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Ancient Theatre.

Itinerant actors and itineraries of ancient drama.

Itinerancy is comprised into the distinctive nature of theatrical profession, ever since poets themselves played the role of interpreters: Thespis, the inventor of tragedy by definition, toured Attica in the role of leading actor; Aeschylus (if he did not play his dramas definitely led the chorus, Ghiron Bistagne 1976, p. 140) stayed in Sicily at the court of Hieron.

The stages in the history of acting match with the development of theatrical genres and with the expansion in the map of performative opportunities. In ancient times, actors carried out their career at religious festivals, which took place in the sanctuaries' areas and included competitions in their programs, and performances on extra-agonistic occasions. Out of the frame of institutional events, these latter were arranged on arrival of artists in town. Memory of victors and of those who took part in the competitions set up in countless ancient cities is preserved in the agonistic catalogues (as an example, we can mention the *fasti*, *catalogi victorum* and *didascaliae* of the Athenian dramatic contests: Millis-Olson 2012). The epigraphic evidence is rich in various typologies of sources allowing us to clarify the itinerant condition of theatrical artists in relation to their professional profile and the nature of the events at which they chose to perform. The contribution of literary sources and papyri is also essential, in particular, at defining the social implications and impact that drama had on the cultural sphere of Greco-Roman society. Accordingly, a composite documentation allows this reconstruction and supports at defining how dramatists impacted on society in their career paths towards success while showing off their bravura and at acknowledging their level of interaction with political and cultural context.

Athens was for a long time the pole of attraction for poets and the landmark of drama tradition that the actors noteworthy contributed at spreading throughout the Hellenized world. Theatrical art reached such a development and dissemination that the success of poets at dramatic contests depended on professionalism and public influence of the actors (Aristoteles, *Rhetorica* 1403 b 30-35). At that point, there was already great interest in the artistic talent hidden behind the mask and in the actor himself. The names of the virtuosi inscribed on painted vases illustrating Greek drama attest to this point (as an example, the name of Aeschylus' son, Euaion, actor of his father's *Toxotides* and of Sophocles' *Thamyras*, was marked on a red-figure crater by the Painter of Lycaon and on the Vatican *hydria* by the Painter of Phiale, 450-440 BC: Trendall-Webster 1971, 62 e pl. III 1.28, 69 e pl. III 2.9; Boston Museum of Fine Arts inv. 00.346; Rome, Vatican Museums inv. 16549).

Nevertheless, theatrical life was not confined to Athens. Since on the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 4th century BC, with new performative contexts arising and increasing professionalism, the focus of theater split off among cultural centers welcoming, with other virtuosi of the performative arts, renowned actors who could enhance the reputation of their events.

As well as poets, actors travelled on long tours and dwelled at the kings' courts. Kallippides, who unwillingly provoked Sophocles' death but who is also remembered among the glories of Athens for the realistic innovations in his acting (Aristoteles, *Poetica*, 1462 a; Plutarchus, *De Gloria Atheniensium*, 6), toured to Opous (*Vita Sophoclis*, 14) and travelled to Aeolis together with his colleague Nikostratos for a job that turned out to be a scheme. There, the garrison chief of some forts, Alexander, attracting in the theater the people of nearby cities with the excuse of a celebrities' show, trapped and then released them under a large ransom, handing over the territories to Thibron (Polyaenus, *Strategemata*, 6.10).

The Macedonian court was also a suitable place for the virtuosi of the Athenian drama who found good fortune and recognition there. In the wake of Archelaus, who offered Euripides

a safe space, Philip II attracted illustrious actors, such as Neoptolemos from Skyros and Aristodemos from Metapontum (Stefanis 1988, pp. 332 and 1797), who had won at the dramatic contests of the Dionysia and Lenaia festivals. These were involved in the public and private entertainments arranged for the Macedonian court and were entrusted with embassies and political negotiations. Cultural mobility was defined by actors, as well as historical and political transformations. The appeal of artistic celebrities assumed considerable proportions at the itinerant court of Alexander, who admired the Greek theater very much and could recite plays by heart (Plutarchus, *Alexander*, 7.7). In particular, the stars of the Athenian theatre took pride of place among the Ἀλεξανδροκόλακες (*Alexandrokòlakes*, “flatterers of Alexander”: Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, 12.538 f.): the tragic actors Thessalos and Athenodoros and the comedy artist Lykon of Skarphea (Stefanis 1988, pp. 75, 1200, 1567) were among the king’s favored participating in the lavish entertainments organized along the Asian campaign with great recruitment of performers (as an example, the icons of drama and music attended the court weddings at Susa: Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, 13.538 b-539 a; the artists recruited for the festivals of Ecbatana and the funeral of Hephaestion are even numbered in thousands: Plutarchus, *Alexander*, 72.1; Arranus, *Alexandri Anabasis*, 7.14.10).

In the Hellenistic period, along with new dramas, other forms of entertainment spread in which the actor’s skills and technical specialization barged (Pretagostini 1998, pp. 625-26). Revivals and virtuoso performances of renowned theatrical pieces; scenes combined from one or more works and thematic collections set in motion a process of “anthologization” and selection of the classics. In the frame of a “deconstructed theater”, Euripides was the most popular poet accommodating performative requests and pleasing the public (Gentili 1977, pp. 13-17): singing with the cithara Euripides’ *Bacchae*, Satyros of Samos brought to his feet the PanHellenic audience gathered in Delphi for the Pythian festival (*FD* III 3, 128; Cinalli 2017, pp. 387-96). A tragic anthology was gradually put together for specialized interpreters who could reperform the suitable piece to the context, an entertaining or an institutional one. Accordingly, an actor specialized in Euripidean interpretations left on a stone in Tegea the memory of his many victories (Nachtergaele 1977, pp. 483-84 nr. 69 and pp. 359-61). Such events could meet the public’s favor and at the same time strengthen a cultural heritage based on common identity. From a dynamic related to the public’s requirements and to the occasion arouse a “popular” culture which developed concurrently with the erudite and written literature flourishing at the Hellenistic courts. The itinerant professionals of the performing arts spread this culture throughout the Hellenistic age. A plethora of intellectuals, virtuosi of verse and prose literature, musicians, dramatic performers and experts in all artistic forms contributed together to shape a cultural phenomenon we can acknowledge almost exclusively through epigraphy. Inscriptions are rich in information for reconstructing the artistic endeavors and stories of artists who individually left their mark in the cultural life of the cities they visited and of artists’ associations defining the agonistic context and the history of festivals. In this vibrant milieu, the role of performer merged again with that of author: in public demonstrations, the poets presented their new dramatic works to the city audience, as Zotion of Ephesus did in Coronea (Schachter-Slater 2007). By performing new verses and reperforming ancient poetry, literature was entangled with the establishment of relations among peoples and territories and with the re-arrangement of cultural memory. The theater celebrities traveling with their teams won great appreciation among the public performing in events organized by the cities upon their arrival and sponsored in order to keep or get the dramatic crown. The *tragoidos* Aristys of Agion and his *synagonistes* Damokles (leading and supporting actors: *FD* III 3, 125-26; Cinalli 2014, §10 and Tab. 3) conquered applause and crowns in Delphi; Polos of Aegina, a drama icon, accepted the invitation to perform at the theater in Samos for a lesser fee than requested (*IG* XII 6 1, 56; Stefanis 1988, p. 2187).

New agonistic itineraries, complementing the ancient *periodos* (the circuit of poetry and music embedding the festivals of the Pythia, Isthmia, Nemeia but not the Olympia, which only included an athletic program) and crossing it in multiple directions, created intense

movements towards the cultural centers. Actors but also poets of tragedy and comedy had a crucial role in this fervent effort of artistic energies which, spanning from the empire of Alexander to Roman rule, reached its affirmation by echoing the ancient glories and venturing into creative paths. Since the first decades of the 3rd century BC, dramatic and musical *technitai* (artists) organized in associations devoted to Dionysus are attested. Specialists of poetic and musical arts and actors had every interest at associating together: new theaters and festivals were springing up everywhere, thus it was necessary for artists to be able to travel safely and work in agreement with local administrations by sharing a common artistic vision (Pickard Cambridge 1988, pp. 279–305). It seems that the *synodoi* (companies) of Athens and of the Isthmus and Nemea were the first to be officially established but the epigraphic sources attest to a long evolution of artistic coordination and organized groups moving throughout the festivals of the mainland and the Cyclades. Towards the end of the 2nd century BC, a dispute arose between the two continental guilds, due probably to mutual interferences in the participation and organization of the festivals falling under their jurisdiction. The intervention of the Romans resolved the argument in favor of the Athenian association which grew in prestige. The association of the Isthmus and Nemea fell instead into decay under the accusations of violation of pacts and agreements. Beyond Continental Greece, an Egyptian guild of Dionysus was already in place in the first half of the 3rd century BC, with a well-structured organization and a wide range of members supervising the events in honor of the Lagides. Along with professionals performing in institutional occasions, Egyptian papyri offer a rich documentation also attesting to the activity of a constellation of artists who acted in peripheral or private contexts and practiced their profession individually or in minor companies. From the last decades of the 3rd century BC, an association of Ionia and Hellespont is also attested that was based in Theos and from which detachments were produced when it fell under the authority of the Attalids. The Ionian-Hellespontine company did not prosper for a long time as a dispute with the citizens of Theos, towards the end of the 2nd century BC, led to multiple shifts of headquarter. Even in Magna Graecia, with its fervent theatrical activity and a long history of reception of the Greek dramatic repertoire – well attested by archaeological and iconographic evidence – the *technitai* of Dionysus were at least based in Rhegium, at the latest since on the 1st century BC.

Following the conquest, the Romans did not interrupt but favored the cultural exchange among the cities of the *Graecia capta* but the fortune of artists and associations depended on the attitude shown towards the new masters. While the Athenian guild was reduced to a local level by Sulla, the Boeotian festivals resounded with the praises for the Romans and Naples, with its lively cultural life, became a privileged destination for the *technitai*. From there, Brutus in 44 BC recruited prominent performers for his artistic initiatives (Plutarchus, *Brutus*, 21.5). Since on the 2nd century AD, a worldwide association took hold under the auspices of the emperors and responded to the needs posed by the extraordinary flowering of new festivals related to the imperial cult. This association found different variations on a territorial and professional basis: for example, it seems that actors produced particular companies within the main organization.

The inscriptions of the *periodonikai* (victors at the agonistic circuit) of Roman times list astonishing catalogues of successes, even in numerous specialties, obtained at the old festivals and at the newly established ones spread throughout the empire. Noteworthy are cases of C. Julius Bassus, herald, *komoidos* and *tragoidos* from Miletus, and of the Smyranean *tragoidos* C. Julius Julianus (Stefanis 1988, pp. 518 and 1272), who built their agonistic circuit travelling from east to west of the empire and decorated their *palmarès* with more than three hundred victories each (Moretti 1953, nr. 74; *IG V* 1, 662). These multiple victors achieved their success reperforming the tragic and comic theater of Ancient Greece that continued to be revived in various forms and for entertainment purposes. Along with Menander, who enjoyed long fortune, Euripides continued to be favored and to produce specialists in his theater, such as the Milesian *periodonikes* Themison who, in the 2nd century AD, set to music the Euripidean repertoire, together with that of Sophocles and Timotheus (Brooner

1953, pp. 192-93). In order to meet the audiences' taste, theatrical classics were reduced to declamations and sung demonstrations by actors whose virtuosity turned to be voted to mannered representations (Lucianus, *De Saltatione*, 27). Dramatic art concerted with further artistic skills to obtain danced and mime entertainments in which the talents' exhibition overshadowed the educational and cultural value of texts.

The actor's profession could vary according to many levels of specialization and status: the artists belonging to established associations, the stars of the major theaters and the *periodonikai* certainly lived in a privileged condition if compared to that of hirelings recruited in remote villages and of itinerant troupes of actors who travelled wherever their work was required (Lucianus, *Nigrinus*, 8-9; *De mercede conductis*, 5). These worlds, even distant from each other, made up of attempts of success and achievements on the stage of the Greco-Roman theatre, determined the evolution of drama and defined the artistic and cultural heritage.

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Modern Theatre.

Nomadism and itinerancy are a universal condition of the entertainment business and the performance professions. The relationships between journeys and theatre can be observed when, in the rhythm between movement and permanence, they generate specific traces and memories of the conditions or choices of the ways of living of the theatre. This entry is divided into two paragraphs. The first, *Travelling theatres*, refers to the century-old events of the new itinerant theatrical communities that began the moment they appeared in modern European civilization, in the mid-sixteenth century, while the second, *Theatre as journey*, refers to the main expeditions in time and space of theatre people and new communities of the twentieth century.

Travelling theatres.

From the outset of the Italian invention of the theatrical trade in the 16th century, (the so-called «Commedia dell'Arte»), the companies of the actors can be neither identified as belonging to the wanderings of the traveling arts and the entertainers linked to the performing arts professions, nor to the nomadic lives of professions subject to institutional and corporate controls. Uprooted as individuals (the «homeless bourgeois»), the actors are located between belonging to the «micro-society [...] an organization functional to the production of artistic diversity» (Meldolesi 2010, p. 92), which identifies their difference as «stage person», and the elaboration of an external public person projected onto the models and values of the surrounding societies.

In crossing internal and external borders of social life, the societies of the actors make contact with the spaces of the cultures they cross, generating, between attraction and anxiety, times that are discontinuous compared to those of the communities of citizens: the arrival and departure of companies, the expectation of the return modeled by the spectators' memories, the times of the shows offered in the designated spaces, the reactivation of the recollections of holiday and entertainment times, the development of recurrent «theatrical seasons».

The characteristics of more or less prolonged temporary settling, feed into the strategies of the theatres in transit: the creation of a functional nostalgia to maintain demand for the presence of those who offer shows, the construction of memorability in defense of the acting profession, and the production practices of shows required for the preservation of independence from the tastes and mentalities of the different social contexts, effective in reactivating the rhythm of novelties and conservation in the endowments of the profession of the actors and contracting the vital spaces for the exercise of the profession.

The term «micro-society» (proposed by Ferdinando Taviani, see Guarino 2011, p. 45) and the strategies adopted by organized nomadism are decisive in establishing the relationship between the movement of companies and the journey. As individuals, actors themselves do not travel. What does travel is the periodic exposure of the theatricalization of their difference. On the margins of the societies, but periodically situated in the very heart of the cities, the transit of the tiny companies takes the form of a journey into the memory deposit of the spectators, in the proverbial and legendary reports, in the repertoires of the images, in the production of specific narratives.

With the success of Paul Scarron's *Roman Comique* (1651), the journey of the actors becomes the new subject of a moving micro-world that produces threats, enticements, conversion projects, an opportunity to reshape identities, shelters and escapes for those who are driven to escape the constraints of the societies in which they live. In German *Bildungsroman* that tell about theatre, growing tumultuously at the end of the 18th century from the satirical *Theatralische Reisen* by Christoph Sigmund Gruner and Christian August Vulpius to the *Wilhelm Meister* of Goethe, (*Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, 1795-1796), the communities of the travelling actors offer images of freedom, mirages and opportunities for passionate calls for reform. In the escapes of young people to the theatre of itinerant companies, the journey with the theatre is experienced as a crossing over to other worlds, as disorientation and access to a «analogous world» (Taviani 1995, pp. 38-45) where it seems possible to experiment, even if slightly, personal maturation and the transformation of the inflexible rules that govern the societies from which they are fleeing.

The phenomenon of the relationship between the German *Bildungsroman* and theatre, which had a punctual equivalent in the hectic recruitment of restless young bourgeois in the traveling companies of the time, especially in Germany and Italy, contributes to identifying the spaces and forms of the European novel as a privileged place to welcome the transit of actors, without being configured as a specific genre or subgenre.

During the nineteenth century the narrated events of the passing actors are for the most part about the crossroads of the journey, or about journey of the protagonists, revealing a backlit destiny, fruitful stumbling blocks in the story-lines of existence. While the companies of the actors in the European capitals are well-established in the legitimate and privileged theatres, the novels welcome the presence of humble wandering companies, acrobats, puppeteers. The «romantic» preference for popular shows, fairs, square attractions, in the emblematic novels of Hugo, Dickens, Gauthier, is identifiable through the attraction for different lives, predisposed to romance suggestions, and pre-existing theatrical memories, reactivated by the passage of the actors. Bearers of an original and mythical theatricality, the appearances of the wandering entertainers can emerge from the darkness of violated lives (Hugo), from the contiguity with the images of death (Dickens), or explicitly recalled to life by the seventeenth-century figurative repertoires (Théophile Gautier). Events and lives backdated to historical or legendary time: itinerancy appears as a journey of an archive still preserving intact living bodies from the past because they are crystallized into artificial compositions or deformed by the misfortunes suffered in life.

In the mid-nineteenth century with the affirmation of the «Great Actor», especially Italian, the geography of the travels of the actors undergoes a change of scale. Adelaide Ristori's triumphant tours are its legendary mark: starting from that of Paris in 1855, on the occasion of the Universal Exposition of that year, up to the «artistic tour» that was to lead the actress around the world in twenty months and 19 days, acting in 334 cities, 33 states, and on 5 continents.

The spread and breadth of these “artistic tours”, in which all the great nineteenth-century actors were involved, are closely linked to the creation of stage masterpieces, not so much as unitary interpretations of characters, but rather dramas parallel to the stories where the actors magnified “micro dramas” capable of opening gashes on the person of the stage and sparkling glimpses into humanity. The international redemption of the Italian wandering actor, who, in comparison to other European nations, lacked theatrical institutions and a representative center of theatrical civilization, brought to fruition the very lack of homogeneity of those creations with respect to the representative cultures of the nations and countries encountered. The layers of heterogeneous materials of the Shakespearean characters were the privileged venues for the development of the great actors, the vast reservoir in which they could offer a vision of the “nature” of characters through the simultaneous display of opposite elements, between roughness and elegance.

The amplitude of the artist tours cannot be assessed only as the conquest of an international space and market, but also as the ability to cross and narrate borders and boundaries, both internal and external, to the nation-states.

The emblematic date of the first tour of the Ristori, hosted within the Parisian Universal Exposition, allows us to observe an aspect of the fortune of this grandiose change in the scale of the traveling theatres against the backlight of the performances and industry of human display that was entering the customs of public life in the capitalist West. che trasformava la sincronia delle culture in diacronia e dunque in progresso. In friction with the taste for contrasts of industrialized modernity, fueled, for example, by visits to colonial villages which transformed the synchrony of cultures into diachrony and therefore into progress, the “anachronism” of these stage masterpieces showed the fascinating co-presence of the «barbaric» and the «primitive» with the forms of European civilizations. With the sensory and emotional experience of the «contemporary of the non-contemporary», (Bloch 1992 [1935], p. 82) offered spectators, the traveling works of the «Great Actors» compensated with the breadth of the itineraries, the crossing of a world that had become smaller.

It is no coincidence that in the early twentieth century the protagonist and in its own way heir of the international greatness of the Great Actor was the Sicilian actor Giovanni Grasso, who was seen as bringing another civilization compared to the western one while at the same time, for the great renovators of the European theatre, as the premonition of the future actor.

Theatre as journey.

Starting from the twentieth century, with the marginalization of the theatre in the light of the new market of recorded images and the consequent disintegration of the centuries-old history of European companies, a new theatrical geography began to emerge, parallel to the national markets of shows, institutions related to theatrical buildings, and places intended for reproductions of theatre related occupation and professions. The environments created by the great theatre reformers of the first decades of the century, founded far from the riverbed of the customs of traditional theatres and of their ways of production, sought the actor as a human possibility and rebuilt the theatre through its actors.

In identifying the actor with a future-oriented historical subject and no longer as object in the history of theatre, the reformers of the new theatres rejected the laws of diachrony and distance. Theatre can come into contact with «traditions and ways of life settled in time and far away in space» – from the myth of the *Commedia dell'arte* to the traditions of Asian theatres – «sharing with ethnology and psychoanalysis the privilege of drawing on other and spatially distant temporalities» (Aliverti 2009, p. 53).

For Mejerchol'd, Copeau, Ėjzenštejn, Artaud and Brecht, travels are not opportunities to renew the artistic imagination, but the realization, under different tropics, of one's own vision of theatre and the search for interlocutors to analyze creation processes.

These are the «viaggiatori della velocità» («travelers of speed», Barba 2004, p. 274) where the territory is the actor's body-mind. Jacques Copeau invents himself the heir of the *farceurs*

and Molière, Mejercol'd of the practices of the comedians of art, the visions of Artaud, Brecht, Ėjzenštejn go beyond the European borders inaugurating comparison with the great traditions of the Asian theatres, perceived as what was lacking from the matrices of western theatres.

In travelling back in time and space, the past of the theatre is no longer what we descend from or inherit from, but the journey through which we go back to identify the common principles of life on stage for the actors and the effectiveness of their actions, a theatrical knowledge to come that no longer has its center of gravity exclusively in books and forms of drama.

The expeditions of the second half of the twentieth century to places far from theatrical customs, recognizable by the need to rediscover the sense of the presence of the theatre in the surrounding societies, are the search for a legacy of the travels of the reformers of the first part of the century through the self-training of small communities that are detached from the consolidated territories.

Mid 20th century expeditions to places far from theatrical customs, recognizable by the need to rediscover theatrical presence in surrounding societies, are a search for a legacy of the travels of the reformers of the first part of the century by the self-training of small detached communities.

In the early 1960s, inspired above all by their reading Percy and Paul Goodman's of *Communitas: Means of Livelihood and Ways of Life*, the founders of the Living Theatre, Julian Beck and Judith Malina were determined to design a new form of theatrical community. Following their expulsion from the United States for tax reasons, at the moment of a long European journey mid-way between forced exile and adventurous touring, a collective of actors was concretely set up. Beck's explicit reference is to the creation of a new «tribe» capable of «moving thru a society dying of loneliness [...]». The tribe passes by; and the cold and frightened spectator, perishing in his aloneness, sees the gypsies, sees the Jews, see the caravan of actresses and actors, scorns them for their inbred secretions, envies their ability to make it, hates, and hopes that they will transcend his hate, and knows they will (Beck 1972, p. 114).

Beck combined two aspects of the new nomadism with his fiery words in the early 1960s. On the one hand, the energetic eruption of the «tribe», which subverts the removed part of individuals «the incubi of their unconscious, [...] the meat of their dreams» with a repertoire of actions and images; on the other, the radical discrepancy between the mandate individuals entrust to the State's orders and therefore their «solitude» («Strong and Big and Brittle») and that of the theatrical «tribe», «Weak and small and unbreakable» (Beck 1972, p. 115). In the following years, *The Living Theatre* deployed specific survival strategies and wanderings ranging from a search for a new patronage, seduced by the aristocratic presence of these homeless people and bearers of a refined interconnection between theatrical knowledge and libertarian community life, followed by migrations in urban peripheries, from the Brazilian favelas to those of European cities, working in the spaces contracted from time to time. Filled with a spirit of assault and offering performances that were to soon become memorable, the refusal to link the presence of the *Living* to theatre buildings was to have a decisive influence as it infected both individuals and youth groups, fascinated the new nomadic theatre. Yet, while the «Nomads live shorter lives but the wide range of their experience is their compensation» (Beck 1972, p. 63), for Julian Beck it is also a small personal journey, a continuous return to European culture: «I feel myself joined there to my roots [...] in the United States I feel alien and far from home» (Beck 1994, p. 145).

In 1970, director Peter Brook moved to Paris and founded the Centre for Theatre Research. Coming from different parts of the world, the Centre's members intended to move distance themselves from the traditional notion of theatre company. The idea was to form a nomadic organism, a microcosm based on differences, «a small world» (Brook 1989, p. 106), not to exchange techniques or theatrical knowledge, but to separate from their own cultures. After the initial years of experimentation, they decided to travel in search of spectators unconditioned by Western theatrical forms. Overturning traditional notion of

theatre touring – the offering of the same performance in different surroundings – they begin a journey that crossed Iran, Africa, reaching the Chicano people in California, the American Indians, and «even to a park in Brooklyn» (Brook 1998, p. 175).

The radical question that drove Peter Brook on the journey, «What is theatre?» (Brook 1989, p. 132), translated into the apprenticeship of theatrical knowledge which, until then, had been confined to different genres or to practices that had fallen into disuse. These included experiencing the differences produced by small or large spectator numbers, their distance and proximity, the opportunities offered by open spaces, the breakdown of the orchestration of sounds, and the actor's body («the weight of a word, of a syllable, of a hand or foot»: Brook 1998, p. 175).

In 1974, following the previous decade's performances that had made this theatre group of former self-taught actors, rejected by traditional theatre schools, famous throughout Europe, and without a new show to offer, the Odin Teatret moved to a small town in the south of Italy. The expectations and curiosity generated around the incongruous presence of a foreign group, undefined by its extraordinary offer, in a territory far from the exchanges and the theatre market, turned out to be the source of questions, small discoveries, and the invention of a new relationship with the inhabitants. Through the term «barter», Odin limited the set of practices and interventions through which the theatre group showed the communities it encountered the hidden plot of the visions that had animated the construction of their performances until then. In exchange it asked the local population to illustrate their own culture's existing and surviving forms: songs, dances, rituals, acting. After this journey, Odin continued bartering in European and non-European countries until practicing the most extreme form with the Yanomami tribe in the Venezuelan jungle. With this unplanned invention, the actors of Odin Teatret and their director, Eugenio Barba, discover that the paths taken for training and the personal resources of each member of the group in the construction of the performance represent an independent «microculture», a common heritage of uses, practices, and organizational functions that, taken together, have the depth of a history and are equivalent to tradition. What would once have been called the «trade secrets», which is to say, not visible to the audience, now serve to define the presence of the community through comparison with other theatrical traditions.

In their own way, the expeditions of the 1960s and early 1970s represent the outcome of theatre as a journey as it arose in the 20th century: there are no longer places from which one moves away without, at the same time, seeking the definition of one's own identity in a common ground that transcends it. Eugenio Barba defined this as «the tradition of traditions» (Barba 1987, p. 247) referring above all to the reciprocal gazes between West and East in which, beyond the surface of forms and performance, he identified a common ground of «returning principles» in shaping the physical presence of the actor and the perception of the spectator. However, the expansion of frontiers and the awareness that now «every space can be a theatre space as long as relations are created» (Cruciani 1992, p. 98) has produced multiform outcomes in searching for territories identified by encounters, relations, and encounters with other communities. Among these, we choose to conclude this entry by indicating those experiences that, since the last decades of the 20th century, have focused on the exploration of movement, on the itineraries of attention in urban and extra-urban realities, and on paths of bewilderment and perceptive awakening in the spaces of everyday life. In some seminal interventions and projects – *Azioni nella città*, *Memories of Earth*, *Città invisibili*, *Night in This City*, *Trilogia*, *Viaggio nella mente dello spettatore* – we see the need to reactivate a vital space in order to lay claim to the effectiveness of theatrical action in contemporary experience, which is increasingly generated by flows of movement and communication rather than social and memorial relationships with specific places. These journeys are no longer an opportunity to discover another meaning of the theatre's existence in opposition to «cultural amnesia» (Connerton 2010, p.116), but an awakening and transformation of the identities of the «actors-travellers».

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