

## ANTHROPOLOGY AND INTERCULTURALISM

Kirsten Hastrup, *The motivated body. Locus and agency in culture and theatre*

The author usefully draws upon the most recent findings in theatre anthropology, employing the term according to the definition given by Eugenio Barba, the founder of ISTA, in order to tackle the interweaving of general anthropology and theatre anthropology in an original way. The author argues that certain manifestations of embodied energy point to a field of social action which still has to be explored by anthropologists: a field of embodied motivation which has its highest vitality in theatre.

The idea that agency is not merely located in the mind connects the author's propositions with certain parts of performative anthropology. Recentering the locus of agency in the motivated body, she identifies the mindful body potentially as a vehicle for creative action and cultural transformation.

The essay begins with a discussion of the «lived experience». It then deals with the tenacity of the Cartesian dualism of body and mind in terms of the absent body, and goes on to inspect those theatres of self where the art of performing is put into play, thus allowing the author to propose a theory of culture as both incarnated and improvised in the corporeal field of the people.

Piergiorgio Giacché, *An equation between Anthropology and Theatre*

«Anthropology and theatre are the same thing, but they must not be confused». This statement marks the beginning of the essay where the similarities between the two fields are analysed. A «strange» science and a «strange» art, which have always appeared as necessary hybrids and presumptuous epitomes of the other human sciences or arts. The two have at least two things in common: a peculiar method (they are based on the relationship between observer and observed, both being subjects, the only object being the result of their encounter, i.e. the research itself or the performance); and the fact that both anthropological research and theatre performance provide different possibilities and methods for a «journey to and within the alterity». Their similarity might provide the context and object of an anthropological research in theatre, if Theatre could be considered a territory which can be walked across or observed as an autonomous culture. It was Theatre Anthropology which provided the theatre with these definitions; and the studies on the art of the performer – cf. Grotowski's – have been the basis for identifying the visible «ends» of the Theatre into which the «journey» of cultural anthropology becomes possible and profitable.

Ferdinando Taviani, «*My step, my clearness of mind*»

The author defines what theatre anthropology and cultural anthropology have in common, and in what they differ while warning against the constant danger of creating abstract distinctions between the two fields. These distinctions demarginate the experience of researchers and theatre practitioners. The author also suggests that during the process of research it is important not to create false barriers between researchers and theatre practitioners but to identify concrete examples which illuminate «the paths that change into methods» that is «routes leading further on».

Jean-Marie Pradier, *From the arts of life to life as art*

The observations, the experimentations, the visions – in a word: the knowledge – acquired by theatre practitioners is different from and complementary to that of critics, historians, and theatre scholars: it is the tradition of the living theatre, a notion prevalent in Asiatic cultures. Pursuing this knowledge of the arts of life, the author explores modern scientific knowledge, which has stimulated the imagination and practice of modern theatre makers. The author goes from psychology to physiology, from biology to physics, and arrives through sociology and anthropology to the present theatre theories. He clarifies some difficulties regarding a biocultural vision of the theatre, promoting a new scientific perspective of the subject of theatre.

Peter Chelkowski-Anna Vanzan, *The rite of passage, the passage of rite. On an Islamic ritual theatre*

The Persian «Tazie» – an ancient sacred play and the only kind of performance permitted by Islam – is here reconstructed in the light also of its journey from Iran to Northern India, and from India to the Caribbean Islands, particularly Trinidad. In 1834, when the English freed the African slaves who worked in the sugar cane plantations, they had to resort to the importation of Indian seasonal workers: the Indians imported and preserved their religious rituals. The creolization of ritual, its inevitable deep alteration, indicates a desacralization which represents a significant shift in many Eastern and Western theatre forms. The present analysis has been carried out by the most eminent Western authority on Tazie, and highlights its various aspects.

Mirella Schino, *Counter-actors and stock-actors. A hypothesis of continuity*

Analysing the role of the great actor, the *mattatore* in 19th century theatre, played by the men and women in the leading roles, a second function appears beside the figure of the stock-actors – that of counter-actors, i.e. actors who rely upon their personal techniques. If we accept this bipolarism of the great actor, significant elements emerge marking a continuity from 19th century theatre of the actors to the theatre of the directors. This perspective contradicts the idea of a discontinuity traditionally accepted as reliable by theatre historiographers.

Janne Risum, *Irving's poetic dance (with a note by Stefano Geraci)*

The book which Gordon Craig dedicated to Henry Irving, the great actor (the man who together with Craig's mother, Hellen Terry, had initiated him to

the life of the theatre) is perhaps one of the best books ever dedicated to the art of the actor. It is therefore natural that, in the first place, the book constitutes a primary source in helping to understand Irving's art; secondly, it is an important mark of the attention Craig gave to the actor; thirdly it indicates in what terms the art of the actor can be defined. In examining these three aspects Janne Risum refers to theatre anthropology in order to show how Irving's art, as described by Craig, is based on dance, that is on the continual change in equilibrium and the creation of opposing physical tendencies.

Laura Mariani, *Chimène and Le Cid in one body. The theatre of Colette*

The author provides a detailed description of the different theatrical activities of the writer (actress, mime, theatre critic). In doing so, she goes over a wealth of biographical details and artistic encounters and analyses one of the performer's focal points: the performer's sexual identity in contrast a) with the interpretation of characters of the opposite sex, and b) with travesty.

Ian Watson, *A brief history and survey of actor training in the United States*

Actor training in the theatre of the United States depends on the school system (Universities, Conservatories), which in turn is based on the great traditions such as that of the Actors' Studio. In his brief and dense survey, the author indicates the names and places to be considered as points of reference for the apprenticeship of actors in USA. His study spans the period from the first professional companies (at the end of the 18th century) to the Conservatories at the end of the 19th century and to the introduction of Stanislavski system during the latter's tournée in 1923. The whole system of apprenticeship in so huge a country that demands long tours, is also deeply bound to the economic system and to the necessarily polyform actor (theatre, cinema, television).

Zbigniew Osinski, *A box office report of the Theatre of the «Thirteen Rows». Opole 1964*

The researcher who is most familiar with the Polish period of Grotowski's work here proposes the reading of a single text – the box office report of the Teatr Laboratorium for the Theatre of the «Thirteen Rows» in 1964. A strange paradox emerges: the group's difficulty in establishing itself with performances which were later to be considered as *historical*. Osinski describes the strategy it used to survive (not only in the economic sense): poetry recitals of the Cantos – which at the time were certainly very effective, but which today have been completely forgotten.

Claudio Meldolesi, *The marriage of theatre-in-life with Kafka's hidden dramaturgy. Two Italian examples, a Congress in France, and a wish*

«Kafka Dramaturg without knowing» could be the title of this text which deals with one of the most interesting themes in modern dramaturgy – the use of literary works not explicitly or formally written for the stage, either as sources of inspiration or as models for adaptations. Through the different ways used in Italy to stage Kafka, and the use made of the author by two different directors: Eugen-

io Barba in *Kaosmos* and Giorgio Barberio Corsetti in four different productions, Meldolesi compiles a «history of genre».

Vanda Monaco, *On Leif Zern, the actor, the text, the metamorphosis*

When examining the great tradition of the French actors, from Sarah Bernhardt to Louis Jouvet, Leif Zern, a major theatre critic and essayist in Sweden, questions the way Swedish theatre has developed over the last 30 years: the theatre of the educational and transparent society described by Foucault particularly in his work about «surveillance and punishment». A highly schooled theatre where knowledge does not develop rooted in the historical and magmatic memory, but in the frigid and unmindful domain of *method*. Zern does not go into the more political and sociological aspects of the problem, but takes into consideration the current urge to return to the text. He deals with the fundamental relationship between the actor and the *word* in the elaboration of the theatrical event: he shows the body and voice of the actor as the place of metamorphosis, of the miracle that is born from the encounter with the text.

Claudia Melli, *Augusto Boal or the rainbow of desire*

In his latest book – *The rainbow of desire* – Augusto Boal narrates the events which marked the shift of political theatre to *simultaneous dramaturgy* right up to the *theatre forum*, the best known form of his Theatre of the Oppressed. In the present essay the author, a psychologist and the editor of the Italian edition of Boal's book, examines this way of doing theatre with spectators and thinks back to the latest experiences of the Brazilian director in order to underline not only the social but also the therapeutic value of this technique, as can be seen by the use of the *theatre forum* in centres for the rehabilitation of psychotic patients.

Victor Weijie Yu, *How to identify Shakespeare with the tradition of Chinese Operatic Theatre: Beijing Opera Othello*

For some years Victor Weijie Yu has been the secretary of the Shanghai William Shakespeare Theatre Society, a sort of Institute for the diffusion of Shakespeare and other foreign classic authors in China. In this essay Weijie Yu examines how the Peking Opera has turned Shakespeare's *Othello* into a traditional performance. The author indicates the problems which emerge from such a cultural translation: besides the literary adaptation (from 5 acts to 7 scenes lasting about one hundred minutes in all), the article deals with the translation of the dramatic characters and situations into the conventions typical of the Peking Opera (stock characters, costumes, singing-recitative, codified movements). It is an interesting analysis of the Shakespearean text which should attract not only the followers of theatre transculturalism but also those who deal with Shakespearean adaptations and stagings in the West today: is the distance separating us from Shakespeare today shorter than the distance separating us from China?

Michiko Tanaka, *Seki Sano and popular, political and social theatre in Latin America*

Seki Sano is a singular figure devoted to political theatre, whose role as promoter and inspirer is today acknowledged in all Latin America. Japanese by

birth, Seki Sano grew up in the Japanese University theatre, which was deeply committed to the communist and proletarian fronts. From 1931 he continued his experience outside Japan first in the USA, afterwards in USSR, then in the USA again, and lastly in Mexico from 1939. His activity as a militant theatre director gave a stimulus to the development of a popular and political theatre of brechtian inspiration. The article deals with Seki Sano's formation in Japan and the years of his forced exile in Mexico until 1945.

«Años sin cuenta». Santiago Garcia answers Eugenio Barba's questions (with a note by Nicola Savarese)

Santiago Garcia, a Colombian director of the «Candelaria Theatre», recounts to Eugenio Barba his apprenticeship in the theatre, which started off by following the Japanese master Seki Sano, and continued during his wanderings in Europe and USA. Garcia can be considered today as one of the patriarchs of the theatre in Latin America. The story of his vast experience reveals the roots of modern Latin American culture.

*A performer must thirst for knowledge. A conversation between Robert Lepage and Josette Féral (with a note by Hélène Beauchamp)*

In a rare interview, Robert Lepage, one of the most brilliant and interesting Canadian directors, partly known also in Europe, discusses his work and creativity both as director and actor. What emerges is a portrait which arouses the reader's curiosity presenting a dramaturgy and a theatre culture linked to an American mentality and organization yet willing to confront the problem of its own deeper identity which appears inclined towards Europe: the theatre of Quebec.

Thomas Leabhart, «Words» on Decroux

Étienne Decroux, the French founder of modern mime who died in 1991, is re-evoked by one of his pupils. He is portrayed as a great master of actors, perhaps the only European master to have elaborated a system of rules comparable to that of an Oriental tradition.

Gerardo Guccini, *The lesson of Fabrizio Cruciani*

Theatre historiography, as a subject, owes much to the work, method and efforts of Fabrizio Cruciani, professor at the Department of Art, Music and Performance (DAMS) at the University of Bologna, who died an untimely death in 1992. One of his pupils traces Cruciani's limpid style of teaching both inside and outside the academic world.

Nicola Savarese, *Thirty years of Kaosmos: seven topics on the Odin Teatret*

Through a personal reading of the Odin Teatret's *Kaosmos*, the author pursues the rules of game created by the director and the actors and permeating the staging of the performance. Can the spectator's sense of giddiness be traced back to the rules of the game? If the game is the art of the performer, the fertile inven-

tiveness and the staging of ideas through ingenious and simple solutions, an unceasing, thirty year long activity, characterized by intensity and rigour in an ever renewed creative process, then the stakes are high.

#### RENAISSANCE REPERTORY

Raimondo Guarino, *Performance environments and urban environment. Studies and researches on Renaissance in Rome*

The essay examines the latest publications on the space of performance in Rome from Sisto IV's papacy to the Capitol Theatre in 1513. It analyses the plural models of ancient times, from Vitruvio's treatise to other sources concerning private residences. The relations between pictorial and architectural spaces and the theatre are here connected both to the participation of the humanists in the celebrations of the time and to the development of the typology of the Cardinals' mansions. References to classic performances imply a large range of situations: an intentional echoing of the Roman *ludi*, the delivery of latin texts, a mythographical idealization of the papal court, a staging of the archaeological private collections, the presence of the humanists' association.

Giangiaco Scocchera, *A plan and the final staging. Contributions to the study of the production of Aretino's «Talanta»*

A reconstruction of Giorgio Vasari's staging of Aretino's Talanta produced for the 1542 Venice Carnival. Since the only evidence of the event is by Vasari himself, and consists of technical descriptions of the apparatus and the initial plans, it is necessary to re-evoke the socio-cultural context in order to obtain a correct reading of the production.

#### PARERGA