

Indian Theatre, Ritual and Drama:

Towards an Intercultural Understanding of the Dramatic Mode

A workshop to be held during the triennial congress of the International Comparative Literature Association at the University of Vienna, July 21-27, 2016

Different cultures- literary or otherwise- have their own ways of defining drama. In Sanskrit poetics, dramatic poetry seeks to elicit an affective and emotional response from the discerning and sensitive audience. The transition from emotion of poetic composition (*bhava*) to the aesthetic experience of an emotion for the audience (*rasa*) is achieved by a combination of factors such as language-use and performative codes. Sanskrit drama differs substantially from its Greek counterpart, as articulated by Aristotle and criticism that ensued in response to Aristotle's formulations. When we think of drama and tragedy in the West, we think in terms of '*mimesis*', '*anagnorisis*', '*katharsis*'. In India, the audience experienced a panoply of moods that reaffirm the order of the universe. In both Sanskrit and Greek drama, however, there is a notion of the affective associated with the dramatic more so than any other literary mode of enunciation. Theatricality also appears as a stylistic device in various genres of literary writing such as the novel or epic as well as in ritualized performance. The difference between ritual and the performance of the written or spoken word resides in their respective illocutionary power or force. As a mode of enunciation, drama is categorized by its performative immediacy as well as its literary context.

This proposed panel solicits submissions on the dramatic mode in all its complexity within diverse literary, cultural, social, religious, political contexts with the hopes of moving towards an intra- and intercultural understanding of dramatic phenomena. In particular, we seek papers that deal primarily with Indian drama – 'Classical', 'Folk' and 'Modern' – in a comparative context, either a comparison of the various Indian dramatic forms such as Yaksagama, Kootiyatthan, Kathakali, Ram Lila, etc., modern art theater, group theatre and political theatre or in comparison with other world dramatic systems (ancient Greek, Western and non-Western, medieval and modern).

The workshop will convene three times during the congress, with a maximum of 12 participants. The presentations, once revised, will be published in a volume to be co-edited by Dorothy Figueira and Marc Maufort ("Dramaturgies" series, P.I.E Peter Lang, Brussels) in the course of 2017.

Prospective participants should send their proposal to the workshop convenor, Prof. Marc Maufort on mmaufort@ulb.ac.be no later than October 31, 2015.