

doi:10.1017/S0266464X16000737

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

doi:10.1017/S0266464X16000749

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,