



Across the stage: When Theatre Studies confronts literary and cultural matters

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1.

«I can't be sure that I'm not wasting my time standing here,
and I'm not entirely confident that I might not be wasting yours.
Is there any point talking about theatre at all?» [\[1\]](#)

Sir Richard Eyre, one of the major British theatre directors of today, who between 1988 and 1997 was the Artistic Director of the National Theatre, addressed thus his audience at a lecture in London University some 4 years ago.

If I do begin my paper by quoting him it is because I wonder why in the first place would it be considered idle to talk about theatre? I agree that we are now very far away from those passionate outbursts of a romantic critic like William Hazlitt who honestly thought that theatre was the most interesting subject to talk about:

«The merits of a new play, or of a new actor, are always among the first topics of polite conversation (...) If we meet with a stranger at an inn or in a stage-coach, who knows nothing but his own affairs – his shop, his customers, his farm, his pig, his poultry – we can carry on no conversation with him on these local and personal matters (...) But if he has fortunately ever seen Mr. Liston act, this is an immediate topic of mutual conversation, and we agree together the rest of the evening in discussing the merits of that inimitable actor, with the same satisfaction as in talking over the affairs of the most intimate friend» [\[2\]](#) .

I suppose that it would be difficult today to reach a wide agreement on this. However, theatre has been, for the past three decades, at the heart of a heated debate on culture, art and society, balancing between two major roles: being either a prime reference or a worn-out art form, a kind of a relic of times gone by. So we may ask: How is it possible? What is at stake? Which are the theoretical perspectives that allow this wide gap between the two poles? How are theatre practitioners, theorists and critics responding to this? And do they all mean the same when using the concept «theatre»?

I intend furthermore to argue that Theatre and Theatre Studies should be considered as intersecting both Cultural Studies and Comparative (or Interdisciplinary) Studies. It is also true that the concepts of «performance» and performativity, traditionally belonging to Theatre and Theatre studies have been widely acclaimed in all of them both as a metaphor and analytical tool (or interpretive grid), since so much more attention is now allotted to the idea of constructedness of human experience, as Marvin Carlson detects:

«A major shift in many cultural fields from the “what” of culture to the “how”, from the accumulation of social, cultural, psychological, political, or linguistic data to a consideration of how this material is created, valorised, and changed, or how it operates within the culture, by its actions. Its real meaning is now sought in its praxis, its performance» [\[3\]](#) .

Therefore, on trying to highlight a possible specificity for Theatre Studies I have to enquire whether that specificity should aim at claiming real autonomy and a leading role or at establishing links with those other disciplines.

2.

Following Guy Debord's argument of the late sixties, we are now living in a «société du spectacle» [4], implying that society has turned into a kind of a permanent show, carefully designed to reach spectacularity. Elaborating on this argument, Erika Fischer-Lichte considers that reality is increasingly experienced as a performance, as a kind of theatre production:

«Contemporary Western society may be described as a culture which puts itself onstage, as a culture of theatricalizations. Individual and social groups from all social domains compete in the art of putting themselves and their everyday lives most effectively "onstage". Town planning, architecture, and design shape our environment as a kind of theatrical backdrop, against which individuals and groups display themselves and their lifestyles, in ever changing costume, before an audience.» [5].

Apparently this is a widely accepted idea, if we recall all the arguments used to describe our so-called post-modern condition, but I suppose we could question this presumption in two different ways, according to a minimal and a maximal perspective:

Can we consider this pattern of theatricalization of contemporary everyday life as a unique situation and a unique discourse in history? Or should we rather assign it to the Baroque metaphor of world theatre, and so refer our times to a kind of a neo-Baroque period?

And - Is there any possibility of imagining a society without this performance quality? Or rephrasing the question: aren't we, all things considered, transposing a sociological feature and an epistemological principle into an ontological entity just for the sake of a glamour we want to shed onto the scene?

As for the first question, there are indeed some arguments pointing out the return of the baroque pattern in our times, as did Omar Calabrese in his celebrated *L'Età Neobarroca* [6]. Of course, its characteristics aren't exactly the same as they were in the seventeenth century: there is indeed a difference between conceiving life as a play performed before the eyes of God (he being its author, stage director, spectator and judge) or conceiving life as a show designed by men in order to abolish the gap between appearance and reality, thus proposing to take simulations of reality – the simulacrum – as the real thing, as Baudrillard's cognitive and epistemological scepticism did

state

[7]

. Still, one has to admit that there is a pervasive consciousness of a deliberate enactment, or staging, in everyday life, mostly because of the influence of the new media (specially TV) and its actual aptness to frame reality.

But it is also true that due to various scientific perspectives and evaluations on human activity (be they sociological, biological, psychological, linguistic or anthropological), the idea of theatre or performance pervades the proper definition of mankind in such a way as to confirm the Shakespearean trope that «All the world is a stage/ and all the men and women merely players». Even though the trope may be slightly and amusingly misread today, as in Goffman's words in the late fifties: «All the world is not, of course, a stage, but the crucial ways in which it isn't are not easy to specify» [\[8\]](#) .

Indeed, our everyday life is framed and performed: many interactions depend upon a complex network of rules and conventions that create reciprocal expectations and obligations. There is a repertory of actions, attitudes and gestures that frame our social living and, though we may not be conscious of planning or performing a role, the fact is that it does not prevent us from doing it, thus proving that «we all act better than we know how» [\[9\]](#) .

The anthropological reasoning of Victor Turner [\[10\]](#) or Richard Schechner [\[11\]](#) on performance and performance theory addresses this broad canvas of human activities, but at the same time it recognises the difference between acting according to repeated and socially sanctioned modes of behaviour and being conscious of using trained skills for certain purposes.

When studying the «Traditional India», the American anthropologist Milton Singer [\[12\]](#) in the late fifties coined the term «cultural performance», using it to describe those particular instances of cultural organization as rituals, temple festivals, sporting events, political rallies, circus, exhibitions, dances, musical concerts, etc. «through which a culture articulates its self-image (...) and thereby represents and exhibits itself to its own members as well as to outsiders»

[\[13\]](#)

. Cultural performances are, in his opinion, «the most concrete observable units of a cultural structure»

[\[14\]](#)

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As Erika Fischer-Lichte [\[15\]](#) puts it, there is an exchange of all kinds of cultural goods and

products between theatre and other spheres of social life – other institutions, cultural performances, art forms, and elements of everyday life» [16]. It is in this perspective, she writes, that «stories, rituals, ideas, concepts, perceptive modes, conventions, rules, techniques, actions, behavioural patterns, objects, etc. circulate among the different spheres [of social life], travelling to and fro» [17].

We may approach these exchanges as an attempt to «negotiate the limits between theatre and other cultural domains and to redefine them» [18], but at the same time we have to recognise that this circulation brings about real (and sometimes unexpected) changes in the different spheres. It was so, for instance, with the transfer of the central perspective from Renaissance painting into theatre: in fact, the so-called Italian stage, through architects such as Palladio (Andrea di Pietro [19]), changed the conditions of visual perspective. However, the Italian stage begot a considerable discrimination: because if it is true that those in the royal seat could enjoy a real central perspective of what was happening on stage, the fact remains that all the other spectators sitting anywhere in the auditorium would have a distorted view of that central perspective.

3.

Skipping many other instances of cultural interaction, let us focus on the more immediate human presence and human interaction at the theatre. Because theatre is indeed presence, as Peter Brook wisely wrote in his first important book on theatre:

«I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged» [20].

So, as far as human behaviour in the theatre is concerned these are the two poles that constitute theatre: acting on one side, and audience reaction on the other. The interaction between these two important components have engaged countless theorists, practitioners and scholars along history in their ways of trying to define, through them, what theatre is or what it

should be. Besides the aesthetic options, the cultural issue at stake is also very important, partly because acting is indeed one of the most interesting fields of research in theatre history, since in this activity nature and culture seem to intertwine, thereby raising questions such as: how is the human body shaped and presented on stage? How can an acting style be related to other cultural practices? And can it be possible to conceive a universal readiness to become an actor, or even to transpose skills and practices from one culture to another (in a possible intercultural project)?

These questions have been addressed very differently and have determined various aesthetic options in theatre. Some of these options have tended to reassess certain cultural backgrounds; others, instead, have aimed at importing foreign theatre traditions, thus challenging the dominant «national» culture and thereby aiming at (or anyway contributing to) some cultural changes.

For instance, Artaud when proposing his ideas on theatre [\[21\]](#) declared his debt to the Balinese dances, which he had seen during the Paris colonial exhibition in 1931 and which remained for him as a major reference of what the theatre should aim to be. But he was not the first to be influenced by the eastern theatre: we could recall the “Turkish” scenes in Molière, Voltaire’s use of Chinese elements and Goethe’s interest in Sanskrit drama (visible in *Faust*

). And, since the end of the nineteenth century, Asian theatre has been an explicit influence on several playwrights and theatre directors. We can mention Yeats and his enthusiasm for the Noh players, Gordon Craig and the use of African and Asian masks in some of his productions, and, along the twentieth century, Tairov, Jacques Copeau and Bertolt Brecht proved to be great admirers of the Asian theatre. Nearer to our times we should name Richard Schechner and Bob Wilson in America, Peter Brook, Ariadne Mnouchkine and Eugenio Barba in Europe: they are all experimenting in inter and multicultural theatre.

Putting aside, for the moment, some of the most persistent accusations of this trend as being an offshoot of neo-colonialism, cultural imperialism or tourist cosmopolitanism, it would be illuminating in cultural and theatrical terms to question this new fashion.

Clifford Geertz, in his celebrated essay «Blurred Genres» [\[22\]](#) spoke about the fact that «traditional anthropological concerns with continuous traditions, singular and stable cultures, coherent structures, and stable identities have been largely replaced by a concept of “identity” and “culture” as constructed, relational, and in constant flux, with the porous or contested borders replacing centres as the focus of interest – because it is at these borders that meaning is continually being created and negotiated. This clearly relates to the reality of the post-colonial

world, with its new patterns of global communication, multinational corporations, and the continual movement and displacement of peoples»

[\[23\]](#)

I suppose that it is also in this context that we should question the use of foreign theatre traditions in the West: are they experiments in borderlands, attempts at a translation into a target culture, illuminations on an universal predisposition for acting regardless of any specific training, a way to include so many people coming back from former colonies, or are they simply exotic devices in order to increase curiosity in sophisticated audiences?

Two of the most important theatre directors who have put an emphasis on the «culture of links» or deliberate use of foreign traditions are Peter Brook and Ariadne Mnouchkine, both working in Paris. Though very different in their approach to the Indian, Japanese or Chinese theatres (Mnouchkine being more assumedly political), they both discard any idea of respecting the authenticity of those foreign cultures, presenting instead their works as adaptations in order to better serve the texts they stage and the idea of a universal language that would mobilize communication between members of different cultures.

As once Peter Brook defined his intended culture of links: «It is the force that can counterbalance the fragmentation of our world. It has to do with the discovery of relationships where such relationships have become submerged and lost – between man and society, between one race and another, between the microcosm and the macrocosm, between humanity and machinery, between the visible and the invisible, between categories, languages, genres. What are these relationships? Only cultural acts can explore and reveal these vital truths» [\[24\]](#) .

But can this intended “universal culture” be reached? And assuming that this culture is possible or desirable, is theatre the proper place to achieve it? And can it avoid the accusation of appropriating other cultures for purposes of exoticism, spectacle, without the least attempt to discover the voice of the material itself?

When Ariadne Mnouchkine decided to stage, at the Cartoucherie, Shakespeare’s plays –
Richard II
(1981),
Twelfth Night

(1982)

and Henry IV (Part I)

(1984) – in a kabuki style she did so in order to impose a certain formality, thus avoiding the naturalistic acting tradition. We know that her preference for Asia is due partly to a personal fascination with Japan and Indonesia, that she visited before founding the Théâtre du Soleil, and partly to a belief that Asia is the origin and guardian of openly theatrical performance traditions. Actually, she keeps recalling Artaud's words: «Theatre is oriental».

She had already experimented other overtly theatrical traditions belonging to the West like clowning, fairground performance, cabaret and *commedia dell'arte*. But this time, she felt that the ritualistic style of kabuki would better serve Shakespeare's poetry as well as his stories with great warriors, nobles, princes and kings, and it explains the reason why she so extensively used costumes, masks, music, individual gestures, steps and dance sequences from the Japanese stage. As she explained by that time: «I wanted to escape from the rather picturesque imagery of the Middle Ages... The Japanese cinema [she was thinking mainly of Kurosawa], for example, has retained a much better account of chivalry than that of our Western countries»

[\[25\]](#)

. Besides, kabuki would be the perfect way of gaining a ceremonial quality and avoiding the prosaic acting: «The reference to this great traditional form imposes rules for working: precision of gesture, cleanness of line, the meeting of an extreme artifice within a kind of performance that might be called hyperrealist»

[\[26\]](#)

Thus Ariadne Mnouchkine very blatantly states the intention of using the traditions of the East as a means to enhance the formal distance and theatricality of her productions, since, as she argues against Jan Kott, «Shakespeare is not our contemporary» [\[27\]](#) .

But this trend was to make a more impressive international impact by the staging of the great Indian epic *Mahabharata* by Peter Brook: first at Avignon Festival (1985), then at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord (his permanent theatre venue in Paris), and afterwards in New York – the Majestic Theatre in Brooklyn. Using some common traits of Kathakali theatre, he aimed at retelling the great epic, thus paying homage to the rich cultural life and art forms of classical India. However, as he repeatedly said, he did not intend to imitate, but rather to suggest, since it was clear for him that it would take a lifetime to master those refined and elaborate artistic techniques of the Kathakali dancers.

The fact that the actors in this mega-production represented nineteen nations was appointed as the evidence of the «international voice» in the theatre, though, of course, it did raise some doubts as to a possible universal language, as Marvin Carlson ironically recalls: «One Sanskrit scholar, a warm supporter of Brook on the whole, called the idea of an international cast charming, but noted that when one hears a Japanese with a French accent pronouncing an English transliteration of a Sanskrit name, it is hardly surprising that the effect is rather that of a one-man Tower of Babel» [\[28\]](#) .

It is true that Peter Brook had been dealing with this kind of inter or transcultural experiments ever since *Orghast*, on Ted Hughes's poetry, staged at the ruins of Persepolis, and then more systematically with *The Ik* and *The Conference of the Birds*. Moreover, there is his whole project of the International Centre in Paris. Still, his *Mahabharata*, did raise some dispute as to the idea of India it showed.

Quite often in this dispute, Edward Saïd's *Orientalism* [\[29\]](#) was mentioned. Indeed some of the questions raised by these performances went along Saïd's argument that the Orient served as a symbol of Otherness upon which the fantasies, fears and desires of Western people were presented. And it surely did give an argument to Rustom Bharucha, who in his *Theatre and the World: Performance and the Politics of Culture*

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voices a third world perspective on these theatre ventures of the West, denouncing what he considers their colonialist mind-set plundering Indian culture in the search for a supposed universality, but indeed forcing a centralizing culture actually dominated by Western culture.

However this Western interest in the Far eastern theatre, that saw its most visible heyday in the '80, has had its counterpart in Japan, Korea or China ever since the '20s. There theatre people would increasingly think their traditional theatre to be far removed from the daily problems their modern urban culture was facing, thus resorting to Western drama and realistic theatre training as presented by Greek tragedy, Shakespeare, Ibsen, Chekhov and Stanislavsky, as was the case of the Shingeki (=new drama) movement. Later, especially after the Second World War, other Japanese (and Korean) theatre directors tried to establish their own cultural identity, bringing again into play Kabuki theatre, but without excluding the influence of Western culture. It was the case of Tadashi Suzuki (taking Greek plays and Shakespeare into Japan but aiming at a popular audience), or the invention in the '60s of a new theatre style out of the convergence of Japanese dance and German expressionism – named Butoh – which was invented by Tatsumi Hijikata and later adopted by Kazuo Ohno in a more sentimentalised version.

Reaching beyond performances, Italian theatre director Eugenio Barba (working in Holstebro, Denmark) has developed a whole research programme that is based on an intercultural approach to theatre, which involves performers and scholars from all around the world in workshops done in the most different locations with the help of excellent performers from around the world, but mostly from the far east: India [31], Japan, China, Korea, Bali. His theory of the actor's pre-expressivity is exclusively based on his observations of Far East Asian theatre and puts forward an interesting field of research that he names Theatre Anthropology. Its chief aim resorts to defining the shared principles of performers that he identifies in «different performers at different places and times and in spite of the stylistic forms specific to their traditions»

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These deliberate and productive encounters with theatre traditions from other cultures have had, as we saw, different starting points and have aimed at different goals, but some think they seem to have responded to the demand of a «universal language of theatre» that would be an important step into a somewhat Utopian concept of a world culture. However, this concept of a world culture would be the opposite of a one-world culture that would flatten (or, rather, **is** flattening) out all differences and which is represented by Coca-cola, Shell or McDonald's monopolies. Whether these nobler interests of an intercultural theatre are actually being carried out or not, it is a question of dispute. Still, theatre semiologist and historian Erika Fischer-Lichte optimistically applauds these attempts as the real «aesthetic beacon of Utopia»

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This is not the idea that Bharucha gets out of these attempts, as we saw earlier in this paper. While he distinctively pleads for an intracultural theatre in India (through the interaction of local cultures within the boundaries of a particular state), he dismisses these Euro-American mega-events as the most blatant and accomplished «appropriation and reordering of non-western material within an orientalist framework of thought and action, which has been specifically designed for the international market» [34]. And, in this market, government bodies and states are involved, as he deplures:

«It is worth pondering that the Indian government and its cultural satellites spent more money on this enterprise of the *Mahabharata* than it has supported any other cultural group in India itself. And to enhance the irony, we never even got to see the production in India apart from its film version. The «real thing» proved to be too expensive to transport back home»

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4.

But there are other important levels to be considered in this more general design of cross-references in the cultural sphere as far as the most recent theatre is concerned. One of them deals with multiracial casts: it would be expected of course in a production of *Othello*, for instance. But it will be surprising, if, instead, you choose to see, for example,

As you like it,

in the Cheek by Jowl production, directed by Declan Donellan, and find out that the part of Rosalind is played by African actor Adrian Lester. Indeed, this excellent production, done in a most brilliant and lyrical way, chose not only actors of different colours for no other purpose than to include very good performers, but it also stressed, through an all male cast, the gender confusion that is at the centre of this drama.

Actually cross-dressing has been an important way both of exploring some original or spectacular effects and of calling attention to new or unexpected readings of a play. We could remember Sarah Bernhardt playing Hamlet and, more recently, in a Deborah Warner's staging, Fiona Shaw fabulous in the role of Richard II. Still one feels that this kind of distribution tends to use the more charismatic leading actresses and actors and serves a more institutional purpose.

On the contrary, multiracial casts have engaged younger performers and are not always directly linked to intercultural events, like the *Mahabharata*. It is already a fact in mainstream productions in London or Paris to include black, or Asian actors, and it has raised interesting questions regarding the visibility of the difference. Indeed some directors react angrily when asked why they have chosen actors coming from so different cultures to play the parts of European characters, arguing for the need of colour-blindness. It is however curious to hear David Harewood, who was doing *Othello*, claim: «I don't want you to ignore my colour; I am asking you to look at it» [\[36\]](#) .

But this casting policy may be a more disputable issue when the play dramatises cultural oppositions or addresses (or may be read as addressing) colonial questions. It is the case of *The Tempest*, where Caliban may be seen as representing the indigenous, and Prospero the colonizer, as so many Shakespearean scholars have lately stressed

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. Now, when reading the play as a possible way of enacting a colonial discourse that seeks to legitimise itself, it can be distressing for an audience to see African Sotigui Kouyaté playing Prospero, white coloured David Bennent as Caliban, and African Bakary Sangaré as Ariel.

I am obviously referring to Peter Brook's production of *The Tempest* (in 1990) and much of this melting pot derives from the multicultural ensemble he directs at his Centre International des Créations Théâtrales in Paris. It should be added that the wider cultural diversity of the performance included a Miranda played by an Indian (sixteen years old) actress, and Gonzalo by a Japanese actor.

Peter Sellars in America also perplexed the critics when doing *The Merchant of Venice* with a black Shylock, a Portia and Nerissa who were Chinese-American, and an Antonio and Bassanio who were Hispanic. It was not only the case, as critics argued, that Shylock's sense of isolation would be diminished (with those other ethnic minorities also at stake), it also seemed unfair to the Los Angeles riots, which was the real context proposed and used by this production.

This kind of role playing shows significant cultural changes as far as actors are concerned and may point to a certain democratisation of the mainstream theatre, although many black artists keep complaining that there is a rather significant lack of equality and opportunity for them in the British theatre [38]. However, we should also consider how these multicultural casts affect the reading of plays at the same time that they tend to show the blurring of gender, race and culture differences. In a way, it serves a certain pattern that Joseph Roach assigns to the contemporary world:

«Mobility and constraint, negotiation and appropriation, inclusion and exclusion, identity and difference – these oppositions come less often in tidy pair of either/or than in tangled bundles of perhaps/but. Such questions currently animate debate in cultural studies, and no doubt they will continue to do so for as long as boundaries exist, which is to say for as long as cultures exist» [39]

5.

Having to deal with theatre as a whole, Theatre Studies has to address this kind of questions looking for their wider social, cultural and aesthetic implications.

And indeed, ever since its origin, as Theaterwissenschaft, the discipline of Theatre Studies has adopted both an aesthetic and a historical perspective. More recently, however, it has tended to give as much attention to historiography as to performance analysis, claiming that only being a participant (as part of an audience) can the researcher be entitled to speak of the theatre as an aesthetic experience. Therefore, Theatre Studies tends to incorporate much research on current performances, requires a substantial knowledge of many of the artistic and cultural codes involved in a performance, demands a certain expertise in performance analysis (mainly based on the concepts and methodology of semiology), and calls for a framework that allows theatre to be included in the more general social and cultural background in which it occurs and which it tends to modify. In a word, it points to a deliberate interdisciplinary approach.

But, of course, the concept of theatre, as we have seen, is not a matter of *consensus*, and has lately been used in its broadest sense of any form of exposure of anybody to the gaze of others. It may correspond to the awareness by sociologists and anthropologists of the performativity in our everyday life. But it also tends to characterise what some theorists see as a deliberate attempt of the post modern society to fuse theatre and reality, a tendency that may be emblematically referred to the Big Brother and other reality shows.

However, theatre artists tend to claim specificity for their work, thus contradicting the idea of «spectacle», as French director Bernard Sobel did:

«Ceux qui se doivent aujourd’hui de refuser cette «société du spectacle» dont parle bien un philosophe comme Debord ce sont d’abord les hommes de theatre» [\[40\]](#) .

This specificity has to do with the idea that theatre is also an art form and relates to all the other art forms that participate in a theatrical performance. However, very interestingly, there is in this process of interplay a curious contradiction that singles out theatre: whereas all the other arts (fine arts, literature, music etc.) are said to create fixed artefacts, the theatre performance does not: it is an ephemeral process. Any interdisciplinary approach should therefore take into account this singular contradiction and at the same time question whether theatre is not already interfering with and pressing upon the other art forms: isn’t it true that poetry is more and more being publicly read and staged by poets, actors, scholars, etc.? And is it not true that more conventional art exhibitions are being taken by installations in which the visitors are interacting

with the scenario? Isn't the performativity being transmitted to those art forms that usually participate in a theatre performance?

The change of paradigm that took place in the humanities (ever since the Annales school of history) brought a new concern on transitory and ephemeral events of the cultural performances, besides the more traditional focus on texts and monuments. Thus, disciplines like history, sociology, political science, art history among others began sharing with Theatre Studies the same interests and the same object of research, thus opening up perspectives and possibilities for interdisciplinary approaches in cultural studies, when it engaged, for instance, in the research on festivals, religious rituals, ceremonies of penance, funeral processions or executions. As Erika Fischer-Lichte writes: «In terms of specific approaches to a problem, it would make good sense, for example, if public executions were investigated by historians, anthropologists, and theatre historians» [\[41\]](#) . Moreover she stresses the fact that Theatre Studies is in a good position to contribute to this kind of interdisciplinary approach for some aspects have been its more prominent object of research, namely: the performative process itself, its production (devices of staging and fabrication), the use of the performers' bodies and the spectators' perception and behaviour.

So, if on the one hand Theatre Studies should indeed not lose sight of Cultural and Comparative Studies and keep them as a frame of reference, on the other, it is clear that its specificity entitles it to be very useful in all interdisciplinary approaches. Due not only to the importance accorded to performance and performativity in all human activities, but also to the artistic and cultural relevance of theatre in life in general.

[\[1\]](#) Richard Eyre, «Michelangelo's Snowman», *Theatre in a Cool Climate*. Eds. Vera Gottlieb & Colin Chambers. Oxford: Amber Lane Press, 1999, p. 57.

[\[2\]](#) William Hazlitt, «On actors and acting» (1817), *Drama Criticism: Developments since Ibsen*. Ed. Arnold P. Hinchliffe, London & Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1979, p. 42.

[3] Marvin Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction*. London & New York: Routledge, 1996, p. 195.

[4] Cf. Guy Debord, *Société du spectacle*. Paris: Buchet-Chastel, 1967.

[5] Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Show and the Gaze of Theatre: A European Perspective*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997, p.218.

[6] Omar Calabrese, *L'Etá Neobarroca*. Roma-Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1987.

[7] See *La guerre du Golf n'a pas eu lieu*. Ed. Galilée, 1991. Cf. Christopher Norris, *Uncritical Theory: Postmodernism, Intellectuals and the Gulf War*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1992.

[8] Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City: Doubleday Anchor, 1959, p. 72.

[9] *Ibidem*, pp. 73-74.

[10] See Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: PAJ Publications, 1982;
The Anthropology of Performance.
New York: PAJ Publications, 1987.

[11] See Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory*. New York & London: Routledge, 1977; – *Between Theater and Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.

[12] Milton Singer, ed., *Traditional India: Structure and Change*. Philadelphia: American

Folklore Society, 1959.

[13] *Apud* Erika Fischer-Lichte, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

[14] *Apud ibidem*, p. 16.

[15] Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The show and the Gaze of Theatre: A European Perspective*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997.

[16] *Ibidem*, p. 1.

[17] *Ibidem*, p. 1.

[18] *Ibidem*, p. 12.

[19] Andrea di Pietro, known as Palladio, was the architect responsible for the Olympic Theatre in Vicence (1584).

[20] Peter Brook, *The Empty Space* (1968). Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973, p.11.

[21] Antonin Artaud, *Le théâtre et son double*, 1938.

[22] Clifford Geertz, «Blurred Genres», *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* . Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983.

[23] *Apud* Marvin Carlson, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

[24] Peter Brook, *The Shifting Point: Theatre, Film, Opera 1946-1987*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1987, p. 239.

[25] Ariadne Mnouchkine, «The theatre is oriental», *The Intercultural Performance Reader*, ed. Patrice Pavis. London & New York: Routledge, 1996, p. 96.

[26] *Ibidem*, p. 95.

[27] *Apud* Erika Fischer-Lichte, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

[28] Marvin Carlson, «Brook and Mnouchkine: Passages to India?», in *The Intercultural Performance Reader*, ed. Patrice Pavis. London & New York: Routledge, 1996, p. 89.

[29] Edward Saïd's *Orientalism*. New York : Vintage Books, 1979.

[30] Rustom Bharucha, *Theatre and the World: Performance and the Politics of Culture*. London & New York: Routledge, 1993

[31] Of a special importance was Sanjukta Panigrahi, recently deceased.

[32] Eugenio Barba, «Introduction», », in Eugenio Barba & Nicola Savarese, *The Secret Art of the Performer: A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* (1991). London & New York: Routledge, 1995, p. 8.

[33] Erika Fischer-Lichte, «Interculturalism in contemporary theatre», in *The Intercultural Performance Reader*, ed. Patrice Pavis, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

[34] Rustom Bharucha, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

[35] Rustom Bharucha, «Somebody's other: disorientations in the cultural politics of our times», in *The Intercultural Performer Reader*, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

[36] *Apud* Simon Russell Beale, «A good investment», in *Theatre in a Cool Climate*. Eds. Vera Gottlieb & Colin Chambers. Oxford: Amber Lane Press, 1999, p. 44.

[37] Cf. Francis Barker & Peter Hulme, «Nymphs and reapers heavily vanish: the discursive com-texts of *The Tempest*», in *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. John Drakakis. London & New York: Methuen, 1985, pp. 191- 205.

[38] Winsome Pinnock, «Breaking down the door», *Theatre in a Cool Climate*, *op. cit.*, p.29.

[39] Joseph R. Roach, «Cultural Studies: Introduction», *Critical Theory and Performance*. Eds. Janelle G. Reinelt & Joseph R. Roach. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992, pp. 14, 15.

[40] Bernard Sobel, *Un art légitme*. Arles: Actes Sud, 1993, pp. 112.

[41] Erika Fischer-Lichte, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

