

# Theater und Globalisierung

## Flashlight Globalisierung

- Probleme werden komplexer
- Theater als kritischer Begleiter der Globalisierung
- einfachere Erreichbarkeit unterschiedlicher Theatertheorien
- Möglichkeiten der Stilmischung
  - o Durch digitale Medien lässt sich an Material kommen – Wie sieht es aus mit dem direkten persönlichen Austausch von Künstlern untereinander aus?
  - o Balinesisches Theater und weitere anleihen etwa bei Jaques Lecoq, Ariane Mnouchkine oder Tadashi Suzuki
- Theater als Ort an dem Differenz von Menschen untereinander sichtbar wird
- Was ist anders? Was ist gleich?
- Globalisierung → „Alle Kinder lernen lesen, Indianer und Chinesen...“ , Ressourcen, Kulturexport/-import, Armut, „One world – one dilemma“
- Unterschiede innerhalb einer Kultur sind größer als „zwischen“ Kulturen
- Kulturen sind weniger ortsgebunden
- Theater kann Medium der Kritik sein
- Tadashi Suzuki: „*To act one must have a point of view*“

## Theoretischer Background

- Kulturbegriff äußerst umstritten und Definitionsfrage
- Zumeist wird heute von hybriden Kulturen ausgegangen
- Kulturelle Unterscheidung beinhaltet die Gefahr der Kulturalisierung nationaler/ethnischer Zugehörigkeiten

## Bedeutungshorizont und Bedeutungsvielfalt von „Kultur“

Kultur...

..ist die Entwicklung des Ortes an dem man aufwächst

...hat mit der eigenen Vergangenheit zu tun

...hat mit „Normalitätsempfinden“ zu tun

...besteht aus tradiertem Wissen und Verhaltensformen

...tritt auf in Verbindung mit Ethnizität sowie Nationalität

...definiert sich über Kleidung, Sprache, generell über menschliche Erzeugnisse

### Tadashi Suzuki – Three main issues about globalization

- 1) Digitale Revolution vs. menschliche Energie („human animal energy“)
- 2) „paradox of globalization“ → während sich die Lebensstile international eher angleichen, nimmt die Rhetorik der Betonung nationaler Identitäten zu. Es besteht die Gefahr, dass Politiker Staaten zunehmend historisch sowie durch Traditionen (etwa sog. „Kulturen“) rechtfertigen.
- 3) Gefahr der Überwachung („big data screening“) und Rasterfandung nach Menschen die über Landesgrenzen hinaus arbeiten und Unterschiede zwischen Menschen sichtbar machen

### Fragen im Kontext Theater und Globalisierung

*Was bedeutet Kultur für euch?*

*Kann Theater Individualität wertschätzen?*

*Gibt es so etwas wie „einheitliche“ Kulturen?*

*Wo verorten wir uns kulturell?*

## Tadashi Suzuki – “Globalization and the Theatre’s Mission”

Today I’d like to talk about what I consider to be the three most pressing issues facing theatre artists in our current environment of globalization.

The first issue concerns how the U.S. market economy model has expanded to encompass practically every corner of the planet. Systems designed to streamline operations and increase profits permeate the globe. Along with adopting U.S.-style capitalism as a blueprint, nations worldwide are digitizing masses of information through the use of computers and the Internet, which is quickly becoming the dominant form of human communication. One characteristic of this digital revolution is the automatization of jobs to increase labor efficiency and drive profits, a process that favors the use of non-animal energy (nuclear energy, electricity, gasoline, oil and the like) over human or animal energy. Digitization and automatization have subsequently led to outsourcing, whereby corporations isolate segments of their business and allocate them to third parties, sometimes overseas, instead of employing individuals within the corporation. The fact that outsourcing has now become standard practice in most economies proves that the globalized world values financial wealth over human individuality. Naturally, every single human being is multi-faceted, unique and possesses a distinct ethnic heritage. Nevertheless, these variances are becoming more and more disregarded as globalization advances.

If we use this globalized business philosophy to evaluate the theatre, it seems an extremely inefficient activity—a large group of people coming together for an extended period of time to create a single product, which is usually unprofitable and wasteful. What’s more, decisions in the theatre are often made by committee, taking into consideration individual differences, and working through these frictions to generate an end result. Managing all the interpersonal relationships involved in a production can be burdensome, and sooner or later the theatre’s social value starts to come under question. For me, however, in a society that prioritizes economic efficiency, we should place even more value on products created by human beings, over time, using their innate animal energy while being mindful of each other’s differences. Armed with these convictions we must, as artists, reaffirm the theatre's critical role in the age of globalization. This, above all, must be our main objective.

The second issue concerns how globalization has standardized systems and homogenized lifestyles the world over. Nowadays, at first glance, it is hard to differentiate between Chinese, Korean or Japanese youth based on fashion or behavior. Similarly, when I taught in Russia and the United States, I had the impression that students there behaved in more or less the same way. From a political standpoint, however, each group exhibited a clear bias toward their respective culture, with each individual proclaiming their own country’s uniqueness. When asserting such differences, there tends to be a stress placed on concepts such as love for one’s homeland or a national spirit of solidarity. I am wary, however, that politicians have started to take advantage of these inclinations by using historically significant art and culture to capture public support for their agendas. The fact is, regardless of how much globalization homogenizes lifestyles or prioritizes economic growth above all else, the language, religion, history and traditions of each country will remain distinct. By overemphasizing the culturally specific aspect of the arts, government leaders can create a deceptive rhetoric of national identity and thus galvanize a mandate to justify their actions and policy. This is the paradox of globalization. Of course, ideally globalization creates a world where everyone lives in equanimity and a universal commonality of thought facilitates human communication. Still, the more unified the world becomes, the more people will seek to express the singularity of their heritage and confirm which country, religion, ethnic group and history they belong to. This is not necessarily a bad impulse, but it does portend that art and culture will increasingly be presented in a setting where people are searching for a national identity, with politicians looking to capitalize on that need.

Despite the growing appropriation of art for political purposes, the theatre and all other cultural activities still provide a way for people to collaborate while appreciating differences in nationality and ethnicity. Dating back to ancient Greek drama, the theatre in particular has a tradition of engaging foreign culture to examine issues of co-existence. Driven by this history, many theatre artists continue to actively investigate how people from different cultures, religions and national identities function together in society. It is our duty, as artists, to re-engage this vital mission of the theatre in today's world.

The third issue I want to address scares me somewhat. I of course love the theatre, and being a director who has worked in many different countries, I know the joys of collaborating with people who have a different set of values from my own. On the other hand, while international exchange has flourished in our time, a frightening phenomenon generated by the global accumulation and sharing of data has also developed. Data, by its nature, is de-physicalized. In other words, it's not something accumulated in the body or on paper, but stored digitally in a computer and then shared worldwide. In the case of terrorism, this information can be gathered by crossing national boundaries, identifying and then monitoring certain individuals in order to prevent violence and maintain global order. Led by the U.S., many countries are now taking steps to globally pinpoint and track potentially dangerous individuals this way. Even as I speak, the ideas certain people express and the actions they commit are recorded in the databases of digitized societies and then shared through myriad networks. In the past, suspects would be singled out only after a terrorist action occurred. Now, however, more emphasis is placed on preventive screening. I wouldn't be surprised if we start to see governments across the globe using this accumulated data to identify and restrain individuals based simply on their daily behavior, before any kind of crime is committed. This is the onerous double-edged sword which the U.S. has brandished in the age of globalization. While this "sword" does have a positive, beneficial side, the negative side could be immensely destructive.

Due to the nature of our work, there is a likelihood that theatre artists, more than artists in other fields, will be increasingly targeted and monitored by the authorities. This is partially due to the fact that, in the theatre, we can use dramatic texts to express our political dissent in venues where people with differing philosophies, sensibilities and objectives congregate. What's more, the act of improvisation, though based on a script, allows actors the freedom to say anything in a public forum. Theatres have, in fact, been under government surveillance in many countries for some time, as has been the case in Japan, Russia and the United States, to name a few. Now, however, the individual information gleaned from such surveillance is much more easily shared internationally, and in ways that are almost impossible to trace. This trend could eventually inhibit the free exchange between theatre artists. I don't believe it will necessarily affect all of us, but I do think there is a risk that working with people from certain countries, and perhaps even the act of collaborating internationally at all, will be viewed with growing suspicion. Obviously, terrorism is a crime, and there is merit in doing everything possible to prevent it. In the process, however, there is a danger that governments will develop a bias towards individuals based on race or nationality, which in turn could spawn widespread prejudice between people. Thus, as we continue to participate in global collaborations, we must strive to cooperate and create environments free of discrimination, where people can make work that enriches the lives of everyone involved.

Over the course of my career, in many different cultural contexts, I have tried to consistently make work that stimulates a new perspective on the world we live in. However, with the onset of globalization, I sense a climate where theatre artists may have a progressively difficult time working in any context that is not rooted in commercialism. To prevent such narrowing of our artistic scope going forward into the 21st century, we must focus on the three principle concerns that I've expressed here. (...) *Seoul, 2010*, Tadashi Suzuki (<http://www.scot-suzukicompany.com/en/philosophy.php>)