

EDITORS' NOTE

This special issue of *Gramma* is devoted to an examination of the relationships between theatre, society and power. At a time when a whole episteme based on the binary logic of the cold war has collapsed, at a time when the Left is in disarray and the Right hurries to consolidate its hegemony, contemporary theatre scholars, already discontented with the current state of affairs, bring back to their discourse the issue of ideology to (re)examine the way texts, performances and cultures inscribe power. Using methodologies ranging from new historicism to feminism, the writers of this issue foreground a varied discourse, away from established assumptions regarding gender, ethnicity etc and closer to the concerns and anxieties of our postmodern era.

The articles included in this volume cover a variety of individual playwrights, ranging from 19th-century writers such as John Brougham and Mercy Otis Warren to modern and contemporary dramatists like Eugene O' Neill, Tennessee Williams, Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, Peter Handke, Minoru Betsuyaku, Caryl Churchill, Marsha Norman and Sam Shepard. Both thematically and methodologically they differ widely as they range from presenting descriptive case analyses and historical/sociocultural surveys to offering feminist readings of theatrical texts or tackling more theoretical questions, such as author-text-performance relationships, the body-space relationship and its signification, the deconstruction of the self as theatrical representation, political discourse as cryptic theatrical language, possibilities and strategies of audience control, the interaction of modernism and postmodernism in the theatrical praxis, the mediation of social forces in the reception of theatrical texts and playwrights and strategies of ideologically subversive theatre through seemingly conventional theatrical forms.

We hope that the thematic richness and methodological variety of the articles as much as the cultural diversity of the contributors to this volume will have synthesized for the reader the multi-dimensional panel of thought that we had originally envisaged as corresponding to our initial idea of "Theatre / Power/ Culture."

Of all the contributions in this volume Pat M. Ryan's is not in full concordance with the rest of the articles. This is due to the sad event of Pat's sudden death and a series of other misfortunes that befell his family, which prevented our collaboration for obtaining a fully revised manuscript. We humbly dedicate the version we have got (to which we have brought only the barely essential editorial changes) to his memory.

Finishing this short note we should like to thank Dr. Yiorgos Kalogeras and Dr. Ruth Parkin-Gounelas, who offered us valuable advice through their experience with the editing of the first issue of this journal. Our special thanks should also go to Katerina Kitsi-Mitakou who undertook with real devotion the hard task of processing all the disparate initial material into uniform shape.

Lastly we should like to announce the topic of our next volume, which will be dedicated to the major current issue of international scholarship, "Crossing Boundaries."

Savas Patsalidis and Elizabeth Sakellaridou
Editors