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POLISHING REYKJAVIK: IMMIGRANT LANGUAGE ON THE CITY THEATRE

When a colleague asked me: “Do you know that we are staging a performance in Polish in the Reykjavík City Theatre?”, my mind immediately exploded with all the questions: why? How is it possible? Who is responsible for that? And most importantly, how is it going? After all, it is not that often to see a performance in a foreign language to be part of the regular repertoire of the city theatre. As a guest performance – yes; as part of the immigrant institution (e.g., polnisches theater kiel – Polish Theatre in Kiel, Germany) – yes; as a performance in an official minority language (e.g., Finnish in Sweden) – yes. But the forementioned example does not belong to any of those cases: the City Theatre invited foreign artists to perform in their mother tongue and included the result of their work in the regular repertoire available to all the Reykjavík residents.

In my paper I will deliberate on how performances by PóliS theatre group in Reykjavík cross the cultural boundaries of the theatre institution. I will look at them as an example of the Third Space [Bhabha] – a space where cultures interact that supports creative processes. In my discussion I will include the terms transculturation (i.e., reciprocal processes that appear during the meeting of two cultures [Ortiz and Taylor]) and acculturation (i.e., engaging in the intercultural contact [Berry]) that may help to better understand what effect the staging of the performances in Polish may have on local audiences. I will also consider whether such an event can contribute to a cultural transfer [Prykowska-Michalak] or rather serves as a theatrical experiment.

Biography

Daria Skjoldager-Nielsen, Stockholm University. Also publishes as Daria S. Nielsen. Holder of two MA degrees from the University of Lodz: in marketing and theatre studies. PhD candidate in theatre studies at Stockholm University. Lecturer at University of Lodz. Member of the IFTR working group The Theatrical Event. Vice chairwoman of Rococo Foundation researching cultural institutions’ management and performance. Research interests: the theatrical event; new approaches to audience development; marketing and theatre; audience

research. Recent publications: “The (Ir)replaceable Master Director – Considering the Case of the Odin Teatret” with Kim Skjoldager-Nielsen, in *Zarządzanie w kulturze* 2020, Tom 21, Numer 2, “Para-Anthropo(s)cene Aesthetics Between Despair and Beauty: A Matter of Response-Ability” with Kim Skjoldager-Nielsen, in *Nordic Theatre Studies* 2020, 32(1).