

Il viaggio nel teatro di narrazione giapponese: tecniche e funzioni diegetiche

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Abstract

Travel in Japanese Narrative Theatre: Diegetic techniques and functions

In Japanese narrative theatre, travel performs several functions, and it is narrated employing specific performative techniques drawing from semantics and gesturality. In particular, the following diegetic functions can be highlighted: first, the expansion of the descriptive richness by means of inclusion of references to various locations in Japan, a technique that in the pre-modern period drew on the audience's curiosity for places that were considered far away and little known. Second, the increase in the protagonists' heroic or magical powers, described as ones who can travel to any destination, overcoming obstacles and dangers. For today's audience, these techniques are arguably a way to reproduce traditional customs, but they also provide a platform from which it is possible to find amusement in the naivety of century-old travellers: as a matter of fact, contemporary individuals seem inclined to nurture feelings of superiority and therefore feel legitimized to ridicule them, though at times replicating their behavior.

Keywords: verbal art; narrative theatre; kōdan; rakugo; travel.