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Mary Luckhurst and E. Morin, eds.
Things Unspeakable:
Theatre and Human Rights after 1945
Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. 254 p. £60.
ISBN: 978-1-137-36229-2.

In this important book, editors Mary Luckhurst and Emilie Morin have collected an impressive range of international perspectives on human rights and theatre. Drawing on the significant work in trauma studies relating to literature's role in representing painful pasts and the repetition of historical traumata, the framing of the volume includes colonial legacies, specific events, and national conflicts.

The volume asserts the need to consider 'things unspeakable' in contexts aside from the holocaust. The chapters have an international focus as well as a concern with the latter half of the twentieth century. This offers the chance to deepen the conversation about how human rights discourses (so central to the constitution of post-war European and international law, as well as culture) are to be understood in light of the often-quoted sentiment of Adorno's that 'to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric'. As such, the collection of essays demonstrates the necessity of such wider consideration in terms of aesthetics, form and content of theatre and its practitioners.

Luckhurst and Morin ask readers to consider the ethics of historical events with the burden of representation and comprehension. Furthermore, they place primacy on the ways aesthetics, narrative, and witnessing play out an ethics of encounter, memory, and moral judgement. The contributions are concerned with theatre's formal qualities as offering particular value to the unspeakable and the traumatic.

The device that is common to many of the chapters of applying a theatrical analytic frame allows for an understanding of the (often hidden) processes of oppression, torture, and erasure of rights and the emergence of human rights discourses. As a whole, the volume achieves this (particularly in chapters by Emma Cox, Catherine M. Cole, and Ananda Breed), as well as asserting the value of theatre in representing atrocity (as in Cathy Caruth's and Carol Martin's chapters). The book's wide-ranging contributions move far beyond simplistic claims for theatre's transcendence of the unspeakable or its unique capacity to 'give voice' to underrepresented populations or to talk back to traumatic pasts. Rather, the tensions and problematics of form, intent, and effects of theatre are excavated in detail. This promotes an understanding of theatre as bruise – the visible wounding on the cultural body.

What the volume as a whole achieves is an insistence on theatre's roles in wider cultural (often global) contexts that are about testimony, the recognition of past injustices, mediation, advocacy, and potential catharsis. Contributors offer engaging accounts of examples from a range of places (and eras) in which performance speaks of and through human rights abuses at the level of institutions, states, and international collusion. However it falls to other volumes to expand upon theories of the unspeakable as this one offers examples rather than deepening a contribution to trauma theory. If there is a gap to be addressed (particularly in light of global events post 2012) it concerns the need for understanding the transnational issues related to human rights that are not contained within borders or nation states.

AYLWYN WALSH

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Roger Wooster,
Theatre in Education in Britain:
Origins, Development, and Influence
London: Bloomsbury, 2016. 290 p. £21.99.
ISBN 978-1-4725-9147-0.

Wooster provides us here with an unashamedly partial account of the history of Theatre in Education. Although the title refers specifically to Britain, examples are restricted mainly to England and Wales, but there are chapters that look specifically at practice beyond the UK. Theatre in Education (TIE), from its origins and in what Wooster calls its 'classic' period (1965 until the late 1980s), identified itself closely with the ideals of socialism. Wooster contextualizes his narrative within the politics of the period and relates it from within his own socialist perspective, quite typical of those of his generation who were convinced that theatre could provide young people with the critical, reflective tools to help them take control of their own lives.

The book is divided into three sections entitled 'Roots, Fruits, and Shoots', which correspond to the three categories of the book's subtitle, albeit with a metaphorical conceit that chimes readily with the values of progressive education so close to the heart of TIE practitioners. Few would argue with Wooster's choice of key figures within the practice and theory that informed the movement. Peter Slade, Brian Way, and Dorothy Heathcote all feature as do Brecht, Boal, and the Workers' Theatre Movement, but also educationalists such as Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner.

Wooster is necessarily selective and sometimes partisan in his choice of examples of practice. Programmes from the Coventry Belgrade are, necessarily, given due attention as are others from his own Theatr Powys background. There is a particularly informative section on how TIE companies tried, with difficulty, to live out their socialist ideals in the way they organized themselves,

both economically and artistically. The deep, personal investment of Wooster in TIE may be the book's chief strength but it is also at the root of its weaknesses. Despite the cogency of its overall structure, he tends to move from one topic or detail to another in ways that could be confusing for the uninformed reader. No cogent definition of TIE is offered early on in the book and the reader is expected readily to understand condensed summaries of the politics of the time and elliptical references to specific TIE programmes. When the programmes are thoroughly described, as in the central section of the book, they make for fascinating if rather uncritical reading. It is this overall lack of critical distance that, in the final analysis, make this less an academic text and more of a personal memoir.

JOE WINSTON

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Augusto Corrieri
In Place of a Show: What Happens inside Theatres when Nothing is Happening
London: Bloomsbury, 2016. 198 p. £70.
ISBN 978-1474-25672-8.

We all have a Desert Island book we would harbour beyond Shakespeare's works and the Bible that are pressed upon us along with those tracks. Mine is currently *In Place of a Show*. The auguries were good before the end of the brief acknowledgements: Heathfield, Bayly, Williams, and Lavery amongst others, each a specialist in a certain kind of uncertainty, a proudly topical dérivist affective methodology that has informed European performance scholarship of the twenty-first century and made it indispensable reading.

Corrieri joins those floating signifiers with just about the best theatre thing in the form of writing I have encountered since Kelleher's *The Illuminated Stage* and Ridout's *Passionate Amateurs*, sharing with both a genuine, evidential interest in theatrical scholarship, a gritty materialist grip, and the poetic generosity of Calvino, Sebald, and Bachelard, the true heirs to this marvellous work. Lots of men in a ragged line, self-appointed and privileged to be opaquely opinionated maybe, but one of the most interesting engagements with masculinity itself over a short century by way of being a by-product of thinking and expressing oneself about being embodied and out-of-bodied in spacesite, through the emotional contours of history.

In this work, ostensibly four theatres are at stake, a German Baroque auditorium, a London music hall, a Renaissance Italian theatre, and an Amazonian rainforest opera house (yes, the one that opens Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo*), where nothing theatrical would appear to appear, but each is an excuse for thinking something through about happening itself. The 'what goes without saying' theatre that Roland Barthes would have suggested we might carry as a measure in our heads, given here the placeholder name: *théâtre a l'italienne*. This is phenomenology by stealth, very much my own preferred modus operandi, given the inevitability, irrespective of our suppleness, of losing out to performance's more agile spring.

Corrieri conducts here with lightest of baton touches, gesturing towards some offstage figures who do not need to be brought 'on' for us to feel their subtle sway: apparatus (Agamben), foreground-background (Benjamin), nonhuman (Lyotard), rubble (Gordillo), atmospherics (Sloterdijk), theatre=theatre (May, Theresa), nostalgia (Stewart), dust (Pailos), walls (Flusser), monuments (Musil), abandonment (Stengers) – each woven between the folds of a gripping narrative that, following a delicious false start (itself a page-staged *coup de théâtre*), takes us to and fro in the sleight hands of a conjuring author.

For each of these unnamed associations there are as many that are figured, framed, and fostered to new and revived relevance: La Cecla, Augé, Lévi-Strauss, Lingis, Harraway. It occurred to me that for all Harraway's remarkable 'cenes' (most recently the Chthulucene), her generously expansive calling out of human exceptionalism and methodological individualism, would do well to detour via work of this genuinely open 'nature'. I am not sure – thanks to a rigorously policed citational hierarchy that seems to bedevil North American scholarship, despite its thematic concerns with inclusiveness – that Corrieri is about to sit between Cixous and Croce in those indexes, but he should. He pre-empts me anyway, by eschewing the index in his own work, as though the alphabetical is just too tight for words.

On a visit to the Hackney Archive in search of the Dalston Theatre the author photographs this sign, bannered across the wall: 'Turn the pages of your imagination. READ.' He mistranscribes it into uniform caps in his own text, reminding us he is human after all, but the picture is there for us all to see. Corrieri imagines the imagination that is the child's imagination, imagining the building that these fragments once belonged to, remnants hanging from the library walls. But I take it as something more selfish, altogether more personal, a bespoke imperative: 'Turn the pages of your imagination READ.' By reading this book, I did. Others will find their own signs, taken for wonders, here. When you become bored with your Bible and the complete works, in the undergrowth of that desert island there will be a theatre, there always is. In the absence of drinkable water, when the light begins to bend, *In the Place of a Show* will remind us that the show, really, does not need to go on. There's no business.

ALAN READ