

Framing the Revolution: Triana's *La noche de los asesinos* and *Ceremonial de guerra*

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José Triana begins his play *Ceremonial de guerra* with an epigraph from Miguel Hernández: "Yo me digo: si el mundo es teatro, si la revolución es carne de teatro, procuremos que el teatro y, por consiguiente, la revolución sean ejemplares, y tal vez, y sin tal vez, conseguiremos entre todos que el mundo también lo sea." Triana thus reaffirms a connection between theatre (ceremonial) and revolution (guerra) which he already advanced in his title, *Ceremonial de guerra*: revolution-as-theatre, theatre about revolution, theatre as engendering revolution. But how is revolution, specifically the Cuban Revolution, *theatrical*? And what is the relationship between theatre and revolution as posited by Triana's *La noche de los asesinos* (1965) and *Ceremonial de guerra* (1968-1973)?

The Cuban Revolution, aside from providing the hope of viable political alternatives for Latin America, also produced a riveting theatrical image. Without reducing the Revolution to a spectacle, it is important to notice that its spectacular components served a vital, *real* function. They captured worldwide attention; they rallied their followers and admirers by ennobling the revolutionaries and giving them an identity while simultaneously delegitimizing their opponents. The compelling figure of Ché in his beret, and to a lesser degree the figure of Castro, dominated the imagination of a huge sector of the population of Latin America. The revolution generated images of epic proportions: a new world was being created before one's eyes--a new beginning, a new hero, a new revolutionary "man."¹ Ché's heroic quest could almost be decoded with Brechtian terminology: the episodic plot, the frozen frame, the green fatigue costumes, the *gestus*, the popular audience. The entire sequence was spectacular. Unlike the Brechtian dialectical theatre which specifies that the "spectator and actor ought not to approach one another but to move apart" (Brecht 26), the revolutionary spectacle encouraged an Artaudian identification, even merging, with those heroic figures who were "capable of imposing this supreme notion of the theatre, men who [would] restore to all of us the natural and magic equivalent of the dogmas in which we no longer believe" (*Double* 32). Artaudian theatre calls for collective fusion

in the name of a metaphysical transcendence; the revolution encouraged the surrender of the personal to the collective ideal. Moreover, the mythification of violence as a source of liberation and truth that underlined the Revolution's armed struggle was also profoundly theatrical, consistent with Artaud's theories of a total, essential and heroic theatre, the "theatre of cruelty." The drama of liberation,² then, was taking place off-stage. This was the generative "revolutionary myth" envisioned by José Carlos Mariátegui. It created a sense of national and international identity mediated through an image. Instead of twenty-five politically marginal, economically dependent and culturally colonized countries, Latin America could envision itself as a united, coherent entity, a producer (rather than importer) of cultural images.

Just as the Cuban Revolution was theatrical, much of the so-called revolutionary theatre of this period incorporated and furthered revolutionary ideology and images.³ Collective theatres began to reflect the grass roots movements with their emphasis on leadership, unity and combined force. This theatre, both in and outside Cuba, manifested the widespread preoccupation with war as a process toward liberation and theatre as an instrument in that effort, either reaffirming or decoding military terminology: Augusto Boal, for example, speaks of theatre as a weapon and describes theatrical raids staged in 1963 during the Cuban crisis. Theatrical groups, like Conjunto Dramático de Oriente (started in 1961) and Grupo Teatro Escambray (1968) gradually moved away from scripted theatre and instead staged collective acts of group definition and affirmation. Theatre, then, provided one more arena from which to display public cohesiveness.

The theatricality of revolution, like theatre's revolutionary potential, rests on the careful selection of roles and the simplification of images. Revolution, like theatre, provides a frame within which people can imagine themselves otherwise, hence, both revolution and theatre on some level (of which I will say more later) are utopian. This image of a better world implies a projection both into space and time. It involves a rigorous elimination--rather than the traditional accumulation--of signs. The image must be immediately recognizable; it must be repeated incessantly to signal one unequivocal revolutionary message. Yet, paradoxically, the sign must also be equivocal, ambiguous; it must mean different things to different people. Only thus can it unite diverse constituencies.⁴

While the political strength of theatrical roles and images lies in their simplicity, their ability to unite disparate collectivities under one banner, the singularity of the image also necessarily limits, distorts and, to a degree, falsifies the program. Another kind of theatre during this period began to examine the inherent contradictions within the concept, the nature and, ultimately, the discursive and iconographic *framing* of revolution itself. How can revolution (theoretically a collective process) subsume the many to the one--one image, one slogan, one leader? How can an agenda based on higher social truth and justice be grounded on the fabrication and manipulation of

images? The rigidity of the frame (Castro's "dentro de la Revolución todo, fuera de la Revolución nada" for example) suggests a radical split between inner and outer. This separation, as *La noche de los asesinos* illustrates, does not guarantee either homogeneity or consensus in the inner space. Moreover, the rift between inner and outer also poses questions about the viability of ascertaining truth or pursuing knowledge within a closed space that allows for no aperture with contiguous, outer spaces. How, as *La noche de los asesinos* challenges us, can we know what happens inside the room if we do not know what lies on the other side of the door? These are just some of the contradictions explored by Triana's theatre of the 1960s. While supporting the Revolution and cognizant that the theatre helps frame revolutionary images, that the "revolución es carne de teatro," Triana nonetheless scrutinizes the revolutionary frame--what it keeps in and, perhaps more important, what it keeps out.

Triana's *La noche de los asesinos* (1965) and *Ceremonial de guerra* (1968-1973) are particularly interesting in that they are among the first works to raise the most urgent questions about the nature and meaning of revolution from within the frame of the revolutionary movement itself. It is important to stress that Triana's work was not politically reactionary, anti-revolutionary, as its critics at the time suggested.⁵ He was not outside or against the movement. Triana had participated actively in the Cuban Revolution and was a founding member of the Unión de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba (UNEAC). Nor was he merely experiencing personal disillusionment. Rather, the Cuban Revolution and the very concept of revolution were undergoing crisis from within, a result of the gradual institutionalization of the revolutionary process. Triana had initially believed that the Revolution, as Castro had claimed, was following the doctrines of Martí: political, economic and cultural independence and an ethos based on love and creativity. Like Yevgeny Zamyatin, who in the 1920s had been considered the Soviet heretic, Triana felt that the Revolution had not gone far enough. The Revolution itself had betrayed Martí's visions of Cuban self-determination by conforming to Soviet communism.

Triana's *La noche de los asesinos* is a play that questions the nature and meaning of revolution. The three children endlessly re-enact the murder of their parents, repeating thus the prototypical act of parricide and rebellion which dates back to the three Cyclopes. By conflating parricide and rebellion, *Asesinos* offers a biological, repetitive model of human history. The biological pattern--parents give birth and identity to children who will rebel against the father in their own struggle to acquire a separate identity--gives birth to a political model. As Aristotle notes, "the patriarchal family supplies the primal model for political government."⁶ Having overthrown the father, the children band together in criminal conspiracy to establish a new social order. According to Freud, "society was based on complicity in the common crime."⁷ In Triana's play, the crime gives the children their identity; they are "asesinos," partners in crimes, embarked on the mythic task of creating order out of

chaos. Yet, the biological model simultaneously undermines their revolutionary identity insofar as the circularity seems predetermined--the children, too, will succumb to this natural and biologically necessary fate of being supplanted by their offspring.

Asesinos, however, simultaneously reflects and challenges the biological model of historical process from within the confines of the model itself. Lalo obsessively re-enacts the role of his parents, including the role of Mother on her wedding day, pregnant with him. He is both a product of past events and, at the same time, the being who perpetuates the past into the future. Like Oedipus, the biological fact of his existence generates history and sets in motion a series of foreseeable events, the petty domestic miseries decreed before he was born. Although Lalo kills his parents--metaphorically if not literally--the killing itself is not the problem. The problem is that he and his sisters cannot find new ways of acting or new strategies for reorganizing their territory. Should they tear down the house (revolution)? Should they improve on what they already have (internal reorganization)? Should they leave the house forever (exile)? But the endless abreactions seem to preclude the possibility of action altogether. The characters repeatedly act out a series of roles that undermine rather than establish identity and context. Lalo plays Father at the end of the play. In true Oedipal fashion, he has replaced his father and substituted one power figure for another. But is this revolution? Lalo fights with his sisters, orders them around and reproduces the violence and frustration he had tried to leave behind. Incapable of change, the characters see themselves as objects (rather than agents) of action. Lalo feels indistinguishable from the ashtray, the chair, the flower vase and the other refuse shoved into the cluttered room. So while he is capable of radical change, just as his father long ago, he proves incapable of directing his own life: "Había que limpiar la casa . . . Había que cambiar los muebles . . ." (199). The father crumbles under the challenge; so does Lalo. Like father, like son . . . "Si el amor pudiera . . . Solo el amor," says Lalo at the end of the play (201). But love has failed. So has the struggle for personal autonomy and self-determination. Martí has failed. What, then, does revolution mean? Is revolution a circular, steadily repetitive phenomenon as in the revolutions of the earth around the sun? Is revolution the substitution of one power figure for another? Lalo is trapped in a parental body that rejects him, locked in a totalizing family structure that deforms him: biology as history and history as biological process. Here, then, we have repetition not only as circularity and substitution, but also as degeneration. Each new revolution bespeaks new failures, deeper depths of despair.

Juxtaposed with the downwardly spiraling motion of a degrading biological process, Triana introduces another model of repetition--theatrical rehearsal. Repetition signals more than a simple replay. The theory behind theatrical repetition (the French "répétition") is originality and perfectibility. However, this progressive improvement is only possible within the framework

of a repetitive structure: practice makes perfect, rehearsal culminates in performance. "Un día," the children keep reassuring themselves, "llegaremos hasta el final." Instead of being dwarfed by the inherited biological and theatrical roles--Father, Mother, Pantaleón--they may try on and eventually assume roles that allow them the possibility of meaningful action. The hope lies in that the children may, through theatrical repetition, be able to generate a new "Real" and perhaps even "Ideal," thus establishing a linear pattern for historical process. The hope is never fully articulated or imagined within the text; every re-enactment ends in the old fights and frustration. But the theatrical model of repetition in itself provides the model of imagining oneself otherwise, without which the children's representations and the play itself would be impossible. Whether each individual role-playing ends positively or negatively is, from this particular vantage point, of secondary importance. Of vital importance is the recognition that each new venture (theatrical or revolutionary) into the realm of the possible, of the imaginable, reaffirms the existence of this other world, even if only as potential. One day things will be different, the children keep assuring themselves. Here, then, we have the concept of a Marxist linearity. *Asesinos*, much as the epigraph to *Ceremonial* from Miguel Hernández, proposes that theatre is capable of creating a better world.

Ceremonial de guerra, too, focuses on the attempt to create a new "Real." It has much in common with *Asesinos*, although superficially it looks like an entirely different play. Aracelio, a revolutionary soldier, a mambí, has been wounded in the leg during Cuba's War of Independence. His companions abandon him, leaving him to die; but they realize after doing so that Aracelio has the map indicating the way to the fort, la Candelaria. Not only are the enemy's military supplies and food kept at the Candelaria, the fort also represents a microcosm of Cuba, "la imagen de nuestra isla" (6). Whoever has the map controls the country's future. Aracelio has been entrusted with a heroic mission, "la epopeya más grande de la Revolución" (34), to take the fort and, hence, the country: "Es como si te posesionaras de la isla de Cuba" (34). Throughout the two-act play, Aracelio's companions use fiction, role-playing and theatrical ceremony to try to win over the map and Aracelio. *Ceremonial* raises several questions about the "frame" or limits of the revolution that go beyond those posed in *Asesinos*: Can the map (itself a framed projection of space) generate a new country, an independent country, if obtaining it involves orchestrated falsehood? Can the ends be separated from the means? Is Aracelio an anti-revolutionary if he refuses to hand over the map to those who betrayed them? Is he a revolutionary if he overlooks his companions' personal failings for the good of the revolutionary goals and ideals? What is the role of the individual in the revolutionary struggle and process?

On one level, the differences between *Asesinos* and *Ceremonial* clearly indicate the changes in Triana's position in Cuba during the three years after

he won the Casas de las Americas' award. Triana no longer felt trapped within the Revolution but, rather, left out of it. Until his exile in 1980, Triana, like the wounded revolutionary of *Ceremonial*, felt abandoned as he was gradually marginalized from all intellectual activity in Cuba. The obsessive, confessional tone of the play is nightmarish; Triana describes *Ceremonial* as the product of a bad dream, a recurring nightmare of betrayal and paralysis.⁸

On another level, however, it is clear that the conflicts and paradigms that surface in *Ceremonial* were already present in *Asesinos*. While to a certain degree *Ceremonial* can be seen as a variation, or repetition, of an earlier model, it is also more explicitly political and, thus, a progression beyond the ambiguity of the earlier piece. The biological model of historical progress still governs *Ceremonial* as it does *Asesinos*. *Ceremonial*, too, depicts history as a generational (specifically patriarchal) changing of the guards: the old hero dies, but not before he has reproduced himself: "Si muero, porque sé que no seré hueso viejo . . . Ya tengo un cachorro preparado. Un cachorro que será mambí de cuerpo entero" (28). However, unlike *Asesinos*, in which the political meditations on revolution hide behind the dominant, repetitive Oedipal motif, in *Ceremonial* the biological is almost totally transposed onto the political body. Aracelio depends on the political body (revolution) for his existence and identity. He is defined by his revolt, a revolutionary much as Lalo is an asesino. He incorporates himself totally into the larger political body: "Aquí me tienes. Vengo como incondicional" (82). Yet, he feels betrayed and rejected after having been abandoned to die from his wounded leg, another Oedipus. He passionately longs to merge with the revolutionary ideals and heroic images, yet he has been left out and despises the body that expelled him. Like Lalo, both incorporated by the mother and loathed by her ("no sé cómo pude tenerte tanto tiempo en mis entrañas" 192-3), Aracelio experiences annihilation as both inclusion and exclusion; he is a revolutionary trapped in a rotting body; he has been left behind by the revolution to die alone.

The transposition of the biological model onto the political involves the phenomenon of transcendence, the longing to merge with other conveys simultaneously a fulfillment and negation of self. In *Asesinos*, the merging with other is clearly depicted as the biological dependency of the fetus on the mother: "Flotamos," says Lalo, "con los pies hacia arriba y la cabeza hacia abajo" (140). Lalo's existence and identity depend on the mother, her death would mean his own death. However, his life also depends on his ability to separate from her: "Yo quería . . . La vida . . . Yo quería, anhelaba, deseaba desesperadamente hacer cosas por mí mismo" (187). The biological process from incorporation to separation also, according to Freud, generates the psychological paradigm--the Oedipal substitution of son for father represents concomitantly a coupling and a killing. Transposed into a political realm, however, the longing to merge and the separation are combined in one revolutionary act--in itself a contradiction. The individuals melt into one

collective body, under one banner, one symbol, thus replacing and killing the authoritarian (parental) body. The act of separation involves an act of submission. For Aracelio to become an incondicional, he must renounce his individual rights and needs. However, when his individuality is betrayed by his fellow revolutionaries, he withdraws from the political body.

Here *Ceremonial* goes beyond *Asesinos* in examining the relationship between the individual and the collective revolutionary project, what the frame keeps in, what it keeps out. The position adhered to by Ché was that the revolutionary individual was central to the Revolution: "the revolution is made by man (sic), but man must forge the revolutionary spirit day by day."⁹ In *Ceremonial*, however, Triana suggests otherwise--that the individual and individual concerns are left out of the Revolution. The soldiers do not come back for the man; they want the map. Aracelio is the superfluous human consciousness that gets in the way of their success. He did not draw up the map; in fact he has little idea what it represents. Revolutionary success, then, is seen as depending on objects--the map, the fort, the weapons, the food. Individuals are expendable. Human subjects are not depicted as drawing up maps and devising strategies but rather as following a map, followers not leaders. The map is a double image--it connotes both an idea (an ideological map, a concept) and the material representation of that idea on paper (a physical object). The fact that the revolutionaries prize the material object over the human subject illustrates what, for Triana, was the central problem of the Cuban Revolution--the role of the individual, as a living, thinking subject in the revolutionary process.

Triana's image of the map, thus, is central to our understanding of the nature and limitations of the revolutionary frame. Arif Dirlik, in his essay "Culturalism as Hegemonic Ideology and Liberating Practice," differentiates between revolution as a totalizing phenomenon and as liberating one depending precisely on the same dynamic identified by Triana in *Ceremonial*--the position of the individual within the process: "While the revolutionary as subject of history has a sense of his (sic) direction, the [revolution] provides no more than a tentative guideline, for ultimately the direction of the revolution must emerge in the course of the struggle that is the revolution . . . the revolutionary, too, must be listening all the time and must not merely impose his abstractions upon the revolutionary process" (42). Revolution is unthinkable without an ideological map, but what map is going to allow us the flexibility to go beyond the hitherto explored without reproducing the pitfalls of the earlier territory?

A map, by definition, establishes boundaries, divides space and fixes symbols. A map for the revolution must first define the meaning and limits of revolution. As early as 1965, Triana's *La noche de los asesinos* already insinuated that revolution did not necessarily mean liberation. Revolution could also mean mechanical repetition, or the substitution of leaders without an open or democratic political structure. The tendency of revolution to

reproduce previous power structures was emphasized by the double time frame in *Asesinos* (set in the 50s, staged in the 60s), a strategy that Triana repeats in *Ceremonial*. Set in 1895 during the Cuban war of Independence, the issues the play raises apply as much to the Revolution of 1959 as to the events a hundred years before. By 1968, it had become increasingly evident that the word revolution itself meant no one thing, appropriated as it had been by parties old and new, as varied and unrevolutionary as Mexico's Institutionalized Revolutionary Party (PRI), Onganía's authoritarian Revolución Argentina of 1966 and China's Cultural Revolution of 1967, to name a few. The potent symbolic function of the word revolution, as the repeated use of it throughout *Ceremonial* indicates, lends itself to indiscriminate application. Where, then, is the definition or truth of revolution that Aracelio and his fellow revolutionaries keep insisting on? After innumerable repetitions, it becomes obvious that revolution cannot simply be equated with the truth. As often, Aracelio finally realizes, it means "cabronadas e injusticias." Instead of being "la palabra santa" (79) that motivates people onto higher actions and sacrifices, it also serves to camouflage self-interest, "tu puñetero interés" (79). The problem with this map of revolution, then, is that it cannot define or demarcate the ground it theoretically covers.

The image of the map, moreover, calls attention to the need to re-examine the issue of boundaries, the frame itself. What does it keep in? What does it keep out? In focusing on one image, one slogan, the revolution, like the theatre, like the map, allows all else to disappear from view. Herein lies the danger of falsification. It is not that theatre (or the revolution) deceives the audience by substituting the false for the real, as Plato argued. Rather, its power of manipulation lies in its control of the visible and the hidden, the perceptual and discursive frames. We cannot interpret what happens in *Asesinos* without knowing what (and who) lies beyond the door. We need access to that which the theatrical frame excludes. In *Ceremonial*, Aracelio suggests that truth falls outside the frame of revolutionary discourse: "Si existe la verdad . . . Tiene que haber algo. No creo en nada, pero tiene que haber algo. En el aire, en lo invisible" (81). The revolution cannot be won until the revolutionaries integrate that which they have left out.

The image of the map points to a paradox that the image itself cannot solve. The map, like the theatre, like the revolution, imposes totalizing and fixed boundaries. There are no flexible maps. While the world's surface, political boundaries and human concepts change, maps remain fixed; insofar as they are printed material objects, they are replaced rather than changed. Maps distort; they reduce the three dimensional to the two dimensional. Each map in itself is a reduction and a limitation, excluding always more than it includes. Moreover, maps are not neutral or scientific but ideological; the perspective usually reveals the ideology of the powerful--those who finance the research and making of the maps. This is evident when we consider that the northern hemisphere is depicted as unduly large and "on top" in most maps

when there is no scientific basis for north over south on the south-north axis. Who fixes the limits? Who will design our maps? Triana is right, those who possess the map control the territory. On the other hand, maps provide direction; they are revolution's tentative guideline, its blueprint for the future which is only partially based on the past. Maps are not only material, fixed objects on paper. They also signal the other side of the double image, that is, the non-material mental images and ideas. The map does not just represent or reproduce the territory; but, as Jean Baudrillard observes, the map also "engenders the territory."¹⁰ We remember that it was the European's mental maps and images of America that shaped the continent (the "New World," "the Indies,") and not the other way around. In short, concepts have to change before revolutions change. The map, then, is a generative, almost utopian projection toward the future. By handing over the map, Aracelio tries to go beyond the previous barriers, divides and pitfalls. He is no longer agent but historic subject; he leads the way to reintegration between the outer and the inner that strives to overcome the revolutionary/anti-revolutionary impasse.

Ceremonial explores the contradiction in the very concept of revolution; the tension between the fluidity of the process and the rigidity of the program, between the idea of a guide and the material concreteness of the map, between truth as a guiding goal and truth as dogma. Though maps distort, we need them. We cannot get around, or overcome, contradiction. Rather than resist contradiction (as Aracelio originally does) or despair about it (as the children do in *Asesinos*), we need a language and logic of contradiction that allows us to accept that we need maps and truths in spite of their limitations and because of their limitations.¹¹ Faced with innumerable routes and pitfalls, we need direction, a tentative guideline. Thus, the play returns us to the old Marxist concept of dialectic. As Zamyatin observed, "today's truths become errors tomorrow; there is no final number" (110). There is no truth, yet we need truths, distorting and limiting though they might be. Aracelio's individual truth does not motivate armies until it becomes the truth, a generally accepted collective truth. But collectivities (as Castro made clear) do not run revolutions. However, as Triana protests in *Ceremonial*, the revolutionaries must listen to their people and "it is only to the extent that revolutionaries resist the temptation to establish . . . a center [entropy, fixed] that revolution appears as a liberating possibility" (Dirlik 43).

Rather than "anti-revolutionary" texts, I would argue that *Asesinos* and *Ceremonial* are utopian texts, dramatic processes which produce the real: ". . . clearly we will have to begin to think of the Real, not as something outside the work, of which the latter stands as an image or representation, but as something born in and vehiculated by the text itself . . ." (Jameson 81). They are revolutionary texts, but not in the sense that commentators recognized or were prepared to accept. Rather than espouse the party line, these plays warn against the institutionalization of the revolutionary process; they keep urging for new images, new paradigms that will allow this Revolution to go beyond

the limits of the possible hitherto explored. The repetition in these plays is not merely the incessant representation of what already exists, but a striving for creation and regeneration.

The failure of the revolution, of this Revolution, according to *Asesinos* and *Ceremonial*, was ultimately the failure to create viable new maps, roles and images. What had originally appeared to be new, for all its laudable programs and policies, proved to be recreations of the old authoritarianism. Ché's heroic, though almost predictable, downfall replayed, yet again, the extinction of a heroic race, another Cuauhtémoc. Dreams of liberation and self-determination gradually gave way to a new totalizing order, but one which (like the Mexican Revolution of 1910-1920) integrated the revolutionary vocabulary and images. So too, the image of a Latin American self proved fictitious and unsustainable, stemming more from a rejection of Other than from any real sense of affinity or identity. The characters, like the societies they represent, continued to be marginal and economically dependent. One of the hopes for the Revolution, as expressed by H. A. Murena in 1960, was that it would "free man from the myths that oppress him," so that he "could become once again his own master."¹² However, the Revolution seemed to reproduce, rather than dispel, the old myths. Revolution as repetition? As substitution? As radical change? Triana's characters are revolutionaries, forever balanced between the end and visions of a new beginning.

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Notes

1. I do not want to de-emphasize the importance, or the real socio-political repercussions of the Cuban Revolution or suggest that the process was in any way "artificial" or purely representational or "show" (the depreciating notions of theatre and social theatricality). Rather, social spectacle is fundamental to any and all political movement—it can be either politically liberating (like for example the icon of Ché or the *Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo* in Argentina), or obfuscating. I will capitalize the word *revolution* when I am referring specifically to the Cuban Revolution of 1959. The repeated allusions to a male subject in this essay reflect the gender bias of the revolutionary discourse.

2. Marina Pianca uses the term to describe Latin American theatre between 1959 and 1968, *Diogenes*, 8.

3. George Woodyard, in "Perspectives on Cuban Theatre," describes the intense theatrical activity in Cuba following the Revolution. Compared with the lack of serious interest in Cuba in the years immediately preceding the Revolution ("In the five years preceding the Revolution, only 30 plays were staged, many of them because February of 1958 had been designated Cuban Theatre Month" 42), the political transformation was accompanied by a cultural one. Theatrical activities were organized by the National Council on Culture which funded production and put playwrights, directors and actors as well as the technical and artistic staff on salary. The *Casa de las Americas* and the *Union de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba* held competitions and festivals to encourage, stage and publish theatrical works. Collective theatre groups ("creación colectiva"), like the Conjunto Dramático del Oriente founded in 1961, offered training in theatrical production, history and analysis. Aside from producing international and Latin American plays, the group resuscitated the "teatro de relaciones, a dramatic form which was

developed in Cuba by the oppressed classes and used since colonial times until its disappearance in the early 1950's" (48). This theatre provided a means of "searching for its roots in the past as a means of establishing direct communication with the people within the framework of the Revolution" (48). The Grupo Teatro Escambray, started in 1968, developed a Marxist-Leninist program, consistent with the ideological aims of the Revolution itself, and traveled to rural areas to work on specific local issues and political problems. Many groups like this formed in the late 60's and continued working into the 70's—La Yaya, Grupo Teatrova, Grupo Teatro Estudio, Grupo Yarabey, etc. However, as Mario Beneditti noted in the late 60's (the quote comes from Woodyard's essay) the theatre in Cuba was experiencing a "serious crisis. The first time I came to Cuba, in 1966, there was sustained theatrical activity, with various good quality companies. On my second visit, in 1967, I saw a couple of high-level shows, like, for example, *Unos hombres y otros*, an adaptation of stories by Jesús Díaz, and *La noche de los asesinos*, by José Triana . . . But then came the collapse" (49, the suspension marks do not represent an omission from the text). Woodyard advances several hypotheses for the decline of theatre in Cuba, among them the intellectual intolerance (epitomized by the Padilla affair in 1968) and the gradual institutionalization of the Cuban Revolution.

4. For a study of the political use of social spectacle see Kertzer's study *Ritual, Politics, and Power*.

5. See Román V. de la Campa's study *José Triana: Ritualización de la sociedad cubana*, for a discussion of the Cuban reception of Triana's work suggesting that he could not capture the revolutionary nature of the new Cuba. Triana himself tried to dispel readings of his play *Asesinos* as anti-revolutionary by stressing that he had begun the play before the revolution and that the miasma suggests Batista's, rather than Castro's, Cuba; see Ramiro Fernández, "José Triana habla de su teatro" (38-40) and the interview between Abelardo Estorino, Vicente Revuelta and Triana ("Destruir los fantasmas," 6).

6. Quoted by Norman O. Brown, *Love's Body*, 15.

7. Brown, 16.

8. Interview Triana-Taylor, *En busca de una imagen*, 122.

9. Quoted by Dirlik, 42.

10. Jean Baudrillard in *Simulations* states: "Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being or substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality, a hyperreal. The territory no longer precedes the map, nor survives it. Henceforth, it is the map that precedes the territory—PRECESSION OF SIMULACRA—it is the map that precedes the territory . . ." (2, Baudrillard's emphasis).

11. Marcuse speaks of the "logic and language of contradiction" (xii) and the "power of negative thinking" as dialectical in that it is a "critique of a conformist logic, which denies the reality of contradiction" (vii).

12. H. A. Murena, "El estrido del conformismo," translated and quoted by Martin S. Staff, *In Quest of Identity*, 143.

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