, 36, of "Puppetry as Rhetoric: An Effective Forum for Argument," Green and Pepicello 157.

puppet--the very essence of puppetry. As a result, there is a juxtaposition of illusion and reality.

Commentary by Narrator and Verbal Communication in

"The Adventures of Peer Gynt"

The starting point of this analysis is the text of the play itself with reference to the characters and plot.

The first character we see in Peer Gynt is Peer's mother. She has a high shrill voice. Her clothing consists of a blue shawl, white blouse, and peasant skirt with colorful trim. The basic theme of Peer's mother is that one must work to earn one's keep. She accentuates this theme through repetition in the dialogue, which serves not only to help explain the action, but also as a form of persuasion or a message of socialization. This is illustrated by the following dialogue:

Mother

Peer. Peer Gynt. Where are you? What are you doing out there, you lazy boy? Playing again. You should be doing your chores. Cleaning your room. Do you hear me? You should have a job. Are you listening to me? All you want to do is play. Waste your time. Oh, he could have a job. He could earn his keep. Do you see that good for nothing son of mine?

(She turns to narrator and as if speaking to the narrator in tones).

Oh, what will I do with him?

Peer, you never listen to your poor old mother. I wash your clothes. I fix your food. I work my fingers to the bone. Speak up, Peer. Peer, what did I just tell you?

By contrast, Peer does not want to work at home but wants to see the world. This is indicated as follows:

Peer

But, mother

Mother

Play...Play...Play...You're lazy, Peer.

Peer

I want to see the world before I settle down.

I want to have an adventure.

Mother

See the world. See the world. All you will find are those who will trap and trick you. Those who will do you harm.

Peer

Mother...I must find out for myself.

Mother

Then go find out for yourself, but beware, Things are not always what they seem.

Peer

Good-bye mother. Good-bye friends. I will return someday.

In effect, Peer is naive to evil and has a different value orientation from his mother. Moreover, interestingly,

while Peer has not had a profitable day in his life, he demands a lot of others.⁸⁰

At this point, as the narrator indicates, Peer leaves his village with only the clothes on his back, dreaming exciting dreams of adventure. In so doing Peer walks into a forest. He passes trees relative to which he initially is taller, but as he goes deeper and deeper into the forest Peer becomes smaller, with the trees themselves appearing larger.

Then Peer encounters a strange looking woman with flaming orange hair, laughing as she performs an even stranger dance. This is the puppet character, Green Hilda.

There is, in substance, a striking contrast between Green Hilda and Peer's mother. While Peer's mother wants him to work honestly to earn his keep, Green Hilda is looking for someone to be her slave--a slave to evil. In effect, Green Hilda is the negative of Peer's mother. Green Hilda's introductory remarks are revealing:

Green Hilda

I must find some strong young man to work for me.
Someone to take care of me and my children. I need
someone to be my slave.

She laughs repetitively. There then follows the initial dialogue between Green Hilda and Peer:

⁸⁰D.J. Eikeland, Ibsen Studies (New York: Haskell 1934) 27.

Peer

Oh, hello, who are you?

Green Hilda

I am Green Hilda.

Peer

And, what are you?

Green Hilda

I am a Princess.

Peer

A princess...then where is your kingdom?

Green Hilda

I live with my father, the Mountain King...Deep in the forest. It's a place full of adventure. Just right for a strong young man like you.

Peer

Full of adventure. Sounds great.

Green Hilda

And...if you pass the test you can become one of us. Just take that path. The one over there. Straight to the Hall of the Mountain King.

Peer

Alright. I am off to seek my adventure.

Green Hilda

And now I, must hurry and take the shorter path to get there first.

Green Hilda, who indeed takes on a greenish hue, then literally flies off much in the fashion of a witch. Peer proceeds to walk up the mountain. He does so in a round about way similar to one in search of one's true self. While he thinks of Green Hilda as a princess, in reality she is the wicked daughter of the Mountain King and she keeps company with trolls. Peer attempts to convince himself that he wants to be like these strange and curious, if not evil, mountain folk⁸¹ --though the latter quality is not yet readily discernible by Peer.

The Narrator points out that Green Hilda is representative of the "temptations that boys and girls face in the larger world." In view of these temptations, each person has a choice and can develop the good or bad side of the self. At this point in his existence Peer is naive to worldly ways and does not have a strong sense of self.

The next scene consists of dialogue with Green Hilda's father, the Mountain King. The narrator introduces the action:

Narrator

Finally Peer came to a great Stone Hall. It was dark and ancient and so large that it appeared to be cut from the very heart of the mountain.

⁸¹Haldane MacFall, Ibsen, The Man, His Art, and His Significance (New York: Morgan Shepard, 1907) 129-141.

Peer

Hello. Hello. Anyone there? (Echo)

Are you the Mountain King?

Mountain King

Yes. What do you want?

Peer

I want adventure. I want to become one of you.

Mountain King

One of us. To become one of us you must pass certain tests. Can you pass the tests?

Peer

I can do anything.

Mountain King

First, you must never again go out into the light of day. Will you agree?

Peer

Well...Okay.

Mountain King

Second. You must grow a tail like us.

Peer

I'll try.

Mountain King

And third, you must marry my daughter, Green Hilda.

The scene at this point is a scene of self confrontation.

Does Peer want to become one of them or remain himself?

The Mountain King's eyes are inarticulated, lacking movement capabilities. They do not see the light of day. Indeed, the mountain itself represents evil and chaos. It is a world of wicked compromise. This is in contrast with the higher world of good--that is, when one makes proper choices, one is thereby true to one's better self. By way of further contrast, the word "troll" means that which is "wicked, evil, sinful."⁸² Ibsen provides illustration:

Among men the saying goes: "Man, be thyself!"
At home with us mid the tribe of the troll,
The saying goes: Troll to thy self-be enough"⁸³

Though initially Peer does not seem to object to becoming a troll, he then realizes that by so doing he would be unable to return to the world of men, but would have to remain in this strange environment. Growing fearful, Peer escapes from the Hall of the Mountain King. Even so, now it will be difficult to let go of his exposure to the evil of the trolls, and past thoughts regarding this will haunt him daily. In effect, his past life with the trolls follows him wherever he goes.

Moving back now to the text, Peer, in response to the suggestion he marry Green Hilda, equivocates:

⁸²P.J. Eikeland, 30.

⁸³P.J. Eikeland, 30.

Peer

Uh...I'll have to think about that.

Mountain King

Then sit down there on that magic carpet and meet those who will become your brothers.

Peer moves toward the magic carpet and sits. He watches the troll-like creatures. Three of them enter and in unison with one another nod "yes" as they appear to be providing emotional support for one another. Peer watches the troll-like creatures dance.

Mountain King

And now Peer Gynt. You will become one of us. You will remain here forever.

The King is then transformed into Green Hilda and her three troll children.

Peer

You're not the King. You are Green Hilda and your children are all trolls.

I'm getting out of here right now. Magic Carpet. Take me away.

Green Hilda

You think you have escaped, Peer Gynt,..but I will follow you wherever you go....

Peer flies off on the magic carpet. By this action Peer seeks to establish that he is "emperor of himself."⁸⁴ Indeed, Ibsen in his original text states: "They shall see Peer Gynt, the emperor ride through the air." In effect, Peer's exertion of control on the magic carpet ride shows he is becoming, but is not yet, emperor of himself. More specifically, Peer is becoming aware that in life one is presented with choices, often between becoming one's better self or otherwise.

Peer

Wow, this is great. I wonder how you steer this thing.

Narrator

Finally, the carpet's magic was exhausted and he began to descend to a strange exotic land called Persia.

Peer

Woo. Woo. Ouch Ow.

Let me off.

Here, Peer the puppet looks at Jim Gamble, the narrator. Thus, there is direct interaction between the puppet and a live person in terms of the performance itself. This interaction continues:

Peer

I've come such a long way and far away from that Green Hilda...I'm tired and sleepy. I need a rest. Maybe a nap. Over here.

Bernard Shaw, "Peer Gynt-1867," *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (New York: Brentane's, 1913) 54.

As if directing the narrator, Peer lies down and can then be seen breathing deeply as he falls asleep.

Peer's actions directing the puppeteer illustrate he is ostensibly aware that he is a puppet. However, in terms of the dialogue they provide an indication that Peer is in control of himself rather than being under the control of someone else, such as Green Hilda.

Moreover, from the standpoint of nonverbal communication, Peer's deep breathing in falling asleep is an interesting and in fact beautiful aspect of the performance. This is because in the case of a human such breathing would be entirely natural, but since the audience knows Peer is a puppet there is a certain fascination generated by his apparent lifelike breathing.

While sleeping, Peer dreams. The outset of Peer's dream involves a dancing man--a whirling dervish who goes round and about. The man is dressed, perhaps deceptively, as a prophet or other religious figure. The dancing man exits and is replaced by a puppet dancing girl costumed in red and orange colors. The puppet is all bust and torso. She dances round and round and round. The sound of a drum is heard and Peer then awakens.

Peer

Oh, what was that? Hey, where am I?... What an unusual dream I had.

Whirling dervish. Dancers. Was an adventure!

On awakening, Peer then sees the same dancing girl, but this time dressed in a blue and white costume. She conveys emotions of sensuality as expressed through dance. Peer is charmed by her physical grace as she dances toward Peer and then kisses him. It is evident from this overall scenario that Peer is responding with just sensual feelings--feelings which could lead Peer down an inappropriate path.

Instantaneously the whirling dervish reappears again, dancing round and round. Suddenly the dervish is transformed into Green Hilda, who starts laughing in fiendish, devilish fashion. Peer, taken aback, expresses his consternation:

Peer Gynt

Oh no. Not you.

I must run.

Narrator

And run he did. Peer ran all the way from Persia to the Serengeti Plain in Africa.

In analyzing the theme of Peer Gynt, it is apparent from the activities in Persia that Peer continues pursuing a reckless course which could lead to his own self-destruction. Moreover, first in Persia and now in Africa, it is evident that Peer is out of his familiar Norwegian surroundings and unaware of potential dangers. This is made patently clear by the appearance of a lion puppet. On seeing this puppet, Peer remarks:

Peer

This is the strangest place yet. Now, this is adventure.
The lion then roars, startling Peer.

Peer

I think I better hide over there and see what's going on.

Peer moves into the bushes and as he does so African Pygmy puppets appear. In terms of nonverbal communication, these puppets, with their flexible breakaway body parts--such as head and body, or mask and body--perform feats of a superhuman nature. For example, their necks actually stretch to a remarkable degree, becoming so attenuated one might suspect they could actually snap. An important point is that these puppets seem more unreal than the characters in terms of lifelike qualities, more like mystical objects than actual people, due essentially to their fabrication enabling them to perform their spectacular, superhuman feats.

Even though hiding, Peer remains the subject of attention. In this connection, the narrator tells us that even as Peer Gynt was watching the strange dance of the masked Pygmies, Green Hilda was already in Africa.

Green Hilda is seen behind the bushes wearing an African mask, which she lowers to reveal her face. The mask and her purpose are further described by the narrator.

Narrator

She had taken on the disguise of a magical Shaman witch doctor and she was searching for Peer from one side of the Serengeti to the other.

Apart from being pursued by Green Hilda, Peer is now dangerously close to the lion. In fact, Peer seems initially unaware of the danger associated with the lion as he fails to maintain a respectable distance. Even so, when the lion roars, frightening Peer, he decides to exit quickly.

Peer

Down Kitty. Nice Kitty. Ohhh. I've had enough adventure. I'm heading for home. I'm going to take the first ship for Norway.

In the next scene depicted in the puppet play, Peer is indeed aboard a ship to Norway, as he has decided to go home. Suddenly we hear the sounds of a storm and the ship, which has a painted mermaid on the helm, first begins to sway and then to sink. Green Hilda reappears, this time disguised as a mermaid. Peer, on recognizing her, calls Green Hilda a "creepy codfish."

The dialogue proceeds as follows:

Peer

Help. Help, I'm sinking.

Peer begins coughing. A fish tail of an apparent live mermaid appears, which Peer grabs.

Peer

Oh, I'm saved. Thanks to this fish.

Green Hilda's laugh is heard and it is apparent that Peer recognizes her voice and that she has taken the form of a mermaid.

Peer

Oh, no. It's Green Hilda again.

Get away from me you creepy codfish. You've scared me for the last time. I'll take my chances on my own. Norway, I'm coming home, even if I have to swim all the way.

Peer, charged with superhuman strength, is seen swimming from the point where the ship sinks until he reaches Norway.

The next scene depicts a wooded forest and against that backdrop we see a butterfly and a reindeer. In the forest is a wooded hillside where the farm of Peer's mother is located.

Peer

Mother! Mother! Hey everybody, I'm home. Mother.

I'm home.

Mother

Peer...Peer Gynt is that you?

Peer

Yes mother, it is me, and I'm so glad to be home.

I saw the world. I found adventure. But mother, my adventures were almost the end of me. First, there was

the Mountain King who was really Green Hilda and the whirling dervish and the pygmies with the scary masks and then the ship sank and I swam from Green Hilda...

Mother

Peer...Peer...What an imagination. Come in my son.
You need a rest.

Narrator

And so Peer returned to his home in Norway, and spent many hours telling his friends and neighbors about his adventures in Persia, and in Africa, and in the Hall of the Mountain King and also of narrowly escaping from Green Hilda. And the more he told the story the more he realized that Green Hilda was more than just a witch. She represented all the evils and temptations that boys and girls face in the larger world...and so I would like to remind you of just one thing. Don't let any Green Hilda's catch up with you.

Green Hilda appears laughing. End of Play.

In summary, The Adventures of Peer Gynt is a puppet play about values. It addresses the naivete, at best, and self-egotism, at worst, in terms of the puppet character Peer Gynt and his susceptibility to evil influences. These influences are, in turn, depicted by the puppet character Green Hilda.

It is noteworthy that the evil represented by Green Hilda takes on various manifestations. That is, she not only

appears directly as herself, Green Hilda, but also as the Mountain King, whirling dervish, magical Shaman witch doctor, and the mermaid. In effect, as Peer's mother said at the outset, the play illustrates that "things are not always what they seem," but that one must develop the discernment to go beneath the exterior finish to the underlying substance.

Indeed, the values sought to be promoted in the play are perhaps best identified with the person of Peer's mother. It is she who encouraged Peer to focus on honest work rather than laziness and warned Peer of those evil persons in the world who would "trap and trick" him. While appearing to reject this sage advice in embarking on world adventure, Peer nevertheless indicates a degree of faithfulness in stating he "will return someday."

Despite exposure while on his adventure to the evils of the world through the various personae of Green Hilda, Peer in the end is not absorbed by this undesirable value system. Rather, at each phase of his adventure, whether with the Mountain King, in Persia, in Africa, or on the vessel, he on exposure pulls away from this approach--one described by the narrator as representing "... all the evils and temptations... [faced] in the larger world."

Moreover, in the end Peer does return to his mother and her humble home, recognizing the adventure was "almost the end of me." In effect, the value system instilled by Peer's Mother was more powerful and sufficient to overcome the

temptations of evil and the dangers Peer encountered in the world.

The narrator, in providing background information and clarifying the action, serves as a storyteller, using the puppets for illustrative purposes. Correspondingly, the narrator helps set the moral tone for the overall performance.

The play, itself, in addressing these conflicting value systems, has universal appeal. All have experienced the temptation to do evil and have struggled internally to remain true to inherent or instilled values. Indeed, the values promoted in Peer Gynt reflect universal spiritual values of the world's major religions. These values involve transcending selfish egotism and reaching outward to help others.

Nonverbal Communication in

"The Adventures of Peer Gynt"

The nonverbal communication of the puppet, which includes the puppet's design, the movement and voice, provides clues to the thoughts of the characters not existing in the dialogue.⁸⁵

In a puppet performance there is also the matter of the audience's perception of the objective features of the puppets themselves. The puppets in Peer Gynt are more readily perceived as objects when performing spectacular feats. Correspondingly, certain instances exist where the audience may perceive the puppet's own ostensible awareness of its puppet-like qualities. To illustrate, in the context of the magic carpet ride, Peer having said to the puppeteer "Let me off" in effect evidences awareness of his own physical limitations as a puppet. Even so, in terms of nonverbal communication the audience may observe seemingly human

Ibsen's views of Norway as a homey place which is cheerful and wholesome is reflected in the design of the puppets and the surrounding setting. These surroundings are reflective of a Norway that Ibsen knows and likes. The setting is directed toward Norwegian culture. The heaven of the Christian church of Ibsen's Norway is a place where evil cannot be tolerated.

Use of Color

First, this setting in Norway is a place where there is light. The mother and Peer Gynt wear similar colors, indicating that they belong together. Peer and his mother are both white and have blonde hair. The sky is blue and the setting is a wooded hillside. Peer wears a striped porcelain and sky blue scarf, a white shirt with a blue flower and a sand colored vest with trim brown pants and striped socks.

Peer's mother wears a blue shawl, white blouse, and pleasant skirt with colorful trim. In contrast to the bright sky colors that Peer and his mother are wearing, the troll king, his daughter, Green Hilda, and the creatures who would be Peer's brothers are wearing dark earthy colors. These colors reflect the colors of an evil place, where there is only darkness and no light.

qualities such as Peer's lifelike breathing thus generating a degree of fascination since the audience at the same time realizes Peer is not human, but a puppet. In terms of audience perception, these aspects of a puppet all work together to communicate value-based argument.

In Persia, the whirling dervish is dressed in an ethnic costume which, in effect, is a two piece costume, in reds and then blue and white. The red, white, and blue colors are suggestive of the adult version of Peer Gynt, in which Peer travels to the U.S. Peer's adventures are not well thought of in Norway, as he gets involved in what would be considered to be immoral behavior, such as slave trading.

The text of the adult Peer Gynt suggests that Americans have unhealthy values and are perceived as being overly materialistic, as they put too much of an emphasis on money. The decadence and shallowness of Peer's thought process as reflected by his activities in the U.S. and the shallowness of American society are analogous to the superficial sensuality of the dancing girl. Peer is out of his environment and his love for the dancing girl cannot possibly work because of the fact that Peer's loyalties belong to his own country and the values of Norway and its religious thought.

In Africa, the characters of the African pygmies and the lion are dressed in their traditional ethnic and natural colors and are perceived as being proper to their environment. On the other hand, Green Hilda is dressed like a witch doctor and is in Africa with improper motive--once again, reinforcing Peer's mother's initial advice that "things are not always what they seem," and that people will "try to trap and trick you."

Green Hilda is trying to trap and trick Peer Gynt wherever he goes. Peer's attraction to her represents a negative value. His fascination with dancing girl is a mistake and Peer's feelings are feelings to be aware of or be cautioned about.

In the shipwreck scene, the colors are the colors of the sea, such as the blue/green color of the ocean. Both the hair of Peer Gynt and the mermaid, really Green Hilda, have the texture of seaweed. While a mermaid could live in the environment of the sea, Peer Gynt is not in reality part of it and would drown if not able to reach the shore.

The immediate thought of the character is that he is in danger and when he sees the mermaid with the seaweed hair Peer realizes that he does not want to live in the sea, as he could not survive there and it is then that he begins to swim.

Use of Voice and Movement

Beyond the appearance of the puppets is their voice and movement--by voice is meant the nonverbal aspects of their speech.

Peer's high pitched tone of voice, and his quick tempo create a sense of urgency. In addition, Peer's articulated eyes and mouth create the appearance of emotion. In conjunction with quick and spontaneous movements, the puppet creates a sense of naivete. He normally speaks softly, but when startled speaks loudly and rapidly.

The mother's voice and articulated mouth movements help to create realistic life-like conversation, establishing the emotion expressive of her thought, that Peer should be working and helping out. She also creates a sense of urgency with her loud, quick, and shrill voice.

Green Hilda is motivated by unhealthy values, such as greed. She wants to take advantage of Peer Gynt physically and financially. Her thoughts involve the various ideas that she conjures up to trick Peer Gynt, and she follows him wherever she goes.

Her voice, which is raspy and loud, is indicative of a stereotypical witch. In fact, what defines her character so significantly is her ability to disguise herself. This is how evil influences good thought, by making it appear beautiful when in reality it is ugly.

As such, Green Hilda is planning tricks and through her tricks she attempts to influence and manipulate good thought. Her actions reinforce the essential conclusion of the play, which is that "things are not always what they seem."

The Mountain King does not move from his throne. His most effective characteristic is his voice, which is the primary driving force of the character. His voice echoes in the hall, as does Peer's. Since he and his daughter are evil, the effect of becoming evil is to ignore one's conscience or thoughts, which may be echoed throughout one's mind repetitively.

The troll-like creatures in the Hall of the Mountain King have animal-like features, such as tails and fur trims. They nod to one another, indicating that they think of themselves as comrades in their adventures. We know through their dance and gestures that they lend one another moral support and that they are comrades and loyal, at least for the moment.

In the setting in Persia, the whirling dervish, by going round and about, represents a spirit of compromise. He represents the thought of Peer as he dreams and may even be an illusion of Peer himself as he thinks about a future Peer.

It is clear that Peer is out of his environment in Persia. The dancing girl begins to dance and Peer emulates her movements. Peer's response to the dancing girl makes him appear ridiculous, especially since he is a Norwegian boy and the dance seems out of character. When the dancing girl approaches Peer, by continuing to lay down and not responding, but remaining silent, we can infer that he thought he would like to be kissed and that he consented.

In Africa, all of the characters wear masks. The African pygmies do so because they are participating in some type of ceremonial dance which is apparently part of their culture. They are fascinating to watch, as their tricks seem magical. Green Hilda, on the other hand, is wearing a mask to disguise her true appearance. Again, she is a replica of evil.

The lion, which is designed just as a lion, golden with a yellow mane, is very lifelike due to his articulated eyes

and mouth. His voice is electronically amplified and when the lion roars we become aware of the physical danger that Peer Gynt is in. Because the lion is a wild animal, Peer has met his match. Just as Peer is ready to overcome evil with good, the lion is ready to overcome with physical prowess alone.

Similarly, Peer is in real physical and spiritual danger in the mermaid scene. Green Hilda's laugh identifies the mermaid puppet as a witch. The danger is amplified by the sound of the storm, loud voice, and his frantic swimming.

By swimming home to his true environment, that of Norway, the place of his culture, family, and religious values, to which he remains loyal, he will have no fears and be safe. The fact that he is afraid is not just communicated verbally, but is expressed nonverbally through the kinesics of the puppet figure and its voice.

Distance and Size

In a puppet performance, it has been stated that a puppet creates distance or alienation. By "alienation" is meant the fact that we realize we are not watching a human.

This aspect of distance is important to Peer Gynt with respect to the dancing girl. Her sensual dance might be considered too risque for children if performed by a human actor. Her intentionally designed figure, consisting only of bust and torso, could not have been performed by a human at all. The figures and costumes of these puppets and characters have been intentionally designed to portray sensuality.

In addition to alienating distance, there is also the physical distance between the puppets which is important for conveying messages in the puppet theatre. In the beginning of the play in the scene with the mother, the distances seem normal. But, when Peer meets Green Hilda and speaks to her father, the Mountain King, he is at too close a distance for people he has just met, indicating his naivete and lack of thought concerning the presence of evil and danger.

In the setting in Persia, Peer sits at a social distance from the dancing girl. However, when she moves toward him to kiss him he does not move. Because he does not move it can be implied that he consented to the kiss.

When Peer lands by magic carpet in Africa he hides behind the bushes as he wants now to keep his distance, especially since he has seen the puppet lion. Later, however, he seems oblivious of this same fact indicating a lack of thought or a willingness to repress thought concerning the danger as he stands dangerously close calling the lion by the name of a domestic pet--kitty, kitty.

Closely related to distance is size and proportion. When Peer begins to leave Norway, he seems taller than many of the trees. The deeper and deeper he goes into the forest, the taller and taller the trees become.

Giving Life to the Puppet Performance

Mr. Gamble utilizes techniques to create the impression that the puppets are acting spontaneously and to show that the

puppet has life. One such instance is when the mother, in the beginning, turns to him and says "Do you see that good for nothing son of mine?"

This statement is made simply to create the impression the puppet has life and has no deeper meaning or relation to the text other than to create this appearance. On the other hand, a puppet may be perceived as being something other than a puppet.

Jurkowski, in his essay, traces the puppet's appearance in various types of European theatrical experiences. During Greek times puppets were associated with something mystical or mythological. There are many characters in Peer Gynt that involve the mystic or magic. They include Green Hilda, the witch, the Mountain King, and the dancing creatures seeking to become Peer Gynt's brothers. Even the masked pygmies are mystical or mythological characters, as masks are often associated with myth. Green Hilda disguised as a Shaman witch doctor creates a suggestion of a mythological character. Green Hilda disguised as a mermaid is also magical, mystical and of a mythological character type. Green Hilda, thus, is not perceived as a puppet by Peer Gynt, but as a real diabolical force.

The play, in addition to containing mythological or mystical character types, is also presented in a story-telling style. This effect is achieved when the narrator introduces

us to the story by telling us the name of the story, the author, and composer of the music and the locale of Norway.

We see two sets or what could even be considered two stages. One is a large stage with a proscenium, decorated with a Victorian style black drape. The other is a booth-theatre designed to look like Gynt's home.

The narrator engages in showing and telling while the puppets serve to illustrate the story. In addition to the puppet's function as an illustration to the Peer Gynt folk tale, it is important to note that Peer Gynt is not only a folk tale and poetic drama, but there are many plays written as adaptations of the original Peer Gynt. It is important to note, then, that the puppet play "The Adventures of Peer Gynt" is a play that emulates the live actors theatre. The puppets may be compared to actors or characters in live actors theatre.

The puppets in Peer Gynt are real theatrical puppets, aware of their own theatrical existence. This is reflected in the scene in which Peer says "I wonder how you steer this" and then "Let Me Off," showing not only that he is aware that he exists as a puppet, but also in effect becoming in control of himself. In essence, by saying "Let me off," he has become in effect the puppeteer of Mr. Gamble, the Magic Carpet and of himself.

This is an example of what Jurkowski means when he is discussing the two part vision of the puppet and scenic

character. When the puppet looks up at Mr. Gamble, it is indicating that it is aware of the puppeteer's existence, in addition to its own puppet-like existence.

Thus, Peer, through his thought processes and actions, is able to assert his true self (his good side) and to indicate that he will not allow evil to control him, and he will not be a "puppet" for manipulation with respect to diabolical forces.

Interpretation

The production of Peer Gynt, while borrowing from many categories of puppet usage or application, does not fit into any neat category of puppet theatre.

In this production of Peer Gynt, the puppet is not perceived as just an object or something living, but instead the puppet is perceived as a puppet, in that the operator manipulates the puppet in full view of the audience.

We are charmed by the magical feats and tricks of the marionettes by their spectacular dancing, transformations, realistic breathing, breakaway puppets, masks and bodice, and elongated neck. We are fascinated because we know that we are watching a puppet that has material limitations.

In addition to the historic aspects of the puppet and how the puppet is viewed by the audience, also important to the puppet's existence is its verbal and nonverbal communication.

Because the puppet is not an actor, certain techniques are employed to ensure transmission of the message. These

techniques include the voice and kinesics of the puppet in conjunction with the dialogue to help clarify the action.

During the storm, the shipwreck scene when Peer starts to sink and his body is moved downward to present the impression he is sinking, he states "Help! Help! I'm sinking." Later in that same scene he states "I'm taking my chances on my own even if I have to swim all the way." He then moves his arms in a forward motion to indicate he is swimming. Because the puppet has reduced physical features, the puppet must compensate by gesture. It is through these gestures that everyday activities or emotion can be illustrated.

To illustrate further, laughter may be shown with the shoulders of the puppet making upward and downward motions; such is the case when Green Hilda laughs. A kissing puppet may move toward the other puppet to an intimate distance, kiss and then move away.

The puppet's physical appearance, such as its design, is part of the visual channel. The voice is part of the aural. Together with all of the scenic elements, they work to create the action of the play. In the case of the play, Peer Gynt, the thought of the character is the primary motivating force.

Though scholars previously have defined what a puppet is, they have not explained how the puppet functions as a form of argument. This thesis does so.

Specifically, it is through analysis of the puppet's verbal and nonverbal communication from the standpoint of

thought that effective treatment of the argument of the puppet can be drawn.

Eric Bass states: "it's essential for us that the puppet 'live' on stage...that the puppet be alive and you're sensitive that the puppet breathe...that the puppet think...react."⁸⁶

We are fascinated by the fact that the puppet "Peer Gynt" breathes because we know he is a puppet. We are equally fascinated at seeing the visualization of the interpersonal thoughts of the puppet as he dreams, as when Peer first arrives in Persia and sees the dancing girl.

Peer's adventures with Green Hilda, in the Hall of the Mountain King, Persia, Africa, and throughout the storm and his responses to his predicaments through his verbal and nonverbal communication, upon our reflection, illustrate how value-based argument is made through dramatic forms.

It has been stated by Perelman that formal logic is inappropriate with respect to rhetorical reasoning from the standpoint of absolutism. The character's statements cannot be taken to be absolute truths. Thus, while Green Hilda, as a representation of evil, may appear beautiful, she is, in fact, ugly. Her virtues may at first appear to be positive, but in the end represent negative values.

Live and videotaped interview with Eric Bass, SandGlass Theatre, after performance of "The Village Child" Center for Puppetry Arts, March 18 - April 3, 1993.

In chapter two, four aspects of Fisher and Filloy's analytical method was set forth. The first was determine the message, the overall conclusion of the work. The overall conclusion of the work is that "things are not always what they seem." This message is stated by the mother at the beginning of the play "The Adventures of Peer Gynt." The mother also states that "there are those who will try to trap and trick you."

The second is decide whether the "message is justified by the reliability of the narrator(s), the words and actions of other characters, and the descriptions of characters, scenes, and events...." These descriptions are "verbal in literature" while in drama they may be represented non-verbally "as well as in words."

This message is justified by the actions of the other characters, such as the Mountain King and Green Hilda and the dancing girl. The character of Green Hilda reinforces the play's conclusion by her numerous tricks and traps. As illustrated, it is through the narrator and the verbal and nonverbal communication of the puppet that argument is conveyed. We are happy with the result that Peer Gynt has narrowly escaped from the evils, as represented by Green Hilda.

He confronts not just Green Hilda, as herself, but as she appears in the form of the Mountain King, Whirling Dervishes, Magical Shaman Witch Doctor, and the Mermaid. We see that

those that are ugly in substance may disguise themselves as being outwardly beautiful.

The third is to note "the outcomes of the various conflicts." For example, "whose values [are more] powerful and/or worthy?" Are "events controlled by characters or forces outside them."

Peer, who narrowly escapes from Green Hilda returns home to his wise old mother in Norway, where he is safe and secure. His mother's values are seen as correct. The self-knowledge that Peer Gynt realizes is recognized by us as healthy, and the narrator, James Gamble is proved a reliable judge.

Events are managed by the Self, in conjunction with outside forces of good or evil. When Peer is on the magic carpet and says "Let me Off" he is not only in control of the self, but is also acting with help from the power of the forces above.

The fourth point is the critic should determine whether the story is true by "the truth it makes known." That is, what is the truth it makes known? Then the critic should weigh "this 'truth', the set of conclusions advanced by the story, against one's perceptions of the world." In doing this, the following questions should be asked: (1) "whether the message accurately portrays the world we live in?", and (2) does it provide "a reliable guide to our beliefs, attitudes, values and/or actions?"

When James Gamble states at the end that Green Hilda represents all of the temptations that boys and girls face in the large world and warns them not to let any Green Hilda's get a hold of them, we appreciate the validity of this argument and, tested against our own experiences in the real world, it often rings true in terms of our own values.

The values that Peer Gynt promotes are ones that all world spiritual leaders would approve. They lead to transcendent values such as knowledge of self and improvement toward one's self and others.

The story of Peer Gynt is universal and would appeal to a universal audience. We have all experienced the temptation to do evil. To remain faithful and true to our good self is a reliable goal. The values set forth in Peer Gynt reflect the values of spiritual leaders of all major religions. These beliefs provide reliable guides to our actions.

Conclusion

As stated in our discussion of argument, Perelman emphasized values and that argument involving person centered activities could not be restricted to the inquiries of formal logic. There are issues involving the human thought process that are not accounted for in the realm of traditional logic. These include the motivations and values of characters involved in a narrative, and our response, as an audience, to them.

I have explored the dynamics of this modern puppet play, "The Adventures of Peer Gynt," to help explain how a puppet functions rhetorically to convey an effective argumentative message. It is clear that Peer has not been persuaded to follow evil.

The dynamics of puppetry has been analyzed and discussed through specific application to argument to provide a contribution to literary development in this important area. The limitations of this analysis is that application of argument has been applied only to one play, "The Adventures of Peer Gynt".

Further research is recommended in this area in terms of application of the theory of argument to analogous literary and concerned works such as Muppet Treasure Island.

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Zipes, Jack. Trans. The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm. New York: Bantam Books, 1992.

Zucker, A.E. "Peer Gynt and the Beginnings of International Fame." Ibsen: The Master Builder. London: Butterworth, 1930. 120-136.

Puppet Plays-Films, Videotapes,
Theatre, Scripts, and Filmstrips

Aesop's The Tortoise and the Hare and Other Fables. Performed at the Center for Puppetry Arts, 1993.

Blue Night. By Janie Geiser. Center for Puppetry Arts, 1984.

Burning in the Dark. By Janie Geiser. Center for Puppetry Arts, 1987.

Everything and All. Center for Puppetry Arts, Nov. 5-21, 1992.

Fo, Durio, Stuart Houd. Trans. Toto Theater "The violence of the Marionette and the Mask." 18.3 (Summer/Fall 1987): 6-12.

Hangman. By Janie Geiser, Jottay Theatre. Performed at the Center for Puppetry Arts, 1985.

Hansel and Gretel. Center for Puppetry Arts, Dec. 3, 1992 - Feb. 27, 1993.

Labrynth. Dir. Jim Henson. Henson Associates, Inc, 1986.

Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland. Director: Luis Q. Barroso. Performed at the Center for Puppetry Arts, Dec. 12, 1986 - Feb. 28, 1987.

Little Eddie. By Janie Geiser, Jottay Theater. Performed at the Center for Puppetry Arts 1981.

Mel Howard, La Tango Pasion. Coconut Grove Playhouse, Miami, Florida, Dec. 1992.

Pinokio Uncensored. Theatre Drak of Czechoslovakia, Director: Josef Krofta. Performed at the Center for Puppetry Arts, 1992.

Sick But True. Paul Zaloom. Center for Puppetry Arts, Jan 30-31, 1993.

Skipitaes, Theodora, "The Age of Invention" Theater 17.1 (Winter 1985): Cover, 5-15.

Taymor, Julie and Eliot Goldenthal. Theater "Juan Darien: A Carnival Mass." 20.2 (Spring/Summer 1989): 43:56.

The Adventures of Peer Gynt. Prod. Jonathan Bogner. Dir. David Touster. Jim Gamble Puppet Productions. Bogner Ent. Inc., 1992.

The Dark Crystal. Dir. Jim Henson. Jim Henson Productions, 1982.

The Great Muppet Caper. Dir. Jim Henson. Jim Henson Productions, 1987.

The House. by Janie Geiser, Center for Puppetry Arts, 1989.

The Muppet Movie. Dir. James Frawley. Jim Henson Productions, 1979.

The Muppets Take Manhattan Dir. Jim Henson. Jim Henson Productions, 1984.

The Muppet Christmas Carol. Dir. Brian Henson. Walt Disney Productions, 1993.

The Third Bank of The River. By Janie Geiser, Jottay Theater. Performed at the Center for Puppetry Arts, 1986.

The Village Child. Sandglass Theatre, Eric Bass, Center for Puppetry Arts, March 18 - April 3, 1993.

Winnie The Pooh. Center for Puppetry Arts, Sept. 10 - Nov. 13, 1992.

Puppetry Workshops

Create a Puppet Workshop

Made "Winnie The Pooh" Shadow puppets.

Make A Marionette

March 3 and 20, 1993.

Workshop included the making of a 13 inch, string figure, in addition to the basic movement mechanics.

Taught by Peter Hart.

Puppetry as a Teaching Tool, Nov. 14, 1992.

Workshop included storytelling and puppetry as a tool for classroom educators. Ideas for making puppets and writing scripts were presented, taught by Claire Ritzler.

Puppet Manipulation Clinic, Feb. 6, 1993.
Workshop included "hands on" instruction for the manipulation and presentation of the hand and style "Muppet," taught by Peter Hart.

Speech Communication Association
October 1992 Convention

Enhancing Communication in the Classroom through the Use of Puppets: Theory and Practice

This Workshop was presented by: Pamela L. Gray and Deanne S. Christensen. Central Michigan University, Chicago, IL, October 29, 1992.

Workshop included various ways in which puppetry can be utilized in the classroom, as a teaching tool. Hands-on manipulation session with various types of puppets.

Video Excerpts of Puppetry Performances

Presentation of Breaking Boundaries: American Puppetry in the 1980's Center for Puppetry Arts, Smithsonian Exhibit. Washington, D.C. 1993. Videotape included selected artists from Smithsonian exhibit. Exhibiting artists included: Eric Bass, Janie Geiser, Jim Henson, Ralph Lee, Jon Ludwig, Roman Paska, Peter Schumann, Theadora Skipitares, Julie Taymor, Hanne Tierney, and Paul Zaloom.

Viewed separately, additional excerpts from the works of numerous puppeters, including Paul Zaloom, Julie Taymor, and Janie Geiser.

Cultural Traditions

Viewed excerpts of various types of puppet performances from all parts of the world.

Videotapes included performances of:

Marionettes of India, Indonesian Wayang Golek and Kulit; Japanese Bunraku, and Segu puppets of Mali. Karagoiz, the shadow theater of Turkey.

The Puppetry of Bil Baird

Viewed excerpts of numerous puppet performances featuring the puppets of Bil Baird.

Classic Children's Television Shows

Viewed excerpts from numerous children's television shows, including Howdy Doody and Kukla, Fran, and Ollie.

