



Hastabhinaya: Hand Gestures in Traditional Theatre Art of India

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The book *Hastabhinaya. Hand gestures in traditional theatre art of India* deals with a traditional Indian acting style, particularly hand gestures. Its focus lies in a specific form of actor-spectator communication – the communication carried out by means of *mudras*, symbolic hand positions. Its aim consists in defining principles of this mode of communication within performance activities of India. The book also verifies the proposition that *mudras* create an autonomous language system, by which every single thought or emotion can be expressed. The research is based on ancient and also contemporary theatre literature in Sanskrit, English and French, especially poetics and acting manuals, and on a contemporary practice of traditional theatre/dance in India (most notably the *kootiyattam* and the *kathakali*).

Published in Brno: Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts, 2013. 236 pp. ISBN 978-80-210-6406-5.