

From Semiotics to Pragmatism: The Ontology of the Text on the Example of “New Drama”

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The article tackles the relation between the literary/theatrical knowledge and practice of “new drama.” We are not so interested in whether “new drama” – used as a provisional term – is a somewhat blind spot in the field, rather, whether there exists a sufficient conceptual apparatus within the theory that would reflect literary originality, transgressiveness (across some classical drama postulates), liminality (between theatre and literature) and in particular the “eventness” of new drama – something that could retroactively be considered a supraladen interpretation of “new drama” within the field of this theory which consequently affirms its perching marginality on the literary-theatrical historical map.

A close liaison between the text and the event in the “new drama” is the line of thought that trails through the epicentre of the event as a philosophical concept and the event as an empirical problem (new textual proceduralisms).

Let us first deal with the mapping of genealogical tangents of the literary and theatrical theories’ formations in order to re-address the question of theory and the theory of theoretical practice as proposed by Althusser in his epistemology by focusing the reflection on the emergence of a new score of thought – poststructuralism. Indeed, the very emergence of a theory (as practice) significantly concusses the autonomy of individual studies and loosens the ontology of a specific subject of research à la text and event. The revision of the literature and theatrical study which emerges from within and criticises itself through the hijinks of its own content, is demonstrative of the radical weakness which, as proposed by Althusser, requires an external support. This will only be able to transform internal relations of power – propelled from the Enlightenment if not earlier; the illusion of some historical omnipotence of cognition, detachment, honesty-and-rigour, tradition subject to *authority* (99). The intervention and conversion of the relations of power is not an immanent critique, but rather an external intervention, an external event, an external assistance that can only be philosophical and materialist (101).

Investigating the eventness of the text (which will not be studied in detail on the level of an empirical problem), the second part provides a genealogy of the theoretical lines which have formed the conceptual foundation of the event (the event as a philosophical

concept) and draws lines from historical materialism to the aleatory materialism of the recounter (Althusser) and from the recounter (Deleuze) to the affect (Massumi). The cartographed genealogical lines and the mode of this projection within the theoretical orientation are condensed in particular into a new materialism. This line, which considers itself an intervention in the existing relations of power, makes a sharp cut in the possibilities of knowledge formation (Moretti, Althusser, Deleuze, Massumi). Consequently, the conditions of production within which this knowledge occurs, where it is formed and what it elapses from are all relevant.

In the end, we propose a liaison between a distant reading (originating from Moretti's Marxist orientation) and "eventness reading" which follows the text's textual eventness on the horizon of this new materialism. Disconcealing the text production of eventness does not imply kidnapping authorship by nonpersonal contingency, rather a shift from authorial intention to proscriptive protocols of production and the effects of work (Foucault's author-function); playing with the spectator's perception does not imply arbitrary meaning – the theory of pragmatism is not interested in deciphering the meaning but in the effects of work; redefining the protocols of art (starting with neo-avant-garde and the techniques of auto-reflection and intertextuality) exceeds nominal self-integration into extant protocols of politico-social conditions, transforming these protocols by performative gesture (Čičigoj, "Tekst" 820). Thus, new textual proceduralisms significantly exceed bare aesthetic decisions.