Book Reviews
Edited by Mark Fearnow

Lighting the Shakespearean Stage, 1567–1642. By R. B. Graves. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999; pp. 275. $44.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Robert I. Lublin, The Ohio State University

Lighting the Shakespearean Stage, 1567–1642 rigorously explores the manner in which light functioned in early modern English playhouses and makes that information available to a readership that does not require specialist knowledge in either Renaissance theatre history or lighting technology to understand the text's contribution to both. Tracking down all of the historically relevant data available, Graves opens up a subject that has long been dominated by assumptions and conjecture. He develops as thorough a picture as possible of how light served both the theatres and the drama of the period.

After a brief introduction, Graves begins by examining Tudor and early Stuart lighting equipment. Distinguishing among lamps, candles, rushlights, torches, links, and tapers, he situates the lighting implements historically and theatrically, noting how common each was in early modern England. Collecting his data, Graves notes that, "the major obstacle in attempting to reconstruct the artificial illumination of the early drama is that nearly every light could be and was confused with others. Torches and tapers were sometimes called candles, large candles were called torches, even tapers called lanterns" (23). Graves then explores the relative frequency with which the various lighting implements appeared on the stage. Although the title of the book highlights "Shakespeare's" stage, Graves draws evidence from numerous other Renaissance playwrights and takes into account a wide range of historical data in forming his conclusions about the various playhouses, both indoor and outdoor, that proliferated at this point in England's history.

Carefully sifting the historical evidence, Graves demonstrates how lighting was achieved on Renaissance stages. Towards this end, the second chapter, "Early Lighting Systems," investigates the influence of Roman theatre technology and medieval practices on early modern lighting. Graves states that "By the seventeenth century, nearly every major court in Europe lavishly mounted indoor entertainments reflecting Roman pictorial and mechanical ideas" (39). He argues that theatre companies, in building the roof-canopies that covered much of the stage, were "attempting to approximate the accommodations afforded by the ceilings of indoor venues such as temporary banqueting houses and Tudor halls" (43). Graves additionally considers the forms of lighting employed at university theatres, in church plays, and in the halls of lords where professional players likely performed before getting their own playhouses.

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Graves devotes several chapters to considering how light appeared in performances at the playhouses of the period. He accomplishes this by first considering the time of day when plays were performed at the different theatres (debunking the myth that plays always started at 2 P.M.). He then studies the shape of the playhouses, both indoor and outdoor, to note where the stages were located and the relative position of the sun at the time of performance. Ultimately, Graves concludes that in outdoor playhouses, "direct sunlight rarely illuminated the actors" (93). This assertion, which contradicts current practice at Shakespeare Festivals where technical directors frequently attempt to situate plays in the brightest light possible, suggests an area in which historical study can benefit modern practice. In his examination of indoor theatres, Graves considers the positioning of windows and the likely times of performance, concluding, with noted exceptions, that indoor playhouses frequently depended upon sunlight for primary illumination of the drama, accentuated by candlelight.

Court performances made extensive use of artificial light in illuminating drama. The court could afford the expensive lighting equipment required to present plays without the aid of sunlight. To establish how lighting was accomplished in the evening in winter when such performances were most commonly held, Graves examines the price of lighting equipment, the places of performance, and lists of court purchases. He also considers Inigo Jones's experiments with lighting for court masques.

Towards the end of the book, Graves makes a bold assertion about the nature of drama in indoor versus outdoor playhouses that deserves extended quotation:

> I do not see that we must attribute any shift in dramatic style solely to indoor lighting when the King's men [sic] began taking up winter residence at Blackfriars in 1609. The King's men had been accustomed to performing indoors long before that. From 1594 to 1608, in fact, when we think of the company as playing outdoors, we have records of ninety-three indoor performances and at least twenty-eight more probable indoor performances in the provinces. (196)

Graves also notes that that there was no substantially different use of property lights in indoor and outdoor theatres. In support of these arguments, Graves devotes his final chapter to examining recent scholarship on *The Duchess of Malfi* which argues that the play was specifically written to be performed indoors. Reconsidering the ways in which textual evidence can be used to determine the intended location of performance, Graves finds that Webster's drama lends itself equally well to indoor and outdoor playing conditions.

As his work represents the fullest examination of lighting thus far undertaken, Graves's arguments are compelling. For its broad survey of

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historical evidence and careful analysis of available data, *Lighting the Shakespearean Stage, 1567–1642* is an excellent and thorough historical study. And, in light of recent attempts to recreate the Globe and even more recent interest in recreating the Blackfriars, Graves book comes at a particularly auspicious moment in theatre history.

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A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580–1642. By Alan C. Dessen and Leslie Thomson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999; pp. 289. $69.95.

Reviewed by Franklin J. Hildy, University of Maryland

Stage directions have long been used to "prove" one theory or another concerning the staging of plays in Shakespearean playhouses. With the remarkable increase in works on Shakespeare in performance that have paralleled the opening of the Globe reconstruction in London, it was inevitable that the examination of these intriguing indicators would increase. *A Dictionary of Stage Directions in English Drama 1580–1642* presents us with the raw materials that will make the process of researching stage directions infinitely easier for all scholars. The down side of this is that it is going to be a lot harder to "overlook" evidence that does not fit the theories we want to propose. Starting with *The Three Ladies of London* by Robert Wilson, a play written in 1581, despite the dictionary's claim of 1580, the authors read through some 500 plays known or at least likely to be "linked to the London professional theatres" up to their closing in 1642. (A complete list is provided on pp. 267–284. Some of these plays were published as late as 1661 but were included if it seemed to the authors that they were "certainly written earlier.") From this Herculean effort, Thompson compiled a database of over 22,000 stage directions and, using criteria largely developed by Alan Dessen in *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary* (1995), they put together this dictionary of over 900 terms. Each word is defined by its usage and cross referenced. When we look at "pen," for example, we do not get a definition of what a pen is, we get "a property almost always called for with ink and/or paper." This is followed by representative quotations from the plays *OED*-style, though the authors "have not attempted to trace the evolution of the terms" because, surprisingly, "for the bulk of the period up through the 1630's, . . . continuity rather than evolution appears to be the norm." The quotations are extensive but not exhaustive. When there are several hundred examples of the usage of an entry like "run, running" (260 examples), only a representative sampling is provided. If there are only a limited number of examples for a term, all are listed. In both cases the examples are provided in "roughly" chronological order. A special entry for "permissive stage directions" list all those entries that "leave key entries indeterminate" as with *"They fight a good while and then breath"* from *Orlando Furioso*.

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If one chooses to get involved in the controversy over the meaning of "passing over the stage," a controversy reignited in the pages of *Theatre Notebook* since Evert Sprinchorn's 1992 article "An Intermediate Stage Level in the Elizabethan Stage," this dictionary is the logical place to start. You can enter that perplexing phrase at "pass, passing, passage" or "stage." But the definition you will find for "crossing the stage from one door to another" may be a little disappointing. It ignores the other possibilities such as Allardyce Nicoll's 1959 argument that this stage direction indicated an entrance from the yard, over the stage, and back out through the yard, and this is an important omission. If Nicoll was correct, and nothing in the examples provided would make his argument untenable, there are significant implications for the style of production, for the design of the stage, and for our understanding of what the playgoers of this period actually saw, that we are totally missing. Making no reference to legitimate alternative definitions tends to weaken the authors' stated goal of establishing the theatrical vocabulary shared by playwrights, bookkeepers, scribes and, though they do not say this, printers. Ironically, this very danger in compiling a dictionary was anticipated by Dessen in *Recovering Shakespeare's Theatrical Vocabulary* (42–46). The problem is unresolved here but that does not negate the exceptional value of this book.

At the end of the dictionary entries is an invaluable list of "Terms by category" which starts with those terms indicating "actions" and goes through to those indicating "weapons." If you need a list of every animal mentioned in the stage directions of the period, see "animals." If you want to know how many mentions are made of an "inner stage," look under "stage locations." As the authors themselves point out, if you find no references to a term like "inner stage" (and you won't) it is because that is not a term that was used in the stage directions of the period, and this is valuable information that you no longer have to read 500 plays on microfilm to be able to determine. But if you do not find a reference to a particular object, that does not necessarily mean it was not used. No mention is made of Crab the dog in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, for example, because neither his entrance or exit is noted in the stage directions, and this points to a very important limitation that must be kept in mind when using this dictionary—no dialogue evidence has been included. This means, among other things, that you will find no references to any part of the audience in this dictionary, because while such references do appear from time to time in the dialogue, they do not appear in stage directions. If you are interested in the origin of the term "groundling," this is not the place to look for it. The dictionary has also excluded any references to academic plays, boys company plays, court masques, and pageants. These exclusions are perfectly justified but the reader needs to keep them in mind.

I am not the sort of person who generally reads dictionaries for enjoyment, but I read this one, and it is always informative and thought provoking. *"They sit a good while on the Stage before the Candles are lighted, talking together*." Are these the house candles at an indoor theatre? If so, what was the light

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source before the candles were lit? I'm going to have to turn to Robert Grave's recent *Lighting the Shakespearean Stage* [reviewed in this issue] to puzzle that one out.

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Hamlet. Edited by Robert Hapgood. Shakespeare in Production Series. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999; pp. 296. $54.95 hardcover. $19.95 paperback.

Reviewed by Kimberly Axline, Binghamton University

Recent decades have seen a proliferation of critical discourses challenging an ostensible immutability of meaning and valuation in Shakespeare's texts, as the worlds they represent and even the manuscripts themselves are increasingly negotiated as ambivalent cultural constructs. Poststructural figurations of the instability of language and systems of representation inform Brian Vickers's and Gary Taylor's considerations of how Shakespeare is continuously "remade" vis-a-vis ever-evolving philosophical and sociopolitical mores. Stephen Greenblatt's seminal explorations of historicity, "cultural poetics," and the performance of power likewise continue to bear fruit in recent works such as David Scott Kastan's *Shakespeare After Theory*. Invaluable as these branches of critical inquiry have been to countless scholars and practitioners alike (myself included on both counts), there is nonetheless a potential inattention to the core theatricality or playability of a text once it becomes embroiled in these larger discourses. Certainly, there are numerous branches of performance theory which address the performative act itself: Marvin Carlson's explorations of theatrical dialogism, Bert States's work on phenomenology in the theatre, or Patrice Pavis' postmodern ruminations on the plurality of significance in a critically self-reflective *mise-en-scène*. Yet critical considerations of individual plays in performance remain the exception rather than the rule.

It is in this regard that the new Shakespeare in Production series from Cambridge merits a liberal recommendation, seeking as it does to provide the reader with substantive stage histories alongside up-to-date editions of the text. While certainly not the first serial Shakespearean production history, Cambridge's initial offerings in the series are arguably the most accessible and up-to-date theatrical variorums of their kind. Each volume presents an introductory "conceptual overview of the play, marking out the major stages of its representation and reception," as well as detailed line-by-line annotations concerning individual interpretations, theatrical traditions, stage directions, and critical reception, effectively evoking a panoramic production history for a given play.

Robert Hapgood has authored many articles in this field and the well-received *Shakespeare the Theatre-Poet* (1988). His edition of *Hamlet*—fourth

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in the ongoing series—combines solid scholarship with engaging performance narratives, drawn from an impressive collection of promptbooks, reviews, photographs/films, and sundry secondary materials. His study aims to provide a production "sampler" or chronological survey from Burbage to Branagh, emphasizing interpretations of the title role within a "cultural context that includes developments in theatre history and literary analysis" (ix). Selective by necessity, Hapgood's performance histories are drawn largely from the English-speaking theatre, with somewhat sporadic references to landmark Eastern European productions and no mention of Asiatic or African incarnations of *Hamlet*. Ironically, it is frequently the productions-in-translation which provide the most stimulating interpretations and innovations, and which may be of most interest to a western audience already largely familiar with the benchmarks of its own theatrical tradition. However, the sheer amount of territory covered usually leaves the reader little breath to lament these contestable omissions.

The introduction opens with a brief account of the play's historical popularity, as well as an overview of the numerous textual variations: Q1; Q2; F; numerous "players' versions," which reflect a "pattern of abridgement" consistent with evolving sociopolitical and aesthetic agendas; and twentieth century "conflated" scripts which amalgamate all textual materials—and are then subsequently trimmed in performance in accordance with particular interpretive emphases. Hapgood then launches into a chronological reckoning of the greatest players and productions of *Hamlet* through the ages. Few will come as surprises: David Garrick, John Philip Kemble, Edmund Kean, Henry Irving, John Barrymore, John Gielgud, Laurence Olivier, Richard Burton, and Kenneth Branagh, just to name some. Less familiar names (e.g., François Joseph Talma, Pavel Mochalov, Josef Kainz) and supporting characters are typically afforded little more than a paragraph or two of cursory overviews, leaving this reader wanting more detailed accounts. Yet Hapgood's narratives remain engaging throughout, and he consistently contextualizes his production histories by taking into account advances in varied fields which left an indelible mark on artistic expression: scenography (moveable perspective scenery); evolutions in literary criticism (Turgenev's "superfluous man"); changes in theatrical convention (restoration of "original" texts); and sociopolitical movements (the "feminization" of American culture in the late nineteenth century). If the narrative becomes a bit choppy in places as he attempts to cover too much territory in too little space (e.g., four productions in one page), or one begins to wonder about the distinct presence of an Anglo-bias, Hapgood nevertheless manages to tie together numerous divergent strands into a coherent and convincing story of theatrical evolution.

Arguably, the annotated text that follows the introduction is the most valuable portion of this *Hamlet*. Instead of the traditional textual glossing of the Arden or even Cambridge editions, the footnotes here are of a decidedly performative bent, cataloging both lines of influence as well as innovations over

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a four-hundred-year period. These annotations may cover anything from specific line readings, stage directions, and character interpretations to critical commentaries, personal anecdotes, and textual variations. Longer exegeses on costumes, interpretation, and characterization are woven throughout with details of staging and critical reception. At best, the voluminous annotations provide ample fodder for comparison and contrast (e.g., staging the mousetrap, 189ff); at times, however, the notes move the reader from one production to another in no particular order, and the isolated anecdotes must be stitched together to create a coherent picture of any single production. This may be endemic to any line-by-line multi-production annotation. The juxtaposition skirts the methodological hazard of failing to recognize historical differences and their resultant impact on performance. As Piscator remarked to Brecht, the passage of "150 years [is] no small matter"—a conclusion the reader is often left to draw for herself.

Several productions mentioned in the Introduction make little or no appearance in the subsequent text and footnotes, arguably skewing the individual line readings in favor of contemporary British interpretations. The reader is also never given any indication which contemporary productions the author has personally seen and which are culled from secondary materials, compounding the overall anonymity of the study. Hapgood never proffers personal interpretations or appraisals, nor does he typically note that certain textual variations or performative traditions will entail major production choices. The book in toto is more historical—*about* the productions—than practical—a guide *for* production. Those who are seeking the latter, however, may still easily interpolate from the excellent catalogue Hapgood provides in order to identify key production moments and issues.

Ultimately, Hapgood's edition of *Hamlet* and the forthcoming Shakespeare in Production series are invaluable references for both theatre historians and practitioners, providing expansive integrated texts and performance histories in a highly digestible format. A truly objective and comprehensive Shakespearean production history may be more of a holy grail than a reality, yet Hapgood's current offering is encouraging in its often deft weaving of performance acts into a larger cultural context. More comprehensive than the introductory production histories in the New Cambridge Shakespeare, more expansive than Manchester University Press's Shakespeare in Performance production essays, and more user-friendly than the voluminous Garland bibliographies, the Cambridge series promises to be a milestone in contemporary Shakespeare criticism—perhaps balancing the scales a bit with other modes of critical inquiry. And while subsequent editions might benefit from more pictorial evidence, those aware of the monumental task of paring down the stage history of *Hamlet* to a single volume can only applaud Hapgood's endeavor.

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Chinese Theories of Theater and Performance: From Confucius to the Present. Edited and translated by Faye Chunfang Fei. Foreword by Richard Schechner. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999; pp. 213+ xiii. $44.50 hardcover.

Reviewed by Sara Davis, Yale University

The Great Wall of language that separates Chinese from Western theatre studies has been a challenging wall to climb until now. The hopeful climber must know both classical and modern Chinese (which are pretty much different languages), as well as, ideally, the strange landscape of postmodern theatre studies. Faye Chunfang Fei's book tries to make some of the vast Chinese literary tradition available to theatre scholars, as well as to sinologists. This is a daunting task and we should applaud her for taking it on. As a collection of interesting essays, the anthology is a good read, competently translated, and provides some invaluable and little-known texts. However, no historical anthology is objective, and what gets put in or left out determines how the history of the genre (and in this case, the nation) is constructed. This collection constructs a potentially misleading history for Chinese theatre, and thus unfortunately gets stuck halfway across the wall.

The first problem has to do with what is left out of this collection, and it arises from the use of the English term "theatre" in China at all. Spoken drama barely existed in China until the early twentieth century. When we group a variety of kinds of Chinese performance together under the term theatre, we need to decide what we mean by it.

As a rule, "Chinese theatre" refers to highly choreographed sung performances, *ju,* or opera. Most historians agree that *ju* grew out of the folk and popular performances of the Tang (618–907) and Song (960–1279) dynasties. The Tang empire conquered vast areas, and had contact and trade with remote kingdoms. Some Tang emperors were also avid patrons of the arts, and these two factors brought a variety of South, Central, and Southeast Asian performers into the imperial capital. These foreign performers had a lasting impact on Chinese culture. In particular (and controversially), sinologist Victor Mair has argued that Indian professional folk performers who came across the Silk Road during the Tang period sparked the growth of Chinese professional storytelling and opera.

Later, during the Song, red-light districts arose in the massive coastal cities, where traveling merchants and scholars gathered to eat, drink, and see Chinese opera, storytelling, acrobatics, and puppetry; many performers were also prostitutes. Most of these folk performers were illiterate, yet most were also trained professionals organized into guilds. Other itinerant troupes, sometimes run by women, performed satirical plays in markets and on the streets. Later Chinese theatre, from literary operas to the oral Beijing drumsong, all evolved

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from this early explosion of professional folk performance. Because theatre was largely a folk genre for most of its history, it was regarded as vulgar, low culture by Chinese scholar-officials like those whose essays are translated here. When they were not condemning it, scholar-officials still sneaked off to see theatre, and appropriated the material they saw for their own writings.

Sadly, you will not learn any of this from reading Fei's book. The Tang and the Song dynasties are dealt with collectively in four pages, giving little sense of the growth or variety of performance during this seminal six-hundred year period.

What is included is almost as surprising as what is left out. Instead of linking Chinese theatre's roots to Tang and Song folk performance, the author starts off the collection with essays from elite scholar-officials about *yue*, a form of court ritual music. By including material about court music in a book about theatre, the editor, perhaps unintentionally, gives the impression that Chinese opera descended from Confucian court music, when the two were actually as different as blues and Bach. Court music came from the court, but Chinese theatre came from the streets.

Setting these problems aside, as an overall resource for theatre scholars, the book includes some very fine and useful essays, especially those by and about actors in the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing dynasties. It is wonderful to have the words of the legendary actor Mei Lanfang, and the essays by Chinese scholars musing on Brecht (we have heard more than enough about what Brecht thought he saw in China). The last essay, a dream play in which Chinese folk heroes argue with playwrights Wei Minglun and Eugene Ionesco, is an example of the kind of fascinating material, little known in the United States, that Fei turns up in China. For the theatre studies crowd, the author might consider giving more historical context for the essays and their authors, and listing more English-language works in the bibliography (there are many, they are wonderful, and they are not widely read enough outside of Chinese studies).

As for the sinological readers, they are a notoriously finicky crew, and finicky readers may find things to pick at here. Some sinologists may blink in bafflement when the philosopher Mozi is presented as an advocate of the "working poor." We sometimes get more romanization of Chinese terms than we need, but sometimes it is left out when we need it (as with the "New West Chamber Story"), and sometimes what we are given needs proofreading (see especially the mysterious g's that keep cropping up on pages 6, 26, and 61, and the use of both Tao and Dao). None of these are terrible flaws, and all could be cleared up easily. The core of the book, its fine data, is here, and it only needs more polishing and thinking through for the next edition.

Richard Schechner's comments about the semiotics of opera are insightful, and they give a hint of the exciting things that will happen as more performance

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scholars begin to investigate China, and vice versa. However, he hits an off-key note when he says that there was "no orthodoxy of theory" among these writers about Chinese theatre: unfortunately, there was, and the orthodoxy was that Chinese theatre was not worth thinking about. Today scholars in both hemispheres know better, and some of us are dreaming of the day when India theatre scholars like Schechner give us their views on the putative influence of Indian performers on China. It would be wonderful to have their input in this roiling debate within Chinese studies, and is just one example of what great things breaking down the Great disciplinary Wall can do for all sides.

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Zeami and the Nô Theatre in the World. Edited by Benito Ortolani and Samuel E. Leiter. New York: Center for Advanced Studies in Theatre Arts, 1998; pp. 177. Paperback.

Reviewed by Richard Nichols, Penn State University

Thomas Rimer's Fall 1992 *Asian Theatre Journal* article, "What More Do We Need to Know about the Nô ?" notes that, despite the blossoming of interest in the nô during the decade of the 1980s, and, despite having the nô as a tradition and living performance to both study and enjoy, scholars of the nô miss a "certain understanding of the tradition in the larger perspective" (217). Though perhaps not responding directly to Professor Rimer's concern, *Zeami and the Nô Theatre in the World* successfully places nô in a larger context of theory, aesthetics, and performance. The editors of this volume, Benito Ortolani and Samuel Leiter, both widely published and highly respected scholars of traditional Japanese theatre, note in their introduction that Zeami (1363–1443), the acknowledged founder of the nô, has "become increasingly well known as one of the great figures in the history of world theatre," and they "wish not only to encourage readers to more effectively appreciate and understand nô drama through increased access to his ideas, but to recognize Zeami's place in the pantheon of theatrical thinker artists as one whose insights are surprisingly pertinent on a universal plane." The focus of the text is firmly fixed on Zeami as the creator of an art form that is at once ancient and modern, Japanese and universal. Despite the brevity of *Zeami and the Nô Theatre in the World*, the introduction by Ortolani and Leiter and the eleven essays they edited for inclusion in the volume attain the editors' stated goals, and, in so doing, provide a valuable resource for generalist and specialist alike.

The essays, edited from papers originally part of the proceedings of the October 1997 "Zeami and the Nô Theatre in the World" symposium held in New York City in conjunction with the "Japanese Theatre in the World" exhibit at the Japan Society, are organized into four sections: Zeami's Theories and Aesthetics, Zeami and Drama, Zeami and Acting, and Zeami and the World. The editors' brief introduction to the collected essays outlines the key ideas in each essay,

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providing useful focus for some of the more complex, dense articles in the collection. The reader with little background in the nô may do well to read the Introduction and the final section of the text, "Zeami Discussed" (a summary of round-table discussions that concluded presentation of the papers collected in this volume), before moving to the articles themselves.

In Part I of the volume, Zeami's Theories and Aesthetics, Matsuda Tamotsu provides a brief (two pages) but illuminating analysis of Zeami's concept of "flower" and the fleeting ephemeral nature of life as core concepts in nô aesthetics. Daniel Gerould's "Zeami the Theorist in the Context of World Theatre," places Zeami on the "map of theatrical theory" through a well-developed thesis that the "fourteenth and fifteenth-century Japanese nô actor and playwright becomes a contemporary player on the world stage of competing theatrical theories"(11). Carol Fisher Sorgenfrei ("Zeami and the Aesthetics of Contemporary Japanese Performance") interprets the available evidence regarding fourteenth- and fifteenth-century performances (for example, those of *dengaku*, a form popular at the same time as Zeami was developing what became nô), reflecting on issues of death, the dark, and the alien in early nô (providing an antidote to any conceptions of early nô as austere or effete) before she moves to a well-argued correlation between contemporary *butoh* and the nô. The first section concludes with Stanca Scholz-Cionca's "Outcast Imagery in Zeami's Plays," an enlightening depiction of actors as outcasts and Zeami's use of outcasts in his plays, most especially *Nue*.

The editors note that the grouping of the essays in Part II, Zeami and Drama, seems less cohesive than the other sections in the book. Taira Takehiko's "Ghosts of Shakespeare and Nô Plays" is largely an exegesis of the development of ghost plays from Aeschylus to Shakespeare, with only a superficial consideration of nô ghosts, a regrettable imbalance in light of the importance of ghosts in the nô canon. The next essay in this section, "Zeami and Zen," is a tightly reasoned explication of Zen context and its influences on Zeami's life and works. After placing Zeami in the context of Zen, author Otomo Taishi demonstrates that a different interpretation of the Chinese characters used in Zeami's text provides very different conclusions from those reached by other scholars and argues that his views make sense of Zen perspectives inherent in Zeami's treatise, the *Fushikaden*. (The editors of the volume are to be congratulated for the helpful and enlightening footnotes regarding the variance between Otomo's translation and that of Rimer and Yamazaki in their respected standard*, On the Art of the Nô Drama: The Major Treatises of Zeami*.) The concluding article in Part II, Yoshimura Hitoshi's "The Function of Dreams in Nô Plays," illuminates parallels between the dramatic use of meditation in the nô, real-life meditation by monks, and a process of salvation.

Shelly Fenno Quinn's "Zeami's Body Poetique," the first article in Part III, Zeami and Acting, examines Zeami's *nikyoku santai* (three modes and two styles). Though she explicates issues of mimesis and music in Zeami's theory,

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Quinn's work will likely resonate most with those possessing considerable background in Japanese language and literature and less with the theatre generalist, a contrast to James Brandon's article, "Zeami on Acting: Values for the Western Actor," a title accurately suggesting the content of the article which Brandon characterizes as observations from the "margin," written by one who is not a specialist in the study of Zeami. Frank Hoff's "Kanze Hisao (1925–1978): Making Nô into Contemporary Theatre," is a masterful dissection of Kanze Hisao's acting artistry in light of Zeami's writings—and vice versa. Hoff's article provides profound insights into theatre as an art, acting as a form of possession, and the power of the mask to transform. Kathryn Wylie Marques's article, "Zeami Motokiyo and Etienne Decroux: Twin Reformers of the Art of Mime," explicates the artistic parallels between the two artists separated by some 600 years, illuminating the work of both and finding them "united in a common pursuit of formal beauty as "the highest aim of theatical performance" (111).

Part IV consists of charts depicting the chronological and geographical distribution of overseas performances of the nô since 1954, noting the plays presented and the performers' schools. Part V sets forth Professor Ortolani's thoughts regarding an international bibliography of works related to Zeami and the nô. The volume concludes with summaries of the round-table discussion mentioned above.

Zeami and the Nô Theatre in the World is a valuable contribution to current scholarship on the nô and Zeami, and the value of the text is enhanced by the many insights into Japanese culture, character, and cross-cultural connections contained therein. Some readers may wish for illustrations or photographs (knowledge of the shape of the nô stage or nô masks is assumed, as is familiarity with *dengaku*, *butoh*, or Decroux). A detailed, summary bibliography certainly might be useful to those readers less steeped in the nô than the members of the International Zeami Society (for whom the symposium papers were originally presented), but this is a blue collar text with no frills and the welcome absence of academic jargon. Passion for the subject and the expertise of the individual authors are palpable in the eminently readable essays. Somewhere in the collected articles, there is something inviting to the uninitiated and challenging to the advanced student. Ortolani and Leiter are to be congratulated for their efforts, and the text is a worthy addition to the professional libraries of anyone interested in traditional Japanese theatre, Zeami, and the nô.

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Moissi: Triest, Berlin, New York, eine Schauspielerlegende. By Rüdiger Schaper. Berlin: Argon, 2000; pp. 255. DM 39.90.

Reviewed by William Grange, University of Nebraska

This book is a great read for a number of reasons, the most significant of which is the author's demonstration that Alexander Moissi (Alessandro Moissi,

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1879–1935) was the German-speaking theatre's first modern actor. That dubious distinction Moissi may have shared with Josef Kainz, Alexander Granach, Peter Lorre, and a few others, but there is little doubt that Moissi was among the twentieth century's first German-speaking superstars. Unlike most of the great German actors before him, Moissi was not a native German speaker. He was born in Albania, grew up speaking Greek and Italian, and had a lucrative career that spanned four decades in thousands of performances all over the world. In none of those performances did Moissi lose the Mediterranean inflections in the language of Goethe and Schiller. But that did not diminish his stature; it enhanced it. Near the end of his career, film director Ernst Lubitsch approached him in Hollywood to plead, "Herr Moissi, please allow me to embrace you, so that people will think I am somebody!"

Moissi is now almost completely forgotten. Who remembers that he was Max Reinhardt's most frequently cast star in Berlin? Who recalls his innumerable deaths onstage as Romeo, Hamlet, Danton, and the suicidal Fedya in Tolstoy's *The Living Corpse*? Who for that matter even recognizes that play's title anymore? And who summons to memory Max Reinhardt himself, that "Barnum of the theatre" who created what critic Karl Kraus called "epoch-making humbug"? Reinhardt initiated Moissi's transformation from a provincial café singer to an international star by insisting on a new pronunciation for "Moissi." In Berlin, he was no longer to be Mo-ees-si, but Moi-ssi, emphasizing the *moi*, as in "me."

Reinhardt liked Moissi's accent. It was foreign, but Reinhardt appreciated Moissi's *chutzpah* in speaking that way before a Berlin audience. Reinhardt often cast foreigners—Hungarians, Russians, Poles, even Americans—because he sought an alternative to "high German" stage speech. Moissi became his emblematic alternative in distinctive premieres as Orestes in Hofmannsthal's *Elektra*, Danton in Büchner's *Dantons Tod*, Henri in Schnitzler's *Der grüne Kakadu*, and in Gorky's *The Lower Depths* (the first play Moissi did for Reinhardt). In these roles, Moissi put himself on display as much as he created a character, and as such he became the first of a twentieth-century type, the man who, according Schaper, exhibits his own existence as a work of art, "a soul in the process of decomposition."

Decay and disease have long been thematic staples of modernist drama, and Berlin's critics were among the first to recognize Moissi's superb facility at portraying them. Schaper estimates that Moissi died over 5,000 times, and to each of his doomed characters he brought a distinct modernist sensibility. Modernist apologists like Herbert Ihering, Julius Bab, and Siegfried Jacobsohn were among Moissi's most ardent advocates, who felt he arrived at, or perhaps personified the moment when (as Schaper says) "psychology broke into art. . . . It was that moment when drama penetrated industrial society and promptly went into crisis mode, where it has remained ever since."

Reinhardt saw in Moissi an expedient by which he could penetrate Berlin's theatre establishment and leave a lasting impression. When he bought the

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Deutsches Theater from Adolph L'Arronge for 2.5 million marks and made that theatre his permanent base of operations, he gambled on an unabridged production of Wedekind's *Spring's Awakening* and an almost Expressionistic staging of Ibsen's *Ghosts*. They became box-office blockbusters, and in both productions Moissi played the leading male role. Several observers thereafter proclaimed Moissi the "new" Josef Kainz, but unlike Kainz, Moissi was "the protagonist of the young, strife-torn, depravity-seeking twentieth century." Kainz had been a heroic figure whose suffering had thrilled audiences. Moissi's suffering and deaths were themselves the objects of fascination. When Moissi played Oswald in *Ghosts*, his death throes started early (in the second act) and tottered on to the play's conclusion. In the final scene, "as if Edvard Munch had done the blocking or painted the *mise-en-scène*," he finally managed to flounder into the lap of the great Agnes Sorma (as Mrs. Oswald) and gurgle, "May I sit near you mother? . . . I am the living dead!" It was "a modernist Pietá, as a Mediterranean Messiah took up his cross and began his *via dolorosa*, a naked individual, *Ecce homo* alone and abandoned, the 'modern man.'"

Moissi is one of the few actors to have performed with Franz Kafka (1883–1924) in the audience and to have the novelist describe his performance—though what Kafka witnessed was a poetry reading, and his description of what he saw was not particularly kind. "Shameless tricks and contrivances, casting gazes at the floor, singing the beginning parts of lines, using odd pauses and stops, then running his voice up and down melodically. [He] apparently gets the tip of his tongue in between the words so he can make a little whistle—which forces you to look upwards toward the ceiling [in embarrassment], when your spirits should be lifted instead." Kafka also did not appreciate Moissi's habit of sitting while reading poetry instead standing, as was then the norm. "You can't see his face," and "his voice seems unconnected to his body. The words come out like a small boat adrift on the water." Franz Werfel, on the other hand, waxed enthusiastic about Moissi, calling him a "magician" whose voice was filled with "loving entreaty, slovenly charm, [and] a sing-song supplication spoken during sleep. . . . It has a narcotic effect." Stefan Zweig liked it, too: "The voice flatters itself; rolling like a cat with a ball of yarn on a flight of stairs, up and down the octaves, touching on notes, playing the entire scale of the throat. Sometimes you close your eyes just to get the full effect of the voice." Moissi's eyes were equally impressive. They were the kind "you see on an Egyptian mummy case, wide open, unspeakably tragic, yet uncomplaining."

Moissi's Fedya in Tolstoy's *The Living Corpse* became his trademark in the 1920s. He played the role over fifteen hundred times in Europe, the Americas, and in Asia. His Fedya, Schaper says, fulfilled Nietzsche's prophecy: God is dead, art has displaced the church, and the individual celebrates his apotheosis in order to start in motion a concomitant process of decay. "The actor dies for the masses, and if this actor is playing Fedya, the actor is spreading the gospel of a besotted Messiah, glowing with idealistic self-pity and proclaiming self-extinction." Moissi never really studied acting to achieve such effects. "I am

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always Moissi, whether I'm slipping into the hell of a distraught, tortured Hamlet or of a weak, defenseless Fedya—both are a part of myself." New York critics in the 1920s nonetheless hailed Moissi as "Europe's greatest living actor," "the man with the golden voice," and "the John Barrymore of the Old World." John Barrymore had, as it turns out, also played Fedya, but "Barrymore has thousands lying at his feet," Schaper quotes one critic, "but Moissi has, in Berlin, Paris, Moscow, Rome, Vienna, and Salzburg, his tens of thousands."

One of the most remarkable accounts in this remarkable book is Schaper's description of Moissi's wartime experience as a German fighter pilot when the actor was at the height of his fame. Moissi had immediately volunteered for the German armed forces when mobilization was declared and joined the air force after qualifying for pilot's training. In 1915 he and his co-pilot were shot down over England, where they had flown in error. Moissi was then transferred to a prisoner-of-war camp in France, where he remained until 1917. In the wake of the German defeat, Moissi was frequently confronted with his non-German status and taunted in the press, his service to Germany in its armed forces notwithstanding. The Nazis in particular attacked Moissi for his "non-German" background, and their attacks on him forced his career, like the plane he piloted over England, into a downward spiral. Then Reinhardt in 1931, himself under withering fire from the Nazis, briefly brought Moissi's career out of its tailspin and cast him in the title role of Hofmannsthal's *Everyman* for the Salzburg festival. Moissi remained in that role for the next four years and died splendidly at the close of each performance, but the festival provided only about six weeks of steady work. When the Nazis came to power, Moissi's career in Germany was over. He tried film work but was too old to play leading man parts by the time sound film came in, and early sound technology in film could never do justice to his voice.

Moissi therefore continued to tour in Central Europe, "resembling Eleanora Duse playing Camille and other trademark roles in deadening repetition." Meantime in his native Albania, King Zogu accorded him state citizenship and called upon him to be Master of Ceremonies at his court. Zogu, who had ordered a seven-pound crown to be made of solid gold for his coronation, wanted Moissi to be his court jester. Moissi declined the offer and remained on tour, where he died "for real" of a pulmonary edema aboard a train, shortly after he had died onstage for what turned out to be the last time.

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Jacques Copeau: Biography of a Theater. By Maurice Kurtz. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999; pp. 181 + illus. $34.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by James Fisher, Wabash College

Maurice Kurtz's insightful study of the achievements of visionary actor, director, and teacher Jacques Copeau (1879–1949) is among the most welcome

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and important theatre books of the past year. Copeau's concepts have had a widespread and profound influence on theatre practice since the first days prior to World War I when Copeau revitalized the French stage. Kurtz offers a thorough and, at times, moving portrait of a singular artist devoted to the greater glory of the theatre. Copeau began his career as a Parisian drama critic before transforming himself into reformer and practitioner who relentlessly attacked the tired conventions of Europe's *fin-de-siècle* stage. At the same time, Copeau also aimed to offer an alternative to the rise of realism, epitomized in France by André Antoine's Théâtre Libre. Seeking a foundation for a new kind of modern theatrical art, Copeau looked to what he regarded as the unchanging truths of the past to create an as yet unknown future theatre.

Kurtz rightly notes that Copeau's first major step toward achieving his goals came with the founding of his Théâtre du Vieux Colombier in 1913, but Kurtz extends beyond previous scholars in the skill with which he reconstructs Copeau's era, the evolution of his ideas for reform, and the complex inner workings of his company. Working against the proliferation of realism, as were Adolphe Appia, Edward Gordon Craig, William Butler Yeats, and Vsevolod Meyerhold, among others, Copeau was unshakable in his mission to bring beauty and poetry back into the theatre. It was a task he found vast, but, as Kurtz argues, Copeau never wavered from his deeply moral sense of the responsibility of theatre to its society. Assembling a remarkable company, including Charles Dullin, Louis Jouvet, and Gaston Baty, Copeau reaped a rich harvest of variant talents to carry his ideas forward into the future.

Striving to rid the French stage of its overly formal "staginess," Copeau turned to playwrights whose works he felt had been most obscured by layers of tired traditions: Molière and Shakespeare. Kurtz is at his best in reconstructing Copeau's landmark productions of their plays and in explaining the many ways in which Copeau used techniques drawn from theatrical history. He drew much inspiration from the traditions of *commedia dell'arte*, especially in its improvisatory practices and in its employment of a permanent ensemble of actors who worked together in a varied repertory of plays. Copeau's unique understanding of *commedia* techniques helped free his actors from formalized acting styles that, in his view, contributed to the staginess he sought to destroy. As Kurtz explains, once Copeau had developed his approach, he boldly stated his ambitious intentions in a prospectus published in September 1913. Asserting the contempt he and his followers had for the condition of the French stage, which they found weak, disorganized, frivolous, and filled with vanity encouraged by acquiescent critics and a misguided public, Copeau made clear that his company would familiarize itself with the best contemporary techniques and movements, as well as past theatrical traditions that inspired them. He identified strongly with the innovations of French director Jacques Rouché, as well as aspects of the work of Craig, Meyerhold, Max Reinhardt, Harley Granville-Barker, and other international iconoclasts of the modern stage.

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Kurtz stresses Copeau's single-minded emphasis on the actor, and the ways in which he succeeded in creating a freer performance style enhanced by the harmonizing elements of light and music, as well as the rejection of ponderous realistic settings, replaced at the Vieux Colombier by a permanent stage of entrances, levels, and steps. Copeau's love of acting and the actor bordered on the religious, and his respect for his audience was that of a priest for his congregation. His techniques refreshed the classics his company performed and provided a model for performances in which engagement with his audience and action was emphasized over language. At the same time, his actors were fully trained in the use of the voice, body, and imagination.

Copeau believed that once an actor's vocal, mental, and physical equipment were fully harmonized, the actor could then let the character take over; in his approach, the actor does not enter a role, but instead the character approaches the actor. Each actor finds a stage persona to be used in various configurations for different plays, not unlike the actor's employment of a stock character in *commedia*. To achieve this end, Copeau experimented with masks for performances of Molière's farces. Masks forced the actors to place greater emphasis on movement, and Copeau pushed this further toward *commedia*-inspired "play" and improvisation. In seeking inspiration for his theorizing on movement, Copeau studied Dalcroze's eurythmics, but he found some of the stock gestures used stiff and unnatural. He turned instead to an examination of animal movements, musical rhythms, and gymnastics, studying them in depth; he even went so far as to arrange for his actors to receive training from the Fratellini Brothers, a group of Italian clowns who functioned in the *commedia* tradition. They impressed upon the Vieux Colombier company that the art of clowning required almost unlimited physical dexterity, so ultimately their performances featured everything from juggling and tumbling to trapeze work as the actors broadened their physical skills. Copeau's desire to re-theatricalize the theatre with the spirit and techniques of *commedia* led him to actually consider discarding the literary texts of plays, entirely transforming them into rough scenarios; this worked effectively in some cases, less so in others.

Kurtz further illuminates the variant ways Copeau's troupe gained international recognition for the originality and freshness of their performances. When Copeau disbanded the group in the late 1920s, their reputation was well-established and Copeau's techniques were well-formed. As Kurtz contends, the seeds had been sown and ultimately flowered on French stages and within the experiments of numerous international artists inspired by Copeau's concepts for the rest of the twentieth century.

Kurtz is well-prepared to explore Copeau's ideas in large measure because he himself is a theatrical experimenter. He worked as Erwin Piscator's assistant and dramaturg and also supervised a UNESCO theater program and, although he never worked with Copeau, he was a Copeau disciple (Kurtz includes a letter he

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received from Copeau in the text). Kurtz, as an artist himself, is able to dissect Copeau's techniques and influences in ways that few scholars have approached. He most persuasively explains Copeau's ability to remain steadfast in his convictions in the face of seemingly overwhelming indifference—even hostility—to his seemingly radical ideas. Kurtz views Copeau's commitment, independence, and continued openness to further experimentation as an inspiration to future artists. Kurtz eloquently argues that Copeau is a model for the artist-as-visionary in the areas of creating a theatre built on teamwork, community, commitment to the social importance of the stage, and passionate professionalism that is a foundation for many of the outstanding international theatre companies at work today.

Jacques Copeau: Biography of a Theater is well-organized. Kurtz offers an initial chapter in which he reconstructs the French theatre into which Copeau thrust himself, examining why a Copeau was necessary. In subsequent chapters, Kurtz looks at the Vieux Colombier's initial struggles of formation, its heady seasons in New York City from 1917 to 1919, its acclaim in Paris following the First World War, and its slow dissolution during the 1920s as Copeau's actors split off to form their own companies. In the final two chapters, Kurtz traces Copeau's influence, both through his company members and the dissemination of his concepts throughout international theatres. Most interesting are the connections Kurtz points out between Copeau and Albert Camus, the great existentialist who wrote that "In the history of the French theatre, there are two periods: before Copeau and after Copeau."

Kurtz's well-written text is amply annotated, a useful bibliography is appended, and several excellent illustrations of Copeau and his productions are well-reproduced in this handsomely bound volume. More importantly, Kurtz's lively prose and well-formulated theorizing brings to life Copeau's enlivening theatrical concepts and the robust energies of his extraordinary company.

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***The Screaming Body*.** By Stephen Barber. London: Creation Books, 1999; pp. 126, 25 illustrations. $19.95 paperback.

The Secret Art of Antonin Artaud. By Jacques Derrida and Paule Thévenin. Translated by Mary Ann Caws. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998; pp.148, 10 illustrations. $16.00 paperback.

***Antonin Artaud: The Man and His Work*.** By Martin Esslin. London: John Calder, 1999; pp. 127. $13.95 paperback.

Reviewed by James L. Penner, University of Southern California

Following the centennial celebration of Antonin Artaud's 1896 birth, a series of scholarly works on Artaud have appeared. Stephen Barber's *The*

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Screaming Body and Jacques Derrida and Paule Thévenin's *The Secret Art of Antonin Artaud* are concerned with Artaud's non-theatrical works—his drawings and audio recordings—and John Calder Publications has begun reissuing Martin Esslin's *Antonin Artaud: The Man and His Work*, a book that was first published in 1976, and six volumes of Artaud's *Collected Works* in translation. These publications come on the heels of several major Artaud exhibitions. Artaud's drawings have appeared at the Centre Georges Pompidou (1987 and 1994), Marseilles' Musée Cantini (1995), and New York's Museum of Modern Art (1996). Retrospectives of Artaud's work in the cinema—Artaud appeared in twenty-three films during the 1920s and early 1930s—were held at Centre Georges Pompidou in 1987, and in London, at the National Film Theatre, in 1993. And finally, Artaud's radio project, *To Have Done With The Judgement of God* (*Pour en finir avec le jugement de Dieu*), previously unavailable to scholars, was released in its entirety on compact disc in France, in 1995. The controversial recording, which was recorded six weeks before Artaud's death in 1948, was originally banned by the French director of the Radiodiffusion Française and labeled "blasphemous" and "obscene." The ubiquity of Artaud's work and the current scholarly interest in Artaud cannot really be called a revival because Artaud has never gone out of fashion. In fact, Artaud's reputation—both in France and in non-Francophone cultures—has never been higher. Since the 1960s, Artaud's poetry, letters, and essays on dramatic theory have inspired theatre practitioners throughout the world.

These scholarly works by Esslin, Derrida, and Thévenin, and Barber all approach Artaud from disparate critical angles; their respective interests and emphases are indicative of how Artaudian scholarship has shifted in the last fifty years. In his lifetime and shortly after his death, Artaud was regarded as an iconoclastic thinker who was also a "madman." Artaud's mental illness gave his immediate peers and many scholars pause. Much like a Poean unreliable narrator, Artaud's apocalyptic rants about the wholesale destruction of Western culture and the text-centered theatrical tradition were read with a mixture of distrust and fascination; moreover, Artaud's failed theatrical productions and his confinement in the Rodez asylum were offered as the proof of his ineffectuality. In the 1960s, Artaud re-emerged as a major dramatic theorist and prophetic hero of the counterculture. The first wave of revisionist writings in the 1960s and 1970s attempted to reclaim Artaud and re-establish his importance. To a certain extent, Esslin's work can be placed in this tradition, but with one caveat: Esslin has clear misgivings about the counterculture's misappropriation of Artaud's teachings in the 1960s; he somewhat unconvincingly argues that the French student revolutionaries were wrong to invoke Artaud's name when they took to the streets during the May 1968 uprising. To disentangle Artaud from the hippies and the student radicals, Esslin presents himself as the detached scholar who will approach Artaud and his mythic presence with clear-headed objectivity. Esslin's judicious study is still an excellent introduction to Artaud's life, theatrical productions, and aesthetic thought. Most importantly, Esslin provides a concise and cogent critical summation of Artaud's dramatic theory and his philosophical

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belief in the inadequacy of human speech. Artaud maintained that Western theatre was obsessed with the pedestrian notion that art should be an imitation of reality. For Artaud, performance must privilege the immediate experience of the live event and disregard both the fetish for illusionism and the desire to reproduce "accurate" and "realistic" human behavior on the stage. Esslin manages to elucidate Artaud's esoteric thought and dramatic theory without need of neologisms or theoretical clutter. Perhaps the only aspect of Esslin's scholarship that sounds dated is his tone of scholarly detachment (recent writers like Barber, Derrida, and Thévenin will adopt a more partisan view of Artaud). Esslin's scholarly detachment is less a fault and more an indication of how our attitudes and perspectives toward psychological dysfunction and mental illness have shifted in the last thirty years. In our confessional age, Artaud's personal revelations and aberrant behavior are less likely to be regarded as unseemly.

Esslin's book is divided into roughly two sections; the first three chapters provide a biographical sketch of Artaud's tumultuous life; the last five attempt to assess his dramatic theory and his cultural significance. Esslin is best when he attempts to distill and categorize Artaud's dramatic theory and quasi-mystical thought. At one point, Esslin convincingly labels Artaud a "romantic vitalist" and "a believer in the healing power of the life force, the power of man's natural instinct as against dry-as-dust rationalism, logical reasoning based on linguistic subtlety; he supported the head, the body, and its emotions against the rarefied abstractions of the mind" (80). Esslin also suggests that Artaud's dramatic theory follows Nietzsche's path in *The Birth of Tragedy*, with one key qualification: "Artaud rejected the Apollonian element altogether and put his trust in the dark forces of Dionysian vitality with all their violence and mystery. If these forces could be activated through the theatre, incarnated by the theatre, Artaud hoped that mankind might be diverted from their disastrous path that led towards an increasing atrophying of their instincts which amounted to the death of their vitality and eventual extinction" (80). Artaud's rejection of the written text as a basis for the performative event and the apocalyptic tone of Artaud's *To Have Done With The Judgement Of God* (1948) certainly echoes Esslin's romantic vitalist interpretation. In the past, theatre scholars have paid a great deal of attention to Artaud's directorial failures—his adaptations of Strindberg's *The Dream Play* and Shelley's *The Cenci*—and are quick to point out Artaud's reliance on the literary text and how his own productions seem to contradict his own theories. However, perhaps theatre scholars should devote more attention to his audio recordings which are arguably a more theoretically consistent application of his dramatic theory. To his credit, Esslin recognizes the importance of the last phase of Artaud's work—the audio recordings—and how they can be regarded as "the true fulfillment of his ideas about the theatre of cruelty" (74). Esslin also connects "Artaud's . . . spine-chilling screams and banging of gongs . . . [to the] madly inspired . . . utterances of the Pythia at Delphoi talking in a holy trance, or the chants of a shaman through whom the voices of Gods and Demons speak" (74). Some twenty-five years later, Esslin's

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Antonin Artaud:The Man and His Work is still a lively and engaging work; his astute criticism and his keen understanding of the history of performance provide the reader with a lucid interpretation of Artaud's thought and dramatic theory.

Barber's *The Screaming Body* (1999) is a follow-up to his terse biography, *Antonin Artaud Blows and Bombs*, which was published in 1993. In this illustrated study (which includes twelve reproductions of Artaud's drawings), Barber describes the three areas of Artaud's *oeuvre* that have received less attention in the English speaking world: his film scripts, drawings, and audio recordings. In Barber's study, Artaud is less a prophet and visionary and more an artist in his right. But Barber is quick to point out how Artaud anticipates many of the trends and techniques in postwar performance art: the attempt to blur the distinction between life and art and the desire to obliterate the mimetic impulse in theatre and performance. In Artaud's controversial audio recordings and drawings, the body, both mutilated and screaming, becomes the locus of Artaud's performative event. Barber notes that Artaud called the recording "*bruitages* or 'noise effects' . . . screams, cries, dialogues in an invented language, percussion and bangs" (97). For Barber, these sounds "constitute Artaud's ultimate struggle with language—the interrogation, the fragmentation and the concentration of language to discover a way of viscerally conveying the body through language" (98). Artaud's recording is an assault on what he termed the "dictatorship of speech," and the notion of a text-based theatre. Barber's insightful commentary and the reproductions of Artaud's drawings provide an intelligent and much needed introduction to Artaud's non-theatrical work; *The Screaming Body* is useful because it illuminates works that have typically been neglected by theatre historians.

Much like Barber's *The Screaming Body*, Derrida and Thévenin's *The Secret Art of Antonin Artaud* is concerned with Artaud's non-theatrical work; the book focuses on Artaud's artwork and the drawings that were produced during the last decade of his life. Thévenin was Artaud's assistant during the years before his death (1946–48) and was instrumental in helping him find a convalescent home after he had been released from the notorious Rodez asylum; she was also an actress who appeared in his audio recordings. Her essay provides a somewhat useful biographical overview of Artaud's drawings. In some instances, her personal knowledge of Artaud's life and work sheds light on his aesthetic technique and how his drawings were shaped by specific events in his life. Due to a dispute between Artaud's heirs and Thévenin, the book unfortunately does not contain reproductions of Artaud's artwork. The fact that these works have not been included is a severe handicap that this book never really overcomes: Thévenin muses about drawings that the reader cannot see and Derrida, never known for his brevity or lucidity, is, in some respects, even less helpful. Derrida's "To Unsense the Subjectile" is primarily concerned with Artaud's aesthetic technique. In laymen's terms, the essay basically suggests that Artaud is a proto-deconstructionist (Derrida would certainly object to this term)

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who was keenly aware of the limitations of language, reason, and logic. Artaud's entire aesthetic strategy is the attempt to overcome this dilemma (i.e., thought cannot be represented in speech). There is, of course, no remedy to the predicament. To illustrate the paradox of representation, Artaud uses the term "subjectile," which implies the aspects of the self that cannot be represented in language. In this case, the "subjectile" signifies a negative statement; as Derrida points out, "Artaud doesn't speak of the subjectile, only of what is called by this name" (63). The concept of the "subjectile" is later linked to the notion of "unsensing": the act of losing one's reason. In terms of aesthetic technique, Derrida also calls this process "jetée" or throwing. Artaud's technique is akin to "hurling himself into the experience of . . . throwing" (75). Hence, there can be no finished product only a canvas or a drawing that records the trajectory of the attempt. The notion of "jetée" can be used to describe Artaud's drawings. For Artaud, the essence of art is not the tangible product, but rather "an act or an energy . . . [and] . . . the very energy of its spilling over" (89). Artaud's aesthetic technique in drawing can also be applied to his audio recordings. Hence, Artaud's glossolalia and primal shrieks in *To Have Done With The Judgement of God* (1948) can be understood as verbal or theatrical "jetée."

Derrida's "To Unsense the Subjectile" is a meandering essay that is bound to tire and frustrate most readers; it is written in an obfuscatory style and includes a large dose of deconstructionist prattle: endless etymological discussions, a fondness for neologisms, and much pretentious speculation about what is said and not being said. Despite the book's stylistic shortcomings, it would be a serious mistake to entirely dismiss Derrida's writings on Artaud. Readers who are interested in Derrida's understanding of Artaud's dramatic theory would be advised to consult his "La parole soufflée" and "The Theater of Cruelty and the Closure of Representation." These two perceptive essays, which are published in *Writing and Difference* (1978), are written in a more engaging style, and they cogently describe the antiverbal thrust of Artaud's attack on mimesis: the eradication of speech-based theatre and the attempt to write through the human body.

Recent scholarship on Artaud clearly suggests that we need to move beyond the rather obvious notion that Artaud's work is prophetic and the suggestion that his work anticipates the aesthetic milieu of postwar avant-garde performance. Instead, it would be more useful to regard Artaud as a modernist artist who produced his own autonomous works of art; hence, his audio recordings and drawings should be viewed as examples of Artaudian praxis and not merely as works of art that foreshadow postmodernism. The audio recordings are instructive because they elucidate, if nothing else, the practical and philosophical limitations of his radical critique of mimesis and text-based theatre.

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Postmodern / Drama: Reading the Contemporary Stage. By Stephen Watt. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1998; pp. viii + 220, $ 42.50 hardcover.

Reviewed by Dean Wilcox, North Carolina School of the Arts

While it might not be a stretch to get scholars and critics to agree that the work of people like Robert Wilson and Richard Foreman are postmodern, asking the same folks to agree upon this categorization for Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, and Sam Shepard might be more challenging. Stephen Watt address this issue of classification with regards to drama, which for Watt excludes "performance," to concentrate on "what writers write" (4). This is not an easy task since, as Watt points out, the very idea of postmodernism dissolves "neatly sutured categories, such as genres themselves" (8). With this understanding, which prompts the dialectical slash in the book's title, Watt searches for a way to "begin to unravel the taut conceptual skein that results from the paradoxical union of the two terms" (13).

Watt further problematizes this rift by suggesting that there are at least two postmodernisms, one related to high modernism and the other consummated and consumed by the MTV generation. While this is an adequate assessment, it never quite addresses the difference in using the term as a periodizing concept and as a stylistic approach. This is further confounded by Watt's use of a plethora of postmodern critics that, with the exception of Jean Baudrillard, he never fully explicates. To be fair, a simple and straightforward definition of postmodernism is impossible, something Watt gleefully acknowledges by stating that he embarked on this project expecting that "as many questions will remain unanswered as were resolved" (7).

Readers willing to support Watt's resistance to defining postmodernism and willing to embrace his understanding that cleanly resolved conclusions do not really apply will undoubtedly enjoy this stance; those that pine for the stability of concise resolutions may not. Watt's claim is that up until this point there has been scant work done on postmodern drama as such, alluding to the fact that much of these critical energies have been siphoned off by performance studies. In attempting to rectify this situation, Watt virtually ignores performance and devotes all of his energies to the text, despite, or because of the fact that postmodernism challenges this privileged status. I continued to wonder how Watt would handle performance material that slips through the text and yet is still a part of the performative reception of the text. How, for instance, does one read, as Watt does, Churchill's *Cloud 9* without dealing with the idea of cross-gender and cross-racial casting?

After working to construct a set of analytical tools that prepare the reader to "read betwixt and between . . . genres, cultural registers, center and ever

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changing margins" (56), Watt plunges into the question of whether Beckett's works should be considered postmodern, a question that he, in true postmodern style, refuses to answer. He is deliberately inconclusive yet leads the reader toward conclusions with the warning of "careful" in relation to the postmodernity of Joyce and Beckett (87). Watt's energies are devoted to pondering the stability of Beckett's characters vis-à-vis memory and objects, questioning their nomadic qualities with a discussion of Gómez-Peña's idea of a "borderless future." Truly, next to Gómez-Peña's characters, Beckett's seem downright modernistically contained, and yet Watt never really gets to the heart of Beckett's postmodernism. While his focus on character enables him to state that both Beckett and Joyce "anticipate postmodernist representations of subjectivity" (79), he never begins to address the open-ended, fragmented, and repetitive qualities of Beckett's dramaturgy.

Moving from Beckett to Pinter, Watt explores the "textual flatness" and "horizontal" narrative qualities of Pinter's later, more "political" work, which eschews structural depth for an aesthetic allegiance to the surface (93). Complete with postmodern buzzwords like parody, irony, and indeterminacy, Watt's approach to Pinter appears as if it would transcend his textual analysis of Beckett, but he avoids moving beyond a surface reading. Because Watt spends his time analyzing narrative as opposed to structure, his focus is on texts that document the existence of postmodern societies, not necessarily texts that are stylistically postmodern. Even when addressing such a fragmented piece as Lucas's *Reckless,* his focus is on content, story, narrative, and not on how this narrative is constructed.

From Pinter, Watt sets out to explicate the "Baudrillardian qualities of American drama over the past quarter-century or so" (128). The bulk of this analysis is devoted to the work of Shepard, David Mamet, Arthur Kopit, and David Rabe, who document the "recuperation of phallic prerogatives" (142) via texts that deal either head-on or tangentially with the film and television industries. Watt eventually addresses Finley's *The Theory of Total Blame* and Moraga's *Giving Up the Ghost* in the final chapter, not as feminist parallels to the machismo of the above authors, but as examples of the absorption of contemporary media imagery within the context of the drama. Here he discusses plays about a postmodern world in which women are either subjugated, killed, or act as castrators, as film and television "invades its viewers' psyches, shaping conceptions of self, gender, and of Otherness" (167).

For all of his desire to open up these plays to the larger cultural sphere, Watt does not seem to develop the tools for analyzing them short of describing the narratives as postmodern. While the work of Wilson, Foreman, and the Wooster Group fall out of Watt's category of "drama" due to the performative quality of their "texts," I couldn't help but question why he omitted the work of Charles Mee, Suzan-Lori Parks, Megan Terry, Heiner Müller, and Tony Kushner, all of which would have allowed him to transcend a surface reading and delve

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into the fragmented postmodern landscape that MTV has helped spawn. The strength of Watt's text rests on his willingness to engage in a dialogue about how drama as a writerly category has been affected by theory and culture. For those not ready, or willing, to dive headlong into the morass that is postmodern theatre, this text offers a pleasant wade into the waters of postmodern theory and practice via texts by well-known authors. While embedded in this discussion of postmodern / drama are wisely unresolved paradoxes that urge further consideration, I could not help but wonder in the end if Watt's desire to provide one of the first studies of this material would not be better served without the slash.

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***Trevor Griffiths: Politics, Drama, History*.** By Stanton B. Garner, Jr. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1999; pp. 317. $49.50 hardcover.

Reviewed by John E. O'Connor, Fairmont State College

Trevor Griffiths first made his presence felt in British theatre with the 1970 production of *Occupations*, his account of the 1920 factory occupations in Turin, Italy. For the past three decades, he has produced a considerable body of work for stage, television, and film. Griffiths's journey as a writer reflects his lifelong commitment to the socialist cause in England, his exploration of the contradictions inherent in revolutionary politics, and his own struggles as a radical writer working within a capitalist system.

Stanton B. Garner's *Trevor Griffiths: Politics, Drama, History*, part of the University of Michigan Press's excellent "Theater: Theory/Text/Performance" series, is the first comprehensive study in English of all of Griffiths's work. The volume includes analyses of, and context for, thirteen stage plays, eleven works for television, eight screenplays, and one radio drama. One of the many positive features of this excellent study is Garner's analysis of the symbiotic relationship between the plays written for the stage and those written for television and film. His readings of the stage plays highlight Griffiths's increasing interest in the politics of medium and representation, and his recent efforts to create a theatrical language that incorporates a critique of the process of the mediatization of politics.

Garner's analysis also focuses on what he considers to be Griffiths's major preoccupations as a committed socialist writer: an acute awareness of class structure, a commitment to history as a field for political and cultural intervention, a dialectical view of social and individual reality and the negotiation of the contradictions within that dialectic, and an ongoing exploration of the nature of revolution. Additionally, his analysis incorporates an investigation of Griffiths's idea of "strategic penetration," writing within and against cultural institutions in an attempt to expose their conservative hegemony.

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Garner approaches the works in a chronological order, employing a developmental strategy that places the later plays within the context of the earlier works. The Introduction presents the methodological strategies Garner applies in his analysis. Chapter 1, "Educations," provides a brief biographical sketch, focusing on those experiences that have affected Griffiths's work. These include teaching positions, a job as the further education officer for the BBC, and his affiliation with the New Left movement in the late 1950s and 1960s. The chapter includes analyses of five early works written during the 1960s, with an emphasis on Griffiths's earliest full-length play, *Sam, Sam*.

Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5 cover the period of the 1970s. The chapter titles, "Occupying History," "Politics and Sexuality," "Medium, Reflexivity, Counternarrative: Griffiths in Television," and "Class Comedy, Classic Texts," provide a convenient shorthand description of the thematic issues and dramaturgical strategies incorporated in the texts under Garner's scrutiny. There are readings of the major stage works of this period, *Occupations, The Party*, and *Comedians*, as well as analyses of Griffiths's forays into television drama. The latter group includes *Absolute Beginners*, written for the BBC's *Fall of Eagles* series; *Such Impossibilities*, about the Labour and socialist activist, Tom Mann; and *Bill Brand*, an eleven episode series about a Labour MP that explores the possibilities of parliamentary socialism.

Chapters 6 and 7, "Thatcherism and the Myth of Nation" and "Screen/Plays," cover Griffiths's dramatic output during the 1980s. Garner first describes the salient characteristics of "Thatcherism," the ideology of the British New Right, and its deleterious effect on the Left. His analysis of the works of this period focuses on Griffiths's exploration of the politics of Britishness, the relationship between history and myth, and the growing racial and class divisions in British society. The works covered include the television plays *Country* and *Oi for England*, the seven-part television series about the failed Scott expedition, *The Last Place on Earth*, the films *Reds* and *Fatherland*, and the stage play *Real Dreams*.

Chapter 7, "Politics over the Gulf," provides analyses of Griffiths's work in the early 1990s. Garner begins with a consideration of the context for the plays with an emphasis on the post–cold war and postmodern sensibilities of the final decade of the twentieth century. The plays covered include *The Gulf between Us*, Griffiths's response to the Gulf War, and *Thatcher's Children*, about a group of youths who came of age in the 1980s.

Chapter 9, "Specters of History," takes its title from Jacques Derrida's *Specters of Marx*. Garner analyzes Griffiths's most recent television plays from the perspective of the "liminality of a socialist past" (252) and the politics of memory. He characterizes *Hope in the Year Two*, about the last hours of Danton, and *Food for Ravens*, a meditation on the life of socialist and Labour politician Aneurin Bevan, as dream-like, reflexive explorations of the issues of the legacy

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of socialism and the responsibility of committed socialists at the end of the millennium.

Garner's readings are consistently penetrating. His plot summaries are complete, concise, and written so as to motivate the reader to read the plays. His cogent analysis is always sympathetic but never fawning, acknowledging and coming to terms with the occasional flaws in Griffiths's work. In particular these include insensitivity about women and women's issues in the revolutionary context in the early works, and a maudlin sentimentalism about the past in the later works. Garner's analysis exhibits careful research. He provides concise explanations of historical, political, and social contexts, and his analysis often goes beyond texts to confront issues of production, process, and critical response. He relies heavily on Griffiths's own words from published interviews and prefaces, as well as personal correspondence and interviews he conducted with Griffiths.

One might argue that a volume dedicated to a socialist writer might be out of place in a period when capitalism has seemingly triumphed. Griffiths deserves the attention Garner gives him, not only for his seminal work in the 1970s, but even more for his continued exploration of the possibilities for politically committed theatre in the new millennium. Garner writes in the Introduction, "Griffiths has been at the forefront of those writers working to rethink the aesthetic and representational assumptions of political theater and to evolve a dramatic practice for the changing political and cultural world of this century's end" (15).

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African Theatre in Development. Edited by Martin Banham, James Gibbs, and Femi Osofisan. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999; pp. x + 182. $39.95 cloth; $18.95 paper.

Reviewed by I. Peter Ukpokodu, University of Kansas

The year of publication of *African Theatre in Development* is significant. In the immediate years preceding its 1999 release, important works that mark the march of progress in African theatre had been published: Martin Banham, Errol Hill, and George Woodyard's *The Cambridge Guide to African and Caribbean Theatre* (1994), Eckhard Breitinger's *Theatre and Performance in Africa* (1994), Marion Frank's *AIDS-Education Through Theatre* (1995), Jane Plastow's *African Theatre and Politics* (1996), David Kerr's *African Popular Theatre* (1996), Karin Barber, John Collins, and Alain Ricard's *West African Popular Theatre* (1997), Don Rubin's *The World Encyclopedia of Contemporary Theatre, Volume 3, Africa* (1997), Oga Steve *Abah's Performing Life: Case Studies in the Practice of Theatre for Development* (1997), Robert Mshengu Kavanagh's *Making People's Theatre* (1997), Kamal Salhi's *African Theatre for Development: Art for Self-*

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Determination (1998), and Jane Taylor's *Ubu and the Truth Commission* (1998). Published as if with one eye on a *fin de siècle* assessment of past theatrical achievements and the other on millennial aspirations, *African Theatre in Development* is mostly a case-by-case study of how theatre has been developed in Africa, and how it has been used in and for development. It is the first in Indiana University Press's nascent African Theatre series edited by Martin Banham, James Gibbs, and Femi Osofisan, all eminent scholars of African theatre.

Structurally, *African Theatre in Development* is in four parts: articles, noticeboard, playwriting, and reviews. The section on articles is the most prominent part of the book. The opening essay by Carolyn Duggan, "Strategies in Staging: Theatre Technique in the Plays of Zakes Mda," examines the convergence of African roots and European theatrical techniques in Mda's South African plays. Guided by a firm belief that theatre must be directed towards popular liberation, Mda's plays are centered on African proletarian characters, themes, and settings, but he uses Bertolt Brecht's techniques of the Epic theatre, with emphasis on *Verfremdungseffekt*, as his medium of dramatic expression.

James Gibbs's essay is an excursion to the colonial Gold Coast (contemporary Ghana), where Alec Dickson's interest in mass education, community development, and social welfare on a national level led him to champion drama as a development tool before "theatre for development" came into current discourse and practice. It is Gibbs's suggestion that Dickson "be regarded as a pioneer in the use of drama within the context of a national community development on the West African coast" (p. 13).

The radical use of Creole, instead of English and French, in the development of post-colonial theatre in Mauritius, is the preoccupation of Roshni Mooneeram's "Theatre in Development in Mauritius." Drawing attention to the plays of Dev Virahsawmy, Azize Asgarally, and Henri Favory, Mooneeram argues that writing in Creole is a political stance against an exploitative class system, and that "Creole is the only language that can translate the experiences and cultures of Mauritius for the stage" (p. 25). He critically examines representative plays for corroboration, some existing on several intertextual planes.

In "Telling the Lion's Tale," collaborators and their students discuss their experiences at the Eritrea Community-based Theatre Project in 1997. The project was designed to offer basic theatre training and skills to Eritreans, to guide the native participants to achieve a level of excellence over time that would enable them to create and to assume power and control in their own community theatres, and to "create a sustainable network of theatre groups in Eritrea which can mutually support each other" (p. 39). The enthusiastic response, positive development, and visible success were disrupted when

political tensions and antagonisms that had been simmering between Ethiopia and Eritrea boiled over to an explosive war in 1998. Sadly, many of the actors were mobilized for war, foreigners were evacuated, and a theatre project pregnant with a vigorous cultural affirmation was aborted.

Extending the focus on Eritrea, Jane Plastow introduces Alemseged Tesfai, an Eritrean playwright whose theatrical vision is shaped by the country's liberation struggle. A former member of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, Alemseged's plays are mostly "agit-prop on behalf of the struggle"; but his central characters are not the warfront soldiers, "but those working to support the struggle behind the scenes" (p.57), mostly women. Plastow points out that she and Alemseged share a common vision of artistic liberation—that all arts be set free (p. 59).

A succeeding essay by Chuck Mike and members of the Performance Studio Workshop (PSW), a Lagos (Nigeria)-based theatre laboratory with a focus on community development and empowerment among other things, discusses a theatre outreach workshop in a community in southwestern Nigeria. Collaborating with the Theatre for Development (TFD) Cell of the Department of Theatre Arts at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, the PSW targeted a community to perform, discuss, and implement action on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Because of the topicality of FGM vis-à-vis a strong conservative cultural edifice bent on preserving female circumcision, the PSW brought in a formidable team of the local government health officer, a Ford Foundation representative, a MacArthur Foundation representative, and a representative of the Association for Reproductive and Family Health to help facilitate discussion and enlighten the community about the "physical, sociological and legal implications of FGM on the lives of women and girls" (p. 64) as dramatized by the PSW.

In "Art as Tool, Weapon or Shield?" David Kerr directs attention to a seminar on Arts and Development in Harare (Zimbabwe) in 1997. With a keen sense of history and drawing on personal involvement, Kerr discusses the successes and failures of earlier workshops and conferences on Theatre for Development (TFD) in Southern Africa. He points out how the "betrayal of radical energy and solidarity . . . made many popular theatre workers in Africa retreat from networking" (p. 81). At the Harare seminar, the role of mediated arts and technology in development was hotly contested and unresolved, among other things. Kerr argues that the principal challenge for practitioners is the mobilization of communities "against an iniquitous world system" (p. 86).

Jumai Ewu's contribution is a review of the workshop on Arts and Development II held in Ibadan (Nigeria), 1998. The main thrust of the workshop was to further the discussion begun in Harare, on how TFD should relate to funding agencies' demands without losing its sense of purpose. Ewu

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also discusses the participants' unease with the fact that most TFD programs are based in academic institutions, and their perception that literary, political theatre could be complementary to TFD.

Frances Harding's penultimate article compares two TFD workshops in Benue and Katsina (both in Nigeria) that are separated by fifteen years. Her conclusion is that one was more relaxed than the other, and that the use of local performance modes was most striking. While some form of song or dance was peripheral to a Benue TFD performance, in Katsina it was central, thus allowing the articulation and analysis of development issues in familiar performance contexts.

The concluding essay in the section of articles belongs to Jan Cohen-Cruz whose "Practice and Policy in Theatre & Development" draws examples from an international, not specifically African, workshop/seminar in London. Though the techniques of Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* excessively dominated the gathering, Cohen-Cruz points out that at an informal brainstorming session, the relationships between theatre and development were summed up not only by identifying theatre's role in personal and social or community development but in seeing theatre itself as development.

The Noticeboard section of the book, compiled by James Gibbs, informs readers about various African theatrical activities and news. Focus of news ranges from patterns of theatre development in Nigeria, Ghana, Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, and South Africa to publications and productions. The subsection, "Who Pays for What?" wades into the contentious funding of African artistic and literary activities, revealing that most of the easily recognizable ones such as *Black Orpheus* and *Transition* had been funded by the CIA, and that other agencies such as the Ford, Rockefeller, and Farfield Foundations, the British Council, the Goethe Institute, and governmental agencies from the United States, Sweden, and Canada continue to fund theatre projects in Africa. Gibbs concludes entries in the Noticeboard section by remarking on the importance of the Internet and encourages African theatre to take advantage of it.

The section on playwriting features Agbo Sikuade's *Babalawo: Mystery-Master*. It is a play in which the lives of a Babalawo (medicine man), Umar (police superintendent), and Lape (wife of Aremo, the crown-prince) are intertwined because of Taju's (Babalawo's assistant) greed and manipulations. The central character, Babalawo, combines the understanding of the power, fear, and reverence by which he is regarded with his knowledge of both traditional and Western scientific medicine to relieve people's problems.

The final section of the book concentrates on book reviews. A good index follows.

African Theatre in Development is a rare publication that seems to combine the qualities of a monograph and an academic journal. Its description

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and analysis of theatrical practices for, and in development are a strong affirmation that African theatre need not be a replica of Western theatre, and that an economically strapped African theatre need not abjure its populist, open-arena, village-square, street format for an auditorium to validate itself. The editors' choice of practices representative of various African countries is indicative of the spread of theatre for/in development; if examples from Nigeria are predominant, it is because that nation dwarfs every other African nation in sheer size and practices. In well chosen, strong terms that seemingly bespeak of TFD's holy struggle as "against an iniquitous world system" (p. 86) in which NGOs work as the "shock absorbers" and "bandages" of G7 capitalist countries' domination of, and wounding of Third World nations (p. 85), *African Theatre in Development* invites a reflective discussion on the relationship between theatre and global economics. The book makes it almost impossible to ignore the strangulation by the imposed structural adjustment policy (SAP) of the jugular vein of Africa's material and human resources.

The inclusion of a new play in *African Theatre in Development* establishes that African theatre has a vigorous future that defies SAP-inflicted injuries. The play has endearing qualities. Yoruba words and phrases are so dexterously built into the main dialogue that their meanings are clear; they neither require a glossary nor distract from the focus. An image of the Babalawo as a man of all seasons is created. He is scientifically very contemporary and unfettered by the stereotypical expectation of casting the "opele" (cowries, palm nuts, kola nuts) on an "opon Ifa" (divination tray) as the only source of knowledge. In spite of some minor errors—"ambigious" (p. 85), "even although" (p. 100), "Lapo" (p. 131), and Babalawo's two successive dialogues when there is no other intervening speaker or character (pp. 127 and 133)—*African Theatre in Development* presents a wealth of knowledge not readily available. Its unique structure allows it to accomplish what is almost impossible in other books. It is a pacesetter for the successive issues under the African Theatre series.

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The Dramatic Art of Athol Fugard: From South Africa to the World. By Albert Wertheim. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000; pp. 273. $39.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by Christopher Olsen, Montgomery College/Community College of Baltimore County

One of the most celebrated African writers of a generation, Athol Fugard has come to be regarded as a great playwright throughout the world. This white South African playwright witnessed firsthand the tyranny and eventual transformation of his racially polarized country into a multicultural society. Beginning with his play *No-Good Friday* (1958) about black African township life, Fugard has created a large body of work which includes plays about the

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destructiveness of racial apartheid, the alienation within families, and the role of artists in society. Although Fugard often writes autobiographically, dramatizing scenes and characters from his past, he has refrained from documenting political events in a sweeping social allegory of South African repression. On the contrary, as Wertheim points out, Fugard emulates the minimalist staging and style of Samuel Beckett by letting his disenfranchised and alienated characters speak for themselves about their condition in an inhumane society.

Albert Wertheim, an English professor at Indiana University and a frequent writer on South African literature and theatre, has produced the first comprehensive analysis of Fugard's plays since Russell Vandenbroucke's 1985 study. Although Fugard's work has been mentioned in numerous articles and studies on African theatre, Wertheim offers the first content analysis of all his plays in chronological order from *No-Good Friday* through his most recent work, *The Captain's Tiger* (1997). Himself a witness of Fugard's theatre around the world, and a frequent interviewer of the playwright, Wertheim adds a witness's testimony to this remarkable, politically-charged artistic career.

Wertheim states that his goal is to discuss the issues raised by the plays and analyze the ways in which Fugard "uses drama and dramaturgy to present his insights (xi)." Wertheim's approach is based in dramaturgical anaylsis rather than beginning with the historical context of South African anti-apartheid writing. Wertheim's predecessors—Dennis Walder and Russell Vandebroucke, in particular—found it important to define Fugard's work in a political context and as an expression of resistance to the apartheid government of South Africa in the 1980s. This expression may no longer be necessary in the new South Africa of the twenty-first century.

Wertheim's most successful chapters dissect Fugard's most enduring and satisfying plays, some of which are not produced often. In his chapter on the Port Elizabeth plays, Wertheim points out that Fugard developed his craft by distilling complicated social issues into minimalist settings with no more than two or three characters as mouthpieces. *Hello and Goodbye* and *People Are Living There*, for example, are still to this day relatively unknown plays about alienated Afrikaner characters, yet they stand as precursors to so many of Fugard's plays. Wertheim makes a convincing argument that the dramatic form of the playwright's early work was replicated in his later output.

Except for his groundbreaking 1961 play, *The Blood Knot*, Fugard's reputation as an anti-apartheid playwright was not widely known in western Europe and the States. In his chapter on "Acting Against Apartheid," Wertheim chronicles the influences of Fugard's colleagues in his theatre company, the Serpent Players. John Kani and Winston Ntshona co-authored the "Fugard" plays that brought him international fame. Wertheim clarifies *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* and *The Island* as examples of collective creation in which dramatic versions of actual experiences of the two actors were developed through

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improvisation. Both plays were never formally written down (for fear of confiscation under censorship law) and were only published after the plays had been performed abroad to critical acclaim.

Wertheim's book focuses most closely on the often acknowledged masterpieces of Fugard's cannon—*Master Harold . . . and the Boys* (1982) and *The Lesson from Aloes* (1977). Both plays, reveal the "qualities that enabled the Afrikaners to survive and tame South African wilderness . . . and to institute and vigorously maintain the full apartheid system" (134). *Master Harold* opened at the Yale Repertory Theatre and won several Tony awards. Perhaps Fugard's most autobiographical piece, the play is set in 1950 in a tea-room where his alter ego, Halley, conveys the inherent racism of South Africa. *Aloes* opened in England to mixed reviews and shows the division within the white African culture between the British and Afrikaners as depicted by an unhappily married couple. Though he clearly admires the play itself, Wertheim seems to underestimate the influence of *Master Harold* and its role in bringing worldwide attention to the injustices of the apartheid regime in 1982. It was my observation that before that play was widely produced in the United States, few Americans knew much about Fugard.

Wertheim calls Fugard's plays of the last decade "an eloquent record of [his] adjustments to the changes in South Africa and to his role as an artist." Wertheim points to the playwright's change from a Grotowski-influenced ritual theatre to a Brechtian political theatre of dialectic. *My Children! My Africa!* (1989), for example, amounts to a debate about the future of South Africa from the standpoint of a teacher, his students, and the audience.

In all, this is an excellent new book, by an author deeply immersed in his subject and fully grounded in documentary research. In addition to his multiple contacts with Fugard, Wertheim has had the benefit of access to Fugard's "Notebooks" (a diary of observations, rehearsal notes, and textual revisions), as well as to a large collection of Fugard papers now in the Lilly Library on the Indiana University campus.

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***Eugene O'Neill: Beyond Mourning and Tragedy*.** By Stephen A. Black. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999; pp. 543. $29.95 hardcover.

Reviewed by William Davies King, University of California—Santa Barbara

Stephen A. Black has brought to an impressive conclusion the important project on which he has been working for a couple of decades, the writing of a psychoanalytic biography of Eugene O'Neill. Black, who is a literature professor, underwent non-medical psychoanalytic training to carry out this work, and the result is a book that conveys both artistic and scientific insight into the self-analytical dramas of O'Neill.

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Previous biographies of O'Neill, of which there are about half a dozen, have brought out the "autobiographical" aspects of the plays, especially the later plays, treating these works as testaments of a life. Of course, as the biographers have noted, most of O'Neill's plays were not written with the aim of telling the author's life story, but along the way they do, and thus the biographer finds that the work of narrating a life has already begun. *Long Day's Journey into Night*, written in 1940, has usually been taken as the starting place for telling the story of O'Neill because it seems to provide a window to that moment in 1912 when he realized the tragic dimensions of his birth family and became the playwright who could grow up to write this consummate American tragedy. Those same biographers must attend to the factual inconsistencies that make this play a problematic document of life history. It is a play, after all, and requires a certain artistic license, but the basic truth of the representation becomes the foundation for the story.

The biography first published in 1962 by Arthur and Barbara Gelb begins with an account of the time when O'Neill wrote this play because here, near the end of his writing career, O'Neill attained that goal he had been seeking since that low moment in 1912; he found a way to make art out of despair. The son of the romantic actor thus came into his own by completing his own heroic self-transformation in an act of truth-telling, and that Monte Cristo plot is the essence of the Gelb narrative. Their already massive biography, revised, augmented, and now divided into three volumes, is being reissued, and the first volume shows that the work remains novelistic, a variation on *Les Miserables*, with individual plays interpreted as "disguised versions of his family mythology" (5). On the other hand, the Gelb biography has the merit of being the work of two extremely diligent and crafty journalists who managed to interview an enormous range of people who had some connection with their topic. Even after their book was published, they continued to pursue leads, write subsidiary stories, and control the journalistic profile of O'Neill by their connection to the *New York Times*.

They also had the good fortune to outlive Louis Sheaffer, the other unflagging biographer of O'Neill, who was less capable as a novelist, but even more dogged in pursuing interview subjects and the telling anecdote. Sheaffer, too, depicts a metamorphic O'Neill, an epitomic artist, who synthesized the dialectics of personal and public history. Sheaffer's papers have since been archived at Connecticut College. Granted, Sheaffer was jealous of the attention the Gelbs garnered by their biography, and expressed a certain bitterness, but it is shocking that the Gelbs, in the first volume of their revised biography, offer not a word of acknowledgment to Sheaffer, though it is clear they have benefited greatly from the Connecticut College papers.

The detail the Gelbs offered in their original volume—rich, significant detail, not trivia—was already impressive. Their biography was always a better read than Sheaffer's two laborious volumes, and a handsomer book. Now,

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however, the revised version seems heavy with extra material, a little larded now. Both Sheaffer and the Gelbs offer portraits that are at once too mythic, too world historical, and too microscopic. They fail to keep in focus a continuous life story.

Stephen Black has written the first coherent analysis of the life and works of O'Neill, and he has done so by opting not to write a biography, at least not one that resembles any of the ones described above. He has not interviewed countless people who might provide insight; he has not made extensive use of the critical, biographical, and historical discourse on O'Neill; he has not sought to recreate the "world" or the milieu of O'Neill. Instead, he has listened as an analyst would to O'Neill on O'Neill, reading his plays, letters, and quoted words as statements of a psychoanalysis—not as autobiography.

O'Neill was reasonably well informed about Freudian analysis at just about the same time as he became a playwright, in the 1910s, so nearly all of what survives as a record of O'Neill as a writer can be understood as at least familiar with that mode of reading. Black argues that O'Neill found a way to use playwriting as a form of self-psychoanalysis. Where autobiography presumably aims at a certain truth of self-disclosure (or self-display), self-psychoanalysis aims for a therapeutic effect, and Black argues that this effect was ultimately achieved by O'Neill in his late plays.

His subtitle, "Beyond Mourning and Tragedy," expresses his sense of the obstacles faced by O'Neill—the problem of coping with a succession of deeply significant losses and a recognition that his place within the doomed situation of his birth family (and its later replacements) might only be expressed as tragedy. As Black shows, all of his plays, even the few that are not explicitly tragic, can be understood in terms of O'Neill's process of working through these obstacles in a self-psychoanalysis.

Black's reading of the plays pays little attention to their success or failure, the critical debates, the theatre historical positioning, or the cultural nexus. A failed play like *Dynamo* (1929) receives close attention for what it says about the author's ongoing struggle. In this respect, Black's book most resembles Travis Bogard's monumental *Contour in Time: The Plays of Eugene O'Neill*, which brings together a biographer's knowledge of the facts with a critic's acute interpretations of the plays, always probing at the roots of the question of what it means for these plays to be called autobiographical. Bogard's readings remain typological, detecting "aspects" of Jamie in one character, Eugene in another, and so on. What Black has done that differs notably from Bogard is to attend to the process of configuring these plays rather than the product. For Black, each play incorporates an extended series of analytic self-encounters. What with the publication of O'Neill's *Work Diary* and various notebooks and the cataloguing of well over three thousand extant O'Neill letters, not to mention the close study of his manuscripts, much more can be known about the composition process

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than earlier biographers had available. Black has made excellent use of these resources, and the result is a book that depicts an artist more notable for his singularity of purpose in writing than for the wild diversity of means intended to accomplish that purpose.

In the process, some familiar great anecdotes get flattened, and the narrative lacks story-telling verve. Indeed, whole episodes of the book could be labeled "more of the same," like most analytic sessions. It is the dull pain, the deep trauma, the ongoing struggle to survive, and the effort to heal that Black registers, and the wavelength of those signals is much longer than the rhythm of the Broadway season or the buying and selling of houses. The other figures in O'Neill's life, especially beyond his birth family, rarely stand forth as more than psychological constructs of O'Neill, again as in an analytic session. They were beside the purpose for Black, as, in a way, they were for O'Neill in the process of his self-analysis. The result is a book that is somewhat dull, page by page, but immensely valuable as a whole. After reading proofs of Barrett Clark's biography of O'Neill, the first book-length life of the playwright, O'Neill could not resist altering it, involving himself in the task of self-representation. Of Clark's portrayal, O'Neill wrote that it "is legend. It isn't really true. It isn't I. And the truth would make a much more interesting—and incredible—legend" (342). As it turned out, in Black's book, the incredible legend has made a much more interesting truth.

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Congressional Theatre. Dramatizing McCarthyism on Stage, Film, and Television. By Brenda Murphy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999; pp. 310. $59.95.

Reviewed by Yvonne Shafer, St. John's University

At the First International Conference on the American Theatre at the University of Málaga, Spain in May 2000, one of the most worthwhile of the many fine papers was the plenary paper by Brenda Murphy, "Tennessee Williams's Metaphors of McCarthyism." An outtake, as it were, from her book on the plays and films written during the McCarthy era in response to the House Un-American Activities Committee hearings, the paper was a close analysis of Tennessee Williams's *Camino Real* (a notable failure in the American theatre), the critical response to it, William's own feelings and political views, and the political situation in America at the time. She also drew many fascinating parallels between the play and the well-known anti-fascist film, *Casablanca*. Like many others, I was eager to read the book.

I was not disappointed. It is quite revelatory and often surprising in its explication of many films and plays, beginning with the Federal Theatre Project in the late 1930s to the end of blacklisting in the 1970s—a much longer time of

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angst and unemployment for screenwriters, directors, and actors than is commonly realized. The breadth and depth of the reaction in America to the HUAC committee work is probably underestimated today, so the book is a welcome reminder of a traumatic time in recent American history. Sheer numbers are often surprising: even the famous "Hollywood Ten" are nineteen.

Although the subject is serious, and even depressing at many points, the book is not without humor. For example, Murphy quotes the exchange between the Dies committee representative, Joseph Starnes, and Federal Theatre project head, Hallie Flanagan, who was being questioned about Communist influence in the FTP. Flanagan had made a reference to Christopher Marlowe, to which Starnes responded: "You are quoting from this Marlowe. Is he a Communist?" Flanagan wrote, "the room rocked with laughter, but I did not laugh. Eight thousand people might lose their jobs because a Congressional Committee had so pre-judged us that even the classics were 'communistic.'" Murphy uses the exchange between Flanagan and Starnes as a take-off point for a theme that is developed throughout the book: the ignorance of the interrogators. Witnesses faced a dangerous combination of ignorance, prejudice, and power.

Given that the book moves from the 1930s to the 1970s and draws on contemporary apologiae by Elia Kazan, Lillian Hellman, Arthur Miller, and others, the book might well have been developed in a chronological pattern. Instead, Murphy sets up the framework in a clear introduction and then moves into a series of categories in which various types of responses to the HUAC activities are examined and compared. The categories are "Dramatizing Directly," "Witch Hunt," "Inquisition," "Informers," and "Forensics." In each of these categories the cultural and political background is established and the theatrical responses (for example, Joan of Arc plays and Galileo plays) are examined and compared. Although this is less clear than a straightforward chronological pattern, many rewarding insights are possible through this pattern.

The insights are supported by brief, but very useful explanations of actual historical events and scientific theories which relate to the plays and films discussed. For example, there is a good description of the cultural conditions which led to the initial formation of a congressional committee to investigate Communist activities and how that developed into a committee with almost unlimited powers. Also, in the discussion of plays dealing with Galileo, Murphy provides some good material about the issues in the historical drama in which the actual Galileo performed.

There will probably be a wide range of reactions to a book dealing with material which still has the power to draw people into intense arguments. Some readers will feel that there would have been more satisfaction in seeing a stronger condemnation of those who "named the names," etc. But as Michael Billington noted in a discussion of *Betrayal* in his book on Harold Pinter, the richness in a treatment can lie in pointing out the many kinds of betrayal and

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bringing full understanding and analysis to the various figures involved. Murphy attempts to do just that. She concludes her chapter on informers by stating that in Miller's *After the Fall*, "Miller embraced the common guilt, and thus common humanity of friendlies, unfriendlies, and bystanders, everyone involved in the HUAC hearings—except maybe the Committee" (225).

Complementing the text, Murphy includes illustrations including cartoons, pictures of congressmen, and production photographs. The book treats a significant period in American history from which we still experience the consequences half a century after the high point. Even the response to the recent Academy Award given to Elia Kazan brought out an intense response for and against the honor. Murphy deserves credit for a re-examination of material that was once very familiar to most Americans. Many of the films and plays are remembered, but the undercurrents that relate them to the time in which they were written are no longer understood. The book left me wanting more. For example, one of the great, surprising failures in the American theatre was the musical *Candide*. Many explanations have been offered, but Murphy suggests in a brief discussion that the failure might well have been related in part to the obvious analogy in Hellman's libretto between the Inquisition and HUAC hearings. Murphy, herself, concludes the book with a statement calling for more research:

> In singling out the treatments of the Un-American Activities Committee and focusing on the aesthetics of historical analogy, I have tackled only a modest corner of this potentially enormous field of study. There is much work to be done if we are to understand the political and cultural implications of the plays, films, and teleplays that were written by Americans who lived through this politically and ideologically charged period. Each year brings more information in the form of declassified documents, memoirs and biographies, interviews, and historical studies. Many more cultural texts will reward further reading, viewing, study, and analysis. (264)

For those who would like a little more after reading this book, Murphy's paper will be published as part of the papers of the Málaga conference, edited by Marcia Noe and Barbara Ozieblo.

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***Performing America: Cultural Nationalism in American Theater*.** Edited by Jeffery D. Mason and J. Ellen Gainor. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 1999; pp. 250. $44.50 hardcover.

Reviewed by John Agee Ball, University of Pittsburgh

How has "America" been performed, reimagined, and contested for the past 250 years? Or as J. Ellen Gainor puts it, what "role" has theatre played in the "construction of American identity"? One need not concur with Jeffrey D.

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Mason's foreword that there is a "void" of theatre scholarship on this topic (remember the pioneering histories of Richard Moody and Walter Meserve) to agree with him and his co-editor, J. Ellen Gainor, that questions of nationalism and cultural representation in the United States remain far from exhausted (4). As evidence for this claim, Mason and Gainor invoke a bibliography of recent (and not-so recent) scholarship by "New Americanists" like Sacvan Bercovitch, Annette Kolodny, Donald Pease, Myra Jehlen, and Lauren Berlant that should rightly spur theatre scholars to engage the problem of "performing America" with fresh vigor.

The book is organized into two parts: "Nation Then," covering early American theatre and performance (1792–1932), and "Nation Now," which emphasizes multicultural American playwriting and performance since the 1970s. In the absence of any sustained examination of "canonical" twentieth-century American playwrights, or of the commercial stage more generally, this structure confronts the virulently homogenizing modes of national representations in the nineteenth-century United States with a heterotopia of contemporary Asian-American, African-American, Latino-American, and "Queer" counter-narratives. One strength of this strategy is that it invites the reader to hold questions of American cultural nationalism in a dramatic double-focus. A particularly effective example of this is David Krasner's insightful treatment of "black nationalism" in W.E.B. Du Bois's "The Pageant Is the Thing: Black Nationalism and *The Star of Ethiopia*" and Harry Elam and Alice Rayner's thoughtful explication of historical "absence" in "Echoes from the Black (W)hole: An Examination of *The America Play* by Suzan-Lori Parks." When read against one another, these chapters offer strong proof for the editors' contention that American performance can be characterized by "the shifting energies between the desires to codify American culture and identity" and the wish to "incorporate constant change" (9).

Generally speaking, the contributors to "Nation Then" emphasize performative attempts to essentialize American nationhood in ways designed to subordinate and/or erase difference. Rosemarie K. Bank extends her previously published work in *Theatre Culture in America, 1825–1860* (1997) to elaborate on the nationalist function of Charles Willson Peale's Museum in 1786. Bank concludes in her contribution, "Archiving Culture," that Peale's museum was responsible for circulating "scientific" discourses of racism that must be seen as culturally enabling slavery and the "ethnocide" of native Americans (49). Charlotte Canning's essay on the Chautaqua movement is one of the book's strongest contributions. Entitled "The Most American Thing in America:" Producing National Identities in Chautauqua, 1904–1932," Canning rereads the evidence of the movement's distribution and audience reception through the lens of Benedict Anderson's discussion of the "modularization" of national culture in *Imagined Communities* (1983). The result is not only a valuable discussion of how America was performed as homogenous, Protestant, and white, but also a clever critique of the political unconscious that was repressed by this cultural

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performance. As Canning argues, "This United States bore little resemblance to the heterogeneous, unstable and complex nation that actually existed outside the comfortable confines of Chatauqua, and it was that United States that people wished to be reassured did not exist" (104). Ann Larabee's excellent essay on the Neighborhood Playhouse movement (e.g., Jane Addams's Hull House) can be seen to extend Canning's effort by showing how the Progressive and liberal discourses associated with the Chautauqua movement were employed to help "transform" Southern and Eastern European immigrants into model American "citizens."

The most problematic contribution to the book's historical section is Kim Marra's attempt to link nineteenth-century American discourses of frontier and empire with Augustin Daly's managerial style and, specifically, to his treatment of female actors like Ada Rehan ("Taming America as Actress"). Marra's central contention is that Daly used "theatrical gentrification and, in particular, the 'taming' of purportedly savage actresses" as "the chief means of overcoming his denigrated Old World heritage and acceding to American manhood." (54) Marra provides a sufficient amount of evidence that Daly used frontier and "virgin land" metaphors when speaking about his relationship to female actors employed by him. But her argument breaks down when she attempts to extend this point by linking Daly's "classical" stage rhetoric in a production of *Taming of the Shrew* with American frontier imperialism. Daly's use of scenic perspective and Petrucchio's "untrammeled masculinity" may have had affinities with the "mythos of [an] infinitely expanding empire," but it seems an enormous leap to read this production as a homologous expression of American imperialism—and not merely a provocative simile (67). We would have to know much more about the audience reception of Daly's productions, for example, before Marra's tantalizing thesis could be substantiated. Her attempt to examine the intersection of gender and national representation will prove to be valuable reading, however, to those working in this rapidly expanding area of research.

The contributors to "Nation Now" are most compelling when they are able to elaborate beyond familiar discussions of identity politics in contemporary American performance to engage problems of representing alternative visions of American nationhood as they are expressly encountered by the artists they examine. Susan-Lori Parks and Tony Kushner are particularly eloquent on behalf of their own cultural interventions. David Savran, perhaps Kushner's most perceptive critic, ably argues that the rhetorical power of *Angels in America* must be seen in the problematic light of Kushner's reinscription of American, and specifically Mormon, tropes of progress, providence, and America as the "promised land . . . of infinite promise" (214). Less satisfying and extraneous to Savran's main argument are his subsequent claims on behalf of a "queer internationalism." Josephine Lee examines a range of plays in "Speaking a Language That We Both Understand: Reconciling Feminism in Asian American Theater." Lee's piece explores the tension between Asian American cultural nationalism's history of trying to restore "Asian American masculinity"

(historically ridiculed by the "white" American gaze) and the efforts of contemporary Asian American performers, like Diana Son's *R.A.W. ('Cause I'm a Woman)*, to "address [the] sexist representation" of Asian American women (156).

Because Mason and Gainor frame this collection by a commitment to methodological pluralism and "eschew" attempts to posit any developmental model for evaluating the history of "performing America," it is difficult to say whether this book makes any great strides toward realizing Mason's ambitious goal for American theatre history, i.e., catching-up with "landmark studies" in English and American Studies. In fact, it seems likely that the field of American theatre and performance has a few "landmarks" of its own and that Mason's rhetoric is perhaps too urgent. What does one call Bruce McConachie's *Melodramatic Formations* (1992), Joseph Roach's *Cities of the Dead* (1996), or the recent three-volume *Cambridge History of American Theatre,* if not landmarks? But the question of American cultural nationalism that Mason and Gainor raise *is* important, and the intellectual capital they identify in other disciplines is as useful as it is surely unexhausted by theatre historians. This collection of essays is a provocation in the right direction.

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