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Od teatru pedagogicznego do teatru terapeutycznego, (red.) Sikorski W., Sikorska A., Difin SA, Warszawa 2014

Difin publishing house released another book devoted to the issues of wide use of theater and drama in the process of upbringing, education and treatment. Previously the were released the two notable works about educational drama of Kamila Witerska.

The editors of work discussed here are Wiesław Sikorski and Aneta Sikorska, who's scientific and professional work involve children education and therapy. Also the subject of the book concerns issues of therapy and psycho-education using theater techniques in working with children and other age groups. The publication as a collection of articles of different authors shows variety of approaches on the use of theater and drama in the processes of education and therapy. Ten chapters have been arranged by subject. The first texts relate general understanding theater as the art its origin, essence, varieties, as well as the acting. Subsequent chapters go to the relation of theater and pedagogy, then the issue of social therapy and sociodrama. The whole is crowned with articles on psychodrama.

Alfred Free, author of the first text *Theater – Multiple art* shows theater as part inseparable from human life, its various spheres, not only aesthetic experiences. Theater since the beginning of its history served a variety of functions. In addition to this the simplest, ludic function, its task was to enable man to meet with other people and himself (p. 18). The theater also served a kind of educational and therapeutic role, because the task of plays (drama and comedies) was to moralize and allow to experience catharsis (p. 19).

Another article by Andrzej Kącki in addition to a brief characterization of the variety of experimental theater, develops reflections on the educational function of the theater. The author describes the use of theatrical art in view of education and resocialization using an example of play *Hamlet*, which was performed by prisoners in Opole as well as the work of young people from different subcultures in experimental theater. These initiatives were not only

pleasant time, but also a way of “forcing” to reflect on moral issues and to pose themselves a questions (p. 27).

Krystyna Nowak-Wolna in the next text, like the previous authors, refers to the tradition of theater, the ancient meaning of catharsis and describes the approaches of different authors to the art of acting, explains the nuances of the different understandings of the actor's profession. In my opinion it is an interesting and enriching, because it realizes, especially the laity, multidimensionality and ambiguity of the craft of acting. It also allows to find analogies to used roles in the drama and even enrichment, or verify our approach to it. Valuable may be here, for example. K. Stanislavsky guidance on the roles of acting (p. 37-38). Author takes very interesting issue referring to the RPG (Role – Playing Games) and LARP (Live – Action – Role – Playing), finding common elements with drama, like the narrative character and taking the role of imaginary characters (p. 43–44). Nowak-Wolna also shows wide view of development of drama concept in the world and in Poland, which gives a broader perspective and understanding of this method, and also refers to the very first sources (p. 46–50).

In the next chapter Justyna Ewelina Konieczna presents specific methods of using therapy through theater in pedagogical practice. Besides the theoretical description of the differences between several methods based on the elements of theater, there were presented sample scenarios used in work with young people. They provide an interesting and practical illustration of the discussed content.

The next two articles of Sławomir Śliwa and Sławomir Kania take the issue of resocialization and the use of drama in its process. The first of the authors emphasized the importance of a positive diagnosis in resocialization and opportunities of using drama to work on the strengths with people with disorder manifested in social functioning (p. 82–84). S. Kania refers firstly to different conceptions of moral development and the genesis of antisocial behavior, then presents technical matters concerning the socio-therapy by drama method. This gives the overview of the techniques and sequence of each phases in sociotherapy.

In the text of Monika Kostusiak you can read about the general framework of the theater and its relationship with education. The author shows also the importance and value of individual elements of theater, like a scene, lighting, props, acting and audience.

Three further articles are about psychotherapy. The first of these by Aneta Sikorska refers psychotherapy through drama for children and it is a comprehensive description of this method contains detailed discussion of the different phases of psychodrama. It is a text rich in content, specifying the characteristics of the specific and difficult psychotherapeutic work by drama with children.

Karolina Mateja in an article *Impact of psychodrama in sociotherapy* largely focuses not only on the sociotherapy, but also on the person of therapist,

pointing to his role in this process and the essence of his personality and character traits.

The whole monograph is crowned with the text of one of the editors, W. Sikorski, who more accurately than M. Kostusiak develop the issue of importance of each theatrical element used in psychodrama. Sikorski factly with evident of his own experience describes the applicability of the scene, props, music and sound effects, light and color. Very valuable seem to be also comments on the risks or adverse effects that can be caused by various objects such as inappropriately chosen light or music that can evoke negative memories of children or bring them in the bad mood.

After a brief presentation of the content of each chapter, I would like to draw conclusion and once again to refer to the chapters as to the entire monograph.

As I wrote at the beginning of my article, despite the collective character of discussed work, the chapters have been arranged so as to form the whole fluently passing from one issue to another. Indeed, the first chapters create interesting background, outlining the cultural and historical context of theater and drama. In my opinion the subjects raised here are not only interesting, but also very valuable, because they broaden the perspective and encourage to search new inspirations for drama in less-known forms of the theater.

Despite a reasonable composition the whole chapters, from the most general to the most particular ones, unfortunately, repeatability some of the content wasn't avoided. This applies specifically to the texts dealing about psychodrama and therapy through theater. About the theory of therapy through theater we can read for example in text of E. J. Konieczna and M. Kostusiak.

Also articles of A. Sikorska and W. Sikorski duplicate some part of informations. Both authors describe the phases in psychodrama and techniques used in it, but A. Sikorska dedicates for this matters more space. On the other hand, Sikorski in a very reliable and interesting way analyzes the value and use of various theatrical elements (eg. props), about which M. Kostusiak writes in her article as well. Her reflections on this subject are, however, rather general and refer to education or therapy far less, which, to my mind, is particularly essential due to the subject of the publication. Certainly, it would be more preferred if each articles were more consistent with each other and instead of duplicating some information, they complement it. On the other hand, in this situation, the reader is able to compare the content and different points of view presented by the authors.

I believe that the monograph *From pedagogical theater to therapeutic theater* is an interesting and necessary position on the Polish publishing market of education. This is because it draws attention to the importance and benefits coming out of using, still unknown in Poland on a large scale, drama, pedagogical and therapeutic theater. Despite the fact that the authors primarily relate to the therapy of children and adolescents, matter of adults therapy through theater appears as well. It is also emphasized the importance

of the theater for the general and lifelong development of each individual. K. Nowak-Wolna writes: *So Grotowski's theater is a tool of catharsis, understood as self-knowledge, stripping the mask that hides the true face of man. If the man lost awareness of masks and considers it as his own face, then such a process becomes very painful. The mask, therefore, lies, and theater allows to discover the truth. In this way, theater is life* (p. 40). The author shows by this words a general worth that comes from communing with the theater. This quote is not about therapy, but about the overall development, growth, work which should be done by everyone to fully develop oneself. Theater is not only a space to meet oneself, but also the Other, [...] *presupposes a meeting of man with man, which aid is the intensity of experience the world of emotions and thoughts. This requires opening up to the other* (p. 18). Thus theater becomes a space for meeting, a mirror and even therapeutic cabinet, where we can experience our catharsis.

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