

SUMMARY

The relations of "Pamiętnik Teatralny" with Jerzy Grotowski go back to the sixties. The first meeting of the editorial team with the creator of the 13 Rows Theatre took place on 15-16th March 1963 in Opole. "Pamiętnik Teatralny" was represented by Zbigniew Raszewski, Jerzy Timoszewicz and Andrzej Wysiński. Other participants were Bożena Frankowska, Zbigniew Osiński, Zenobiusz Strzelecki and Grotowski's assistant, Eugenio Barba. A discussion was held a day after the performance of *Akropolis*. On the next day, exercises of the team and rehearsals of *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* were performed.

On 7-8th April 1964, a special ministerial committee was discussing the future of Grotowski's theatre in Opole. The committee was headed by Jerzy Jasiński and some of its members were Jan Paweł Gawlik, Konstanty Puzyna, Jerzy Sokołowski, Zenobiusz Strzelecki, Józef Szczublewski. Also editors of "Pamiętnik Teatralny": Bohdan Korzeniewski, Zbigniew Raszewski, Jerzy Timoszewicz were present as observers-consultants. Grotowski presented *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* and *Hamlet* to his guests. The committee found 'the existence of the 13 Rows Theatre in Opole as an interesting and creative phenomenon in our modern theatrical life, a phenomenon that deserves further development'.

In October 1964, the third issue of "Pamiętnik Teatralny" appeared, defending Grotowski's theatre in Opole, the future of which was uncertain, again. Two outstanding articles: Ludwik Flaszen's 'Godfathers' Eve', 'Kordian' and 'Akropolis' in the 13 Rows Theatre and Zbigniew Raszewski's *The 13 Rows Theatre* were published in the section *Portrait of Theatre*. In the latter, Raszewski wrote: 'When one works with such a fury and as disinterestedly as the 13 Rows Theatre, when it has so much curiosity of life and sensitivity, all it needs is time to achieve unparalleled

exceptional results. Today, it is one of very few, if not the only one, who lives and performs according to the dialectics, which he declares. It is neither good nor bad. Overall: it is great.'

From the perspective of the end of the century, one can clearly see that Jerzy Grotowski, together with Tadeusz Kantor, was marking the routes for the world theatre; got the title of the Great Reformer, Magician, Shaman. His influence on world theatre is unquestioned. In this aura, in 1998, an idea appeared in the office of "Pamiętnik Teatralny" to prepare a special issue, dedicated to the artist. The first working discussion was held on 4th December 1998 in 'Nowy Świat' café in Warsaw. A 'round table' was occupied by: Grzegorz Janikowski, Leszek Kolankiewicz, Edward Krasiński and Zbigniew Osiński. In the following weeks, individual meetings took place, discussions on choice of authors, subjects and contributors from different universities. We were also asking Ludwik Flaszen and Janusz Degler for advice.

The information about Grotowski's death on 14th January 1999 accelerated the work of authors and editors. It was then, that we took the decision to entrust the preparation of the monographic issue to three young theatre researchers, for whom Grotowski had always been a myth and legend, and at the same time, a living reference point. These editors are: Jarosław Fret (The Centre of Studies on Jerzy Grotowski's Work and of the Cultural and Theatrical Research in Wrocław), Grzegorz Janikowski ("Pamiętnik Teatralny") and Grzegorz Ziółkowski (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań). Discussions held late at night, creative disputes, multidirectional initiatives, invitation of renowned authors and consultants, resulted in huge amount of material, sent to the Editorial Office. Amount, which could not be put into one issue. We were forced to continue the work, to change the structure of the volume, finally to move the memoirs and source materials to the next issue of "Pamiętnik Teatralny" (2001 vol.1-2).

In the issue "Pamiętnik Teatralny" 2000, we undertook an effort to 'verify the tradition of interpretation', to re-explore the life and works of Grotowski. We do hope that this large volume will raise a dispute on Grotowski, will become a testament of his 'absent presence' and create interest also for a new generation of critics and scholars. That it will become an argument in discussions between generations of researchers, dialogue with the works of the director of *Apocalypsis cum Figuris*.

Our spacious volume starts with an excellent *Family Portrait* of the brother of the director of *Akropolis*, Kazimierz Grotowski. It is a recollection

of family tradition and religious-cultural background, showing a lot of details and new information about Jerzy's childhood, years of Nazi occupation, spent in Nienadówka, university time and the most important readings of the brothers. The political context of Jerzy's father emigration is shown, as well as his relations with his mother, Emilia. The text brings full information about 'life in the shadow of death' of Jerzy Grotowski, his consecutive struggles for life and constantly deteriorating health.

Subsequent documents, studies, essays are grouped into eight chapters, and the volume ends with *Annex*, including: a missing part of the calendar of the guest performances of the Laboratory Theatre in the years 1959-1984 and the chronicle of team's activities in the years 1978-1984 (compiled by a monographer of Grotowski's works – Zbigniew Osiński) and *Filmography of Jerzy Grotowski and the Laboratory Theatre Works*.

The first section of material, *In search for Essence*, groups essays and studies, which are new interpretations of Jerzy Grotowski's activities. It starts with a text of a close collaborator of Grotowski, Leszek Kolankiewicz: *Grotowski in search for Essence*. The author conducts a deep dispute with the text *Exoduction* by Richard Schechner from *The Grotowski Sourcebook*, exploring romantic and mystic contexts in Grotowski's works. He shows relations of Grotowski with Georgij I. Gurdijeff and his idea of Essence, and also the influence of the tradition of philosophy of dialogue and *The Hasidic Tales* by Martin Buber on the director of *Akropolis*. Kolankiewicz precisely describes and shows the *Vedas* parallels in the chosen fragments of *Sermons* of Master Eckhart, published in the *Performer*. He also analyses the importance of gnosis and apocryphal *The Gospel According to Thomas* for the understanding of *Action* – opus from the period of Pontedera. He treats the work of Grotowski as a trial to build a bridge between Christianity (which was ignored by Schechner) and gnosis as teaching on salvation.

Mirosław Kocur (participant of the Laboratory activities from the paratheatrical period) in his study *Dionysus' Laboratory. How did Grotowski invent Antic Theatre* is building a stream of analogies and parallels in the ways of using costume, voice, props and space in Greek theatre and in the Laboratory Theatre. He also puts attention to an approach to the performance and Grotowski's search for the ancient 'triple-one chorea'.

Zbigniew Osiński in his study *On Jerzy Grotowski in connexion with Eugenio Barba's book 'Land of Ashes and Diamonds'* shows Grotowski's understanding of the theatre and the world in categories of the dance of Shiva, cosmic dance. Grotowski was looking for such an ideal in his work

with an actor. Osiński is also enumerating gnostic roots in Grotowski's work. He ends his essay with showing the importance of Eugene Barba's book *Land of Ashes and Diamonds*.

Barbara Gräfin Schwerin von Krosigk in her synthetic study *Asceticism and Ecstasy* describes and concentrates on the interpretation of Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski activities in Pontedera, his work on *Action*, and the meaning of 'total act' for the Laboratory Theatre.

Next, Paweł Możdżyński in his essay *New Age Laboratory* interprets the practice of Grotowski in categories of New Age, showing possible contexts of understanding the work of Grotowski through Eliade's reflections, Jung, Hinduism. He shows relations between apophatics, the 'via negativa' method and giving up one's little ego for the Self. He compares it to searching for harmony between Brahman and atman.

David Read Johnson shows a spectrum of Grotowski's influence on development of different types of psychotherapy in the United Kingdom and the USA.

The section *Opole and Wroclaw* brings an important text of Grotowski *Farse-Mystery*, presenting the search for secular, laic ritual in the practice of Opole Theatre. It also shows attempts to establish new, 'ceremonial' relations with the spectators, who are to become participants in the event.

Agnieszka Wójtowicz publishes newly discovered documents of political censorship from the period of the Theatre's activities in Opole. Tadeusz Kornaś shows little known, last spectacle of the actors of the Laboratory Theatre – *Thanatos Polski* from 1981.

The section *Grotowski and his Russian experience* fills the gap in the knowledge of this period in life of the Polish director. In his study, *Jerzy Grotowski's experience of Russia*, Zbigniew Osiński reproduces consecutive periods of studies and stay of the director in the USSR and its Asian republics. He shows the relations of the director-teacher Jurij Zawadski, unveiling the facts from the trip to the south of the Soviet Union for kidney treatment. The scholar is specially showing the lesson of 'political independence', which Zawadski gave to the Pole. The next two sections of Grotowski's letters (compiled by Osiński) show his respect for and relation with his teacher of craft – Zawadski (letters from the years 1956-1976), and exploration of another world and culture during stay in Turkmenistan (letters from the years 1955-1956).

The section *Grotowski in the presence of Romanticism* brings an outstanding essay of Halina Filipowicz *Mickiewicz-Performer*, setting together the technique of oration, improvisation and speeches of a great predecessor of Grotowski in College de France, the most famous Polish romantic poet, Adam Mickiewicz, with the 'oratory' method practiced by Grotowski.

We publish the report of Allen J. Kuharski from the first lecture of Grotowski in College de France (in the Bouffes du Nord Theatre) and an erudite study of Magdalena Saganiak: *Słowacki's Dramas in Grotowski's Theatre*, in which the scholar analyses the aspects of the works of the great romantic poet and playwright (author of *Kordian* and imitation of Calderon's *The Constant Prince*), used by Grotowski. At the same time, she shows mystical roots of thoughts of both Polish artists, concentrating on the spirit, inner man, relation between 'total act' and mystical death. The author also shows Grotowski's attitude towards romanticism.

The section *The United States: Objective Drama* brings a selection of unknown documents and texts from the archives of Robert Cohen, vice-director (under Grotowski). They were written during the works on *Focused Research Program in Objective Drama*, which were conducted by the Polish director in Irvine campus of the University of California (UCI) in the years 1983-1989. The section includes projects, summaries, information about personnel, funds, and also an outstanding letters between Grotowski and Cohen, that explains the differences in their approaches to activities in Irvine. They also show reasons of moving to Pontedera in Toscana.

We publish a famous Lisa Wolford's essay, known from *The Grotowski Sourcebook*, analysing and documenting the period of Grotowski's works on *Objective Drama* in Irvine.

Finally, the section includes a controversial but very picturesque *Journal* of Philip Winterbottom Jr., one of actors-participants of works in Irvine. It gives an insight into a kind of exercises and borrowings of performance and ritual elements, which have roots in different cultural and religious backgrounds, like Balinese ceremonies, Haitian voodoo, Korean shamanism, Sufi tradition of the dervishes, Taoism, gnosis.

The next section, *Pontedera: Performer* brings two outstanding, analytical studies of prominent Italian researchers – Franco Ruffini and Ferdinando Taviani, explaining the initiation and cognitive idea and

utopia, towards which Grotowski was heading at the end of his life. In his essay, *Tertium datur: Performer and Actor*, using Roland Barthes' punctum theory, Ruffini analyses differences and similarities between the Doer (*Performer*), man of knowledge in Grotowski's performance and Stanisławski's actor according to Toporkov's description.

Ferdinando Taviani, in his *A Commentary to Performer*, concentrates on the cognitive character of *Performer* and on practical work of Grotowski on initiative technique in theatrical field, which takes place in Pontedera (Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski).

In the section *Stanislavsky – Brook – The Living Theatre* we present texts analysing the activities of the Laboratory Theatre and Grotowski's works in the context of theatrical achievements of other great reformers of the theatre in the 20th century. In her essay, Agnieszka Kruszewska analyses differences and similarities in understanding and practical usage of the 'physical actions' method, practiced by Stanislavsky and Grotowski. She also uses the reports and descriptions of the developed phase of work on the 'physical actions' method, as presented in Thomas Richards' books *At Work with Grotowski on Physical Actions* and *The Edge-point of Performance*. Juliusz Tyszka, in his study *Stanislavsky and Grotowski – Glosses to Glosses* discusses the importance of innovative approach introduced by Grotowski to Stanislavsky's system.

The essay *Theatre is only a Form*, written by Grzegorz Ziółkowski is a penetrating comparative study of activities and theatrical explorations conducted by Grotowski and his close friend, propagator of the achievements of the Laboratory Theatre, Peter Brook. The author stresses the role of thoughts and practice of an Armenian esoteric thinker and master, Georgij I. Gurdzijew in the works of both directors. Ziółkowski also presents the importance of innovative intercultural experiments, which they conducted in the area of performance arts.

The text of Joanna Ostrowska, *Two Ways. The Laboratory Theatre and The Living Theatre* puts together the concepts and practice of both groups related to engagement of spectators, their participation in the performances. It also describes the attitude of Polish theatre and an anarchistic group of Julian Beck and Judith Malina to the ideas of counter-culture.

In the section *The Absent Presence: Grotowski's Testaments*, we publish fragments of Jerzy Grotowski's Last Will, concerning the city of Wrocław and the Centre of Studies on Jerzy Grotowski's Work and of the Cultural

and Theatrical Research, presented to the Centre by Mario Biagini from Pontedera.

Another text (*Spiritual Testament*, translated by Ludwik Flaszen) is Grotowski's text from 1998, which clearly explains that the author of *Action*, which is not a spectacle but a work created in the area of the *Arts as a vehicle*, is Thomas Richards. Grotowski presents here also his understanding of importance of work on *Action* and appoints Richards as the inheritor of his works in the domain of *Ritual Arts*.

Translated by Jarosław Lewandowski
Prepared by Grzegorz Janikowski