# Week 1 (Elizabethan and Jacobean Theatre)

## Lecture 1: Intro, Overview, Requirements

Admin team: Mezzanine level, room 409 (Andrew Parker)

Course convenor: Dr Victoria Price (worries about course, missed lectures)

* [Victoria.price@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Victoria.price@glasgow.ac.uk)
* Room 306, Gilmorehill Halls
* Office Hours: Monday 1pm – 3pm

Course Admin: Andrew Parker (seminar groups, collects and submits work)

* [Andrew.parker@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Andrew.parker@glasgow.ac.uk)

6 blocks of lectures

* Elizabethan and Jacobean Theatre
* Post-1968 British Theatre
* French Theatre
* 20th-century German Theatre
* Verbatim and Documentary Theatre
  + Authenticity
  + The ethics of theatre-making
* Interculturalism

3 key themes:

* Patronage and subsidy
* Control and restraint
  + Obstacles to theatre-makers
    - Censorship
* Audiences and makers

Patronage and subsidy:

* Patronage as a form of
  + privilege
  + exercise in power
  + a way of creating
* subsidy as a way of extending access to theatre for a more diverse range of makers and audience
* does public/private funding change how a work of art is received?

Control and restraint:

* control – regulate, exercise power over, prevent from growing spontaneously
* restraint – inhibition, prevention or moderation of action

Audience and Makers:

* theatre made by, for, with?
* distinction/blurred boundaries
* intervention in the world?

## Lecture 2: Space and Place, Audience and Performers

“A work is an object overflowing its frame.” – M. Goulish, 2000

Before, theatre was mobile (street, marketplace, bear-baiting pit), location was temporary

The building of the first permanent playhouses (late 16th century):

* James Burbage – The Theatre (1576)
* Consequences:
  + Theatre as an institution
  + More control on the money earned
  + Theatre gravitated towards London (because of the requirements)
    - In the Liberties (suburb areas just outside of the wall of London, homes for prostitutes, beggars, etc)
      * Theatres were not subject to city authorities (their jurisdiction didn’t reach)
      * **Physically** and **ideologically** **marginal**
* Requirements:
  + Patrons
  + Large amounts of spectators
* Two types of theatre
  + Public outdoor theatre (amphitheatre) (Burbage’s The Theatre)
    - The whole building is a theatre
      * Used specifically for theatre
    - Much lower entrance fees
    - Did not have a ceiling
      * Could not play in the dark
      * Sounds disrupted the plays
      * Performances impacted by weather
    - Round
      * Good distribution of sound
    - Wooden also for sound
    - Canopy acts as a sounding board
    - Tight grouping of people
    - Slow turnover of actors
    - Playwrights collaborated with the actors
    - Sense of familiarity
  + Private indoor playing hall (Blackfriars)
    - Existing building in which one room was used for theatre
    - Exclusive audience: aristocracy, elite, wealthy
    - Huge, decorative room
    - Much more expensive
    - Rectangular
    - Pit/yard area was filled with benches (in contrast to outdoor theatres)
    - Stage had seats, too (VERY expensive – 24 pence)

Interior design and relationship between audience and performers:

* Social stratification caused by different levels
* Proximity
* Interactivity between audience and performers (audience throwing things)
  + The performers watch the audience, too

*Henry V* Prologue 8-27:

* There is an obligation from the audience to use their imagination to fill the stage because it is impossible to recreate scenes perfectly and with all props

Prologues introduce crucial information for the audience:

* Edward II:
  + Gaveston and Edward II are lovers
  + Gaveston is in exile
* Epicene:
  + Relationship between Dauphine and Morose (inheritance)

# Week 2 (Elizabethan and Jacobean Theatre)

## Lecture 3: Patronage, Subsidy, and Sponsorship

The audience in the outdoor playhouses was heterogeneous (all classes, professions: aristocrats, merchants, prostitutes, nuns).

Early outdoor playhouses:

* accessible
  + place for mass communication
* Both men and women attended
  + Though women could only come with a male chaperone or in a group (including women-only groups)

The building of the first permanent playhouses marked the point at which commercial theatres emerged in England

* Maturing of English drama in Renaissance period caused by constant location and constant performers

First commercial playhouse: The Red Lion (1567) in Whitechapel (liberties, eastern suburb of London)

* John Brayne
* No use until 1575

The Rose (1587), Philip Henslowe

James Burbage:

* connection - the earl of Leicester’s men
* The Theatre (1566) (*theatrum* in Latin):
  + meant to spend 200 pounds, so took a partner: John Brayne (son-in-law)
  + because of skirmishes, spent 700 pounds
* 1596: Burbage lost his lease
* Rebuilt it as The Globe (1599)
  + Spent 700 pounds, 17 each
  + Lots of sharers
    - Hard to control
    - Low financial risk

Companies run cooperatively

Average size of full company: 20-30 people

Philip Henslowe’s diary:

* Costumes were expensive
* Hired freelancers and professionals

System of patronage from 1572 act: all acting companies were required to have a patron who would accept nominal responsibility for them

* Presumably financial backing, too
* Patron might have an agenda -> constant negotiations
* Henslowe’s and Burbage’s companies were oligopolies

All acting companies are bought under the monarchy

Becomes possible to move up the social ladder -> early capitalism

* Expansion of urban centres
* Rise of banking
* Increase in ???
* ???

Edward II (not censored, but baffles historians)

* Genre: historical tragedy
* Source text: Raphael Holinshed’s *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (c. 1581)
* The play was written sometime in 1591-92 and performed by the Earl of Pembroke’s Men (not known at which playhouse)
* Plot:
  + The play focuses on Edward II (who has just ascended the throne) and the political implication of his sexual relationship with Gaveston, a love affair which Edward prioritises above his monarchical duties
* Key themes:
  + Kingship and politics, power and authority
  + Gender and sexuality
    - Queen’s role
  + Social mobility
    - Gaveston gaining titles

Epicoene (censored):

* Genre: city comedy
  + sense of immediacy, familiarity, vitality
  + contemporary references, topical jokes
  + satirising the ills and follies of society
  + exposing social pretensions
  + Satire: force audience to laugh at themselves and so reassess themselves
* First performed in 1609-10 by the Children of the Queen’s Revels at the private, indoor Whitefriars theatre
* Key themes:
  + Commodification / Consumerism
  + Sexuality and Gender (especially the play’s treatment of women)
  + Secrecy / Deception / Artifice

## Lecture 4: Anti-theatricalism and Censorship

Censorship:

* The theatres in the Liberties fell under the scrutiny of the Crown (not city authorities because they were outside the city)
  + The Crown were very tolerant
* Revels Office (made by Henry VIII to better display his wealth)
* 1606 legislation: language on the stage (using God’s name)
* Government maintaining hands-off policy toward the stage: tolerance as political act (the gov employing theatre to release political pressure)
* Master of the Revels:
  + Licensed plays for performance (for both indoor and outdoor theatres)
  + Essentially censored the plays
    - Marked objectionable passages with ‘X’ or wrote warnings (“I like this not”)
  + Charged additional payment if the playwright wanted the play in print
  + Received a fee for the service
  + Submitting early draft (‘foul papers’) or mostly finished work
  + Didn’t work as editors, only censors
* Examples of Ben Jonson
  + *The Isle of Dogs* (1597) – accused of satirising city merchants and of containing seditious and scandalous matter (‘lewd’). Jonson was arrested (2 months)
  + *Sejanus* (1603) – satirical allusions to contemporary matters. Jonson was called before the Privy Council to answer charges of popery and treason but the matter seems to have ended there.
  + *Eastward Ho!* (1605), a collaborative play by Jonson, John Marston and George Chapman – accused of satirising Scottish courtiers. Jonson was in gaol for 2 months (and Chapman, but not Marston because he fled)
  + *Epicoene* (Dec 1609 – Jan 10) – by February 1610, the play had been banned by the authorities. Jonson accused of alluding to the Arbella Stuart (cousin of James) and Prince of Moldavia (Stephen Janiculo) rumours that were in circulation (that they were dating) – **censored because of aristocratic gossips**

Jonson exploring the issue of censorship in *Epicoene*

* Jonson censuring the information that he imparts to his spectator
* Part of the play’s subtext is the audience’s relationship to the play itself

Anti-theatricalism:

* City authorities always petitioning Privy Council to remove the theatres
  + Concern about apprentices wasting their time
  + Most frequent complain: theatre is immoral, prostituting actors and audience, theatre makers
* Theatre as a spiritual disease
* Problems of theatre seen by anti-theatricalists:
  + Women allowed in the theatre: corruptive, deflowering by going to the theatre, Performers on display, “prostituting” them, women “visually penetrated”
  + Money wasted, not spent on the Church
  + Costumes too ornate, not as simple as puritans wanted
  + Prepubescent boys acting as women, so romance scenes were too scandalous

Cultural value of the Elizabethan and Jacobean Theatre:

* Entertainment
  + For the masses
  + Tap-houses (pubs)
  + Gardens
  + Musicians
  + Spectacle (by costumes)
* Evolution of drama
  + First permanent playhouses
  + Constant supply of novelty
* Social barometer
  + Reinforces social status
* Media-like function
  + Reaching massive audiences
  + Social intercommunication
  + Accessible (men and women, literate and illiterate)
  + Revolutionary ideas
* Safety-valve
* Didactic

# Week 3 (Post-1968 British Theatre)

## Lecture 5: Censorship and The Stage

Censorship: narrow def (censorship by state) and broader def (control by anybody)

Motivations for censorship:

* Military
* Political
* Moral
* Religious
* Corporate

Stage censorship in the UK:

* Licensing Act (1737)
* Licensing Act (1843)
  + Revised Lord Chamberlain’s powers, theatre only fitting “good morals” etc

Pressure towards reform in the 1950s:

* Overseas playwrights refused licenses
* Theatre Club System: private productions, staging almost anything
* 1958: decision to allow homosexuality

1958: revised guidelines, homophobic

“The glass closet” strengthened by

Prosecution of theatre workshop:

* Chapman’s “You Won’t Always Be on Top” (1957) actors, authors prosecuted for going off-script

John Osborne’s *A Patriot for Me*:

* denied license, played “privately” to 25,000 people

Liberal hour of social reform:

* Capital punishment suspended in 1965 and then permanently ended in 1969
* Abortion made legally available in 1967

Towards reform: The Theatres Act (1968):

* Lord Chamberlain wanted to retain power, but the act still passed
* repealed the Theatres Act (1843), abolished the Royal Prerogative in respect of stage censorship

“The Romans in Britain” (1981):

* Howard Brendan?
* British history, myths of Imperial England, Northern Ireland politics
* Included male sexual assault
* “Representation of indecency was the same as real indecency”
* Prosecution fell apart when the chief witness mistook mimed play for real action (penis instead of thumb

Examples of modern censorship: 13 Reasons Why, Disney, His Dark Materials, A Clockwork Orange

Jerry Springer: The Opera:

* Britsh operatic musical, based on “Jerry Springer Show”
* irreverent treatment of Christianity, profanity, audacious/surreal imagery
* Many awards
* “challenges us to confront our own complicity as spectators of ritualized humiliation”
* Jeremy Kyle show
* After broadcast, 55 000 public complaints
  + Christian Institute: private prosecution

“Behzti” (2004)

* addresses sexual abuse and hypocrisy in Sikh community
* Police could not guarantee audience safety

Why does theatre draw such controversies?

* Edgar’s 3 forms of public anxiety:
  + theatre has influence to inspire action
  + depicting = endorsement
  + enacting events on stage = off stage

Brett Bailey’s “Exhibit B”:

* live exhibition restaging 19th century “human zoo”
* issues of re-enacting slavery being slavery
* counterpoint of freedom to perform

Geopolitics of Censorship:

* “My Name is Rachel Corrie” (doc play) by Alan Rickman and Katharine Viner
* Protests at Edinburgh Fringe 2014: “The City”, protest against the funding

“the will to censor remains alive and well”

anti-walk? Lawrence Fawkes

Conceptualising Censorship:

* Constraint on both form and content
* .
* .

## Lecture 6: British Context, Alternative Theatre, 7:84

1970s Britain:

* Lots of coal miners
* Consumerism (Chanel, bread (Nimble), kitchen stuff
* Major miner strikes
* PM leads UK into EEC
* 2 general elections: hung Parliament, slim Labour majority
* ‘Troubles’: (Northern Ireland)
* ‘winter of discontent’ (demanding higher pay)
  + Rubbish dumped
* fall of the Callaghan gov and election of Margaret Thatcher
* Scotland
  + Nationalism grew politically and culturally
  + North Sea Oil

‘Alternative’ theatre:

* Sexual Offences Act – decriminalised certain homosexual acts
* Abortion Act
* Theatres Act (1968)
* alternative – as a response to perceived theatrical mainstream
* Categories
  + Community – available to communities not usually connected to theate
  + Overtly political
  + Campaign companies
  + Populist theatre
  + Experimental companies (came out of a women’s movement)
  + Companies devoted to production of new plays
* 7:84
  + 7% of UK population owning 84% in 1966
  + Socialist principles

The Cheviot, The Stag and The Black Black Oil by John McGrath

* Stylistic devices:
  + range of performance styles (montage of songs, jokes, sketches, anecdotes, doc material)
  + episodic, making use of repetition
* History play
  + highland clearances: eviction of highland crofters to make way for the more profitable Cheviot sheep
  + ‘Romantic’ tourism
  + present day (1973) American ‘invasion’
* Genre
  + Political – agitational, potentially didactic, ‘agit-prop’
  + Popular – ceilidh,
* Scottish practice?
  + “Scotland is distinguished by its socialist, egalitarian tradition, its Labour history, its cultural cohesions” – Elizabeth MacLennan
* Collaborative process?
  + McGrath says yes
  + Monstrous Regiment mirrors socialist ideology
* Ground-breaking
  + Performed in new and local communities where theatre hadn’t been there before
* 7:84 Cheviot project

John McGrath’s statement: “The theatre can never cause social change. It can articulate the pressures towards one, help people to celebrate their strengths and maybe build their self-esteem […]”

Works inspired by Cheviot:

* The Pure, the Dead and the Brilliant
  + Scottish playwright Alan Bissett
  + rallying Yes vote in the run up to the Scottish referendum vote in Sep 2014
* Coney’s Early Days (of a Better Nation) (2014-5)
  + interactive
  + kind of ‘live action RPG’
  + structured as a sequence of decisions about power
  + toured the UK during the 2015 general election

# Week 4 (Post-1968, French Theatre of 1930s to 1970s)

## Lecture 7: Theatre as a Public Forum

Theatre as a public forum

* historical tradition? Ancient Greek theatre
* Objectivity vs subjectivity
  + Representation by majority

Robin Soans’ *Talking to Terrorists*:

* developed through interviews undertaken by Soans, director, cast – a doc drama?
* juxtaposes figures from a number of different conflict and countries (UK/Northern Ireland, Palestine, Uganda), interviews with high profile pol figures ( Northern Ireland PM Mo Mowlem, Craig Murray)
* Testimony
  + theatre giving a voice to the voiceless
* Style and Structure
  + Mix of named chars and those identified by role or job
  + Reflexive recognition of interview process as theatrical process
  + Direct address or illusion of it (talking to the audience)
  + Juxtaposing counterpointing experiences (IRA bomber and conference attendee, ex-secretary of state and his wife)
* Structure
  + interviewees talking to audience

Playwright as editor?

* Structure as a form of content
* Example: photographers
* Playwrights have responsibility to anonymise interviewees, but cannot guarantee it

Gillian Slovo’s *The Riots* (2011):

* work based on eyewitness accounts of London riots in summer 2011, following the death of Mark Duggan
* originally framed at the Tricycle Theatre as a ‘public inquiry’ in the absence of a formal gov
* Slovo’s process
  + 55h
  + ‘You can’t give characters words they haven’t said but you can edit their words’

Verbatim theatre:

* Example of process: The Permanent Way

Tim Price’s *The Radicalisation of Bradley Manning*

* produced as touring production in Waled during 212
* originally staged in Tasker Milward School, where Manning went
* Manning held in detention at production, found guilty
* Fictional account inspired by true story
  + Had a disclaimer as not a biography

A history of the present?

* issues and matters of the present
* audience as witnesses, liveness
* overlap of temporalities (theatre time and historical time)
* Whose history?
  + Political, rhetorical, personal (narrator)
* Whose ‘truth’?
  + the term ‘verbatim theatre’ tends to fetishize the notion that we are getting things ‘word for word’
  + Documents, interviews historical, not representative of interviewees years/months after

## Lecture 8: Artaud, Cruelty (Politics, Aesthetics, Sensation)

**EXAM: cruelty, politics of form**

“all this trigger warning shit”

“When I’m listening, I have no interest in deciphering music, I just want to sit there and feel”

Context:

* search for extreme theatre

Outlaw politics (gender, sexuality), not the politics of ideologies

* Antonin Artaud – 100 electroshock therapies, drug addict, visionary, mentally disturbed, committed to theatricality as something visual and gestural, surrealism, art as tapping and provoking the subconscious, total revolution in perception
  + “We suffer from corruption, a corruption of reason”
* Jean Genet – thief, queer, prisoner, committed to producing a theatre that provokes, that uses “shit against shit”, politics of the outcast, sexual politics of freedom and liberation
* Marguerite Duras – feminist, alcoholic, confessed ‘salope’ (slut/whore) by confessing to having had an abortion (illegal at the time) (The 343; 1971)

Lectures:

* main argument is that French theatre offers a type of politics in which content doesn’t matter as much as the search for a form of in order to produce a type of shock

French theatre

* Influenced by avant-garde (late 18th century word, shock troops who breach enemy lines: military breach in way of thinking and feeling) aesthetics – surrealism
  + Surrealism:
    - Fascination with the primitive, irrational, dream reality
    - Not art for art’s sake
* **Theatricality** theatre from Jacques Copeau – gestures more important than words (opposite of dramatic theatre)
* Theatre where training, the body are more important than text
* Theatre with a spiritual and political mission
* Theatre is a National Theatre, like a kind of rite or ceremony
* Recreating the world, not reflecting it. Politics of perception, existence (subject, gendered being)

Keywords to think about

* Formal experimentation/rites/ceremonies
  + Ritual that transforms the audience
* Erotics/Sexuality/Gender
  + Orgasmic theatre, close to death
* Cruelty
* Bodies
* Theatricality
* Force (not semantics)
  + Art transmitting something that ‘hits’ with force, touches audience’s bodies, arrow hitting audience in the heart, in the eye
  + Visceral theatre
* Anti-France, anti-bourgeois, negationist
* Creative destruction

Artaud’s influence (Carl Lavery)

* ‘even if Artaud did not succeed for himself, it is certain that through him something has succeeded for us al”

Antonin Artaud

* Born in Marseilles 1896
* Illness, anxiety, time in clinics
* Missed WWI, but his whole career is marked by that – his work is therapeutic, trying to cure sickness
* Most important theatre-maker in 20th cent
* Offers a revolutionary concept/practice
* Infects audience with cruelty
* Rejection of standard theatre; alienation
* Career starts as a surrealist poet (‘The Nerve Meter’), then film-maker
* ‘The Jet of Blood’

Cruelty texts:

* Cruelty throughout Artaud’s career (1 essay, 2 manifestos, 2 letters)
  + Theatre and the Plague
  + No More Masterpieces
  + Theatre and Cruelty
  + Theatre of Cruelty (1st and 2nd)
  + Letters on Cruelty
    - ‘I do not systematically cultivate horror. The word cruelty must be taken in a broad sense, and not in the rapacious physical sense that it is customarily […]
  + ‘The idea that we can be healed through cruelty’
* Cruelty not physical but psychic, works through bodies, as an effect
* “We are not free and the sky can still fall on our heads. And above all else theatre is made to teach us this” (Artaud)
  + No one completely controls their surroundings, behaviour
  + A nod towards nihilism
* Cruelty not literal; rigorous attention to form, content
* An assault on senses (costumes, musicality, rejection of psychology (Racinian tragedy and naturalism))
* Non-humanist theatre
  + Animal-like, cosmic energies
* Artaud’s politics
  + Not interested in ideology (left surrealists because of connection to communism)
  + Makes life an excitement
* Total revolution

# Week 5 (French)

## Lecture 9: *The Balcony* – Between Cruelty and Spectacle

(against mobility and fixity)

Dilemma about spectacles:

* In a spectacular world, a world of images and simulations, what role should theatre play?
* If reality is already theatricalised, and not simply real or actual, what does this do to realism in the theatre?
* What type of politics should theatre look to represent in a world where all politics are spectacular?

Spectacle:

* A society based on images where watching is more important than doing
* An unreal world based on commodities (capitalism as an image)
* A world of simulation and untruth
* A world of living death, where people live separated from each other
* A world of alienation and boredom – where mass media manages everything
* ‘The spectacle is not a collection of images; it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images’ (Guy Debord, Society of Spectacle, no.9)

What is Cruelty?

* Puncturing illusions of humanism and humanist theatre
* Showing that the world cares little for humans (Artaud’s falling sky)
  + Life is senseless, violent, cruel, and love and strife are in a constant cosmic battle
  + The only way forward is acceptance of this cruelty
* Cruelty as a metaphysical concept

Jean Genet’s *The Balcony* (1956)

* *The Balcony* is a place of looking, a space where one is not occupied in actual life, but located in a place above it
* To that extent, *The Balcony* is **an allegory of theatre itself**, a place where nothing actual happens, especially ideas of political theatre
* Genet’s cruelty: showing this fact, puncturing liberal illusions

Kristen Ross’ *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*

* spectacle of commodification
* similar to *The Balcony*

Etymology: French word for theatre similar to ‘spectacle’

Genet about:

* says that capitalism transforms nature into culture

Ideologies represent history as a constant

History shows that things change

1950s-1968 France:

* Revolution vs reaction, losing colonies (Algeria 1956-1962) (civil war), student revolution (1968)

Carl Lavery’s summary of *The Balcony* (which he does not understand himself)

* Allegory for how the ruling regime creates a false reality

Highlights:

* The brothel as the play itself
  + The audience have come to see *The Balcony* as the citizens come below the fictional balcony

Another theme:

* We all desire to be dominated, we don’t want freedom
  + The new image is the image of fascism, a fascist leader
  + Most scenarios are sadomasochistic

Genet’s purpose:

* Target all things audience doesn’t want to discuss
  + Throws into audience everything we repress
  + Accuse audience, not solve problems: show them
  + Wound: confront the subject with what they are not, internally
    - The wound is the return of the repressed, what the subject does not want to face, the impossible within, undoing identity, interior abyss
    - A creative wound: allows things to flow, history to move (the underside of spectacular existence
* Laughter as a politically cleansing force
  + Showing the ridiculousness of things
* Doubt what one sees
  + Metatheatre: theatre about theatre
  + “What’s being represented to you might not be real at all”
* Attack the audience about entertainment and distancing oneself from events (watching a revolution in theatre instead of participating in it)
* Show the potential of becoming different

Genet’s Aesthetic Politics:

* The plays provide an oblique or indirect way of dealing with politics
* While critical of the established order and always on the side of the underdog (maids, rebels, Blacks, Algerians), critical of revolutionary movements, too (and offer no messages)
  + Critical of revolutionary games, in particular their tendency to repeat mistakes of the regime and their love of images, heroism, propaganda
* Different from other political theatre at the time in France (popular, militant, committed, Brechtian theatre)

Common threads in Genet’s work:

* A hatred of France – anger, violence
* Radical freedom of sexuality, gender, race (more than class)
* Sensitivity to role-playing and illusion
* Theatricality of power
* Power of images
* Complexity and open-endedness (reluctance to provide a message)
* Rejection of realism and prose, in its place abstraction and poetry

Historical context of Genet:

* Genet’s work conditioned by traumas of French history
  + WWII where France was defeated, collaborated by Germany
  + Loss of colonies in 1950s
    - 1954: defeat of Indochina
    - 1958: order for decolonisation in West Africa
      * Influx of Africans, significant rise in racism
    - 1954-1962: Algerian War
* Instead of hiding it, Genet exposes them, unveils the repressed
  + Deconstructs myth of resistance (made by de Gaulle) and shows fascist tendencies within French culture
* Rise of capitalism in the ’50s, image culture (cars, luxury, TV, ads)

Artaud’s influence on Genet:

* Theme of attacking reality (sexuality, nihilism, cynicism, revolution, images)
* *The Balcony*: inflicts cruelty on audience, holds them accountable by revealing their delight in perversity and disclosing their hypocrisy
  + Attacks complacency by showing the sadomasochism of the subject
  + A theatre where feeling/effect is political

*The Balcony* and spectacle:

* The play shows the dangers of spectacle (maybe, by extension, theatre)
  + The revolution is defeated not because of military power, but because the ruling class controls the production of images
  + The ruling class colonises consciousness

Themes of *The Balcony*:

* Revolution (and how it fails to come to power)
* Theory of fascism – eroticism / sadomasochism
* The role of mass media in a society of spectacle
* Representation of history (history made by winners)
* Representation of reality (reality as an image, illusions)
* Sexuality, power, and glamour
* Theatre and politics – spectacle
* Existential / Political power of the brothel, pornography
* Sadomasochism, master-slave relationship

Devices used in the play:

* Laughter
  + Highlights ridiculousness of concepts and traditions
  + Creates a distance
* Language
  + Characters praise the archetypes of Bishop, Judge, Thief
  + Ornate, beautiful, poetic – theatrical
* Acting style not realistic, e.g. Arthur’s death
* Costumes are fake (platform heels): characters made up like puppets
* Meta
  + Addresses audience, calls reality/theatre as fake as the brothel/house of illusions

## Lecture 10: India Song (1975)

A Logic of Infection – a dramaturgy of deliberated confusion and dislocation

India Song:

* Play, film
* Structured not as a musical, but musicalized in its form
* Idea
  + Music is much more powerful in producing feelings than words by themselves

Artaud, Genet, Duras:

* Undoing sense, creating non-sense (not chaotic and meaningless, but meaningful lack of meaning)
* Creation by destruction

Marguerite Duras

* Born in 1914 in Indochina, Vietnam, Saigon
* Named Marguerite Donnadieu, but rejected father’s surname for Duras
  + Rejection of patriarchy
* Themes about: female desire, madness, suicide, melancholy – fascination with excess, Leslie Hill’s ‘apocalyptic desire’ (1993)
  + Hiroshima mon amou
  + Moderato cantiblet

Sichsue(?) plays on words

* ‘thief’ and ‘woman’
  + women stealing male ability to control them by flying away, stealing male identity
* ‘reborn’ and ‘Genet’

India Song:

* A play but also a film/play/dance hybrid
* Setting: India, Calcutta, 1930s
  + But other places are always evoked, voices speak of the past -> a memory piece
  + Unknown location always
  + No distinction between India, Laos, other Asian countries
  + Colonialism ?
* Nothing explained, everything is evoked (unknown reason why things get together)
* Politics
  + Feminism
  + Anti-colonial
  + The enigma, cruelty

Scene with the vice consul (dance where he explains that he shot at beggars, shot at his mirror, then screams off-screen):

* A cry mirroring Artaud’s theatre of voice (not of words), cruelty in sound
* Cruelty of madness, suicide, depression, violence, eroticism/sex, meaninglessness
* Desire as a driving factor

Anne-Marie Stretter:

* Feminism:
  + Anne-Marie Stretter is a liberated woman (like the beggar woman, she strays, has multiple affairs) **but** she is also passed around, entrapped, and surrounded by men, appears to exist for their pleasure
  + The film shows her the object of male gaze, of fascination
* Representation:
  + Representation doesn’t reveal the truth, rather it exposes the enigma
  + The violence of exposure, the thing that all the men want, is never committed in Duras’s film
  + Anne-Marie Stretter is always out of reach
  + Symbols: water, sea, Venice -> liquid -> out of grasp
    - Inability to know the opposite sex, any attempt to do so will end in violence -> cruelty against violence
      * Violence of the patriarchy, leading to her suicide
        + Ambassador controls her -> critique of free love of the 60s

Duras’ theatre: Noonan:

* ‘a theatrical form that both staged a severing of the woman’s body/presence from discourse/subjectivity, and gave expression to the distressed source of the woman’s voice beyond discourse. This form of theatre appeals to the spectator who is willing to become involved in its uncovering of possible meanings of female identity’

*India Song* and colonialism:

* India – then a symbol for all European colonialism
* The film is suffused with an air of melancholy and defeat (ghostly, spectral, ruined)
  + Western colonialism was always a doomed exercise
  + Cruelty that European ideology is abandoned
  + Western ‘civilising’ discourse – a myth; in reality, it inflicted violence, was meaningless
* Silence of the servant – silence against colonialism

The work is cruel because the form is an enigma: confronts us with the unknowable (failure of western humanism, the truths of patriarchy, the desire to have a proper identity, to coincide with ourselves

Shooting at mirrors:

* The vice-consul shoots at his mirror (his reflection, his illusion) because he hates the fact that he can’t know himself
* The form of the work asks the audience to stay on the surface, to accept the enigma of never being able to pass to the other side of the mirror

Art as eroticism, life, becoming:

* The point of the work is to enjoy the enigma, the mystery, the unknowability,
* *India Song* is a work of infection: the form of the piece gets into our bodies, under our skin, we breathe it in

Critical imperative:

* How to change our viewing habits so that we become attuned to following, to unfolding, a work whose entire organisational structure, whose very reason is to frustrate, and disrupt?

# Week 7 (German)

Lecturer: Anselm Heinrich

## Lecture 11: Theatre, Propaganda, and Politics in 20th cent. Germany

Goethe-Institut: lots of lit for free bc of Glasgow uni

Claims:

* Theatre in ger is not just to entertain, but also to educate audience, offer some greater truths
* The ideal can be linked to gov subsidies
* The link between the state and the arts can be positive, but is also problematic for propaganda

Historical context of Germany 1871 – 1914

* Late nation state (1871)
  + Born out of a war (with the French)
  + Union through language
* **Competition** between principalities to build impressive operas, theatres, etc
  + Even Hagen had its theatre
  + Theatre as a means of **distinction**
  + Civic, bourgeois theatre

Perception of theatre

* Until 1800s, attacks on theatre: people not going to church
  + Time wasted
  + A gathering of people is dangerous
  + Actors pretending to be someone else, performing = lying

German classics (new playwrights)

* Goethe
* Schiller
* Contributing to Bildung

State and theatre

* Theatres receive subsidies from the state, 1900s
* Middle classes invest in theatres, often in competition to bourgeois, aristocratic, court theatres
* All theatres taken over by the state, increasing subsidies
* City council’s attempt to make proper, serious theatre: Stadttheater
* Late 1920s: 80% of theatres are fully funded by state
* Employees in theatres and orchestras: civic employees
* Schiller and Goethe
  + These people were used for political purposes
    - By state, Nazis, etc
* First meeting of National Assembly met in the theatre in Weimar
* Consequences:
  + Over 150 publicly funded theatres

Propaganda: systematic dissemination of info especially in a biased way

* Oxford English Dictionary
* Examples
  + British: Dig for Victory, Hitler eating his occupied territories
  + US: be careful, don’t talk, Fifth column?, anti-Japanese (Don’t talk, Rats have big ears), anti-German (Swastika as bull’s eye)
  + Russian: All to the front,
  + German: Hitler good with children, “degenerate music” (jazz, star of David), “The Eternal Soldier” (1940)

## Lecture 12: German Context, Brecht

Censorship in UK before 1968:

* Sexuality (homosexuality)
* Crown
* Politics (foreign heads of state: Mussolini in 1940 (“Even Hitler had a mother, even musso had a ma”))
* Christianity

Censorship in GER post-1918:

* 1918: official banishment of censorship
* Still possible to ban plays that “endanger peace \ cause unrest” – plays closely supervised by gov
* Theatres allowed to experiment

GER context:

* Late comer to industrial revolution
  + By 1900 the biggest economy
* Divided by religion (Protestant, catholic)
* Large income gap
  + Pensions, health insurance, unemployment benefits
* Arts:
  + Berlin is theatre capital
  + Subsidised by state/municipalities
  + Shakespeare performed more than anywhere else in the world
    - Hamlet is Deutsch
  + Film: 1920s Berlin is the place to be for new movements
    - Dadaism, Bauhaus

Bertold Brecht (1898-1956):

* Political playwright/theorist
* Born in imperial, undemocratic Germany ruled by Keiser (emperor) Wilhelm II
* Born in Augsburg, family of businessmen (father – paper manufacturer), middle class
* Joins imperial army (1918), but never serves
* WWI influence
* Republic proclaimed in 1918
* German rev 1918 inspired by Russian one in 1917
* Joins Augsburg council
* Joins socialist uprising (ultimately unsuccessful)
* *Drums in the Night*
* Moves to Berlin in 1924
  + GER econ recovers
  + No more Weimar
  + Collaborates with famous talented people
* *Three Penny Opera* (1928)
  + First huge success
  + Biting satire of decayed capitalism
  + Adapted from …opera
  + Narrator: “we are about to witness an opera called an opera for beggars”
  + London: the archetypal capitalist city
  + Boer War (British vs. Zulu over resources in South Africa, British win) linked to capitalism
  + Modern, sexual, anti-capitalist
  + Themes/synopsis
    - Capitalism based on unjust means (prostitution, oppression)
    - The two [beggars] become the defender of bourgeois morality, conspire with the police
    - anti-Keynesian capitalism
  + Wanted to be remembered for line “food first, politics later”

Brecht’s Epic theatre

* Epic = episodic
* Seemingly disconnected, montage, non-chronological, non-naturalistic
* Conclusions presented, audience invited to draw their own **connections**
* In opposition to Aristotelian theatre
  + Against three unities: one place, one action, one time
  + Against one plot, one major character, over 24hrs
  + => Non-Aristotelian
* *Three Penny Opera* making fun of playgoers

# Week 8 (GER, Documentary)

## Lecture 13: Verfremdung Effect, Documentary

*Three Penny Opera*

* begins a serious study of Karl Marx’s Das Kapital
  + Industrial revolution dehumanises workers: just corks in the machine, alienates from the product because workers make only small parts of the end product, working for someone higher up
  + Capitalism commodifies everything (emotion, lives, etc)

From Marxism Brecht takes a revolutionary method for representing classes

* Three Penny Opera: “We would all practice charity and love, but sad to say the earth is far from heaven”

Brecht:

* Realism is a false world view because it presents reality/society as unmalleable, an end result of natural evolution
  + Naturalism, realism is bourgeois propaganda, agenda
* Theatre needs to be open
* Brecht’s theatre alienates audience from everyday life to realise the wrongs, distance = objectivity
* Questions capitalism
* His theatre is based on a radical separation of elements of production

Verfremdung (alienation) effect

* *Three Penny Opera*
  + “Wake up you rotten Christian!” (“Wacht auf du verrotteter Christ”)
* See characters from a distance
* Shocking audience, keeping audience conscious of the fact it is a performance (~~suspension of~~ disbelief)
* Narrator
  + *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*
* Everything seen is fiction
* The stage (like life) is made, not given
  + Do not accept the status quo, change what you want
* Acting style
  + Anti-Stanislavskian
  + Stand outside the character and retain a critical distance

Reception of Brecht’s epic theatre:

* *Threepenny Opera* huge success, but nothing else was popular
* Brecht was seen as a threat to civ
* Not the mainstream
* 1933: Brecht leaves as Nazis come to power

Theatre-writing in exile (33-47)

* 1947: Brecht interrogated by US House of Unamerican Activities Committee

1954: The Caucasian Chalk Circle:

* Parable inspired by ancient Chinese Chalk Circle
* In Georgia
* Retells tale of King Solomon
* Allegory to politics
* Prologue: dispute over a valley
  + Left out in one US version
* Plans for property are more important than previous ownership: precedence comes to those who have better plans than to those who owned the property before
* “The Fat Prince” – condemnation of nobility, bourgeoisie
* Obviously socialist propaganda

Brecht in East Germany:

* Helene Weigel: leading actress in his company
  + Calls the shots
* Goes to Switzerland first, then goes to East Germany
* Berliner Ensemble (leading theatre company
* *Mother Courage*
  + 1945
  + First European tour

Theatre in Third Reich, Aesthetics

* Art in Nazi Germany
  + 1933
  + Heroic, Germanic, Aryan
  + Arno Breker’s sculpture
    - Heroic, brave (sword, not shield), fighting, power, muscular, looking forward to future
  + Wanted an accepting audience, not questioning of status quo
  + Re-enactments of
  + *Thing* site
  + Heroic tragedy of fate
  + *The Frankenberg Game of Dice* (1936 Berlin)

Documentary Theatre:

* 1960s Germany
* Factual material (evidence, transcripts, speeches)
* “Barbaric to write a poem after Auschwitz”
* Examples
  + Auschwitz
    - *Die Ermittlung* (*The Investigation*) by Peter Weiss

## Lecture 14: Documentary Theatre (Bg, Qs)

Lecturer: Dr Michael Bachmann

Def:

* **doc theatre** – a theatre that uses ‘documents’ in order to ‘document’ (often contemporary or recent) events, i.e. to present them (usually from a critical perspective) to an audience
  + **Verbatim theatre** – ‘word for word’ theatre

Qs:

* Are there any differences between different types of docs (statistics, witness reports, etc)?
* How does a witness differ from an actor?
* Differences between different forms (e.g. film vs theatre)?
  + History plays: Georg Büchner, Schiller, Shakespeare (*Richard II*)
  + Theatre of testimony (actual witnesses), autobiographical performance, re-enactment, verbatim, political theatre, etc

“In Germany, for instance… Or rather, in Austria, […]”

Background:

* **19th century** development of supposedly ‘objective’ means of **recording reality** (photography, phonography as indexical ‘traces’ of the real); belief – as in Naturalism – in the Positivist nature of things (‘the scientific age’)
* **Documentary ‘waves’ model**: in theatre history, it is often claimed that doc forms emerge when reality becomes too ‘complex’ for fiction, when it probes the limits of representation, and/or when there is a heightened (e.g. political) need for facts (1920s-30s (WWI), 1960s (WWII, Vietnam), 2000s (War on Terror, Financial Crisis, Migration), 2010s (Fake News))

Qs:

* Does theatre fictionalise all facts (through editing, acting)?
* Do facts make for ‘bad art’ (does the aesthetic quality of theatre suffer)?

Brecht: ‘[…] the classics are already dead. But if they are dead, *when* did the die? The truth is, they died in the war. They are amongst our war victims. If it is true that soldiers going off to war had *Faust* in their kitbag, then the ones who returned from war no longer did.’

Piscator: ‘The demolition of art was begun by the Dadaists under the slogan “ART IS SHIT!” […]. I too now had a clear opinion of how art was only a means to an end. A political means.’

Brecht:

1. Documents cannot represent reality in an understandable manner
2. Art creators need to edit documents to help audience understand reality
3. Art creators cannot base depiction of reality on experience alone (facts are needed)

Theodor W. Adorno:

1. Simple, basic art is not enough to represent/demonstrate real suffering
2. In art, ‘suffering can still find its own voice’

**Complexity of reality**: doc/pol theatre not as simple reproduction, but aesthetic intervention / critical selection to make spectators understand reality (belief that this is possible – maybe no longer today)

**Ethics of representation**: in light of events that are difficult or impossible to represent (genocide), can doc forms be one way of dealing with this reality – or are they caught up in the problem of aesthetic pleasure and narrative meaning (Adorno)?

**Function of art**: pol rather than ‘culinary’ (Brecht, Piscator)

# Week 9 (Doc, Interculturalism)

## Lecture 15: Form and Content

Peter Weiss (‘Notes on Documentary Theatre’, 1968):

* “Documentary Theatre is a theatre of reportage. […]. Documentary Theatre refrains from all invention; it takes authentic material and puts it on the stage, **unaltered in content, edited in form [im Inhalt unverändert, in der Form bearbeitet]**. […] This critical selection, and the principles by which the montage of snippets of reality is effected, determines the quality of the documentary drama.”

Theatre is removed from reality, even witnesses speaking fictionalise the events by putting them on the stage.

Peter Weiss’ *Vietnam Discourse* – another example of a pol discourse

Peter Weiss

* One of the most important doc theatre makers of the 1960s, and his reflections on doc theatre are hugely influential until today, even though we might disagree with some of his claims
* **Invention and authenticity**: ‘editing’/’selecting’ and invention can’t be easily separated; invention might be needed to tell the truth about social relations (if evidence itself (like photographs) cannot); the recognition of diff perspectives and voices destabilises the notion of one authentic or objective truth
* **Critical selection**: Weiss believes that theatre can provide answers by creating a ‘clear’ narrative of events as opposed to the ‘haphazard nature’ of the news (for Weiss, this ‘chaos’ serves the interests of the ruling classes)

Critical discourse

* Doc creates “a new public sphere in which to scrutinize events” (Jill Dolan)
* It may “construct the past in the service of a future the authors would like to create” (Carol Martin)
* “although it might seem that postmodernism would gradually empty doc of [the] authority [of its truth claim] […], that is not what has happened.” (Janelle Reinelt)

Modes of Doc Theatre / Acting

* (not all might be considered doc theatre; *Flight* is puppetry, *Situation Room* is participatory, *Breivik’s Statement* either verbatim or a re-enactment)
* Qs
  + What narrative of reality is presented (one truth, diff perspectives)?
  + Do they primarily pose questions or give answers?
  + How do they mediate their truth claim?
* Peter Weiss’ *The Investigation*
  + ‘no attempt should be made to reconstruct the courtroom before which the proceedings of the camp trial took place. Any such reconstruction would […] be as impossible as trying to present the camp itself on the stage.’
    - Two layers of removal: the trial, then the performance
  + ‘The confrontation of witnesses and the accused […] were overcharged with emotion. Only a condensation of the evidence can remain on the stage. This condensation should contain nothing but the facts. Inasmuch as the witnesses in the play lose their names, they become mere speaking tubes. The nine witnesses sum up what hundreds at the trial expressed
    - ‘Summing up’ / ‘expressing’ instead of relating detail-to-detail: performance even in the trial
    - Example: Eichmann trial (Jerusalem 1961), Yehiel De-Nur collapses
      * Performance in real trial, emotional collapse/testimony instead of verbal testimony
    - One can focus more on the facts in a play than the actual trial can
* Milo Rau’s *Breivik’s Statement* (2013)
  + Verbatim repetition of hate speech (compare with *Confirmation* by Chris Thorpe)
    - Manifesto where he explains his atrocities
  + **German-Turkish actress** Sascha Ö. Soydan **reads the manifesto** for 60 minutes
  + There is no addition to the performance, just reading
  + Always a Q&A afterwards, place of discourse
* Anna Deavere Smith’s *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* (1993)
  + Complex multiplicity of perspectives
  + Author did interviews (taped), **imitated** witnesses (pose, body language, voice, accent, clothing, etc) on the stage by listening to the tapes
  + PBS did a doc on the show
* Khulumani Support Group’s *The Story I am about to Tell*
  + The actual witnesses telling their stories on stage
* Vox Motus’ *Flight* (Candice Edmunds & Jamie Harrison)
  + Based on a novel
  + Story told by tiny clay figures
  + Modeled on August Fuhrmann’s *Kaiserpanorama* in Berlin
    - Spectator immobile while the story unfolds by rotation (dioramas)
* Rimini Protokoll’s *Situation Rooms – A multiplayer video piece* (2013) on arms trade
  + Spectator lives through characters by footage from an iPad (brought along) and headphones

## Lecture 16: Interculturalism Intro

Teen Vogue video: ‘My Culture is NOT a Costume’

* The socio-cultural contexts of the video. Do these contexts matter?
  + The US as a multiculturalist country
  + The Netherlands: Santa Claus festival with Black Peter
  + Colonialism: colonialists repressed the indigenous culture
* The intended audience
* Narrative / argument regarding cultural identity
* Relation to theatre
  + Halloween as a form of theatre: a social performance
  + The moral question of who can represent whom

Case studies:

* *Metamora*

Rick Knowles: “[C]ulture – the fluid, day-to-day, lived realities of specific peoples in specific places and at specific times – exists only insofar as it is enacted, performed into being by the daily and (extra-daily) ritual and performative activities of individuals and communities as they negotiate their place in the world. […] Intercultural theatre and performance [is] the site for the continuing renegotiating of cultural values and the reconstitution of individual and community identities and subject positions.’

* The world forces roles on people, behaviour is determined, culture constrains
  + There is freedom to act differently, making culture fluid

Example: *Kathakali King Lear* at the Globe Theatre, London (1999) as intercultural theatre in the narrow sense

* Shakespeare in India
* Kathakali: Indian, rhythmic, hand signs (mutras?)

Potential areas of contact between cultures (in theatre):

* ‘Mono-cultural’ production on stage with audience predominantly from other cultural backgrounds (e.g. festivals)
* Different cultural performative traditions on stage (formal)
* Casting policies and debates
* Representations of alterity (the ‘other’) on stage (e.g. blackface, *The Persians* (in Greek culture), Shylock)
* Exhibition of indigenous people and other racialised bodies (e.g. ‘human zoos’)
  + ‘Human Zoo’ – Samoan performers at Hagenbeck’s Tiergarten, Hamburg 1910
* Productions dealing with ‘interculturalism’ in content rather than on a formal level (*West Side Story*)
* Cross-cultural adaptations (e.g. translations)

Examples:

* Jane Taylor, with William Kentridge and the Handspring Puppet Company: *Ubu and the Truth Commission* (1997)