



THEATRE ANTHROPOLOGY

The concept of **theatre anthropology** is a very precise one: it is the study of the performer's behaviour and action in a performative situation in which s/he implements his/her biological and mental competence according to principles which differ from those of daily life. This extra-daily implementation of the body, which is called technique, is the foundation of the performer's presence.

The notion of **pre-expressivity** has been coined to designate the performer's competence, based on his/her training, which enabled him/her to master specific body techniques different from those used in daily life. **Pre-expressivity** has its foundation in mental as well as sensor-motor rules which are integrated by the performer and is an acquired capability which manifests itself in scenic actions, that is, the way in which the performer behaves on stages.

During its ten years of existence, numerous performances, demonstrations, workshops, and scientific examination ISTA has progressively clarified its perspectives as well as its methodology and the results obtained from its research. Given the fact that the object of study is extremely complex - the human being in a performative situation and his/her relationship to the spectator, regardless of culture, throughout the course of history - **theatre anthropology** is neither a doctrine nor an orthodoxy.

The growth of theatre anthropology is linked to both the development of scientific disciplines and the artistic as well as the epistemological evolution of those disciplines which constitute it. This is why, nowadays, **theatre anthropology** is a pertinent methodology for the synchronic and diachronic study of the performer. And, in fact, theatre historians have already started to employ it in their work.

THE UNIVERSITY OF EURASIAN THEATRE

The recurrent principles which the previous ISTA sessions have helped discover, correspond to the deep structures of techniques which lead to the performer's presence. This discovery stems from the identification of physiological and mental laws common to all performers. The principles constitute the elementary foundations upon which each culture elaborates its particular performance forms.

This relationship between the universal and the particular has led to an operative notion: that of **Eurasian Theatre**. **Eurasian Theatre**, in terms of **theatre anthropology**, is a body of knowledge, techniques, and trans-cultural practices which form a common competence to performers from different traditions. This inter-relationship of knowledge does not imply a levelling of forms. The mutual borrowings function at two levels:

- that of poetic metaphor which nourishes the artist's concrete action and
- that of technique which supports the quality of his/her esthetic action.

When the Western performer refers, for instance, to the Japanese principles of JO HA KYU, s/he nourishes his/her imagination engendering the mental images which are the basis of physical action - that is, the level of poetic metaphor.

At the same time, s/he adopts the three phased rhythm of JO HA KYU to structure gestures and movements avoiding stereotypes and banality at the technical level. What the spectator perceives is not a Western performer who imitates a classical Japanese style but an artist who seizes his/her attention. The inter-relationship is effective, however, it is not obvious, while the quality of presence is undeniable.

The Eurasian Theatre does not lead to the erasure of individual traits. On the contrary, the inter-relationship cannot exist unless the product of the two entities has a strong identity.

DEFINITION OF THE 6TH SESSION

The 6th session was organized around two major themes:

- Eurasian Theatre
- Theatre Anthropology and Historiography

The former led to an transcultural theatre work during the first week of the session. The title of the project, "The Crossing" expressed its meaning, its method, and its objectives. The work, in English, implies the traversing of a given space - sea, desert, country. It also designates inter-relation since in genetics, the term refers to certain displacements or inter-mixing of genes.

The latter theme constituted the subject of the international colloquium mounted in collaboration with the University of Bologna in their premises.

THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants who attended the 6th session were essentially from one of two groups:

-Asian and Western artists: performers, musicians, composers, and singers. The first group formed the core of the theatrical work created by Eugenio Barba in the first week of the meeting.

The second group consisted of two subgroups:

- a) directors, actors, and representatives from cultural institutions;
- b) scholars, scientific researchers, anthropologists, and theatre specialists.

Countries of origin and the number of participants*:

Argentina	3
Bali	10
Brazil	3
Canada	1
Chile	4
Colombia	1
Cuba	3
Denmark	8
Egypt	1
USA	5
France	6
India	5
Israel	1
Italy	34
Japan	8
Peru	2
West Germany	5
Popular Republic of China	1
UK	3
Switzerland	1
Soviet Union	1
Uruguay	1

Total: 107

* This list does not include six members of the Odin Teatret.

Even though in the previous ISTA sessions the activities which corresponded to each group and subgroup were always clearly differentiated, in this instance, a unique project "The Crossing", involved everybody in a common task during the first week.

THE CROSSING

The theatrical work called "The Crossing" was developed by the participants themselves who were divided into international and interdisciplinary cells. Each cell was asked by Eugenio Barba to:

- 1) determine an archetypical situation common to most cultures;
- 2) consider that the chosen situation must have dynamic value and become a scenic web which permits the process of going from one culture to another and from one perspective to another.

After a general meeting, the cells suggested ideas based on these directions following which each cell was asked to develop a scenario for the performance.

Once Sanjukta Panigrahi chose a scenario, "rehearsals" began.

PEDAGOGY OF THE 6TH SESSION

Within the living performance arts, in which intentions are less important than what the performer allows to be seen, it is not sufficient to teach "techniques". One must also propose ways to learn to learn, appropriate, and make sense out of these techniques. The epistemological lesson carries pedagogical consequences.

The experience of previous sessions demonstrated the value for all participants - actors, directors, and intellectuals, of being placed in work situations different from those they regularly encounter in their professions. Both the Asian performer's art and that of certain Western performers are the product of a lengthy sensory, motor, and cognitive immersion begun at an early age. It is only possible to discover and make sense of the principles underlying these forms after patient observations and exercises. The unusual organization of the day's work at ISTA was based on these factors. Let's underline the essential points:

1. The introduction of music as a linking rather than an illustrative component in the collective work, as well as a poetic metaphor and accompaniment for each dramatic sequence. This musical work was realized by the composer Ivan Hansen along with the Balinese, Indian, Japanese, and European musicians.
2. The appeal to performers capable of thinking through actions (*thinking in motion*) and not to those who rely on verbalization (*thinking in concepts*): Artists formed through precise body techniques for whom imagination is not merely an abstract entity.
3. Each scene was elaborated then fixed through a combination of collective creation and the director's concern for thematic unity.
4. An ambiguity of meaning was created to compensate for the unavoidable shortcomings of the work. This ambiguity was supported by a strong final scene which offered an enigmatic synthesis of the whole.

EVALUATION OF THE WORK

About thirty hours were devoted to an analysis of the work. Each of the two forementioned large groups described the experience of creating the piece. This long period was very useful to distinguish different perceptions, subjective impressions, technical considerations, and professional opinions.

Summarizing, the success of the project relied on:

- 1) -The professional skills of the participants from the first group (performers/musicians).
- 2) -The selection of participants according to their interest.
- 3) -The general rules of work common to all ISTA public sessions: schedules, punctuality, silence zone and silent time to allow for personal work and rest, mixing of nationalities, and bilingual work situations.
- 4) -The quality of the work spaces provided by the beauty of the Villa Guastavillani set amid green lawns on a hill, away from the city.

5) -The recreation of the different levels of the theatre system: unexperienced performers, well-known masters, personalities who already belong to the history of the theatre, actors, dancers, musicians, critics, theatre historians, theatre specialists, sociologists, anthropologists, academics and researchers, passionate spectators, all put at the same level.

The intensity of the work is one of ISTA's characteristics. A public session constitutes an exceptional situation which nourishes each participant's intellectual and artistic research in depth and during the entire time.

First week schedule

5:45 a.m. - 6:45 a.m.: Ulvetime (silent time).
6 a.m. - 6:30 a.m.: Breakfast.
6:45 a.m. - 11 a.m.: "The Crossing".
11 a.m. - 12 a.m.: "Ora et Labora" (individual and group work).
12 a.m. - 12:30 a.m.: Lunch.
12:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.: "Dream Therapy" (individual and group work). A library was set up in the Villa to which all were invited to contribute a book as well as at least one article of their own.
3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.: "Citas". Lecture/demonstrations led by invited participants.
5 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.: "Nightingales and Owls". Lecture/demonstrations and research on voice techniques.
7 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.: Diner.
8 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.: "Avatara". Meetings, lecture/demonstrations, analyses of performances.

The schedule for the second week was adjusted to the needs of the International Colloquium which, as stated above, was held at the University of Bologna. The schedule included meetings and lecture/demonstrations open to visitors and public performances.

For the first time, all participants took an active part in the *Theatrum Mundi*. This performance, which took place on Sunday July 15th, included a song composed during "The Crossing" and sung by participants. The *Theatrum Mundi* is a unique intercultural spectacle which, in this instance, involved more than fifty Asian and Western artists.

THE LECTURE/DEMONSTRATIONS

The meetings were devoted to the analysis of different corporal, musical, and vocal techniques drawn from the cultures represented in the public session. Special attention was given to the articulation of technical principles and symbolic values. Some of the material touched on has been dealt with in previous publications based on ISTA's work, therefore, let us only consider new areas explored during the 6th session:

- The voice: Balinese, Indian, Japanese techniques; bel canto tradition, and contemporary theatre techniques.

- The new forms of creation in the Asian cultures, especially in Bali, India, and Japan.

It appears that when contemporary creation inverts certain traditional values, it integrates the fundamental principles of classical techniques in a conscious way.

THE INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM

Three full days of study open to the public were held in collaboration with the University of Bologna at its premises in the city:

July 12th: Symposium on theatre Anthropology: Ethos and Pre-expressivity.

July 13th and 14th: International Colloquium: Performance Techniques and Historiography.

During the course of the colloquium, artists and academics discussed the historical perspective of their work. Sanjukta Panigrahi, for instance, reported on the history of the Odissi dance, being herself the most remarkable artist in the genre. In fact, mainly thanks to her, such regional dance has become a classical dance form.

An important event marked this part of the 6th ISTA session series of activities: the collaboration with Jerzy Grotowski's Centro di lavoro. On this occasion, the possibility of exploring areas of common research was proposed.

ORGANIZERS

The 6th ISTA session was organized by:

Pietro Valenti - Centro Teatrale San Geminiano - Modena
Renzo Filippetti - Teatro Ridotto - Bologna

The cultural coordination: Prof. Franco Ruffini

The organizational coordination: Elisa Dal Re and Monica Vaccari from the Bologna Town Council Division of Information Services and Public Relations.

BUDGET AND FINANCING

The 6th session was made possible thanks to the financial support of the following institutions:

- University of Bologna
- The Cultural Department of the Town Council of Bologna
- Bologna University - Bologna Town Consortium
- Italian Ministry of Culture
- Danish Ministry of Culture
- Japan Foundation
- Saison Foundation
- Town Council of Holstebro

GUESTS ARTISTS

BALI

I Wayan Berata Sskar, dancer
Tjokorda Istri Putra Padmini, dancer, musician
Catra I Nyoman, dancer, musician
Laksmi Suarti Desak Made, dancer, musician
Ray I Wayan, dancer, musician
Surytini Ni Ketut, dancer, musician
Tjandri Ni Njoman, dancer, musician
Tjokorda Taka Tisnu, dancer, musician
Ida Bagus Nyoman Mas, dancer, musician
Pasek Tempo I Made, dancer, musician
Confessa Giuseppe, dancer

INDIA

Panigrahi Sanjukta, Odissi dancer
Panigrahi Raghunath, musician, singer
Nityanand Mohapatra, musician
Das Hemant Kumar, musician
Pradhan Gangadhar, musician

JAPAN

Azuma Kanho, Nihon Buyo
Hanayagi Kanichi, Onnagata
Azuma Senkai, Nihon Buyo
Kojima Naobumi, shamisen player
Wakayama Tomiro, singer

ODIN TEATRET

Eugenio Barba, director
Roberta Carreri, actress
Jan Ferslev, musician
Rina Skeel, producer
Julia Varley, actress
Torgeir Wethal, actor
Frans Winther, musician

RECOMMENDATIONS

The ISTA Permanent Scientific Committee and the signatories of the present Report consider that it is essential for the University of Eurasian Theatre to have a permanent home where it could mount regular activities periodically. The University of Eurasian Theatre must function as a centre for research and information in collaboration with those universities who have been collaborating with ISTA for many years.

If the headquarters of such an international network for the exchange of knowledge was based in a dynamic city with a university tradition and an international reputation, it could accomplish its academic and culturally diverse goals through specifically designed programs.

We had the opportunity of appreciating the city of Bologna's kindness and the attention of its public. Given the interest and the open attitude of the University and the Town Council of Bologna, and the scientific results of this first independent session of the University of Eurasian Theatre, the ISTA Permanent Scientific Committee and the signatories propose the University of Bologna as the permanent base for the University of Eurasian Theatre.

Signed by:

Prof. Clive BARKER, University of Warwick
Prof. Frank HOFF, University of Toronto
Prof. Jean-Marie PRADIER, University of Paris 8
Prof. Franco RUFFINI, University of Bologna
Prof. Masao YAMAGUCHI, Foreign Languages University of Tokyo

Bologna, July 25th 1990