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Intersubjective Traps over Tricks on the Kazakhstani Puppet Stage:

Animation as Dicentization

By Meghanne Barker

Abstract: This article introduces puppet animation as a process of dicentization, in which the puppet's resemblance to a living creature is treated as if it resulted from the object being alive. This act requires recognition that the puppet is only an object, accompanied by a momentary forgetting. At a state-funded theater in Kazakhstan, animation is achieved through a complex participant framework. Any component can jeopardize successful animation, yet this configuration enables a range of possibilities for how animation can unfold. A director's shifting of animation techniques transformed social relations and enabled artists to play with new possibilities of puppetry. Coordinating animation requires – and thus assigns – values to those who participate. Understanding animation as dicentization highlights the endeavor as one that generates signs across the proscenium.

Keywords: animation, dicentization, postsocialism, performance, agency

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On the day before the premiere of their new play, *Kashtanka,* at the Almaty State Puppet Theater, a series of events tested the patience of the new stage director, Kuba. The stage wasn't set up properly. Actors arrived late. Even the puppets were uncooperative: Kashtanka, the lead dog puppet, only recently completed, had legs made of rope, covered with foam rubber and cloth to give them shape (*Fig. 1*). The newly-added padding undid the previously floppy nature of the legs. When the dog was supposed to lie down, one leg would stick up stubbornly in the air.

Kuba called in the head props artist, Lyuba, a tiny woman with short, red hair. Kuba towered over her as Lyuba explained that she hadn't been the one to make those legs. I shrank in my chair, for I had made them. Before Lyuba could point fingers, however, Kuba insisted that it didn't matter if she had made them or not. As head artist, she should have been overseeing all aspects of the puppets and should have been attending rehearsals to inspect how each puppet was moving. He described the dog's leg as "pornographic."

Kuba left to find the administrative director. Soon, the two had filled the room with theater employees involved in different levels of the production, from administrators in charge of the budget to the puppets' caretaker; the administrative director worked to get to the bottom of who was responsible for so many things going wrong. When the artistic director explained that he hadn't been able to prepare the stage before rehearsal because he had been busy with other things, the administrative director argued that Presidents Putin and Nazarbayev (first and only President of Kazakhstan at that time) were the busiest men in the world, but they always found time to do what they needed to do. The artistic director quit and walked out.

How could such a little thing as a leg cause so much commotion? Of course, the leg wasn't the only problem on this morning (not to excuse myself for my shoddy limb

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construction). The more central point this vignette illustrates is that animation is achieved not only through a puppeteer's successful manipulation of an object. It involves, instead, a concerted effort of different actors working at various physical and temporal distances to create an effect that an audience perceives as animate. In this article, I argue that we treat puppet animation as a process of dicentization, a process in which the puppet's resemblance to a living creature is treated as if it resulted from the puppet being alive. Through my analysis of the work at the Almaty State Puppet Theater, I show how this achieved through a complex participant framework. Any one of these components can jeopardize successful animation. Audience members are not merely recipients of a message but play a key role in achieving animation effects. Understanding the process as one of dicentization furthermore highlights the ways the puppet theater's endeavor not only construes the puppet as a particular sign, but it moreover generates the assignment of values to various participants in the process as particular signs. Shifts in animation techniques thus transform social relations beyond the puppet stage. On this day before the premiere, multiple actors were failing to meet the expectations of the director — who was acting in lieu of the spectator in rehearsals. While changes in techniques and understandings of animation created tension, they also offered new possibilities for the theater to explore and to exploit.

After introducing the process of dicentization as useful for understanding animation, I offer a brief overview of the historical and institutional specificity of the Almaty State Puppet Theater. While the bureaucratic structure of the theater helps underline the complex interactional framework that can come to comprise a single show, the production of *Kashtanka*, occurring at a time of internal and external renovation of the theater, afforded greater reflection on ways of doing puppetry than the troupe had previously known. I then examine two moments of the

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production of *Kashtanka* that introduced innovations of method and of staging that, I argue, expanded the possibilities of animation for this troupe. In one example, by shifting the division between what Goffman (1979) would describe as principal and animator — and what the puppeteers had described as "first I" and "second I," the puppeteer's bodies became animated figures alongside those of the puppets. This created new possibilities for the actors to recognize their own bodies as dicent signs. In another case in the same play, the theater cultivated dicentization through a surprise moment of de-animation, when a puppet appeared to elude the control of its master. The novelty of such techniques of animation both shed light on semiotic processes of animation otherwise taken for granted by artists, while they also reshaped social relations, among artists and between performers and spectators. Understanding animation as a process of dicentization — as an effort to bring a figure to life through these processes of transposition and projection, of manipulation and distancing — illuminates animation as an act at once hierarchical and intimate that should not be reduced to a simple relationship of the active puppeteer and the passive puppet. It is, rather, a kind of intersubjective trap that people and non-human objects co-create, with institutions such as the puppet theater carefully cultivating an openness to entrapment.

Generating Dicent Signs through Animation

People use the concept of "puppets" as metaphors for humans that have become a pure conduit or medium for someone else's message.[i] The metaphor exists in Kazakhstani media as well. For example, one local newspaper couldn't resist leading with the quote, "I am not a puppet!"[ii] when interviewing a former administrative director of the puppet theater in Almaty, following some controversy with the local Department of Culture. Puppet metaphors in popular

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culture frequently focus on a dyadic relationship between puppet and puppeteer, as speculation abounds surrounding who's pulling the strings. However, such models leave out many roles, as evidenced in the *Kashtanka* rehearsal mentioned in the introduction, when a complaint about a faulty leg swelled into larger discussions of responsibilities of everyone from lighting technicians to the Kazakhstani President. This popular rendering of puppetry, moreover, focuses on the puppet as a passive medium for another's message. However, the puppet is never merely a medium. "You're the television!" doesn't do the same pragmatic work as slinging a puppet accusation at someone. This is because a puppet, while in some respects acting as a medium, nonetheless pretends *not* to be one. It is in this contradiction where its semiotic agency lies (Kockelman 2017).

Perhaps a more accurate description of the puppet involves noting that the puppet both animates another's utterance and acts as a characterological figure. This takes up Goffman's call to break up the speaker-hearer dichotomy into a more complex participant framework (1979). Most spectators, including children, are conscious of the fact that the human holding the puppet somehow compels its movements, but successful animation — according to puppeteers — requires spectators to recognize the puppets' movements as the products of others' efforts while they must also forget this, momentarily and willfully. Dicentization can help illuminate this process of animation as the culmination of efforts at multiple scales, and moving in multiple directions, in order to create the perception of an inanimate object working independently of all of these actors. Understanding animation as a process of dicentization underlines the fact that animation is not simply about one actor's control over or manipulation of another, but that it manages to do this while also being perceived or accepted as an independently animated being. This contrasts significantly with the way the puppet is often construed as secretly passive when

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cast as an aspersion.

Ball describes the dicentization of icons as the process in which a first gets interpreted as a second: "Dicentization applies to situations in which images are perceived to come alive, either through some external agency or our own, whereby relations of identity, otherness, and existence are invoked and made actual" (Ball 2014: 156). Puppets are objects that come alive through the work of multiple agencies. The animated puppet is not simply an object standing in an iconic relationship of resemblance to the living thing it represents. Chumley notes that materialities perceived sensorially are qualia, while those that manifest ethnographically are significations (2017, S7). The signification that manifests ethnographically in the puppet is that of an animate entity. The degree to which this signification is perceived as successful depends on a number of factors. Through puppeteers' efforts to create movement, through the puppet's interaction with other characters onstage, and through the audience's viewing and attributing living qualities to the moving object, the puppet gains the qualities of a living thing and a social subject.

In puppetry, the recognition of resemblance is a basic goal. Perceiving the animated puppet as standing in more than an iconic relationship with the animate dog (or human) but as being, rather, an actual, living dog, requires momentarily – but readily – forgetting that the puppet is manipulated and animated by the hands that surround it.[iii] At the same time, if audiences fully believed that the object was unambiguously, fully animate, they might then cease to be impressed. Just as a magic trick can impress precisely because audiences know they are being tricked (Jones 2011), the goal is momentarily forgetting, and then remembering, that what they watch is, after all, only a puppet. However, the way this occurs depends not only on the techniques of the puppeteer but also varies according to audiences, as discussed below. Moreover, dicentization is a creative process, with signs growing out of one another (Ball 2014,

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152). At the puppet theater, artists construe different child and adult audiences as interpreting signs, generating ideologies surrounding age, audience, and understandings of animation. This becomes especially important when working to attract new spectators, as the theater sought to do.

While the iconic relationship between the Kashtanka puppet and a real dog might be a necessary but insufficient precondition for animation, aspects of the object’s materiality can get in the way of audiences perceiving the object as a dog, such as when the dog’s leg sticks in the air persistently. There might be other aspects of the materiality that an interpretant is willing to overlook in an object’s failure to resemble its object, but for Kuba, Kashtanka’s erect leg was unacceptably distracting. Qualities and affordances of puppets deserve attention, as much as other aspects of puppetry. Puppets are not merely a medium for transmitting a message to young viewers; they are a collection of objects around which creative individuals labored to create a fantastic experience in which objects would come to life. The process of animation involved mediation through these objects and motivation from the actors and other artists compelling the objects into action. The puppet is an object that is imputed agency — and sentience — through its participation in this process that simultaneously required of it a certain passivity, a pliability.

Participant Frameworks of Puppetry

While the puppet metaphor might offer a limited notion of the way animation works on actual puppet stages, animation, as a broader trope, offers fruitful insight for social roles and relations. Teri Silvio (2010) defines animation “as the projection of qualities perceived as human—life, power, agency, will, personality, and so on—outside of the self, and into the sensory environment, through acts of creation, perception, and interaction” (2010, 427). This

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broad definition allows for the animation of organic beings by others. In other research I examine how human bodies come to animate roles as characterological figures.[iv] For this article, I focus on the collaborative efforts of artists, manipulators, materials, and objects in the emergence of a nonorganic object being treated as a social person. Silvio and others urge us to think about animation as a process that unfolds through particular participant frameworks that question assumptions of a unified, coherent self in a single body. We can find, of course, parallels between these processes and projects in which humans animate others’ utterances, as leaky as such endeavors turn out to be (Irvine 1996; 2011). It is, in fact, these parallels that then make the puppet a useful trope for those wishing to call into question assumed participant frameworks through theorizations of ventriloquy and voicing.[v]

While we are aware, then, of the slippery nature of distinguishing self from other in everyday interactions, we might imagine the puppet theater as being a purer format in which we can imagine clean breaks between participant roles. However, multiple humans sometimes animate a single puppet, while in other cases, a single speaker voices multiple puppets (Silvio 2010). Manning and Gershon (2013) have pointed to other media in which similar configurations can be found, whether through group-crafted breakup texts or a single player creating a number of avatars and alts for themselves.[vi] We should be careful not to take for granted that animation and ventriloquism unfold in a way that is obvious or uniform. Roles extend beyond the puppet-puppeteer dyad, behind the scenes, with the author of the text (Anton Chekhov (1887), in the case of *Kashtanka*), the director, the puppet makers, and the department of culture financing the theater. Rather than listing a neat taxonomy of roles, I take the moment of animation as one of bringing together efforts at various scales, from multiple directions.

Extending the participant framework outside the stage, across the proscenium and

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backstage and upstairs, is not simply a matter of illuminating invisible labor. Social relations between administrators, artists, and audiences were intertwined with action onstage. During rehearsals, artists anticipate absent spectators. Kuba, as director, also takes responsibility for the perspective of the child audience. The everyday work of making an inert puppet come to life paralleled conversations I heard at various levels regarding the need to teach workers with various duties at the theater to take responsibility for their work and to go beyond what they were told to do. Workers should learn to act independently, rather than being compelled into action; this nonetheless involved an understanding of what was expected from them without their being told.

These discussions sometimes sounded like a call on workers to develop new neoliberal subjectivities of self-cultivation. I am more interested in the parallels I saw between these efforts and the kind of work involved in animating the puppet — of creating a figure that was perceived as self-motivated despite the multiple energies that went into putting it into action. Silvio (2010) argues that animation serves as a productive trope for understanding labor in the computerized, deindustrialized twenty-first century. If this is so, it might be useful to examine the work relations at an institution of animation, such as a post-Soviet, state-run puppet theater, not necessarily as applying neoliberal ideals imported from the West. Instead, I see Kuba as extending particular principles of animation accomplished onstage outward to the work with the puppeteers and other personnel at the theater.

Discourses of responsibility and acts of transposition among puppet artists raise questions of agency, an issue intertwined with responsibility, as Hill and Irvine point out (1993, 4). Kuba seemingly granted artists agency by charging them with greater responsibilities over discerning their duties, yet it is he who has the authority to make these designations. He invited the actors to

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think as he does, thus potentially animating them to work through scenes offstage. As we look at the work that goes into the puppet’s animation, we see how the efforts of animation as dicentization — attributing the object’s movements as independent of all the various forces that are going into it — also involve the dissolution of easy divisions between the bodies of those involved. This is accomplished through discussions of responsibility, through transpositions of perspective, and through processes of collaborators claiming relationships of belonging to one another.

The potentials and hazards surrounding the animation and de-animation of a nonorganic object like a puppet forces us to think of the agency of objects in a more nuanced fashion than a simple question of whether or not it is possible, or according to whose definition. We can see shifts in attention, for example, from the puppet as a characterological figure – attributed a certain amount of subjectivity – to the puppet as a thing made up of parts that influence the artists’ work and overall effects of the performance. This is a shift from signification to qualia (Chumley 2017), and thus involves different agencies at work in different contexts. Puppeteers and audiences — under ideal circumstances — endow puppets with an agency not unlike that of art objects, humans imputing their sentience through interactions (Gell 1998). On the other hand, when a normally pliant puppet calls attention to some part of itself as a resistant or troublesome actor — such as when its leg sticks up — the agency of the object seems to assert itself over the humans around it, making the leg into an agentive object of the kind Latour describes when he asks, “Does it make a difference in the course of some other agent’s action or not?” (2005, 71) The leg, in distracting Kuba, prevented him from seeing the dog puppet, Kashtanka, as a characterological figure. Here, the shift causes Kuba consternation. In another example, explored below, Kuba exploits the possibilities of this shift from a focus on the puppet as a figure to

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regarding it as a mere object, achieved by a purposeful de-animation at a critical point in the play.

Animating the Puppet in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan

The Almaty State Puppet Theater offered an interesting case for exploring questions of animation, in part because of the many participant roles within the institution itself. Additionally, I conducted my fieldwork there during a transitional period, between 2012 and 2014, when workers and directors were called upon to justify and re-evaluate their ways of working. The theater preserved and promoted the animation of objects as an ideal medium for socializing children. The theater was founded in 1936, around the same time as many government puppet theaters all over the Soviet Union.[vii] Early Soviet troupes used puppetry to animate and to socialize the masses, in addition to child audiences. This eventually gave way to a focus on child audiences, with the exception of the most prominent puppet theaters in cultural capitals, such as Moscow and St. Petersburg. Directors often mentioned ambitions of making puppets more interesting to adults, though they produced none geared chiefly at adults during my research there. A bilingual (Kazakh and Russian) theater from the beginning, the troupe performed every weekend, with shows in Kazakh and Russian each day, along with visiting schools, children’s hospitals, orphanages, and traveling for puppet festivals.

The theater’s evolution over the twentieth century and into the twenty-first was one of increased professionalization, specialization, and bureaucratization. Archives from the early puppet theater include frequent complaints about having to move from one shared space to another, and about the lack of professionally-trained artists to perform.[viii] By the time of my fieldwork, however, the theater occupied a space in the center of the city, just between the central

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green market and a popular park. The puppeteers had all attended art schools for three or four years, most of them specializing specifically in puppetry. The structure of the theater had, moreover, expanded to include an administrative director and several vice-directors, a number of mid-level administrators, a team responsible for lighting and sound, another in charge of securing materials needed for making puppets and props, and a team of backstage artists who constructed sets, props, puppets, and costumes.

The state puppet theater model of former socialist countries, such as the Almaty State Puppet Theater, differed starkly from the independent puppeteers and troupes I met from the United States, Australia, France, or Italy, where a “company” might consist of a sole performer or a couple, who had designed their performances with portability in mind, not only in order to travel to festivals such as the ones where I met these artists but also because they often rented theaters or performed in public spaces in their home cities. While some of these artists would act as puppeteer, director, puppet maker, and lighting engineer, all of these roles existed as separate entities at the Almaty State Puppet Theater. Various administrators kept track of ticket sales, arranged the troupe’s visit to schools and hospitals, and publicized shows. In this way, the act of animation ultimately accomplished on the stage was the product of a number of different participants, working at different temporal and spatial distances, from the city’s Department of Culture that provided the funding for the theater (and could threaten to take it away) to the carpenters and props artists.[ix] This configuration affects not only the way we might conceive of a production’s participant framework — moving us beyond the puppet-puppeteer dyad — but also creates a number of different contingencies and opportunities to consider different types of agency that might assert themselves at different moments.

This new type of puppetry thus promised to engage new spectators, which was a crucial

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goal of the puppet theater. By the time of my arrival for fieldwork, nearly 80 years after its founding, the state puppet theater had solidified into a remarkably stable institution for children's entertainment. Several artists had been with the theater for decades, and when I arrived for fieldwork in 2012, the theater had produced no new plays since before the collapse of the Soviet Union and Kazakhstan's independence. However, the renovation of the theater building in 2012-2013 created pressure for the troupe to undergo a renovation of its own. As one artist explained to me, "They [the Department of Culture] are saying we can't put old shows in a new building." New directors were hired or brought in temporarily, new puppets were made, and new shows premiered. *Kashtanka* was one product of these efforts. The theater hired Kuba as the first full-time stage director at the theater in many years. Though he had originally trained to be a puppeteer, and though the Russian story he chose was far from new (written in the late nineteenth century and a favorite during Soviet times (Kelly 2007)), artists described Kuba's way of working as "totally new," "European," and "modern." These latter two terms were used somewhat synonymously, often in contrast with the pejorative "Soviet" regarding theatrical styles that were outdated.[x]

The professionalization and institutionalization of the puppet theater meant that the performers were capable of working with a range of different types of puppets, and the size of the theater meant they could create and store the puppets and sets for shows of a different scale than small, private theaters. Italian puppeteers of the Pulcinella tradition (or adaptations of this, such as Punch in England or Petrushka in Russia), traveling alone or with a musician, had their booth configurations down to a science, so that they could fold everything into a single suitcase. The hand puppets they used allowed them to animate two characters at the same time, one on each hand, but it was difficult to go beyond this, unless one of the characters happened to be

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dead (which sometimes happened). At the Almaty theater, artists animated hand puppets, rod puppets controlled from below with complex triggers to make eyes or mouths move, marionettes controlled from above, “life-sized” (*rostovoi*) puppets similar to an American sports mascot, puppets controlled from behind (*Fig. 2*), and one super-sized puppet, approximately ten-feet tall. For *Kashtanka*, the director had chosen table-top puppets for the animal characters. These puppets approximately corresponded with the size of the animals they represented, and in some ways resembled simple stuffed animals — made of wood and metal bases that were then covered with foam rubber and then with cloth — but they had handles in the backs of their heads or the bases of their spines, enabling the artists to grab and manipulate them from behind. This style of puppet meant that the puppeteers were never hidden from the audience (*Fig. 3*).

These conditions – the theater’s bureaucratic structure, along with the perception that change was necessary – ensured that most changes would influence and be influenced by a number of parties. The theater’s establishment during Soviet times led workers to associate styles of acting and working to a broader set of aesthetics and attitudes that they labeled, disparagingly, as “Soviet.” And the theater’s status as a state theater for children infused their work with a sense of civic and moral duty.

Puppetry as an Intersubjective Trap

Puppetry offers insight surrounding semiotic ideologies of animated objects, along with local ideologies of those who will be involved in animating through spectating. In this case, the work of the puppet theater reflected upon and generated local ideologies of childhood and of children as participants in semiosis and as signs. Puppet artists in Kazakhstan often explained to me that puppetry was a genre ideally — though not exclusively — targeted at children because

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child audiences most readily perceived the puppets as "really" alive. Puppeteers do not only animate these objects for one another or for themselves (in contrast, for example, to the children's play with dolls I have studied in Kazakhstan, as well). Whether or not the audience is physically present during rehearsals for future performances, the audience plays a key role as the focal interpretant that should eventually watch and affirm the animacy of the puppet. Understanding which techniques would be most effective required an understanding of the audience. During rehearsals, the director acts as a key proxy for this audience.[xi] Both in discussions between directors and actors, and when I discussed the work of puppetry with puppet artists, questions of animation and audience often generated theorizations of audiences — and of child audiences, in particular. Hiding oneself was unnecessary, according to puppeteers, because spectators, especially children, easily forgot them in their fascination with the moving puppet.

The puppeteers at the Almaty State Puppet Theater described animation as magic to children, despite evidence that children are savvy at navigating between the realms of animate and inanimate in their own play. Children are clearly aware, moreover, that animation takes work. In my second main research site, a temporary, government-run group home for children under 7 years of age, children not only played with dolls and other objects on a regular basis but also put on puppet shows for the younger children and for visiting adults. They also regularly rehearsed and performed songs and dances for visiting adults (Barker 2019). And yet, according to these accounts of puppeteers, it was far easier for children to forget the presence of the puppeteers, to forget the work the puppeteers were doing, so that they could see the puppet's movements as emerging from the puppet itself. If the art of puppetry was magic, children were themselves quite skilled magicians. Adolescent and adult audiences, in contrast, carried an awareness of the work that the puppeteers were doing. Older children, in fact, were the hardest to

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impress, according to one puppeteer I interviewed from the private puppet theater in Almaty. She said that by the time children were about 10 years old, they exhibited hostility toward the puppeteers who were, these older children believed, trying to trick them. She complained, "We're not trying to trick them. We're standing right beside our puppets."

If not a trick, could puppetry nonetheless be a kind of trap? In arguing for considering traps as art, Gell (1996) notes that art is a kind of trap, as well. Both reveal themselves intersubjective endeavors of imagining of the entrapped viewer and inviting encounters. Puppet animation sets a trap targeted especially at children in the Almaty theater, though artists hoped to ensnare adults from time to time, as well. Soviet ideologies of puppetry stressed the possibility of performing objects to represent purer forms than live acting, enabling child audiences to comprehend essential truths. Keeler (1987) notes that even though adult viewers of Javanese shadow puppetry rarely sit through an entire show, the form and content of these shows — along with the ritual events in which they unfold — enact larger questions of selfhood and proper interaction with others. Ball (2014), moreover, draws from Gell's traps to argue that ritual is an act of dicentization, in creating presence through relationships of likeness.

Both ritual performance and traps presume and create intersubjective relationships between objects and viewers, so that spectatorship creates presence. Orifices, especially eyes, invite the viewer to attribute an interiority to the object; this other set of eyes allow for ocular exchange, and it is through this exchange between devotee and idol that intersubjectivity between human and object is achieved (Gell 1998, 120). Puppets not only invite audiences to attribute interiority to them; they model this through their interactions with one another. In puppetry, the puppet might sometimes look out into the audience or at the human holding it, but the majority of ocular exchange comes instead between the painted or sewn-on eyes of the puppets themselves. Live

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actors engage in eye contact onstage, as well, but it is largely puppets' recognizing one another as sentient subjects that establishes their subjectivity. Puppeteers tend to focus on the puppet, modeling the line of gaze desired of the audience (*Fig. 4*). Audience interactions frequently frame the narrated action onstage, but once the play is underway, the puppets, absorbed in their own story, remain oblivious both to viewers and manipulators as they let the drama of their puppet lives absorb them.

While Kuba had, in early rehearsals, projected that *Kashtanka* would be a show suited for children and adults of all ages, by the day of the premiere, the theater recommended the show for children aged 10 and up. To create a show that would impress older children, such as those the puppeteer described as the most skeptical, the puppet theater needed to set different kind of trap, one that respected their awareness of the very devices the artists used in order to engage the spectator. Vsevolod Meyerhold, an influential director in Russia in the early twentieth century (discussed below), wanted the audience never to forget that they were looking at a piece of art. Rather than a passive victim of the artists' trap, the spectator would become a "fourth creator": "The stylized theatre produces a play in such a way that the spectator is compelled to employ his imagination creatively in order to fill in those details suggested by the stage action" (Meierhold and Braun 1969, 63). The spectator is both active and creative in the process, yet is also being compelled by the spectacle to react in this way.[xii]

While Meyerhold writes simply of "the spectator," the puppet theater distinguishes among different types of spectators, according to age, and anticipates the various attitudes and dispositions they will bring into their participant role as spectators. Puppeteers imagine children's reactions while preparing for contingencies, so that spectators are part of the animating process, even before they have seen the spectacle.

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Shifting the Second I: From Transposing Souls to Dividing Subjectivities

In addition to the intersubjectivity between performing bodies and spectators, animation highlights alternative conceptions of subjectivity, in part by exploring issues of voice and voicing. Animation can highlight, as Nozawa argues, “relations of disembodiment, control, operation, and play distributed across different actors,” which includes voice actors and others involved in animation, along with users and fans (2016, 172). This differs from certain tropes of performance, especially when performance assumes an attempt to “get into” the role and to close an imagined gap between actor and role in the process. Despite the productivity of considering disembodiment instead of assuming embodiment as artists’ goal, we should not imagine that such processes are purely aural or that they rely exclusively on ears and mouths to be carried out. Disembodiment does not empty the process of physicality but displaces it into a different body. These processes have effects on the bodies of those doing the voicing. Walloon puppeteers mimic the facial features of the puppets they animate, creating an iconic relationship between the faces of puppet and puppeteer simply in order to aid the puppeteer in creating the voice that they found to be truest to the puppet (Gross 2001). Pulcinella puppeteers make use of prosthetic voicing materials — namely, the swazzle – a thin reed placed in the back of the throat. The swazzle exaggerates the contrast between the voices of Pulcinella and his puppeteer (Proschan 1981). It also acts as a piece of Pulcinella that enters the body of the puppeteer, even as the puppeteer’s hand occupies Pulcinella’s body. In such cases, the puppeteer quite literally gets into the character, just as the character gets into the puppeteer.

In *Kashtanka*, puppets interact with human actors — such as the human figure of the animals’ master working with the animals (*Fig. 5*). An interplay of performance and animation

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logics mapped onto puppet and human bodies alike. Particular traditions of theater – such as those following Brecht or Meyerhold – strive for effects of distance and alienation.[xiii] At the Almaty puppet theater, directors incorporated theorizations of puppetry and theater in their work with the artists, mentioning Konstantin Stanislavskii and other famous Soviet directors more often than they did Sergei Obraztsov (largely seen as the father of Soviet puppetry, who studied briefly with Stanislavskii before turning to puppetry (Obraztsov 1950)).

Puppeteers at the Almaty State Puppet Theater — and the art school professors who had trained most of them — described the process of animation as one of transposing the self into the puppet body. They referred to their own bodies as the “first I,” while the puppet became a “second I.”[xiv] Puppets provoke us to consider the agency of objects and the distribution of personhood (Gell 1998; Enfield and Kockelman 2017). The dominant ideology of puppetry at the theater maintains a dyadic model, involving a simple and incontestable transposition of subjectivity from the perspective of the puppeteer into the body of the puppet, not unlike the “passive agency” Gell describes when talking about dolls (129). This model echoes a beloved essay from 1810 by German writer Heinrich von Kleist describing the line of gravity between the artist and the marionette as “nothing less than *the path of the dancer's soul*,” achieved by the puppeteer’s transposition into the body of the marionette (1982:212, emphasis in original).

Kashtanka was the first play that Kuba, the new stage director at the Almaty State Puppet Theatre, had chosen to stage. The new techniques and theorizations of their work included significant shifts in divisions between *first I* and *second I* and in assumptions of the puppeteer’s absolute control over a passive object. In an early interview with Kuba, when he and the actors were only reading through the script, Kuba stated his main goal for the production as one of getting the puppeteers to “stop hiding behind their puppets.” This goal of un-hiding surprised me,

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in part, because the Almaty puppeteers hardly struck me as timid. Puppeteers in other contexts have characterized themselves as shy actors, hiding behind puppets or dummies in order to let these animated objects say and do things they wouldn't dare.[xv] The puppeteers I met in Kazakhstan, however, never described shyness as a reason for pursuing puppetry. Many admitted that they had wanted to be stage or screen actors, but opportunities for study or work had led them down the path to puppetry.

The Kazakhstani puppet artists described themselves, in fact, as the ultimate performing artists. Besides manipulating the puppets, they also sometimes danced, sang, and played human roles onstage. Different puppet shows required actors to show or hide themselves in various ways. When they worked with rod or hand puppets, a curtain indeed concealed the puppeteers, as they controlled their instruments from below. In the musical revue they performed most frequently at the theater, however, the puppeteers wore sparkly white suits, lots of makeup, and smiled at the audience as they adroitly twirled and spun marionettes (*Fig. 6*). As the artists had often explained to me, there was no reason to hide. If they successfully transposed themselves into the *second I* of the puppet, audiences would only regard the puppets and forget all about the humans animating them.

In observing the rehearsals leading up to the premiere of *Kashtanka,* nonetheless, there was something different about the ways the actors comported themselves onstage, whether animating puppets or not. One moment, Bolat voiced Kashtanka's bark as the puppeteer; the next, he regarded her with concern (*Fig. 7*). Another actor, Altay, shifted between acting as a kind of on-stage assistant — bringing food for the animals — and occasionally stepped in as the second puppeteer to the gander, controlling his wings, while Maral manipulated the head. This play between artist-as-character and artist-as-puppeteer was not in itself novel: Pulcinella puppeteers, ventriloquists, and Soviet master puppeteer Obraztsov all offer examples of puppeteer-puppet interactions, but each often involves a certain regularity in form of this interaction. Kuba's production of *Kashtanka* cast human roles that shifted from actor to puppeteer more frequently and suddenly, moving from narrated event into narrating one for a moment and then returning to the narrated. If before, the puppeteers' goal was to transpose themselves so completely into the puppets that audiences would forget about them, whether they hid or not, Kuba encouraged them to call attention to themselves.

Related to this work of unhiding was a shift in discussing the division between *first I* and *second I*. While the puppeteers had drawn this division between their own bodies and the bodies of the puppet — and this relationship resulted in a transposition of perspective and placement of "self" in the body of the puppet — Kuba instructed them to treat their own bodies onstage as the *second I*. At times, this unfolded in explicit ways, as actors approached or detached from the puppets they animated. When they did this, their human bodies became characters interacting with the puppets or with each other. Other times, the two *I*s were to be thinking about different things and to possess different understandings of the scenes unfolding. Kuba explained his theory of the two *I*s when discussing the relationship of time and contrast between scenes. The *first I* knows things the *second I* – the characterological figure onstage – does not. The *first I* could see ahead and could use this knowledge to shape the present scene in such a way to draw contrast with a scene that followed. Upon hearing Kuba direct this shift in the placement of the *second I*, I asked him if this meant the puppet was a *third I*, but he said no, the puppet was an extension of the *second I*. The body and the puppet, like a violin to a violinist, these were all instruments, he explained. In this way, his shift rendered the body a performing object, not unlike the puppet (Bell 2001), subject to the same precision of performance onstage

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as the animated object.

Rather than a movement of perspective, self, or what Kleist called "soul" from the body of puppeteer into the puppet, the *first I*/*second I* would require puppeteers to see themselves from the outside. Such a theorization of the actor's work echoes particular theories of acting, namely Diderot's paradox, that the actor's "talent depends not, as you think, upon feeling, but upon rendering so exactly the outward signs of feeling, that you fall into the trap" (Diderot 1883, 16). To move an audience, actors must work in the most calculated manner. This paradox influenced Meyerhold's biomechanics.[xvi] Though Kuba originally studied puppetry, he likely picked up a variation of these theories and others in his graduate studies of directing in Russia, which he then applied to his work in the puppet theater. [xvii] Nonetheless, we should note that Meyerhold was inspired by the ideal of the puppet as a model for the human actor to follow (Meierhold and Braun 1969, 128). The interplay between puppet and human bodies as performing instruments that Kuba develops are part of a longer exploration of possibilities of the two forms borrowing techniques from one another for specific effects. Following Kuba's redrawing the boundary between *first I* and *second I*, the human bodies onstage become equivalent to the puppet bodies, not only for the actors animating characters specified in the original Chekhov text, such as the animals' master, played by Baqyt, but also for the puppeteers. Kuba, along with his friend and colleague Natasha who visited rehearsals, encouraged the puppeteers to enter and exit the stage with more dramatic flourish, and to interact with their puppets at moments when they were waking them up.

By treating the human body onstage as an instrument, as a *second I* also directed, in some sense, by the *first I*, the puppeteer became a characterological figure and thus a dicent sign, as well. That is, it takes work from the spectator to see the puppeteers onstage – who have no

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named role and who are apparently there in order to manipulate the puppets they hold in their hands – as characterological figures. They should not blend into the background as they were accustomed to doing previously. While human and nonhuman bodies alike get treated as instruments, not all instruments are equal. If the show was to impress new audiences, Kuba and the artists would need to transform the work not only of the human bodies but also of the puppets.

Exposing the Fragility of Animation

Puppeteers sometimes referred to the puppet as an extension (*prodolzhenie*) of their bodies. This need not carry the same spiritual connotation suggested by the *second I* or Kleist's "path of the dancer's soul," but could emphasize, instead, the ways objects become bodily extensions, subject to the same proprioception as their own limbs. Like a woman who feels where the feather in her hat is, "just as we feel where our hand is" (Merleau-Ponty 2002 [1968], 165), habit is "knowledge in the hands" (166). The body is "our general medium for having a world," but when our body cannot achieve particular means, "it must then build itself an instrument" (168). Kuba described the puppet as an "instrument" of the puppet actor, but he also allowed for the possibility of breaking that path between the puppeteer and puppet, for particular effects, reminding the audience of the fragility of animation as dicentization.

In his staging of *Kashtanka*, Kuba created distance between puppeteer and puppet by disallowing identification with the puppet as a second self or a kind of avatar. With the exception of the pig (a minor role), he mismatched genders of puppets and puppeteers: a male puppeteer (Bolat) animated the female dog, Kashtanka, and two female puppeteers animated the gander and male cat, Ivan Ivanitch and Fyodr Timoveyitch. This contrasted from common casting choices

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made by directors. Puppets and puppeteers usually matched, according to gender and age. This kind of pairing enabled a single puppeteer to manage the manipulation and the voicing of the puppet.[xviii] This was unnecessary in *Kashtanka*, for the only time an animal speaks a human language is in a dream sequence, in which Maral (a female artist) voiced Kashtanka.

In addition to basic relationships of resemblance between artists and objects, typically found at the Almaty theater, audiences expect contiguity that is almost effortless. While people invoke puppets as metaphors of pure passivity, we might take cues from Nakassis' praise of indexicality's ambivalent ground (2018) by noting the unstable dynamics in puppetry of animate and inanimate. *Kashtanka* played with expectations of contiguity by introducing an unexpected rupture between puppeteer and puppet. The move granted the puppet greater autonomy than anywhere else in the play. In most nighttime scenes, the puppeteers would carefully place the puppet animals of *Kashtanka* into sleeping positions and then move offstage or crouch behind their puppets and hunch over, as if sleeping themselves. In one scene, however, close to the climax of the play, Maral the puppeteer is settling the gander, Ivan Ivanich, into his sleeping position. Instead of folding easily into repose, the goose suddenly falls out of Maral's hands, as if by accident (*Fig. 8*). His beak bangs against the front of the wooden box. Maral regards the puppet with surprise, as do the dog and cat.

Maral, who has been animating Ivan Ivanich throughout the play, now studies him closely. She touches his head — and, in the process, helps him slowly raise it to let out a moan. The head slips out of her hand and knocks again against the box. In this way, Maral shifts from animating the gander to caring for him, regarding him as if she is unsure what will happen next. Maral strokes the goose's wing, and helps him raise his other wing to emit another cry. Looking shocked, she rushes offstage. The human master, played by Baqyt, comes out in his robe. He acts

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annoyed at the gander for waking him up. He asks, sarcastically, “What, are you dying?” He touches the goose’s wing and sees that it is bleeding. Recalling an accident earlier that day, the master realizes the goose really is dying. Maral returns with a small metal bowl and puts it up to the goose’s beak. The master commands the goose to drink, but it is no use (*Fig. 9*).

Baqyt – the animals’ master and trainer – and Maral – the puppeteer whom we assumed was in control of this object all along – are both powerless to stop the puppet’s death. Baqyt blows out his candle and returns to bed. Maral picks up the goose — once her puppet to animate, now a corpse — by its wing. She flings him into his box, closes the lid with a thud, and wheels the black box offstage. On the one hand, such a scene brings into question assumptions about the puppeteer having total control over the puppet. The scene is planned, of course, but the way Maral regards the gander as autonomous differs from other acts in which the puppet appears independent of the puppeteer, such as in a ventriloquist-dummy routine. Here, the gander’s autonomy is experienced as a loss, rather than a joke. The gander’s temporary freedom from Maral is followed by its death. In this scene, two masters dispose of the de-animated instrument, as the master takes leave of the useless corpse of the gander that had played a key role in his circus act, and as the puppeteer puts away the object that will no longer perform.

Conclusion: Redefining Relationships of Belonging, On and Offstage

In the rehearsals leading up to the play, Kuba was working to establish new relationships, not only between the puppeteers and the instruments of performance, but also between himself and the troupe. This play — about a dog who gets taken in by an animal trainer and circus clown — included scenes of performance and rehearsal, providing particular opportunities for meta-analysis of director-performer relationships (*Fig. 10*). In one scene early in the play that they

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rehearsed at length, the animal trainer/new master works to quiet the animals, who were all barking, rawrrring and squawking at one another. The first several times they rehearsed this, it was staged so that the master worked to quiet all of the animals, with Kashtanka – the newest addition to the household – failing to understand his commands and continuing to bark after the others have quieted.

However, one day, Kuba cut in on their rehearsal of the scene, as if just realizing something: "In fact, with Kashtanka you need to scold her *less*." He explained, "Usually you scold your *own* more" (*obychno bol'she rugayesh'sya na svoikh*). "If some new actors come in," he elaborated, "I'm going to scold them less than you. You I know better. You're mine" (*svoi*). *Svoi* is a reflexive, possessive pronoun that indexes a relationship of belonging between the grammatical subject and object of a sentence. It is also used without an object that is possessed to refer broadly to people one thinks of as one's own — or as "our own."[xix] It signals a relationship of closeness. For the scene at hand, it meant that Baqyt would first yell sternly at the cat and gander, who were already familiar to him, and then he would turn gently to Kashtanka, reassuring her. In working out this moment, Kuba describes his relationship to the cast as analogous to the relationship in the narrated event in a way that presupposes a relationship of *svoi* — of belonging — between himself and the actors.

In addition to imagining spectators, artists also learn to anticipate and interpret one another. Lemon (2017) describes an exercise among Russian acting students in which they must maintain a taut thread between one another, as a way of learning to feel one another, intuitively. For the puppeteers, this need to feel one another becomes especially important when they animate a single puppet together, in which case they say they form a unified *I*. Yet they must constantly feel one another onstage, whether they are acting as human characters, animating

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puppets, or both at the same time. In his discussion of *svoi*, Kuba draws a direct parallel between himself and the master-clown, and between the trained animals and the artists; in so doing, he also defines his relationship with the actors as one of already *svoi*. Kuba offers an example of himself and the actors as *svoi*, ostensibly using the narrating event to make sense of the narrated one. This indexical move also has entailing effects of defining their relationship to one another as both hierarchical and intimate (Silverstein 2003). The production not only creates new divisions of *first I/second I* within artists' bodies, but also brings artists and the director into (power-laden) relations of belonging. One goal of this closeness, I believe, was to achieve new possibilities for motivating – and thus animating – artists to go beyond doing what they were explicitly told. On the day before the premiere, the eruption that culminated with the artistic director quitting was resolved by Kuba and the artists that afternoon. The artistic director returned to his post in time for the premiere the following day. Kuba, afterwards, said that he was glad the whole thing had happened. Like the de-animation of the gander, the rupture perhaps made explicit roles and relations otherwise taken for granted. While the gander's death was final, the arguments created opportunities for repair.

On opening day, the theater was filled with a group of children around 10 to 12 years old. The play was making use of a new, smaller hall in the theater, one designed to offer a more intimate experience for the audience. The floor of this hall was flat and empty, with chairs brought in and arranged for the performance. The children filled the seats. I wanted to film and to stay out of everyone's way, so I went to the back of the theater. I stood, lifting my camera higher up on its tripod, and pointing it down at an angle. It was hard, from the back, to see the action of the puppets when they were on the floor, rather than on their boxes. The children, too, were keen to watch the puppets. I always found it difficult to track the gaze of the spectators that the

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puppeteers so keenly insisted were always on the puppets, rather than on them. On this day, it was easy. Whenever the puppet action moved to the floor, children stood up to follow the puppet (*Fig. 11*).

This opening day marked a presentation of human and nonhuman bodies onstage, inviting these notoriously skeptical spectators to be compelled by what they saw, to treat these objects and persons as living signs. The drama onstage involved a crystallization of efforts from diffuse parties who could nonetheless claim a certain amount of responsibility for the actions playing out. Amidst these layers of planning and control, the show nonetheless reminded the audience that all could come undone, quite easily, with the simple drop of a puppet.

This article illuminates the work of both understanding and forgetting required for animation. It illustrates the work of animating a puppet as one of dicentization, with puppets and other performing bodies onstage perceived as living signs of a particular sort. Participants at various distances from the animated figure work together to construe this figure as having a life – a life made possible through the joint efforts of multiple participants. This animation, as an act of dicentization, has the potential to transform the signs that these participants are to one another, thus reshaping social relations among them.

This process has implications for understanding the usefulness of animation as a trope for social and labor relations beyond explicitly-framed institutions of animation. Many parties are part of the animation process at the Almaty State Puppet Theater. Because of this, shifts and debates regarding how to animate are intertwined with negotiations surrounding how to perceive one's own role and the roles of others. Reimagining the puppet theaters entails re-envisioning the spectator, reshaping relations between workers, and reconfiguring one's own role as an artist participating in this process. Changes in this work scale up to take on certain geopolitical-

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aesthetic significance, as a state puppet theater works to make itself less “Soviet” and more “European.” In order to draw new audiences, Kuba nonetheless relied on pre- and early Soviet techniques of creating an internal split, so that actors treated their own bodies as performing objects of a certain sort. While making the human body more puppet-like, the director also reminded the audience that the puppet’s animation took work to achieve by having the puppeteer de-animating the gander at a key moment in the play. By drawing attention to the artfulness of the human bodies onstage and to the status of the puppet as an object, he made the audience work a bit harder to realize their animation, thus construing this audience of older children as a sophisticated group of spectators who are up to the challenge of co-creating. Theorizing animation as a process of dicentization in this way offers insight regarding the ways various participant roles share one task – of co-creating signs as figures that come alive onstage. In the process, relationships and roles get renovated, and boundaries between self and other get redrawn.

The theater had, perhaps, laid a different kind of trap, one that was more effective in ensnaring a skeptical audience because it made no secret of its intentions to do so. *Kashtanka* thus invited viewers to step into this trap willingly. It provoked the children to rise up from their seats and to remain entangled in this net of projection and transposition. Just as the relationship between the gander, the puppeteer, and the training master proved tenuous, puppet animation cannot be taken for granted. The fragility of animation can be deployed strategically, with a planned moment of rupture. Or it can be undone quite by accident – by a faulty leg, for example, which threatens to remind the audience that the barking object onstage only pretends to be a dog.

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i. In the 2016 American Presidential election, multiple sources accused then-candidate Donald Trump of being a puppet – of Russian President Vladimir Putin, of media and political figure Stephen Bannon, and of others, the most cited example occurring at an October 2016 presidential debate in which Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton called Trump a puppet, who then retorted, "No, you're the puppet." The entire transcript of the October 19, 2016 debate can be found at https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/10/19/the-final-trump-clinton-debate-transcript-annotated/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.bdc946c80ca7

ii. Pliaskina, Nadezhda. December 25, 2012. *"Po-kukol'nom schetu." Vremia: Obshchestvenno-politicheskaia gazeta Kazakhstana. http://www.time.kz/news/archive/2012/12/25/po- kukolnomu-schyotu Last accessed March 20, 2017.*

iii. The process of animation moves the puppet beyond mere iconicity – though iconicity is indispensable. Peirce's third trichotomy of signs, a Rheme is a sign of "qualitative Possibility…understood as representing such and such a kind of possible object," whereas a Dicent Sign is a "sign of actual existence…A Dicisign necessarily involves, as part of it, a Rheme, to describe the fact which it is interpreted as indicating" (1955, 103). The work of making an object that stands in a relationship of resemblance — of making a collection of wood, metal, foam rubber and fabric into something that looks like a dog — gets accomplished, to some extent, backstage. However, these objects must also move in ways that resemble their living counterparts; moreover, the sounds emitted from puppeteers' mouths must bear likeness to the sounds attributed to such animals. Rhemes — signs that are taken as icons by an interpretant — play a crucial role, as does the process of recognizing similarities and defining objects according to a relationship of resemblance, through the process of rhematization (Irvine and Gal 2000; Gal 2013). In addition to creating an object that looks and moves like a dog, theaters moreover prime audiences to recognize moving objects onstage as standing in relationships of resemblance to human or animal characters. The theater – with its stage and proscenium – physically frames the action onstage as distinct from everyday life (Bauman and Briggs 1990, Lemon 2000). Characterological figures and sequences of action in puppet plays at the theater often resemble or are direct adaptations of stories with which children are already familiar from books, animated films, or from other children's theaters around town. As Nozawa (2013) highlights, characterization is a process in which a figure becomes and remains legible across contexts, through multiple acts of decontextualization and recontextualization (Bauman and Briggs 1990). Thus, relationships of resemblance – of Firstness – are necessary to dicentization within the puppet theater. So too are Thirds, as conventions within the puppet theater help ensure that spectators will accept certain inconsistencies in resemblance between the puppet dog and a real dog, for example. Dicentization and rhematization often work in a dialectical relationship with one another, as Ingebretson (2017) has shown.

[iv] Barker 2017; 2019. See also Silvio 2006 on COSplay and Nozawa 2013; 2016 on characterological figures and voice acting.

[v] Bakhtin's (1981) work on heteroglossia in the novel and Voloshinov's work on reported speech (1989) have been productive for linguistic anthropologists interested in the multivocality of everyday utterances (Hill 1995) and in the use of ventriloquism in producing subjectivities (Inoue 2011). A Russian/Soviet contemporary of Bakhtin and Voloshinov (and collaborator with Roman Jakobson), Petr Bogatyrev, wrote specifically about the semiotics of (Czech) puppetry as a system of signs, while noting the ways puppetry compels us to think more about audience, precisely because of increased interaction with child audiences at Czech puppet shows (1983, 2003). Cooren and Latour (2010) theorize ventriloquism for media studies concerns surrounding

agency and action, drawing from Goffman (though without acknowledging linguistic anthropologists' contributions to questions of voicing and ventriloquism).

vi. Gerson 2012 and Manning 2018 expand the ethnographic examples cited in the article.

[vii] This is curious timing for such widespread support of state puppet theaters, not only because it occurs under Stalin but also because Kazakhstan had just experienced a devastating famine, between 1931 and 1934, during which time 1.5 million people died, more than a third of all Kazakhs and a fourth of the entire population (Kindler 2018).

[viii] State Central Archives of Kazakhstan (*Kraevoi kukol'nyi tear Kaz. ASSR*), Fond 1241.

[ix] Even in the smallest private puppet theaters, the participant framework extends beyond the one or two puppeteers to include writers, puppet makers, and other roles. However, while a French puppeteer friend commissions his puppets from a Czech puppet maker whom he met on Facebook, the Almaty State Puppet Theater allowed me to observe various aspects of the production process under one roof.

[x] Zhanara Nauruzbayeva's (2011) reveals a similar delineation of artistic styles as either Soviet or European in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, though many artists choose to adhere not only to Soviet styles of painting but also to Soviet-era customs of painting portraits of political elites in order to gain patronage and secure clients.

[xi] While I was also watching these rehearsals and recording them for later analysis, puppeteers rarely solicited my advice, and I rarely gave it.

[xii] Meyerhold uses the word "compelled" to describe the spectator's reaction (*prihoditsia*, in the original Russian, Meierhold 1968: 164).

[xiii] Nozawa notes this, even as he strategically emphasizes animation and performance to explore

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questions of disembodiment that animation thus provokes (2016, 183). We should be careful not to conflate stereotypes of performance (e.g. as "getting into a role") with methods of artists as complex as Stanislavskii, whose method is generally misunderstood in the West and in Russia alike, as Carnicke has noted (1989; see also Lemon 2008).

xiv. . In Russian, *pervyi ia, vtoroi ia*. While the theater was bilingual and artists often spoke Kazakh amongst themselves between rehearsals, most meta-discussions with directors and with me took place in Russian. Several of them had gone to Russia for advanced degrees in theater.

xv. Silvio (2010) mentions this, and I've come across it various times in interviews with puppeteers, as cited in (Barker 2017). Jones (2011) describes a similar narrative of shy-youth-turned-performer amongst French magicians.

xvi. Contrary to common characterizations of his own interest in puppets as a metaphor for the actor, Meyerhold didn't seek to empty out the actor's interior. Rather, he worked to enable actors to see themselves from the audience's point of view (Meyerhold and Braun 1969 [1921- 1925]). Lemon explains: "The actor was always to remain aware of her duality as both artist and object of art, and to do this must develop the ability to 'mirror' the self and others" (2014, 16). This kind of double consciousness, as theorized by DuBois (1994[1903]) plays a key role in the establishment and maintenance of social (and linguistic) difference, as Irvine (2018) points out.

xvii. Urban's *I* as metaphor, rather than deictic (1989), enables the transmission of messages and, significantly for Urban's larger point, it enables the transmission of culture. The two *Is* created by Kuba enables distance, treating of the body as a thinking and planning artist and as an instrument that incorporates other instruments. It is not that the interior *I* is a self and the rest is mere matter, but that the two *I*s are key to one another's existence. Just as the anaphoric — and, in elaborations of possible framings, the theatrical — *I* in Urban's essay allows the *I* to become a

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metaphor for someone else, splitting the *first I* and *second I* enables the puppeteer’s body to become a characterological figure onstage alongside the animated puppet, while the puppeteer maintains an awareness of a larger plan of action. Crapanzano (1996) notes that in Western autobiographical traditions, there is an inevitable split between narrated and narrating *I* that generally gets ignored, but this split nonetheless creates the possibility for dialogical engagement.

[xviii] This differs from traditions such as Pili in Taiwan (Silvio 2006) or *wayang* in Indonesia (Keeler 1987), in which a single person does the voices of all the characters.

xix. Yurchak (2005) points out the importance of *svoi* in creating us/them distinctions in late Soviet rhetoric. There may be, as Yurchak states, no equivalent to *svoi* in English, but Urban (1989) points out the ways even a pronoun like *I* is not always simply a deictic (as discussed above).