INTERCULTURALITY:
THE METAESTHETIC EXPERIENCE
OF PERFORMANCE AND CULTURE

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy by **Ayşegül Jenkinson.**

July, 2007

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PART THREE: Culture and Performance

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was made possible by the award of a Gladstone Research Fellowship by the University of Chester, for which I am grateful. I would like to express my thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Peter Harrop, for endless patience and excellent guidance. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Meyzi Baran for materials from France, Louis Winwood for materials from Japan, and Faeeza Jasdanwalla for materials from India.

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Abstract

The first part of this thesis outlines the conventional view that defines 'intercultural theatre' as a hybrid genre. In the second part, Zeami's and Bharata's principles of performance are explored in their contexts (Japanese and Indian respectively), as a means to critique that conventional view. The final part of the thesis reinforces the critique by focusing on interculturality in the present globalisation context, and viewing it from a metaesthetic perspective. This thesis seeks to shift the emphasis from theatrical or social events to the inherent interculturality of people.

INTRODUCTION

> At the individual level an artist sees something inspiring in another way of working and something of that experience is transferred into his or her work. This new work, this new hybrid, is the starting point of interculturalism. [...] This exchange is not multiculturalism, the simultaneous existence of several cultures side by side, nor cross-culturalism where people from one cultural background learn a form from another culture and practice it. Interculturalism is an area of interaction where new forms are created. (Martin, 2004: 1-2)

This declaration exemplifies the ambiguities and problems that constitute the intercultural theatre debate for both practitioner and academic. Martin brings up one of the most significant aspects of an artist's process: that of being inspired by another way of working. What he is suggesting is that integrating another way of working into one's existing way of working is the starting point of interculturalism, and that from this point onwards, this new way of working is a hybrid. However, the hybridity of this new way of working is highly questionable on five sets of grounds: Firstly, an absolute valuation of both the ways of working is assumed, which does not allow any flexibility for either of them. Secondly, an inspiration such as he describes could be true of anybody's way of working, since he is not specifying the cultural 'other' in this 'another way of working'. According to Martin's premise, anyone could be inspired by anyone else and that would be an example of interculturalism too. But then, how is it possible to call this a hybrid? Thirdly, arguably, the word hybrid implies a difference in parentage, which is the defining element of the present issue. Is hybrid the most appropriate term if we want to emphasise 'this new work'? Fourthly, if we accept that the starting point of interculturalism is one's interaction with another (or another's) way of working, then when were we ever not intercultural? What was the artist before this point of inspiration? He uses the all important word 'exchange' in unpicking interculturalism but argues that it is possible for cultures to

exist side by side and not exchange anything, as this is how he defines multiculturalism. When he states that when one learns a new form from another culture, this is cross-culturalism; he is actually contradicting himself because at the start he had declared that "something of that experience is transferred into [one's] work" and he had called that interculturalism. Finally, the allegation that interculturalism leads to new forms is also problematic because 'what forms are' and 'to whom they might belong' are highly contentious issues for which there may be as many answers as there are people who may care to provide them. Martin's attempt to identify interculturalism and distinguish it from its 'relatives' (multi-culturalism and cross-culturalism) demonstrates the problems faced by other scholars and practitioners who have also focused on a variety of aspects of the concept. Indeed, one might go so far as to argue that every piece of academic discourse or performance demonstrates interculturalism in its own way.

Eugenio Barba, Rustom Bharucha, Peter Brook, Erika Fischer-Lichte, Jerzy Grotowski, Bonnie Marranca, Ariane Mnouchkine, Patrice Pavis, Richard Schechner, and Robert Wilson are among the many names most usually associated with intercultural theatre. The first part of the thesis offers an exploration of some of these major contributors. The points Martin raises in his definition of interculturalism are contextualised in this descriptive overview of the commonly accepted development of interculturalism.

The second part of the thesis goes on to add two of the most prevalent non-western references to that list of names by introducing Zeami's and Bharata's key teachings on performance. It is important to underline that Zeami and Bharata tend to be associated with the intercultural debate when people refer to or learn from or 'appropriate' elements from traditional Japanese or Indian theatres. The third and final

part of the thesis considers the term interculturalism in the wider context of globalisation. In light of this, I will offer an alternative to what may now be labelled a 'conventional' approach towards interculturalism by emphasising the inherent interculturality of Zeami's and Bharata's principles. The concept of metaesthetics will then be used as the key to unlock this notion of inherent interculturality, which I will conclude to be an intrinsic part of both culture and performance.

At this juncture it will be useful to offer preliminary definitions for 'intercultural', 'theatre' and 'performance' in relation to 'intercultural theatre'. Starting with *inter-*, the meaning of the prefix is simply stated; it means 'between' and/or 'among'. The word *culture* is more complicated to break down, due to the variation in usage. The following definition is an appropriate point of departure, as it refers to points which will prove significant in the development of this thesis.

> A culture is a complex set of shared beliefs, values, and concepts which enables a group to make sense of its life and which provides it with directions for how to live. [...] In perhaps the most influential variant of this standard view, culture is pictured as a text the vocabulary and grammar of which its members learn. Indeed, on this view, becoming a member of a particular culture is a process of enculturation conceived as learning to read the culture's basic text and making it one's own. (Fay, 1999: 55)

A culture is not just a "set of shared beliefs, values..." but it is rather "a complex set of shared" experiences. The complexity of these shared experiences is in the nature of culture. 'Shared beliefs' are not limited to institutionalised religions. The insinuation is rather more flexible than that; the operative word is 'shared'. In addition, the word 'belief' does not necessitate a religious belief, although, of course, that might be the case in some instances. Despite Fay's use of words such as *text, vocabulary, grammar* and *reading,* he does not stop at suggesting that a culture is a text to be read, as may be implied by textualism. In fact, he draws

attention to the enculturation process through "learning to read a culture's basic text and making it one's own". In this sense, enculturation is more like learning a language than simply reading a text. In order to recognise, understand and make it one's own, one has to go through the simple but crucial process of interpretation. This is reminiscent of the hermeneutics debate where the location of meaning is determined according to one's stance on intentionality and interpretivism. Once something (anything outside the 'self') is interpreted and made one's own, that something stays within the 'self'; that is what is meant by 'making it one's own'. Following this logic through, it is possible to infer from this definition, and further support it with our 'lived experiences', that one person could belong to more than one culture at one time. Moreover, that same person might share more than one culture with another person. A person's life is made up of the different shared experiences s/he has with others and the complexity of these shared experiences is directly related to how much work/interpretation one is willing to do. It is essentially up to the individual how many texts s/he is willing to make her/his own.

It is here that issues of 'identity' and 'identity politics' enter and problematise notions of culture. In my view, identifying oneself solely by one's nationality, or passport, or gender, or religion, or race is problematic. It seems more realistic to identify oneself with one's culture because it is made up of many different shared experiences, and because it is open to change and development, and because it is not as fixed as some of the options offered above. One may be subject to political or economic pressure to sustain a fixed, unchanging and limited identity precisely because it is convenient for someone else. Indeed one's identity might be presented and even represented to others in this fixed fashion because it fits another's agenda regardless of how one might prefer to identify oneself—and that is the main issue around identity politics.

It is essential to take into consideration the associations the word 'culture' comes with when attempting to define interculturalism. If Fay is right, then sharing is already an inherent part of culture. Therefore, it may be inferred that *intercultural* implies a sense of sharing between more than one culture. In other words, intercultural means some type of give and take between two or more cultures. It is important to note that semantically, the word interculturalism does not necessarily favour any one of the cultures involved, however, when it is applied in the context of theatre, (or any other context for that matter) whether one culture is favoured or not depends on the type of the exchange, the rapport (or lack of) or indeed the hierarchy between the cultures in question. Another distinction that needs to be made here is the interculturality of the person as opposed to the event or the context. In most discourses concerning interculturalism in theatre, the event will dominate the discussion and the interculturality of the people/person involved will not even be mentioned. In this thesis, the emphasis is brought back from the event to the person by arguing that it is the people involved who make a performance or a culture intercultural.

Intercultural theatre, as stated at the start by Martin, is commonly described as a new, hybrid theatre, made up of two or more theatre traditions from different cultures. It is sometimes referred to as a new genre where elements from different traditions are brought together to create something new. The ethics of decontextualising elements belonging to a certain tradition and attempting to create new meaning utilising these elements in another context have been discussion points in the interculturalism debate in general. Brook, Bharucha, Schechner, Barba, Pavis and others all have their specific perspective on what is and is not important with reference to culture and performance and where they would place themselves in the intercultural theatre debate.

Patrice Pavis is unique in the sense that he has written extensively about semiotics, cultural and intercultural exchange with reference to theatre and he has brought together all the key names associated with interculturalism in one compilation and has written extensive introductions in this 1996 work. Despite the fact that he is one of the principal authors in the subject, Pavis' discussion of interculturalism in theatre is adorned by question marks, uncertainties and even suspicions. The introduction to his 1996 work, *The Intercultural Performance Reader,* is entitled, *Towards a Theory of Interculturalism in Theatre?* The question mark is his. The title suggests caution in terms of the possible directions he might take the theory or indeed where the theory might take him.

> ...this new 'genre', with which one immediately associates the names of Brook, Barba and Mnouchkine, has not managed to find its own identity. It remains no more than the tip of an iceberg; we are still uncertain as to whether this visible portion signals a depth of startling proportions hidden from view, or whether it is already in the process of melting away under the spotlights of our (post)modernity. (Pavis, 1996: 1)

As he tries to compartmentalise interculturalism within the grander scheme of art and theatre history, he describes the phenomenon as a new 'genre' with no identity. Further on in the same article he decides that, "it might be more productive to speak of intercultural exchanges within theatre practice rather than [...] a new genre [...]."(Pavis, 1996: 1) It is possible that for Pavis, intercultural theatre is not yet recognised as an established category. He utilises the iceberg analogy to make this point. He seems uncertain of the possible hidden depths lurking underneath the intercultural theatre debate. To state the obvious, it is the invisible, the submerged part of the iceberg that sank the famous ship. Moreover, if there is a chance of anything melting 'under the spotlight of our (post)modernity' it may well be the perspective that views intercultural

theatre as a new genre that might get melted away.[1] If we indeed accept 'our (post)modernity' then we would not be trying to come up with one unifying global performance theory that underpins the essence of all theatre, in a one-size-fits-all approach. On the contrary, our (post)modernity might be the cause for celebrating the difference of cultures as the antidote for a one-size-fits-all approach.

Projecting our western perspective onto issues relating to theatre is something Pavis had written about in 1992 and he seems to be doing just that in his extensive 1996 introduction. He states that, "a flattening out of the imported culture" is not always the implication of "Western intercultural theatre." (1996: 15-16) This comment is strictly Western; its *a priori* and *a posteriori* judgements are restricted by its narrow worldview. One of the main tenets of interculturalism is that it suggests being more than one thing at a time; by calling it a 'western interculturalism', are we not seriously narrowing down its scope? Then the natural development of this line of inquiry is to ask if there are other interculturalisms. Then we might ask if there ever was an original version of interculturalism—is it possible to search for ur-interculturalism? A more specific answer to this question will reveal itself as the thesis develops and unfolds; however, it should suffice to say for the moment that trying to categorise interculturalism in confluence with the already existing structures of western art movements is not going to be adequate. The answers shall be sought in human relationships and exchanges as different contexts of interculturalism are explored throughout this thesis.

The eclectic group of contributors to Pavis' book provide many differing perspectives. For example, Erika Fischer-Lichte offers a conservative, a somewhat severe Eurocentric point of view. Richard

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[1] Indeed it may even be the spotlights of our interculturality that might melt down these, so called, hybrid, new genres of theatre.

Schechner provides the voice for freedom-to-choose. Contributors like, Marvin Carlson and Ariane Mnouchkine make the case for a specified western perspective on intercultural theatre. Rustom Bharucha, William Sun and Faye Fei undertake the non-western point of view and analyse content in different contexts. In the final section, Eugenio Barba and Jerzy Grotowski attempt an intercultural perspective that keeps the focus on the *principles* of the doing of performance (the physical action) as opposed to who is doing it. In this thesis, a variety of perspectives on interculturalism will be explored and questioned, but these perspectives (and the people who argue them) will not be divided into a West versus East binary opposition. It is my inclination that an enquiry into the human as well as the human elements in performance is more fruitful than drawing up analyses based on where a person originates from. An enquiry into the human in general is an exploration of human behaviour and actions; the human elements in performance/culture can range from how these actions are imagined, chosen, depicted, or played to how they are shaped and changed by others or other things. In other words, what a person is capable of doing and the relationships s/he is capable of creating with his/her world are more revealing than his/her nationality.

Having introduced the lines of enquiry that will be raised with reference to the issues pertaining to interculturalism, the focus may now shift towards theatre and performance and what defines them. People's usages of theatre-related words differ from one another. Some of this difference stems from socio-linguistic conditions. Unlike the example of English, in other languages there may be no need to differentiate between performance and theatre. In addition, the complexities of translation range from literal translations of words to how cognates are interpreted in different languages. In Turkish, for instance, a theatre actor would call himself a 'player' (*oyuncu)* whereas a film actor is an 'actor' (*aktör).* Another example is the usage of *spectacle* as 'performance' in French but

'spectacle' in English having different connotations. Other differences may stem from the backgrounds of the people—academic and practical backgrounds inevitably shape one's usage of terminology differently. Some people seek fixed meanings while others prefer a more fluid, flexible approach toward meaning-making. Some words are simply more fashionable than others and as trends change terminology changes; and some people may adopt the term *du jour* more readily than others. Furthermore differences may be caused by some people privileging the etymologies (often Greek) of the words while others may be referring to more modernised meanings. There are further problems with understanding etymologies because a historical understanding of the derivation of a word is one thing and assuming that the oldest possible root (or base) to be the true meaning of that word is something else. (Incidentally, etymologists are more interested in the historical derivation of a word rather than its meaning.) The word 'theatre' can be traced back to Greek *thea-* from which the verb *theāsthai* 'watch, look at' was derived. In its etymological journey the word became *théātron*, later *theātrum* in Latin and *theatre* in Old French and entered the English language in the fourteenth century. (Ayto, 2005: 503) 'Performance' also entered the English language in the fourteenth century and it comes from Old French *par-* and *fournir* 'accomplish'. (Ayto, 2005: 373) In terms of a more modernised understanding of what these words may suggest it is essential to consider the wider world and not only a western perspective.[2] Moreover, it is also essential to consider disciplines outside of theatre. In the second half of the twentieth century, the word 'performance' gained popularity, arguably, at the expense of 'theatre'. The development of Performance Studies as a discipline, as developed by Schechner and also advocated

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[2] From a personal standpoint, as English is not my first language, I have always considered 'words' in more than one language thus finding out their etymologies as well as their more currently accepted meanings without having to privilege one over the other. My personal interest in the study of other languages, as well as linguistics, affords me with a certain flexibility that may not be otherwise available to a monoglot.

by Conquergood among others, marked a turning point when interdisciplinarity explicitly became the chief influence. Human behaviour became the focus and thus folklore, semiotics, social sciences and potentially every other subject that deals with behaviour gained importance amongst those who wanted to study, teach, practice or write about the theatre—only now it was called performance. In light of the contributions of Performance Studies, performance became the bigger set within which theatre is a subset. Even though I advocate for Performance Studies as a discipline and agree with Schechner's idea of the broad-spectrum of performing arts curricula, my view is that theatre is the larger set within which performance is a smaller subset where performance is the job of the performers.[3] In this light, theatre is the name given to the art itself and I do not mean to emphasise a form that relies solely on the written word (as in text-based theatre); theatre is the name of the performing art where performers perform and audience/partakers experience. It is a given that the audience/partakers' experience involves a 'doing' as well, which is part of the complexity of the partaker-performer relationship. This complex relationship is studied and examined in many ways, from semiology, to reception theory to what Susan Melrose calls spectatorship studies. However, the main focus here shall remain on what performers do. Fundamentally (and I use that word advisedly), this thesis is about performance because the word 'performance' emphasises the doing, both in the context of theatre and in the context of life.

Regardless of what we may prefer to call it and regardless of its geographical location in the world, theatre is invariably about human beings or human behaviour even though it might be depicted without the presence of actual human beings; for example, puppetry, installation-heavy-performance art, Craig's Übermarionette, or Beckett's *Breath*, or

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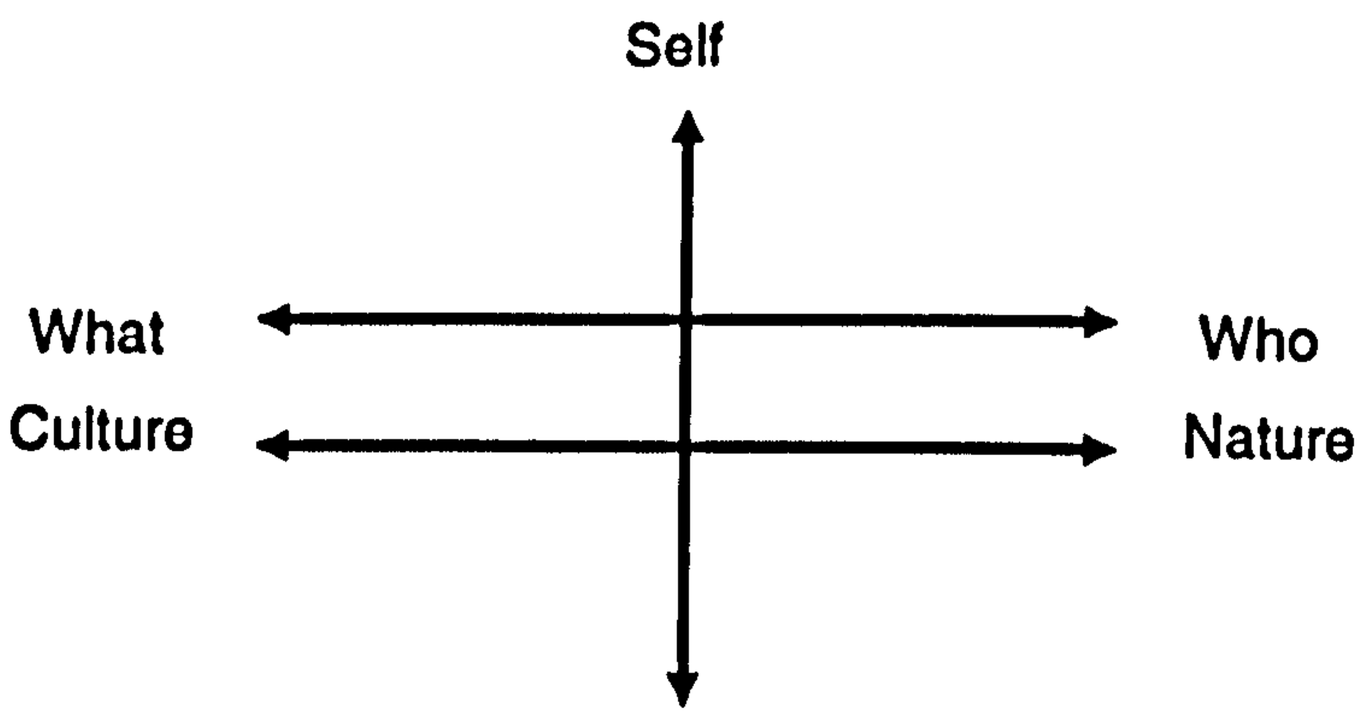
[3] My view stems from my practical background because when I was trained, performance signified what I did as an actor/performer and theatre was the larger context in which I performed.

Kathakali "where gods and demons come to play" (Zarilli) and other such works. Most theatre depicts human beings being human; form might differ, language might differ but the content is invariably about human behaviour.

If theatre is about being human, then it is already closely related to *culture*. If culture defines what to do and how to do it, then surely, culture and performance go (and grow) hand-in-hand. What does it mean to be a human being? Does it mean something else in the twenty-first century than it did a few centuries ago? Do the developments of biological and sociological sciences have a positive impact on questions of identity? An interdisciplinary way of answering these questions is to examine the dialectical relationship between nature and culture without resorting to the 'nature versus nurture' debate. People's answers to the questions, 'who are you?' and 'what are you?' are, more often than not, ambiguous. People find it difficult to define themselves, once they have stated their names. I will argue that we are defined by our relationships with others; for example, X's daughter, Y's teacher, or Z's reader etc. This is the basic implication of relativity: Existing as part of someone or something else. Accepting that we exist in relation to other animate or inanimate objects, it is possible to assert that as much as we make our culture, our culture makes us, but the question is: does our culture make us *who* we are or *what* we are? Maybe *determine* is a better word than *make*. If our culture determines what we are, then it is possible that our nature determines who we are. Moreover, since the human animal is not a puppet that is merely acted upon, the hypothesis cuts both ways. The human is not an absolute value or concept. In other words, just as the relationship between our culture and nature determines what and who we are, we also determine our culture and nature; simply because we learn, we interpret and as a result we react. Therefore, it can be inferred that human existence is an ongoing process and it is forever changing. This is the reason why this discourse is not a re-visitation of the tired-old nature versus nurture

debate. This is a point of departure in an attempt to better understand the interconnectedness of the self and the other through the dialectical relationship between nature and culture. As the developments in genetics demonstrate, nature and culture have an ongoing impact upon one another and one is not absolutely privileged over the other. Emphasising the relationships that are identified by an exchange between parties will provide the problematisation of the prefix inter- of interculturalism.

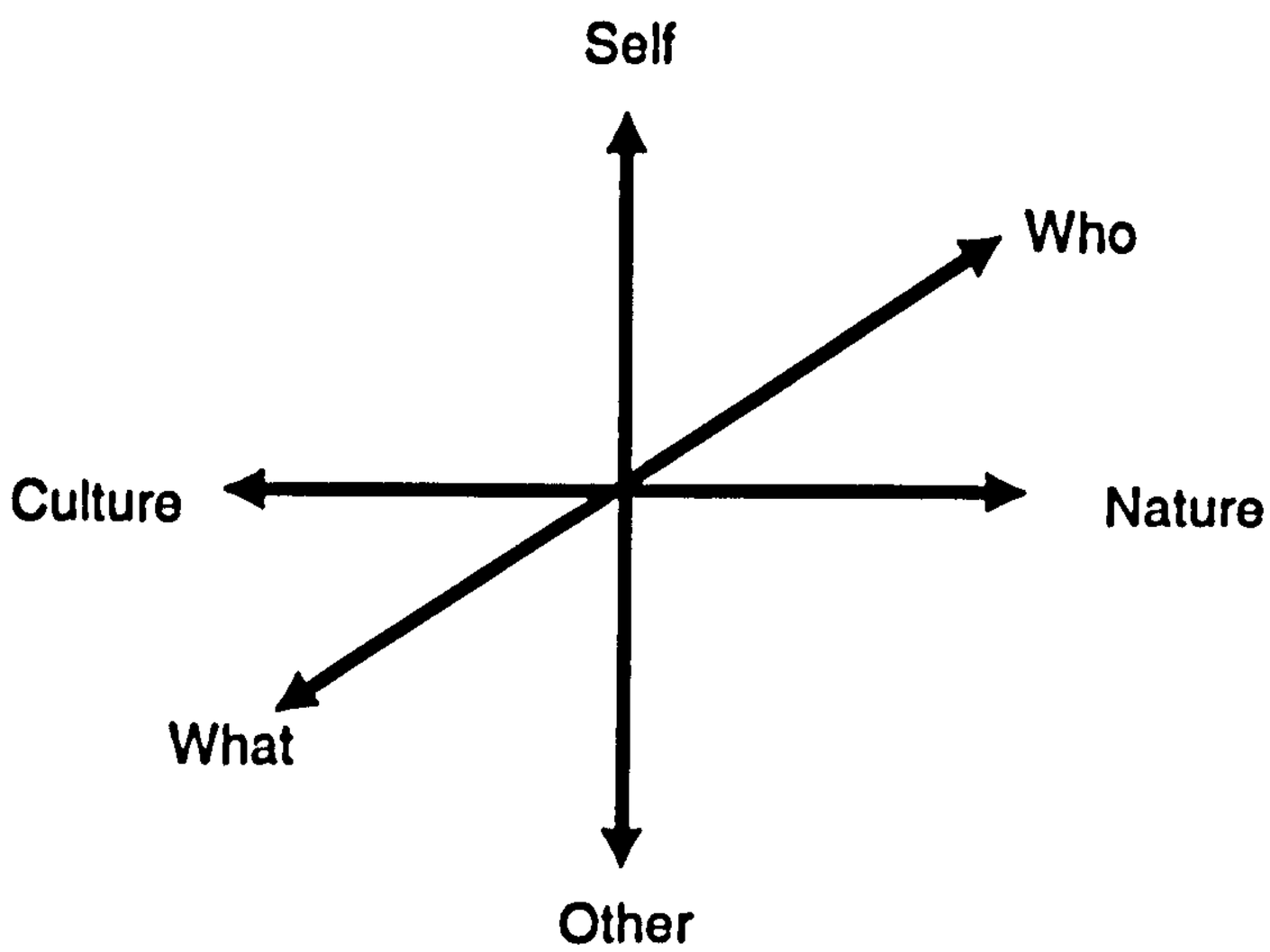


Model A

If the above is a model of being, then the operative dynamic is represented by the arrows at both ends of all the lines that reach open sets. These arrows serve two main purposes: Firstly, the emphasis is on the fact that we are not dealing with absolutes here. For example, neither 'self' and 'other', nor the relationship between the two is quantifiable. Secondly, because the lines do not end at specific points we cannot assume that the points of intersection happen in exact middle points of these lines. This suggests that a generic concept of equality does not apply here for it is not possible to pin down an equidistant point between unquantifiable sets. Even though it may appear as though there is a

symmetrical relationship between the objects in the diagram, the arrows signify that a symmetrically equal relationship is not necessary. The other major operative dynamic is that there are more than one intersecting points. All the objects in the model exist in time and space and the intersecting points between objects do not have to be temporally and spatially synchronised. In light of the analysis of Model A, how is it possible to label a relationship between two objects in the diagram a hybrid, when everything about these relationships or their influence on one another is unquantifiable?

Model A might have also looked like this:



Model B

The intersection of the six way traffic could be identified as the essence of being. The fact that everything intersects everything else might be the dynamic element that defines a being. Compared with Model A, Model B appears as though it encompasses all the objects at any given time, which

may be true, but it does not allow for a potential greater influence of one object over the others. In this light, not only does Model A suggest more possibilities but it is also more specific in the options that it offers. The clear division between the vertical and the horizontal objects reiterates the flexibility of being a human being. The only possible privilege (if at all) is given to the interchange between 'self' and 'other'; traffic between what and who, and culture and nature becomes part of the ongoing relationship between 'self and 'other'.

It is also possible to depict the relationship between 'self' and 'other' in the diagram below (Model C). But this depicts a *closed* relationship which is not flexible; this assumes absolute values for the self and the other, which is not a true depiction of human relationships. (Although, it is possible for some ethno-centric people to embody such a (narrow) worldview as implied in Model C.)

Model C

In this context, the close relationship between the self and culture where one is decidedly a part of the other, prompts the question, 'do we perform our culture?' Having asserted that theatre always depicts human beings and performance has to do with human behaviour; and having looked at Model A, it can be argued that in the context of interculturality of theatre, the qualities of the interplay—between the human and the cultural

elements—are similar to those of a palimpsest. The two-way-traffic pathways between two points in Model A (self-other; what-who; nature-culture) carry upon them the past, the present and the future of being. This suggests that a totally clean slate is impossible in the middle of a journey and that there would always be remnants of other experiences if one is open to receive them. This also emphasises the diachronic nature of existence. So, not only do we perform our culture (both in life and on stage) but our performance also changes through time as culture and nature impact upon one another and self and other influence each other.

Whilst considering the diachrony of the pathways described above, it is also useful to think about them in terms of their direction. Direction changes more than just the direction—as the Roman goddesses Venilia and Selacia demonstrate, "One was the goddess of the waves which lap the shore, the other was the goddess of the waves which return to the open sea." (Taviani in Barba and Savarese, 1991: 79) As Taviani underlines in the *Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: the Secret Art of the Performer*, "Thus substance and the force may be the same, but the direction and the quality of the energy are different, opposite." (ibid.) In this instance *direction* and therefore the *quality of energy* characterises the force, which in turn becomes the objective itself. In terms of performance, such characteristics of movement are shaped by interculturality which is made up of the aforementioned layers of self, other, nature, and culture. The direction of the influence from one object, in Model A, to another object changes the quality of the experience of being. In this way, being, as in the example of Model A, and performance in the larger sense are synonymous as the principles that make them work are the same.

If culture and performance are the two givens that humans have to live by, then maybe there is not a huge difference between them from the

perspective of any "*thinking body*".[4] Our body, our 'self' is influenced and shaped by everything it encounters externally through a process of interpretation and internalisation. In light of the above premise, is it possible to argue that today we are in the privileged position of having the choice of cultures of influence? Schechner seems to think we do. He mentions "the culture of choice" numerous times in his writings. He says that, "people know it is a matter of choice; it is something you have to defend rather than something to which you are condemned." (Schechner in Pavis, 1996: 49) In his interview with Pavis, Schechner states that especially for artists today it is possible to be "promiscuous" with the culture/s of influence. (Pavis, 1996: 41-50) When he includes the notion of artists having a variety of cultures of influence, in a sense, he is extending the meaning of his original idea of "culture of choice" to a choice of cultures. Our current condition allows for such promiscuity mainly because it is now possible because of the advent of technology and other positive effects of globalisation. It is also possible to note at this point that one of the aspects of our current condition is an 'attitude' that is open/ready for such promiscuity. Schechner reiterates this extended meaning of 'culture of choice' by stating that, "A hundred years ago there was no question; a German was a German, a Frenchman was a Frenchman, a Nigerian was a Nigerian. Nobody could move out of that." (Pavis, 1996: 49-50) Now, it is different. The ability to choose a cultural influence has developed to such a scale that it is now a matter of choice for a German, a Frenchman, or a Nigerian to maintain the influence of their culture of origin. Moreover, if we were to follow this notion of 'promiscuity', we could choose more than one culture. In support of Schechner, it could be added that if culture is a grammar one learns, as mentioned earlier, surely, potentially anyone can

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[4] *The Thinking Body* is a seminal study of human anatomy and alignment in conjunction with behaviour, written by Mable E. Todd in 1937. Todd argues that for every thought and emotion there is a muscle change in the body. I am not aware of any scientific inaccuracies that there may be in Todd's argument, however, even if there were, the metaphoric powerfulness of her argument would be significant enough in the context of actor training and thinking about performing.

learn any number of languages and grammars and make them one's own. It is true that a culture of choice may not be afforded to everyone in the world. It is also true that not everyone may think that they have a choice of cultures. However, by focusing on the potentiality of the human experience, in the culture and choice debate, the interpersonal is integrated into the intercultural.

The issue of choosing a culture for oneself can be challenged with the view that cultures belong to people and by choosing a culture that belongs to someone else, we are essentially stealing. The debate around interculturality inevitably ends up with whether a culture actually belongs to one specific group of people, who possess the ultimate last word on the copyrights of that culture. This debate is best exemplified by Peter Brook's *Mahabharata* and Rustom Bharucha's views on the subject. Brook was criticised for grossly westernising a uniquely Indian epic; Bharucha labels that 'appropriation'; whereas it could be argued that Brook was doing nothing other that devising a performance based on a great story that happens to be Indian. However, it is impossible not to acknowledge the fact that the two men in question are part of a history that maybe be tinting their judgements. Bharucha argues that the *Mahabharata* "is universal *because* it is Indian" (Bharucha, 1990: 70) and it is such an intrinsic part of the culture that it is not possible to separate the story from its originating culture; furthermore, it is in fact insulting to do so.

One of the aims of introducing the Brook-Bharucha debate is also to assess the validity of the argument that intercultural theatre is a hybrid, new genre as suggested by Martin et al. Do we not imply absolute values and meanings when we introduce hybridity? This type of hybridity seems to suggest that Englishness or Indianness can be described and/or prescribed; in other words, there can be such a thing as pure English or Indian culture—or any other culture for that matter. Schechner states and

Pavis agrees that, "there is no 'pure' culture not influenced by others". (Pavis, 1996: 4) Assuming this is true, than the previous question, 'do we perform our culture?' is accentuated slightly differently. What it is that we perform gains focus as opposed to the fact that we perform. In addition, if performing one's culture is a tautological statement then it can be inferred that we are a mixture of various cultural influences and with each move or sound, we reveal who and what we are—and that is what is meant by performing a culture.

It is not possible to discuss embodying one's culture and not note Eugenio Barba's work, ISTA—International School of Theatre Anthropology. Arguably, Barba is the most significant contributor to the intercultural performance project through his performance work and his writing as well as the ISTA workshop/conferences. Based in Holstebro, Denmark, Barba's theatre company, *Odin Teatret,* experiments with performance techniques and principles learned in different parts of the world. In my view, in one of the most important publications on theatre, *The Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: The Secret Art of the Performer,* edited by Barba and his collaborator Nicola Savarese, Barba explains what exactly he means by 'theatre anthropology':

> Theatre anthropology is the study of the behaviour of the human being when it uses its physical and mental presence in an organised performance situation and according to the principles which are different from those used in daily life. This extra-daily use of the body is what is called technique. (1991: 7)

The key word here is *principles*. Barba is dedicated to studying what those principles are rather than investigating why they are very similar to one another even though they might originate in totally different parts of the world. He supports his thesis with the help of Decroux in the following passage:

> 'The arts', Decroux has written, 'resemble each other because of their principles, not because of their works'. I could add: and so it is with theatres. They resemble each other because of their principles, not because of their performances. (Barba and Savarese, 1991: 9)

And I could add that in order to explore these principles at work, we would need to look at theatre from a performer's point of view; because if we want to understand the principles we would need to scrutinise the practice, the performance. This may remind us of the seemingly complicated relationship between practice and theory and prompts us to ask whether the nature or the complexity of this relationship changes from culture to culture. Susan Melrose accuses British scholars of not using these words adequately in the context of higher education. In her 2003 PARIP (Practice as Research in Performance) address she provides varying examples of different usages of 'theory and practice' and underlines the common traps scholars fall into. (She even reminds delegates of the "performance-based understanding of *theoros*".) The point is that even as recently as 2003, in the context of PARIP, Melrose was compelled to talk about the practice/theory phenomenon, which is enough proof that there are inconsistencies in terminology, at least, in the UK context. I do not make a distinction between practice and theory; they are interconnected parts of a greater whole. It is also clear that neither Zeami nor Bharata make such a distinction either. Practice and theory complete one another; practice is theorised and theory is practiced. However, as previously mentioned, the difference in the use of terminology may be the predictable cause for disagreements.

In light of this introduction, it is possible to summarise that an alternative to a 'conventional' approach towards interculturalism will be sought firstly by studying this conventional view in the theatre context with examples from major academics and practitioners; secondly by exploring

Zeami's and Bharata's specific teachings on performance. Thirdly, interculturalism in the current, wider globalisation context will be explored by sampling some of the non-theatre and theatre based perspectives that connect interculturalism to globalisation. Finally, critiquing the conventional view in light of Zeami's and Bharata's teachings as well as the larger globalisation context, will lead to an alternative approach towards interculturality, which emphasises the *inter-* of interculturality.

PART 1: 'Intercultural Theatre'

An eclectic variety of theorists and practitioners are generally associated with what might be termed intercultural theatre: They include Patrice Pavis, Erika Fischer-Lichte, Richard Schechner, Bonnie Marranca, Peter Brook, Rustom Bharucha, Eugenio Barba, Ariane Mnouchkine, Robert Wilson and Jerzy Grotowski. However, there is a manifest difference between the ways in which these people approach their work. It is not always clear whether there is an overlap between their definitions or understanding of intercultural theatre. Problematising 'intercultural theatre' need not be a complex task; at its simplest, it can be noted that these words are loaded and very often people make assumptions about them. In fact, it is not even very clear how scholars and practitioners differentiate between theatre and performance, let alone identifying a similarity or an overlap in their interpretation of *interculturality*. This chapter will focus on some of those names mentioned above in an attempt to reveal their interpretations of interculturalism, with the intention of forming a definition of interculturalism. In other words, it is essential to try to compile some of the most pertinent, existing approaches to interculturalism so that it may be possible to understand what the required minimum constituent element is (or elements are), or indeed if such elements even exist, for a piece to be labelled 'intercultural'.

Amongst western academics and researchers in general, the ongoing theatre/performance discussions have paved the way for a more pronounced debate about the possible relationships between theory and practice in the larger context of the performing arts. Historically, the debates around 'theatre and performance' and 'practice and theory' have developed alongside one another. Theatre and performance are not

necessarily two different art forms as such, but a distinction was made by researchers in the name of accuracy and agility in our knowledge and developing understanding of performing arts. Using the word performance whilst thinking about theatre allowed for the development of new perspectives to transpire and shed new light on the art of the performer. Reconsidering the art of the performer consequently pointed to a discussion about the relationship between practice and theory. Through interculturalism further inquiry into the practice/theory construct is made possible. Indeed the study of other traditions where the practice/theory divide is absent has encouraged reflection upon its presence in the west. In addition, the necessity to decipher or interpret performances from different cultures created a significant space for the science of *reading* signs, or semiotics in the theatre context. Before a discourse on reading and utilising signs from other cultures, a few words will be offered about the development of semiotics and its relationship to theatre. More specifically, the Prague School structuralists' conception of semiotics will be mentioned as a stepping stone from the general idea of linguistic semiotics to a theory of performance. It is my contention that the relationship between theory and practice is problematised when semiotics is entered into the equation and this is likely to be a western problem. Due to the interpretive nature of witnessing something unfamiliar, western scholars/researchers have identified theory with semiotics. In other words, in time, the ways of *reading* a performance, or semiotics, have become synonymous with theory. In this respect, engagement with theatre traditions from different parts of the world has led the western researcher to theorising about their *own* practice as well as others'. Some of this reflection upon theatre traditions will be highlighted as the narrative of interculturalism unfolds. However, to start with, offering some of the highlights of the endeavours of the aforementioned scholars and practitioners will provide us with the generally received account of interculturalism in theatre. As stated in the introduction to this thesis,

following the narrative of interculturalism with the two case studies from two different parts of the world will make it possible to challenge this generally accepted account by reinstating the *inter–* of interculturalism and by examining the relationships between *performance* and *culture* in the globalization context.

Chapter One: Methodology of the Scholar

Patrice Pavis is one of those rare scholars who attempted a description (rather than a definition) of an intercultural exchange in a theatre context in *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture.* It must be noted that Pavis is a semiotician who analyses everything about the theatre in terms of *mise en scène.*[5] At every chance Pavis places mise en scène at the heart of his perception of theatre, which reveals that his approach to theatre is one of a non-performer's. In fact, by his own admission, his interest lies with the audience perspective.

> The notion of mise en scène remains, however, central to the theory of intercultural theatre, because it is bound to the practical, pragmatic aspect of putting systems of signs together and organising them from a semiotic point of view, i.e. of giving them productive and receptive pertinence.
> Mise en scène is a kind of *réglage* ('fine-tuning') between different contexts and cultures; it is no longer only a question of intercultural exchange or of dialectics between text and context; it is a mediation between different cultural backgrounds, traditions and methods of acting. (1992: 6)

It is evident from this assertion that his idea of the practice of theatre is strictly from the receiver's point of view, which needs to be factored into the analysis of his description of intercultural exchange. Moreover, it seems as though the 'fine-tuning' in question is in the reception and not in the making or creating of the performance. Mise en scène constitutes a part of the 'mediation between different cultural backgrounds, traditions and methods of acting'; however, in analysing the nature of this *mediation*, the accuracy of the word *mediation* in this context can be challenged. Nevertheless, it is useful to look at Pavis' description of an intercultural exchange, which is his hourglass model.

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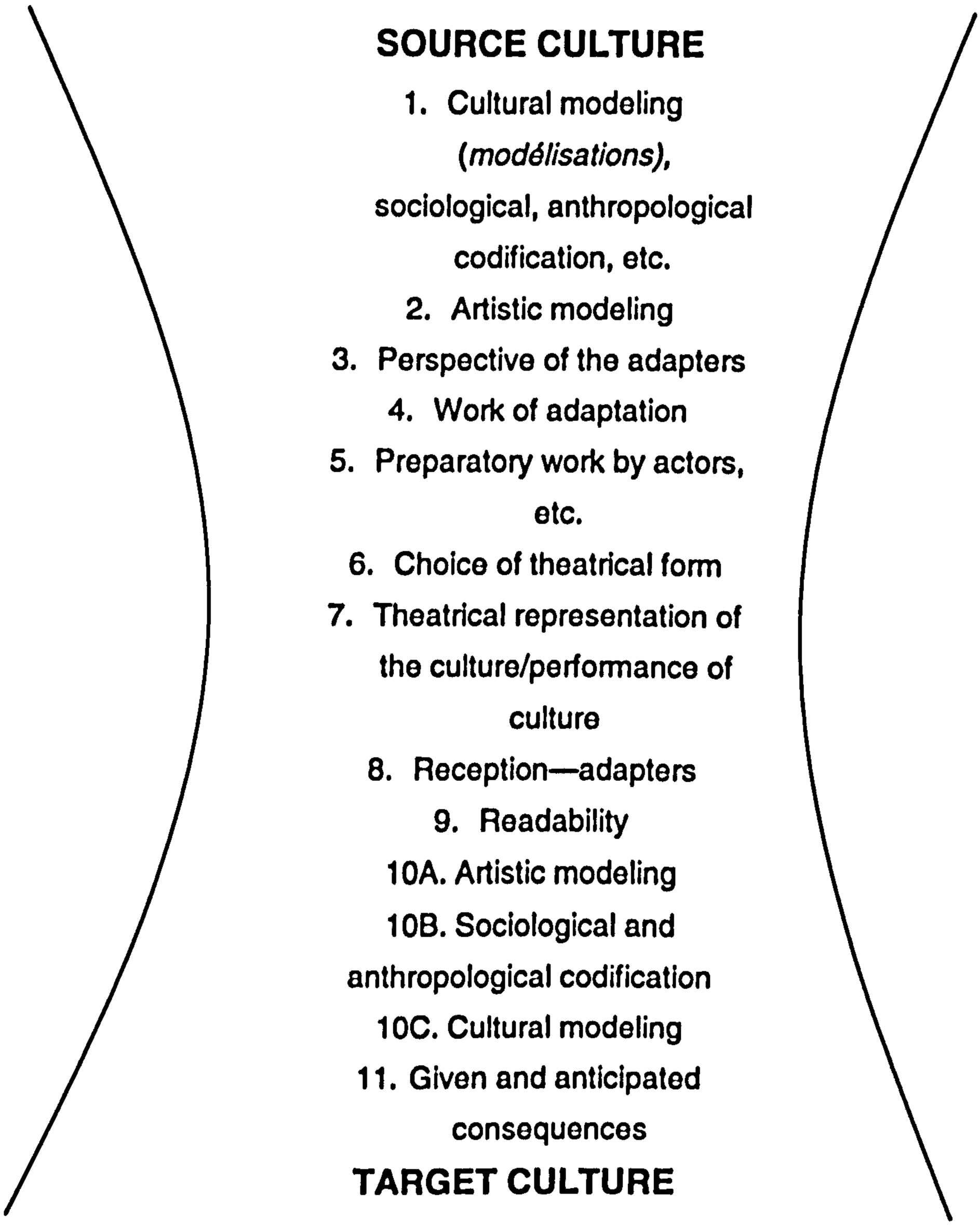
[5] While it is accurate that mise en scène is an important part of theatre, it must also be noted that it certainly does not constitute the whole of it.

Under the subheading, *An Hourglass Ready for Everything* (1992: 4) Pavis explains that the top part of the hourglass signifies the 'source culture' and the bottom part, the 'target culture'. The source culture must pass through the tight neck of the glass and thus it is subjected to a variety of filters before it reaches "us", Pavis writes. The various filters that mediate information (or signs) offer an intercultural exchange as a result, according to Pavis' explanation of his hourglass. The hourglass follows:



The Hourglass of Cultures as devised by Patrice Pavis (1992: 185)

Pavis accepts the short-comings of the hourglass model to a degree. He attempts to compensate for this by implying that it is not a 'mill' therefore, it will not 'blend the source culture'; it is also not a 'funnel' therefore it will not "indiscriminately absorb the initial substance without reshaping it through the series of filters". (1992: 5) This model relies heavily upon the control of the target culture. The items 1 and 2 get thoroughly re-worked by the steps 3 to 8, which are the first set of filters; then come in the second set of filters which engage the audiences with the material on a variety of levels. Steps 8 to 11 allow western audiences to apply their (personal and cultural) interpretations with an eye to read the semiotics of the performance they are witnessing.

> We thus run the risk of projecting our own western categories on to the foreign culture and of defining modeling systems which are not always specific to the source culture (for instance, western notions such as autonomy of codes, authenticity, aesthetics, or the opposition between art and craft). (1992: 186)

We do not merely 'run the risk', we actually do project our western ways of thinking onto the model. When Pavis identifies the west as the target culture, and the 'foreign' as the source culture (1992: 4) he already starts projecting western perspectives onto the model. In a sense, this reveals a very self-serving western world-view, which prioritises itself as the target (or the objective.) The problem is not necessarily with prioritising one self over another, but in a discussion such as this—interculturality—it can come across as Euro-centric. In addition to this, his assertion positively acknowledges the existence of set, or at least recognizable, modelling systems that are culture-specific, which is altogether another grey area. It prompts a question that may be rhetorical: can anything belong to one culture and one culture only? Pavis' model suggests an affirmative response. It is possible to argue that any discussion that utilises phrases like, *target culture* and *source culture* allows for culture-specific *modélisation*. He continues to mention a variety of, what he calls, 'western

notions', which are not *only* western. However, it is not very clear from the translation if he means to say, 'a western perspective on these notions', or if he indeed implies that the notions he counts are western. If exchange is a two-way street, then how is it possible to have strictly western notions of authenticity or aesthetics—unless we consciously choose to adopt such a tactic? In fact, we all—from the most primitive animal to the most evolved species—negotiate difference regularly in daily life. Furthermore, Pavis makes a strong statement in passing when he writes, "the opposition between art and craft". This opposition is clearly identified in the history of western art movements. In terms of its non-western counterpart, it can be said that a harmony between art and craft generate the work. Once again, with this example, Pavis seems to highlight the projection of a western perspective onto a/any non-western object of art. In a way, this alludes to the western-ness of interculturalism itself and this may be a contradiction in terms.

The objective here is not to criticise Pavis' efforts blindly; on the contrary, the objective is to shed light onto Pavis' thought process as he is esteemed to be one of the more respected academics on the subject. Indeed, Pavis might simply be describing and/or reporting his theatrical observations rather than attempting to come up with some ideal way of thinking. In other words, it is possible to interpret the hourglass model as a reflection of what already happens, retold by Pavis, in the shape of an hourglass. If that is the case, then it is possible to conclude that it is the phenomenon of intercultural theatre he describes that projects western notions onto all events and objects, rather then Pavis himself. At the very least, the potentiality of this thought needs to be considered in any in-depth analysis of interculturalism in the context of theatre. [6]

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[6] In a conversation I had with Pavis at the 2005 Centre for Performance Research conference *Towards Tomorrow?* Pavis told me that the hourglass model works as long as we remember that we inevitably project our western-ness onto the hourglass.

Upon quoting Victor Hugo, who writes, "Theatre is a crucible of civilizations. It is a place for human communication", Pavis responds by explaining the choice (and function) of the sand in the hourglass:

> The sand in the hourglass prevents us from believing naïvely in the melting pot, the crucible where cultures would be miraculously melted and reduced to a radically different substance. *Pace* Victor, there is no theatre in the crucible of humanity where all specificity melts into a universal substance, or in the warm cavity of a familiarly cupped hand. It is at the crossing of ways, of traditions, of artistic practices that we can hope to grasp the distinct hybridization of cultures, and bring together the winding paths of anthropology, sociology and artistic practices. (1992:6)

This rather revealing paragraph could be interpreted in a number of ways. It is especially interesting when considered in conjunction with Pavis' later definition of interculturalism as a hybrid genre in, *The Intercultural Performance Reader* (1996) as mentioned in the introduction. Here (in the 1992 work) Pavis seems to say that a variety of cultures cannot be melted together to create a new substance—cultural alchemy is not a possibility. Moreover, he seems to state this to be a rather 'naïve' thought. Then he attempts a questionable reference to hybridization which does not directly support the argument. It is unclear whether it is the word *crucible* to which he objects—and if he prefers *hybridization* instead—or indeed if it is the process that he wants to emphasise. In any case, he makes a distinction—however unclear—between the common cultural notions of 'the melting pot' and 'hybridization'. He seems to be making the point that, "crossing of ways, of traditions, of artistic practices" do not have much to do the with the idea of 'the melting pot' and that it is *naïve* to think that cultures would (or could) *reduce* to the level where they become something other than themselves; but that it is possible to think about hybridization in terms of an exchange between cultures (by "crossing of ways, of traditions, of artistic practices"). Hybridization can be interpreted, rather literally, as cross-breeding which then would emphasise the

difference of parentage of the issue. The notion of the un-melting sand particles then gets obscured by the process of hybridization. In his 1996 work, he seems to have changed his mind: he starts out by stating that intercultural theatre is a hybrid made-up of untraceable, different origins. Having said that, the last sentence of the thought quoted above is significant in terms of the history of interculturalism and this also gives an insight into his choice of title for his book, *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*. It is indeed, "at the crossing of ways, of traditions, and artistic practices that [we] bring together the winding paths of anthropology, sociology and artistic practices". Pavis highlights an integral tenet of interculturalism, which is interdisciplinarity. The crossroads of arts and social sciences provide a suitable location for intercultural research, which is interdisciplinary by definition.[7]

Looking at Hugo's assertion itself, "Theatre is a crucible of civilizations. It is a place for human communication", the word play on *crucible* is significant; he could mean either one of the main meanings of the word: a vessel, a melting pot; or a severe test. The first option is that theatre is a vessel, a space where civilizations can be collocated for the objective of human communication. The second option is that theatre is the arena where civilization would be tested severely *because* it is a place for human communication. In other words, theatre is the means of a severe test of civilization itself. Hugo does not necessarily make a distinctive point about human specificity vanishing at the melting point; on the contrary his metaphor seems to be alluding to the coming together of people, the coming together of civilization, for the common objective of

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[7] Pavis' approach, 'Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture', implicitly identifies the meeting of different disciplines at the crossroads. At this point it is sufficient to begin to think explicitly about the interdisciplinary nature of intercultural exchange.

communication. Moreover, it is also possible to consider a coming together of civilizations for the common objective of communication.[8]

In the context of theatre, the concept of *communication* can simply be transposed as *performance;* but in academia there is nothing simple about the possible definitions of performance; it becomes yet another complex, loaded term that is open to questioning. If communication is defined as an exchange between two or more parties then it is the dynamic nature of the communication that is problematised in the theatrical context. It is interesting to note that one of the dictionary definitions of *communication* is, "the art and technique of using words effectively in imparting one's ideas".[9] Not only can this definition be applied to performance, but it also alludes to the practice and theory discussion with its statement of, "the art and technique" of doing something. The word, *word* in the definition refers to *text* and in the context of theatre it is essential to remember that text does not necessarily refer to written or spoken words, but it is an all-encompassing term that refers to the various languages of the stage and to echo Pavis, this is where theatre and study of culture meet at the crossroads. This is also where interdisciplinarity of exchange is made explicit.

> In structuralism and semiology, communication is analysed in terms of the codes or rules and conventions that determine the meaningfulness of any message, in terms of the selection and combination of meaningful elements (or signs). This approach, in turn, leads to an interest in texts [...] and the process of producing and reading them as well as problems of how (if at all) the sign can refer to a world that is external to the text. (Edgar and Sedgwick, 2002: 73)

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[8] I have not been able to read Hugo's statement in its original context; Pavis does not provide a reference for this statement by Hugo.
[9] Entry for *communication* in The American Heritage College Dictionary, Third Edition.

As identified in the passage above, (from *Cultural Theory)*, structuralism and semiology are viewed as branches of cultural theory; however, their correspondence to performance is very clear. Keeping Pavis' hourglass structure in mind, it is possible to see that in performance many levels of engagement with objects/people and meaning-making take place, be this strictly from the audience perspective, or be it an all-inclusive perspective that encompasses both the practitioners and the audiences (partakers).

Diversion to Prague

In the 1930s the Prague School structuralism played an important part in this meeting at the crossroads. Semiotics, "Derived from the Greek word *semeion"* as explained in *Semiotics of Art: Prague School Contributions* (Matejka and Titunik, 1979: ix) was specifically chosen by Charles Sanders Peirce, "for his theory of sign", from John Locke's terminology, *semiotic.*

> The same classical derivational base served for the coinage of "semiology," which the Geneva linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure, Peirce's contemporary and the cofounder of modern semiotic thought, employed to designate the general science of sign. (ibid.)

Matejka and Titunik seem to make the specific point that a concept as modern as semiology was explicitly established employing "older traditions of human thought". (ibid.) The meeting of the new and the old establishes one of the many correspondences at the crossroads. They continue to state the variety of origins involved in the development of the Prague School:

> Both Peirce's *semiotic* and Saussure's *semiology*, whether imported directly from America and Geneva or indirectly via Russia and Vienna, came to Prague, Czechoslovakia [...]. (ibid.)

At this point it is sufficient to note the interculturality of the journey of the development of a thought that has played a significant part in the later history of philosophy, linguistics, sociology and theatre, and a thought that still continues to occupy the minds (and pens) of many theoreticians and scholars today.

Despite the etymological origins of the terminology, *semiotics*, in the field of linguistics, the Prague School structuralists were mostly occupied with a semiological interest in written and spoken language[10]. This, gradually, led them to begin to differentiate between drama and lyric/epic poetry. Bogatyrev, one of the main players of the Prague School identifies (in 1936, *The Functional and Structural Concept in Ethnography*) the significance of signs and their meaning in the context of theatre as follows:

> The world around us displays two different kinds of material objects. One kind is without ideological significance, for example, natural objects, implements of production, things of everyday use. [...] In this case, we do not suppose that a stone or a hammer, for instance, is a sign which denotes something else: another object or event. However, if we take a stone, paint it white and then place it between two fields, something different happens. Such a stone will accrue a specific meaning. Now it will no longer be merely itself, namely a stone as an item of nature, but it will acquire special significance of indicating something other than itself. It will become a marker, that is, a sign with particular and variously usable meaning. [...] Similarly, when we see the crossed hammer and sickle prominently displayed, they represent not merely tools, [...] but a symbol of the USSR. What exactly has happened? A phenomenon of material reality has become a phenomenon of ideological reality: a thing has changed into a sign (which is also of a material nature, of course). (Bogatyrev in Matejka and Titunik, 1979: 13)

The statement above very clearly describes the main premise upon which this *science of signs* is based. This phenomenon, which is the opposite of

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[10] In the seventeenth century *sema*, meaning sign, was about "interpreting the signs of weather". In the late nineteenth century the linguistic meaning entered the English language. (Ayto, 2005: 446)

reification, has become the focal point of the Prague School of thought with reference to the *signified* and the *signifier* as identified earlier by Saussure. The function (or functions) an object serves is a relevant discussion in the context of theatre in terms of making meaning, and *reading* the mise en scène. The relationship between "material reality" and "ideological reality" is a central concern for performance research with specific interest in how one reality is transformed into the other as well as focusing on who it is that facilitates this transformation. Bogatyrev highlights the representational nature of objects (and people) that do not necessitate a written or spoken language. What can be inferred from the statement above is that objects (or people) can and will mean different things (represent different things) relative to their circumstances; and in the context of theatre it is possible to accept this assertion to a certain degree. The process of this transformation from the material-presentational-signifier to the ideological-representational-signified seems to be the primary concern for semiotics. Bogatyrev writes in a different essay (in 1940 *Forms and Functions of Folk Theater*), in the same compilation:

> One of the most important and fundamental features of the theater is *transformation:* the actor changes his appearance, dress, voice, and even features of his personality into the appearance, costume, voice and personality of the character whom he represents in the play. (1979: 51)

As much as there seems to be an interest in the process of transformation, the outside-in approach of the semiotician is more focused on the reading of the result of that process, which, in this context, is the audience perspective of the performance[11]. What the semiotician sees 'on stage' is "appearance" and representation.

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[11] As opposed to the inside-out approach of the practitioner for whom the process does not end!

Another contributor to the Prague School, Jindrich Honzl makes a similar point (in 1940, *Dynamics of the Sign in the Theater*) but takes it slightly further:

> Everything that makes up reality on the stage—the playwright's text, the actor's acting, the stage lighting—all these things in every case stand for other things. In other words, dramatic performance is a set of signs. (Honzl in Matejka and Titunik, 1979: 74)

In his essay he argues that, "the stage has no other function than to stand for something else and it ceases to be the stage if it does not represent something" (ibid.) According to Honzl then, a stone can never be just a natural object, if it is on a stage, it must always represent, be the signifier of something other than itself. This cancels out the first option that Bogatyrev had offered as the two kinds of material objects that exist.[12] Objects, animate or inanimate, by virtue of being "on stage" are transformed into things they are not. This thought has been historically resonant in theatre and performance research. A variety of people outside the Prague School took up these points and built upon them. Patrice Pavis, Susan Melrose, Elaine Aston and George Savona and Keir Elam are some of the prominent theoreticians who specifically write about the semiotics of theatre, or to put it simply, represent an outside-in methodology to performance. **End of diversion.**

Elam in his in-depth study, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (1980) introduces concepts and terms that were developed out of the teachings of the Prague School. In his book, he takes the reader through a quick history of structuralism and semiotics whilst introducing some of the important scholars and their terminology as well as revealing his own perception of theatre analysis. One of the central ideas of his discourse is

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[12] When applied to the human body and behaviour, this may not be very different from Barba's daily and extra-daily activities, or the *loka dharmi* and the *natya dharmi* of classical Indian theatre—both of which will be explored elsewhere in this thesis.

proxemics, a term coined by the American anthropologist Edward T. Hall, "defined by Hall himself as, 'the interrelated observations and theories of man's use of space as a specialized elaboration of culture'." (Elam 1980: 62) Elam unpicks Hall's assertion about the possible relationships between us and our space and what these relationships might represent:

> [...] man's use of space in his architectural, domestic, urban, working place and aesthetic activities is neither casual nor merely functional but represents a semiotically loaded choice subject to powerful rules which generate a range of (connotative) cultural units. (ibid.)

Here the issue of culture is entered into the semiotic analyses of theatrical performance. It must be noted that more of what Elam writes about has to do with use of space and the cultural connotations or origins of theatrical conventions, as opposed to interpersonal relationships between people who share that space. According to Hall and Elam there are three principal proxemic systems "according to the flexibility or otherwise of the boundaries between units". (ibid.) These are: *Fixed-feature*, *semi-fixed feature* and *informal*. The first is the unmovable part of the architectural structure; the second is the *movable but non-dynamic* parts that exist in the space, like the set, the grid, the seating in the auditorium etc.

> The third proxemic mode, informal space, has as its units the ever-shifting relations of proximity and distance between individuals, in the theatre, to actor-actor, actor-spectator and spectator-spectator interplay. (1980: 63)

The third mode is more pertinent for a discourse on a selective history of semiotics with an eye to cultural and intercultural dynamics. In his explications, Elam posits a possible relationship only between individuals

who are physically there to share the three dimensional space.[13] The obvious individuals who may not be physically there might be the people who worked on making the performance (writer, dramaturg, designer, costume people and other such parties), who are obviously part of the event. There may also be characters that do not physically exist but dictate the dynamic flow of the play. (For example, General Gabler in Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler.)* Moreover, the moment we factor a *range of (connotative) cultural units* into the analysis, there might be metaphysical 'individuals' that need bearing in mind (gods, demons, ghosts, reincarnations and other such parties), as well as other connections or associations the audiences make with people from their own lives but outside the world of the performance they are witnessing.

The ever-shifting relations of proximity and distance between individuals help create yet another layer of correspondences at the aforementioned *crossroads* where people and cultures and thought structures meet and an interdisciplinary exchange happens. In his chapter on *Dramatic Logic* Elam does make connections between the actual world and the dramatic, the metaphoric world of the play and offers a semiotic investigation of the signs that represent the variety of the worlds created within the performance event, however, his methodology relies solely on *reading* the performance.

Elam's book, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* is on the reading lists of many higher education institutions. He is, very clearly, stimulated by his field and is stimulating in his discourse. However, in his excitement about the contributions of the Prague School, he makes a rather remarkable opening statement at the start of his second chapter, *Foundations: Signs in the Theatre:*

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[13] It is necessary to note that objects do not feature in Elam's list of possible proxemic relationships. (Object-object, object-spectator and object-actor might have been included in this list.)

> The year 1931 is an important date in the history of theatre studies. Until that time dramatic poetics—the descriptive science of the drama and theatrical performance—had made little substantial progress since its Aristotelian origins. (1980: 5)

Like Pavis, Elam's approach to theatre and theatre studies seems to be from the audience perspective but it seems that unlike Pavis, Elam does not advocate for a meeting at the crossroads—at least not explicitly. From the statement above it is possible to deduce that Elam associates theatre with literature (because he laments the lack of more literary criticism of drama and theatrical performance) and that he is either not aware of the non-western theatre traditions, or that he is specifically not referring to them. Unfortunately, declaring Aristotle as the originator of "dramatic poetics—the descriptive science of the drama and theatrical performance" is not necessarily an uncommon position in the west.

Similarly to the Prague School scholars, some of the academics mentioned so far, find themselves in the grey-area, which is the divide between accepting theatre as *a literary genre* or as *a theatrical piece* to be performed. It is usually their text analyses that indicate the literary or the practical background of the writer. Jiri Veltrusky of the Prague School (in 1941, in *Dramatic Text as a Component of Theater)* puts this divide into words:

> The unending quarrel about the nature of drama, whether it is a literary genre or a theatrical piece, is perfectly futile. One does not exclude the other. Drama is a work of literature in its own right; it does not need anything but simple reading to enter the consciousness of the public. At the same time, it is a text that can, and mostly is intended to, be used as the verbal component of theatrical performance. (Matejka and Titunik, 1979: 95)

One of the reasons for the existence of the practice-theory divide in western scholarship may be the academic output of the people who

belong to that grey-area, which is identified by the view that theatre is a branch of literature and that theatre/performance analysis is a scrutiny of its spoken or written text. In a world where communication does not necessarily depend on written or spoken language, other commonalities take precedence and new languages are generated for *theatre is a crucible of civilizations; it is a place for human communication.*

Similarly, one of the reasons for the divide between the terms *theatre* and *performance* may also be the academic output of the people who long to get out of that grey-area by simply swapping their terminology in order to avoid connotations and specific histories—especially in the intercultural context. This leads to a somewhat pained coexistence of the two terms. Some are writing about the practice of performance from a non-practitioner's perspective, others are writing about general audience reception, while others are focusing on a more systematised notion of spectatorship, all of which result in academic papers. It is important to remember that this dilemma between the terms 'performance' and 'theatre' is specific to the English language. The concept or the word for performance in other languages will have rather different connotations and the debate between 'theatre' and another word that might allude to 'performance' are inevitably going to be different than the one we have in English. Therefore, in the context of intercultural theatre this dilemma gets even more complex because people have to refer to theatre traditions that are not part of the English speaking world. Hence the preference for *performance* in the intercultural context by scholars—regardless of the fact that they might actually be referring to 'theatre' in some cases—as the following few examples will attest: Pavis' earlier work refers to ***Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*** (1992), and then he titles his next publication (1996), *The Intercultural **Performance** Reader*, lastly, his most recent work (2003) is entitled, *Analyzing **Performance: Theatre**, Dance, and Film*, where he has come to categorise theatre as a subset of

performance. (This last one was originally published in French as *L'Analyse des Spectacle.*) One of the seminal texts in the field is edited by Marranca and Dasgupta (1991), *Interculturalism and Performance*, where a variety of articles by academics from different parts of the world use the words, *theatre* and *performance,* inconsistently. The contributors do not make any explicit differentiation (specific or general) between the terms, but more importantly, the editors do not either and use them interchangeably. In many cases, these authors are writing about theatre and theatre traditions but the title of the compilation consigns these writings as research into *performance* as opposed to *theatre.*

As for the more semiologically-oriented scholars who are not in any grey-area, their personal involvement and approach are the defining factors for their choice of terminology. Erika Fischer-Lichte co-edited a volume (1990) entitled, *A Dramatic Touch of Difference: Theatre, Own and Foreign*[14]; Graham Ley published, *From Mimesis to Interculturalism: Readings of Theatrical Theory Before and After 'Modernism'* in 1999. Fischer-Lichte and Ley employ a literary approach to *theatre* and that is the very reason for their choice of terminology. Whilst Fischer-Lichte et al make specific distinctions between 'us' and 'them' in the intercultural context, Ley attempts to chart out the historical journey of theatre from Plato to Pavis in order to uncover theory in the intercultural context. He summarises his findings:

> [...] four morals for reading what is written of the theatre. The first is that the 'theatre' may well be a figure in discourse, rather then the overt subject that it appears to be. The second is that theoretical

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[14] In this work edited by Fischer-Lichte, Riley and Gissenwehrer, all contributors and Fischer-Lichte herself always refer to **theatre** traditions 'own and foreign' only in the case of interculturalism she reverts to **performance.** It is Nigerian theatre tradition or European folk theatre tradition, but it is 'intercultural performance'. It is also interesting to note that in this work the chapters are divided into the following sections: 1-Europe, North America; 2-Japan; 3- China; 4- Indonesia, India; 5- Africa; thus making the own versus foreign binary explicitly western versus non-western.

> discourse may well, despite its monumental appearance, contain the terms which permit its own disruption, or disintegration. The third is that the belief that theory is more 'well founded' than criticism is itself 'baseless', to answer within the metaphor. The last is, perhaps, self-evident: that is that theory is decisively no less 'literary' than script. (Ley, 1999: 302)

Ley's analysis does not pretend to be anything other than *reading*; even though he often refers to scholars and practitioners who write about, or generate *performance;* the focus in his book lies in reading a literary text. His classicist background informs his choice of vocabulary and/or his perspective.

Fischer-Lichte, a semiotician and a historian, employs a somewhat similar strategy but starting the journey from the position of interculturalism. In her case, her personal back-ground (the fact that she is from Western Europe) is one of the defining factors of her analyses.[15] In a paper entitled, *Interculturalism in Contemporary Theatre* (in Pavis, 1996), she highlights the fact that, "the productive association of the theatre of one culture with that of a foreign one is neither entirely new nor unique." (Fischer-Lichte in Pavis, 1996: 28) She goes on to state that this has had a rather long history in Western culture, dating back to 'antiquity'. She, with some clarity, places intercultural theatre in the Western culture. Moreover, in the next sentence, she offers Goethe's notion of *Weltliteratur* as an example and quotes Goethe, "National literature means little nowadays, the era of world literature is at hand, and each of us now must help to hasten its arrival." (ibid.) She creates a pathway that starts from Goethe's notion of world literature to the modern and contemporary artists such as Mnouchkine, Wilson and Brook. As she paves this pathway she uses some highly significant words that are at the crux of the interculturalism debate. She refers to the above western artists *adopting*, *borrowing*, *using*, and *experimenting with* "elements of foreign theatre

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[15] Hence the reference in the title of her own compilation: *Theatre, Own and Foreign.*

traditions". (1996: 27) Her Eurocentric position is revealed by her constant association of 'own' with western and 'foreign' with Asian or African, even though she might be talking about non-western directors adopting western theatre conventions. On the very same page Pavis adds one more such word to the list, which is *appropriation*. Considering the fact that all these words appear on just one page of western writing about interculturalism, it is easy to identify the trend. More verbs could be added to this list: Utilise, Apply, Translate, Adapt, Transform, Acclimatise, Transfer, Steal, Exploit, Interpret, Reinterpret, Misinterpret...

Following from Fischer-Lichte's lead, what is it 'we' do to these elements from 'other' theatre traditions? Does it matter what verb we use? It does, because not all verbs are equal; the implications of some are more democratic than others', some highlight a strictly western world-view, some seem more flexible, some have different practical implications than others, and needless to say, some are unethical in the context of intercultural exchange.[16] The point is that the interculturalism that is analysed so far does not seem to have any correlations with ethics of any kind and therefore, it does not necessitate an inquiry into *how* it happens, as long as the result, (the performance) can be labelled as intercultural. Fischer-Lichte explains further:

> Both the elements of the own culture as well as those from the foreign culture are ripped from their various contexts. They can neither refer back to the context from which they originate, thereby offering coherence and meaning, nor do they enter into a relation

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[16] This clearly demonstrates that the main problem is with language rather than interculturality. Austin's concept of 'performativity' sheds different lights and casts different shadows when applied to the varying verbs mentioned above. My understanding of performativity is that the actions implied by the word define what the word means and that this is problematised because the doer of the action has to interpret before, during and after the doing. Interpretation, especially in the context of the arts, can hardly be standardised and should not be generalised, thus giving names to actions becomes a linguistic problem.

> with one another, so that one could interpret their meaning. (1996: 32)

She continues to explain that in such a scenario the specific cultural signs cease to exist, thereby resulting in the impossibility of meaning-making by the audiences. Once again, the focus seems to be on how the performance is *read* as opposed to how it is made. She concludes in *The Dramatic Touch of Difference: Theatre, Own and Foreign* that:

> The Intercultural production in contemporary theatre is, therefore, not uniquely interpreted as an aesthetic indicator of a potential social change in the existing culture. It functions far more as the place of execution and instrument of such cultural change. (1990: 287)

It is possible to interpret this as; change does not happen in society but it happens in the theatre tradition itself. Contemporary intercultural performance encourages a shift in the theatre culture and not the society and therefore, one should not turn to theatre if one is interested in 'aesthetic indicators' of a culture. This conclusion is the natural development of her initial idea which argues that no 'other' theatre tradition is sought after because 'we' might be interested in that 'other' culture; only when there is a problem or something lacking in the existing culture 'we' seek 'other' cultures. This may or may not be true for some people but as a premise, it borders on coming across as a generalisation accented by a hint of cultural arrogance.

Perhaps acknowledging the performativity of the words (especially verbs) utilised by scholars in the 'intercultural theatre' context, that describe the relationship between the two or more cultures at work might fill in whatever gap there may be for the scholar between practice and theory. In addition, it may help incorporate the hermeneutic level of complexity into the intercultural exchange in question. Unless we

emphasise the exchange in interculturalism, we risk getting stuck in the chain of 'misunderstandings' as Winet calls them.

> Western audiences have increasing access to diverse performance forms whose conventions they cannot read, and so they develop strategies for misreading those conventions. Theatrical reception becomes touristic. Interculturalism flourished through a hermeneutic circle in which disoriented reading produces new misunderstandings. Many of these misunderstanding form the basis for new artistic and intercultural forms. (Winet, 1998: 98)

Chapter Two: Process of the Practitioner

Some of the immediate names associated with the practice of interculturalism are Brook, Mnouchkine and Barba, as well as Schechner and Bharucha. These practitioners are also theoreticians and some of them are also scholars. The fact that most of these people can approach theatre both from a practitioner's perspective and from a scholar's perspective enriches their work, whatever the form of output might be. In this chapter of the thesis, the focus will be on the inside-out process of the practitioner, as opposed to the outside-in methodology of the scholar's established in the first chapter. In the case of some of the names mentioned above, (i.e. Barba) it is even possible to state that the primary interest lies in learning about and understanding aesthetic theories from different parts of the world. The subsequent significant realisation that aesthetic theories are better understood experientially is what separates the scholars and the practitioners. The individuals in the latter group approach theatre from the makers' point of view, in all aspects of their work, whether they regularly make theatre or not.[17] In fact, their approach is identified by their inside-out process as opposed to the outside-in methodology of the scholars' approach. This difference in perspective explains (and nullifies) whatever contention there may be between theory and practice, because theory is practiced and practice is theorised. The difference in perspective does not and should not create a divide between practice and theory; however, what it does underline is that the observer's perspective and the doer's perspective progress in directional opposition to one another, much like the two Roman goddesses, "One was the goddess of the waves which lap the shore, the other was the goddess of

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[17] Arguably, with the exception of Bharucha; even though he is a director himself, the reason why he is included here is the contribution to the intercultural debate he has provided through responding to Brook's and to a lesser extent Mnouchkine's work.

the waves which return to the open sea." (Taviani in Barba and Savarese, 1991: 79)

For those who make a distinction, the debates surrounding theory and practice evoke other discourses related to interculturalism, such as performance aesthetics, content versus form, cultural-politics, pedagogy, reception theory, semiotics, and theatre anthropology among others. In my view, the interconnectedness of these discourses to interculturalism is testimony to the interdisciplinarity of interculturalism and not an indication of a differentiation between practice and theory. Since I do not make a categorical differentiation between theory and practice, I advocate for highlighting the differences between an out-side-in and an inside-out approach by presenting these names that are commonly associated with 'intercultural theatre' under two general headings: *Methodology of the Scholar* and *Process of the Practitioner.* The scholars and the practitioners who are given as examples here serve two purposes; firstly, they are some of the more influential figures in the context of performance and therefore it is important to note their contribution. Secondly, their work relates to or emerges from the above named discourses, for example Bharucha's work corresponds to his worldview which emphasises his cultural-politics, or Pavis, a semiotician who applies theories of linguistics to performance analysis and reception theory and then to intercultural exchange. Mnouchkine's work could be analysed in terms of form and content relationships. An exhaustive coverage of their work is not the objective in this context, nor is it possible to do that in just one PhD thesis. By the same token, an exhaustive coverage of the issues mentioned is not a feasible objective either, however, what is possible is to acknowledge the interconnectedness of these seemingly disparate discourses with interculturalism, and expose facets that are interrelated in order to provide a general survey of interculturalism whilst highlighting the more significant commonalities. In this light, it will be appropriate to explore how

interculturalism manifests itself in the works of Brook, Mnouchkine and Barba and identify any similarities and differences by employing Bharucha's response to these practitioners as a foreground. Brook's *Mahabharata* (1985 theatre, 1988 film) has created a myriad of discussions with regard to interculturalism in theatre, (as well as introducing this great story to a great variety of people) which is one of the reasons why it will have more coverage here. Mnouchkine's theatre will be explored as an example of western interculturalism as a genre and Barba's theatre anthropology be outlined. Since Schechner's work is almost like a connective tissue throughout the intercultural theatre debate, instead of devoting a specific section to him, his ideas and provocations will be considered throughout the development of this chapter as well as the whole of the thesis.

Peter Brook's culture: *"culture like yoghurt"*

Arguably the most influential intercultural director in the world is Peter Brook (born 1925), partly because he has been working professionally, non-stop since 1943 and mainly because his understanding of culture is "like yoghurt, culture as fermentation". As Michael Kustow explains in his biography of Peter Brook:

> Brook's work with his 'inter-cultural' group, as it has been labelled by the academics, is not a swap-shop of skills and techniques, but as he once suggested in an aside, culture like yoghurt, culture as fermentation. His Bouffes du Nord theatre has housed a mixed group unafraid to descend into disorder to surface with forms of performance that are nuanced, direct and—using a word Brook likes—transparent. This theatre does not belong to any single culture. It has no homeland, and so no abroad. It is extra-territorial. (2005: 2)

It does not sound like they are pleased with the general understanding of the inter-cultural label as it has been attributed to Brook's theatre by the

academics. What is clear from the first part of this comment is that the *Centre International de Recherches Théâtrales* (CIRT) at the Bouffes du Nord, in Paris, does not serve as a sterilised lab for Brook to conduct multicultural experiments to quench his empiricist thirst. His aim is not to short cut training in various theatre traditions of the world by making each performer teach Brook and the other members the essence of what he/she knows. Brook's approach to 'culture like yoghurt' and 'culture as fermentation' demonstrates that he is interested in allowing whatever chemical, biological or organic reactions may occur due to the differences and similarities in the group. Taking into account Brook's writings on theatre, if the 'descent into disorder' is the agitation caused by the fermentation process, then 'surfacing with forms' 'that are nuanced, direct' and 'transparent' must be the process of choosing and decision making which is informed by intelligence, fuelled by motivation and emotionalised by precision. Asserting that his 'theatre does not belong to a single culture' does not make this theatre characterless; on the contrary, it seems to put the focus on the human (the performer) and in the present tense. Focusing on the 'now' does not equate with the denial of history as some scholars argue,[18] because being is as diachronic an experience as a synchronic one. Human-being is capable of responding to immediate surroundings and is constantly supported by an inner world which he/she maintains within.

The same reasoning works for his audiences as well; Brook believes that they are able to react and respond to their environment just like his actors and that is the simple but the main reason for creating theatre that breaks all boundaries and in turn creating new audiences. In his 1969 bid to the funding bodies for the CIRT he advocates that the only way to better the world is by creating new audiences and new audiences can only be created if they witness new theatre. He continues by

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[18] As Bharucha does in the *Afterword* of the second edition of his *Theatre and the World.*

responding to the revolutionaries of 1968 that it is possible to wipe the slate clean by starting from zero in the theatre and that it is futile to wait for the world to change so that real art can be made again. In Brook's words, "Total reform can be put into immediate application." (in Kustow, 2005: 199) As Kustow explains, securing the funds were very important at that time because Brook wanted three years of financial freedom from the box office gains in order to travel with an extended troupe. They were successful in their bid and they travelled to Persia, where they worked on *Orghast* with Ted Hughes as part of the Shiraz/Persepolis Festival (1971), continued their experiments in Paris (part of 1972), and travelled to Africa and the US in 1972 and 1973. Brook had created a multiethnic, multinational troupe, they had a base in Paris but they were to travel together for three years; he was interested in the possibilities of generative processes, in dynamic relationships created between these 'different' people. Brook articulates his interest thus, "the pre-expressive substrata that underlie cultural stereotypes and imitations". (Brook in Kustow, 2005: 203) In other words he is interested in the *being* process of a being. How does one *be*? What constitutes *being*? And that question leads on to: How do we *be* together? If we are able to shed our cultural selves, what are we left with? Assuming it is true that the pre-expressive substratum is the raw being and that the cultural layers define the 'dressed' being; then how do we communicate with others who do not share the same cultural layers that dress us? Closely related to this train of thought is the phenomenon of learning. In this process of working with others who are culturally different than us, in our 'raw' state, how do we learn? Observing the phenomenon of *being* seems to have preoccupied Brook all his life, but it was at the end of the 60s and the start of the 70s when he was able to 'play' with this idea practically and in a focused manner—i.e. since he did not have to think about finances, he could concentrate on the work, his theatre research. If it was possible to do this with the actors then it would mean that the same would be true of the audiences as well. This was the new audience he was

after, 'raw', 'undressed' so to speak. It is for this reason that he thought it important to change the name of his organisation when they went back to Paris after three years of travelling theatre research. When Bouffes du Nord was ready to be opened officially—with the production of *Timon of Athens* in 1974—Brook changed the name to International Centre for Theatre Creation. He wanted to give his audiences the specific message that he was interested in *creating*. (Kustow, 2005:227)

Brook's quest for the 'raw' is manifest in his choice of material as well as his way of working.

> I'm going toward the essential elements. Not the essential experience, but the essential elements. That's really like in writing when you go back and cut out all unnecessary adjectives. You're not really against the adjectives themselves but you look at what you are trying to say and you see that adjectives are fogging the meaning...you are trying to find the most appropriate form for reflecting something. (Kustow, 2005: 232)

Asking the most fundamental questions and tirelessly searching for ways of answering them year after year, project after project allows Brook and his actors to learn new ways of creating theatre by un-weaving the socio-cultural adjectives that fog the meaning. In the subsequent years he was going to paraphrase his quest as, "a question of trying to get something hidden to emerge by elimination". (Kustow, 2005: 278)

Brook's highly prolific career is packed with engaging, arresting and often controversial projects from the very start until the present. Arguably, he commenced his theatre research that is explicitly associated with interculturalism in the late 60s and the analysis of his work starts from there. It is common knowledge that his troupe consists of actors from a wide variety of countries and ethnic origin and ever since the establishment of CIRT (now CICT) he has continued this tradition.

Different projects might bring in additional actors to the troupe and there are a few collaborators who have been working with Brook since the start. The project that attracted the most attention with regards to the intercultural debate supported such an eclectic cast. *The Mahabharata* boasted a team from many countries: Switzerland, Poland, France, Senegal, England, Germany, Wales, Northern Ireland, Trinidad, Burkina Faso, Turkey, South Africa, Italy, Japan, Vietnam, Bali, America and India; as they are listed in the accompanying documentation of the film version. It begs the question if indeed one of the reasons why it evokes the intercultural debate is the multi-nationality of the team working on it. But we do know that intercultural and multinational may not have the same meaning depending on who is uttering the words and in what context.[19] What is Brook's cast, intercultural, international or multinational? International and multinational seem to be more corporate terms as they are more likely to be used in business and in politics than in the arts; mainly because businesses doing business with other countries have to adhere to certain national and international laws and laws are national (or international) and not cultural. Culture as a word seems to be more about the human and human behaviour and it does not evoke national or governmental laws as much as the word nation does. Brook's interest lies with his theatre research and that seems to be more about the human and human behaviour as well—as opposed to governmental, national or indeed international laws.

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[19] For example, the UN by definition divides countries/people according to their geo-political boundaries; therefore, their dealings are international. Big corporations are often referred to as 'multinationals' for short. In the current political agenda in Britain 'multiculturalism' seems to be a buzz word; the government seems to be offering this word as a prophylactic against race-related problems. The official 10 Downing Street site allows access to speeches, where it is possible to count how many times Blair et al use the word multiculturalism. It is also possible to observe that they have never referred to interculturalism or interculturality. www.number-10.gov.co.uk

In terms of word choice, even seasoned scholars make untenable assertions in their analyses, as in the example of Dasgupta on Brook's *Mahabharata.* Dasgupta is one of the many scholars who associate Brook's work with interculturalism[20]. He compares the *Mahabharata* to "Brook's earlier intercultural adaptations—*Orghast, Conference of the Birds, The Ik,* and *Ubu*" as a "task worthy of admiration". (1991: 76) In the same article, Dasgupta declares:

> Given the internationalist cast and the quixotic admixture of costumes and musical instruments, it seems obvious that coherence was not their primary concern. (1991: 80)

"Internationalist" is a curious word choice which is loaded with unexplained layers of meaning. Throughout the article Dasgupta accuses Brook (and Carriére the script writer of Brook's *Mahabharata)* with the charge of Orientalism and projecting his western-ness onto an eastern epic and thus becoming "an illustration of the West misreading the literature of the East". (ibid.) The phrase 'internationalist cast' makes the statement even more dubious. In his context, is he equating the terms 'internationalist' and 'Orientalist'? He does not explain. It seems as though he is blaming the cast, the costume designer and the musicians for being heterogeneous. It makes one think, he may be blaming these people for not being Indian, because that might be the only option for Dasgupta to accept a performative rendition of the famous epic. [21]

The 'epic', *Mahabharata*, will be contextualised in the chapter on Indian performance aesthetics. For the moment it is sufficient to say that the *Mahabharata* does not have a western equivalent in terms of scope

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[20] After all his article, *The Mahabharata: Peter Brook's Orientalism* appears in the book he co-edited with Marranca, *Interculturalism and Performance.*
[21] I'm not suggesting this because of Dasgupta's Indian origin, but the *Mahabharata's.*

and length. It consists of about[22] 100,000 stanzas of 'Brahmanic lore'. (Dasgupta in Dasgupta and Marranca 1991: 76). In Dasgupta's words it is:

> [...] essentially and originally a secular tale of war and strife. [...] a vital source of nourishment, a measure of one's thoughts and deeds. It is no mere epic constrained by literary and narrative strategies, but a revolutionary injunction, ethical and theological in purpose, that determines and defines the social and personal interactions of millions of Indians." (1991: 76)

In Rustom Bharucha's words it is:

> [...] our 'ancient' past, our 'authentic' record of traditional Hindu culture. [...] [It] is not merely a great narrative poem; it is our *itihasa*[23], the fundamental source of knowledge of our literature, dance, painting, sculpture, theology, stage craft, sociology, economy—in short, our *history* in all its detail and density. (1993: 68-69)

In Carriére's words it is:

> [...] the masterpiece at the centre of the very rich Sanskrit literature. The poem is the origin of thousands of belief, legends, thoughts, teachings and characters which even today form part of Indian life. 'Maha' in Sanskrit means 'great' 'complete'. [...] 'Bharata' is primarily the name of a legendary character, then that of a family or clan. So the title can be understood as 'The great History of the Bharatas'. However, in an extended meaning, 'bharata' can mean 'Hindu', and, even more generally, 'Man'. So *The Mahabharata* could be translated as 'The Great History of Mankind'. (1989: 3)

As it will be discussed later, the *Bhagavad Gita* is deemed to be the most important section of the whole story; it is where Krishna communicates the

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[22] Dasgupta writes "over 90,000 stanzas, Jean-Claude Carriére states it is, "more than one hundred thousand stanzas long" (Dasgupta in Dasgupta and Marranca, 1991: 76), (Carriére page 3 DVD booklet).

[23] Itihasa are a specific type of sacred texts, they are recorded from what has been remembered, as in 'traditional', as opposed to what has been revealed by gods, as in 'revelation'. The types of sacred texts will be briefly discussed in the chapter pertaining to India. In the *Concise Encyclopaedia of Hinduism*, Klostermaier's translation of *Itihasa* is, "so it has been said." (1998: 86)

main philosophical teaching (the path to Liberation) to Arjuna, the greatest of all warriors. Dasgupta is absolutely outraged by Brook's staging of the *Bhagavad Gita*. In this section Brook makes Krishna whisper the whole text in Arjuna's ear, the audience can barely make out a few sentences. Dasgupta argues that Brook has taken the heart of the text away from the audience by reducing the "fulcrum on which rests the entire thrust of this monumental drama of humanity". (1991: 78) He declares that, "*The Mahabharata* is nothing, an empty shell, if it is read merely as a compendium of martial legends, of revenge, valor and bravura." (ibid.) That may well be true; but just because the philosophy is not spelled out by Krishna does not mean that the audience does not 'get' the importance of the situation and this indeed will make them 'think' about what might be said. In other words, it may be possible to approach the situation from a positive and not a negative position—looking at what Brook is doing rather then speculating about what he does not want to do. Brook's understanding of the sacredness of the text as well as the importance of the *Bhagavad Gita* is very subtly demonstrated by the intimate relationship created between Krishna and Arjuna. The fact that the audience is receiving 'bits' and 'pieces' reflects the experience of the people as well as the historians who had to make sense of fragments of information transmitted by an oral tradition. In addition, (as will be clearer in the chapter devoted to India), some of the sacred texts were revealed to certain members of society whereas others were accessible by all. Knowing the precision with which Brook approaches his work, it would not be difficult to imagine that he purposefully integrated his understanding of the importance of the texts and their content into his production, and thus made the specific choice of representing the whole of the *Gita* by a few phrases, instead of trying to unpick and explain the complexity of Krishna's teachings. The *Gita* is a very sophisticated text that requires many readings, in addition, it is not a book of answers, it requires each being to question and therefore understand his/her actions. Brook's treatment of

the piece proves his understanding of it not his desire to trivialise it as it is suggested by Bharucha and Dasgupta.[24]

Bharucha comments about audience reaction to this section; he seems to be as much outraged by the audience reaction caused as the sacrilegious treatment of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

> It did not come as a surprise to me when the audience laughed on hearing Krishna's famous advice to Arjuna: 'Act, but don't reflect on the fruits of the action'. If the New York audience laughed, it is not because their ideology of capitalism and self-interest had been called into question.[25] Krishna's statement came out of the blue without any depth of meaning or resonance. What could have been a moment of revelation was reduced to a banality. (1993: 71)

Bharucha seems to be overlooking the fact that it is also very common for westerners, just like everyone else in the world, to laugh at our/their own miserable selves, especially when we/they are faced with our/themselves on a stage. Having said that, it is not possible for anyone to find out or speculate why people in the audience might have laughed at that moment. It seems as though how Brook dealt with the loaded section of the *Bhagavad Gita* was very thought provoking and it may indeed have forced his audiences to undertake self-reflecting contemplation. Those unfamiliar with Hinduism and the Brahmanic teachings (the Vedas) would have struggled to grasp the complex ideas of an unfamiliar world-view. However, it is more fruitful for Brook to coax his audiences into contemplating what they would do in that situation rather than preach at them.

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[24] For further positive criticism of Brook's production of the *Mahabharata*, and specifically his treatment of the *Bhagavad-Gita* see Meyer-Dinkgräfe (2001: 137-259).
[25] On a simplistic level, it is possible that the audiences reacted to the concept of 'acting' with laughter because they recognised it as 'familiar'. After all, that was what the actors on the stage were doing, 'acting'. It may be possible to guess various readings as to why they laughed, but because it is impossible to 'know' it may not be too useful to presume.

Bharucha laments that Brook never found it to be problematic to contextualise the piece in India. "In fact, the context is never an issue for him. What matters is the 'flavour of India' that is suggested through the *mise-en- scène*." (1993: 70) Bharucha then continues with a tirade on the significance of 'flavour' in Indian aesthetics of performance. He accuses Brook for not having done enough research on the traditional Indian theatre, especially the concept of flavour (*rasa*) as taught by the *Natyashastra*. Bharucha explains:

> 'Flavour' is not some mystical aura that emanates from a culture. It is the outcome of a process wherein specific ingredients have been seasoned and blended with specific spices in particular combinations. The 'flavour' of Indian culture has a definite context. It is what differentiates a curry from a stew, and I am not just referring to the taste, but to the entire history of a people that shapes taste in particular ways. (1993:71)

This point about 'flavour' (rasa) is pertinent for the chapter pertaining to Indian performance aesthetics. Bharucha seems to be saying that different ways of cooking as well as different cooking pots and utensils will result in different processes and different products, thus tastes will be shaped in particular ways. I wonder, had Brook explicitly written about the connections he has made with his project and the teachings of the *Natyashastra* if Bharucha would have given him the benefit of the doubt.

Bharucha makes an important point about the relationships that are defined and shaped by the conventions of the caste system. In the story, as well as in real life, people's actions are to be justified by their caste duties, which in turn are shaped by *dharma*—the cosmic and social order. Respect is an important part of the caste system; one's caste dictates how one would approach and receive another. Bharucha gives a few examples: Krishna and Arjuna belong to the same caste and therefore would "share an intimacy (not explored in the production) that Duryodhana

and Karna never hope to share". (1993: 73) Furthermore, he states that Karna is humiliated because as the adopted son of a driver, he is of the lowest caste. Although he is of the highest caste by birth, he does not find out about his real parentage until just before the war begins. Bharucha claims that in Brook's production Karna's suffering was depicted at a personal level only and that it should have reflected the "social and ritual structure of Hindu society with its accompanying tensions and constraints". (ibid.) The point Bharucha is making is seminal; indeed creating relationships is what theatre is about and that is the reason why any socio-cultural ingredient would play an important role in the depiction of relationships. However, it is arguable whether Brook has indeed ignored the caste system and caused the *rupture* in the characters' *ritual status* as Bharucha argues. Karna seems very much like an outsider throughout and Krishna and Arjuna do share a certain intimacy as previously mentioned. Do the audience need to know the particularities of the caste system and how it works? Not necessarily. As long as the director and the performers have taken the facts about the caste system into consideration in their process and incorporated their response in their work, then their *ritual status* should be implicit. An explicit point about the caste system in order to educate the audiences could veer the focus away from the rest of the action.

Arguably, the singularly most important point Bharucha makes about Brook's *Mahabharata* is that the text must be considered in the Indian context "on as many levels as possible". (1993: 70)

> So that its meaning (or rather multiple levels of meaning) can have some bearing on the lives of the Indian people for whom the *Mahabharata* was written, and who continue to derive their strength from it. [...] One cannot agree with the premise that 'The *Mahabharata* is Indian but it is universal'. The 'but' is misleading. The *Mahabharata*, I would counter, is universal *because* it is Indian. One cannot separate the culture from the text. (ibid.)

This seems to encapsulate the heart of the intercultural debate; can one separate the culture from the text? Or what is the relationship between the culture and the text? Is the fact that Bharucha finds the 'but' misleading testimony to his socio-cultural perspective? Has he the right to demand that everyone finds that 'but' misleading? It can be argued that the *Mahabharata* is universal, period. Its place of origin becomes less important compared with its universality. Universality by nature is an all encompassing condition that does not privilege one member of a group over another; so it should not privilege one culture over another. This does not dispute that the *Mahabharata* is Indian. It certainly is, but that does not mean that it cannot be told by a non-Indian. Bharucha blames Brook for not allowing the production to become 'too Indian'. He mentions Mallika Sarabhai, "the only 'authentic' Indian presence on stage, with black hair, brown skin and expressive eyes".[26] (1993: 79) He suggests that because she was not allowed to perform as she knows how but rather directed in a specific way, her delivery was monotonous and that it lacked texture.

> If she could have expressed herself through dance even for a few moments, her culture would have been embodied in the performance. But that's clearly what Brook didn't want; it would have become 'too Indian'. (1993: 80)

Bharucha seems to be assuming that she only embodies her culture in her dance and that the dancer's body, when not dancing, is not capable of embodying her culture. Moreover, he assumes that Brook thinks alike and that is the reason why he does not allow her to dance. Bharucha does not do his argument any justice by such comments heavily based on presumptions.

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[26] This description is rather curious, considering the fact that Sarabhai's fellow performers were from a variety of parts of the world and some of them actually fit the description Bharucha reserves for Sarabhai. Moreover, reducing the conditions of being an *authentic* Indian to three such tenets sounds too subjective for it to be academic—to say the least!

Dasgupta also detects a lack of 'Indianness' in the production and drops a literal bomb at the end of his paper.

> If, as I have suggested, Brook's *Mahabharata* falls short of the essential Indianness of the epic by staging predominantly its major incidents and failing to adequately emphasize its coterminous philosophical precepts, it does however raise the spectre, in no uncertain terms, of the fate that awaits us in the event of a nuclear holocaust. [...] Brook's tragic coda is appended to a body of prophetic writings that give daily sustenance to millions of Hindus the world over. Here again we might possibly glimpse another aspect of "Orientalism". But now that even India possesses the bomb, the *Mahabharata*, yes, Peter Brook's and Jean-Claude Carriére's *Mahabharata*, apocalyptic ending in place, should be performed in the land from which it originated. The eternal cycle will be completed, for today both India and the West possess the ultimate weapon, the *pasupata* which Shiva bestows as a gift to Arjuna. (1991: 81-82)

Dasgupta's initial point is not very dissimilar to Bharucha's that Brook's attempt at summarising this vast text into nine hours is not acceptable because of the complexity of the material; especially the density of the 'philosophical precepts'. Because the Indian traditional play structure does not work in a linear fashion and it does not support genres such as tragedy or comedy—as in the accustomed Aristotelian play structure; focusing the action on the tragedy of the aftermath of the war not only goes against the aesthetics of traditional Indian theatre but it also negates the concept of dharma, cosmic and social order. Arjuna, the great warrior is given the *pasupata*, the ultimate weapon, which is nothing other than a weapon of mass destruction; the *Bhagavad Gita* depicts Arjuna's inner battle, the result of which will be the decisive factor whether he will use this weapon. In a sense, understanding why and more importantly *how* Arjuna makes the decision to fight (and is aided by Krishna himself) is grasping the most complex teaching of Hinduism. In this context, Dasgupta's references to India's nuclear weapons do not make it clear as

to why the *Mahabharata* "should be performed" in India. If he is suggesting that India was colonised by the British because it did not possess the means to rebel against it and that now that they developed nuclear weapons they would not be colonised, meaning that he would welcome the "eternal cycle to be completed" by daring the British (or "the West"), then it seems to me that he is not directly responding to the play. His response reads like a personal, postcolonial expression.

As much as Dasgupta and Bharucha (and everyone else who may agree with them) have a right to bring in their personal politics into their reception and interpretation of a performance, Brook has a right to explore and depict the *Mahabharata* without trying to be Indian. The question of authenticity does not even have to enter into Brook's frame, if that is not what he intends to explore. That does not mean to say that the Dasguptas or the Bharuchas of this world are incorrect in any way, of course not, on the contrary their very personal reactions open up very important discussions on many levels. Bharucha has been writing his reactions and responses to Peter Brook's interculturality for many years now. In his 2000 publication, *The Politics of Cultural Practice: Thinking Through Theatre in an Age of Globalization,* in the very first page he refers to one of Brook's productions and he actually seems to be fuelled by his negative reaction to Brook's, *The Ik,* which seems to start the book for him. Once again he accuses Brook of trivializing other cultures. He suggests that Brook's usage of the elements of water, fire and earth on stage alongside sand, and flowers are the signs of this trivialisation of India, but of course that cannot be strictly true because Brook's consequent productions of *Carmen* and *Cherry Orchards* utilise exactly the same list of elements.

> When one puts on a play, inevitably, at the beginning it has no form, it is just words on paper, or ideas. The event is the shaping of the form. What one calls the work is the search for the right form. If

> this work is successful, the result can eventually last for a few years, but no more. (Brook, 1993: 51)

Brook's interest in *form* and his approach to the theatre *event* differentiate him as a practitioner. His interest in creating new forms is confluent with his idea of culture; allowing for the fermentation to take place will result in an organic product and more importantly, an organic process. Privileging an organic process of constant reconfiguration over fitting a man-made construct onto his actors is an indication of Brook's engagement with form in the present tense.

There is a considerable difference between Brook's embodying and understanding of interculturalism and Bharucha's approach to interculturalism; this difference is shaped by their personal and professional perspectives. Bharucha appears to be a critic and author with practical experience and Brook is first and foremost a practitioner with the specific agenda of practice as research (hence the title of his theatre company). Bharucha views interculturalism as a western genre and keeps his focus politicised whereas Brook seems to be interested in the craft as well as the function it serves—as in the quotation above. Brook's writings focus on the process unlike Bharucha, whose focus seems to stay on the reception, the interpretation, the result. Bharucha seems to be more plot-driven in his interest. He discusses his own practice (*Request Concert; Prakriya; Woyzeck)* with a self-reflective eye and declares *Prakriya (Process)* "a tortured rehearsal process", "a rather self-conscious frame work" and "somewhat contrived and arid—precisely what I dislike in much intercultural experimentation". (1993: 248-249) In this work a character from the *Mahabharata* meets Nina from the *Seagull*; both characters have a memory "it is a moment in the past that activates the future". (249) This work was meant to be about the process of memory as Bharucha describes it but did not work very well by his own admission. As much as Bharucha proves to be almost as sharp when it comes to self-criticism, he

seems to take it further when he writes about Brook. Bharucha labels Brook's *Mahabharata*, "Shakespeareana" (1993: 77) and he declares that, "it is 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing'." (1993: 76) He also blames Patrice Pavis with, "gurufication of Brook" (1993: 246) mainly because according to Bharucha, Pavis seems to be making generalised comments about Brook's detailed understanding of India and the Indian culture and Pavis' acceptance of the superfluousness of contextualising the performance in India, simply angers Bharucha. Bharucha's rich and powerful criticism will help explore Mnouchkine's approach to interculturalism as well.

Mnouchkine: *"The Theatre Is Oriental"*[27]

Ariane Mnouchkine (born 1939) is an exceptionally political woman; perhaps unsurprisingly, so is her theatre, Théâtre du Soleil (Theatre of the Sun). In fact, she is so overtly political that she was part of a group who petitioned Boutros Boutros-Gali to resign in connection to the UN's inadequate response to the 'ethnic cleansing' in Bosnia and went on a hunger strike to condemn the indifference. (Oral, 2003: 110) Later on, in 1996, she (and her company) were to side with 300 immigrants from Mali "whose papers were not in order" (*sans papier*). They provided the immigrants with shelter "in the company's caravan-huts". "[...] they were locked in with them for several days and nights, up to and including the police attack." (Shevtsova, 1999: 73) These are only two, out of many, of the examples of Mnouchkine's political activity. Naturally, her work is very much influenced by her political views.[28]

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[27] (Artaud quoted by Mnouchkine in Pavis, 1996: 95) Mnouchkine adopts Artaud's phrase and gives it as a title to her contribution to Pavis', *The Intercultural Performance Reader.*
[28] Their experience with the immigrants marked the company deeply and it became the basis for the next production, only the story was changed to the relationship between China and Tibet. It was called, *Et Soudain des Nuit d'Eveil* (And Suddenly Nights of Awakening) (1997)

Starting with Wesker's *Kitchen* in 1967 (with circus elements helping to tell the story) and continuing with the piece devised by the company *1789* (in 1970)—a re-enactment of the revolution whilst experimenting with the carnavalesque—her political theatre was onto great box-office successes. Her latest production (in 2005), *Le Dernier Caravansérail (Odyssées) Part I: Le Fleuve Cruel* (The Last Caravansary (Odysseus) Part I: The Cruel River) and *Part II: Origins and Destines* (Origins and Destinies), was no exception. According to the reviews, almost all performances of the tour were sold-out; the reviews were good but not overly enthusiastic. Michael Feingold of the *Village Voice* calls it a "grave disappointment" and his headline reads: *Escape from Drama: Ariane Mnouchkine tells an epic story of million lives—but does she make us care?* The verdict is, no. He describes the production as a:

> [...] meditation on the travails and fates of refugees in the contemporary world. Done in a cascade of non-Western languages, it makes a sweeping though not all-encompassing survey: Afghans, Iraqis, Iranians, Kurds, Chechens, Russians, Kosovars, and others straggle through its long procession of scenes, fleeing Christian extremists, Muslim extremists, war, totalitarianism, starvation, drought, or simply the general misery of life in countries where the economy has tanked and the water in the rusty taps is no different from that in the open sewers. (*Village Voice* July 26 2005)

It is evident from the descriptions that this is a majestic attempt at depicting the most taxing problems facing our world today; only it might be over ambitious in its desire to cover (literally) too much ground. Feingold writes that even though the production was dispersed with "breath-stopping moments" the main problem with it was that, "trying to do the work of a UN report, Mnouchkine seems to abdicate the work of the theater". Perhaps Feingold was aware of the fact that Mnouchkine was the recipient of the UNESCO Picasso Medal in March 2005.[29] He concludes

[29] "The UNESCO Picasso Medal, created on the centenary of Pablo Picasso's birth in 1981, is awarded to individuals or groups, in recognition of an outstanding contribution to

his review by articulating his disappointment: "Tackling an enormous reality, Mnouchkine has done the one thing I would not have expected of her: she has made it less interesting."(ibid.) Mnouchkine is famous for her over-the-top and extremely theatrical productions; an expectation of more of the same might be the reason for this reviewer's chagrin.

Charles Isherwood, the reviewer for *The New York Times* opens his piece by alluding to the length of the production, a point he makes several times in this review. "A two-part dramatization of the suffering of the world's refugee population that is ultimately as stirring as it is solemn, as rewarding as it is, well, long."[30] However, he admits that even at six hours performance (plus a 90 minute break), the effectiveness of the production increases in time. He writes, "This deeply socially engaged artist insists that we keep looking and looking, until at last we see and we feel" instead of looking away at the first sign of pity.

Bryce Hallett of *The Sydney Morning Herald* focuses on how the story was put together as a result of over 100 hours of interviews taped at refugee camps, in France, Australia, Indonesia and New Zealand. Hallett writes that in 2002 Mnouchkine was there for the Sydney Festival with another production but, "at the time the director was so upset by the Howard Government's manipulation of the Tampa affair that she considered boycotting the Sydney Festival"[31], instead she went to the refugee camp to conduct her interviews. Hallett's positive response to the interviews is evident from the remark: "[it] is not verbatim theatre as such but an interpretive, poetic, graceful and near operatic work that is moving and grim."(ibid.)

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the arts or culture" http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=26649&URL_DO-DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html accessed 24 November 2005

[30] http://theater2.nytimes.com/2005/07/10/theater/reviews accessed 09 January 2005

[31] http://www.smh.com.au/news/arts-reviews/le-dernier-caravanserail/2005/10/14 accessed 09 January 2005

For *The Guardian*, Michael Kustow, the biographer of Peter Brook provides the review of the Paris production in 2003. Kustow picks up on the performative aspects of the production and gives a few examples of the theatrical scenes people have come to expect from Mnouchkine (i.e. stormy ocean crossing scenes, actors' feet not ever touching the ground due to everything being wheeled on and off the stage, thus "the fluid staging" becoming metaphorical for "existence in endless transit".) He states, "[it] doesn't go in for economic and political overviews; instead, it confines itself to the real experiences of the actors and the inhabitants of refugee camps. The recorded voices of the original tellers punctuate the action, and what they say is striking."[32]

It is as though in this last production Mnouchkine decided to put all of her life's work, in terms of political concerns, into one production. Having outlined her initial and latest productions, it will be useful to provide a brief overview of what she has done in between. If politics is one of the main common denominators of her work, mixing and matching genres and aesthetic theories and styles is another important component to her work. The following list of performance titles, followed by the main aesthetic influence, is taken from the official website[33]. www.theatre-du-soleil.fr

- *L'Age d'Or* (The Golden Age) 1975

Commedia dell'arte
Chinese theatre

- *Richard II* 1981

Kabuki
Nō
Kyōgen

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[32] http://theater2.nytimes.com/2005/07/10/theater/reviews

[33] Arguably, her CV is not as well known as Brook's and because of a language barrier, accessibility might be an issue for some. It is pertinent to note here that the website for Mnouchkine's theatre is in French and there are no other language options. The translations of the titles and the influences are my own.

- *Twelfth Night* 1982

Kathakali
Bharata Natyam
Commedia dell'arte

- *Henry IV (Part I)* 1984

Kabuki
Nô
Kyôgen

- *L'Histoire Terrible Mais Inachevée de Norodom Sihanouk, Roi de Cambodge* (The Terrible but Incomplete History of Norodom Sihanouk, King of Cambodia) 1985

Cambodian Shadow puppetry
Balinese (Topeng) masks

- *L'Indiade ou L'Inde de Leurs Rêves* (Indiade or India of Their Dreams) 1987

History of India

- *Les Atrides* (The Atrides/The House of Atreus):
  Agamemnon (Agamemnon) 1990
  Iphigenie a Aulis (Iphigenia in Aulis) 1990[34]
  Les Choéphores (The Libation Bearers) 1991
  Les Eumenidés (Eumenides) 1992

Kathakali
Kuttiyattam
Bharata Natyam

- *Le Tartuffe* (Tartuffe) 1995[35]

Commedia dell'arte
Balinese (Topeng) masks

- *Et Soudain des Nuit d'Eveil* (And Suddenly Nights of Awakening) 1997

History of Tibet
Tibetan Cham
Tibetan Ache Lhamo

- *Tambour sur la Digue* (The Flood Drummers) 1999

Chinese tale
Bunraku

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[34] Her Greek cycle was a Euripides play, plus the *Oresteia*.
[35] The story is adapted to a Muslim fundamentalist context, where Tartuffe turns their Algerian heaven into (a fundamentalist) hell.

Nō
Kabuki
Chinese puppets
Korean Samunori and Pansori
Vietnamese puppets

- *Le Dernier Caravansérail (Odyssées)*
  (The Last Caravansary) (Odysseys) 2003

Part I Le Fleuve Cruel (The Cruel River)
Part II Origines et Destin (Origins and Destiny)

It is evident from Mnouchkine's theatre projects that she has a fervent interest in Asian theatre traditions. She quotes Artaud with enthusiasm to further explain her affection for the Orient. "Asia is a constant! Brecht constantly touched on that. And as for Artaud, he simply said, "The theatre is Oriental"." (Mnouchkine in Pavis, 1996: 95) In response to her Japanese influenced Shakespeare productions, she says, "we wanted to make Asian theatre a voyage of research, simply because western theatre offers little in this way, and because realism has started to bore me." (Mnouchkine in Pavis, 1996: 96) The article, which is her contribution to Pavis' *The Intercultural Performance Reader*, consists of many little paragraphs; they are some of her responses to frequently asked questions, as opposed to being an organised article she wrote about her thoughts on theatre. In these answers, she seems to be acknowledging commedia dell'arte as the only workable western genre that interests her. She claims that "the origin of theatre and my source is Asia."(ibid.) She explains why realism does not do enough to satisfy her desire for theatricality:

> I found in Asia such beauty in things, in gestures, in simple ceremonial quality which seems to me indispensable in the theatre. In Asia there is a perpetual formalization of every action. The everyday western aggressiveness, especially in France and above all Paris, comes from a total loss of all formalization of relationships. (1996: 97)

This focus on 'formalization' stems from her desire to restore theatricality to the theatre—which was lost on route to western realism. She argues that since Shakespeare was not a realist, then it is more fitting to apply the very theatrical "Oriental" theatre aesthetics to his plays. Arguing that life is not art but that theatre is, she defends theatricality as the only salvation for the art of theatre. "Otherwise the cinema would beat us every time. Besides great cinema is theatrical." (ibid.) In response to sourcing her theatrical practice from Asia, she says that they "have been very enriching. They allowed the actors to fashion a performance tool with great discipline." (ibid.) She states that personally a Kathakali dancer "speaks to [her] more directly" when compared with any western performer, and she states a similar scenario for Japanese actors and that they are "wonderful actors." In other words, in her quest for formal theatricality she brings in fragments of theatre aesthetics from different parts of the world, because actors trained in these ways are going to be able to serve her theatre better and her theatre, of course, will always serve the larger function of making specific political points. She does all this in her theatre outside Paris with her company, apparently made up of people of varying nationalities.[36]

In this process of 'enriching' her theatre with the help of traditional theatres of the world, her focus always stays with serving the content of the play as opposed to "how Asian and Western theatre can be successfully fused while retaining the essence of both" as Robert Long demands intercultural productions to do. (Long quoted in Carlson, in Pavis 1996: 83) Even the possibility of such a proposal is contestable let alone

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[36] I say apparently, because some scholars and reviewers attest to that view but in the official company website, the names of the actors are written underneath all the production pictures, and a great majority of them seem and sound very French. It is very likely that she makes a point of including a note of this kind in the programme notes of each production. The two production booklets I have of *Les Atrides* list the names of those players whose photo appears in the booklet. In addition to the many French names, there seems to be some eastern European and Indian sounding names—if the sound of a name means anything.

being the requirement (or indeed the constituent element) for an intercultural performance. Long's demand is problematic both in relation to Mnouchkine's theatre and in terms of interculturality in theatre in general. Retaining the essence of Asian and Western theatre traditions requires understanding and embodying them both, which does not necessarily coincide with Mnouchkine's interests. She speaks rather specifically of what she thinks about the original context of her beloved Oriental theatre. Here she gives Kabuki as an example:

> The Kabuki in Japan, like commedia dell'arte in Italy at one time, is going through a bad period today; it is suffering from a certain immobility and will have to revive itself. **But for us, that has no importance because it is not our tradition.** We are not experiencing its internal conflicts. [...] **we don't know its grammar;** our connection with this theatre is therefore a relationship of absolute respect but not of servility to the techniques. (Mnouchkine in Pavis, 1996: 95) (My emphasis)

This seemingly nonchalant statement, which demonstrates a particular gaucheness, could be seen as inept in a UNESCO medal holder in our current climate. As politically active and caring as Mnouchkine is, it is curious for her to say that she does not give importance to the problems of a theatre tradition that is not hers. In fact it is not even relevant exactly which tradition she is referring to; a casual indifference toward the 'other' is potentially more hazardous than the socio-political wrongs she sets out to acknowledge using theatre as a medium. In the next part of her response, she is unusually passive for the adventurous, energetic theatre director who likes her events bold and theatrical. If we do not know the grammar, what is stopping us from trying to learn it or at least understand it better? If, as she argues, the origin of theatre is the orient, then should not we try to learn that grammar—at the least its alphabet? She then states that what we learn or grasp from this new 'grammar' must be 'respected'—but we do not have to follow it? It is a given that in order to learn a new language, one must learn the alphabet and the grammar first,

before starting to write a simple paragraph—let alone experimental poetry![37]

In her work she seems to prioritise content over form in the sense that she enables form to serve the content which, certainly, is a legitimate approach. Even though she attests to the fact that it is the technique of the actor she likes to learn from Asia, the content of her work also pertains to the East, as it is evident from her productions (*l'Indiade; Rol de Cambodge; Tambour, Et Soudain*...are a few). It is possible that some people refer to her interculturality with regard to the company's generous usage of Asian performance elements in their productions, whilst others refer to their subject matter.[38] In an interview with Maria Shevstova, Mnouchkine herself declares that while, "Oriental theatre is the art of the actor", "writing for the theatre seems to be a western phenomenon". (Shevstova, 1997: footnote 13) Some of the productions were written by the company, for example, the latest production about the refugees of the world, *Le Dernier Caravansérail. L'Indiade* on the other hand was written by Helene Cixous. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Bharucha is exasperated with Cixous' "unacknowledged neo-orientalist" writing about a "metaphoric India". (Bharucha, 2000: 50). "The sheer effrontery of this Eurocentric protectionism gets lost in ecstasy". (ibid., 49) Bharucha quotes a few lines from Cixous:

> We cross all borders, astride music, and the borders dissipate with pleasure. A fairy-like bewitchment reigns. The men reel in as

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[37] Having seen *Tambour sur la Digue* on DVD, it seems clear to me that the spectacle she creates is hugely dynamic and evidently the result of very hard physical work. It seems as though the actors were taught exactly those letters of the alphabet that Mnouchkine asked them to learn, in other words, she is right when she says "we don't know the grammar". What they create is very arresting and definitely interesting to watch, in a new language that lacks grammar. In the absence of grammar the compassion for the content gets lost in the artifice.

[38] It may be worth noting here that much like Brook, Mnouchkine's personal background is also intercultural and I have not come across anyone referring to their personal intercultural backgrounds.

> women, the women brandish an ornamental masculinity. And the Hindus greet the Muslims respectfully. (ibid.)

Then Bharucha exclaims, "How does that follow? From 'crossing borders' to 'fairy-like bewitchment' to the communal accord between 'Hindus' and Muslims'?"(ibid.) One gets a similar feeling from both Cixous and Mnouchkine; it seems as though they are trying to cover too much ground at any one time and as a result the harmony between form and content suffers; they merge into a commotion. This commotion that takes over the stage, in some productions, may aid the aforementioned confusion about the company's interculturality. The mix and match of styles and issues and countries seem to create more of a *bricollage* instead of the intended *collage*. If the play is *Twelfth Night* and the characters are costumed and made-up like Kathakali or Bharata Natyam performers, then thinking that the play is set in India (and is about India) is an easy mistake to make—unless the opposite is made clear to the viewers.[39] As a matter of fact, Bharucha and Pavis do just that. Bharucha writes:

> [...] Ariane Mnouchkine attempt[s] to evoke self-conscious images of a phantasmagoric 'India', [...] the effect is so contrived and dated that it embodies the worst indulgences of 'orientalism' (ironically funded by a socialist government).The 'India' that Pavis saw in *La Nuit des Rois* through 'the erotic painting, music punctuated by an eastern timbre, the languid, effeminate carriage of the men (the Duke)'—tantalizes me into confronting the cultural stereotypes that determine the meanings of intercultural scenarios. Judging from my own experience, I did not see 'India' in Mnouchkine's spectacle; I saw 'France'. (1990: 244)

Just as Mnouchkine defended herself by saying that the *Richard II* production had nothing to do with Japan, she probably would have said the same about *Twelfth Night.* She always argues in her responses that

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[39] Even though Mnouchkine is a practitioner, it is possible to draw parallels between her work and the outside-in methodology of the scholar. In a sense, she is relying on the external appearance of a form rather than exploring the performance principles from the inside.

the 'form' or 'technique' she may adopt from Asia does not necessitate that the play itself is about those very countries or cultures of influence. "We have sought to establish a subtle relationship with the form, so that it should not be a narrowly restrictive corset but a space which replays elsewhere what Shakespeare had at his disposal: a place not a form." (Mnouchkine in Pavis, 1996: 96) Neither Pavis nor Bharucha should have been looking for India or indeed 'India' in this production. The problem seems to be precisely in that 'place' created by Mnouchkine's considered efforts; that 'place' seems to be where interculturality gets lost, or disguised instead of being the place where interculturality thrives.

Further problematising the location of interculturality is relatively straightforward in this context. What makes these productions intercultural, the form, the content, the audience, Mnouchkine herself, or something else? In the introductory summary of Carlson's paper (*Brook and Mnouchkine: Passages to India?)* Pavis revisits his hourglass structure again and asks "whether to favour the source or the target culture". (1996: 80) Once again only the non-performers are considered part of the project. In Mnouchkine's *L'Indiade* and Brook's *Mahabharata* Pavis considers India and France (or the audience culture) as the only intercultural influence on the projects whilst completely disregarding the intercultural casts of players (and indeed the director). Since he cannot be imagining that the performers will not have an influence on the production, the exclusion of the performers from the arguments or the premises for arguments seems to highlight the gap not just in Pavis' arguments but in the intercultural debate in general.

Anthony Tatlow, in his book *Shakespeare, Brecht and the Intercultural Sign* (2001), highlights the main positive aspect of Mnouchkine's approach to theatre; his example is Shakespeare. He states that Shakespeare may be too distant from contemporary audiences (he

quotes Bradby and Williams who say that "Shakespeare is not our contemporary and should not be treated as such") and employing such distancing effects as Japanese movement techniques and Indian costumes etc will help reinvigorate the text and allow easier access for audiences. (2001: 61) Arguably, she would do this by an intercultural means of out-Brechting Brecht. Pavis identifies such theatrical means as "inauthentic" "hypertheatrical and thus false". (1992: 202)

As often as Brook and Mnouchkine are compared with one another, their approach to theatre and creating performance could not be any more different. Their understanding of the function of theatre is different from one another—as their works demonstrate. Brook's politics are more subtle but powerful, whereas Mnouchkine's are more overt and almost 'in-yer-face'. This is evident from Brook's response to his critics (Eric Bentley et al.) who condemned Brook for accepting the invitation to the Shiraz Theatre Festival on the grounds that he should not have accepted an invitation and money from a police state. Moreover, they wanted Brook to openly refuse on these specific grounds so that an overt political statement about oppressive governments dealing with 'dirty money' was made through the medium of the theatre. Brook's response to this was politically momentous and provocative. "If I can set foot in the United States, I can set foot in Iran". (Brook in Kustow, 2005: 210) Fully aware of the patronising, even Orientalist, recriminations of such a political statement, he added that, "It would be complete humbug for us to work in France as though we naively believed that there was no repression or police brutality here and suddenly discover it in Iran." (Brook in Kustow, 2005: 209) The unsuspecting audiences may or may not be aware of the subtle politics of Brook or the overt politics of Mnouchkine. However, as Marvin Carlson also points out, their audiences go to these performances with certain expectations. They have been labelled as intercultural

practitioners and this pre-judgement is one of the reasons why they will always be compared to one another.

Having said that, it must be remembered that most of the time the experiences of the audiences are not academically oriented at these events. In fact, quite the opposite, there are hundreds of audience accounts of 'a wonderful night in the theatre' written (or verbalised) about both the companies. The experientiality of the audience's encounter with the plays seems to surpass their academic or political objections to what they witness. For example, Oral describes at least eight of Mnouchkine's productions in great detail and briefly mentions at least five others. These productions include the very first productions of the company (*Kitchen, Mephisto, 1789)* and the later ones such as the Shakespeare cycle and *Tambour sur la Digue*. Oral's impression is that each production is more magical than the next and that the level of theatricality on stage is such that as the audience member one is not even aware if it is night time or day time![40] Oral finishes the chapter on Mnouchkine by stating that, "Mnouchkine not only helps us identify our place in the historical context through the means of theatre, but she also turns the art of theatre into a joy, a *joie de vivre*". (2003: 114)[41] Oral does not have a single negative (or what may be construed as negative) comment to make about Mnouchkine and her stylised productions. Tatlow on the other hand critically analyses the works of Théâtre du Soleil as opposed to describing them and disagrees with Mnouchkine on many levels. He even goes as far as saying, "Mnouchkine never read Artaud". (Tatlow, 2001: 63) However, he summarises her theatre in the following positive statement:

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[40] She recounts the experience of the end of *L'Age D'Or* where at the end of the performance the sun rose and the theatre was filled with the sunlight coming in through the window; the audience thought that they had been in the theatre for hours and that the sun was rising the next day. Of course they found out when they left the theatre that it was just after midnight and they had been in the theatre for about four hours. (Oral, 2003: 93)

[41] My translation from Turkish.

> The brilliant systemisation of gesture of *Le Théâtre du Soleil*, whose codification is not rigid [...] rests on a vivid and original presentational style that, far from merely being a contemporary orientalizing aestheticism, probes and externalizes the character's and the situation's contradictions. Such visualization does not lead back to an inviolate, centered self but instead functions in order to help us understand how that self is the product of cultural attitudes and ideological structures. (ibid.)

If we accept that through the perspective of a western audience, what we see on stage, in some intercultural performances, are indeed 'original presentational styles' and that they should not be accused of 'oriental aestheticism' just because eastern performance techniques and/or costumes are *appropriated* in these productions, then what are we implying about our attitude towards inter-cultural ethics? Is our ethical stance indicated by the verb choice? Borrowing, using, interpreting or appropriating elements from other theatre traditions have consequences. Can we afford to dismiss the consequences of such a practice for the objective of 'a great night at the theatre'? It is crucial to remember that the audiences do not have to be interested in these debates that surround the works of some companies or even directors. As much as it is true that directors like Brook and Mnouchkine have a certain following, these companies do not exist solely for that certain following but they have their individual reasons for practising theatre as well as having their own views about the function theatre serves in society. The experiential aspect of theatre determines the continuation of the audience involvement with the play beyond the night of the performance.[42] In other words, 'a wonderful night at the theatre' does not do the theatre experience justice in terms of duration and the continuation (and even permanence) of its affects. In this respect, interculturality in theatre can only enrich the experience of those who witness it and those who make it. Whether this solves the question of

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[42] A more detailed discourse on the experientiality of theatre will be offered in the third section of this thesis, in chapter six.

ethics (or sheds further light onto the 'ideological structures' that shape the self) depends on one's perspective—in this regard the views of Pavis, Dasgupta, Bharucha, Mnouchkine, Brook and Tatlow, could not have been any different from each other. Adding Eugenio Barba to the perspectives listed above might open new doors.

Barba's Theatre Anthropology: "There is theatre in interculturalism. And there is interculturalism in theatre."

Eugenio Barba's contribution to theatre history is voluminous; in 2005 he celebrated the fortieth anniversary of his Odin Teatret and his seventieth birthday in 2006. (Barba, 2005: 153-161) Barba's most important publication, with his collaborator Nicola Savarese, is *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: the Secret Art of the Performer* (1991). Since he has been subjected to much criticism with regards to his use of the word 'anthropology' in his research, which he formalises in sessions of ISTA (International School of Theatre Anthropology), he has dedicated the preface of the *Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology* to explain exactly what theatre anthropology is and what it is not and how it is different from cultural anthropology and in what ways they resemble each other. [43]

> Theatre anthropology is the study of the behaviour of the human being when it uses its physical and mental presence in an organised performance situation and according to principles which are different from those used in daily life. This extra-daily use of the body is what is called technique. (1991: 7)

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[43] In fact, paraphrasing is something he does repeatedly. It might be that he needs to rethink his concept of performance from many different angles and paraphrasing himself allows him to understand it better, so it might be a learning strategy. Or he does it for the benefit of others who continually misrepresent his ideas—an example of this may be found in the third part of the thesis (Holledge and Tompkins).

The key word here is 'principles'. The premise is that different performance traditions in different parts of the world, even at different times in history share common principles; Barba calls these, 'recurrent principles'. Theatre anthropology outlines these recurrent principles. However, he adds that, "they [recurrent principles] are not proof of the existence of a 'science of theatre' nor a few universal laws. They are nothing more than particularly good bits of advice; information useful for scenic practice." (1991: 8) The main aim of the ISTA sessions is the "study of the principles of this extra-daily use of the body and their application to the actor's and the dancer's creative work." (1991: 7) However, later on in 1993 in Italian and 1995 in English he wrote in *The Paper Canoe* that he would not claim that all performers are "substantially equal". On the contrary recognising what he calls the obvious is enough for him to conduct his *transcultural performance research*: "performers who work in an organized performance situation individualize themselves through profound differences as well as profound similarities." (1995: 45) He argues that working precisely with such differences and similarities is what theatre anthropology investigates. "It is therefore possible to conduct research of a scientific kind which proposes to single out transcultural principles which, *on the operative level*, are the basis of scenic behaviour."[44] (ibid.) Ian Watson questions the validity of the scientific nature of theatre anthropology and mentions an earlier statement made by Barba (in 1969) admitting that "theatre can draw on the human sciences, like anthropology and sociology, it cannot be identified and equated with them." (Barba quoted in Watson in Pavis, 1996: 224) Indeed in different writings at different times, Barba may seem as though he is contradicting himself, but whether Barba's work is as solid as natural or even social sciences is not relevant in terms of the advancement of the interculturalism debate. Knowing the importance Barba and his colleagues give to knowledge and the process of gaining knowledge, it is possible to accept that when they say 'science' they mean

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[44] His italics.

"knowledge gained through experience".[45] (As Barba is influenced by Zeami's treatises it is not surprising that this is in keeping with Zeami's notion of direct knowledge which will be unpicked later.)

Theatre anthropology, according to Barba, is based on Eurasian theatre; by Eurasian he does not mean a mixture of European with Asian nor does he admit any interest in specifically studying the origins and the myths of the theatre traditions in the context of their original cultures (European or Asian).

> It suggests a mental and technical dimension, an active *idea* in modern theatrical culture. It includes that collection of theatres which, for those who have concentrated on the performer's problems, have become 'classical' points of reference of research. (1995: 46)

He goes on to list a number of performance traditions of the world such as Kathakali, Nõ, Meyerhold's theatre, ballet, Brecht, mime etc. (This list can be very long.) The point is that such a diverse list of traditions or ways of approaching theatre has become a common reference point for those (regardless of where they come from) interested in the 'art of the performer'. He connects his definition of Eurasian theatre with a poem by Goethe, *Occidental-Oriental Divan.*

> 'He who knows himself and others is also certain of this: Orient and Occident can no longer be separated. I make a rule of staying in a conscious balance between the two worlds, thus always choosing to move between East and West.'

> The theatre of the twentieth century lives in this *movement*, in the search for a meaning for that archaeological relic which is its present condition. [...] My entire theatrical apprenticeship has taken place in that *movement* between East and West which I now call Eurasian theatre. (1995: 42)

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[45] 1993 American Heritage Dictionary entry for, *science.*

Considering the fact that Goethe (1749-1832) had the insight (and the foresight) to be able to come to this conclusion in the early nineteenth century, it is unsurprising then for Barba to declare that, "for all those who in the twentieth century have reflected in a competent way on the performer, the borders between 'European theatre' and 'Asian theatre' do not exist." (1995: 46) (It is a shame to observe that we, in the twenty-first century, seem to have taken a few steps backwards.)

It is important to note that he is making a distinction between people who *have reflected in a competent way on the performer* and others. He laments "the presumption of understanding" that actually blocks people from understanding and therefore analysing "the performer's work". (1995: 43)

> Critics, scholars, theoreticians, and even philosophers such as Hegel and Sartre have tried to interpret the performer's creative process by starting from the assumption that they knew what they were talking about. In reality, they yielded to their spectator ethnocentrism. They often imagined a process which was only the deceptive, a posteriori projection of the effects achieved by the performer on the minds of their spectators. (ibid.)

This remark in conjunction with the chapter division of the *Dictionary* proves the certainty of Barba's approach as that of the practitioner's.[46] Barba's writing is also focused on the work of the performer; in fact he has proved to be a prolific writer, as he has published numerous books and letters, and articles in journals. He attacks his goal from all corners; performances at the Odin Teatret, ISTA sessions with a variety of artists, his writing, and as Watson observes, his lecture demonstrations, which

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[46] A quick reminder of some of the chapter titles: apprenticeship, balance, energy, face and eye, feet, hands, rhythm, pre-expressivity.

have become a prominent part of the ISTA meetings. (Watson in Pavis, 1996: 226) [47]

Barba, continuing with the spirit of his rebuttal against Hegel and Sartre, responds to his critics without naming them (although it seems obvious to me that he is responding to Bharucha). Barba writes that some *perplexed* people accuse him of ignoring the historical and cultural contexts of *particular technical procedures*. He argues that, of course he knows that almost everything symbolises something specific or that it has an *ideal meaning* in its original culture which is part of its history. His response is clear, "someone who studies the joints of the hand does not ignore the importance of the heart, even if s/he never mentions the heart." (1995: 44-45) He is choosing to focus on one thing at a time in order to conduct a more in-depth investigation. He sounds frustrated by the "continuous requests to consider also all the rest 'which must not be ignored'" which for him is the same as "leaving things just as they are". (ibid.) Quite the contrary to a cultural reading, Barba's interest lies in the pre-expressive. One of many of Barba's terms, pre-expressivity is the embodiment of the psycho-physical encounter between the daily and the extra-daily. The pre-expressive level "deals with how to render the actor's energy scenically alive, that is, how the actor can become a presence". (Barba and Savarese, 1991: 188)

> Theatre anthropology postulates that the pre-expressive level is at the root of the various performing techniques and that there exists, independently of traditional culture, a transcultural 'physiology'. In

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[47] His books are available in many languages; the ISTA sessions are open to public. (For excellent photos of Odin productions see D'Urso 2000). This contrasts with the accessibility of Mnouchkine's views. Perhaps, she prefers to let her work speak for itself instead of publishing books and articles. She has an excellent website (with extensive photo gallery) but only in French. Brook on the other hand publishes the lectures he gives (available in a variety of languages) and publishes academic responses to his critics in journals. He also published his memoirs and allowed for an official biography. See Simon Brook's documentary, *Brook by Brook*, for an intimate portrait of his father. (2001, DVD)

> fact, pre-expressivity utilises principles for the acquisition of presence and the performer's life. (ibid.)

This argument is based on the premise that anatomically and biologically all humans function in the same way regardless of their cultural background. For example, blood is blood for everyone. Due to culture-specific facts or environmental givens the maintenance of the human body will require different treatments. By studying the alignment structures of different cultural bodies it is possible to learn how to 'wear' them and even how better to 'wear' them. Since the purpose of the whole exercise is to inject presence into the performer's body, it is not necessary to consider the original cultural context of the movement or gesture. The psycho-physical encounter of the performer allows for a 'transcultural' presence—to use Barba's own word.

However, it is contestable whether the word transcultural suits the context. Transcultural does not necessarily include the cultures in question (however many there may be); it sounds as though it creates a means for communication that is outside of these cultures. But even if the performer is striving to abandon their own cultural expression they are still negotiating the difference with their own body which would mean that their culture(s) is involved with the action. In his 1991 letters to Richard Schechner, Barba seems to prefer the word interculturalism.

> The intercultural dimension of the world in which we live is not a conquest, it is a state of danger. When it remains inert, awareness of coexistence with diversity generates indifference. It unleashes rage if the stranger comes too close. (1999: 149)

This explains the reasoning behind Barba's passion for injecting presence into the performer's work and life, as well as highlighting his sensitivity towards the socio-cultural context even though his critics claim his indifference towards it.

His thoughts on interculturalism are not as negative as they may seem. He states that he agrees with Schechner that "performers from distant cultures meet and experience more affinity with each other than with their compatriots. There is theatre in interculturalism. And there is interculturalism in theatre." (1999:152) This is exactly how he feels with his collaborators and wonders if that is what interculturalism might be—a shared understanding that is generated by being present, together.

In another letter we find out that Barba once asked Schechner to define interculturalism and Schechner refused (with a smile on his face) by stating that he "preferred it to remain a gravitational field, an open perspective, a black hole."(1999: 153) Schechner is right; it is proving to be more difficult to pin down a definition of interculturalism without having to offer forty pages of preliminaries first. It is a gravitational field, and definitely an open perspective but hopefully not a black hole.

In this light, the notion of the world becoming a "supermarket of cultures" appears not as embarrassing as Barba once described. (Barba in Pavis, 1996: 217) The human exchange and the understanding through presence surpass the conventional notions of patriotism or hollow comradeship and indeed this exchange becomes an aesthetic experience that goes beyond the idea of a specific culture or a tradition. Or in Barba's words:

> If [in the consideration of theatre] one seeks to comprehend one's own *identity*, it is also essential to take the opposite and complementary point of view: to think of one's own theatre in a transcultural dimension, in the flow of a "tradition of traditions". (in Pavis, 1996: 218)

This 'flow of tradition of traditions' allows for a focus on the principles at work; the principles in this case are acting tools, technique, 'bits of good

advice', histrionics (in the technical sense), *abhinaya* in traditional Indian theatre and *monomane* in Japanese. Barba argues that in the tradition of traditions, origin and context are less important than the function and execution of the principles. It can be argued that since these decontextualised principles act as points of departure rather than representing their place of origin, they cease to become part of the "supermarket of cultures".

Schechner takes this idea one step further and states that we now live in "a world of immense communicability" which allows for culture to "be a choice rather than something into which you are simply born automatically". (Schechner in Pavis, 1996:49) He refers to this as his theory of "culture of choice". Is this cultural promiscuity, as it is sometimes called? Or is it simply a right of choice for those who are interested in communication systems other than their own? Can the situation be any different for artists for the sake of developing their art—as opposed to 'stealing' for themselves? Has this become possible due to the technological and industrial advancements in the world? Has this become possible for everyone in the world? These are some of the questions that relate to interculturality in theatre that immediately jump out from Barba's idea of the 'supermarket of cultures' and Schechner's theory of 'culture of choice'.

If it is possible to choose one's culture(s)—which I think it is—then the supermarket of cultures should not have a negative connotation for Barba as long as the doors are open to all. It seems as though he understands that some people might equate the western-ness of interculturalism with the idea of a supermarket of cultures and in his professional output he would like to prevent that from happening. His following advice attests to that fact: "You cannot choose ideas in the hope that they will change you. You must choose conditions of life and work."

(Barba in Bharucha, 1993: 67) Even Bharucha is pleased with this advice as he finishes a chapter on Barba he states, "his sound piece of advice, among many others, is always with me, even as I end this essay". (Bharucha, 1993: 67) This concept of choosing the conditions of one's life and work seems to be emerging as a common pattern—although maybe not as profoundly in some other cases. It definitely embodies the heart of Barba's experiments with theatre anthropology as well as being reflected in his own life.

In *The Paper Canoe* Barba relates what his philosophy is to a statement by Niels Bohr.

> Niels Bohr was once asked how—at such a young age—he made the discovery of the periodicity of elements which brought him the Nobel prize. He replied that he did not begin from what 'one knew' but from what 'he knew'. (1995: 40)

This is a most fascinating insight into the creative mind of a scientist. Creative process starts with what one knows—it might travel elsewhere—and again it ends with what one now knows. The human experience, complete with its physical and meta-physical aspects, allows one to proceed, learn, react and *be* in one's own way. The "lived-through experience", as Dilthey[48] calls it, is the content of what one knows and the form of how one learns or understands. Barba and Brook are prime examples (and Mnouchkine to a lesser extent) of creative beings who always start from what they know, based on their lived-through experiences. It is evident that their lived-through experiences have been intercultural; perhaps it is not surprising that their interculturality is reflected in their work. It is possible to assert that the ethical issues around intercultural theatre have so far been dealt with on a personal basis, in

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[48] Wilhelm Dilthey 1831-1911 Germen philosopher, hermeneutist whose *philosophy of existence* and (study of worldview) *Weltanschauungslehre* is an influence on my own understanding of interculturality.

other words, each director, or company justified their intercultural endeavour according to their own specific perspectives only to face the non-western scholars' defensive responses to these performance events. What Brook, Mnouchkine and Barba have in common are personal intercultural backgrounds as their biographical information and artistic endeavours attest. Considering this data in conjunction with Bohr's statement begs the question: Is a personal interculturality, then, the minimum constituent element required for theatre to be called intercultural? It is possible but not conclusive.[49]

[49] However, in the third part of this thesis, the personal experience, as identified by relationships with everything outside the self, will become the focus.

PART 2: Non-Western Sources /Performance Aesthetics

> Interculturalism as theatrical practice divided itself into two distinct lines and it will, I believe, continue to do so more often in the years to come. Those artists inclined toward formal experimentation and abstraction as a performance mode will draw closer to Japanese aesthetics. Others who declare themselves for a politically-engaged, popular theatre will emphasize Latin American, Indian, Southeast Asian, and African affiliations. Artists of both persuasions will take it for granted that their work reflects social commitment. (Marranca, 1991: 14)

I am not certain if such generalised divisions are useful in engaging with the theatre traditions Marranca lists in her assertion. Aside from a generalised approach towards these aesthetics, this view can also be interpreted as limiting. It is not very clear why an artist who might be interested in formal experimentation and abstraction may not look toward India, for example. My interests in neither interculturality nor Zeami's and Bharata's aesthetics require such categorisations.

The rationale for exploring Japanese nō theatre and traditional Indian performance aesthetics in general and the specific teachings of Zeami and Bharata in particular is twofold. Firstly, as established in the first two chapters, these two 'non-western' theatre traditions are common reference points for those who are associated with 'intercultural theatre'. In fact turning to Japan and India for inspiration seems to be the main commonality among western scholars and artists. In addition, there are some Japanese and Indian trained performers/directors who play a part in the generic history of intercultural theatre in the west—Sanjukta Panigrahi, Yoshi Oida, Tadashi Suzuki (and many more). There are those who seek other sources and inspirations because their own is drying up or simply becoming boring, thus their interest veers towards 'spicing up' their work. There are also those who still view Japan and India (or other cultures for that matter) as exotic, 'other' and 'non-western', which are the identifying

factors for these people to be interested in Japan and India. Moreover, some people are only interested in what they see or what is easily identifiable as Japanese or Indian performance elements rather than making an effort to consider the context in which these theatre traditions have developed. In other words, they are taken by the results they see and recognise as 'other' (rather than exploring the process of doing). It is these reasons that comprise the first fold of the rationale for exploring these traditions and the first half of the title for this section, *Non-Western Sources* pertains to this half.

The second fold of the rationale pertains to the particularities of the teachings of these two masters Zeami and Bharata. Their main identifying factor is that they have something specific to teach about performance aesthetics which incorporates interculturality on a fundamental level. In other words, my interest lies in the principles of performance dynamics and how they approach the doing of performance rather than what a Nō performance or a Bharata Natyam performance may look like on stage. In the way that Ancient Greek theatre traditions and Stanislavski's acting technique have been adopted, appropriated and identified with, in western theatre history, Zeami's and Bharata's teachings can equally be influential. After all, it is contentious to suggest that a young (for example) British student of theatre would identify himself more with ancient Greece than with ancient India. If the past has become another culture then it is superfluous to divide it by exclusive national boundaries; as it may be more fruitful to acknowledge the particularities of principles of art (in this case the art of performance) and explore the specific contributions of people (in this case Zeami and Bharata). Therefore, the second fold of the rationale for exploring these two case studies pertains to the specific teachings of Zeami and Bharata and not to their geographical location on the planet.

Chapter Three: Zeami's Teachings on the art of Nō

Historical and Cultural Contexts of the Theatre Tradition

In order to shed some light on the importance of Zeami's teachings on the art of nō theatre it is essential to point out some of the socio-cultural conditions of medieval Japan in an attempt to contextualise the treatises under discussion. Zeami's dates were approximately[50] 1363-1443. These dates fall into the Muromachi period (1333-1573), sometimes referred to as the Ashikaga period. Japanese history is divided into periods and these periods are named after the clans of the ruling families. "The first two shōguns, Takauji [1305-58] and [his second son] Yoshiakira [1330-68], had little time for anything except warfare". (Cortazzi, 1990: 99)The third shogun of this period, Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408), is pivotal in the history of nō; his role in the development of nō will be examined in the following pages. After Yoshimitsu, his sons Ashikaga Yoshimochi and Ashikaga Yoshinori, respectively, followed their father's example in terms of playing an active role in the development of performance arts in their country. Naturally, the rulers of a country may influence a variety of aspects of their culture and in Japan's history this is no different.

It is impossible to provide a generalised overview of Japanese history in a few pages; therefore, it is essential to focus on selective aspects that have a direct influence on the art of nō. Japanese culture, in its history, has maintained a devotion to tradition as well as an enthusiasm for change in the name of advancement. The country's lengthy history afforded its people with a variety of decidedly Japanese traditions ranging

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[50] The usage of the word "approximately" is deliberate. There are many questions about the exact dates but these are agreed by most Japanologists as well as researchers of nō. According to the Japanese calculation a person is at least one year old at birth. There are no direct records of Zeami's birth date; it is calculated according to his statements in his writings. For a summary of the debate on Zeami's birth date, see De Poorter, 2002: 29-32

from martial arts, calligraphy, the tea ceremony, haiku poetry, ikebana (the art of flower arrangement), to the aesthetically complex traditions of performing arts that are widely studied and practiced. However, it is important to emphasise that in its ancient history Japan had land connections to the Asian continent, which allowed for various Asian peoples to move to what is now called Japan and moreover, they brought their own cultural habits with them. Indeed, it took until the 10th century (AD) for an indisputably *Japanese* culture to emerge from its past.

One of the most important influences on Japan's history has been China. Although there is evidence of a plethora of Chinese influences on Japan and its people, two such influences could be isolated as more significant than others—language and religion.

> [...] fruits of advanced Chinese civilization reached Japan via people from the [Korean] peninsula. Weavers, smiths, and irrigation experts migrated to Japan, and the Chinese ideographic script also was introduced at that time [4thcentury AD], together with Confucian works written in this script.[51]

The importation of Chinese scripture allowed for a variety of cross-cultural exchange between the two countries.[52] Sharing a language meant they could study Chinese literature and philosophy as well as building diplomatic relations. In fact some Japanese were specifically sent there to study Chinese culture. The Japanese began sending envoys on these exploratory missions as early as the fifth century and this continued regularly for centuries to come. According to Cortazzi, the sage Wani is responsible for the earliest instances of teaching Chinese philosophy in Japan at the start of the fifth century.

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[51] http://www.crystalinks.com/japan.html (Accessed on May 4, 2004.)
[52] The emphasis here is only going to be on the Chinese influence on Japan, thus excluding the Japanese influence on China.

Over the next three centuries the Chinese classics began to exert an increasing influence on Japan. Japanese scholars, such as Minabuchi no Shõan in the early seventh century and the priest Sõmin (died 653), were sent to China and brought back copies of the Chinese classics. [...]The Japanese gradually became more selective in their attitude to the precepts of the Chinese classics and freely adapted them to suit their own needs. (Cortazzi, 1990: 16)

Since Chinese scripture was made up of ideograms, the Japanese had to devise ways of writing Japanese names that did not exist in Chinese. The solution was to establish characters that would depict sounds as opposed to ideas, or meanings. This is one of the many examples of appropriation of the Chinese culture according to the needs of the Japanese.

Among the texts that were imported from China were teachings of Lau Tzu (an older contemporary of), Confucius (K'ung Ch'iu *c.*551-478 BC) and Siddharta Gautama (*c.*446-? BC). In the west these teachings are usually referred to as the following *–isms*: Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism. Of these three important philosophies, the impact of Buddhism was the most significant. Buddhism reached Japan in the sixth century AD, prior to that, people's beliefs were animistic in nature. Cortazzi states:

> The religious practices of the early Japanese, which were entirely indigenous in origin, seem to have been a primitive form of animism, combined with an element of ancestor worship. (1990: 10)

The impact of the foreign influence was that it started to change the existing belief system. In time, the need to differentiate between the imported belief systems and the constantly evolving indigenous belief system required the naming of the latter. In other words, relative to the increase in foreign influence, the need for distinguishing it from the originally local belief system became greater, for the sake of *Japanising*. Thus Shintõ was differentiated from the Chinese imports such as Taoism,

Confucianism and Indian-originated-Chinese Buddhism. Buddhism played a significant part in the development of Shintō.

The word *Shintō* (the Kami Way) does not appear in writing as the appellation given to the indigenous religion until the eighth century work, *Nihon Shoki* (*Chronicles of Japan)* but Ono states that the belief system itself is ancient and that throughout history Japanese people believed in the *kami.* (Ono, 1962: 2) Almost all sources indicate that the word is usually translated as 'god' but that a western understanding of god/s does not encapsulate the Japanese understanding of kami—nor does it illuminate the believers' notions of devotion and worship. Ono writes that, "fundamentally, the term is an honorific for noble, sacred spirits, which implies a sense of adoration for their virtues and authority". (1962: 6-7) Ono explains who and what may be identified as kami:

> [...] qualities of growth, fertility, and production; natural phenomena, such as wind and thunder; natural objects, such as the sun, mountains, rivers, trees and rocks; some animals; and ancestral spirits. [...] the spirits of the Imperial ancestors, the ancestors of noble families and in a sense all ancestral spirits. Also regarded as kami are the guardian spirits of the land, occupations, and skills; the spirits of national heroes, men of outstanding deeds and virtues and those who have contributed to civilization, culture and human welfare; those who have died for the state or the community and the pitiable dead. (1962: 7)

The influence of Shintō on the development of Japanese culture is significant and it is reflected in all branches of the arts; nō theatre is a prime example of this. Traditional nō performances originally took place at Shintō shrines. Shintō elements in nō are evident on a variety of levels ranging from the design of a nō stage (exterior level) to the heart of its aesthetics (interior level). Some of these elements will be examined as part of the exploration and analysis of form and content in the following pages.

As stated earlier, once the foreign—especially Chinese—influences were digested and re-established as *Japanese*, by the tenth century, the focus seems to have shifted on structuring the land and its people. The lessons learnt from centuries of battles and wars played a crucial role in instigating governmental structures. Thus it is possible to state that warfare has had a significant impact on social and cultural life in Japan. The land and its people endured many battles—internal and external; such circumstances gave way to a hierarchical military government—*Bakufu* (Shogunate), the *Daimyo* (feudal lords) and the *Samurai* (the warrior class) in the early twelfth century. Until the twelfth century Japan was governed by emperors[53] who were the chief leaders of the imperial court; while they were enjoying the grandeur of aristocratic life in the main cities like Heian or Edo (present day Kyoto and Tokyo respectively), the people of the land were uneasy about the inequality of standards of living. Relatively small uprisings, originating in rural areas, had been a part of Japan's history. Some of these uprisings were not against the ruling class but they pertained to unsolved disputes about landownership. Therefore, it was natural for social groups to have warriors among them. In fact the central government was beginning to trust some of the provincial warrior groups with the protection of the government. At the start of the twelfth century what started as a dispute between two major clans, who had tasted political power by working for the imperial court, turned into the biggest civil war Japan had endured in its history thus far. As a result, the leader of the winning clan Yoritomo (1147-1199) established a separate military government (Shogunate) in Kamakura (Eastern Japan). The emperor appointed him, "*Seitaishōgun* (Great General Who Quells the Barbarians)" (Yoshiaki, 1988: 2). This was to open a seven hundred year long chapter in Japanese history. For the first time, the title shōgun was given to someone other than an imperial prince; moreover:

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[53] Emperors claimed to be direct descendants of the Shinto Sun Goddess Amaterasu.

> [...] emperors heading the imperial court in Kyoto continued to embody a sacerdotal sovereignty while powerful warriors (as shoguns or military hegemons) were delegated with authority to rule. (Yoshiaki, 1988: 2)

Thus the samurai began to gain more control and prestige in society. Some of the samurai, who were able to exercise more political power, were appointed as daimyos.

> Daimyo were feudal lords or barons who, as leaders of powerful warrior bands, controlled the provinces of Japan from much of the medieval (*chusei)*, and early modern ages (*kinsei)*, from 1185-1868. (Yoshiaki, 1988: 2)

According to Thomas Cleary, in his introduction to his translation of *The Code of the Samurai: A Modern Translation of the Bushido Shoshinshu of Taira Shigesuke*, once the power had changed hands and the warriors were more powerful, the samurai decided to call themselves *bushi,* "warriors" or "knights". *Samurai* meant "attendant", since that was what they were before. (1999: X) The warriors took pride in their new status in society. They were well educated people who were well-versed in the arts. They became the aristocracy without having aristocratic origins. The socio-political power gained by the warrior classes and especially personally by the shōgun is extremely important in terms of the country's art history. In fact if it were not for the third shōgun of the Muromachi period (1333-1573) Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408), nō theatre as we know it might not have existed, let alone survived.

Origins and Development of Nō

The origin of nō theatre is believed to go all the way back to an ancient Shinto myth. The myth tells the story of Amaterasu, the sun goddess and Ama-no-Uzume, the fertility goddess. It is believed that

Amaterasu[54] and her brother, god of darkness, had an argument upon which Amaterasu, in her fury, hid herself in a cave and the universe fell into a great darkness. Many (kami) gods, goddesses, demons, mortals came together and tried to convince her to come out of her cave. They performed a variety of rituals outside the cave to calm her down. They danced, played sacred music and sang in front of the fire they had made. The fertility goddess, Ama-no-Uzume started to dance under a pine tree, holding a small branch of a type of evergreen in one hand and a specially folded piece of cloth on the other—both items are still used in Shinto rituals. It is said that, she was singing as she was dancing very fast, in a trance. Curious to find out what was going on Amaterasu slightly opened the cave door and light was restored to the universe. It is said that the dance performed by Ama-no-Uzume is the starting point of nō theatre.[55]

Keene suggests it is common to believe that the pine tree Ama-no-Uzume danced under is the Yogo pine which is located in the garden of the Kasuga (Shinto) shrine in Nara (old Yamato). (1973: 28) It is important to note here that the Kofūkuji (Buddhist) temple is also located nearby and that the shrines were always associated with the temples. In this case the Kofūkuji temple had jurisdiction over the Kasuga shrine. (Keene, 1973: 28) This relationship, between Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, is further evidence of the particularity of Japanese Buddhism that was developed over the years. As the changes, due to foreign impact, were being absorbed into the belief system, Shintō had digested so many Buddhist elements that it was possible to call later Shintō 'Japanese Buddhism'. Keene states that the priests of the Kofūkuji temple would perform songs and dances so as to reveal some of their more esoteric teachings. The

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[54] This is the same goddess that the emperors were claiming to have descended from.
[55] This is a popular myth re-told by many, including Zeami in the *Fushikaden* Chapter 4 but it is originally told in the *Kojiki* ('Records of Ancient Matters') written in 712. It is a record of important events dating from ancient history of Japan up to the fifth century.

spectators were not always all worshippers. He argues that it is possible that the oldest known nō play *Okina* was first performed there.

What we now call *nō* used to be called[56] *Sarugaku nō*. *Nō* used to mean 'to be able to' or 'talent'. *Sarugaku nō* was a form of dance that was imported from China. Initially it was called *Sangaku nō*, in time, due to false pronunciation it turned into *Sarugaku nō*. In its earliest form it is believed to be a highly entertaining spectacle comprised of singing, dancing and acrobatics. The word *Sarugaku* is usually translated as 'monkey music'. (Sekine, 1985: 20) Keene writes that the Sarugaku nō players were secular but were financed by the temples since that was where they performed. Aside from *Sarugaku* nō there were other forms of performance in Japan's early history. *Gigaku* and *Bugaku* were the other significant imports from China. *Gigaku* dances were accompanied by flutes and drums; the actors were masked; the performances involved a variety of animal depictions. *Gigaku's* golden age was the middle of the eighth century. The interest in *Gigaku* died out when the Japanese courts discovered that there was another, more courtly form of performance, *Bugaku*. *Bugaku* was highly stylised; it was more elite in terms of its audiences. The most important aspect of *Bugaku* was its structure; it was divided into three sections: *jo, ha, kyu*. Later on, nō theatre was to take on that very structure. "By the end of the twelfth century *Bugaku* had become a palace ceremonial." (Keene, 1973: 29)

Sarugaku was the only form that survived the test of time as the bored aristocrats were in search of different types of performances to busy themselves. It was influenced by all the new forms that became fashionable, so in a sense, *Sarugaku* was always in a state of development. *Dengaku* and *Ennen* were the other two forms of

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[56] I say "used to be called" because in time it lost its original meaning and came to represent the specific art form that developed from Sarugaku.

performance that played a part in the development of *Sarugaku*. *Dengaku* is usually translated as 'field music'. It was a celebratory harvest ritual practiced in the provinces. When *Dengaku* was discovered by the city-dwellers, it was brought to the city and was quickly adapted according to the desires and tastes of its new audience and became the most popular performance art form. *Ennen* on the other hand was a much more subdued dance, performed after "ceremonies of prayer for the prolongation of some exalted person's life". (Keene, 1973: 30) In time the prayers developed into plays; by the fifteenth century *Ennen* scripts were utilising heightened language, scattered with ancient scriptures[57], Chinese as well as Japanese. However, all three of the performance genres' practitioners were keen to observe each other's performances and were quick to adapt their ways. Keene adds that it was most likely that these adaptations were quick enough to make it very difficult to distinguish between the three traditions. Although the different performance troupes were friendly with one another, they started to keep secret teachings about their particular performance art.

As popular as they might have been, in order for any troupe to survive in a city, namely Kyoto, they needed the support of the upper classes. In the provinces they were looked after by shrines and temples. Each troupe was associated with a number of shrines and temples and this association brought with it responsibilities and duties. They had to perform during festivals or special days. Wherever they might have been touring in the country they had to go back to the shrines/temples for the sacred performances—although the troupes themselves were not religious organisations. However, for further financial gain, they had to survive in the cities.

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[57] Textually *Ennen* was not unlike late medieval liturgical dramas of the Christian tradition.

Whatever the form of theatre, the most important factor in its development was the patronage of the upper classes. Without the backing of the nobles, *dengaku* would have remained no more than the prancing and artless singing of the country festival; *sarugaku* acquired its dignity only when enabled to abandon the crude realism demanded by the provincial audiences in favour of the poetic beauty appreciated by the court. Not only did the nobility patronize the drama and the actors, but by 1250 nobles themselves were performing *sarugaku* for their own amusement. (Keene, 1973: 30-31)

Since shōguns took a personal interest in the arts, the future of various schools of *dengaku* or *sarugaku* depended highly on the preferences of the ruling shōgun. Thus, the fate of nō[58] theatre was decided when Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408) came into power. Yoshimitsu witnessed a nō performance in 1374 and this event was to affect the future of nō forever.

Kan-ami and Zeami: the Founders of Nō

Kan-ami (1333-1384) was one of the most distinguished nō actors of his time. Zeami[59] (1363-1443), following his father's footsteps, flourished as an exceptional actor when he was quite young. The most refined form of nō has been attributed to Zeami and his father Kan-ami. In Zeami's time there were four major nō troupes from the Yamato (Nara) region. They were Yuzaki (Kan-ami's troupe), Hosho, Enman and Kongo.[60] Erika De Poorter points out that all these troupes had obligations towards the Kofukūji temple and the Kasuga shrine. (2002: 20) Each school had a leader, a master actor who was responsible for teaching his troupe the art of nō as well as being a spiritual leader to them. In a sense, the leader was like an artistic director, who embraced a holistic approach

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[58] From this point onwards I will refer to *sarugaku nō* with its shortened name, nō.
[59] Full name Zeamidabutsu Motokiyo, but in this thesis I will refer to him with his shortened, most popular name, Zeami.
[60] These four schools are still continuing today. An additional fifth school developed later in the Tokugawa period, called the Kita school.

to acting training. Kan-ami was well-respected as a leader, especially by his son Zeami. Later on when Zeami had to take over the leadership of the school, he renamed it Kanze-za, after his father's name. Kan-ami seems to have enjoyed a wide variety of audiences in his time. As Zeami reminisces in his treatises, Kan-ami was admired by the nobles, city dwellers, country folk and indeed other nō actors. However, his most important audience was the shōgun Yoshimitsu. Yoshimitsu was a very powerful shōgun who was also a published poet. He had a clear interest in the arts and especially in the art of nō. He saw Kan-ami and Zeami on stage when Zeami was approximately twelve years old. Yoshimitsu must have been very impressed with what he saw because he took Kan-ami and Zeami under his wings and supported them in many ways. Yoshimitsu was a very young shōgun himself and some scholars suggest that he might have had a personal admiration for Zeami. The other important person in this affair was the cultural advisor to the shōgun, Nijo Yoshimoto (1320-1388). Yoshimoto was an intellectual aristocrat who probably would have facilitated Yoshimitsu's learning and interests pertaining to the arts. Yoshimoto deeply appreciated the art of nō and especially, these two talented actors. Zeami and Kan-ami built a strong relationship with Yoshimoto.

> When he was a child Ze-Ami had the stage name of Oniyasha, meaning a devil, but Ninjo Yoshimoto gave him a more suitable name, Fujiwaka, meaning young wisteria: this change in name symbolises the change Ze-Ami and his father brought after they won the favour of the Shogun. (Sekine, 1985: 13)

The name choice of *young wisteria* also contests to the deep admiration he had for Zeami. Yoshimoto was a renowned *renga* poet; he and Zeami were close enough to compose *renga* poems together. [61] In addition to

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[61] An example of renga links composed together by Yoshimoto and Zeami (in 1378) reads:
One does not leave one's fame behind

this, it is likely that Yoshimoto needed to look after Zeami in order to win the favour of the shōgun.

Having secured the most enviable audiences and having no financial worries, Kan-ami devoted the rest of his life to the refinement of nō and teaching everything he had learned and developed to his son. Kan-ami died when Zeami was about twenty-two, when they were on tour in the provinces. Zeami had to become the leader of the school at that young age. He immediately started writing everything he had learned from his father. Zeami's initiative was more than simply compiling his father's notes; he took it a few steps further and dedicated many years of his life to contemplating the fineries of performance and writing down everything he learned from his performance experience. It is most important to note here that these writings were not meant for publication. They were for the eyes of the few chosen actors in his troupe. Some of the writing is dedicated to specific people, like his son, or his son-in-law as stated at the ends of chapters or as post scripts at the ends of the treatises. Moreover, his instructions were precise; he was adamant that these documents were not shared with outsiders. Nobody from other troupes was to lay eyes on the secret teachings.

In fact these writings had remained as secrets until a book collector came across them in a second-hand bookshop in Tokyo in 1909. It took another four decades for them to be translated into German, French and English. These writings are usually referred to as treatises by scholars, for they are in-depth investigations of various aspects of the art of nō and of being a good nō actor. [62]

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until one leaves the world. (Yoshimoto)
He who knows his sins
shall find ahead
no world of retribution. ("The Boy") (Brazell, 1999: 293-303)

[62] The Japanologists have identified the existence of a few copies of some of the treatises; at least that is what they argue. For example, De Poorter summarises the

Zeami was a prolific writer and an enthusiastic thinker. Remarkably, he considered all imaginable aspects of acting. However, for the purposes of this thesis, a selection of his teachings will be analysed in detail—namely, his concept of *hana.* The word is usually translated as "flower" but Zeami spent many years developing his theories of *hana* in the context of performance. The *hana* concept was at the heart of his investigations, which meant that he referred to it in all his treatises. Having examined all the treatises available in English translations my references will be mainly from three treatises: *Fushikaden* or *Teaching on Style and the Flower,* (also known as *Kadensho* or *The Book for the Transmission of the Flower*), *Shikado* or *The True Path to the Flower* and *Kakyō* or *A Mirror Held to the Flower (*also known as *A Mirror of the Flower).* A fourth, *Sarugaku Dangi* or *An Account of Zeami's Reflections of Art* or *Zeami's Talks on Sarugaku*, is used as a source for contextualising the background for the acting tradition in fifteenth century Japan. Hana as a dynamic and imagery is further supported by yūgen (suggested beauty; grace) and since these inseparable concepts are at the heart of what Zeami teaches his actors 'to do' and 'how to do it', they are the obvious choice for focus in this discourse.

Content and Form: The Nō Plays and the Play Structure

In an attempt to analyse the specificities and the complexities of Zeami's flower metaphor it is essential to acknowledge the wider context. In terms of content, many of the nō plays were based on the eleventh century masterpiece *Genji monogatari* (*The Tale of Genji)* written by

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differences and the relationships between the various editions of *Sarugaku Dangi* (in 2002: 61-70) See also (Hare, 1986: 41).

Murasaki Shikibu,[63] a woman, who was an aristocratic member of the court. Many of her characters are courtiers and nobles; the plots revolve around the relationships between these characters and people of lesser rank and status. Given the writer's own social background, her perspective of the dealings of the nobility is well placed. The story deals with the socio-cultural clashes between different classes from a humanist position. The text is scattered with w*aka*[64] (court poetry) and *renga*[65] poems. *Waka* and *renga* were the two most popular forms of poetry, especially among the courtiers. In the tale, they appear as poetry exchanges between the nobles. Zeami's appreciation for poetry was deeply rooted and he used this asset in his explorations of the aesthetics of nō. Some of Zeami's terminology originated from *waka* poetry criticism; *yūgen* for example, in waka poetry, "came to have significant overtones of transcendental mystery and depth". (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 260) Zeami used the term to signify a sense of grace or beauty that reluctantly, almost languorously avails itself; suggested beauty, rather than stated. Zeami's usage of the word allows one to view the beautiful object in relation to something else, or in the context of something, like a moon making itself seen behind the branches of a tree. This is a subtle beauty attained with the inner power of the partaker; it is antithetical to obvious or apparent beauty. Zeami also utilised *waka* poetry within the structure of a nō play. Usually after the dance of the main actor (*shite*) in the final section of a nō evening, a *waka* poem is recited to pinpoint the mood of the play.[66] (Mood

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[63] Both Murasaki Shikibu and Zeami have craters named after them on Mercury. In 1976 a convention of astronomers undertook such an exercise and named one hundred and thirty-five craters on Mercury after great artists from all over the world. (Hare, 1986: 1)

[64] "A poetic form in thirty-one syllables, arranged in a pattern of 5-7-5-7-7 syllables, which became the standard form of court poetry. Also called *tanka* (short poem)". (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 269)

[65] "This literally means linked verse. A poetic form usually consisting from two to a hundred parts, alternating five-seven-five and seven-seven syllable units. The aristocratic poet Nijo Yoshimoto elevated this form of poetry into art, and it became popular in the court." (Sekine 1985:165)

[66] The various sections of a nō evening will be outlined in the next page.

is an important part of performance dynamics that will be returned to later in this chapter.)

Other than the *Tale of Genji*, the nō texts were based on other popular stories, Shinto myths, Chinese myths, historical events, stories of heroes who died in battle or stories of people who died for a good cause. As discussed earlier, the kami were a great presence among the Shinto believers and they play an equally great part in the nō theatre. Keene argues that Shinto and nō had a reciprocal relationship where everyone's needs were served:

> [...] most Japanese believe in Shinto not in terms of its formal mythology and the scholars' elucidations, but in terms of gods and demons inhabiting the mountains and waters of Japan. These supernatural beings are innumerable, and include emperors, the ghosts of famous men, animals, trees and even inanimate objects. The good spirits bring happiness and plenty, but there are also malevolent ghosts. One way to appease the dead, who otherwise return and afflict the living, was to recite and re-enact their deeds on earth, assuring them that they are not forgotten. The sacred dances at the Shinto shrine, Kagura, originated in this manner, it appears, and Nō may also have been intended to calm the troubled dead. The dead return to life on the Nō stage to tell again their hours of glory and grief. (1973: 14)

However, as the word 'nō' indicates, the centre of attention in this particular theatre tradition is the ability, or the skill of a performer, rather than the plots of the plays. The audiences would have known the stories very well and this would have allowed them to experience and enjoy the fineries of the art of performance. If performed well, the stories would have been even more memorable, but that seems to be a bonus rather than the main objective.

The plays were a vehicle for the artists to share their ability and skill in performing with their audiences. The audiences would not have

experienced a plot-driven play about certain characters; instead they attended a structure-driven evening of usually five plays that encompassed a variety of roles that would reveal the virtuosity of the nō actors. Each play would depict a different set of events requiring different skills from the actor and the last play of the evening usually challenged the actor's poetic skills, through the use of *waka* poetry as part of the text.[67]

In addition to the five plays, quite frequently but not necessarily always, an evening of nō was prefaced by the performance of *Okina*, the oldest play in the history of nō. *Okina* is considered to be a sacred text and it is performed at the start of a programme for ritualistic reasons. *Okina* was the most performed nō play; it was part of many nō programmes. It was, undoubtedly, performed at all shrine performances, festivals, to mark the beginning of a new year and any other special occasions. (Keene, 1973: 13) Furthermore, in between the nō plays, it was customary to include comic interludes, called *Kyōgen*, to provide comic relief from the more serious, stylised environment of the nō. *Kyōgen* pieces were improvised, even though there were specific texts, the actors were free to improvise. In terms of movement, these were very physical performances that were not unlike the farcical comedies of the western tradition.

In terms of form, the main structural element in nō is the *jo-ha-kyu* structure borrowed from *Bugaku*, as mentioned earlier. According to a variety of glossaries and dictionaries the terms can be translated as follows:

Jo—beginning, introduction, prelude.
Ha—development, exposition, breaking.
Kyu—ending, climax, finale, rapid. [68]

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[67] Speaking waka poetry would have been challenging in the sense that in Japan, there is still, a *kata*, a formal, specific way of doing everything and the actor would have had to learn and perfect the required kata for performing waka in addition to his nō training.
[68] Jo, ha and kyu structure is explained by Zeami, in *Kakyō*, (*Mirror Held to the Flower*).

Jo-ha-kyu is a composition principle of a nō programme, which consisted of five different nō plays—divided up by Kyogen performances. Zeami's division of a nō evening is based more on dynamics of performance rather than subject matter or plot. Zeami's principle of the *jo-ha-kyu* paved the way for a more descriptive programme for the years to come.[69] He suggests that the programme should start with a play from the ***jo*** category: the plot should be easy to follow, the emphasis should be on song and dance, and the play should not require a great effort from the actor. The second play in the programme may belong to this category as well, but it should be of a different quality than the first play; it should be powerful but not too complex. The majority of the plays should belong to the ***ha*** category. Plays in this category will require complex levels of artistic expression from the actor. This category seems to be the heart of the programme. Zeami notes that not all *jo-ha-kyu* compositions consisted of five plays and that it was possible to perform more than five plays in one programme. However, if additional plays were needed then they should be performed in the *ha* category only and as long as the programme ends with a ***kyu*** play, the composition would be completed. This structural principle was also applied to each one of the plays within these categories. Each play would be divided into its *jo, ha* and *kyu* parts. Zeami explains the principle of jo-ha-kyu in *Kakyō* (*Mirror Held to the Flower)*:

> The term *ha* requires breaking the mood of *jo*, and is an art that brings complexity and great artistic skill to the performance. *Kyu* on the other hand, extends the art of *ha* in turn, in order to represent the final stage of the process. In this fashion *kyu* brings on powerful movements, rapid dance steps, as well as fierce and strong

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[69] By the beginning of the Edo period (1600-1867), the categories for these five plays were divided as follows: Waki Nō—plays about gods; Shura Nō—plays about warriors; Kazura Nō—plays about well-born ladies; Kurui Nō—plays about mentally disorientated persons; Kiri Nō—demons, monsters and similar imaginary beings. (Sekine, 1985: 45)

> gestures, in order to dazzle the eyes of the spectators. Agitation characterises this final stage of nō. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984:84)

Jo-ha-kyu is fundamentally different from the Aristotelian play structure in the way that the former is not as plot-driven as the latter; therefore, it is performance dynamics that moves the action forward rather than a narrative or an analytical raison d'être. [70]

Naturally, *jo-ha-kyu* is created by the actor's voice and movements. In terms of movements, much like everything else in nō theatre there are prescribed ways whether it is dance, walking, or gestures. The dance of nō is built out of a combination of two hundred and fifty gesture patterns called *kata*.[71] *Kata* are symbolic sets of gestures; some are realistic or literal and some are stylized or abstract.

> Kata are movements that are stopped at the minimal instant of their expression: the exact moment when the muscles are tensed. Various kata are designed to carry the story forward, but most are purely aesthetic, and serve to produce the subtle beauty which is the essence of Noh. [72]

These gestures range from literally putting a sword back into its scabbard to raising one's water-sleeves to cover one's face to signify weeping in a stylised manner. The stylised physical language that is made up of a mixture of gestures conveys the *jo-ha-kyu* structure of a play.

In terms of voice, Zeami writes in *Sarugaku Dangi (An Account of Zeami's Reflections of Art* (Section 94) that the *jo-ha-kyu* principle applies to every single uttered word, even a single letter word. He gives the example of the word '*o*'. *Jo* is the preparation an actor goes through before

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[70] In this sense, *Jo-ha-kyu* appears to be an organic structure in the sense that the dynamic is encouraged to develop and change whereas the Aristotelian play structure seems more synthetic in its attainment in comparison.
[71] CD-Rom *Masks: Faces of the Pacific* DNA Publishing. (Notes on Nō Acting.)
[72] CD-Rom *Masks: Faces of the Pacific* DNA Publishing.

the sound is produced; *ha* is the spoken or the intoned word and lastly *kyu* is the moment after the word is spoken or intoned. In other words, Zeami tells the actor to think, breathe, prepare and then utter the word and lastly let the sound land in its intended destination. He goes even further and states that, "If there is no introduction, development and climax, [the word] [sic] will not be understood". (De Poorter, 2002: 103) The urgency of each word raises the stakes for the performance thus requiring the total involvement of the actor.

It is possible to observe that a dynamic structure is not only applied to the whole of the programme but also to each play within the programme, as well as every single line and even word. Almost by contrast, this secular (or even mathematical—fractal) structure is preceded by a sacred play that demonstrates the ritualistic roots of nō as well as reifying the connections between Shintō and nō. In conclusion, the structure of nō is an antithesis in itself, dialectical in nature; it is made up of physically ordered and compositional elements, and esoteric Shintō elements that attain a sense of sacredness.

The harmony of the sacred and the secular went through a significant change when the Ashikaga shōgun Yoshimitsu decided to attend a nō performance by Kan-ami's troupe. The shōgun's expected presence in the audience would have marked it as a very special occasion and therefore, the programme, undoubtedly, would have opened with an *Okina* performance. In *Sarugaku Dangi* (Section 139) Zeami describes that Okina was traditionally danced by the oldest actor of the troupe, adorned with a white, very old man's mask. However, on this occasion, Naamidabutsu—presumably one of the advisers of the shōgun—suggested that Kan-ami perform the role of the Okina. "As the shōgun is coming for the first time, he will probably ask about the actor who will appear in the first play". (De Poorter, 2002: 115) Zeami goes on to say

that, "from then it all started". Once Kan-ami danced the Okina role despite the fact that he was not the oldest man in his troupe, they decided to make a rule of it, which meant that from that day on, the leader of the troupe danced the part and *Okina* was only performed during religious festivals. Hare expresses the significance of this performance:

> It not only marks the beginning of shogunal patronage for Kannami's troupe, but also signals a change in the orientation of sarugaku: with this performance, its ostensibly religious purpose was clearly subordinated to that of entertainment. (1986: 13)

Hare suggests that, "in replacing the oldest member of the troupe with the most skillful performer, the central purpose of the play is itself altered". (1986: 257) Hare's statement opens up the question of 'purpose' in the nō theatre. It could be argued that the purpose of the programme proper was not necessarily different than the purpose of the *Okina* play. The actor's process is altered but not necessarily the reasons for it; essentially all nō plays are performed for the kami, therefore all nō performances have rituals as their points of origin. Whilst it is possible to agree that consciously changing some elements in rituals practiced since the ancient times is a radical innovation, it may be questionable whether such a change has a radical impact on the objectives and the practice of nō theatre.

Having outlined some issues around form and content in the art of nō, it is possible to attempt to trace the essence of nō.

Hana: the Essence of Nō

Zeami places *hana* (flower) in the heart of all aspects of performing and witnessing a performance. *Hana* is the utmost goal of everyone involved; in fact *hana* signifies the togetherness of all who are involved.

The performers work to achieve it, the audiences—unwittingly—work[73] to experience it and somewhere in the middle, the performers and the audiences meet; that is where *hana* is located. It is possible to argue that the location of *hana* is as obscure as the term is esoteric. Zeami attempts to decipher this rather hazy concept by offering a variety of nature-related metaphors some of which will be examined below. It is not possible to analyse *hana* in isolation, due to the causal relationship that developed between *hana* and *yūgen* as Zeami matured as an actor and a thinker. However, in terms of the training process, Zeami concentrates on the concept of *hana* mainly because he identifies it as the only possible point of origin of a relationship between *hana* and *yūgen*. Having identified *hana*[74] as the main objective, in his teachings, Zeami explores how an actor might achieve it and understand its interconnectedness with yūgen. The training process is the most important part of a nō actor's life; it involves years of very hard work, requires discipline and absolute commitment. The training, in fact, is the actor's life. The leader of the house would be in charge of the training, especially the training of the actor who would take over the leadership. Zeami wrote extensively about the training process in the *Fushikaden* (*Teaching on Style and the Flower*) as well as in other treatises. This section of the thesis will trace the possible paths to the various flowerings in a performer's life time, whilst offering a brief description and an analysis of the different stages of the training. The exploration of the various flowerings will also provide the appropriate context in which the relationship between hana and yūgen can be better understood.

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[73] The audiences did not have any specific knowledge or understanding of *hana*. *Hana*, *yūgen* and other such terms were part of the practitioners' vocabulary in the context of nō theatre. *Yūgen*, as discussed earlier, originated from poetry criticism and it was Kan-ami and Zeami who applied it to nō. Zeami's audiences would not have attempted to witness or experience *hana* but they would have had a specific experience which resulted from the specific practice of the performers which resulted in *hana*. Even a seasoned audience member would not have used the vocabulary discussed here.

[74] Just like *yūgen* was a term that was adapted to nō from *waka* poetry, *hana* was a term that was borrowed from *renga* poetry criticism.

In the simplest way, it is possible to interpret the flower metaphor according to the natural circumstances of the flower and its fresh beauty. A flower is a natural living organism that blooms in the appropriate seasons. Despite the fact that one might have seen a thousand poppies before, seeing the first bloom in the new season will not take anything away from the freshness of the flower and the onlooker's joy of witnessing that freshness. The next stage is to think that the bloom originates from a seed, so the external beauty of the flower is actually sourced from a buried root that is not visible. In addition to this, the seed goes through a number of phases by the time it appears as a flower; it will have completed a journey. Yet another level of the flower metaphor pertains to its mortality. When its season ends, the flower may lose its petals, wither and then die; only to come back again rejuvenated as a different flower but from the same seed.

In other words, the performer should strive for different flowers (or flowerings) in different stages of his training. The training starts as early as age seven. In *Fushikaden* Zeami describes which aspects of nō theatre should be taught to young actors and what type of blooming to expect from them. As early as age eleven and twelve he starts to mention *yūgen*[75] and *hana*; at this age, the charm of youth should help create the level of *yūgen* that is required and thus the potentiality of *hana* appears. Zeami suggests that the child actor is taught as much as possible about the art but the teaching should not be about the finer points. Voice and dance training should also begin at this stage. A young actor, who has been learning the art from his master, doubtlessly will appear very charming on stage; Zeami warns that the apprentice should not start thinking that he

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[75] As described earlier, *yūgen* signifies a sense of grace or beauty which avails itself. It is the beauty of something or someone in relation to something else. It is subjective in nature and that is the key to understand the close relationship between hana and yūgen. Yūgen is the qualifier for hana and it is a hundred percent subjective whereas hana constantly shifts as the exchange between the performers and the audience shifts.

has gained his "true Flower" but that this is only a "temporary bloom". Zeami emphasises the differentiation between the various flowers one might be able to gain in a life time. Flowers will come and go according to the seasons; gaining such temporary flowers might be difficult but feasible with hard-work. But being able to offer different flowers in different seasons and therefore maintaining the potentiality of an eternal flower is the highest claim. Furthermore, the ability of practicing or performing one's flower with a sense of mysterious grace (*yūgen*) is the achievement of a true master. It is important for the young actor to be aware of the various levels he would need to reach in his future, so that he can specifically work for achieving those levels.

At the ages seventeen or eighteen, it is crucial to help prepare the young actor for the loss of his first flower, due to the natural changes of his voice and body. The blossom that the young actor found earlier is bound to disappear as the actor grows up. Zeami advises that the actor should accept this fact and he should focus on his vocal training and various chanting techniques. It is in this stage the actor makes his decision whether he is going to stay as a nō actor all his life or not. By the time the actor tums twenty-four or twenty-five, he will have started to become aware of his *level of artistry* and according to Zeami, therein lays the key to becoming a good nō actor. Self-discipline is an important part of training as a nō actor; according to Zeami, it is nothing to be taken lightly. He writes:

> The limits of the actor will be fixed by his training and his self-discipline. [...] This is the time of an actor's life when the art is born that will lead to the skills of his later years. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 6)

At this juncture in life, the actor is faced with having to understand his own strengths and limits. Being aware of the actual level he is at will lead the actor to much higher levels in the years to come. Even if the actor might

be winning acting competitions, Zeami warns that this is yet another temporary flower and by mistaking the temporary flower with the permanent one, one might jeopardise the latter. The actor must, at all times, keep his focus on learning more. Zeami repeatedly underlines the importance of knowing oneself with such wisdom as follows:

> If one has a true ability to understand his own level of perfection in his art, then he can never lose that level of the Flower. If an actor thinks he has attained a higher level of skill than he has reached, however, he will lose even the level he has achieved. This matter must be thought over carefully. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 7)

At this point, it will be useful to offer the exact same passage from *Fushikaden* but by another party of translators.

> If he really understands his degree of development, this flower need never fail him to the end of his life, but if he thinks himself more advanced than he is, he will lose even what he has already achieved. This must be deeply pondered. (Sakurai, Hayashi et al, 1969: 21)

It is interesting to note that the first translation considers the "level of perfection" whereas the second translation uses the words, "degree of development" instead. The original work was written in an older version of Japanese, which is difficult even for the specialists in the field to translate to modern Japanese—let alone to another language like English. It is possible to argue that one of the translations is imposing ideas onto the text but it is not possible to determine which one. There are significant differences between the implications of the words 'perfection' and 'development', however, if we try to get to the heart of what Zeami was trying to communicate, it is clear from the sentence that the focus is on 'level' or 'degree'. In this instance he encourages the young actor to develop self-reflectivity and humility. Zeami understood that in order to be able to grow as an actor, one must also learn to grow as a person.

Reflection is an important part of maturing; it is all the more important for a twenty-something year old actor in training who needs to have a strong inner source in order to be able to offer a beautiful flower externally. Reflective practice allows one to embrace one's process subjectively whilst observing it objectively for the purpose of personal and artistic enhancement. In *Kakyō*, he adds that in performance, "the eyes look ahead and the spirit looks behind". (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 81) Not only does an actor need to reflect upon his work in retrospect, but he also needs to be aware of his practice during a performance. Zeami explains that the actor needs to be aware of the space around him and advises not to leave any gaps. In other words, he tells the actor to 'own the space' as it might be referred to today amongst practitioners of the western performance tradition. Zeami explains that, "the actor looks in front of him with his physical eyes, but his inner concentration must be directed to the appearance of his movements from behind". (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 81) Inner concentration is what enables one to see with one's spirit. This is not only an acting tool that advocates the power of imagination but it is also intended as a learning tool that allows one to reflect upon one's progress objectively. This skill is very important for the young actor in training.

When the actor gets to his mid-thirties, he should be at his peak. By this time, he would have embodied his master's teachings and gained his true flower. He would have learned the nō tradition exhaustively; which would have meant he would have mastered *monomane*. *Monomane* is another one of Zeami's central expressions in conveying his teachings on the art of nō. *Monomane* is usually translated as 'imitation' but as always Zeami means more than its literal meaning. Rimer and Yamazaki translate it as 'Role Playing'. Zeami introduces the concept as follows:

> In general, Role Playing involves an imitation, in every particular, with nothing left out. Still, depending on the circumstances, one must know how to vary the degree of imitation involved. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 10)

Zeami unpicks the complexity of *monomane* by offering situational examples. There are a few main role types that need to be mastered by the student and they are old men, women, performing without a mask, mad people, monks, warriors, kami, demons and Chinese roles. Naturally not all old men are similar to one another and the actor has to observe such differences and apply them to his performance. If the old man in question is a noble then he will have a certain gait, deportment; he will wear certain items of clothing and he will have a way of handling, carrying his clothes. Zeami even suggests that the actor asks a few appropriate people for criticism of his imitative ability. He gives such examples for all the role types mentioned above. At a first glance it is easy to interpret *monomane* as pure imitation, as a mirror-image of life. However, there is another level where *monomane* serves a very technical purpose. It is a very simple yet, highly effective acting tool. Zeami asks the actor *to do* something specific rather than playing the general idea of a character, profession or status etc. Many western scholars get attracted to monomane because of its literal translation of 'imitation' and the obvious Aristotelian connections to *mimesis*. However, considering the fact that Zeami was first and foremost a performer, and that he was writing his observations for the benefit of his actors, it is essential to approach his teachings from the perspective of the performer as opposed to the scholar. Donned with such a perspective, it is clear that *monomane* is a technical acting tool and its function is to develop movement styles and techniques. The actor will experiment with physicalisation, in the process he will also find out about his own physicality. It is a chain, the more he is aware of his own physicality the better he can play roles that are unlike him. Such was

the expectation from a nō actor at his peak around the ages of thirty-four and thirty-five.

When the actor gets to forty-four or forty-five years of age, the blooms take on a different quality. At this stage he must strive to "find new means of showing his skills." (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 8) An actor who has gone through the training as prescribed by Zeami will be equipped with:

> [...] the seeds of flowers that bloom in all seasons, from the plum blossoms of early spring to the chrysanthemums of the fall. As he possesses all the Flowers, he can perform in response to any expectation on any occasion. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 53)

However, mastering the art of nō is not enough, the actor needs to be able to lead his own troupe and pass his knowledge on to others when his time comes. At this age the actor will not start to lose the flower but he will certainly begin to decline in beauty. And Zeami has a solution:

> Leaving aside the exceptionally handsome performer, even a fairly good-looking actor, as he grows older, should no longer be seen playing roles that do not require a mask. [...] From this point onward, it is best not to perform elaborate parts. [...] He [the older actor] should allow the younger actors to show off their own abilities, and he should play with them in a modest fashion, as an associate. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 53)

It is evident from his advice that Zeami not only asks for a democratic and an ethical way of working from the actor, but he also teaches his actors to respect one another. It seems as though there is a built-in Equal Opportunities policy in the treatise. If the actor has gained the true flower then he would know the importance of giving younger actors a chance. He concludes the thought with the following words, "one who truly knows how to see and reflect upon himself—it is he who has really grasped the nature of our art." (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 9)

The type of flower an actor of fifty years old or older achieves is different than all the previous flowers; it seems to be the most beautiful flower of them all because *yūgen* plays a big part in determining the quality of the flower. Zeami reminisces about Kan-ami's last performance and how his knowledgeable audience praised him. He writes that his father "performed a few easy roles in a modest way", and his flower was all the stronger because of his modesty. This is how Zeami describes this final flower:

> [...] when an artist has achieved a real Flower, then the art of the *nō*, even if the foliage is slight and the tree grows old, still retains its blooms. This is the very proof that, even in an ancient frame, the Flower remains. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 9)

The old, barren tree still retaining some of its blooms is a powerful image that suggests the permanence of training. The permanence of the nō training is demonstrated in the actor's full embodiment of what he has learnt to such a degree that even if his outer appearance changes, his inner grasp of the art remains untarnished by time. Indeed, as the actor gets older in age and appearance, his inner grasp of his art is likely to strengthen. As a result of the embodiment of the training, regardless of the age of the actor, he is able to attain a certain level in his performance that allows his flower to bloom. An old tree evokes the passage of time as well as epitomising physical endurance. The root of a tree brings to mind depth, which embodies an invisible space that provides strength—the older the tree the stronger the root.[76] Zeami indicates that a good nō actor's qualities resemble an old tree's qualities, among them, the ability to rejuvenate, patience and depth. These are qualities that are unrelated to the physical beauty of the tree. The beauty of the old, barren tree comes

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[76] This is reminiscent of Rilke's advice in, *Letters to a Young Poet,* where he writes, "Being an artist means, not reckoning and counting, but ripening like the tree which does not force its sap and stands confident in the storms of spring without fear that after them may come no summer. It does come." (Norton, 1993: 30)

from its ability to bloom, not from the exterior beauty of the flower itself. It is possible to make the relationship between *hana* and *yūgen* clearer with this example of the old tree. Komparu Kunio underlines the fact that as Zeami got older he developed his aesthetic theories and this development process included a shift in his perspective. Almost all his treatises have the character for *hana* in the titles and this is a good indication of where his interests lay. However, Komparu argues that, "gradually this concept merged with that of *yūgen*, and eventually he went on to transfer his ideal of beauty from *hana* to the more complex and profound *yūgen*". (1983: 12) Komparu draws a parallel with the changes in Zeami's theories of aesthetics with his changing interest in nō plays; he states that, Zeami became more interested in "phantasmal pieces of a dreamworld" and that, this indicates the shift from the external to the internal. Based on this premise Komparu infers that *hana* can be interpreted as *apparent beauty* while *yūgen* can be interpreted as *invisible beauty*. He writes:

> If we contrast and define these two inseparable concepts, we will have both *hana:* exterior symbolic beauty, beauty seen, and *yugen:* subconscious beauty, beauty felt and responded to, and there can be seen the change of consciousness from beauty that one is made to *see* to beauty one is made to *feel.* (1983: 12)

It is true that Zeami seems to have paid more attention to *yūgen* as he got older, but it is not possible to justify this change taking place at the expense of *hana*. Zeami's instructions are clear that an actor must strive to achieve different flowers in his life time and he can only arrive at that level by training meticulously and passionately. For Zeami yūgen did not become more important than *hana*.[77] Yūgen is not separate from *hana*; it

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[77] As mentioned earlier the different schools of nō focused on different aspects of the art. For the Kanze-za, Zeami's school, *hana* was the focus, whereas for the Komparu school *yūgen* was the most important aspect. Zeami discusses the issue of the differences between the four major schools in the *Sarugaku Dangi*. The author of *The Noh Theatre: Principles and Perspectives* Komparu Kunio might or might not have been part of the later Komparu school; there is no evidence of his possible connections to this school in his book.

is in fact a part of it. It is agreeable to interpret *yūgen* as *beauty felt* but it is crucial to understand that it is the audience who does the feeling. The actor can only work towards achieving *hana,* with *yūgen* in mind and the flower gained will render *yūgen* possible. In this sense, yūgen is yet another layer of beauty that is made possible by *hana. Yūgen* is a distinct aesthetic experience which is not unlike the Kantian sense of the sublime; hence the original interpretation of the concept as *mysterious beauty.* Zeami's primary concern is the training of his actors, teaching them the craft of nō. Naturally, the audience experience plays a big part in the process but if the focus is not on the training then the audiences would not have anything to receive. Therefore, from an actor's perspective *hana* is the heart of nō.

Zeami declares in the *Kadensho* that, "To know hana is to know the secret of Nō". (Sakurai, Hayashi et al, 1969: 21) The secret is years of training and commitment mixed in with contemplations of a philosophical nature. The secret is to be aware of performance dynamics—accepting the fact that flowers bloom and fade. The secret is the deep-rooted desire to gain a flower that does not fade. The secret is to embody the knowledge that the real *hana* is in the mind.

> Only the character of an actor formed by such a thorough training can know the seed of the flower. For before he can know the Flower, he must know the seed. The flower blooms from the imagination; the seed represents merely the various skills of our art. In the words of an ancient sage:
>
> *The mind-ground contains the various seeds,*
> *With the all-pervading rain each and every one sprouts.*
> *Once one has suddenly awakened to the sentiency of the flower,*
> *The fruit of enlightenment matures of itself.* (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 30)

In all his treatises Zeami continually offers more analogies and metaphors in order to clarify what he means by *hana.* It is evident from the

teaching above that the secret is to understand that the flower has a point of origin. More precisely, the seed of the flower is located somewhere and finding the seed will lead to the flower. In the edition of the *Kadensho* translated by Japanese scholars mentioned before, the last sentence before the poem reads, "To know hana is to know the seed. Hana is in the mind, the seed is the technique." (Sakurai, Hayashi et al, 1969: 52) Once again, Zeami's advice contests to his embodiment of his art. As a trained actor himself, he knows that the technique can be learned with hard work, but it will only make sense when it is digested, absorbed when it is totally embodied. There is a 'cause and effect' relationship between technique and acting which can be paralleled to the one between the seed and the flower. Zeami takes this notion a step further in the *Shikadō (The True Path to the Flower)*.

In the *Shikadō* he explores the relationship between Function and Substance. The heart of the relationship is that Function is a consequent of Substance. It is the natural resultant of Substance. Once again he offers a nature analogy:

> If Substance can be compared to a flower, then Function can be compared to its odor. The moon and its light make a similar comparison. [...] those who truly understand the art watch it with the spirit [...] to see with the spirit is to grasp its Substance; to see with the eyes is merely to observe the function. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 71)

Relishing the beauty of the moonlight is simply not possible without the moon, though the moon itself may not be visible. Zeami synthesises some of his previous teachings in this example. A young actor trying to imitate something at face value will only end up imitating the visible, the externalised section of the art. If he fails to understand that all externalisations stem from a deep internal strength then he will never gain his flower. The awareness of the origins of things is to understand the

essence of nō. *Hana* can only happen in the mind, if the technique has been digested by the body—that is the origin of *hana*.

Connected to the notions of Function and Substance, he employs another term to elucidate the concept of *yūgen* sensed through *hana*.

> Then, there is still another kind of artistic elegance called Mood, and its precise location cannot be found. This quality moves like a breeze from the Substance of an actor's art. Mood is fostered through Substance and can be sensed in a performance through Function.
>
> Cannot the beauty of Grace [yūgen] be compared to the image of a swan holding a flower in its bill, I wonder? (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 73)

According to this statement, the Mood would be the Function and *hana* would be the Substance. *Mood* is the English translation for the word *kakari*. In their glossary Rimer and Yamazaki explain it as, "literally, an 'appearance,' an atmosphere created by the nō that Zeami sees as one of those beyond cognition and description". (1984: 261) The investigation for the location of the Mood might end up somewhere in between the audience and the performers. It is certain that this quality, which *moves like a breeze* from the direction of the performers towards the audience, is the essence of performance itself. One of the reasons for not being able to locate this quality readily might be its dynamic nature. It maybe that it is in constant motion and that it is never stagnant. It is possible that wherever this quality moves, that is where exchange happens between the performers and the audience. If performance *is* the exchange between the audience and the performers, then the location of the Mood and the performance are one and the same. This type of indirect exchange creates the required element of *yūgen* into the performance.

> [...] he [an actor] must never separate himself from the virtue of Grace [yūgen]. No matter what the role—whether the character be of high or low rank, a man, a woman, a priest or lay person, a farmer or country person, even a beggar or even outcast—it should seem as though each were holding a branch of flowers in his hand. In this one respect they exhibit the same appeal, despite whatever differences they may show in their social positions. This Flower represents the beauty of their stance in the *nō*; and the ability to reveal this kind of stance in performance represents, of course, its spirit. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 93-94)

Yūgen of *hana* creates a parallel relationship to Function of Substance, Cause of Effect and externalisations of internalisations. For example, if the audience is to experience the sublimity of the moonlight then the actor has to create the moon; which might be interpreted as, if the moonlight experienced is *yūgen* then the moon created by the actor is *hana*.

Zeami's teachings prompt the actor to think more deeply, to understand further and ask more. Even Zeami declares that it is rare for one actor to embody all the necessary knowledge and understanding. However, he summarises the possibility of that rare embodiment in terms of three main elements of nō: Skin, Bone and Flesh.

> Bone represents the exceptional artistic strength that a gifted actor shows naturally in his performance and which comes to him of itself through his inborn ability. Flesh can doubtless be defined as that element visible in a performance that arises from the power of the skills of the actor that he has obtained by his mastering of the Two Basic Arts of chant and dance. Skin on the other hand, may be explained as a manner of ease and beauty in performance that can be obtained when the other two elements are thoroughly perfected. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 69)

Most actors will have a life-time career in acting whilst they only possess one of the elements described above. As Zeami suggests, a good actor should strive to possess all three, so that the seed of the flower constantly rejuvenates itself and each new season brings a new bloom ready to flourish.

Chapter Four: Bharata's *Natyashastra* in the Vedic Context

Socio-cultural Influences and a brief introduction to Hindu philosophy

The Sanskrit theatre tradition is highly unusual in having a text like the *Natyashastra* in its possession. It is a meticulously detailed treatise on the art of performance that not only provides an exhaustive study of classical Indian notions of histrionics[78] but it also describes the origin of theatre and the reasons for the creation of such an art form. In order to contextualise the *Natyashastra,* it is important to highlight some of the socio-cultural influences, such as the social structure of the people, the predominant religion and language. The theatre tradition of any society is likely to be influenced by the social structure, belief system/s, and the literature (or texts) belonging to that society. Performance arts in India have been significantly influenced by the caste system, Hinduism and the traditional epics. In this section of the thesis, the aforementioned influences will be briefly touched upon in at attempt to contextualise two specific chapters of the *Natyashastra* that reveal key concepts of the Indian aesthetic theory; they are entitled: *The Distinction between Sentiment and Emotional Fervour* and *Exposition on Bhavas (Emotional tracts and Stages).*

It is generally assumed by historians and archaeologists, that the Indus Civilisation can be dated back to approximately 4000BCE. The Vedic Civilisation is believed to have flourished from 2700 to 1750 BCE. It is thought that the people who lived beyond the Indus River were called 'Indus' by the ancient Persians and that the term was adapted by western scholars to 'Hindus' by the 18th century. It was then accepted and adopted

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[78] I am using the word 'histrionic' to mean, "of or relating to actors and acting" as cited in *The American Heritage Dictionary.* My general usage of the noun 'histrionics' then, implies the performance tradition with an emphasis on acting (or issues related to acting).

by the Hindus themselves. After 1750BCE, Indo-Aryans from Persia started to migrate to the region and eventually became the majority of the population. "Over the centuries, the Aryans developed a body of rituals and religious customs, which came to be known as Hinduism." (Brandon, 1993: 64)

> Hindus are fond of saying that Hinduism is more than a religion: it is a way of life. As such it suffuses all aspects of public and private life. It is part of India's social fabric as well as of its entire culture. (Klostermaier, 1998:1)

Therefore, as Klostermaier suggests, it is important to consider Hinduism as an umbrella religion that was shaped by a variety of peoples of South Asia in the last few thousand years rather than a single religion with a specific creed. (ibid.) The Vedic thinking system does not make a differentiation between a philosophical and a theological approach to life. The Vedic belief system follows the teachings of the Vedas and other religious texts but it is, at the same time, a "study of the principles underlying conduct, thought, and the nature of the universe", (which is the first definition of philosophy in *Webster's New World Dictionary*). Although Hinduism was not (and is not) the only religion in India, it has definitely been the most popular one throughout its history. Conflicts with other religions did play a part in influencing life and art in India[79] but the influence of Hindu texts is directly related to the discussion on the variety of influences on Sanskrit notions of performance. The influence is such that it is possible to learn about the religion by studying the performing arts. Hinduism encompasses everything in the life of its believer from religion, society, law and order to culture, literature and other arts forms; thus bringing the western divisions of, the *sacred* and the *secular* so close

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[79] Especially the Islamic belief that a living-being created by God cannot and should not be recreated or represented by humans provides evidence for a significant Hindu influence on art in India. As it is well known, depictions of gods and demons or holy beings in all possible forms of art are a common sight in India.

together that the fine line between them is hardly visible. The proximity[80] between the sacred and the secular is not only the key to understanding Hinduism as a belief system but it is also one of the most important influences on the Indian performance aesthetics. Schwartz writes about the proximity/sameness of the sacred with the secular as follows:

> In this tradition, the distinction between religion and philosophy that has permeated western culture as well as the western academy is not useful. Both religion and philosophy in India take their inspiration and their application from a worldview that combines them. It is more fruitful to state that the goal of the aesthetician, from Bharatamuni onward, has been to facilitate a transformation—of the artist, the audience, and ultimately the world—that may only be understandable from the perspective of religion. (2004: 3)

In other words, she seems to be saying that it is possible to understand or at least explore Indian aesthetics from a western perspective and thus concentrate on religion. But she also suggests that the Indian worldview combines religion and philosophy. It is best to see the influence on performance aesthetics for what it is—both sacred and secular—rather than making cultural assumptions based on our western academic thinking.

The caste system, another major influence on the development of the performance aesthetics as mentioned before, divides people into groups, based on social, racial and economic criteria as well as varying states of spiritual development.

Brahmins: The priests and the intellectuals.

Kshatriyas: The warriors and rulers.

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[80] The proximity or the sameness of the sacred and the secular depends on the point of the view of the onlooker. At this expository stage, it is possible to view them as proximate, but a deeper understanding of Hinduism might prove that they are indeed one and the same. However, the crucial point here is that regardless of 'our' perspective on it, the relationship between the sacred and the secular remains unchanged.

Vaisyas: The artisans and farmers.
Sudras: The unskilled labourers.

These four are again subdivided into a great multitude of groups. In addition, there are the *outcastes* who do not belong to one of the four main castes. The outcastes among themselves maintain a caste-like hierarchy. According to the Veda, one is born into one's caste, it is not a matter of choice, nor can it be changed for any reason.

What is generally referred to as 'the Veda', are the teachings in the four Vedas, which are the main sacred texts and other sacred teachings such as the *Upanishads* and the *Aranyakas*. *Veda,* writes Klostermaier, comes "from the root, '*vid*' to know, '*knowledge*' with the connotation of revelation." (Klostermaier, 1998:199) In essence, the Vedas are a collection of hymns[81] written in Vedic[82]. The Vedas are divided into two main categories:

Shruti (what has been heard)
Smrti (what has been remembered)

Shruti, also translated as 'revelation', are considered to be the most sacred of them all. The four major Vedas are *shruti.*

Rigveda (Veda of mantras, hymns)
Samaveda (Veda of melodies)
Yayurveda (Veda of rituals and sacrifices)
Atharvaveda (Veda of incantations, charms)

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[81] The usage of the word *hymn* should not evoke any Christian imagery. It should be considered as its original Latin meaning, song of praise, or spiritual song.
[82] Vedic was the archaic version of Sanskrit which was the sacred language and was standardised around 600BCE by a famous grammarian called Panini.

In addition, the *Brahmanas,* the *Aranyakas* and the *Upanishads* are considered *shruti. Brahmanas* are texts about religious sacrifices of the Brahmans, the religious leaders. *Aranyakas* are associated with the *Yayurveda.* It is a text of mythical interpretations of rituals and the Vedic sayings. The *Upanishads* are also directly related to the four Vedas. (There are 13 main verses of the *Upanishads* that correlate to the Vedas.) The word 'upanishad' itself means, 'sitting next to someone else's knees'. This work symbolises the discipline required in learning a philosophy, a way of living, from a guru. The *Upanishads* are also called the *Vedanta.* (Kaya, 2001:39-44) According to Zimmer, the *Upanishads* are secretive teachings exclusive to the Brahmin caste, where the teacher/guru could only pass on certain specific teachings to the oldest son, only if the pupil is ready to receive them. Zimmer writes, "the word *upanisad* is everywhere described as *rahasyam,* "a secret, a mystery". For this is a hidden, secret doctrine that discloses *satyasya satyam,* "the truth of truth"." (Zimmer, 1971: 61) It is interesting to note that such a notion as *the truth of truth* is exclusive to a group of privileged people and that only the 'religious' leaders are allowed access to certain texts.

Smrti on the other hand are the texts that were written from what has been remembered. In other words, these are the texts for the people; full access allowed for everyone. Klostermaier makes the distinction as "tradition, as opposed to shruti (revelation)." (1998: 174) The *Itihasas* and the *Puranas* are considered to be the most important *smrti.* The *Itihasas* are the two major epics: the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana.* Even though it is actually part of the *Mahabharata,* the *Bhagavad-Gita* is always mentioned separately. It is one of the most important and popular texts among Hindus. The title translates as the *Song of the Lord;* it is a poem that appears in the form of a dialogue, between Krishna and Arjuna, just before the great Bharata war in the *Mahabharata.* (Klostermaier, 1998: 35-36) Klostermaier even states that it is 'the' most well-known "Hindu

scripture world wide". (ibid.) Bhagavad-Gita teaches the three paths to liberation[83] from the rebirth cycle with great detail, which might be one of the reasons for its popularity.

> For traditional Indian historians the great watershed in ancient Indian 'history' is the Mahabharata War which most date at 3002 BCE, based on astronomical cues. They also identify with this date the beginning of the Kali Yuga, the 'Age of Strife'. (Klostermaier 1998: 5)

The *Puranas* are literally, 'old books':

> They deal with the creation of the universe, genealogies of the gods and patriarchs, myths associated with various deities, rules for living and descriptions of heavens and hells as well as of the end of the world. [...] The Puranas themselves claim greater antiquity than the Vedas. (Klostermaier, 1998: 143)

As Klostermaier also states in his introduction, Indian traditional scholars:

> [...] considered Itihasa-Purana the source for ancient Indian 'history', literature that had not seemed worthy of study by serious scholars in the West, because of its often sectarian and occasionally wildly imaginative character. (1998: 5)

Like the epics, Puranas were also meant for the people as opposed to the religious leaders and their secretive teachings and rituals. Another evidence of the division of these texts is the languages in which they were shared. Once Sanskrit was standardised it became the official language of Hindu scholarship; "it was considered to be the language of the gods" (Klostermaier, 1998:10) People however, spoke local, regional languages called *prakrits*, also known as 'natural languages'. The Brahmins did not consider prakrits to be sacred. But in order to maintain and develop religious tuition, the teachings of the Vedas started to get translated into the relevant prakrits and inevitably, the prakrits also developed as literary

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[83] A brief description of the three paths to liberation is to follow in the next few pages.

languages. By the first century (AD), Sanskrit had become a (mostly) written-only language. For example, in traditional dance-dramas only certain characters are allowed to speak (sing) in Sanskrit, the rest of the text is in the relevant regional language[84].

Having mentioned the major texts and the languages as part of a specific socio-cultural structure, it is also necessary to take a brief look at the teachings of Hinduism as a belief system, a philosophy. Hinduism as a lived philosophy offers a flexible 'way' of living and devotion (as opposed to an 'institutionalised religion' in the western sense). It is a totally embodied philosophy that does not have allocated worshipping times and criteria like its western counterparts. This does not mean that there are not specific rites and rituals that are required; on the contrary Hinduism is a highly ritualistic belief system that allows the individual devotees to go through a variety of rites of passage.

Brahman is the ultimate god; characterised by universal consciousness, infinity and the immanence in all things. Almost all written sources on Hinduism open with a statement about the devotees' connections with the world-soul (Brahman). Brocket writes:

> Hinduism teaches that the essence of all things is *spirit* or *soul* and that the fundamental goal is to achieve union with the Supreme World-Soul, or Brahman, who is infinite, eternal, indescribable, and perfect. [...] is the ultimate reality from which everything emanates and everything seeks to return. (1991: 237)

Achieving such a union is believed to be the utmost reason for existence. It is commonly mentioned as *atman*, the Sanskrit word for 'self'. The

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[84] Different characters' speaking in different tongues does not only have social implications; the dramatic consequences could even be greater. It is not implied that Sanskrit theatre is the only tradition that employs such dramatic or linguistic devices; the argument is for making a point about the languages of the people and the stage and to borrow Phelan's terminology, the point is more about 'marking' these devices.

Vedas teach the ways of reaching a pure state of consciousness in order to find one's true 'self'. It is understood that humans mistake exterior appearance with the inner reality and that is the reason why we all need to search for *atman. Atman* is also associated with an eternal state of bliss; this might stem from the embodiment of the knowledge that each individual is part of the world-soul just like the world–soul is part of each individual. A physical understanding of this is identified with an etemal state of bliss. However, the path to this bliss and joy is what is identified with 'life' and this path does not always appear blissful. Hindus worship a plethora of gods and spirits—not all blissful; but they are all 'different aspects' of Brahman. Already there is a dualism that appears to be at the centre of the belief system. On one hand there is the utmost goal of becoming one with the world-soul but on the other hand there are so many aspects of Brahman and so many paths to choose. The notion of *the one in many* and *the many in one* seems to be the simplest way of unpacking this complex philosophy. There are three principle aspects of Brahman; and they are personified by three different gods. This constitutes the Hindu god triumvirate, the *Trimurti.*

Brahma (the creator)
Shiva (the destroyer)
Vishnu (the protector)

The *trimurti* is symbolised in the popular mantra 'om'. But it is actually spelled as AUM. 'A' stands for Vishnu and it also stands for 'waking consciousness'; 'U' stands for Brahma, it also stands for 'dream consciousness', and 'M' stands for Shiva and it also stands for 'deep sleep'. (Kaya and Klostermaier). Even though Brahma is in people's prayers, there are a very limited number of temples dedicated to him. Most temples are dedicated to Vishnu and Shiva and Vishnu's nine

incarnations[85]. Krishna and Rama are the most popular incarnations of Vishnu. They are also the heroes of the two major epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. In addition, Rama and Krishna's heroic deeds are celebrated at month-long, highly performative, festivals: *ram lila* for Rama and *ras lila* for Krishna. These festivals are very much a manifestation of the 'way' of life that is the Hindu philosophy. Town folk come together and re-enact the stories in the epics whilst displaying a significant community effort. It would be a vast understatement to reduce these festivals merely to a community effort; for the complexity of these events in terms of organisation and performance and playing host to tens of thousands of people whilst taking part in religious rites, is more than just a community effort, it becomes life itself[86].

In Hindu philosophy, it is common practice to take part in such performative rites and rituals as the *ram lila* (among many others). As it was highlighted in the example of *ram lila* that for the duration of the festival, which is about a month, life becomes the festival and festival becomes life. As *ram lila* celebrates the life and deeds of Rama, it may be justifiable to call this event a festival; however, it is crucial to remember that this and other such rituals serve a very specific spiritual purpose and that a simplistic interpretation as 'life is one big festival' would be pedestrian as well as untrue. As identified in the *Bhagavad-Gita* as well as the *Upanishads*, there are three paths to liberation from the cycle of life and rebirth.

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[85] According to the myth, the tenth incarnation, Kalki, on his white horse, is going to come at the 'end of the world' and save the world as well as the universe.
[86] There are various sources that depict these festivals but Anuradha Kapur's *Actors, Pilgrims, Kings and Gods: The Ramlila at Ramnagar* provides thorough descriptions of the event from a variety of perspectives; whilst Richard Lannoy's colossal volume, *Benares Seen from Within* provides breathtaking photographs. (NB: Ramnagar is in the city of Benares.)

Vidya (knowledge, wisdom)

Bhakti (devotion)

Karma (action, path of works)

They are correlated to one another and should not be seen as three isolated paths. This means that each individual believer has to understand and define their own paths to liberate their souls from this world. *Samsara* is the cycle of birth-life-death-rebirth a person finds him/herself trapped in if they have not reached the end of their path to liberation. According to Hindu belief, life is an illusion, *maya.* The highest aim is to get out of the illusion and reach reality (Brahman is the only reality). The liberation from samsara means liberation of the soul. Finding the true self and thus reaching atman is the only reality. This is the main teaching of Hinduism that is agreed by almost all of its different sects and versions. According to the *Upanishads*, knowledge (vidya*)* is the only means to find full emancipation from samsara. Klostermaier's entry for vidya highlights the fact that these terms have been interpreted in a variety of ways.

> It arises from discrimination between the eternal self and the transient world of the senses. Indian philosophers have developed diverse interpretations of its meaning and its acquisitions. (1998: 202)

Bhakti, the other path to liberation is complete devotion to a deity through "inner and outer acts of worship". Klostermaier makes the differentiation between "an inner surrender to God" and "an insistence on routine of rituals performed daily". The relationship between a guru and an apprentice also manifests this ultimate, complete devotion; in the way the pupil follows his/her teacher wholly just like a true devotee. (1998: 36-37) Karma in this context means "prescribed", writes Klostermaier (1998:95). It is performing all the required rituals and going through all the rites of

passage throughout one's whole life. Karma means selfless performance for one's community.

The example of ram lila is one of many, where one of the two epics get re-told or re-enacted for a variety of reasons. Such events bring the whole community together. Individuals can perform their caste duties, whilst practicing their religion. The relationship between the individual belonging to a whole as well as the whole belonging to an individual is symbolised in this example, the ram lila. They find the opportunity to personalise their paths to liberation and attempt getting out of the samsara cycle. It is evident that both the major epics (*Mahabharata* and *Ramayana)* serve many functions in Hindu society. At this juncture, it can be noted that there is only one character who appears in both the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* and that is Hanuman, the monkey god (also known as Pavana). If the ram lila is an example of a performative, cultural event that reflects the Hindu worldview, then Hanuman is the godly example.

Hanuman, son of the Wind, is a mischievous god with infinite powers. Hanuman can walk across oceans, fly everywhere, jump as high as the highest mountains, dive as deep as the deepest oceans, and fight against the mightiest monsters. He is capable of doing absolutely anything he wants. Moreover, he is good. When he is not creating harmless havoc in heaven, he is always 'there' when he is needed. Hanuman's most notable characteristic is that he always forgets that he possesses all the powers he could ever want or need and that he always needs reminding that he is a god. This is one of the many reasons for his popularity. As the story goes, everyone has a Hanuman inside them and that sometimes, all it takes is a reminder from someone else in order to accomplish tasks that seem impossible at a first glance. In addition to his hidden potential, Hanuman is also considered to be the perfect believer. He is known as the embodiment of *shakti (power)* and bhakti (devotion). Bhakti is one of the paths to liberation as discussed above. Shakti is "an independent supreme

being, created from the united power of all the gods". (Klostermaier, 1998: 160) In other words, in Hanuman, humility and devotion come together with utmost power and this is depicted in his character in both the stories.

At the risk of over simplifying a very complex belief system, it can be summed up that, in life, the ultimate goal is to achieve atman and by discovering god, to discover self. As the brief introduction to the Hindu philosophy above suggests, atman is not about a mere result; in fact it is more process than it is result. Traditional Indian theatre works according to the same principles—maya (illusion) finds its model in theatre. In theatre the ultimate goal is ***rasa*** (Taste; flavour; relish). Rasa is both the target and the tool; it is more process than it is result, but it is both. It is not a coincidence that the Indian worldview is reflected in its theatre tradition, especially in its aesthetic theory—rasa. The rest of this chapter will be devoted to the traditional aesthetic theory as described in the *Natyashastra,* keeping "a sense of the divine" in mind, as Rustom Bharucha advises us to do.

The Natyashastra[87]

The *Natyashastra* "is part theatrical manual, part philosophy of aesthetics, part mythological history, part theology". (Schwartz, 2004: 12) It is generally dated approximately between 200BC and 200AD and it is attributed to a sage called Bharatamuni. Although not much is known for certain about the author of this significant work, it is generally assumed by scholars that the work itself is referring to a long standing theatre tradition. The *Natyashastra* is often referred to as the fifth Veda, *Natyaveda* by some theatre scholars. This would automatically place the work in the

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[87] Natya Sastra, Natya Shastra, Natyasastra and Natyashastra are the four variants I have seen in print for the title. Sometimes it is shortened to just NS. By the same token the author is sometimes referred to as Bharata Muni, or Bharatamuni or Bharata for short. My personal usage: Natyashastra and Bharata.

shruti category of sacred texts; information that has been revealed, rather than remembered. Natya meaning performance, if it is indeed the fifth Veda, then the *Natyashastra* is a sacred book on the art of performance.[88]

The first chapter of the *Natyashastra* is entitled, *The Origin of Drama,* where Bharata explains how he was asked by the gods to write a treatise of drama. According to the given account, everyone was in a state of emotional chaos and thus had become the victim of their senses.

> [...] people became victims of lust, covetousness, and were engaged in Rustic rites and activities, overwhelmed by jealousy and deluded by wrath, experiencing happiness and misery. (Chapter 1, Verse 8-11)

In terms of the Hindu philosophy explained before, this would mean that people were more interested in their transient selves instead of searching for their true self, mainly because they would have been stuck in the world of senses rather than being on the path to knowledge (vidya). Bharata was asked by Brahma (who was asked by Indra), to put an end to this by providing some social order. The wish was rather specific; as it required the construction of "a pastime that shall simultaneously be visual as well as auditory" and that could involve all four castes. The contents were then revealed to Bharata. Combined with his own knowledge and devotion, thus he wrote the fifth Veda, based on the previous four Vedas and the Vedangas[89], as well as the other texts. Once he had finished, the story continues, he demonstrated it with the help of his hundred sons. The very first play was performed by Bharata's hundred sons. (This would also mean that the original audiences were gods.) This first production evoked many emotions in different entities. Brahma and other Devas (gods) were

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[88] *Sastra* or *sutra* is translated as "revealed scripture".
[89] Klostermaier's entry for *Vedangas ('limbs of the Veda')* "Six auxiliary sciences to be studied in order to understand and use the Veda correctly[...]" (1998: 200)

delighted to see a perfect depiction of a struggle between gods and demons where the gods were winning. This caused upheavals amongst the demons, who then decided to rebel against this new enterprise called natya. The demons put spells on the actors so that they could not move nor speak. Indra saw that the problem needed an immediate solution. He decided to create a specific building, a house, specifically for the natya and vowed that the performance space will be a sacred space so that the actors and the audiences will be safe from the spells of the demons. He appointed different gods for the protection of the cast and crew. This story is the reason and the explanation for the performance of the preliminary prayers before a production in order to 'clear' the performance space from all wrong intentions. *Theyyam* is an example of such a preliminary performative prayer.[90]

Thus, the greatest of all Hindu gods created drama, as well as all the other branches of arts and crafts. Brahma had to take care of additional needs as the creation and the development process continued. For example, he had to create heavenly nymphs to act and dance, and he had to summon up the musicians to play and sing, to accompany the 'play.'[91] Considering the fact that this exercise was undertaken at a time of utmost chaos and emotional commotion, it might be argued that underneath the whole exercise lays the experientiality of our senses and the predominant one in case of the *Natyashastra* is the erotic sentiment. It was decided that women were needed to portray such a sentiment perfectly and thus the celestial damsels were created. The *Natyashastra* instructs how to create theatre and provides chapters on almost every possible aspect whilst

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[90] Theyyam is a form of ritual, specific to Kerala, performed before a night of Kathakali in order to sanctify the space and get rid of all the evil sprits, and it is highly theatrical as well as performative. Chapter 5 of the *Natyashastra*, *Procedure for the Preliminary Items* explains this further.

[91] It is interesting to note that the word for play is 'lila' as introduced earlier. Lila is also defined as "divine playfulness", which is very fitting, considering the important place of rituals in Hindu culture. This also provides another example of 'holy theatre'.

reflecting a specific worldview. In other words, the fifth Veda teaches how to handle transient senses and develop closer connections with Brahman (the world-soul). In fact at the end of the last chapter of the text, Sage Bharata reveals:

> The gods are never so pleased on being worshipped with scents and garlands as they are delighted with the performance of dramas. The man who properly attends the performance of music or drama will (after his death) attain a happy and meritorious path in the company of Brahmanic sages. (Bharata in Varadpande, 1987: 147)

The book is mostly in verse (*Aryametre*) with occasional prose passages. At times using first person singular, he explains how to create *natya* perfectly. Bharata teaches the natya in thirty-six chapters. The chapter titles are as follows:

1. The Origin of Drama
2. Characteristics of the Playhouse
3. Adoration of the God of the Stage
4. Characteristics of the Tandava Dance
5. Procedure for the Preliminary Items
6. The Distinction between Sentiment and Emotional Fervour
7. Exposition on Bhavas (Emotional tracts and stages)
8. Procedure of the Ancillary Limbs
9. Gestures of the Hands
10. Gestures of the Limbs
11. Explanation of the Cari Movements [Simultaneous movement of the feet, shanks and the hip]
12. Diverse Mandala Movements
13. The Different Types of Gaits
14. Review of Zonal Division and Realistic Practice
15. Rules of Prosody
16. An Inquiry into the Varieties of Metres
17. Characteristics of Poetical Work
18. Rules Regarding the Use of Languages
19. Vakyavidhana and Kakusvara Vyanjana
20. Rules Regarding the Ten Types of Dramas
21. Classification of the Constituents Sandhis (Junctures)
22. Division of Styles
23. Costumes-Makeup
24. Basic Representation

25. Services to the Gallant
26. Special Representation
27. Review of Fulfilment and Success in Dramatic Production
28. Classification of Instrumental Music
29. On Stringed Instruments
30. Hollow Musical Instruments
31. Time Measures and the Ghana Instrument of Tala
32. Songs
33. Avanaddhatodya Vidhanam
34. Type of Characters
35. The Different Roles
36. Incarnation of the Science of Dramatic Performance

In addition to the socio-religious contributions the text would have made to people's lives, the above list of chapters also contests to the fact that this is an extraordinary work to be written at any time in history, anywhere in the world. From an artistic point of view, the compilation of such a treatise justifies not only the existence of the art form, but also indicates to the need for such a complete outline of the dramatic arts.

What exactly is meant by Indian dance-dramas? What is the form that is associated with the Indian dance-dramas? It is believed (and to some extent assumed—due to a lack of archiving) that throughout its history, a great number of performance genres were practised in India, so it is not necessarily one particular form of performance that needs to be investigated, but rather it is an aesthetic theory that underlies a performance tradition. Not a lot of written evidence exists about what might be termed Sanskrit drama, (ancient Indian drama) except for some plays, dramaturgical texts and references in other sources and especially the *Natyashastra*. Brandon provides an example of one of the other sources that refer to performance in ancient India.

> The earliest reference to events which may have been the seeds of Sanskrit drama is in 140 BC by Patanjali in his *Mahabhasya*. The

> work itself is a text of grammar. In order to make a point, Patanjali indicates that action may be determined in several ways; through; (1) pantomime; (2) recitation; (3) song; (4) dance. Reference is made to individuals who recite and sing (*nata*). (1997: 65)

It is clear that notions of performance were familiar enough to provide examples for grammar education as early as 140 BC. This example underlines the importance of the *Natyashastra* as a most treasured source of information. As it is clear from the chapter titles listed above that the *Natyashastra* is concerned with all aspects of performance. In the following pages the structure of the Indian aesthetic theory will be examined in three main headings: Abhinaya, Rasa and Bhava as explained in chapters 6 and 7 in the *Natyashastra*—as those are the specific chapters about the aesthetic theory—in an attempt to offer a close analysis of rasa, the central concept of Indian aesthetic theory. An understanding of the aesthetic theory described by this dramaturgical work will provide us with the fundamental principles of the performance tradition in India.

Abhinaya, Rasa and Bhava

A large number of performance genres are practised in different parts of India, and a smaller number of them are investigated in depth by western scholars. Some of these forms have been developed in different parts of the country and they are indeed local traditions. Some of them are ritualistic in nature and are performed in order to sanctify the performance space and the actor, as in the *Theyyam* example of Kerala. Some of them went through simple changes over time; some of them allowed both genders to practice it. Some of them require a solo dancer/performer, others require a big cast. This thesis is not about the individual histories of various genres of performance of India, therefore, no

more than their names will be provided here. Some of the performance genres that are popular among western scholars are named as follows:

Bharata Natyam
Odissi
Kathak
Kathakali
Manipuri
Hyal
Kuttiyattam
Krishnattam
Bhagavata Mela
Kuchipudi
Ankiya Nat
Svang
Nautanki
Jatra
Chauu
Bhavai
Bhagat[92]

Over a period of time ritual elements grow, develop, some get dropped, adjusted and readjusted, modified. This process has helped the growth of theatrical elements. For instance the frenzied dance of the shaman of the Mesolithic era turned into Bharat Natyam. From dancing shaman of primitive culture to the dancing deities of the Vedic period, from them to dancing temple girls with graceful movements, indicate a course of evolution. (Varadpande, 1987: 53)

[92] This is not an exhaustive list of performance genres. These genres or the performers of these genres have been written about in some detail by scholars whose publications can be accessed in English.

Whatever the form may be the dancer-performers are trained from a very young age, for a long time. The extremely rigorous training process (which typically begins when the child is about 5-7 years old) and the preparation of the pupil by the guru constitute the main part of a performer's life[93]. According to some, some of these forms go back thousands of years as in the example of Bharata Natyam. Bharata Natyam of south India is believed by some to be learned from wall sculptures; wall sculptures depicting temple girls dancing gracefully in temples. According to others Bharata Natyam as a dance was created at the start of the 20th century based on what was learned from the temple dancers. The discussions on this are on-going. No matter how old it is, Bharata (ancient name of India) Natya (performance) is one of the main traditional forms of dance as its name suggests can be used as an example to explain the three forms of movement according to the rules of Sanskrit theatre. They are:

> *Nrtta* → Pure, abstract or decorative dance
>
> *Nrtya* → Mime, gesture → based on the interpretation of the narrative or the thematic content of the performance
>
> *Natya* → Acting and dance are combined→ a union of types of body gestures employed to express various states of human condition. (Zarrilli et al, 1990: 5)

"*Nrtta* is that form of dance, which is void of flavour (rasa) and mood (bhava)" assert Coomaraswamy and Duggirala in their acclaimed translation of *The Mirror of Gesture* (*Abhinaya Darpan of Nandikeshwar)* and add that, "there is a twofold division of these three, Lasya and Tandava. Lasya is dancing very sweet, Tandava is dancing violent."

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[93] Performers of Kathakali, Kathak and Bharata Natyam that I have met in the UK since 1999 also attest to the fact that training never stops even though they may not have to get up at dawn to push the limits of their stamina, in the manner that they have throughout their training years.

(1987: 14) A typical Bharata Natyam performance will be composed of all three of the movement types and one (natya) will be dominant. It will also contain both Lasya and Tandava and one will be more emphasised depending on the narrative, and the gait of the performer. It is important to remember that Bharata Natyam is given here as an example, for all these rules apply to all genres of performance, as they are principles of art.

It is explained, in the *Natyashastra* that a combination of rules and regulations lead to expressing a narrative successfully. Bharata calls it *Samgraha*, a 'collection' or a 'synoptic digest'. Concerning the *Natya Veda*, the following comprises of such a 'synoptic digest':

Rasa
Bhavas
Abhinaya (Gesticulatory Representation)
Dharmi (Rehearsed Practice)
Vrtti (Styles)
Pravrtti (Usage in local vogue; action)
Siddhi (Achievements [divine and human])
Svaras (Musical Notes)
Atodya (Musical Instruments)
Ghana (Song)
Ranga (Stage)

It is stated in the *Natyashastra* that the above list is necessary in its entirety. However, it is also stated that some are more important than others. As stated earlier, here only abhinaya, rasa and bhava will be examined, since they are the main tenets of the aesthetic theory and they directly relate to acting and issues related to acting, or histrionics in general. As it is also agreed by the other seminal work in histrionics, *Abhinaya Darpan* of Nandikeshwar, *abhinaya, bhavas* and *rasa* are the

key words in trying to decipher this very complex system of acting technique. Rasa is what lies in the heart and in order to get to the heart, passage through bhava and abhinaya is necessary. The following (frequently quoted) passage from *Abhinaya Darpan (The Mirror of Gesture)* highlights the importance of rasa and its balance with other performance principles.

> *The Course of the Dance*—What is said traditionally by our ancestors must therefore be kept in view. Having made the prayer, etc,. The dancing may begin. The song should be sustained in the throat; its meaning must be shown by the hands; the mood (*bhava*) must be shown by the glances; rhythm (*tala*) is marked by the feet. For wherever the hand moves, there the glances follow; where the glances go, the mind follows, where the mind goes, the mood follows; where the mood goes, there is the flavour (*rasa).* (Coomaraswamy and Duggirala trans, 1987: 17)

Bhava is a derivative of *Bhavayanti* meaning 'pervade' and Bhavita meaning 'pervaded' or 'assimilated'. Bhava is generally translated as, 'mood', 'feeling' or 'condition'. Abhi→toward; ni→to lead: It is that which leads and carries forward. It is sometimes translated as histrionics. In dramaturgy, abhinaya can be defined as; everything an actor does to convey the meaning of the play to the spectator. The 'gesture' in *The Mirror of Gesture* is Abhinaya. The translators state that Abhinaya "is the principle theme of what is here related" and that its meaning "implies exposition". They continue, "*Abhinaya* is so called because it evokes flavour (*rasa*) in the audience". (ibid.) According to the *Natyashastra*, a performer has at his/her disposal, four main ways of expressing a narrative. It is believed by most that the following four ways of expression were based on the previous four Vedas. Ram Gopal, in *Indian Dancing* provides us with the details of the corresponding abhinaya to the Vedas:

Aharya
Costumes, props and accessories
(The Sama Veda)

Angika
Physical movements of the body
(The Yayur Veda)

Sattvika
Expression of emotions, 'voice from within'
(Atharva Veda)

Vacika
Acting through the spoken (sung) word
(The Rg [or Rig] Veda)

Each one of the four is deemed as important as the other one, in order to achieve a sense of completion, it is essential to put emphasis on all. Indian dramatic arts are in essence similar to poetry. The art is about interpreting life as opposed to imitating it. A similar (if not the same) statement can be made about many other eastern branches of art, from Balinese *topeng* to Japanese *haiku*. Therefore, arguably, artistic expressiveness carries a great deal more importance compared with its western counterpart. (Even though western art does not necessitate imitation, mimesis is deemed to be the essence of performance in some circles.)

On a more pedestrian level, aharya abhinaya does not seem like it should be as important as the other three; after all it is only about, costumes, props and accessories. But every performer will know that such seemingly unimportant details can be the most important elements in a

performance situation. Moreover, in life, people create a social-space for themselves with the help of their costumes and accessories. Keeping in mind that this is just a very small piece of this complicated jigsaw that is the collection of all the items needed to create natya; we are reminded once again that the small individual parts of the whole are as important as the whole itself. This is similar to the concept of the one-in-many and the many-in-one as discovered earlier in the discussion about the belief system in India. The notion that all souls have a bit of the other in themselves is symbolised in the *Natyashastra* by the interconnection between the three most important concepts of the aesthetic theory.

The *Natyashastra* states that there is no natya without rasa. Additionally, there is no rasa without all the other elements, most importantly, the Bhavas and the Abhinaya. In other words, it seems as though emotions and histrionics are the main ingredients needed to reach rasa. Rasas (sentiment; juice; flavour; taste) are eight in number. Each narrative will have one overriding rasa although certain transitory rasas could be incorporated, as is usually the case. Whether or not the main rasa and the transitory ones are contradictory does not make any difference. Each rasa will have a corresponding bhava (mood, emotional state) in order to create the complete sensory experience. Similar to the rule of having one dominant rasa as well as transitory ones, bhavas have three different types.

Sthayi Bhavas (Permanently dominant) [Vibhava-Determinant]

They are eight in number.

Sancari (Vyabhicari) Bhavas (Moving or transitory)[Anubhava-Consequent]

They are thirty-three in number.

Sattvika Bhavas (Originating from the mind, temperamental)
They are eight in number.

For example, there are eight possible emotional states (Bhavas) that can be permanently dominant throughout the narrative and each narrative will have one.[94] Each narrative will also have a corresponding dominant rasa. The chart below will be more explanatory.

RASA	BHAVA (Sthayi) (Permanent)
Shringara (Erotic)	Rati (Love)
Hasya (Humorous)	Hasa (Merriment)
Karuna (Pathos)	Shoka (Sorrow)
Raudra (Impetuous anger)	Krodha (Fury)
Vira (Heroic)	Uthasa (Enthusiasm)
Bhayanaka (Terrible)	Bhaya (Terror)
Bibhatsa (Odious)	Jugupsa (Disgust)
Adbhuta (Mysterious)	Vismaya (Astonishment)

Simply to get a general understanding of what the transitory bhavas maybe, here are a few out of thirty-three possibilities:

Weakness Envy Depression Anxiety Cruelty

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[94]Starting from Abhinavagupta in the 10th century, a large number of scholars indicate the possible existence of a ninth rasa without its parallel bhava—santa rasa—tranquillity, bliss, peace. It is deemed to be the ultimate, the perfect 'state of being' that does not require any accompanying bhavas. Vastyayan writes, "Brahman (Ultimate Reality) in the Vedantic conception was santa (quiet, perfect restfulness, without activity), thus static and not dynamic." (1996:149)

Death	Madness	Despair	Inconstancy	Sleep
Exhaustion	Lethargy	Bashfulness	Excitement	Dreaming

The eight Sattvika bhavas, the temperamental states that originate in the mind, manifest themselves as follows:

Stambha (paralysis)

Sveda (sweat)

Romanca

Svarasvada (feebleness in the voice)

Vepathu (trembling)

Vaivarnya (change of colour)

Asru (shedding tears)

Pralaya (loss of sense)

It would be useful to introduce the notions of *dharmi* (rehearsed practice) at this juncture. There are two kinds: *loka dharmi* (Popularly realistic representation) and *natya dharmi* (theatrically conventional representation). Barba's notions of 'daily' and 'extra daily' behaviour are parallel to this differentiation between the two kinds of rehearsed practice. In general, in everyday life, people tend to aim for the most by doing the least—we strive to economise from energy. Quite the opposite is true for natya dharmi, where even the simplest of movements must be accentuated because it must look bigger than life. Considering the fact that for Indian dramatic arts, 'bigger is better' is a well-suited motto; dharmi, especially *natya dharmi*, then gains even more significance.

As each ingredient is introduced, the recipe for natya is getting easier to understand and the bigger picture is becoming more transparent.

A perfect balance of the blend is the key to the puzzle. Puzzles, recipes, pictures...it seems that the performance aesthetics of Indian theatre can only be defined in terms of metaphors. In a sense, it is indeed true that metaphors are to be employed in order to covey the concept, after all that is exactly what Bharata does in the *Natyashastra*. "Rasa is that which is worthy of being tasted, or relished", he writes. The theatregoers and the persons who enjoy good food have one important thing in common: They both look for intense (or even fervent) enjoyment. They both expect to "enjoy" themselves. "The onlookers (theatre goers) relish the Sthayi Bhavas indicated through the gesticulation of the Bhavas through verbal, physical and temperamental activities and become delighted." [95] Similarly, a person tasting good food will distinguish the different tastes of each spice, herb and produce, and appreciate the combination, as well as the successful blend. Different bhavas and abhinaya could be compared to the various ingredients that make up a dish, complete with its garnitures, decorations and other ornamentations.

> Just as the side dish is prepared by means of different articles of devise[96] characteristics, so the Bhavas produce Rasa in combination with Abhinayas. There is no Rasa devoid of Bhava, nor Bhava devoid of Rasa. Their effectiveness is mutual in regard to Abhinaya. (Chapter 6, Verse 34)

In order for one thing to work everything else must also work. Everything on its own is a contribution towards the greater aim. This is one of the important tenets of the belief system as well as the dramaturgy. The 'whole' of the experience is achieved by treating the 'smaller pieces' with equal respect. Once again this is parallel to the worldview that places god in self and self in god because they are made up of each other.

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[95] Chapter 6, 'prose passage' before verses 32-33
[96] This should be 'diverse' probably; unfortunately there are more examples of such careless spelling in this edition..

> Just as the tree takes its origin from the seed and the flower and the fruit from the tree. So also the Rasas are the root and all the Bhavas are stabilised therein. (Chapter 6, Verse 38)

It is explained in the prose passage that precedes the detailed explanation of each rasa that the combination of Vibhavas (Determinants, permanently dominant bhavas, or stimulus) and Anubhavas (Consequents, temperamental bhavas or involuntary reaction) together with Vyabhicari Bhavas (Transitory States, or voluntary reaction) produce rasa.[97] Bharata advises the performer that, "that which makes the idea of the poet revealed through words, gesticulations, colours of the face and temperamental representation is called bhava". The connotation is that the pervasive nature of the bhavas, help create the rasa in the theatregoer. In Chapter 7, *Exposition on Bhavas (Emotional Tracts and States),* Vibhava is defined as "special knowledge". It refers to the vast technical knowledge of an actor pertaining to his craft. Some scholars interpret that rather literally and argue that the Sanskrit drama requires audiences to be connoisseurs. No. All that the Sanskrit drama requires is that the audiences are present; the emphasis is on the actors' training and hard work, rather than the audiences' depth of knowledge. Indeed Coomaraswamy states a similar view in his preface to his translation of *The Mirror of Gesture*:

> It must not be imagined on [this][98] account that Indian Natya served or serves only for the entertainment of an academic clique. This may have been the case with the old court dramas, but it was not so with Natya in general, which corresponded to the common and

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[97] A detailed explanation of rasa and its production as dictated in the Natyashastra will be very helpful in seeing a clearer picture. It is worth noting that the chapter on bhava follows the one on rasa.

[98] "This account" refers to the constantly repeated phrase in the text: "This is the view of those who are learned in the Bharatagama". Coomaraswamy warns the reader not to interpret this sentence as a statement requiring connoisseurship from the audience.

> the collective need of the folk. Where such a need is felt, there arises a common and collective art, that is to say, an art which is not, indeed, practiced by everyone but understood by everyone. (1987: 6)

Actions on the stage are determined by the verbal and physical gesticulations, which can be executed with that 'special knowledge' and that is the reason why they are call 'determinants'. The Anubhavas (Consequents) are more self-explanatory; they are the on stage manifestations of the Vibhavas. Thus, it can be stated that rasa is the audience reaction to all the bhavas (all 49: 8 Determinant, 8 Consequent and 33 Transitory).

> Just as there is the production of good taste through the juice produced when different spices, herbs and other articles are pressed together so also Rasa (Sentiment) is produced when various Bhavas get together. (Chapter 6, 'prose passage' after verse 31)

Shringara Rasa (erotic)[99]

It originates from the Sthayi Bhava of Rati (love); according to Bharata,

> a bright dress is its soul. Whatever is clean, pure, and worth looking at is associated with the sentiment Shringara. One who is brightly attired is [curiously] named Shringaravan (Don Juan).

One must be named or nicknamed in accordance with his/her character. The character is heavily but pleasantly made-up. This rasa can be used by both males and females. Its "source of origin" was "an excellent young woman".

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[99] This is my summary of the Shringara rasa from Chapter 6, starting from after the prose passage after verses 44-45, pp 75-77.

It is written that, it has two "bases": Sambogha (love in union) and Vipralambha (love in separation).

1. Sambogha - Love in Union

As is the case with all the other rasas, it is produced by a combination of Determinant, Consequent and Transitory bhavas. In order to evoke the necessary emotions in the spectator the following must be employed:

Vibhavas (Determinants): "pleasant season, garlands, ornaments, people dear and near, sensual objects, objects of pleasure, going to the garden, experiencing pleasures, listening to sweet voices, seeing beautiful things, play and sports etc."

Anubhavas (Consequents): "clever and significant glances of the eyes, movements of the eyebrows, ogling looks, movements of the limbs, sweet angarahas (major dance figures)."

Vyabhicari (Transitory): of the thirty-three mentioned before all can be used except for fight, lethargy, ferocity and disgust.

2. Vipralambha - Love in Separation

Imaginably, the consequents of Vipralambha will differ greatly from that of Sambogha.

Anubhavas (Consequents): "dejectedness and indifference towards worldly joys, languor, apprehension, jealousy, weariness, anxiety and worry, yearning, drowsiness, sleep, dream, feigned anger, illness, insanity, forgetfulness, sluggishness, death and other conditions."

Because of its double-sided nature, Shringara rasa incorporates all possible bhavas and sentiments. Its on stage presentation is through sweet smiles, beaming face, beautiful words and other means of 'making nice'. A further general summary of this erotic sentiment is given in verse 46 of Chapter 6:

The term Shringara refers to a man who is richly endowed with all desirable things and much interested in pleasure, who makes full use of the season's garlands etc. (for enhancing his pleasure) and who is accompanied by a youthful maiden.

It is also evident from this passage that 'more is better' according to this aesthetic tradition. This statement highlights that everything must be employed to its fullest potential and that no choices should be left half-accomplished. Performers must see the details and think about the generalities of a sentiment at the same time.

Thus, the first rasa is explained in detail in the text. Noticeably, the Shringara rasa is explained in great detail and depth. When we consider the fact that not just each rasa but every single concept is explained in such great detail and depth, then we are likely to begin to see the significance of this text. Moreover, the focus here is only on the two main chapters on rasa and bhava. When a comprehensive study of all the chapters is put together, an actor playing a character 'in love' whether he is with or without his beloved, will know exactly what his eyebrows should or should not be doing. If it is a female character, then the actor playing the role of a young woman in love will know exactly how much she should part her lips, exposing her white teeth, when she smiles at her beloved. In short, this is a most complete character study guide.

Rasa is most regularly defined as a 'quality' that arises when the bhavas successfully blend with the rest of the elements. Since it is highly difficult to describe exactly what happens when rasa arises and how it happens, yet another metaphor is employed by the *Natyashastra* in Chapter 7, verse 7:

> Just as the dry wood is pervaded by the fire so also the physical body is pervaded by Rasa which is congenial to the heart and the Bhavas thus give rise to the sentiment.

In other words, whatever the type of sentiment may be, the main experience of rasa will be enjoyment, delight. This acknowledges the fact that the theatregoer is capable of enjoying an aesthetic experience even though what they actually witness may not necessarily be 'joyful'. In other words, as the experience progresses the individual may have to go through different stages, and naturally, some of those stages will be favoured more and some will be favoured less but they will all be experiential. Nevertheless, whatever the preferred stage maybe rasa will eventually invade the whole of the system and transcendence to a joyous state of consciousness will take place. (In this way, the transient senses will begin to lose focus and the individual will be closer to the main aim of reaching atman.) Varadpande also equates joy with rasa:

> Drama unfolds scene by scene, act by act, the variegated saga of human life in all its complexity and colour giving total aesthetic experience culminating into joy, or rasa. (1987: 271)

In the prose passage preceding the detailed explanations of the eight Sthayi bhavas, Bharata is asked why there are so many types and forms of bhavas, and how one can cope with understanding the importance and the relevance of every one of them. He talks about the hierarchical structure of the system and attests that it is no different than in real life. Every one of them is ranked differently and the subordinates and the superiors never get confused.

> There is a leading man with many attendants but only he gets the name king and no one else also albeit he may be very great. When

> many go along, someone somewhere may ask, 'who is this?' He replies, "Of course the King'. So also Sthayi bhava surrounded by Vibhava, Anubhava, and Vyabhicarin, gets the appellation Rasa like the appellation 'King'. (Chapter 6, prose passage, after verse 7)

He then adds that the highest ranking after the King is the Sthayi bhava.

What follows is the detailed explanation of the first Sthayi bhava, Rati (love), the one that is coupled with the Shringara rasa:

Rati Bhava (love)

"What is called Rati is the nature of Pleasure...

Vibhavas (Determinants): favourable seasons, garlands, unguents, ornaments, persons near and dear, lofty abodes, absence of antagonism.

Anubhavas (Consequents): face beaming with smiles and words of exquisite sweetness, knitting of eyebrows, glances etc.

> Rati takes its origin through the requisition of the desired objects and sensations because of its being very delicate and gentle. It had to be represented on the stage through sweetness of words and suitable movements of the limbs." (Chapter7, verses 8-9)

The subtle blend of the bhavas with the other constituents seems to exhort an almost tangible kind of aesthetic experience (i.e., rasa). However, the 'kind' of aesthetics seems to be highly important for Sanskrit drama for it is said that, 'there is no natya without rasa'. The commonality of all the chapters is of promoting the idea that rasa should be the common aim. Such an emphasis might be curious for the western mindset. Once the 'western mindset' barrier is overcome, it is no longer so curious to observe and accept that the gods created dramatic arts in order to induce peace in a society that was in total havoc. Furthermore, to educate the public in knowing themselves and consequently getting closer to knowing god, for everyone has a bit of 'god' in them. Thus, the text serves two purposes. Firstly, it is the fifth Veda; it provides another 'way' of

believing, and living for the ultimate goal of finding one's true self (atman) through a ritualistic existence congruent with the ways of the *trimurti* (AUM, the Hindu triumvirate). Secondly, it is the *Natyashastra*, a substantially detailed treatise in performance arts. The work is sometimes compared with the *Poetics*. There cannot be any denying that Aristotle's work was seminal and that it probably is one of the most important pieces of text written about the theatre. However much philosophical depth the *Poetics* may have, it does not cover as much ground and as much technical detail, as the *Natyashastra*. The *Natyashastra* is very much about performance as its name suggests.[100]

In summary, the correspondences between the origin myth of drama in ancient India and the objectives of the performers outlined in the *Natyashastra* give way to a different kind of aesthetic experience. The origin myth underlines the emotional havoc the people were trapped in, mainly because they had no access to the most sacred Vedic teachings. The people were consumed by their transient, worldly senses that prevented them from feeling deeper connections with the supreme-world-soul (Brahman). Thus they could not get out of the cycle of samsara—not being able to find their true selves and not reaching atman. In order to remedy this, the fifth Veda was written so that it summarised the four preceding vedas that came before it and rendered it accessible to all. In addition, this was a three-dimensional art form that people experienced (regardless of the part they played in the production). This meant that a special emphasis had to be put on the feelings, the sentiments and the emotional behaviour advocated in the new text. This is exactly what happened with the rasas and the bhavas; hence the special emphases on erotic love, both in the *Natyashastra* and here in this chapter so far. The

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[100] See Ley's, 2000 article, "Aristotle's *Poetics*, Bharatamuni's *Natyashastra*, and Zeami's Treatises: Theory as Discourse" for the legitimacy of such a comparison. For a contrasting view see Schechner's 2001 article, "Rasaesthetics".

action might involve erotic love or disgust or merriment but the objective is to experience this all pervasive quality the *Natyashastra* writes about that is different than the everyday versions of these feelings. What is different is the experiential quality of the sentiments in question that render the experience enduring; and depending on the involvement level, transcendental. If the objective is to distance the self from a (physical) aesthetic experience of feelings, then the attention might be on the meta-aesthetic experience, so that one can go beyond the reach of the physicality of feelings.

Schwartz's approach to text might prove useful for furthering the discussion on the pervasive and at times transcendental quality of rasa.

> In Hindu and other South Asian settings, while performance *of* text is often a feature of religious observance, performance *as* text is embraced on many levels as equally potent. That is, performance contains those qualities perceived in other religious traditions as present primarily in revealed sacred texts, such as authority, divine presence, and inspiration, direct and unmediated. [...] It is through performative modes that the sacred becomes palpable in India. (2004: 6)

Schwartz' observation also demonstrates the significance of the festival of ram lila, given as an example earlier in the text. By the same token each and every performance has the potential to function *as text;* by functioning as text performance takes on the more formal, divine and authoritative forms that are usually associated with 'religions'. This demonstrates the ritualistic nature of performance in India. It is important to note that it seems as though Schwartz puts the emphasis on the value, the definition given to the text and the function assigned to it as opposed to the performance itself. This highlights her perspective which names the text as

the thing that shifts and not the principles of performance.[101] In other words, the performance does not have to change in order to function *as text;* rather it is the onlookers' or partakers' perspective that allows for the shift to occur. This shift or transmutation is the effect caused by rasa, the process of which starts with the five senses but then continues onto the different levels of consciousness. It is rasa itself that facilitates the passage from the transient to the divine, from secular to sacred, and it is rasa that creates a connection between self and other as well as self and god. [102]

Rasa, the Sanskrit word, has a variety of meanings. As previously explained, it is usually translated as taste, juice, flavour, or essence. Khare in Schwartz declares that it can also be translated as "a mixture, a concoction, essence of various products", as well as referring to the element mercury. (2004: 7) Quicksilver (*rajarasam)* was known as, "the king or lord of drugs, for its many mysterious attributes." (ibid.) For Schwartz, the "essence" meaning of rasa is deemed more important, because, "as a flavourful "essence," *rasa* is that compilation of essential qualities underlying all food".[103] (ibid.) Food is important everywhere, but in India food is also required for devotional rituals, where gods and demons are frequently offered especially prepared foods. In addition, according to

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[101] This is interesting mainly because the performance event is not (and was not) as formal an event as it may be deemed in the west. In India going to the theatre is an event in itself. In most cases it may take up half the day or sometimes the whole day—it may also be a three day event, but the longest it goes on is about three to four weeks and that is when the whole (or the most) of the epic (either *Mahabharata* or the *Ramayana*) is performed. Typically, going to the theatre may involve, eating, drinking, sleeping as well as being a chance for a small (or large) community to come together. It is an ideal family outing as well as being a great opportunity to catch up with friends and family in addition to partaking in spiritual activity. What is significant in all these activities is that they are all shared.

[102] This passage from the self to the other (and from the other to the self) THROUGH the senses is very similar to the nature of the meta-aesthetic experience which will become the focal point for my understanding of interculturality which will be offered as an alternative to the conventional view, in the sixth chapter of this thesis.

[103] For Schechner flavour and taste are more important that 'essence' because in his view without the flavour the essence will not be experienced by someone. (Schechner, 2001)

Schwartz, "Ayurvedic medicine names *rasa* as one of the seven essences that "maintain the integrity of the organism." (2004: 8) The key to understanding rasa in this light is in blending a balance of varieties into a completely transformed whole. Schwartz suggests that this is parallel to the fundamental cooking methods of Indian cuisine, which dictates that all ingredients are cooked thoroughly and that everything gets transformed into another state. She continues to unpick the etymology as she makes the case for the significance of the concept of rasa in Indian culture. She refers to Wulff who writes that out of the many possible meanings of the word rasa, *juice; liquid; extract; essence; flavor* and *delight* are meanings that:

> are important constituents of its specialized poetic meaning, a relishable "sentiment" or "mood" awakened in the reader or spectator through the combination of elements in a given poem or drama. The standard analogy is that of a blend of a basic food, such as yoghurt, with a number of spices; the resulting substance has a unique flavour, (*rasa*) which is not identical with any of the single elements comprising it. *Rasa* is so important to Indian literary critics that it has been termed the soul of poetry, and no criticism of work or art is considered so devastating as the allegation that it is devoid of rasa. (Wulff in Schwartz, 2004: 8)

In light of the information already established about Hinduism, it is possible to infer from the above explanation that rasa causes an aesthetic experience that may even be considered synaesthetic. It seems as though killing two birds with one stone is a common trend in Hindu life, whether this is partaking in performative activity that is also spiritual in nature, or transforming sensory experiences into *relishable sentiments or moods* and that rasa is the facilitator in many human experiences. The audience experience seems to be privileged in terms of experiencing rasa, in fact it seems as though the whole purpose of rasa is directly related to audience experience. It is established by Wulff above that rasa plays a central role in art in general. Lannoy argues for the same point in his book *The*

Speaking Tree, where he gives the example of the cave paintings in Ajanta. He argues that not only the paintings on the walls but also the caves themselves were hand carved with a complete rasa experience in mind and that the structure of the whole venue was thought out in order to evoke rasa in the onlookers. Not having visited the caves, it is difficult to argue either way; however, what this example does offer us is further proof of the centrality of the concept of rasa.

The significance of rasa is relatively easy to detect regardless of the source of information, however, what is not very clear is whether the performers (doers) themselves experience rasa as well. Writers on this aspect of the subject seem to be divided into two schools: there are those who say that performers have to experience the feelings, the delight that they are conveying and that if they do not nor cannot, then the audiences will not experience rasa either. There are also others who claim the opposite view which states that a performer cannot lose himself/herself in emotions or moods during performance because they need to be paying attention to the technical aspects of their performance. Chattophadyay in his volume, *Theatre in Ancient India* writes about the two sides of this endless debate. Since the *Natyashastra* offers numerous technical lessons in performance and explains the concept of rasa only from the audience perspective, it may be possible to infer that the *Natyashastra* does not necessarily advocate that the performers must experience rasa the way the audiences do. However, I am inclined to think that the performers experience a different kind of delight which stems from facilitating other people's joy, very much like the way a teacher would benefit from teaching. The teacher does not necessarily get exactly the same experience as the pupil; nevertheless the teacher will take joy in

facilitating learning.[104] It may be useful to remember here that the story-line is never a mystery for the audiences in India. In all traditional performances, everybody knows exactly what is going to happen next. So, the relationship between the audience and the performer is not affected by what either party knows. In other words, rasa is not a secret that the performer keeps.

Rasa by its nature is not one thing or another; it can be many things all at once, it becomes what it evokes. As it occupies the heart of natya (performance) as well as all art, it is taste, delight, relish, essence, emotion and it may be Mercurial as its etymology also suggests. Coomaraswamy summarises it in *Mirror of Gesture* thus:

> The arts are not for our instruction, but for our delight, and this delight is something more than pleasure, it is the godlike ecstasy of liberation from the restless activity of the mind and the senses, which are the veils of all reality, transparent only when we are at peace with ourselves. [...] The secret of all art is self-forgetfulness. (1987: 9)

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[104] In this simile, I do not wish to advocate that a performer is like a teacher. I am merely drawing the attention to similar experiences.

PART 3: CULTURE AND PERFORMANCE

Chapter Five: Interculturalism(s) in the Context of Globalisation

The first part of this thesis addressed the people and approaches most commonly associated with interculturalism in the theatre. The second part provided Zeami's and Bharata's teachings as case studies, as they are frequent reference points in the 'intercultural theatre' debate. In the third part of the thesis, interculturalism will be explored in the context of globalisation, illustrating various connections between interculturalism and globalisation whilst highlighting some trends in contemporary usages of these words. Firstly, some of the more apparent cultural implications of globalisation will be established. Secondly, I will offer a brief exposition of a variety of usages of interculturalism in non-theatre contexts to see what light they may throw on the culture and performance discourse. Thirdly, I will seek to critique 'conventional' notions of interculturalism in the theatre context and observe the connections between the inadequacy of this 'conventional' approach and the developments in social scientific thinking which have emerged from the implications of globalisation.

A very short discourse on globalisation itself will be helpful in order to establish some of its more apparent cultural implications. In the word *globalisation* the emphasis is on the suffix *–isation*, the meaning of the word is driven by the fact that it is *making something global*; as such it denotes an on-going change, a *progress* which moves with the aim of covering the whole of the globe. If the aim is the global spreading of one application or concept (or whatever 'it' may be), arguably, *globalisation* connotes standardisation; only in the sense that whatever is spread globally is not tailor-made according to the context of its destination (or derivation) but that the priority is financial gain. Even though globalisation is the name of a *progress*, it nevertheless has a singular aim and that is

the *product*, specifically, the value of the product. This progress—the prioritisation of product over process—is the very definition of the product-oriented nature of globalisation, which may be a cause for its negative reputation. Perhaps this might be exemplified by Chaturvedi's assertion about globalisation. He laments that many more chips than are required or needed are being created every day, both the potato and the computer kind, and yet there are billions of hungry and/or undereducated people in this world.[105] The conundrum is the continuing food and education deficiency in the world despite the efforts for globalising more 'chips'. For Chaturvedi (and many others) this demonstrates that the value of the product is of greater significance than tackling hunger and education related issues. In this light, globalisation has come to be associated or even equated with the manipulative economic powers of a handful of western governments or corporations over the rest of the world, without regard to the wellbeing of the population of the world and the urgent environmental issues concerning the planet. This might be a popular generalisation in some circles but it may not necessarily be a complete assessment of globalisation.

The new opportunities and benefits offered by the developments in communication, information and transportation technologies since the second half of the nineteenth century means that the progress of globalisation can also be a positive experience for many. Arguably, the efficiency of these technologies is measured by speed and by the turn of the twenty-first century the way the world works changed in fundamental ways due to the speed-related advancements in these technologies. Governments, mass-media, business and art worlds have had to develop (or change) in conjunction with these technological changes. On one hand the speedy information/data exchange provided a plethora of business

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[105] From his paper entitled, *Pro(In)jecting Global in a Local Body: The Actor of Indian Theatre*, presented at the 15th World Congress of IFTR/FIRT in Helsinki, August 2006.

and cultural opportunities. On the other hand, the 'information age' became more about selling and buying of information rather than information turning into shared knowledge. Governments' ways of handling the changes prompted by these technological developments have a direct influence on individuals' experience of globalisation. Therefore considering the context of globalisation is important in order to begin to understand the individual's changing relationships with his/her world, which is partly shaped by government action.

To summarise this brief exposition on globalisation; insofar as the progress of globalisation can be viewed in two phases: the first phase of globalisation was accented by the speed of technological advancements in fields such as communication, information and transportation. The second phase of globalisation is accented by whether governments utilise such technologies successfully and whether the competition between the individual and state has been reduced to a vote-earning political endeavour that lacks ideology.

Similarly, Jagdish Bhagwati, a prominent economist, considers globalisation in two related aspects as well. "The story of globalization today must be written in two inks: one colored by technical change and the other by state action." (2004: 11) Technical change, as we have all witnessed in our recent history, can change everyday life very quickly. In addition to the advancements in information technology, the technical developments in transportation, the mediatisation of culture in general and the mass production of electronic goods have allowed the cost of technology to decrease greatly. Technology might have become more accessible for more people but the level of education and know-how required for it to play a particular role in analysing and utilising data that might have financial significance is still a specialist subject and rivalry is fierce. It could be argued that in this respect the western business world

would do everything in its power to stay ahead of their non-western counterparts. Where businesses and governments protect one another, the second colour ink, one of state action, is intertwined with the first colour, technological advancement. The foreign policies, trade laws, tax treaties, international monetary laws, laws pertaining to immigration and tourism and sanctions drawn up by governments more often than not benefit **some** businesses/governments and individuals more than others. Bauman establishes his view on the subject with reference to the global/local debate:

> All of us are, willy-nilly, by design or by default, on the move. We are on the move even if, physically, we stay put: immobility is not a realistic option in a world of permanent change. And yet the effects of that new condition are radically unequal. Some of us become fully, or truly 'global'; some are fixed in their 'locality'—a predicament neither pleasurable nor endurable in the world in which the 'globals' set the tone and compose the rules of the life-game. (1998: 3)

Bauman sees such a vast gap between the small percentage 'globals' and the rest of the people, due to the dividing—as well as the unifying—nature of globalisation that he argues that these people on either side of the fence have such different life experiences that were they to face one another they would have nothing to share. He refers to Wittgenstein's remark to make his point: "If lions could talk, we would not understand them." (1998: 86) However, the socio-political and economic consequences of globalisation upon the individual are already implied by the fierce rivalry (amongst 'globals' as well as between 'globals' and the non-globals) that justifies the (sometimes unjustifiable) actions of businesses and governments—regardless of one's ability to understand the intricacies of this rivalry with some clarity.

Here, the focus shall remain on the cultural and therefore intercultural implications of globalisation. In this chapter, my aim is to

explore the repercussions of a 'cultural exchange' that prioritises product and financial gain at the expense of the processes of human exchange, which is one of the adverse implications of globalisation. However, my aim is not to conclude whether globalisation is a positive or a negative predicament; it is to try and gauge if *interculturalism* itself is also being regarded as the same type of 'cultural exchange', one that does not go beyond being a business transaction. It is to discuss the relationship between globalisation and interculturalism by exploring some of the distinct associations the words carry.

Scores of publications claim to offer advice to make life easier in "today's global market" or "the global era" as declared in the newspapers, and in the marketing blurbs of many a publication. A quick search on Amazon, the online bookstore, reveals many publications that relate to globalisation and globalization—both spellings. In Amazon US, both the spellings reveal both business and non-economics oriented results; the first result page offers books that range from philosophical discourses to fashion and globalisation. In the UK branch, a more definite separation is revealed. All the results for the American spelling of the word have something do to with business or economics whereas *globalisation* offers a few other alternatives such as, "green alternatives to...", "Globalisation: Studies in Anthropology", "Alternatives to Economic Globalisation: A Better World is Possible", "Media Policy and..." and so forth. These results are not meant to have a statistical value nor do they represent my research; they are only mentioned to re-familiarise ourselves with what is readily available for the lay reader and the student market. Insofar as the publishers' blurbs can be demonstrated to be effective, that is to say, were we to assume that people buy books because of the blurbs, then there is evidence of a popular appeal that is conceming. One such publication is, *Understanding Global Cultures: Metaphorical Journeys through 23 Nations*. This book is divided according to countries and each country is

represented by a phrase/image that the author calls a "cultural metaphor": *The Japanese Garden; The Turkish Coffeehouse; American Football; The Traditional British House; The Italian Opera; The Mexican Fiesta; Irish Conversation; The German Symphony; Belgian Lace, The Chinese Family Altar* are some examples. According to the back-cover this book:

> [...] presents the cultural metaphor as a method for understanding the cultural mindset of a nation and comparing it to those of other nations. [...] [This book] is highly recommended for courses in international management, international business, organizational culture, comparative management, cross-cultural psychology, and cross-cultural sociology. (Gannon, 2001)

In addition to some gross generalisations the author resorts to in this work, he also fails to see a difference between nations and cultures and makes a number of claims. If we understand the structure of an opera, for example, we are told we will be able to understand the Italian mind-set. Regardless of the accuracy of these metaphors, it is highly questionable to teach students that one can make individual judgements or decisions based on generalised, almost caricaturised cultural metaphors and that such an investigation would lead to understanding "the cultural mindset of a nation".

Another such publication is entitled, *Cultural Intelligence: A Guide to Working with People from Other Cultures* by Brooks Peterson. The back-cover declaration reads, "Sharpen your own cultural intelligence—and increase your business effectiveness at the same time." It is written by an American, in a self-confessed "American" or "informal" tone and it is overflowing with generalisations such as:

> Americans used to be able to do things abroad "the American way." Now, more choices for international partners means Americans need to make themselves culturally compatible or they will lose to someone else. (Peterson, 2004: 70)

The generalisations are not limited to the Americans, every case study or example offered is another generalisation about an entire culture. When the aim of the whole exercise is reduced to signing a deal or successfully concluding a transaction that aims for financial gain, then the so called "cultural intelligence" this book aims to teach becomes nothing other than a technical tool that is used in money making. A glowing review by the regional sales manager of a company declares that the book "contains much needed practical material and relevant advice for the professional". An example of this "relevant advice" taken from a section devoted to what the author calls "communication styles" is divided into three main categories: "taking turns"; "interrupting"; and "halting". He states that in the English speaking countries in the world (and he names them) people talk *taking turns*, whereas in other parts of the world they do not! *Interrupting* he declares, "is the style of South American, Mediterranean European (such as in Spain, southern France, or Italy), Northern African and Middle Eastern people". (2004: 148-149) Finally, *halting,* he argues, is the style of Asians and Native Americans as "they are comfortable with silence". (2004: 150) In these moments of silence Asians and Native Americans reflect upon what is being said and the author warns that, "these pauses for reflection can be off-putting for those who crack under the pressure of four seconds of silence and *need to say something!*" (ibid.) In addition to the aforementioned culturally tactless advice, this book offers plenty of other equally generalised and rather ill-considered concepts that do not even begin to scratch the surface of communication but serve those who are too lazy to think for themselves—and by default too lazy to think about others.

The two publications above demonstrate the product oriented-ness associated with globalisation that has allowed for such sweeping generalisations to be acceptable so long as the business deal is made. As much as business and trade are doubtlessly essential for the development

of the world and its inhabitants, it seems that they also play a part in hindering or at least slowing down the communication processes. Accepting vague generalisations as truths will only put more distance between peoples, whether they are doing business together or not. Of course, this was not and is not the sole aim of globalisation. But relaying such dubious data that claims to help enhance cultural exchange in the name of acquiring marketing skills is not doing the progress of globalisation any favours—in fact it only creates further damage. This damage will worsen so long as this type of 'cultural intelligence' continues to be viewed as a product with a specific market value that is based on generalisations about different cultures at the expense of genuine intercultural exchanges.

In this context of a globalised world, *interculturalism* itself seems to be catching up with globalisation in terms of being defined by its many aspects and its various applications in different fields. Globalisation is experienced and therefore defined differently by economists than, say, sociologists. In this way, globalisation as a construct is applied differently in different contexts; in addition, people's experiences of these constructs might well be different than those who attempt formal definitions. Interculturalism also seems to be perceived as an application that can pertain to some situations/fields and not to others. Moreover, there is an increasing sense that interculturalism is being treated as a fixed 'ism' that is a construct. Prior to considering some of the non-theatre contexts in which interculturalism plays a role, it may be useful to revisit a definition of culture offered in the introduction to this thesis.

> A culture is a complex set of shared beliefs, values, and concepts which enables a group to make sense of its life and which provides it with directions for how to live. [...] culture is pictured as a text the vocabulary and grammar of which its members learn. Indeed, on this view, becoming a member of a particular culture is a process of

> enculturation conceived as learning to read the culture's basic text and making it one's own. (Fay, 1999: 55)

If Fay is right, then sharing is already an inherent part of culture. Therefore, it may be inferred that *intercultural* implies a sense of sharing, some type of give and take between two or more cultures. It is also evident that the experience of one person does not need to be limited to one culture, as long as they learn the text and make it their own. In this light, the phenomenon of interculturalism must have existed as soon as people existed in groups. Semantically, the word interculturalism does not necessarily privilege any one of the cultures involved. However, in any given application or incidence of interculturalism, the kind of relationship between the individuals and the kind of relationship between the cultures, will determine any privileging that might occur. For example, based in Dublin, there is the *National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism*. A quick glance at their website shows that they address racism issues in Ireland on a practical level as well as discussing their research in their journal *Spectrum*. They have connections with the EU Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia whose aim is "to provide the EU and its Member States with information and research on the phenomena of racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism" as it is declared on the NCCRI website. In the same vein, a website, wikipedia.org, very popular with undergraduate students, defines interculturalism as:

> the philosophy of exchanges between cultural groups within a society. Various states have intercultural policies which seek to encourage the socialization of citizens of different origins. These policies are often used as an instrument to fight racism, overcome prejudice and misunderstanding others. [sic]

This definition seems to have the undertones of a state-required-cultural-assimilation, which advocates a narrow, one-size-fits-all approach to human exchange. There is nothing wrong with associating interculturalism

with racism if the problem of racism is helped in some way, but it is incorrect to publish on a web encyclopaedia that a 'philosophy of exchange' can be limited to this narrow view of racial tensions and prejudices. A google search for just about anything will have a wikipedia hit in the first result page and that is exactly what most students do in the name of research. In other words, the last two examples demonstrate that there is a trend of associating interculturalism with racism and the fact that these examples appear in very easily found websites might serve as an indicator for the frequency of this view.[106]

Interculturalism has also become significant in the disciplines of education, geography and linguistics among others. A publication, *Interculturalism, Education and Inclusion* can be provided as an example; it aims to unpick the "historical and contemporary aspects of social diversity" as stated on the back-cover, "[the author] shows how education at all levels needs to change to embrace an intercultural position. The book also deals with interculturalism in Europe and Asia, the role of state organizations and the need to foster 'communities of hope'." The author's personal intercultural background plays a big role in his constructive criticism of the structure of a 'multicultural Britain' and the place of education within it from an intercultural perspective. He offers Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) as a seminal feature in developing the existing education system.

> IBE [...] is not about destroying but about developing and enhancing linguistic diversity and repertories. For loss of a language means a loss of the perception of the world, a way of life, a knowledge system. A meaningful bilingual education places the learner and their beliefs, values and customs, socio-economic and

[106] Wikipedia is understood to be an unreliable source of information in the US and the students are actively discouraged from (and even penalised for) using it. The case is not so clear cut in the UK; while the debate among the university authorities continues, some students refer to this site with great frequency.

> cultural situations at the centre of the education system. (Gundara, 2000: 143)

He recognises the potential problems in the application of such a system, mainly the skills and the resources that would be required, however, he argues that the positive outcomes would overweigh such impediments, as IBE would actually serve all parties involved. "[...] in the context of majority/minority, dominant/subordinate relations, it is the majority and the dominant who require intercultural bilingual education." (ibid.) Rather than focusing on teaching 'others' how to become more like 'us' as in the potentially patronising context of 'citizenship education', this approach seems to focus on an on-going, constantly developing exchange between humans. Thus the focus seems to stay on the fact that the 'other' is more than their nationality, but a person, much like the 'self'. It is refreshing to observe that in the context of education, at least, the human exchange is not dispensed with for the sake of other gains.

Life's Work: Geographies of Social Reproduction "is a study of the shifting spaces and material practices of social reproduction in the global era." (back-cover) Almost all editors and contributors are geographers (with the exception of two professors of political science and cultural studies). The editors divide the study into three main sections.

- Education and the Making of the Modern (Trans)national Subject
- Domesticity and Other Homely Spaces of Modernity
- Modern Migrants/Flexible Citizens: Cultural Constructions of Belonging and Alienation

In the chapter entitled, *Indigenous Professionalization: Transnational Social Reproduction in the Andes*, authors Laurie, Andolina and Radcliffe write about the origins and the effects of undergraduate and

(post)graduate courses in Interculturalism (such as IBE) at university level in Ecuador and Bolivia in the 1980s in order to eradicate poverty with the help of education.

> The promotion of multicultural education in the Andes is currently framed by the paradigm of interculturalism. A highly contested concept, interculturalism is defined in relation to education, culture, technology, society, forms of communication, the economy, politics, religion and global uniformity and local differences. [...] As a paradigm, interculturalism promotes a way of understanding the relationship between Western and indigenous (Amerindian) practices, spaces and knowledges in Latin America. (Laurie, Andolina and Redcliffe in Mitchell, Marston and Katz, 2004: 60)

Working towards understanding the possible relationships, practices, spaces and knowledges between two or more parties seems to be a valuable goal but the contestability of the concept itself, as the authors declare it above, problematises interculturalism as an accepted paradigm. They argue that in 'pluricultural' places like the Andes it is crucial that 'exchanges', 'comparisons' and 'cooperations' as well as 'confrontations' are promoted through interculturalism as opposed to multiculturalism, for which they refer to Cushner's definition, "unrelated juxtapositions of knowledge about particular groups without any apparent interconnections between them". (ibid.) They conclude that despite emerging "as the framing paradigm for higher education programs and education reform, its [interculturalism's] position as a political and policy strategy remains unconsolidated." (ibid. 70) This particular view that embraces interculturalism as an application or a method that can be applied to a variety of desired contexts and scenarios when required, suggests that this interculturalism is truly an *–ism*, a cultural construct that is by definition inorganic.

The linguistics example is *Intercultural Discourse and Communication: the Essential Readings* edited by Kiesling and Paulston

and according to the back-cover; it "is a collection of articles from the field of intercultural discourse and intercultural communication". This substantial volume regards intercultural discourse and communication as a field within linguistics and understandably assumes written and spoken language as the major modes of communication that help determine our identity, and therefore our culturality. The editors state that much of the debate in this area involves groups of people from different cultures and that there is not enough research on the individual who may "have to live and function in two languages and in two cultures simultaneously." (Kiesling and Paulston, 2005: 249) It is interesting to observe that where two cultures and languages meet within one person it is differentiated as 'biculturalism' and in these instances the problems do not manifest themselves as miscommunications but as identity crises. Paulston draws parallels between cultural competence and linguistic competence in her discourse on 'becoming bicultural'. She argues that one cannot approach biculturalism as one would bilingualism. "It is perfectly possible to learn a foreign language from non-native speakers. [...] it is also possible to become bilingual without becoming bicultural, while the reverse is not true." (Paulston in Kiesling and Paulston, 2005: 280) Even though her study is part of the interculturalism discourse, she does not define the individual who depends on more than one culture 'intercultural', and she does not seem to be alone in doing this. Interculturality seems to be the tag on the **event** of the meeting of more then one culture, or in the case of other social sciences, it seems to be the **space** in which intercultural exchanges happen but not the people themselves. The interculturality of the people who create these events or spaces does not seem to play a significant part in the non-theatre contexts much like some of the writing pertaining to the theatre context.

In the context of theatre, interculturalism is problematised firstly by issues of ownership and authenticity and secondly by training. Both those

issues are further problematised by the disjunctive perspectives of the practitioners and the non-practitioners. Pavis (et al) in his 1996 book, *Intercultural Performance Reader* began asking the question if intercultural theatre was a new genre and if it would have any kind of future. All the articles in this collection related to the issues around ownership and authenticity and training. The already emergent definition of intercultural theatre as a new hybrid form became somewhat concretised by the opinions offered in this book. Brook's and Mnouchkine's productions were the first port of call when discussing this new genre (whether the directors themselves agreed with such a definition or not). *Theatre and the World: Performance and the Politics of Culture* became a standard point of reference due to Bharucha's spirited criticism of some of the main western practitioners. He accused these western practitioners of exploiting eastern cultures. In this debate, Bharucha asked the very important question of whether a text could be separated from its culture of origin—thus creating the discussion on ownership and authenticity. Among others, Barba's theatre anthropology and Schechner's research on theatre and Performance Studies required us to re-consider the matter of training. The methodological divergence of the performer and non-performer that developed parallel to a focus shift from 'nation' to 'culture', as well as a shift from 'theatre' to 'performance' further problematised the intercultural debate. Positioned in the middle of all the factors listed above is the conventional intercultural theatre which is a recent, western, genre; a hybridisation suitably represented by Pavis' hourglass metaphor—a metaphor involving two parties: a source culture (non-western) and a target culture (western); a metaphor that privileges the target culture over the source culture.[107] This conventional intercultural theatre is associated

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[107] Pavis states in the *Reader*, "every intercultural project obeys the constraints and the needs tied specifically to the target culture that produces it" and adds that this is the doing of the capitalist West, dominating all the individual cultures by subsuming them. (1996: 16-17) This statement also supports my initial thoughts on globalisation, as a progress that connotes standardisation, offered at the start of this chapter.

with the notion of 'global theatre' that is linked with international theatre events. According to Baz Kershaw:

> intercultural theatre is often promoted through the global merry-go-round of high-profile festivals, touring circuits, or 'special events' such as the European City of Culture programme [...] these events partake of the disciplines of a newly globalised 'theatre'.(1999: 203)

It is the "jet-setters and the globetrotters of the international *cognoscenti*" who frequent such events. (ibid.) For Kershaw the commodification of intercultural theatre is unavoidable mainly because these high-profile *shows* are placed in the international market-place.

Shevtsova's critique of the intercultural debate and its relationship to globalisation using the examples of Brook's and Mnouchkine's theatres, not only illustrates this conventional view of intercultural theatre but it also renders the usage of the term 'interculturalism' synonymous with 'globalisation'. In her paper entitled, *Interculturalism, Aestheticism, Orientalism: Starting from Peter Brook's "Mahabharata"*, she asks a central question and proceeds to answer it by identifying what she calls the "globalizing principle" and interculturalism in Brook's (and to some extent Mnouchkine's) works:

> How do we explain sociologically this reliance on specific types of 'eastern' material and forms, and the globalizing perception that they project? I should add that the globalizing principle is inherent in the composition both of the Théâtre du Soleil and the Centre International de Creations Theatrales (CICT): the Soleil works, at any one time, with some twenty nationalities, while Brook's company at the time of the Mahabharata had twenty-five different nationalities, most of them in the cast. The composition, but especially how these peoples interact on stage and off, thus determining the character and quality of the production, is, in my view, the only intercultural factor involved in Brook's venture. The rest does not have the interactive dynamic, that whole principle of give-and-take interchange, that the term 'intercultural' should contain. The rest is a matter of borrowing from other cultures, or of

> adapting, interpreting or appropriating them. (Shevtsova, 1997: 98-105)

In other words, she qualifies the globalizing principle by the number of different nationalities of people working at these theatres at any one time. "The composition" of these theatres of many nationalities is the globalizing principle according to Shevtsova. However, in her next sentence she seems to be defining interculturalism in a similar fashion. (The sentence quoted above, beginning with, "The composition, but especially...") She writes that the on and off-stage relationships of these people from different parts of the world define Brook's "venture" as intercultural. In the first sentence she says that this international "composition" is the globalizing principle, whereas in the second, she says that the "composition" of these people of different nationalities and how they interact with one another is the intercultural element. It follows that she does not make a clear differentiation between what she calls the "globalizing principle" and interculturalism. The second part of her statement quoted above is confusing for two interconnected reasons; a) it is not clear specifically what she means by "the rest" and b) her definition of what "the term 'intercultural' should contain". If the on and off-stage relationships between these people from different nationalities can be recognised as the only intercultural element, as she suggests, then how is it possible to state that "borrowing from other cultures or adapting, interpreting or appropriating" cannot be intercultural? What intercultural relationship does not involve borrowing, adapting or interpreting from other cultures? What part of this relationship can be actively defined as not having the "interactive dynamic" and the "give-and-take interchange" that is identified with interculturalism? Assuming by "the rest" she means the "eastern material and form" she referred to earlier on in her question, then she seems to be significantly limiting the extent of the intercultural exchange. The key to this problem may lie in the outcome of what she describes as the globalizing principle and the intercultural factor in the case of these two theatres—"determining

the character and quality of the production". It is possible that her focus is not on the people themselves but on the result of what happens when these people come together. Her views seem to be based upon an ocular-centric experience. Shevtsova's vision of interculturalism is the 'production' that is shaped and affected by these people of various origins and influence and that it is the theatre event that is intercultural and not the people themselves. However unclearly, she seems to be suggesting that the globalizing perception is projected onto the productions created by Brook (and Mnouchkine) through the use of eastern materials and forms, and this may be her reason for not making a distinction between interculturalism and globalisation. In fact she reiterates this view in the following statement:

> Decolonization and mass immigration need to be taken into account when attempting to answer the question above regarding 'eastern' forms 'globalizing perception. [sic] In other words, they have contributed significantly to the expansion of people's vision 360 degrees, so much so that what is 'eastern' no longer appears so far away, and what happens at home has echoes abroad. I need not insist on the roles played in this process by the **mass media, electronic media, cybernetics, cyberspace and other new technologies, behind which stand multinational corporations and international financiers, who are the true interculturalists of our time!** (ibid.) (My emphasis.)

In the same article she states that "the [intercultural theatre] movement believes that all audiences can be reached and that **no** theatre is socio-historically and culturally specific" but her argument is that **"all** theatre is socio-historically and culturally specific."[108] Since a strong argument is likely to emerge from a strong premise, it is unfortunate that her argument is based upon the rather questionable premise that no theatre is socio-historically and culturally specific and that all audiences can be reached and that this premise represents the intercultural

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[108] My emphasis.

perspective. She gives Brook's productions of the *Mahabharata* and Bharucha's criticism as an example, but does not qualify how and where Brook (or any other person associated with intercultural theatre for that matter) could come to hold the view that no theatre is culturally specific. She states that "Brook's conception of the theatre and of its vocation to reach and touch all manner and kind of audiences raises problematic issues" [sic] (ibid.) She continues to unpick this thought by stating that Brook aims for "a new type of theatre (I would even call it a new genre) that is not indebted to any one cultural source, school, or method." Even if this were true, it still does not follow that according to an intercultural perspective no theatre is culturally specific. In fact it can be argued that theatre's ability to reach all kinds of audiences has little to do with socio-historical or cultural specificity (or non-specificity) but it has everything to do with building, overcoming, developing and maintaining relationships among people, as Brook's lifelong experiments actually demonstrate. In other words his interest lies with the actuality of the practice, the progress of human relationships (regardless of how taxonomically messy they might turn out to be) and his focus is not on applying social theories as headings onto his work. She goes on to argue that Brook's journey led him:

> towards what can only be called the quintessence of Theatre. It is this absolutism, this drive to create for theatre its own, very special place above and beyond the routines and pressures of daily life which motivates Brook's idea that theatre bypasses social interferences purely by virtue of its internal, immanent principles. (ibid.)

I could not disagree more; even a brief glance at Brook's résumé will show that it is the exact opposite of absolutism that is the major force that drives Brook's motivation. His journey has been about getting away from absolutisms, fixed positions or totalitarianism. Contrary to Shevtsova's claim, his work embraces flexibility; he creates a working environment that

allows for change to happen.[109] He recognises the experientiality of the people involved, which means that the quotidian routines and pressures are very much a part of Brook's work because they are a part of the lives of the people involved. The fact that what can be perceived as "the routines and pressures of daily life" and a variety of "social interferences" are dealt with differently in theatre than they are in life this does not mean that theatre, and specifically Brook's theatre, bypasses them. On the contrary, actively engaging with social, cultural, national, ethnic and religious differences allow for similarities to surface. In this regard, given some of the negative implications of globalisation, it seems to me that much can be gained from Brook's way of working which depends on negotiating our differences and working with them, not in spite of them. Brook's work does not attempt to bypass the pressures of daily life and social interferences of today but it surprises those who want to compartmentalise socio-cultural issues the easy-way—the way it happens in life. Regardless of the fact that, in life, this 'easy-way' may lead to difficult situations one may not want to face, it is still easy, because the answers (just like the questions) are ready, preconceived, and prescribed, at least, known. In everyday life, it is easy to forget that categorizations or labels are created to define generalities for the sake of constructing theories that make sense. It is true that such constructs help us understand the world around us to a degree. But it is also true that our affinity to categorise, in order to make life easier, leads to generalised, a priori judgements if we do not see beyond the categories. In Brook's work, it is not just the *Mahabharata* that exemplifies this way of exploring beyond the accustomed categories; working without a priori judgements. *The Man Who* and the *Conference of the Birds* are just two of the many possible examples of transference of data into information, information into knowledge and hopefully knowledge into wisdom through the doing, the

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[109] See *Brook by Brook: Portrait in Time* 2001 documentary made by Simon Brook. (DVD)

conditions of the practice of theatre, without relying upon preconceived social theories.

Echoing Niels Bohr's words about his point of departure, it seems as though Shevtsova works from the position of 'what one knows' and Brook works from the position of 'what he knows'. Shevtsova's position, which is defined by her outside-in perspective, seems to be clashing with Brook's. The practitioner's position is complicated in the way that it is many-dimensional, because it strives for a constant process of reconfiguration[110] for the purposes of 'doing'. This separates the non-practitioner, who methodically analyses the end product, from the practitioner, whose main concern is the process of making/creating. In this process a variety of specific socio-historical and cultural elements will be ingrained in the dynamics of performance but these elements will not all be from one culture belonging to one society—regardless of how heterogeneous and plural a definition of society one can conjure. As Shevtsova rightly points out, it is important to recognise the globalisation context; because heterogeneity, as the defining factor of society, is fuelled by the cultural implications of globalisation. In the abstract for this paper she states:

> Critics of Peter Brook's "Mahabharata" and of the intercultural theater movement are concerned about of [Sic.] vulnerable cultures being taken over by aesthetic colonialism. However, the movement believes that all audiences can be reached and that no theater is socio-historically and culturally specific. Brook's performance is characterised by a staff of mixed nationalities and a mixture of cultures. The adaptation of theater from other cultures may expand global theater beyond Western traditions, but must recognize the influence of colonization and mass immigration.

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[110] This constant reconfiguration may utilise beginnings, middles or ends, and/or they might get discarded, or that they may appear in a variety of sequences. It is not that the practice does not strive for any structure at all; of course it does, but that structure will reveal itself as the rehearsals get underway, and it will get reconfigured many times along the way.

It is not very clear if by 'global theatre' she means her understanding of intercultural theatre. However, it is clear that according to her, 'global theatre' is western and that it *may* be expanded by adapting theatre from *other* cultures. (This can be the definition of a conventional take on intercultural theatre in a nut shell.) The usage of *but* is misleading—to echo Bharucha's line of disagreement. The choice of 'but' instead of 'and' reiterates her view of 'adaptation' from other traditions in order to expand western theatre—which is exactly what is problematic about this conventional take in interculturalism. But does Brook adapt a theatre tradition from another culture? No, he does not. The *Mahabharata* is not a theatre tradition. Brook's *Mahabharata* is no different than, say, a ballet version of the Fall of Man. Such misconceptions around Brook's (and indeed others such as Barba's and Grotowski's) works and ways of working are quite common. Western scholars who may not be familiar with these 'other' theatre traditions that are 'popular' non-western sources (such as Japanese and Indian theatre traditions) end up writing either in very general terms or they fuel the misconceptions about intercultural theatre as well as the non-western sources. A divergence to Helsinki, Finland may demonstrate how these misconceptions are formed.

Diversion to Helsinki

The 15th World Congress of the International Federation of Theatre Research (IFTR/FIRT) took place in Helsinki, (August 2006) and the congress theme was *Global vs Local.* One of the three papers in the final panel of the conference was presented by Vasudevan Pillai who outlined the effects of globalisation on Theyyam, a performative ritual from Kerala. The rest of the panel consisted of one scholar from Australia, another from Britain and the chair was from Germany. During the discussion following the papers someone in the audience, who had a comment to make on

Pillai's paper, brought up the issue of intercultural theatre in the context of globalisation; the contributor's phraseology suggested that 'interculturalism' (at least) in this context was almost like a dirty word. Pillai had made a point about Theyyam's existential crisis being directly related to globalisation.

> It [Theyyam] is visited by tourists and scholars, photographed, filmed, videoed, interviewed, marketed and given remuneration [...] In its original environment a performance like Theyyam is a means of cultural continuity and strong resistance against 'alien' and colonial invasion. When globalized, it loses its energy, creativity and identity. [111]

Curiously enough, this contributor seemed as though he thought he was in agreement with Pillai in the way that he thought Pillai was also pointing to interculturalism as a negative predicament. Another audience member who wanted to clarify where Pillai stood with regard to interculturalism in this context asked specifically if he thought people like Brook and Barba could be accused of this kind of marketing and that if indeed Pillai considered the interculturalism associated with Brook and Barba as part of the alien and colonial invasion he mentioned in this paper. Pillai started his vigorous response by saying, "No, of course, not! These are respectable practitioners, artists." At this point, he was, rather abruptly, interrupted by the panel chair who declared that we all knew the intercultural theatre debate very well and that we did not need to waste any time discussing it here. She continued chairing the discussion by asking her own question to another panellist. The person who asked the question to Pillai, a few other people in the audience, I and most certainly Pillai were in disbelief. My disbelief was three-fold: Firstly, the *way* she interrupted Pillai was categorically rude. Secondly, whether censoring the questions that can be asked to the presenters is in the job description of a panel chair could be debatable. Thirdly, the room is packed with people who are interested in

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[111] Taken from Pillai's abstract published in the official conference *Book of Abstracts*.

listening to what these presenters have to say; here, we have the chance to get to the heart of the debate (she claims we all know well) from the horse's mouth, as it were; here we have a practitioner, a specialist from India, *who is not Bharucha*, and he is prepared to share with us his unique perspective...but we are going to dismiss all this because we have all read Fischer-Lichte, Pavis, Bharucha et al so we must know the debate.

I could hardly wait for the end of the discussion in order to talk to Pillai myself. He was generous enough to talk with me for about another twenty minutes. He had not only met Grotowski, Barba and Brook but he had showed them around in Kerala and helped them during their respective visits. He was vehement in his response to the 'censored' question during the discussion. He talked about his respect for these practitioners as great artists and their individual understanding of the process of performance. It is a given that no one who has not gone through the lengthy and rigorous training traditional Indian dances can embody it the way the trained performers do. But as practitioners who are motivated by their curiosity and thirst for other ways of working, Barba and Brook were able to grasp the performance process well enough to impress, at least, Pillai. We continued talking about the craft of the performer and the 'energy' required both from within and from without in order for creativity to be driven. He talked about Brook being energised by what he experienced over there; he said that Brook refused to take pictures or recordings of performers and performance spaces—even though he was encouraged by the locals. Pillai was making the point that Brook was not interested in taking a specific form of theatre or a 'space idea' from India. By keeping himself open, Brook was taking in his experience and understanding the context he was in, he would be taking this experience with him outside of India and that this had absolutely nothing to do with the negative effects of globalisation. It is a pity that the panel chair (and a few others) did not hear Pillai's full response. They

would have heard that maybe Brook is not necessarily responsible for the negative reputation of this 'interculturalism'. Throughout this conference, I encountered a few people who referred to 'intercultural' theatre (and they would mime the inverted commas as they said the word) and meant something negative, even colonial or at least questionable. **End of diversion.**

Alongside scholars whose criticism of the works of certain directors usually associated with interculturalism that can be contested and others who even resist considering interculturality in a new light; there are also practitioners whose perspective draws parallels between interculturalism and globalisation. Mark Ravenhill is an example of one of those people who do not explore interculturality but rather dwell in the context of globalisation. He is a playwright who describes himself as a global brand, despite the fact that he claims an anti-globalisation position himself. In an article he wrote for the *Guardian* (February 6, 2006) entitled, *Better to risk being local than to be generalised,* with the subheading, "My first play turned me into a global brand. Does that mean I now have to write bland, boring money-spinners?" The *boring money-spinners* he compares himself with are, Cameron Mackintosh, Robert Lepage, Robert Wilson and Peter Brook. He starts out by stating his understanding of globalisation.

> I tend to think of globalisation as sneakers made in sweatshops in Malaysia, McDonalds's golden arches in Turkestan [sic][112] or call centres in Delhi. I've come to realise, though, that globalisation is an increasing force in my business, the business we call show.

He qualifies this force in 'his business' by the busloads of tourists who "witness the wash of emotion and spectacle that is *Les Misérables* or

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[112] Maybe the editors at the *Guardian* should have reminded him that *Turkestan* is not one country as he makes it sound to be but the general name given to a historical region comprised of at least seven or eight Turkic countries.

Phantom of the Opera" and such musicals generating more money than Hollywood blockbusters. Aside from his "first piece that brought him to international recognition" he puts Lepage in the same bag as Mackintosh. "Lepage is very much part of the globalisation of the theatre, creating packages that will bring financial support from governments, corporations and festivals across the world." He also gives Wilson as an example of the force of globalisation in 'his business'. "He [Wilson] spent the first half of his career developing a theatre language and then the rest of his time selling that language as an international brand." Then he comes to Brook:

> The market leader in international theatre is probably still Peter Brook. Having established his brand dominance in the 1980s with The Mahabharata, Brook now has the dulling facility to reduce any play or narrative to the same bland hippy event: a few scatter cushions, some oriental rugs, a lot of generalised acting. And although I find his work as boring as a bad episode of Hollyoaks, I suppose it must be that generalised nature that makes it such a saleable commodity for those booking international festivals.

It is interesting that Ravenhill chooses to overlook Brook's professional career spanning from 1943 up to the 1980s; thinking that the *Mahabharata* was a turning point in the way that Brook has worked is not true and it certainly is not well-supported. Even if I were to agree with Ravenhill (and I do not) that there is such a thing as a Brook brand and that Brook might be even slightly interested in having such a brand, I would still disagree that this started in the 1980s. Aside from some inaccurate observations about Brook's work, what is more curious is the way Ravenhill's criticism is stated. Compare Ravenhill's statement above with David Hare's below. (Hare's lecture is actually about John Osborne.)

> He [Osborne] did not, like his great contemporary Peter Brook, go into exile, where he would risk draining individual plays of any specific meaning or context to a point where each one was in danger of becoming the same play—a sort of universal hippy

> babbling which, at its worst, seems to convey nothing but fright of commitment. (Hare, 2005: 55-56)

Hare's lecture was at the 2002 Hay-on-Wye Festival. It is unnecessary to speculate whether Ravenhill was there; regardless, the similarities are clear. In order to dismiss sixty years' worth of highly wide ranging work of any practitioner (let alone Brook) with a comparison to "a bad episode of Hollyoaks" only demonstrates that Ravenhill might have watched too many episodes of *Hollyoaks*.

It is true that theatre should not have become an industry, a commodity, and in this I wholeheartedly agree with Ravenhill but in 'his business' that he calls 'show' he seems to be doing exactly what he criticises others for doing. After blaming Brook for creating "generalised" "saleable commodity" for "international festivals" he writes about the international success of his first play, *Shopping and Fucking*. He states that having watched many different productions of his play in many different countries, he found it difficult to write his next play, because he worried whether a specific word or line would "mean something to someone in Helsinki [etc]". He writes that this is when he realized that he had become a global brand and that he didn't like it. He brings this article to a conclusion with the following grand statement:

> Good art has to be concrete. It is better to risk being local than to be generalised. I wrote *Some Explicit Polaroids* simply about England. It's had as many international productions as *Shopping and Fucking* and people in eastern Europe and South America tell me it's about their country. Which is hugely gratifying—and pays the bills. This year I'm playing the international festival circuit, performing my monologue *Product*. The challenge is going to be the same: enjoy the cultural exchange but, when I sit down to write, block out the international chatter.

The bold statement that "good art has to be concrete" is a highly contestable one and this thesis is not the right place for unpicking this

statement. It should suffice to say that I tend to think that strength comes from flexibility and not from rigidness—"concrete" is too rigid a qualification for all the possibilities offered by art. He suggests that the opposite of 'local' is 'general'[113]but he does not really explain what exactly he means by this, except for saying that he wrote a play about England. He enjoys generating money and 'paying his bills' through his international productions but when Brook does it, he calls this the commoditisation of theatre. Ravenhill seems to think that his own saving grace is the fact that he intended his play to be "simply about England" and since he is not responsible for what other people do with his plays he can enjoy the financial benefits with no qualms. Moreover, he criticises Lepage, Wilson and Brook for catering to the festival circuit yet he ends his article by announcing that he will be taking part in the international festival circuit himself. His article is overflowing with such contradictions. It will be interesting to observe how long he will be able to "block out the international chatter" or indeed if he will be able to do it at all. The fact that Ravenhill puts Mackintosh, Lepage, Wilson and Brook in the same bag is problematic in itself but he takes it a step further by seemingly comparing himself to these people. Arguably, the force of globalisation on the theatre world is where interculturality meets globalisation and it is not useful to dismiss interculturality by calling it *international chatter.*

However, as we have seen interculturalism in the globalisation context does not necessarily evoke similar thoughts, meanings and responses in everyone. Holledge and Tompkins complain about the lack of political engagement on the part of "intercultural theatre" and the primary focus on aesthetics—at the expense of political perspectives—and offer *Women's Intercultural Performance* as an alternative, because according

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[113] If only he had come to the FIRT conference in Helsinki, he would have seen that the general debate is about the relationship of the local with the global and that these two terms or positions do not even have to oppose each other. They could actually be complementary to one another.

to their view, issues relating to gender and specifically the issues surrounding the equality of men and women are always political.[114] (2000: 1-17) They explain their point of departure and goal in the introduction.

> We do not provide a singular definitive model of interculturalism or of women's intercultural performance because such a model would risk assuming too many similarities among cultures and theatrical practices, and ignoring too many of the crucial local differences. Instead, we provide ways of thinking about and analysing contemporary performance and, particularly, representations of the performing, female, culturally marked body. (Holledge and Tompkins 2000: 3)

According to the latter part of the statement above, it seems that the main difference Holledge and Tompkins bring to the debate—aside from their feminist perspective—is that they are interested in the performer as opposed to the performance event and this indeed sounds refreshing. (They devote at least one out of five chapters of their book to what they entitle, *Intercultural Bodies*.) However, as they limit their approach to the female body and particularly to the representations of the female gender, it is problematic to fit this perspective with their definition of interculturalism. "Interculturalism is the meeting in the moment of performance of two or more cultural traditions, a temporary fusing of styles and/or techniques and/or cultures." (2000: 7) Use of the word 'temporary' demonstrates their position on the interculturality of people (or bodies to use their terminology) as opposed to the performance event. It seems that in their view, interculturalism is temporally bound to the duration of the performance. Moreover, purposefully excluding the male gender from any exchange does not further develop the interculturalism debate, or shed new light onto the issues pertaining to performance theory/practice. What might be useful for those who uphold the feminist perspective is that in their exploration of interculturalism Holledge and Tompkins' references to

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[114] Incidentally, they use the words 'theatre' and 'performance' interchangeably. They are not offering 'performance' as an alternative to 'theatre' as it may be suggested by their change (and use) of terminology in their discourse.

the 'other' or 'other cultures' can automatically include the male gender. In this way, they might shed new light onto gender-based discussions in the subject of interculturalism. Similarly, if they had decided to tackle the issues surrounding negotiating differences and similarities between people/s and cultures (see the first sentence of the indented statement above) they might have contributed towards furthering the interculturalism debate by providing their perspective on cultural politics, in addition to their gender politics.[115]

Holledge and Tompkins' specific take on Geertz' discourse on culture and specifically 'thick description' might have something to do with the authors' purposeful exclusion of the male gender from the point of origin of their argument but inevitably including the male gender into the category of 'the other' or 'other cultures'. This is because essentially, one is defined by one's relationships with others, and 'others' inevitably include all genders. Geertz states:

> As inter-worked systems of construable signs...culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviours, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed, it is in this context, something within which they can be intelligibly—that is, thickly—described. (Geertz in Holledge and Tompkins 2000: 184)

Holledge and Tompkins state that:

> Culture is not an isolated concept or an empty sign waiting to be filled by that which we deem 'intelligible'. Culture has a context as well, which Clifford Geertz's 'thick description' makes clear. Culture is located in the construction of the self (or the subjective position) and in the context of that self. Culture is, of course, always more than just the national cuisine and costumed folk dance that are frequently used to represent it: culture is the way in which we

[115] Having said that, it is possible that in the limited space of one book, their choice might have been a practical one.

> understand our own identities and the means through which we encounter other cultures. (2000: 4)

As much as I agree with their observations about culture, I am not certain if they make a specific enough connection to Geertz. In using the term 'thick description' Geertz was borrowing from the philosopher, Gilbert Ryle, who was making a distinction between *movement* ('thin description') and *action* ('thick description'). The main difference between the two is that *movement* is only a physical movement but *action* also includes intentions, reasons for doing that action, therefore meaning can be attached to an action. (Fay, 1996: 93-94)[116] In this sense, our identities are defined by our actions and therefore it may be possible to argue, as Holledge and Tompkins do, that *culture is the way in which we understand our own identities and the means through which we encounter other cultures.* By the same token, it can be argued that our identities help make up the culture; in other words, who we are, our identity, is the way in which we understand our own culture—to echo their phraseology. This elusive concept of the 'self' does not just instrument our understanding of (ours and others') identities and it is not just *the means through which we encounter other cultures*, but it is the means through which we encounter every experience (natural world, meta-physical world etc.) If this is true, then interpreting every experience through the filter of gender would offer a rather narrow worldview.[117]

In their research Holledge and Tompkins outline "three genres of women's performance" where "the female body is the site" of "intercultural encounter". (2000: 16)

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[116] "To ascribe a particular intention to agents—and therefore to characterise their actions—requires that we *interpret* their movements in a particular way, and to describe actions we must employ not physical terms which refer to overt movements but intentional terms which pick out the intentions and rules which define the acts as they are." (Fay, 1996: 94)

[117] Of course, interpreting all experience through the filter of a single gender would offer even a narrower worldview.

> The first genre is taxonomic, because it seeks clearly to demarcate the boundaries between cultures; the second is hybrid, because two cultures in some way merge; and the third is nomadic, because cultural and geographical boundaries are transgressed. (2000: 112)

In order to follow these three genres, they explain the three-way division of the 'body' in performance. They differentiate between *the body of the performer*, which is "the subjective body of corporeal materialism located in a specific historical time and geographical space, embodying the ethics of a particular place"; *the performing body*, which is "a body of artifice" that embodies the physical and vocal language of the specific theatre training and finally, *the body of the audience*. (2000: 111-112) They explain how the three female bodies merge with the three genres:

> The body of the performer and the performing body merge in the taxonomic genre to create a reified cultural essence that can be identified and categorised by the audience. The hybrid genre is a mass of contradictions in both production and reception: artificial performing bodies from diverse backgrounds are juxtaposed, and qualities of two or more cultures mix and merge as cultural signifiers jump from one body to another. Finally, amongst the nomad, we encounter an intercultural site that capitalises on the physical communication between the audience and performer to challenge radically the boundaries of identity. (112-113)

Despite the in-depth research and theorising, what they are offering, in terms of definitions, is not dissimilar to the variety of definitions Pavis and others provided for the many suffixes of the word *culture*. (i.e. Inter-, intra-, multi-, ultra-, trans-, et cetera.) Whereas Pavis was questioning if interculturalism is a genre or not, Holledge and Tompkins clearly think it is. The three way division of the body and the three genres they identify above get tangled into a web that does not help the practitioner or the academic who might seek benefit from this study. This phenomenal categorisation of theatre seems to be focusing solely on the female perspective at the expense of a clear bigger picture, which is problematic

because interculturalism by definition is an inclusive term. Therefore, if not the concept of women's intercultural performance then definitely the title of *Women's Intercultural Performance* manages to be an oxymoron and a tautology at the same time.

> As the above 'conventional' approach to interculturalism demonstrates, once again, culture is treated as a hermetic entity that can be defined by its boundaries, as well as its location in a specific time and space. Moreover, in accordance with the aims of Holledge and Tompkins, the experience of one group of the participants of an exchange is privileged over another group. This privileging 'one' over 'the other' is one of the traits of a conventional (and problematic) way of defining interculturalism as demonstrated by Pavis' compilation of definitions of a western interculturalism, or indeed Marranca's American interculturalism.[118]

Tatlow on the other hand chooses to focus on the 'intercultural sign' from an anthropological perspective as opposed to focusing on interculturalism as a generic concept. In his book, *Shakespeare, Brecht and the Intercultural Sign,* he assesses the question of culture in the globalisation context and seeks to employ the intercultural sign as an interpretative tool to elude the "commercially driven, globalized aesthetics that flattens everything". (2001: 6)

> Intercultural readings question whatever representational paradigm has been conventionalized. Yet we can no longer neatly separate the anthropological sense of culture—geographically distinct, linguistically separate, relatively homogenous "worldviews"—from culture in the intellectual or disciplinary sense of a preferred, rather than inherited, interpretive perspective. (ibid.)

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[118] She makes the distinction that Brook and Mnouchkine's intercultural theatres are seeded in the theatre traditions of their former colonies. "American interculturalism has not grown out of the experience of colonialism, but from this country's own geography and changing demographics." (Marranca and Dasgupta, 1991: 13)

Tatlow's view is that this shift from the previously accepted, or justified separations or categorisations of cultures, to the more recent, boundary defying phenomena, is the very character of postmodernity and he wonders if the two can meet. His aim is to find ways to employ an older anthropological sense of culture to the current "preferred" cultures as opposed to the "inherited" ones.[119] "Defamiliarizing the conventions of representation, the intercultural sign facilitates access to what has, on various levels, been culturally repressed. It speaks through the silence of an *episteme*." (ibid.) In his view, culture is, inarguably, "a text that must be read" but he concedes that, "the position of the anthropologist or the reader is never completely clear". (2001: 2)

> Observing others and wrestling with ourselves in a self-distancing practice of interpretation is a precarious task. I call such reading "textual anthropology". (2001: 1-2)

> In the comparative study that I call textual anthropology, a primary function is to show how a culture employs unconscious structuration through the intercultural sign. (2001: 3)

Distance is a key word in Tatlow's textual anthropological approach, in the sense that everything in the past and of the past essentially belongs to another culture because of the distance. He gives the example that contemporary Britain and Japan are more alike one another than either one of them are alike their sixteenth century selves. By the same token, he argues that, we think we know ourselves well, but we actually do not. The history of the self spreads over too long a space and time for us to factor in all the developments that have happened to us in the mean time and when now (whenever that 'now' is) we look back at our former selves, we are engaging in an intercultural exchange because the past (that is

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[119] Tatlow's idea of preferred as opposed to inherited cultures sounds very much like Schechner's notion of culture of choice.

defined by its distance to our current position) is another culture. (2001: 5)

Thus, textual anthropology is Tatlow's means by which he deems it possible to understand the self and the other through one another. He states that:

> The impulse from another culture is sought and absorbed, because it enables an otherwise difficult, if not impossible, engagement with what has been repressed at home. If what has thereby been transformed is later transmitted back, then we can speak of a "dialectics of acculturation". Such practices help us understand the only way of engaging with "forgotten" aspects of one's own culture can sometimes be this passage through the foreign. (2001: 3-4)

Once again, the initial sense is that another culture's influence is 'sought' because something needs repairing 'at home'. He explains that 'acculturation' is "normally considered unidirectional" and that it is the outcome of a "source/target model" (2001: 47) (as in the example of Pavis' hourglass model). In a way, by considering the dialectics of acculturation Tatlow is continually turning the hourglass upside down. "The second culture absorbs, transforms, and then retransmits" thus enabling a longer lasting relationship that affects all the cultures involved. However, this is where he identifies a major negative implication of globalisation.

> Where a culture lacks this ability to absorb, change, and transmit, it will eventually succumb, stagnate, and disintegrate. The pressure toward uniformity through rapid globalization threatens, ultimately, the destruction of all culture, for where there is no difference, there can be no identity. (2001: 48)

His argument is straightforward enough to follow and indeed to a certain extent, it is possible to consider standardisation as a feasible outcome of globalisation, as mentioned earlier in this chapter—hence the concept of the *global village*. However, prior to getting to the destruction of all culture, it might be useful to consider what makes a culture or the nature of culture—as it were, for a brief moment. Can a culture 'lack the ability to

absorb, change and transmit'? And if it can, can we still define it as 'culture'? This is where Tatlow's otherwise very careful considerations fall short. His argument assumes that initially culture can be defined as prescribed, fixed and limited—otherwise how could it not 'absorb', 'change' or 'transmit'?[120] It must be said that I fervently agree that 'difference' should be celebrated and not shunned and that difference helps create identity, but we cannot equate sharing information and technology, providing equal opportunities, or at least similar facilities to different cultures with the globalising factor that might render every person the same.

So far the examples provided here of people who are engaged with the interculturalism debate in the theatre context demonstrates the inadequacy of argument or weakness of premise. In Tatlow's case, his arguments just fall short because; attempting to apply a dated sense of culture as part of his textual anthropology to the current cultural conditions and explaining the interculturality of the human through dialectical acculturation still, seems somewhat limiting. At the core of his argument for dialectical acculturation, he seems to be assuming that a culture can be a fixed, unabsorbent or impermeable entity. Having said that, he is one of the few people to consider the interculturality of a person as opposed to an event by including the "unconscious" or the "silent episteme" into his perception of interculturality.

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[120] This statement contradicts how he explains the role of the "unconscious" as the key to the intercultural nature of how we get to 'know' ourselves later on in the chapter. "Time is no longer a question of cultural longitude, of where you are, but rather a psychological and experiential category that is now differently constructed and that we take with us wherever we happen to be, which engages, absorbs, and clashes with or is modified by other times. [...] when we encounter the exotic we find that it has already responded to, incorporated, and transformed our own experiences. When we now seek it out, we come up against an appropriation of our "own" culture, which we then reappropriate in our act of interpretation, as we could never have done without that passage through the foreign. In this new sense the foreign really is already inside us as an aspect of our selves. One word for this silent companion, this other side of ourselves, is the unconscious." (p 60-61)

Benefiting from interdisciplinarity (and especially from the social sciences) is common practice in the theatre world. It is therefore important to keep up with the current developments of the borrowed terminology and track if and how the terms and concepts go through reforms in the context of the social sciences in question as well as theatre related disciplines. Since globalisation is in progress and since we are gaining more and perhaps better knowledge about the world, it is inevitable that what was thought to be justifiable and acceptable worldviews and methodologies are shifting in meaning and/or value—some are becoming obsolete. Augé and Colleyn outline some of these main changes in their latest book *The World of the Anthropologist* (2006). Anthropology, cultural anthropology to be exact, is one of the key social sciences that have influenced the developments in the disciplines of theatre and performance. Cultural anthropology can be offered as the example of a social science that has struggled to keep up with the changing world and has had to reconsider its terminology as well its relationship with other disciplines.

Augé and Colleyn write that one of main differences between "yesterday's big theories" and today's continually evolving outlook is the attitude towards seeking the ultimate truth; today we understand that "definitive truths were utopian" and we have to adopt a more flexible approach that would allow us to "modify the chosen instrument [of research] if necessary, to advance through a series of approximations". (2006: 3) They claim that the overabundance of published research and the necessity to refer to other disciplines means that, "anthropology is itself a 'crossroads' discipline".[121] Furthermore, the fact that "the term

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[121] They continue to say that "most of the terms used by anthropologists are also used by everyone else." (2006: 3) They note that journalists often use terms that make "a sort of parody of anthropology, loosely employing exotic notions in an ironic way to designate a role or attitude in own society." They give the examples of the *sheikh of the Collége de France* and *political pundits*. Pundit is an appropriation of *pandita* from Sanskrit. According to the *Concise Encyclopedia of Hinduism*, its literal translation is 'learned'; meaning "an honorific applied to high personalities". (Klostermaier, 1999: 133)

knowledge itself is a subject for debate" (2006: 5) it is important to remain process oriented rather than seeking end results in our quest for knowledge about other cultures. Since the end of the nineteenth century cultural anthropology has been "the comparative study that can be derived from ethnography and ethnology, conceived respectively as the collection and systematic analysis of data".[122](2006: 8)

> Ethnography originally designated (late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) the description of the habits and customs of so-called 'primitive' peoples, ethnology the encyclopaedic knowledge that resulted from it. Broadly speaking ethnology appeared to be the branch of sociology devoted to the study of 'primitive' societies. (2006: 7)

Abandoning "criteria that assumed the supremacy of Western civilization—has managed to rehabilitate the term 'ethnology'" by rejecting the ethnocentric approach that was signified by the study of the *primitive* peoples. (2006: 8-9) Ethnology now is "conceived as theoretical study based on small-scale research, the researcher's prolonged immersion in the field, and participating observation and dialogue with the informants." (2006: 9) Augé and Colleyn remind us that it was Lévi-Strauss who introduced the term 'anthropology' (1950s) "but without the qualifying adjective 'cultural' to denote the study of human beings in all their aspects". (2006: 8) In the United States, anthropology on its own means the "study of human biological evolution and cultural evolution during human prehistory" (2006: 7) whereas in France, due to "the success of structuralism [...] 'anthropology' [...] means the discipline that deals with the current diversity of human cultures". (2006: 8)

> The anthropology of contemporary worlds recognizes the plurality of cultures, but also the references common to all of them and the internal differences present in a single culture. While the concept of

[122] "British authors, on the other hand, prefer the expression 'social anthropology' to 'cultural anthropology', because they favour the study of social acts and institutions." (Augé and Colleyn, 2006: 8)

> culture still has a measure of operative value, it is no longer conceived as a body of knowledge all of which is shared by all members of the society in question. (2006: 18)

Society is made up of individuals who come with varying 'cultural baggage', coexisting together. Cultural baggage could be anything from age, sex, race, to education, wealth, political convictions etc and the weight (or the lightness) of the baggage would vary in accordance with the social boundaries. (ibid.) In light of this, Augé and Colleyn claim the uselessness of the terms *acculturation* and *hybridism* in the current context, despite the fact that they are "fashionable" and "popular".

> The notion of *acculturation*, to designate the range of phenomena resulting from the collision of two different cultures, is misleading in that it assumes that each body was pure and homogenous in the first place. That of *hybridism*, more fashionable nowadays, is of little more use, indeed equally misleading with its biological connotation. (ibid.)

In line with the statement above, unsurprisingly, the same reasons apply to, "what has been called *textualism*—viewing the meaning of what people do as a discourse, a text, which simply has to be read—has been energetically criticized." (2006: 124)

It seems that the terms that are often resorted to in the 'conventional' intercultural theatre discourse may carry more baggage than previously thought. Ranging from 'classically' accepted definitions to current trends in meaning, interpretations of human behaviour are problematised every step of the way. The common pitfall appears to be the assumption of a common understanding of the word 'culture' and a priori judgements that shape the individual's place/role within that culture. It could be argued that, in this conventional sense, interculturalism means different things to different people depending on how they are affected by what their specific experience of globalisation may be. Indeed sometimes

the inadequacies of arguments pertaining to intercultural theatre stem from terminological confusion as demonstrated by the following statements in light of the discourse above.

> Interculturalism is sometimes confused with theatre anthropology which analyses another culture's 'theatre'–or events which the anthropologist considers to be theatrical—without a sharing of traditions. (Holledge and Tompkins, 2000: 7)

As the founder of ISTA and Theatre Anthropology as a new field, Barba explains exactly what he means.

> Theatre Anthropology is not concerned with those levels of organisation which make possible the application of paradigms of cultural anthropology to theatre and dance. It is not the study of performative phenomena in those cultures which are traditionally studied by anthropologists. (Barba, 1991: 7)

In view of the implications of globalisation, the *culture* component of interculturalism has been problematised in the theatre context as well as the non-theatre context. Along the way, we have seen that interculturalism can be perceived as an infinite array of interpretations of the possible relationships between 'self' and 'other'. In the conventional interculturalism sense the relationship between 'self' and 'other' seems to be a polarisation, or binary opposition. Current anthropology is developing (modernising) in accordance with the changing (globalised) world. "The notion of otherness is central to the anthropological approach, not so much because anthropology deals with diversity, but rather because otherness is its instrument." (Augé and Colleyn, 2006: 13) Starting from a position of not-knowing, the subject of anthropological study (or indeed another person or culture we encounter in everyday life) must be 'other' than 'self' which is the reason why it is crucial to resist a priori judgements. Only such an experience of the 'other' can lead to an understanding of 'self'. Starting from the position of not-knowing keeps the focus on the

inter– rather than attempting to define interculturality as an *–ism.* Will problematising the interculturality of performance lead to an understanding of the 'self' as well? Kershaw also hopes that the commoditisation of 'intercultural theatre' is not the only implication of globalisation. Perhaps a global view might provide an alternative to the existing polarities of 'self' and 'other'.

> Perhaps a view of cross-cultural performance from the perspective of globalisation might uncover forms of intercultural exchange that are not plagued by inequality or oppression, covert or otherwise. We would then be looking for practices that are not so susceptible to interpretation in terms of the polarities of self and other, source and target, centre and periphery, and so on, which have so far disastrously dogged discussion of intercultural theatre. (Kershaw, 1999: 204)

Chapter 6: Metaesthetics and Interculturality: Focusing on the *inter–*

The inadequacy of a widespread and increasingly conventional approach to interculturality in theatre as outlined in the previous chapters must be contrasted with another approach, which seeks to reaffirm a truer and more distinctive interculturality, where the prefix *inter–* is emphasised rather than the suffix *–ism*. Employing some of the lessons learned specifically from Zeami and Bharata Muni and more generally from Japan and India, it is possible to trace some parallels between these (and other) performance traditions by exploring the major elements that generate the dynamics of performance. The importance of hana, yūgen and monomane as well as rasa, bhava and abhinaya is not geographically and temporally bound; neither are the dynamics of culture. The aim of this chapter will be to arrive at the heart of interculturality through an investigation of the parallels and similarities between culture and performance in light of Zeami's and Bharata Muni's teachings. This interculturalism, in terms of its inclusiveness, and its focus on the person rather than the event, will be distinct from the more 'conventional' interpretation employed by some others. In doing this, the *–ism* of interculturalism will be challenged.

There is *another interculturalism*, as explored and argued in this thesis. This interculturalism is a process that does not prioritise any of the parties involved, it is not product/result oriented. This interculturalism is a philosophy of exchange that involves people who are by default intercultural because they live in this world. Living, being in this world affords one the potentiality of interculturality. Regardless of one's general stance with reference to globalisation, due simply to the globalisation of modernisation, parallel to the shift from *Gemeinschaft* (community) to

Gesellschaft [123](society), a shift from 'culture' to 'interculturality' has become much more pronounced in this century—though interculturality itself is as old as culture.[124] This interculturalism cannot be divided into 'target' and 'source' cultures because its objective is not a product, it is an organic process that focuses on the human exchange, and human exchange should not be limited by space or time as it is an ongoing process. Emphasising the human exchange brings the prefix *inter–* to the foreground. This interculturalism enriches our lives; it does not reduce our exchanges to business transactions. It is not the same as globalisation, it utilises the positives that globalisation offers and balances out the negatives by allowing for an exchange of knowledge, which enables us to learn different ways of thinking. This interculturalism does not dictate that modernism is viewed as a battered project, nor does it underline postmodernism as the only way out; its strength is in its dialectical nature as opposed to settling for binary oppositions. This approach acknowledges the differences in oppositions and highlights the relationships between oppositions. Working from the exchanges and relationships *between* oppositions allows for *inter–* to become the dynamic force. As established in the previous chapter, some trends in contemporary meaning illustrate the association of globalisation with a conventional approach to interculturalism. Before the shift in meaning renders these two terms synonymous, a more distinctive, a truer interculturalism must be reaffirmed. In fact this interculturalism is not an –ism at all but it is interculturality.

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[123] As ably demonstrated in an essay entitled, *Identity and Migration* by Fukuyama in the February 2007 issue of *Prospect*. In 1999, Bauman wrote, "It was primarily the availability of fast means of travel that triggered the typically modern process of eroding and undermining all locally entrenched social and cultural 'totalities'; the process first captured (and romanticized) by Tönnies' famous formula of modernity as the passage from *Gemeinshcaft* to *Gesellschaft*." (1999: xxiii)

[124] It is possible to argue that as soon as one person travelled outside of his immediate surroundings or region and came into contact with other people and surroundings, an intercultural exchange took place. It is possible to extend this to observations of animal behaviour as well.

A simple example of understanding and connecting to, say, Zeami's wisdom is my personal and artistic acknowledgment of how Zeami's teachings may inform the choices I make; despite the fact that I do not belong to medieval Japan. Contrary to my understanding of interculturality, I can offer a Body Shop shower gel as a contrasting example. "Warming Japanese Sake, Oriental fragranced bath gel for exotic bathing" reads the bottle both in English and in French; complete with the drawing of a Japanese woman wearing a kimono, her hands hidden in her water-sleeves, head tilted to one side, a picture of demureness. Marketing exoticism in this way is what distinguishes globalisation from my understanding of interculturality.

As I have previously identified my usage of the word; 'performance' emphasises the doing, which is inevitably informed by our interdisciplinarity. Performers have called themselves a variety of names such as actors, players, performance artists and they have named what they do as performing, acting and playing. In this discourse, my usage of the term 'performance' includes whatever difference there might be between these terms, in the sense that the *emphasis* is on what the performers *do* regardless of what they call it. I say 'emphasis' because the role of the audience or the onlooker cannot be isolated from the performance—performers do not exist in a vacuum, indeed performers of culture do not exist in a vacuum either. In the section pertaining to theatre traditions of Japan and India, Zeami's and Bharata's teachings on performance have been explored in their original context. Unlike those (Mnouchkine, Pavis, Marranca, Shevtsova et al) who advocate the borrowing of general ideas of forms or aspects of forms from those traditions in the name of interculturalism, the focus here will be on the main tenets, and the constituent elements of performance as rigorously structured and vigorously taught by Zeami and Bharata. The teachings of both the masters lead to one, most important, tenet that defines the nature

of existence as well as functioning as a principle for performance: we are *defined* by our relationships to other people/things and since these relationships between 'self' and 'other' are in a constant state of flux, both in the performance space and in life, it can then be inferred that we are defined by a variety of external factors and that the 'self' is never one thing alone—it is always a combination of the external, other, different, distant with the internal, self, similar and proximate. In this way, *culture* and *performance* operate in the same way. In fact, it can be argued that there is no difference between how one might define *culture* and *performance*. For example, Pavis' simple definition of culture, "human culture is a system of significations which allows a society or a group to understand itself in its relationships with the world" (1996: 2) could well have been a definition of performance. Notions of culture and performance function in the same way; they guide the individual in being part of a whole without eradicating individual creativity. If this is what we learn from Zeami and Bharata, this is a worthwhile rationale for studying their vocabulary and grammar as well as exploring their context (not merely because they are from Japan and India). In this light, Schechner's insistence on an intercultural exploration of performance no longer seems as radical as it might have been in the 70s and the 80s. "In performance studies, questions of embodiment, action, behaviour, and agency are dealt with interculturally." (Schechner, 2002: 2) Here the constantly changing relationship between the 'self' and the 'other' will be explored in light of the chapters pertaining to Bharata and Zeami's teachings and will be further supported with some of Schechner's ideas of interculturality.

The *Natyashastra* states that, 'without rasa there is no performance' and Zeami states that, 'hana is the essence of nō'. As demonstrated in the related chapter, rasa is deemed to be the most important element of three. (Abhinaya, Bhava and Rasa) There is a specific threefold structure where all three elements are intricately interrelated but rasa is what makes a

performance. We know rasa to be one of eight sentiments, and we know that it is translated as 'relish', 'flavour'. If rasa is the flavour of the performance, and assuming that the flavour of something comes into existence for someone when it is experienced by that person, does it then follow that the *Natyashastra* deems the receivers' experience more important? Since it is possible that the performer could also be included in the 'receiver' group—depending on the school of thought one belongs to—rasa then might be the connective space where relishing the flavour happens.[125] On the other hand, Zeami's flower metaphor is embodied by the actor to the degree that, it is possible to explain it as the, "beauty seen" as Komparu does, in relation to yūgen, which is "beauty felt". The flower metaphor is likened to the journey of an actor—it is clear that Zeami's focus is on the actor's experience. Zeami does not have a threefold structure as Bharata but it is possible to consider his three main teachings together. (Monomane, Hana, Yūgen)[126] When comparing and contrasting the aesthetics of Bharata and Zeami, it is of utmost importance to remember that one was a top-secret communication from one master actor to his select group of actors or apprentices[127] and the other was a treatise contemplated by a sage (Bharata Muni meaning Sage Bharata) for his public. Whilst Zeami's perspective is strictly one of a performer's with practical technicalities in mind, Bharata is more concerned with developing an understanding of theatre with philosophical and spiritual advancement of the people in mind—after all, according to the first chapter of the *Natyashastra* that was exactly the task he was given by the gods. In my view, what is significant is the similarity of the two teachings despite the fact that they stem from different perspectives and that they were meant

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[125] As mentioned in the chapter pertaining to rasa, Chattophadyay explores the differing interpretations of the *Natyashastra* by Indian theorists, specifically the opposing schools of thought on whether the actor experiences rasa at all.

[126] "A mediation of these two concepts [monomane and yūgen], under the presiding aspirational imagery of the flower, occupies much of the labor of the treatises, one that is rendered fraught by the elusiveness of taste in the dominant patrons." (Ley, 2000: 198)

[127] We also know that initially, Zeami's reasons for writing the treatises were an attempt to remember his father's teachings prior to developing his own.

for completely different types of people (and I am not referring to their nationality here). The practical and technical development of an actor cannot happen without a life-long process of philosophical and spiritual reflection and the necessity for such reflection is demonstrated both implicitly and explicitly in Zeami's teachings. In other words, the sacred and the secular meet in both set of practises. Academics, historians and practitioners of theatre have to be careful about focusing on one at the expense of the other; because it is evident from Zeami's and Bharata's teachings that developing one's metaphysical stamina is as important as enhancing one's physical stamina in order to possess and maintain hana, and create rasa. Understanding, or at least recognising, the similarities in these seemingly different aesthetics is emphasising the subtle relationship between *similarity* and *difference*, which, in my view, is a worthwhile rationale for studying these theatre traditions and trying to understand their vocabulary and grammar. Here I follow Turner, whose advice is that, "we will get to know one another better by entering one another's performances and learning their grammars and vocabulary" (Turner in Schechner and Appel, 1990:1) as opposed to following Mnouchkine, who resists learning grammars and vocabularies that are not her own. (Mnouchkine in Pavis, 1996: 95)[128]

Prior to further considerations of Zeami's and Bharata's wisdom and how they relate to each other, it will be useful to refer to Schechner's *rasaesthetics*. Schechner also emphasises the taste and/or flavour meaning of rasa. His attempt in locating theatricality in the performer's body leads him to the flow of motion from "the mouth-to-belly-to-bowel" (2001: 27). He calls his "theory of flavour", *Rasaesthetics*, which is the title for his 2001 article.

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[128] As previously stated in chapter two, in the section pertaining to Mnouchkine.

> Rasa is flavor, taste, the sensation one gets when food is perceived, brought within reach, touched, taken into mouth, chewed, mixed, savored and swallowed. [...] The whole snout is engaged. In the snout all the senses are well-represented. [...] Rasa is sensuous, proximate, experiential. Rasa is aromatic. Rasa fills space, joining the outside to the inside. Food is actively taken into the body, becomes part of the body, works from the inside. What was outside is transformed into what is inside. (Schechner, 2001: 29)

Schechner's theory of flavour advocates the importance of the role of the partaker but even more importantly, the synaesthetic, sensory experience of the partaker is emphasised. He makes a distinction between the proximity of a "rasic" aesthetics as opposed to the distance required by one preferred by Aristotle.[129] (2001: 27-28) This close experience involving all the five senses that transforms what is on the outside to a flavour that works from within is his theory of flavour. Schechner believes that the performer is also a partaker, which is one of the main reasons why the *mudras* (the hand gestures) are very important in Indian performance traditions. Just like the food is taken into the mouth by hand, the performer's first point of focus is his/her hands. He further supports this by reminding his reader the dictum all performers of traditional theatre in India know very well: *wherever the hands go, the eyes follow, where the eyes go, the mind follows, where mind goes, the emotions follow; and when the emotions are expressed, there will be rasa.* Schechner writes that, "such a logically linked performance of emotions points to the self". (2001: 46)

Emulating the food analogies given in the *Natyashastra* Schechner offers the example of a juicy plum to help explain the nature of and the relationship between abhinaya, bhava and rasa. He declares: "the

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[129] Schechner argues that Aristotle's construct of drama depended very much on sight, seeing and viewing and that rasaesthetics actively involves all five senses. Interesting to note that while Schechner values proximity, others like Tatlow (as previously mentioned) and Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* value distance with regard to experiencing the 'other'.

sweetness "in" a ripe plum is its bhava, the experience of "tasting the sweet" is rasa. The means of getting the taste across—preparing it, presenting it—is abhinaya." (2001: 31) Let's look at this in a table.

Bhava (emotion, mood)	The sweetness in a ripe plum
Rasa (flavour, essence)	The experience of tasting the sweet
Abhinaya (acting, histrionics)	The means of getting the taste across: preparing, cooking etc.)

This very useful example demonstrates the interrelationships at work amongst the givens in a performance. Schechner then goes on to explain what happens to the digested plum and refers to neurobiological studies (1990s) that define the Enteric Nervous System as *The Second Brain*. He concludes this detailed study with the following invitation. "I am inviting an investigation into theatricality as orality, digestion, and excretion rather than, or in addition to, theatricality as something only or mostly for the eyes and ears." (2001: 47) He is interpreting rasaesthetics as an experience that includes all the senses and puts the physical body into the equation because information passes through the nervous systems (Enteric and Peripheral). As if to complete the circle, he also includes the process of excretion into the experience. "A good meal with good company is a pleasure, so is foreplay and lovemaking; so is a good shit." (2001: 27) I welcome his way of integrating reception study into performance by way of neurobiology.[130] However, what interests me is

[130] After all this is a perfect demonstration of exactly how and why interdisciplinarity is inevitable if one is to learn about performance and culture. Schechner, being one of the foremost practitioner/academics to advocate for interdisciplinarity, is the appropriate candidate to contribute as much as he has to the development of Performance Studies as a discipline today.

what stays with or within the body and how that might affect the body, or the 'self' rather than what gets discarded as waste.

The plum example is also very useful in unpicking the complexities involved with taste and tasting. In the last six years I have been conducting an informal (and unscientific) experiment with my students specifically with Schechner's plum in mind. I offer a piece of chocolate or fruit to each student; I ask them to observe their own experience of tasting it as they are going through it. I ask them to think about where they think taste is located. Their response is always varied and almost always heated discussions arise out of disagreements concerning the location of taste. Some argue that the taste, the flavour is in the thing they are eating, others argue that taste is located in the nose because smell is the first sensory trigger to their experience and others argue that even before eating the chocolate they anticipate the taste based on their previous chocolate tasting experiences. And the list goes on, because it is very rare that the majority of the group has a similar response.[131] It is true that hard sciences can answer some of these questions regarding the difference in response to taste—for example we know that some people are 'super-tasters', their taste buds are not the same as everyone else's—whether a certain part of the brain is stimulated by the intake of a certain food, or even the image of a certain food, can be quantifiable through high-tech lab equipment. It is also true that philosophers and sociologists have engaged with the complexities of taste and tasting—Hume, Kant, Bourdieu are a few. Are my students thinking about knowledge and whether it is only attainable through sensory impressions (Hume)? Or are they thinking about their a priori judgements (Kant)? Or are they explicitly linking what

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[131] The discussion will often involve two further strands of thinking: a) if I were to offer them something they had never tasted or seen before, would they have a different experience? b) if I were to blindfold them and allowed them to pick up the food and put it in their mouth, would they have had a different experience?

they experience as taste to their social disposition (Bourdieu)? One, some, or all could be true.

When we taste a juicy plum or a piece of chocolate, what we do know is that we are tasting a juicy plum or a piece of chocolate; how we interpret this experience of internalising the external is, and what (conscious or unconscious) effect it may have on our 'self' is the issue of subjectivity that needs to be incorporated into Schechner's tasting of the sweetness in the plum. In other words, one's idea of sweetness may not be the same as or similar to someone else's idea of sweetness, by the same token, what one experiences and qualifies as sweet at one time may differ at another time, or under different circumstances. Furthermore, what one associates with the flavour in question might surpass or overshadow one's actual experiencing of the flavour—as in the case of Proust who made specific associations with his own past upon tasting the madeleines. In fact, there is more to one's interpretation of a flavour than the actual tasting of it and getting rid of the unwanted waste (however much we enjoy it) as Schechner suggests; or making (positive or negative) associations to one's past as Proust attests.[132] Attempting to discern where taste is located can be paralleled to where meaning is located. In order to make meaning, the internal must meet with the external.

Zeami's teachings on acting technique and the way an actor learns or embodies his craft is very similar to the notion of internalising the external discussed above. Absorbing knowledge on all possible levels is the main driving force for an actor. Nearman in his translation of *Kakyō (A Mirror of the Flower)* supported by his commentary, which amounts to a 'thick description', summarises that, "For Zeami the overall and continuing goal for the actor is 'to know acting'." (1982a: 335) However, he adds what

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[132] And according to one of the most infamous corporations in the world, Starbucks, "Geography is a flavour." They serve you Ethiopia in a cup, topped with steamed milk.

the verb 'to know' specifically meant to Zeami in order to prevent it from getting lost in translation.

> It denotes the acquiring of a knowledge and understanding of a subject through direct contact and experience, much as we come to know the taste of something by eating it. [...] A major factor in the acquisition of this direct 'knowledge of acting' is the maintenance of an openness to experience and an eagerness to learn, which Zeami associates with a beginner's attitude of mind. Hence, accumulated experiential knowledge is to serve as an aid to the actor for penetrating deeper into his art. But it is not to become something prized for its own sake, nor is it to function presumptively and blind him from seeing the uniqueness of each moment. (Nearman, (1982a: 335-336)

Throughout his writing Zeami refers to a beginner's attitude of mind in terms of maintaining the freshness of the flower, the novelty of the performance and thus creating yūgen. He reminds his actors (time and time again) to never abandon their initial enthusiasm towards achieving their first flower and to keep up this thirst for learning and knowledge throughout their lives. This kind of knowledge that happens through the process of internalisation of a direct contact and experience, which is likened to "know[ing] the taste of something by eating it" is creating an internal moon so that the moonlight can be externalised, or possessing hana so that yūgen is experienced. As in the beginner's attitude of mind, the actor is internally and externally engaged with what he tastes to such a degree that his very process of acquiring knowledge in this way becomes the flower of the performance itself. Zeami's warning as stated above by Nearman that this 'experiential knowledge' should not 'blind the performer from the uniqueness of each moment' is very important so that the performer does not attempt to recreate a moment, and worse, repeat himself. This warning is also important because we may forget to relish the madeleines in the present moment because of the overwhelming presence of the past. The process of experientiality of knowledge is performance as taught by Zeami and Bharata.

Let us remind ourselves of the main terminology of the two teachers and assess how they might correspond to one another.

Zeami's terms	Bharata's terms
Monomane (imitation, histrionics) Skills learned in the training: voice, movement, dance etc.	***Abhinaya*** (histrionics, acting) (Abhi→toward ni→to lead) that which leads and carries forward.
Hana (flower) A quality that the actor creates with use of his performance skills; beauty seen; substance	***Bhava*** (mood, emotional state) Derivative of *bhavayanti* meaning, 'pervade'. A quality that the actor creates with use of his performance skills
Yūgen dark, mysterious beauty; grace; beauty felt; function	***Rasa*** (sentiment, flavour, taste, relish) An experiential response by the audience

Even though hana and rasa are identified as the central dynamics of performance by Zeami and Bharata respectively; I am purposefully drawing the parallels between hana and bhava, as in the middle line, and yūgen and rasa in the third line. The reason for this is the difference in the intentions of the teachers—Zeami was specifically training his school of actors in the art of nō and Bharata was set to create an all inclusive art form that would restore civility and decorum to humanity. Furthermore, the issues around integrating subjectivity into a system of performance practice that are embedded in the processes of yūgen and rasa render them parallel to one another. The comparison of monomane and abhinaya as the tools that are learned as part of the acting training is relatively straightforward. Although it must be noted that the two columns above are not being equated to one another, the purpose is to discern the significant

performance dynamics at work in seemingly very different traditions. At this juncture, it will be useful to reintroduce Schechner's plum into this comparison.

Zeami's terms	Bharata's terms	Schechner's plum
Monomane (imitation, histrionics) Skills learned in the training: voice, movement, dance etc.	***Abhinaya*** (histrionics, acting) (Abhi→toward ni→to lead) that which leads and carries forward.	The means of getting the taste across: preparing, cooking etc.)
Hana (flower) A quality that the actor creates with use of his performance skills; beauty seen; substance	***Bhava*** (mood, emotional state) Derivative of *bhavayanti* meaning, 'pervade'. A quality that the actor creates with use of his performance skills	The sweetness 'in' a ripe plum
Yūgen dark, mysterious beauty; grace; beauty felt; function	***Rasa*** (sentiment, flavour, taste, relish) An experiential response by the audience	The experience of tasting the sweet

It is possible to simplify the table above in the following manner.

Zeami	Bharata	Schechner
Hana The quality or the mood that the actor creates in performance	Bhava The quality or the mood that the actor creates in performance	The sweetness 'in' a ripe plum
Yūgen Partaker's experience of that mood	Rasa Partaker's experience of that mood	The experience of tasting the sweet
Monomane Performance skills, acting tools	Abhinaya Performance skills, acting tools	The means of getting the taste across: preparing, cooking etc.)

Having established the nuances between these Japanese and Sanskrit terms it is possible to see the 'similarities' in dynamics of performance, usually referred to as 'aesthetic theories' in academic parlance. By placing Schechner's "the experience of tasting the sweet" in the same line as yūgen and rasa, I am essentially integrating the issues around subjectivity as mentioned above—as in the cases of Proust, Hume, Kant, Bourdieu, as well as the scholars and practitioners who disagree whether the performer's experience is similar to the partaker's experience in a performance situation. What I would like to argue is that what we bring to the experience of tasting the sweet (for example) and how we digest the experience in a *metaesthetical* sense is the true meaning of an intercultural experience whether the context is performance or culture.

What we bring to an experience is the contribution of 'the self' that is sometimes overtly sometimes covertly shaped or influenced by 'the other'. Digesting, assimilating, absorbing or processing the experience in a metaesthetical way not only incorporates the distant other into the proximate experience of the self but it also utilises sensory perception as a tool rather than an objective. If anaesthetic is the qualifier of an experience 'without sensation' and aesthetics means 'sensory perception' then metaesthetics is a more comprehensive overview that acknowledges what is beyond the aesthetic experience by accepting the five senses as tools for direct learning. In this way, a metaesthetic approach accentuates the interconnectedness between difference and similarity as well as distance and proximity; the main rationale behind this is that we are defined by our relativity and relationships to others. Geneticist and writer, Ridley puts this in simple terms:

> Similarity is the shadow of difference. Two things are similar by virtue of their difference from one another; or different by virtue of one's similarity to a third. So it is with individuals. A short man is different from a tall man, but two men seem similar if contrasted

> with a woman. So it is with species. A man and a woman may be very different, but by comparison with a chimpanzee, it is their similarities that strike the eye—the hairless skin, the upright stance, the prominent nose. A chimpanzee, in turn, is similar to a humanbeing when contrasted with a dog: the face, the hands, the 32 teeth, and so on. And a dog is like a person to the extent that they are both unlike fish. Difference is a shadow of similarity. (2003: 7)

A perspective that acknowledges the relationships between similarity and difference as well as proximity and distance is better equipped to untangle the principles of intercultural exchange than a perspective that privileges one of the parties involved or one that resorts to binary oppositions. Moreover, if the 'self' is already shaped or influenced by the 'other' and vice versa, then the interculturality of the 'person' is inevitable—let alone the interculturality of the 'event'. In other words, a metaesthetical approach to experience provides a space, a site for the familiar, proximate self to merge with the different, distant other. This site where the external merges with the internal is the body or the bodies involved in an exchange. This site is what we call 'self'. If we acknowledge the manifold of influences that determine the self, then an exploration of 'self' must be interdisciplinary. Interdisciplinarity pulls together some of the fundamental research questions pertaining to *being*. If human exchange and understanding are facilitated by presence, without being hindered by a fixed notion of identity, then the metaesthetic experience is the most significant component of presence. What is meant by *presence* is 'being there'; being present at the site and moment of exchange. Presence is therefore acknowledged as a capacity for change, transformation and transcendence and yet earthed by a sense of culture and tradition.

If the sensory perception constitutes the 'aesthetic' part of the experience then all conscious, subconscious and unconscious connections we may make constitute the 'meta' component. Through the use of the five senses we are able to process and absorb information and

feed our consciousness, subconsciousness and unconsciousness—Stella Adler calls this the actor's imagination.[133] Continuing with the example of the sweet plum, what the system does with the sweetness in the plum is the metaesthetical experience. Because some aspect of the experienced sweetness stays with the person regardless of the person's level of awareness of this, the idea of the sweetness or what it may evoke in the person is now part of the body/self, the consciousness, the unconsciousness, memory, imagination, the meta component. The aesthetic experience of seeing, smelling, tasting et cetera of the sweetness in the plum, opens pathways to all aspects of the 'self' that are beyond the immediate reach of sensory perception and the 'self' is able to make connections with the 'other' (that-which-is-not-self); thus the aesthetic experience becomes part of a greater whole, a metaesthetic experience.

A metaesthetic experientiality is what defines the nature of being in this world because this aesthetic integrates the fact that we are defined by our relationships to other things/people in our everyday experience. This changing relationship with those who are other than our 'self' is decidedly intercultural. This intercultural experience incorporates Schechner's view that the concept of a 'pure' culture not influenced by others is a highly problematic premise upon which no sound argument could be based given the current globalised and at the same time fragmented state of the world. This resistance towards the purity of a culture is not an avoidance of the problems raised through the socio-political incongruity which has pervaded

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[133] Zeami and Bharata were not the only two who brought philosophical inquiry and physical stamina together to create the main principles for the training of an actor. I was trained at the Stella Adler Conservatory of Acting. In a nutshell, Adler's technique is based on Stanislavski's later revisions to his system—where he admits he was wrong about the emotional and psychological emphasis and that physical actions supported by clear intent and justification should be the driving force for an actor. Imagination is what allows an actor to choose stronger justifications for his/her physical actions as opposed to weak ones. Adler's main teaching to her students was: *In your choice lies your talent.* Needless to say, the richer the imagination the stronger the choices will be!

the modern world. On the contrary, by putting the 'human' experience under focus, this interculturality can been seen as a step forward in an attempt to balance some of the injustices that stem from a desire to identify people solely by their passports, or place of birth, or skin colour, or social class etc. Accepting and actively acknowledging the many aspects of one's identity is also accepting the view that one's relationship with one's environment is in a constant state of flux and is therefore a process of reconfiguration. Acknowledging and working with such a reconfiguration is starting from a position of not-knowing. If our everyday experience can be defined as an ongoing process of reconfiguration and flux then a culture can be defined as anything but pure—in the sense that it cannot be fixed or hermetically sealed. In this context, what may seem distant or different does not have to stay that way and consequently, the opposite must also be true. This is demonstrated by our ability to gain new perspectives on what we thought was familiar through the experiencing of the unfamiliar.[134] The biggest surprise that one may experience in this context may be one's unfamiliarity with oneself, as Tatlow also points out, "the past is really another culture, its remoteness disguised by language that can occasionally appear as familiar as we seem to ourselves, whom we understand so imperfectly".[135] (2001: 5) Through this relationship between the familiar and the unfamiliar one develops one's understanding of self as well as an understanding of the other. From the Bengal boatman's song, as cited by Mookerjee in *Ritual Art of India*, that says, "in search of thee I found myself" (1998: 21), to Shakespeare, the relationship between the self and the other, the different and the same, the familiar and

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[134] A simple example of this is when we are faced with having to rethink our familiar way of doing something after encountering someone else's unfamiliar way of doing the same thing; as is often experienced by people who have lived in or travelled to other towns, counties and countries. Sometimes one does not even have to travel anywhere, or meet anyone who has travelled outside their town in order to reconsider what they had identified as 'familiar'; within families (i.e. a small group of people who are culturally and genetically as close to one another as possible) there are enough dynamic forces at work that require the individual members to rethink their notion of what is familiar.

[135] In addition to Tatlow's view, this 'past' that is identified as another culture is at once the 'past self' and the 'past other'.

the unfamiliar, the distant and the proximate have been explored by many traditions. For example, Hamlet is in awe of the player who has this ability to synthesise in his actions what is external and internal, distant and proximate, and self and other. Hamlet asks:

> Is it not monstrous that this player here,
> But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
> Could force his soul so to his own conceit
> That from her working all the visage waned,
> Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
> A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
> With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing.
> For Hecuba!
> What's Hecuba to him, or he to her,
> That he should weep for her?
> (*Hamlet* Act II, Scene 2, 548- 557)[136]

What Hecuba is to him is exactly what person X is to person Y, but the tragedy is that X does not always weep for Y in everyday life because of international policies that are economically indexed or 'cultural differences' that are 'offered' to us through mass-media as reasons for violence against one another. There is a similar moment in the *Mahabharata*, where Ghandari, the mother of the Kauravas is wrestling with her own conscience at the thought that her sons would have to face their cousins, the Pandavas in battle and that her and her husband, the blind King would favour their own children and not their nephews. In addition to the tragedy of *the great war* (*Mahabharata*) that is awaiting them, she reveals it to be another layer of tragedy that when one stops being concerned about the lives and wellbeing of other people's children that means war is near. In other words, war is near if X does not weep for Y. The main reason for X to weep for Y is that they are both human. But often X does not want to

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[136] Peter Brook in his 2004 *Hamlet*, rather revealingly, has his player king (Yoshi Oida) speak the verse about Hecuba in Greek. Oida's own heavy Japanese accent comes as a bonus in this context. Brook's choices in this scene reiterate the view that people are interconnected to one another beyond 'words'. What connects the actor to Hecuba is not solely seeded in the text.

weep for Y (or would want to get rid of Y altogether) because X and Y are from different countries, or races, or political or religious convictions or that they are the victims of economically driven power strategies that govern our world. The relationship between X and Y is the same as the relationship between self and other; self and other encounter each other metaesthetically. Borrowing Ridley's phraseology, self is the shadow of the other just like the other is the shadow of the self.

The relationship between the self and other is very significant in Hindu thought as previously expressed in chapter four, the individual strives to get out of the birth-life-death-rebirth cycle (samsara) by following the three paths to liberation and if successful, reaches the self (atman). As we know atman is not limited to the physical and sensory experiences of an individual; in fact the notion of self in Hindu thought suggests direct correspondences with the universe and Brahman because they (self and Brahman) are of the same substance. However, one discovers Brahman in oneself only after liberating oneself from samsara and following the three paths (knowledge, devotion and action). Natya as created by Bharata is a model to understanding and applying these three paths. Amongst other things, natya is a ritual art both for the practitioners and the partakers. Here Mookerjee writes about ritual art in India:

> Ritual art is a means or way towards spiritual identity, towards a state in which we can realize our oneness with the universe. This realization is not something that descends from above; rather, it is an illumination to be discovered within. The unity underlying the diversity of the world is to be discovered in our relationship with all life, manifest and non-manifest. Integration of the self is achieved in ritual worship which opens up contact with each and every atom of our being. (1998: 9)

Locating the power 'within' and developing it throughout one's life in order to make sense of and therefore make connections to the world 'without' is a central theme in Hindu thought. However, as demonstrated in the

chapter pertaining to Zeami's teachings on the art nō, hana is taught very much as a power that lies within the actor and that this power comes to life through its dynamic relationship with yūgen. Some of Zeami's references to this are somewhat implicit; for example, creating the moon and moonlight and considering the notions of Substance and Function, in other words, all his writings on the relationship between yūgen and hana. At other times his references are little more explicit, for example in *Shikadō (True Path to the Flower)* he writes, "In terms of the nō, art that remains External is to be despised." (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 66) In *Kakyō (Mirror Held to the Flower)* he explains what it means to have "a real understanding of skill" by suggesting that the two main lessons the actors study and develop all their lives—dance and gesture—are external skills and that:

> The essentials of our art lie in the spirit. They represent a true enlightenment established through art. Thus, if an actor knows how to create interest and can perform from an understanding of this spirit, he will gain a reputation as a fine actor even if he has not mastered every aspect of his craft. [...] mastery seems to depend on the actor's own state of self-understanding and the sense of style with which he has been blessed. Real discernment of the nature of the differences between external skill and interior understanding forms the basis for true mastery. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 90)

In Nearman's translation the two elements that the actor must master and discern are discussed as *kokoro* ('mind', 'intent', or 'spirit') and *shōi* ('a level of aptness'). (1982b: 473) *Kokoro* seems to be a complex notion which is defined by its various aspects. Nearman, in his notes, refers to *kokoro as mind, kokoro as intent, kokoro as spirit, kokoro as feeling;* and offers the following explanation.

> First of all, *kokoro* encompasses several meanings: 'heart, mind, spirit, intent, thought, feeling'. While originally designating the heart as a physical organ, over time the word took on extended

> meanings, much as 'heart' has in English. However, unlike the Western tradition that has made the heart the seat of emotions and feelings in contrast to the head as the seat of will and thought, the Sino-Japanese tradition has combined feeling, thought, and will, and metaphorically situated them all in the heart as the seat of the conscious mind. (1982b: 473-474)

This is a significant differentiation from Western structures of thinking that advocate the almost binary oppositions of rational/logical processing that is driven and controlled by the 'mind' versus the emotional processing that involves feelings driven and controlled by the 'heart'. The conundrum of 'Should I follow my heart or my mind?' is a very common western problem that assumes the complete isolation of thoughts from feelings. As Nearman states such a distinction is not present in Sino-Japanese thought. He explains this particular view thus:

> The mind process is essentially the same whether it be thoughts or feelings that arise into consciousness. As thoughts and feelings are treated as responsive or reflexive in nature, they are separate from sensory or perceptual awareness which drives from the cognitive faculties (the five sense organs). As a result, thinking (both rational thought and mind images) and feeling (emotional responses) are not viewed as discrete functions but rather as two related types of mind-created responses to sensory awareness or to some previous content (thought, image, or feeling) in the consciousness. (1982b: 474)

In this context not only do we understand the importance of Zeami's emphasis on an actor's understanding of *kokoro* being the essential part for the mastery of the art of nō but we also encounter Zeami's metaesthetics as described by Nearman. In the same section of *Kakyō*, Zeami continues by stating that there is one more level to reach that is even higher in terms of understanding skill.

> This level will be termed one of a pure Feeling that Transcends Cognition. The response to such a performance is such that there is no occasion for reflection, no time for a spectator to realize how well the performance is contrived. Such a state might be referred to as

> "purity unmixed."[...] when true feeling is involved, there is no room in the concept of reflection as a function of the mind. (Rimer and Yamazaki, 1984: 91)

This 'feeling' as we know is processed and sourced not just by the heart but also the 'mind' as explained earlier. Zeami is emphasising the meta component of a metaesthetic experience when he identifies 'pure feeling' as that which 'transcends cognition'. Nearman translates this pure feeling as "unadulterated [by ego-centered thoughts]" and the last sentence of the quotation above is translated as, "true 'feeling' is the result of a moment 'without heart' [i.e., without conscious awareness of one's thoughts and feelings]."[137] (182b: 475) Zeami's rather technical instructions, revealed in these secret treatises to his most capable student, sound strikingly similar to the rather lyrical passage on arts in general and performing arts in particular in *The Mirror of Gesture* :

> The arts are not for our instruction, but for our **delight**, and this delight is something more than pleasure, it is the godlike ecstasy of **liberation from the restless activity of the mind and the senses**, which are the veils of all reality, transparent only when we are at peace with ourselves. [...] **The secret of all art is self-forgetfulness.** (Coomaraswamy, 1987: 9) (My emphasis.)

Keeping in mind that one of the definitions of rasa is 'delight', what the passage above suggests is that experiencing (or creating) art transcends the partaker and allows one to shed one's time and space-bound self-consciousness and thus allowing one to go beyond one's 'familiar' self. This delight, experienced through reaching beyond one's time and space-bound, conventional 'self', is a metaesthetical process that merges the self with the other, or indeed with other aspects of the self to such a degree that a 'familiar' notion of the 'self' is forgotten—be it momentarily.

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[137] This is not unlike Csikszentmihalyi's notion of *flow*. Carlson describes *flow* as, "the sensation felt in creative, playful, or religious experience when the normal process of intellectual reflection is suspended in the pleasure of the present moment." (2004: 210)

I am not suggesting that one has to be trained in Zeami's technique or experience a sacred process as indicated in Vedic texts pertaining to the art of performance in order to experience life metaesthetically. My argument is that from tasting a juicy plum, to partaking in a performance of nō, to negotiating everyday life with those we encounter, to making critical choices; the 'self' is metaesthetically involved with the 'other'. 'Self' is implied by the 'other' and the 'other' is implied by the 'self'; 'self' and 'other' are brought together metaesthetically. In other words, the principles of metaesthetic experience are the same whether the context is performance or culture—if there is a difference between these contexts at all. Applying Zeami's teachings on hana and yūgen, it is possible to argue that self is suggested by the other and the other is suggested by the self. Sometimes this liaison between the self and the other manifests itself as a liaison between difference and similarity, distance and proximity or external and internal and so on. The shifting relationships between these antithetical notions make forward motion possible; they do not create a clash that ends in collapse. Quite the contrary, conflict, clash, friction, resistance, and other concepts like these help us to move forward. The dialectical dynamics of everyday relationships—be it in the context of performance, or politics, or any other social context—start from difference and proceed to become a process of negotiating difference, which results in relationships. An anthropologist who shares this view is Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, in her book, *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*, asserts that a wheel turning in the air does not move forward, but when it touches the ground and a friction occurs, the wheel moves forward. Her argument is that friction produces 'movement', 'action' and 'effect'.

> A study of global connections shows the grip of encounter: friction. A wheel turns because of its encounter with the surface of the road; spinning in the air it goes nowhere. Rubbing two sticks together

produces heat and light; one stick alone is just a stick. As a metaphorical image, friction reminds us that heterogeneous and unequal encounters can lead to new arrangements of culture and power. (2005: 5)

Speaking of friction is a reminder of the importance of interaction in defining movement, cultural form and agency. Friction is not just about slowing things down. Friction is required to keep global power in motion. (2005: 6)

She affirms that, "both global knowledge and knowledge that travels around the globe are improved by dialogue across difference." (2005: 81) This 'difference', she identifies as a plurality of universals that shape people's diverse perspectives. Tsing further explains that friction is necessary if dialogue and exchange of knowledge are to continue. "The play among multiple, contested universals can be described as one kind of friction. Knowledge of the globe, and globally travelling knowledge, depend on this friction." (2005: 87)

However, friction is not deemed to be a positive asset as far as international politics is concerned, at least that is what governments and 'multinational corporations' would have us believe. Following (the late) Baudrillard's notion of hyperreality which emphasises the loss of liberty and freedom in economically driven, ultra-industrialised, western, states; 'friction' is presented to the world as a problem. We are told through the mediatised news that a clash of cultures was the reason for this murder and a religious conflict was responsible for that atrocity. Difference is presented as something to be avoided if at all possible. 'Alien' as a word only has negative connotations. Doubtlessly, clash and friction have their negative aspects as well but all of that is part of life and living for all living beings; moreover, societal, cultural and natural structures are there to try to prevent it from becoming completely destructive. Instead of assuming difference and friction to be troublesome, if we were accept that people are different and that a difference in worldview might enhance

relationships, we might then be able to see the reality from the hype. When some corporations and governments employ the 'clash of cultures' card and go on to make a financial profit from spreading their own culture to the rest of the world in the name of bringing peace; this can be seen as hypocritical. (The role that the arms industry plays in the current wars could be given as an example here.) Some of these states and corporations would have us believe that if we want peace in the world, we must all be like one another (preferably all westernised and economically driven). This highlights the conundrum of attitudes towards change; especially with regard to 'culture'. How do cultures change and how does one's understanding of culture change? Fay is a philosopher who favours developing his understanding and definition of culture according to the changes that take place. He describes culture in terms of differences.

> Cultures are neither coherent nor homogenous nor univocal nor peaceful. They are inherently polyglot, conflictual, changeable and open. Cultures involve constant processes of reinscription and of transformation in which their diverse and often opposing repertoires are re-affirmed, transmuted, exported, challenged, resisted and re-defined. (1996: 55)

In other words, cultures are by definition, intercultural. Therefore it is superfluous to suggest (as those who would have us live in their hyperreality suggest) that problems are caused because of a clash of cultures, of difference of worldview. On the contrary, differences of worldview, the 'lived-experiences' (in Dilthey's sense) of different people, conflict, changeability, openness and friction are the defining elements of cultures. Only a normative approach that promotes a westernised standardisation of cultures would prefer a culture to remain monolingual, homogenous and fixed; unless the 'norms' are reconsidered in the context of heterogeneity and interculturality of the people who form cultures.

Conflict is one of the main required elements of theatre as well. Everyone who teaches (and learns) drama in the west would be familiar with the concept that *agon* is a required element in drama. The two opposing sides (antagonist and protagonist) have to work out their differences and reach a climax and have some sort of resolution; this is the neat recipe for drama as we are taught in the west (in majority of cases). In all narrative, without conflict there is no play, no moving forward. In terms of performance, characters have to want things from each other that they are not willing to give, that is what creates the objectives of scenes and acts and eventually the play (regardless of the fact that it maybe text-based or not). Traditional Japanese and Indian theatres do not have such genre divisions as tragedies or comedies or melodramas, however, what is significant is that the stories, plots, plays, epics all depend on conflict and friction; *Mahabharata* being an especially momentous example. There are many layers of conflict that can be present in performance. In addition to the conflict of the war itself in the *Mahabharata*, arguably, the more significant conflict is the philosophical one. Attaining the ultimate weapon, possessing the power of potential mass destruction in hand and contemplating the consequences; that is a philosophical conflict with no easy resolution.

As established so far, both *culture* and *performance* are defined in remarkably similar ways and they are both accented by the common elements of conflict and difference, moreover they are both driven by the dynamic forces of interdisciplinarity and interculturality. In accordance with the discourse on 'self' discussed above, when we perform ourselves, both on and off stage, we are also performing our culture. Performativity of different aspects of the 'self' is a well established issue as attested by Adler, Beauvoir, Butler, Van Gennep, Goffman, Schechner and Turner to name just a few. It can also be argued that due to the changes in our relationship to the world, facilitated by many aspects of globalisation, what

used to be defined as cultural is now intercultural. It can then follow that, if we perform our culture and that culture is intercultural, then performance must be intercultural. If all performance is intercultural, as indeed all people are intercultural, then it is unnecessary to make a distinction between performance and 'intercultural performance as described by Shevtsova and others'. If performance is intercultural by definition then to suggest that intercultural theatre is a new, hybrid genre is a fallacy.

What I have identified as a more distinctive, a more inclusive, and a truer understanding of interculturality as an alternative to the more conventional interculturalism must be reaffirmed if we are not to live in Baudrillard's nightmares. This interculturalism is not meant to be yet another *–ism*, another category that further divides an already fragmented human condition. It strives to bring together the fragments through accepting difference as a positive given. In fact, this approach resists being and becoming an –ism all together; because it defies the conventional view that upholds interculturalism as a genre, or a movement, or a trend, or indeed a hybrid. If people who form cultures and perform cultures are intercultural, then it must follow that interculturality is an inherent part of culture. This notion of interculturality acknowledges and incorporates the messiness of everyday life and empowers those who have to negotiate everyday life, with the vigour of fluidity and flexibility. A fixed or set notion of culture has had more disadvantages than benefits. As ably demonstrated by Hae-kyung Um in *Diasporas and Interculturalism in Asian Performing Arts: Translating Traditions*, interculturalism often signifies a struggle in identity politics when people are solely identified by their countries or continents. As a Japanese artist ironically said to me at a conference, "I became Asian when I left Asia". Accepting interculturality as a given part of culture and performance would also help undo such antediluvian binaries as West versus East or Europe and America versus Africa and Asia which are seen as absolute markers of identity. It may be

possible to accept the changing realities of everyday relationships by containing the complexity of subjectivity into the wider picture of metaesthetic interculturality. The argument for the interculturality of culture and performance is in fact simple; the complexity arises from accepting the implications of such an argument. Emphasising the 'inter–' of interculturality, as opposed to the '–ism' of interculturalism, might act as a stepping stone towards recognising the possibilities of change in relationships and exchanges between people and peoples.

CONCLUSION

This thesis commenced with an exposition on common referents from the 'intercultural theatre' debate. This paved the way for an exploration of two principal sets of non-western performance aesthetics. Rather than be sidetracked by the wider issues of traditional Japanese and Indian forms of theatre (e.g. Nō, or Bharata Natyam), this specific consideration of principles of performance as voiced by Zeami and Bharata demonstrates the greater significance dedicated to the interplay between teacher and disciple, performer and 'other' and 'self and 'other'. Emphasising these specific teachings on the art of performing and guidance on developing the performer's sense of *being* in the world allows us to consider the way in which each teacher asks his performers to be aware of their changing relationships to their world—relationships between 'self' and 'other'. This is important because acknowledging the constantly shifting relationships between 'self' and 'other' is also acknowledging the inherent interculturality of culture as well as performance. In the wider context of globalisation, through considering various usages of *interculturalism* in disciplines outside the theatre, as well as in theatre, what we realise is that the conventional approach to interculturalism is more influenced by its suffix *–ism* than its prefix *inter–*. The difference between these two emphases is that interculturalism may be a genre; interculturality is a state of being. Finally, an alternative to this conventionalism is offered in light of Zeami's and Bharata's approaches to their art and their principles of performance. This alternative explores the interculturality of *being* by emphasising the human—what they do, their relationships to their world, as well as their relationships to one another—rather than describing *events* as intercultural. Essentially what is argued here is that what we bring to the experience of an exchange and how we digest that experience, in a metaesthetical sense, is the true meaning of an intercultural experience and that this metaesthetic is part of everyday

existence whether the context is performance or culture. Indeed, if being is a metaesthetic experience then there is no difference between the contexts of culture and performance.

Considering the work Schechner contributed to performance theory and Performance Studies as a discipline, alongside the names usually associated with interculturalism, it is possible to assert that if 'intercultural theatre' is accepted as a new genre then there are no minimum constituent elements to speak of, because of the lack of common approaches toward culture, performance and theatre. Indeed the primary commonality might be allowing the suffix *–ism* to overshadow the prefix *inter–*. Interculturalism as a broad cultural or even specific artistic movement is temporally associated with the age of globalisation. In contrast, interculturality, temporally-unbound, specifically characterises the fluidity of being. Peter Brook is one of the few directors to actively acknowledge the interculturality of people and therefore of cultures and performance in all aspects of his work, as his approach of *culture like yoghurt, culture as fermentation* attests. The negative connotations of the conventional kind of interculturalism are, presumably, one of the reasons why Brook does not associate himself with the term interculturalism. However, Brook's and his actors' interculturality (in my sense of the word) is evident in their process oriented practical work as well as their interviews and publications—and not just their *Mahabharata* project. The direct experience, which I associate with interculturality, is evidently also important for Brook. Carlson quotes Brook,

> You should not, he insisted, come "with your own set of notions about Hinduism, Christianity, comparative religion, mythology, the relative nature of different types of epic or non-epic storytelling", but should encounter something "never encountered anywhere else, which cannot be received on a theoretical basis, which can't be received other than as direct experience". (in Pavis, 1996: 88)

Mnouchkine's work, on the other hand, seems to be the perfect example of what I have described as conventional interculturalism. What Mnouchkine creates with Théâtre du Soleil is a new western genre that is sourced in the East in terms of elements of performance skills but mostly uses western narrative. The event, the production, becomes intercultural when her international cast depict a western story using eastern performance techniques or when they tackle a political problem that affects the world's minorities. Schechner, staying true to his own terminology, is betwixt and between in the sense that he seems to be embracing both the suffix –ism and the prefix inter–. He is a vociferous advocate for interculturality to play a greater part in performance and cultural analysis. When he states, "in performance studies, questions of embodiment, action, behaviour, and agency are dealt with interculturally", (Schechner, 2002: 2) it is important to remember that those questions of embodiment, action, behaviour and agency apply to both culture and performance and this is the reason why interculturality is closely associated with interdisciplinarity for Schechner. Pavis is pivotal in the unfolding of the interculturalism debate in theatre. Because of his ability to convey the various perspectives of the argument, empowered by his background in semiology, he is arguably the main facilitator of the debate. My impression from talking to colleagues from different institutions at international conferences is that people are often ready to criticise Pavis and not ready to give him the credit due for opening up different lines of inquiry or triggering further thinking.[138]

Reconsidering and acknowledging interculturality as part of everyday living could not be more important given the increasingly explicit interconnectedness of the world, economically, politically, socially and

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[138] Pavis has recently accepted a post at University of Kent and has embraced practice. He has written two plays and is planning to focus on practicing theatre. In addition, he has a lecture planned that is entitled, "Intercultural Theatre—Afterthoughts", according to an email posted to the SCUDD group list by Peter Boenisch. (March 2007)

culturally. Scientific research and discoveries that take place in one part of the world concerns everyone on this planet and by the same token the developments that happen in the arts are equally of everyone's concern. However, the commoditisation of the arts and mediatisation of culture have had some negative effects on theatre. Unfortunately, especially in the western world, the general misconception that categorises the arts in general and performing arts in particular, as entertainment or simple fun, has caused the demise of the importance given to studying and practicing theatre. The mediatisation of culture and the dominance of television in everyday life have created countless problems alongside the benefits they provide—the chief benefit being dissemination of information. Theatre now has to compete with television in every way, from losing theatre-goers, to losing students who now choose to study 'TV and Media Studies' instead of theatre-performance related courses, to the tragically diminishing government subsidisation. One way to tackle this is to reconsider the negative effects of mediatisation of culture in terms of performance and performance research. This is part of what Schechner achieves in his work. Schechner demonstrated great foresight in 1988 when he published his much debated paper that provoked academics to reconsider the function and status of theatre and performance in everyday life. He asserted:

> Performing arts curricula need to be broadened to include [...] how performance is used in politics, medicine, religion, popular entertainments and ordinary face-to-face interactions. The complex and various relationships among the players in the quadrilog—authors, performers, directors, and spectators—ought to be investigated using the methodological tools increasingly available from performance theorists, social scientists, and semioticians. Courses in performance studies need to be made available not only within performing arts departments but to the university community at large. Performative thinking must be seen as a means of cultural analysis. Performance studies courses should be taught outside performing arts departments as part of core curricula. [...] to expand our vision of what performance is, to study it not only as art but as a

> means of understanding historical, social, and cultural processes. (Schechner in Bial, 2004: 8-9)

Institutionalised television and other mass media has started to dictate how current events get depicted in accordance to media corporations' financial or political gain—Baudrillard's nightmares in other words—and this is not only true for the United States, as Baudrillard critiqued.

It is important for young people growing up today to be cognizant, even explicitly aware, of the performativity of race, gender, religion, and politics and so on, so that they can learn to discern the information they encounter through their own filters. If we accept and acknowledge the interculturality of all people, then we will not fall into the trap of believing that the problems of violence in the world are caused by a "clash of civilisations", a term coined by the Reagan administration.[130] I am not suggesting that if we all embrace our own and other people's interculturality a utopian, problem-free world will reveal itself. Acknowledging *difference* should not be interpreted as reconciling difference. Interculturality incorporates the unavoidable *differences*, clashes and frictions of the world. I am suggesting that an explicit awareness of one's changing relationships to the world might actually prompt one to comprehend the problems for what they really are, rather than accepting them to be clashes of cultures or civilisations. Starting from a position of not-knowing, rather than assuming fixed positions for the 'self' and the 'other', is the primary step towards understanding the metaesthetic associated with the interculturality of a person. Recognizing interculturality and therefore valuing the metaesthetic experientiality will

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[130] According to Adam Curtis the maker of the documentary, "The Trap: What Happened to our Dreams of Freedom?" (March 2007, BBC2) Samuel Huntington, who was in charge of the *Project: Democracy*, had coined the phrase *a clash of civilisations*. Incidentally, in this documentary, one time press officer for the White House (again Reagan administration) explained their programme, *Perception management*, which was the government's programme for controlling the people's perception of what the government was doing by controlling how and what various media depicted the goings on in the world.

allow the ocular-centric self to wean from the habit of believing upon seeing. In this way, interculturality can act as a practical alternative to cynicism so that ill-considered ideas such as 'multiculturalism' or 'tolerance of cultural diversity' or 'positive discrimination' are no longer employed. Compared to interculturality, multiculturalism seems nothing more than a cold label, which does not incorporate any exchange. Official advice for *tolerating* other people is never acceptable. How is it possible to trust any employer or government that advocates discrimination—regardless of the fact that they may claim it to be 'positive'? Employing such language cannot create meaningful exchanges between culturally diverse or intercultural peoples. This is where interdisciplinarity becomes essential. Through performative thinking, it is possible to see the interculturality of performance as well as the performativity of interculturality. Thus, those who live in a diverse world can learn to learn from performance, as well as from performance research and can learn to acknowledge each other's interculturality.

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