

Blokowski, Detopski, Grotowski in a maze of Haitian narration

In a recognized essay *Shape-shifter, shaman, trickster, artist, adept, director, leader, Grotowski*, which is still the most important classical critique commentary regarding the creative research of this Polish artist, Richard Schechner ask some key questions: „What happens to the African or Asian «sources» of [Grotowski’s and Richards’] *Action*? Is *Action* [as an example of Ritual Arts] universal or is it a cultural appropriation?”, and also formed some important arguments: „Grotowski wants to shape what is known about him. He is not eager to lead people to sources he cannot monitor”. These questions and arguments will be the starting point of the paper.

Two different (and at the same time hard to agree on) narrations regarding relations between Grotowski’s research and Afro-Haitian voodoo culture will be discussed: a narration of Grotowski himself, and narration of Haitians. In the second case the conversations with priest Amon Frémon from Cazale (published in *Présence polonaise en Haiti*, by Laureore St Juste and Frère Enel Clerismé, 1983, in „*Bonjour Blanc*”: *A Journey through Haiti*, by Ian Thomson, 1992, and what’s most important in *Lost White Tribes: Journeys among the Forgotten*, by Riccardo Orizio, 2000) are going to be crucial.

This discussion will set a background for two questions: in what sense a Pole Jerzy Grotowski treated Haiti (and India) as his second motherland? And: in what sense a Haitian Amon Frémon treated Poland as his second motherland? Is „the forcing open of the door to the source”, „to the revitalizing forces that flow from the center” that was mentioned by Maya Deren according a voodoo ritual is possible – as Schechner said – „without culture, without ways of doing/being particular to their group, tribe”?

About the Author

Professor Leszek Kolankiewicz, cultural studies, anthropology of performance.

Director of the Institute of Polish Culture in University of Warsaw, Poland. Chairman of the Committee on Cultural Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences.