



Universidade de São Paulo,  
São Paulo, Brazil

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editorial revision, footnotes and comments

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## **ANTHROPOLOGY IN PERFORMANCE: INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD SCHECHNER**

During the period of June 26 to July 7, 2012, the Research Center in Anthropology, Performance, and Drama (Napedra - Núcleo de Antropologia, Performance e Drama), located at the University of São Paulo (USP), promoted a two-week event which was called “Encounters with Richard Schechner”. This was one of a series of events sponsored by Napedra as part of its thematic project, “Anthropology of performance: drama, aesthetics and ritual”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Research funded by the Brazilian National Council for Scientific and Technological Development - CNPq. This interview is also part of the Thematic Project *Antropologia da performance: drama, estética e ritual*, funded by the São Paulo Research Foundation, *Fapesp – Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo* (Fapesp 2006/53006-2). The project was carried out during 2008-2013, with participation of the following researchers: Adriana de Oliveira Silva, Alice Martins Villela Pinto, Ana Cristina Oliveira Lopes, Ana Goldenstein Carvalhaes, Ana Letícia de Fiori, Ana Lúcia Marques Camargo Ferraz, Ana Lúcia Pastore Schritzmeyer, André-Kees de Moraes Schouten, Bianca Catherine Tereza Tomassi, Carolina de Camargo Abreu, Celso Vianna Bezerra de Menezes, Danilo Paiva Ramos, Diana Paola Gómez Mateus, Edgar Teodoro da Cunha, Eduardo Néspoli, Francirosy Campos Barbosa, Giovanni Cirino, Jania Perla Diógenes de Aquino, João Luis Uchoa de Figueiredo Passos, John Cowart Dawsey, Luciana de Fátima Rocha Pereira de Lyra, Marcos Vinicius Malheiros Moraes, Marianna Francisca Martins Monteiro, Regina Aparecida Pólo Müller, Romain Jean Marc Pierre Bragard, Rose Satiko Gitirana Hikiji, Rubens Alves da Silva and Tatiana Molero Giordano.

The following interview with Richard Schechner occurred on July 6, 2012, at the Laboratory of Image and Sound in Anthropology (Lisa), of USP.<sup>2</sup> Visual and sound images were captured by the Laboratory technician, Ricardo Dionísio Fernandes.

Various activities which occurred during Schechner's two-week visit in Brazil provide context for the interview. Among these, the following may be highlighted.

June 26, 6 pm. Presentations of capoeira, maculelê and Afro-Brazilian dance by participants of the University Culture and Extension Center in Afro-Brazilian Arts (Núcleo de Cultura e Extensão em Artes Afro-Brasileiras) at USP, led and directed by Luiz Antonio Nascimento Cardoso, Mestre Pinguim ("Master Penguin"). After presentations, Richard Schechner interacted with Mestre Pinguim and participants. Location: University Culture and Extension Center in Afro-Brazilian Arts at USP.

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The project also counted with support from the following Napedra research associates: Eufrázia Cristina Menezes Santos, Rita de Cássia de Almeida Castro, and Robson Correa de Camargo.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Schechner's production is extensive. Among his publications, may be included the following books: *Public domain* (1968); *Environmental theater* (1973); *Theaters, spaces, and environments* (1975, with Jerry Rojo and Brooks McNamara); *Essays on performance theory* (1976); *The end of humanism* (1981); *From the Ramlila to the avantgarde* (1983); *Between theater and anthropology* (1985); *The Englebert stories* (1987, with Samuel McIntosh Schechner); *The future of ritual* (1993); *Performance theory* (revised edition of Essays on performance theory, 1988; newly revised edition in 2004); *Performance studies – an introduction* (2002, second revised edition in 2006); *Over, under, and around* (2004). Schechner also organized several collections: *Dionysus in 69* (1970); *Ritual, play, and performance* (1976, with Mady Schuman); *By means of performance* (1990, with Willa Appel); and *The Grotowski sourcebook* (1997, with Lisa Wolford).

Schechner's performance and theater production is also expressive. As artistic director of The Performance Group, his production includes *Dionysus in 69* (1968), *Macbeth* (1969), *The Tooth of Crime* by Sam Shepard (1972), *Mother Courage and Her Children* by Bertolt Brecht (1975), *The Marilyn Project* by David Gaard (1975), *Oedipus* (1977), *Cops* by Terry Curtis Fox (1978), and *The Balcony* by Jean Genet (1979). With East Coast Artists, Schechner directed *Faust/Gastronomie* (1993), *Three Sisters* by Anton Chekhov (1995), *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare (1999), *YokastaS* by Richard Schechner and Saviana Stanescu (2003, *YokastaS Redux* 2005), and *Swimming to Spalding* by Lian Amaris (2009). Schechner also directed plays in Asia and Africa: *Cherry ka Baghicha* by Anton Chekhov (1983 in Hindi) in New Delhi, *Mingri Jiuyao Chu Shan* by Sun Huizhu (1989 in Shanghai, in Mandarin), *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* by August Wilson (1992) in South Africa, *The Oresteia* by Aeschylus (1995 in Taipei, in Mandarin), and *Hamlet* by Shakespeare (2007 in Shanghai, and 2009 in Wroclaws, Poland, in Mandarin). During his years in New Orleans, between 1960 and 1967, Schechner was production director (with John O'Neal and Gilbert Moses) of the Free Southern Theatre (1963–65), and founder and director (with Franklin Adams and Paul Epstein) of the New Orleans Group (1964–67).

June 28, 9:30 am. Rasabox workshop with Napedra group, directed by Richard Schechner.

June 28, 9 pm. Presentation of *Bom Retiro 958 metros* (Bom Retiro 958 meters) by the theater group, *Teatro da Vertigem*, in the Bom Retiro neighborhood of São Paulo. After presentation, Richard Schechner interacted with director, Antônio Araújo, and various actresses and actors.

June 29, 10 am. Lecture by Richard Schechner entitled “The conservative avant-garde” presented as special event of the Department of Anthropology of USP, organized by Napedra.

June 30. Candomblé ceremony in Rio de Janeiro. Richard Schechner attended in company of Zeca Ligiéro and other members of the Afro-Amerindian Performance Studies Center (Nepaa) of the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro – UNIRIO .

July 4, 4 pm. Special Lecture by Richard Schechner entitled “Revisiting ‘points of contact’” at the Brazilian Anthropology Meeting. Event held at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica of São Paulo. Session organized by Napedra.

The July 6 interview took place in one of the film editing rooms of Lisa, the Laboratory of Image and Sound in Anthropology, at USP. From the perspective of the camera, Richard Schechner was to the right, and John Dawsey to the left. Between the two, a skeleton with white apron and left hand holding a scepter is presented by John as the “Napedra Grandmother”. In the background, an old typewriter, an early twentieth-century photo of São Paulo’s city masses, and several early to middle twentieth-century cameras.

During the interview thirteen questions were discussed, according to the following topics:

1. Schechner’s notebook and field notes [Part I. 00:01:25];
2. Ritual and theater [Part I. 00:20:06];
3. Liminal and liminoid tragedy [Part I. 00:29:38];
4. *Teatro da Vertigem* and the play *Bom Retiro 958 meters* [Part I. 00:43:58];
5. Restored behavior [Part I. 00:51:49];
6. Anthropology of experience [Part I. 01:07:23];
7. The “infinity loop”: relations between aesthetic and social dramas [Part II. 00:00:01];
8. The “not me... not not me” experience [Part II. 00:08:36];

9. *Jo-ha-kyu* and the variety of aesthetic experience [Part II. 00:21:12];
10. Paleolithic performance [Part II. 00:39:05];
11. The “belly brain” [Part II. 00:50:55];
12. Ethology and physics [Part II. 00:53:42];
13. The “Richard Schechner with lies” autobiography [Part II. 00:59:47].

Although the skeleton (“Napedra Grandmother”) and some objects were quickly arranged or called on scene by John Dawsey, the interview was unrehearsed, and Richard Schechner had no prior knowledge of the questions.



**ANTHROPOLOGY IN PERFORMANCE:  
INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD SCHECHNER**  
164" (96" 1<sup>st</sup> part, 68" 2<sup>nd</sup> part), 2012

[script and interview](#): John C. Dawsey [image and edition](#): Ricardo Dionisio  
[language](#): Kethylin Santos da Silva [english production](#): LISA/USP

JOHN DAWSEY

These have been two magical weeks for us.

RICHARD SCHECHNER

For me also.

JD

So, we are here with our Napedra Grandmother. She will be listening and doing whatever she wants to do.

RS

Right now she does not want to put her hand down.

[...]



## QUESTION 1: SCHECHNER'S NOTEBOOK AND FIELD NOTES

JD [00:01:25 – 00:02:38]

My first question has to do with ethnography. [...] The notebook which you carry to different events has called the attention of colleagues. It is special, I am sure. My question is: how do performance studies help us to rethink and redo ethnography? [...] I am especially interested in this field diary and the one you took to capoeira and Afro dance with Mestre Pinguim<sup>3</sup>, how you take notes, what kind of things you look for. Maybe you could even share some excerpts.

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<sup>3</sup> Luiz Antonio Nascimento Cardoso, Mestre Pinguim, is the leader of the Culture and Extension Center for Afro-Brazilian Arts (Núcleo de Cultura e Extensão em Artes Afro-Brasileiras), at the University of São Paulo, where he teaches capoeira, Afro dance, and maculelê. RS visited and interacted with members of the Center on June 26, 2012.

RS [00:02:38 – 00:20:03]

Sure. So let me tell you about it. [RS lifts notebook.] This particular notebook is special and it is one among other special notebooks. I have been keeping notebooks nearly continuously since 1967 or 1968, when I made my first trip to Latin America. My first visit to Brazil as well as to other countries in Latin America was when I began systematically to keep these books. Prior to that, I had books going back to the fifties, but not continuously. I do not know which number this particular book is [RS opens the notebook to look for date of first entry], but it began in June 2012. It is so beautiful, it has a Persian cover. [RS lifts notebook.] It was given to me by a Persian woman. Usually I just have a simple artists' sketchbook – and I have many of them. But, then there is a series of about fifteen books with leather covers that I had made especially in India. And they look so beautiful. [...] Knowing that I use a particular kind of notebook, always just about this size, people have been giving me notebooks as gifts, which I appreciate. [RS turns toward camera.] So, if any one of you out there wants to give me a gift, give me a notebook. That's a very good gift.



In this one, a woman, who was my student in a workshop, wrote [RS reads]: “September, 2011. Dear Richard, may your life and work continue to be inspired just as your mentorship and friendship have inspired me. Much love, Jahsi.” She says she is an Iranian woman. So this book has been around since 2011, but the first entry was on the 25th or 24th of June, 2012. It reads: “At JFK terminal 04 waiting for departure on Copa Air MA689 to Panama City. All around Spanish, Third World Spanish speakers, lots of kids, a considerable number of South Asians, Blacks, Browns, oldsters, youngsters. The whole airport is different from what it was 30 plus years ago. Not only the demographics, but the culture has changed. The site of modernity has shifted. This is the Third World, not just an enclave of it. [...]”. Etc., etc.

I am always writing reflections in these books. I have at least 75 or 80 thousand pages of them. Now my papers are at Princeton University Library and, of course, they are eager to get their hands on these notebooks. After I die, they will get the notebooks, but not before that. And, even then, the notebooks will not be available to the public until several other people die, because this is not just a field journal. It is an “everything journal”. [...] I write personal notes. [RS turns pages of notebook.] I write accounts about my relations with people. I write to some degree the outline of “new points of contact”.<sup>4</sup> [RS shows outline.] Here I will get to the capoeira.<sup>5</sup> It says: “Indigenous knowledge transmitted performatively via dance, movement, song, vibration, ceremony. Transmission of performers’ knowledge becomes transmission of knowledge by means of performance”. That’s part of what I was talking about. [...]

Here it says: “Send two *Engleburt Stories* to Dawsey, one for him and one for Pinguim, the capoeira leader”. I make notes to myself. The *Engleburt Stories*, which I had told you about, is a novel that my son<sup>6</sup> wrote when he was eight or ten years-old, and which I coauthored. He did the writing about a penguin. [...]

The notebook is an “everything book”. Here I have some writings about my domestic life. Because the book is so multifaceted and is kind of my open brain and my open thought, I need to restrict access to it. [...] I don’t want to hurt anybody’s feelings and I don’t want to have too much privacy or intimacy revealed. But, at a certain point, like Malinowski’s notebooks, I don’t care. When I’m dead and some of these other people are dead, then people that are interested should see it.

Now, in terms of field notes, I think the thing is to read a little bit of what I wrote about capoeira and then I’ll say how I use it. It says: “6:15pm, 26

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4 In Brazil, at the invitation and sponsorship of Napedra (Center of Anthropology, Performance and Drama of the University of São Paulo), Richard Schechner presented a paper on “New points of contact between anthropological and theatrical thought”. This paper was presented on July 4, at the 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Brazilian Anthropological Association, held in São Paulo, during July 2-5, 2012. The paper was published as “‘Points of contact’ revisited”, or, in Portuguese, “‘Pontos de contato’ revisitados”, in the *Revista de Antropologia* (Vol. 56, no. 2, julho-dezembro 2013, pp. 23-66), and in the collection *Antropologia e performance: ensaios Napedra* (São Paulo: Terceiro Nome, 2013, pp. 37-68), edited by John C. Dawsey, Regina P. Müller, Rose Satiko G. Hikiji, and Marianna F. M. Monteiro. The paper was written as a follow-up, 27 years later, on Schechner’s essay, “Points of contact between anthropological and theatrical thought” (In: *Between theater and anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1985, p. 3-34).

5 During his visit to the Center of Afro-Brazilian Arts at USP, RS saw presentations of capoeira led by Mestre Pinguim. He also playfully interacted with Mestre Pinguim and the capoeira group, doing capoeira-like moves and rolling on the floor.

6 Professor Samuel Macintosh-Schechner.

June, capoeira center at the university. [...] Contact improvisations without touching, exchange of energies. Break dancing, trance, lots of dancing in circles, men and women, short sticks, clashing sounds, two people in the center, about 15 total. Skills vary. Pinguim, the leader. This is, I think, a genuine leader. As they dance, the circle rotates counterclockwise. Big cylindrical drums”, etc. etc.. I am just describing what I see. It doesn't bother me, at that point, that I can go to a book and maybe get a better description, a clearer description. It is important that I make my description.

It is kind of like cooking. You can go to a cookbook, and you can go to a restaurant, but you can also cook your own things. If you cook your own things you have to prepare your own materials, you have to refer to your own recipes. Maybe this is a shortcoming of mine, maybe it is a *strong coming* of mine. I take very seriously the Zen adage: beginners begin at the beginning. Always assume your ignorance. Don't rely on secondary sources except to confirm or sometimes elaborate on what you have. But, don't take secondary sources as primary. [...] Let's say somebody wrote something from what they saw. Suppose they didn't see it quite correctly, but, since they were an important person, what they wrote gets repeated. All of the sudden, it becomes part of the disciplinary knowledge, and it is false.

If I read something, let's say Lévi-Strauss' essay or your essay or anybody's essay, describing something, and the description is different from what I see, I don't immediately say “Dawsey is wrong”, or “Lévi-Strauss is wrong”, whatever. I say that what I saw was what I saw. Suppose I don't have any real proof that what they saw is right. I don't believe what I read. I believe more what I experience. Of course, I use what I read, I refer to it. I am more liable to trust a theory when I can trust the data on which the theory is based. I can myself think through the theory and see what is correct, what suits or doesn't suit the logical demands, but the primary observation may be a misobservation. I know this from my own misobservations. So, if I am missing observations, even when I am very careful, so is everybody else. I rather swim in the sea of my own errors than swim in the sea of yours.

Having said that, here is what I write [RS reads excerpt]: “What I am seeing, drummers are all male, 10 of the 20 dancers are women.” That interested me because I thought capoeira was mainly a male thing. So part of this whole gender shift and what I find in cultural studies generally is that we take the earlier models and project them forward, as if things are not changing. Although there are many women doing things that only men do, we still talk about these things as male even to the degree of saying women are learning male things. Now, once a woman learns something, it becomes a woman thing. That's why, yesterday, I was saying “why do we assume that only men were hunters in ancient times?” Once you have a spear... [...]. Men have bone structure and

muscle structure that probably makes them run longer and faster, that's true. But we know that many cultural practices override biological or genetic inclinations. Let's put it this way, just because a man can run faster doesn't necessarily make him a better hunter, especially after the development of spears. Hunting can be about standing still, or hiding in the bushes, or ambushing. It is not always about running.

So I am always trying to challenge assumptions and to see what something might be if you think it in a different way. Of course, I have been rewarded professionally for this, let's put it that way. You have invited me to come here, and I go places because I don't seem to think the way everybody else thinks. Or, sometimes, I think up something and I have written it down, and 25 years later people say, "oh, that was correct!", and the book is still in print.

So here is what I am writing [RS reads another excerpt]: "Racialness, visibly light tan is predominant. Pinguim is one of the darkest. One equally dark woman, one blond, another very nicely mixed." Ok, then I would begin to think: what does Afro-Brazilian mean? What does it mean culturally? And how is this different from what it means racially? And so I would say, as an opening hypothesis – and it probably would not be my hypothesis alone –, that Afro-Brazilian is not a racial category; it is a cultural category. And that Blackness does to some degree map skin color, but, to some degree, it does not. I would use this as a metaphor: the eclipse of the moon. You don't have to have the whole moon eclipsed to have an eclipse. A total eclipse is different from a partial eclipse. So raciality is a partial eclipse of culturality. Etc. etc.

[RS reads from his notebook.] "Pinguim explains the dispersion of the spiritual elements of the dancing. He points to me and says, 'we need the support of people like you'. He gestures to me and John Dawsey. [...] I think that he is appealing to us as authorities." He knows you as an authority and he is assuming that I am an authority because I am an imported person. Etc., etc., etc.

At the same time, I am trying to make note here [RS shows notebook to camera] [00:16:40] and draw out the physical things, the drums, the chanters, the counterclockwise movement, and the different kinds of body gestures here – as opposed to Abu Dhabi, where I just came from. [...] Abu Dhabi is so close to Africa. The very body parts that are isolated, rotated, and displaced here [at the Afro-Brazilian Arts Center of USP] are concealed in public in Arabia. Here one has lots of pushing outward of arms and legs, a big corporal sphere to take up a lot of space. In Arabia, one has cylindrical and vertical stillness up and down; some, mostly hidden, internal vertical rotation, etc. I am seeing the different kinds of body language that are used.

Thiago Mendes/  
Center for  
Afro-Brazilian  
Arts of USP.  
From left to right:  
Eliany Funari,  
Luiz Antônio  
Nascimento  
Cardoso (Mestre  
Pinguim), Richard  
Schechner, João  
Luís Uchoa  
de Figueiredo  
Passos.



And, I am wondering: Arabia is right next to Africa. The Arabs were so active in the slave trade, so they actually were in Africa in a big way. And Africa is highly Islamized by now. So, I would wonder later, how does this affect the dancing? And, so forth. Because the body language and the covering of the body that are current in Arabia are so different from the exposure of the body which one finds, to some degree, in African dance. Although, again, when you go to the *candomblé*<sup>7</sup>, one of the *orishas*<sup>8</sup> is completely covered in straw<sup>9</sup>, the women are in these white dresses that conceal them. So, this business is a little more complicated.

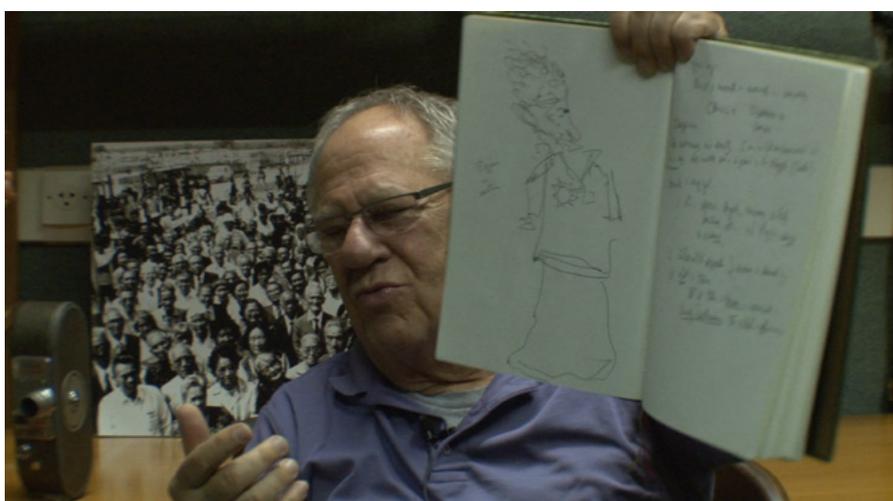
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<sup>7</sup> *Candomblé* (Portuguese pronunciation: [kãdõm'blɛ], *dance in honour of the gods*) is an Afro-American religious tradition, practiced mainly in Brazil by the “*povo do santo*” (*people of the saint*). *Candomblé* officially originated in Salvador, Bahia, at the beginning of the 19th century, when the first temple was founded. Accessed: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Candombl%C3%A9>; on October 29, 2017, at 12:50.

<sup>8</sup> An *orisha* (spelled *òrìṣà* in the Yoruba language, and *orichá* or *orixá* in Latin America) is a spirit who reflects one of the manifestations of the supreme divinity (*Eledumare*, *Olorun*, *Olofi*) in Yoruba religion. *Orishas* are said to have existed in the spiritual world, or astral plane (*òrun*) or lived as human beings in the planetary world, or physical plane (*ayé*). Others are said to be humans who are recognized as deities due to extraordinary feats. Many *orishas* have found their way to most of the New World as a result of the Atlantic slave trade and are now expressed in practices as varied as *Santería*, *Candomblé*, *Trinidad Orisha*, *Umbanda*, and *Oyotunji*, among others. Accessed: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orisha> on October 29, 2017, 12:35.

<sup>9</sup> *Omolu* (or *Obaluaê*), who is covered in straw, is associated with earth, fire, and death, and is considered to be one of the most feared of the *Orishas*. Accessed: <https://www.iquilibrio.com/blog/espiritualidade/umbanda-candomble/tudo-sobre-obaluaie/> on October 29, 2017, at 12:40.

Anyway, I use the notebook to write down what I see. Here is the rhythm, even. I have written a 5-6 rhythm, you know 1-2, 1-2, 2-1, 2-1, 2, 3, 4-5, 6. It is not musical notation, but it helps me remember. That is probably more of an answer than you want, but I also supplement this now with the computer. I have lots of notes on my computer. But what the computer cannot do is draw. You see, the computer cannot draw. [RS shows drawing to camera.] This is a kind of impression drawing not meant to be an accurate artistic rendering. It is called “Pinguim in motion”. The whole drawing is kind of scattered out.



Finally, I say at the end here: “Two levels of engagement, one in Afro-Brazilian moves, rituals, beliefs, etc., which Pinguim says and shows. The second has to do with intercultural aspects of these moves as dance for those who are not part of the tradition. But, if the first one is true and correct, then the body does the believing, the ritual is efficacious.” So, I am trying to understand ritualized behavior, etc. etc. [00:20:03]

## QUESTION 2: RITUAL AND THEATER

JD [00:20:06]

The second question has to do with ritual and theater. I find it interesting that you wrote “From ritual to theater and *back*” before Victor Turner wrote *From ritual to theater*.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> “From ritual to theater and back” was delivered by Richard Schechner as a paper to the Rassegna Internazionale de Teatri Stabili in Florence, Italy, 1974; it was revised and printed in the *Educational Theater Journal* 26 (4) (1974); it was published in Schechner’s *Essays on performance theory 1970-1976* by Drama Book Specialists of New York in 1977, and republished in Schechner’s *Performance theory* by Routledge of London in 1988. Victor Turner’s *From ritual to theatre: the human seriousness of play* was published by PAJ Publications of New York in 1982.

RS [00:20:18]

Well he took the title from my essay. No doubt about that!

JD [00:20:25]

But you did “from ritual to theater *and back*”.

RS [00:20:27]

“*And back*”, and he only did it “from ritual to theater”.

JD [00:20:37]

At first impression, I would have thought that Turner first did “from ritual to theater” and then you kind of...

RS [00:20:37]

... pushed it...

JD [00:20:37]

...or subverted it. [...]

RS [00:20:46 - 00:26:33]

Well, “from ritual to theater” actually comes before Turner and before me. That comes from the so called Cambridge anthropology: Gilbert Murray, Jane Ellen Harrison, and then Theodor Gaster. I do not know if any of these names mean anything to you or not, but they called themselves anthropologists. They never were in the field. They wrote during the early and mid-twentieth century. Jane Ellen Harrison, a classical scholar, wrote a book called *Themis*.<sup>11</sup> Gilbert Murray, another classical scholar, wrote “An excursus on the ritual forms preserved in Greek tragedy”.<sup>12</sup> He picks up on Aristotle and tries to show how Greek tragedy emerges out of a particular kind of ritual. Theodor Gaster expands that into a theory about the annual human sacrifice to a kind of god king who then gets resurrected.<sup>13</sup> He Christianizes it in a certain way. And he tries to conflate an ancient Greek, Middle Eastern, and Christian mythology in telling a story about the tragic sacrifice and resurrection of a year king. This would be a late Winter Spring festival. Of course, that is very interesting because, in Christianity, the placement of when Easter comes obviously has to do with rebirth. It is not so much about the crucifixion as it is about the resurrection. I do not know if it is true here [in Brazil]. But, in the United States, of course, eggs are a very important part

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<sup>11</sup> *Themis: a study of the social origins of Greek religion* was published in 1927.

<sup>12</sup> Published in 1927.

<sup>13</sup> Among other books, Theodor Gaster wrote *A Canaanite ritual drama: the Spring festival at Ugarit* (1946); *Thespis: ritual, myth, and drama in the Ancient Near East* (1950); *The Dead Sea Scriptures in English translation* (1956); and *Myth, legend, and custom in the Old Testament* (1969).

of Easter – the Easter egg hunt, bunny rabbit, chocolate eggs... Rabbits have to do with fertility, of course, because they reproduce so much.

So they called themselves anthropologists and they developed the thesis “from ritual to theater”. I wrote a critique on that in an essay called “Approaches to theory and criticism”, which probably was collected in one of the editions of *Performance theory*. That is an early essay. I wrote it in 1964 or 65, I think. It was published in 66.<sup>14</sup> First in *TDR – The Drama Review* and, then, in *Public domain*,<sup>15</sup> which is my first published full book. And I critique that, even back then, saying that theater could not have simply evolved from ritual.

That is a chicken and egg thing. Theater may be originated in ritual, but ritual may be originated in theater because theater and ritual are both performances. That is when I began first to use the term performance to include both ritual and theater – actually to include ritual, theater and play.

I think Turner, however, being so concerned for his training with Max Gluckman and Milton Singer,<sup>16</sup> would see the more traditional Aristotelian ritual as coming first and theater later. I, very early on, rejected that. It is part of my investigation into early human culture and ritual, especially, not ritual ethologically speaking, but religious ritual and belief – ritual as the enactment of belief. This kind of ritual seems to me to be pretty sophisticated. We could not have become homo erectus and australopithecine and, then, the first thing we do are these sophisticated rituals. There has to be something. It would just seem that telling a story, performing, dancing, and such, without having super elaborated meanings, would be first. That is why I want to finally write about animal behavior. Like certain of the chimpanzees. When they discover a food source, they go kind of crazy and they jump up and down, like dance. Maybe humans went crazy and jumped up and down before they had meaning in the ritual sense.

So, I thought of ritual as a sophisticated cultural development. How could it be first? This [idea of “from ritual to theater”], I thought, was just a mapping backwards by anthropologists who accepted it out of the religious rituals or myth. You know, “in the beginning was the word”, or

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<sup>14</sup> *Performance theory* (1988) first appeared in 1977, as *Essays on performance theory 1970-1976*. The essay “Approaches”, which was published in *Performance theory*, appeared as “Approaches to theory/criticism” in the *TDR, The Drama Review* 10(4) (1966).

<sup>15</sup> Published in 1969.

<sup>16</sup> Among other books, Max Gluckman wrote *Rituals of rebellion in South-East Africa* (1954); and *Order and rebellion in tribal Africa* (1963). Milton Singer published, among other books, *When a great tradition modernizes* (1972)

“God created heaven and earth”. All of these things are repeated in those theories. Also, the idea of the “Fall”. [...] I thought this was a mythic rather than a scientific determinable thing.

But you were going to say something else about these two essays.

JD [00:26:33]

I was thinking of your affinities with Victor Turner, of how they run deep because of your collaborative work. Even so, there are striking differences, and you have just pointed to some of them.

RS [00:26:53 - 00:28:41]

I think he was intrigued by that. In my essay “From ritual to theater and back”, I presented the idea of “the efficacy-entertainment braid”.<sup>17</sup> All performances have some degree of efficacy; they are trying to do something. And when there is a high degree of efficacy, we call them rituals. All performances also entertain, they give pleasure, and they pass time. You know, entertainment and just passing time are fundamentally human things.

We deeply pursue pleasure. We like pleasure. There is an argument for the evolutionary advantage of pleasure. But let that go for a moment. There are obviously a lot of things we do for pleasure. Let’s say eating. Sometimes we do things for pleasure that are destructive. Many people are too fat. That is because they eat for pleasure, right? What else can explain it? They take in more, they expand, and they enjoy it. It is sheer pleasure, and it kills people. I’ve got too much, you’ve got too much. He [Ricardo Dionísio Fernandes, the laboratory technician] is very lucky. Pleasure is a basic human action. All rituals, I would say, have a pleasurable side to them. They are entertainment as well as everything else. [...]

When I go to a candomblé, when I go to these things, of course it is ritual. There is a certain aspect of religion, a deadly serious aspect of Christianity, where you are not supposed to be laughing, and you are not supposed to be having a really good time.

JD [00:29:03]

At candomblé people and even some of the orishas laugh a lot.

RS [00:29:03 - 00:29:36]

That is what I am saying. I think Christianity, over the long haul, also did that. But, there is a certain kind of Reformation and counter-Reformation demand to strip Christianity of everything. And there is a certain

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<sup>17</sup> The complete title of the essay is “From ritual to theater and back: the efficacy-entertainment braid”.

Islamism, also, that is that way. Fundamentalist religions often tend to repress pleasure. But religion is also entertainment. People spend a lot of time at it, they really like it.

### QUESTION 3: LIMINAL AND LIMINOID TRAGEDY

JD [00:29:38]

I want to ask you something about the liminal and the liminoid.

RS

Ok.

JD [00:29:46 - 00:32:12]

As I think of your discussion at the University of São Paulo the other day about the conservative avant-garde, I am reminded of the notions of the liminal and the liminoid, which you and Victor Turner elaborated during the 1970's and 80's.<sup>18</sup> I would like to know what your thoughts are on this. It seems that Turner was inclined to a tragic view of the liminal as it became liminoid especially after the industrial revolution – involving a sort of *sparagmos*, or dismemberment, or amputation of forms of symbolic action.<sup>19</sup> This makes me think of a kind of shattering of the magic mirrors of liminal experience.<sup>20</sup> In regard to your writings of that

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18 Richard Schechner's presentation at the University of São Paulo, on June 29, 2012, was published, in Portuguese, as "Vanguarda conservadora" (*Cadernos de Campo*, v. 22, n. 22, 2013, p. 180-192). Victor Turner's essay "Liminal to liminoid, in play, flow, ritual: an essay in comparative symbology" was published in Turner's book, *From ritual to theatre: the human seriousness of play*, in 1982.

19 The *sparagmos* or dismemberment of forms of symbolic action is discussed by Victor Turner in "Dewey, Dilthey, and drama: an essay in the anthropology of experience" (In: TURNER, Victor, e BRUNER, Edward M., ed. *The anthropology of experience*. Urbana e Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986, p. 42.) Victor Turner's complete work includes the following books: *Schism and continuity in an African society: a study of Ndembu village life* (1957); *The forest of symbols: aspects of Ndembu ritual* (1967); *The drums of affliction* (1968); *The ritual process: structure and anti-structure* (1969); *Dramas, fields and metaphors: symbolic action in human society* (1974); *Revelation and divination in Ndembu ritual* (1975); *From ritual to theatre: the human seriousness of play* (1982); *On the edge of the bush* (1985, post mortem); e *The anthropology of performance* (1987, post mortem). Victor Turner also organized several collections: *Image and pilgrimage in Christian culture* (1978, with Edith Turner) *Celebration: studies in festivity and ritual* (1982); and *The anthropology of experience* (1986, post mortem, with Edward M. Bruner).

20 The metaphor of the "magic mirror" appears in various writings of Victor Turner. Cf. TURNER, Victor. "Images and Reflections: Ritual, Drama, Carnival, Film and Spectacle in Cultural Performance". In: TURNER, Victor. *The Anthropology of Performance*. New York: PAJ Publications, 1987, p. 22.

period, I sensed a different tone, maybe not so tragic. I think that the interesting thing in Turner – and you may have a lot to do with this – was that liminoid phenomena can be even more dangerous, and certainly more subversive, than the liminal.<sup>21</sup> The liminoid can play more with danger, it seems. In your recent work on the “conservative avant-garde,” I sense a type of irony. Or maybe you are pointing to a tragedy of the liminoid? Maybe the liminoid is becoming more like the liminal, that is, more conservative and less subversive? That is, it is becoming more like the liminal in its tendency to reinforce structure in some ways. But this is a very superficial reading, and I just heard you the other day.

RS [00:32:12 - 00:36:29]

I think that what you are opening up here is a huge region of discourse, and it is alright to simplify a little bit. Turner felt – and I must follow him in this, or follow him in most of it, and I will say where I have an exception – he felt that liminal rites occur only within traditional societies. In other words, liminal rites – as first described by Van Gennep and, then, as described by Turner and others – presuppose a mutually dependent value system; in fact, they depend upon a very coercive situation in which, if you do not accept that value system, you are isolated from the community, you are thrown out of the community. That value system is like a lease on a certain kind of collective life. With the onset of the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, private property, capitalism ..., all of these things began to authorize individual ownership of culture, not just individual participation in culture. Obviously, there were always individuals; either you are a good chief or a bad chief, you are this or that, but you were part of the corporate group. The individual as such only had rights within the corporation, within the community. I am not talking about corporate business. There was no life outside the community. There was only another community. You could either join it or live in the wilderness. You could live outside, like a hermit or Saint

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<sup>21</sup> Turner distinguished liminal from liminoid phenomena as follows: a) liminal phenomena tend to occur in societies based on forms of “mechanical solidarity”; liminoid phenomena, on forms of “organic solidarity”; b) liminal phenomena tend to emerge from collective experience; liminoid phenomena tend to be individual; c) liminal phenomena are centrally integrated into the total social process as a negative, subjunctive and anti-structural pole; liminoid phenomena develop at margins of central economic and political processes; d) liminal phenomena are associated with collective representations; liminoid phenomena with “personal and psychological” dimensions of symbols; e) liminal phenomena tend to revitalize social structures; liminoid phenomena are frequently more critical, and, sometimes, under certain conditions, may lead to revolutionary transformation. TURNER, Victor. “Liminal to Liminoid, in Play, Flow, Ritual: An Essay in Comparative Symbolism”. In: TURNER, Victor. *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: PAJ Publications, 1982, pp. 53-55.

Francis, something like that, but even that was given a place within the community. There was no real bohemian, you see. The hermit is to the liminal what the bohemian artist is to the liminoid. So, with the rise of individualism and that whole set of ideas, and even Protestantism as an individuated religion in Christianity, as opposed to Catholic corporatism, the whole ball game changes. Classical Catholicism is liminal and reformed Protestantism is liminoid, of course.

Our second statement would be this. Liminoid societies are modern and postmodern in this regard. There are pockets of liminality. So, if you are a believing Catholic, you can, Monday thru Saturday, live a liminoid life. But, when you go to confession, when you go to mass, when you join the body of the church, or whatever you want to call it, you are living a liminal life. And, it gets complex, because you voluntarily live that life, but if you are a believer it is not voluntary, right? You cannot go to heaven, you are not entitled without the sacrament, so it is voluntarily and not voluntarily. This is the paradox – and I do not think Turner wrote about it so much –: within the liminoid world there are liminal pockets. And you agree to be in that pocket, but once having agreed to be in that pocket, it swallows you up all the way. You cannot believe in the sacrament and not believe in it at the same time. You are a believer or you are not. Of course, some people say, “I do it but I do not believe in it”, which is a liminoid statement about a liminal action. And why do they do it? They do it because they are taking Pascal’s wager. Do you know Pascal’s wager?

JD [00:36:29]

No.

RS [00:36:31 – 00:37:48]

Blaise Pascal was an atheist. On his death bed he called for a priest and for his last sacraments. His friends, the philosophes, came around and they said, “you can’t do this, you are betraying us, we are atheists”. He said, “It is just a bet. I think there is no afterlife. I’ll bet a million to one there isn’t, but who would not take this other bet in my situation? If there is, I certainly don’t want to go to hell.” So it is called “Pascal’s wager”. “Pascal’s wager” in philosophy is a kind of liminoid gesture to liminality, right? So, the liminal continues. And it is not a switch on, switch off thing. I don’t see it that way. I say the liminal continues, not only in our society. The world is saturated by the liminoid, so we choose to be living liminal. That is a paradox, a contradiction. And that is one of those Batesonian things<sup>22</sup>: everything within this frame is true, everything within this frame is not true, and that kind of thing. We choose the liminal, but in choosing the

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22 Gregory Bateson developed his ideas about frames in “A theory of play and fantasy” (In: *Steps to an ecology of mind*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1972).

liminal we are liminoid and we are liminal.

JD [00:37:48]

Yes, that is paradoxical.

RS [00:37:50 - 00:38:20]

And it is similar for the *candomblé*, I would say. I am not sure that those people are adepts all of the time. So the liminoid world introduces individual agency. In a truly liminal society there is no individual agency. There is individual style, there is individual placement, and there is individual hierarchy, but there is no real individual agency. Agency belongs to the community. [RS pauses.] Now, where were we?

JD [00:38:21]

Is there tragedy in the liminoid?<sup>23</sup>

RS [00:38:23 – 00:39:58]

The tragedy in the liminoid must be in the realm of aesthetics, and we have to distinguish between sadness and tragedy. Sadness, of course, occurs when you lose a loved one. There are many occasions that we feel great sadness or little sadness. Tragedy, however, as a genre of thought – and not only as a genre of literature –, is the inevitability of loss. And the irreversibility of loss, let's put it that way, within this whole collective enterprise. Or, to put it in a classic register, as in Aristotelian tragedy, there was nothing that Oedipus could have done in his life that could have made him avoid his fate. So, the tragedy is that his fate has been preordained, predestined. He takes actions to avoid it, and the paradox or, rather, the irony – not paradox – is that every action he takes to avoid his tragedy brings him closer to it. It has already been written. That goes back to what I have just said. That is liminal phenomena. Oedipus belongs to the community and what the community has scripted for him has already been written. He has the illusion of individual agency.

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23 In his initial question, John Dawsey attempted to explore some ideas, as follows: 1- Victor Turner evokes something which may be called a “tragedy of the liminal” that becomes evident especially after the Industrial Revolution with the *sparagmos* or dismemberment of forms of symbolic action; 2- Arising from this process of dismemberment, the liminoid nonetheless has to do with something new in this social and symbolic universe, the awakening of critical and potentially subversive action; 3- In his presentation at the University of São Paulo, Richard Schechner shows how artistic vanguards (that can be viewed as liminoid phenomena) have become conservative. So, the question goes something like this: can we speak of a sort of “tragedy of the liminoid” which results from the loss of critical and subversive potential of artistic vanguards? Evidently, due to lack of clarity in the formulation of the initial question, a question about a possible “tragedy of the liminoid” was transformed into another question possibly even more interesting: the “tragedy in the liminoid”.

Indeed, he is punished for trying to be liminoid. This is something new, now. I have not gotten to this. He is punished for trying to be liminoid within a liminal world. Right?

JD [00:39:58]

That is real interesting.

RS [00:39:59 – 00:41:16]

Alright, now, to some degree, Protestantism – especially certain forms of Protestantism which believe in predestination – re-inscribe this kind of liminality in the modern world. They say that your life has already been predetermined. So, if you are rich, that is proof that you are saved. Let's say, your destiny has been written, but you do not know what the writing is. So you have to go out and earn your evidence that you have been saved. But it has been written. Now others, like existentialists, modern atheists, agnostics, even Catholics – and, here, I am thinking of classical Catholicism –, would say “you are not predestined, you have choices to make”. So, classical tragedy occurs only when you have no choice, but you do not know you have no choice. And circumstances kind of reveal to you your lack of choice. So, this is written all over Shakespeare. And, there is a great short story by Kafka called *The penal colony* – I do not know if you know the story.

JD [00:41:16]

Yes.

RS [00:41:19 – 00:43:04]

So, in this story, the prisoner only knows his crime at the moment of death, right? He knows he is condemned, but he does not know why. That is the classic tragic insight. Tragedy exchanges life for insight. At the end you know, but you are going to lose your life. Othello speaks as “one that loved not wisely but too well”. This is at the end of the play. You know, the story of this Moor who killed his wife because of jealousy, then found he was mistaken. He finds out the truth, but he is finished. Oedipus discovers the truth and is blinded. Or Hamlet, who tells Horatio to give him the goblet, preparing to die, as one who knows the truth, then says “go tell my story”. So, tragedy is the knowledge that we have no freedom, even though we thought we had freedom. Can this be a liminoid phenomenon? Well, this is certainly a liminal phenomenon.

Again, it is a pocket of liminality within liminoidism. True tragedy is always liminal. It cannot be liminoid. Liminoid is connected more to pastiche, to montage, to irony, to the making fun of such things, and to saying “hey, we never know!” I would say that liminoid is more pessimistic and less tragic. Yeah, these are very good things that we are coming up

with. So tragedy is when you find out you are condemned to die and why you are condemned to die. And, in finding that out, you have a *scientia potentia est* – “knowledge is power”. You have that knowledge and you die. You trade your life for that knowledge. So that it is...

JD [00:43:05]  
... meaningful.

RS [00:43:07 – 00:43:57]  
Very meaningful. In the liminoid you live in perpetual doubt. You have skepticism, you have irony, but you cannot have tragedy. And you can die but never know exactly why you are dying. You don't have a belief system in which your death is absolutely secure. You may have “Pascal's wager”. You take a bet. Maybe at the end of your life you would say “bring the priest” or do this or do that... [...] But, you do not really believe. You are just saying that you believe an action. You are saying “If I do it and if there is a god, that god will accept it”. But of course, in this case, if there is a god, the god is also liminoid by now.

#### **QUESTION 4: *TEATRO DA VERTIGEM* AND THE PLAY *BOM RETIRO 958 METERS***

JD [00:43:58 – 00:44:19]  
A liminoid god... That is real interesting. Moving on to another topic, could you comment on the *Teatro da Vertigem*<sup>24</sup>, which we went to see? [RS says: “Yes, we went twice!”] I would be very interested in your comments on *Teatro da Vertigem* in regard to our discussion.

RS [00:44:20 – 00:45:31]  
First of all, my remarks would have to be limited because I do not understand Portuguese. And there is a lot of text in it, but you helped explain what the actors were saying. I have seen it twice. It has a visual, scenic and behavioristic or behavior language, so that I understand. To me, it is a brilliant piece of site specific environmental theater. It uses and exploits, in a positive way, and is controlled by its environment – this semi-rundown, but “trying-to-come-back” neighborhood of São Paulo.<sup>25</sup> It is a neighborhood with lots of ghosts. In other words, it was once a Jewish neighborhood and then it became and is becoming a Korean

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<sup>24</sup> *Teatro da Vertigem*, which literally means “theater of vertigo”, is directed by Antonio Araujo. The street play which we saw, *Bom Retiro 958 metros*, begins at the Shopping Lombroso *Fashion Mall*, located at Rua Prof. Césare Lombroso, in the Bom Retiro district, São Paulo. The 958 meters refers to the distance which the public walks during the performance. The dramaturgy was done by Joca Rainers Terron.

<sup>25</sup> RS is speaking of the Bom Retiro neighborhood of São Paulo.

neighborhood; but there are also Bolivian and other Latin American migrant workers. It is a neighborhood in which clothes are manufactured and sold and so on and so forth. And there is a particular small shopping mall where some of the action takes place. The Lombroso, is it?

JD [00:45:32]

Yes.

RS [00:45:34 – 00:51:46]

The Lombroso shopping mall is a place that is kind of upscale for the neighborhood. It represents an attempt to bring the neighborhood back, or to lift it up. At the same time, the piece itself deals with the fundamental conflicts between the homeless, or the people who are from the crack neighborhood – maybe coming to this neighborhood or rubbing against it –, who have no future, as it were. These are migrant workers who come to São Paulo because they can make more money here than they can in Bolivia. Still, they are deeply exploited. In the presentation, there are mannequins, and those who are half human and half not human, like über-marionettes, or large marionettes, humans playing dolls; there are struggles over fashion, and struggles over controlling the neighborhood – all of these themes which are profoundly, I would not say so much Brazilian or, specifically, from São Paulo, as they are profoundly urban. You know, we see similar kinds of themes in New York, and, I am sure, in any great urban center. This is because an urban center attracts people who feel. Those who, from one perspective, feel they are moving upwards – that is why they come! –, from another perspective, they are being exploited, because the boss can get them cheaper than they can if they were to pay people who live here all the time. They are migrant workers that are being exploited. So, all depends from what place you are looking at this. In this piece we have engagement with the space, engagement with these themes of urban development and urban decay, back and forth. The final scene takes place in this former Jewish social and cultural center. This organization, I was told by Antonio Araújo, the director, was a very leftist organization and fought against the generals and dictators in Brazil. But, then, there were Jews who made more money and left the neighborhood. The place is haunted by its great past. The dumpster scene at the end presents a haunting image with pieces of mannequins and servants being thrown away. I would call this a liminoid tragedy.

Coming up and being pushed out at the same time. Here we see brilliant use of the neighborhood and the space, leading the audience from place to place in subtle but compulsive ways. And we see the marking of those spaces, as, for example, with the woman that I followed for much of the time.<sup>26</sup> The mannequin, the human playing the mannequin, she first

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<sup>26</sup> The actress Kathia Bissoli playing the mannequin.

starts at a sale, and, finally, at a sale with 100% discount, and then is completely discarded. But her place is never at the center of the performance. That is what is interesting. You pass her by. Most people passed her by. Then I stopped a first time, then a second time also. I just stared and stayed there with her. Later, she emailed me, saying how much she appreciated that, because people really treat her as if she is a mannequin, and as something, all of the sudden, to be thrown away. Yet, it is clear that she is a woman. So here we have three sets of figures in the mannequin world. We have the real mannequins; we have a woman who is half mannequin and half woman, the one who is wearing a kind of breast plate, and who is mostly smiling; and, then, we have the actress who is all woman, but is playing a mannequin. [...] But we tend not to treat mannequins as human, but to treat mannequins as mannequins. So, there is also, let's say, a narrative of exploitation of labor where we treat the human as machine, not the machine as human.

We say we treat the machine as human. Perhaps the computer we do, or cellphones – we love them, we hold them, we caress them, and we stroke them. But, most of the time, we are treating humans as machines and as instruments.

I found this performance to be emotionally moving, politically very active, and, yet, not altogether knee-jerking, politically speaking. It was much more complicated because it was also saying the neighborhood should come up. It was also showing us as it was coming up. It was talking about transformation and it was talking about the tragedy of what was happening. Here, we have tragedy again. A little while ago, I said that tragedy cannot occur in liminoid societies. In the liminoid, you can have irony. I would say you can have cruelty, but without tragedy. I am saying that tragedy's mark is not simply cruelty, death, and horror, which we have all the time. We have genocide, we have disease. Tragedy's mark is that in so dying you have gained acceptance into a system. Tragedy is fundamentally hopeful at the end. Most of us die as ignorant as when we were born. If we draw tragic deaths, in the classic sense, we have some knowledge that we are trading for our death. In the *Vertigem* performance there is none. There are some conclusions, there are some final speeches, there is some political thing, but, still, we look at the dumpster and we are seeing these humans and parahumans who are being thrown away. In the dumpster we see the three women: the cleaning lady who is the maid, the half mannequin, and the mannequin. [00:51:46]

## QUESTION 5: RESTORED BEHAVIOR

JD [00:51:49]

Let me ask you about restored behavior.<sup>27</sup> [...]

RS [00:51:56]

At last, a theory that I invented rather than all these other theories.

JD [00:52:02 - 00:52:54]

Right. Of course, in various places, Victor Turner points to the importance of this concept in his own thought, especially for the development of anthropology of experience. It is, as many would say, a powerful concept. I want to ask you, why “behavior”? Kenneth Burke, for example, prefers to speak of action rather than behavior.<sup>28</sup> That would be the first question. The second would be, why “restored”? Would the word “recuperated”, for example, do just as well?

RS [00:52:57 - 00:57:37]

The “behavior” question I can answer systematically. The “restored” one is probably accidental to some degree. I mean, I can make a justification, but we will get there in a minute. I like the word “behavior” rather than “action” because behavior precedes action. In other words, action is already interpretation. For Kenneth Burke and the actionists, action is meaningful behavior. I want to start back at behavior that may or may not be meaningful. Or, we can assume it is meaningful, but we don’t know what the meaning is. Let’s say, I do this with my hand. [RS moves his hand.] Unless you have a context to really understand what I am doing, it is not an action. It is a behavior. It is not even a gesture, because that would imply interpretation. So I want to start back as close as I can to ground zero, or embodiment. Now obviously you can never start exactly at ground zero. But, I want to start there, because the behavior is something that can be observed. You need to observe it and, in a certain sense, map it before you can interpret it – before, or, roughly, at the same time. But, conceptually, it should come first. The behavior should come before its interpretation. Otherwise, you risk not seeing a lot of behavior.

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<sup>27</sup> The main reference for this concept is Richard Schechner’s essay “Restoration of behavior”, which was published in his book *Between theater and anthropology* by the University of Pennsylvania Press of Philadelphia in 1985.

<sup>28</sup> Among other works, Kenneth Burke wrote *Language as symbolic action* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1966); *A rhetoric of motives*. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1950); and *A grammar of motives*. (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1945).

So, now you are shaking your head, and you are moving and you are jiggling your feet a little bit. [RS observes behavior of JD.] Now, if I just say that John Dawsey is looking at me and his lips are moving slightly, and he is nodding his head back and forth, and so on, and you think “mmm”, alright, so I write that down, so I can now interpret it – “he is engaged with me”, “he is agreeing to some of what I am saying”, “he is maintaining a kind of face-to-face supportive attitude” – all of that is action and may be true. But it may also be true that “he is in the middle of this interview”, “he is feeling that this is not going so well but he needs to maintain a front”, as Erving Goffman<sup>29</sup> would say. That is another interpretation. The behavior would support both interpretations. One would be that you are actually showing what you are feeling, and that there is symmetry between your interior state of experience and your communication. Another would be that there is a disjuncture. Could actors be performing disjunction very effectively all the time? It would take the experts to say whether you are lying or not, and maybe even the experts would not know. Let me tell you, great actors can fool them because they have control of all of the behaviors. That is why I want to start with behavior. I am always a little bit contrary. I could say, “Oh yes, I vote for this one, John my friend has always been good to me”; there is also supportive evidence that this is authentic. But, at the same time, maybe this is all an interview that we have done three times, and we are in the fourth take, and all of this is performed, and we have rehearsed it, and this is all part of the script, and you are saying “oh, excuse me, let’s turn this off, I have forgotten page 93”, etc. I am always interested in these disjunctions and possibilities. I feel that if we begin at the second floor of the building rather than at the foundation, we miss a lot of possibility for play, for further knowledge and so on.

The second reason for “behavior” goes back to B. F. Skinner, the behaviorist, and to William James, the pragmatist philosopher.<sup>30</sup> And it goes across to animal stuff. Regarding B. F. Skinner and William James, they really did take behavior as the very first thing. Behavior is observable phenomena. In Skinner’s case, you can train behavior and you can elicit reflex emotional responses through trained behavior. When the bell rings, the dog’s food is ready. After a while, when the bell rings, the dog salivates, and this kind of thing. I am salivating just thinking about it. It is kind of funny, but I truly am.

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<sup>29</sup> Erving Goffman discusses the idea of a “front” in *The presentation of self in everyday life* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959).

<sup>30</sup> Among other books, B. F. Skinner (Burrhus Frederic Skinner) wrote *Walden two* (1948), *Verbal behavior* (1957), and *Beyond freedom and dignity* (1971). William James wrote *The principles of psychology* (1890), *The varieties of religious experience* (1902), *Essays in radical empiricism* (1912), and other works.

JD [00:57:37]  
Maybe I am too.

RS [00:57:37 - 01:00:04]

Just from talking about it we are salivating. That is interesting. Now, the animal stuff is even more interesting because we do not know. We do not have a true theory of mind about animals. We don't know. Maybe we know a little bit about some primates, but we certainly don't know what a snail is thinking. We don't know what a bee is thinking. Does theory of mind even mean anything when I am talking about a bee, or about neuronal matter? I am not good at biology, but I am sure that it goes down to single cell organs, neurons, whatever. So, all we have is behavior. That is all we can see. We can't say what the organism feels, what it thinks. Or, what is its action. But, we can say what it does. So, the action of a virus is really its behavior, because action is interpretation, thought. Or, to put it in behavioristic terms, you know the AIDS virus just wants to replicate itself, it does not want to kill us. It does not have a motive. The HIV virus does not say, "I want to kill you human beings". That is a consequence of what it does. I refuse to believe that there is agency in these things – not human agency. That would be much too much. Let's say a divine plague was sent by God. But, even there, the plague doesn't have agency. God has the agency and the plague is the instrument, right? So, the plagues against pharaoh were behaving. God was doing the action and using the plagues. When I write with my pen, the pen doesn't act. I do the action, the pen is the instrument. Alright, maybe that does it for "behavior". I want to get to "restored", but does that do it for "behavior"?

JD [01:00:04]  
Yes.

RS [01:00:05 - 01:00:42]

Alright, as for "restored", maybe I just like RE words. I like RE words because they suggest repetition, return, restoration, rebuilding. They suggest a circular movement. I don't know why I chose *restored* behavior. Maybe it has to do with the idea of a return.

JD [01:00:44]  
Would the word "recuperate" do just as well?

RS [01:00:46 - 01:01:20]

Hmm, no. Look at my theory carefully and you will see it is saying that the future action determines what from the past is going to be used, and what we want to bring back. "Recuperate" strikes me as "rehabilitate", or as something lost that we need. I don't know, maybe it is very close. I don't have a huge justification for it, except for that.

JD [01:01:22]

Does “restore” have to do with new elements, new materials, or making anew?

RS [01:10:23 - 01:02:34]

Well, maybe rearrangement makes things anew. And what we restore from the past and choose to redo and to re-perform in the present is a function of the future project. What we are trying to build into, or trying to bring into existence. So it is this kind of ongoing rehearsal of the world. When you go in to rehearse a play, you are saying, “ok, today we will work this from yesterday because tomorrow we need to perform it. So we need to keep recycling, reusing – something like that. But, I can’t defend the word “restored” as well as I can the word “behavior”. One more thing, let me just finish this one thing. I feel that, in English, from a poetic point of view, “restoration of behavior” flows. “Recuperation”, with the “p” and “t”, does not sound right to me.

JD [01:02:36 – 01:02:59]

Something just occurred to me. Getting back to why you use “behavior”. The other day, at the rasabox workshop<sup>31</sup>, you mentioned that, in certain cases in India, boys are used instead of adults for transmitting tradition. [...]

RS [01:03:12]

I don’t see the connection. What does that have to do with behavior, with restoration of behavior?

JD [01:03:22]

Could it have to do, in these cases, with giving more importance to behavior than to meaning? Could boys have to do more with behavior, and adults with meaning? Would transmission of tradition by boys, or by children, have to do with learning behaviors while being open to different possibilities of meaning?

RS [01:03:30 – 01:07:20]

O yes, well yes, but I am not talking at that level of the transmission of the performance knowledge. I am just talking about why I use the term “behavior”, why I want to describe behavior, insofar as possible without interpreting it, yet. First describe then interpret. [...]

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31 The rasabox workshop was held with Napedra members on June 28, 2012. Richard Schechner discusses the rasabox exercise and theory in his essay “Rasaesthetics” published by *The Drama Review* 45, 3 (T171) Fall 2001.

Let me say one more thing about restoration. In the opening of that essay<sup>32</sup>, I say it is like treating behavior as film clips that you could be using as in montage. I could have also said that it is like phonemes that can be made into words. The items that are restored exist independently of their meanings. We recombine them to make meaning. We cannot communicate without meaning, of course, but the items of our communication are meaningless. So, the phoneme in itself is not a morpheme. But, if you put two or more phonemes together, you can create meaning. Things have meaning only in combination and it is important for me to try to describe them as stripped from meaning as possible. This involves making both description and analysis as phonemic as possible.<sup>33</sup>

I agree with Clifford Geertz's "thick description".<sup>34</sup> This is the sequence which I make: description, thick description, explanation and theory. I don't know if that is in any of my books, but I use it in class all the time. Description is the behavior; thick description is the behavior within its social, personal, chronological context; explanation is asking "why did behavior occur in this context?"; and theory is generalizing from this instance to other instances, and asking "will similar behaviors in similar contexts yield the same meanings?". As trained fieldworkers and trained performance theorists, we first have to say, "ok, give me a description". "Alright, that is great. Next assignment, take the same description and now give me a thick description. Then give me an explanation. Tell me why this thing is happening, what is going on in here? [...] Finally, give me a theory if you can."

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32 At the beginning of the essay "Restoration of behavior" (In: *Between theater and anthropology*. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985, pp. 35-116), Richard Schechner writes: "Restored behavior is living behavior treated as a film director treats a strip of film. These strips of behavior can be rearranged or reconstructed; they are independent of the causal systems (social, psychological, technological) that brought them into existence. They have a life of their own. The original 'truth' or 'source' of the behavior may be lost, ignored or contradicted – even while this truth or source is apparently being honored and observed. How the strip of behavior was made, found, or developed may be unknown or concealed; elaborated; distorted by myth and tradition. Originating as a process, used in the process of rehearsal to make a new process, a performance, the strips of behavior are not themselves process but things, items, 'material'. Restored behavior can be of long duration as in some dramas and rituals or of short duration as in some gestures, dances, and mantras." Schechner goes on to say that "restored behavior is the main characteristic of performance."

33 In a particularly revealing comment made immediately after the interview, Richard Schechner said that Claude Lévi-Strauss was possibly his main inspiration for the concept of "restored behavior". The comment was made to John Dawsey on a city bus as they were going to the municipal market and popular shopping district of the Rua 25 de Março of São Paulo.

34 Clifford Geertz discusses this concept in "Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture" published in his book *The interpretation of cultures* (Basic Books, 1973).

What I am saying is that any event can be described. If you have a little more knowledge, you can give a thick description. Maybe that is enough. Maybe you can give an explanation, and maybe you cannot. Don't try to give an explanation if you cannot give it. Know where you are in the process. Very few people can contribute to theory. Theory does not change that much. When it changes, we have a paradigm shift.

“Restoration of behavior” is a theory that has been around for a long time, recently speaking. Some theories, like Aristotle's theory of theatrical action, have been around for 2500 years. There are not that many real theories out there. [...]

## QUESTION 6: ANTHROPOLOGY OF EXPERIENCE

JD [01:07:23 – 01:08:18]

Let me ask you about anthropology of experience. Of course that has all to do with restored behavior. Turner was inspired by your work, also by Wilhelm Dilthey and others. In the introduction to *From ritual to theater*, he suggests a model of experience with five 5 moments: something is perceived, causing acute pain or joy; emotions associated with past experience are relived; things are remembered; images from the past articulate with the present so as to create meaning; and then you have expression.<sup>35</sup> My first question is: what are your thoughts on the model itself, or this suggestion of a model?

RS [01:08:18 – 01:09:17]

I think the model is a little bit too soft, for my way of thinking. And that is why I like the idea of embodiment.<sup>36</sup> Again, experience is an internal state of feeling which we communicate unconsciously through our bodily gestures, like what you are doing right now, what I am doing, what Ricardo is doing.<sup>37</sup> So, Ricardo is kind of rocking back and forth, he is watching, but he is not

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35 Victor Turner's book, *From ritual to theatre: the human seriousness of play*, was published by PAJ Publications of New York, in 1982.

36 In “Points of contact' revisited” (“Pontos de contato' revisitados), Richard Schechner highlights Diana Taylor's concept of performance as “a repertoire of embodied knowledge, a learning in and through the body, as well as a means of creating, preserving and transmitting knowledge” (In: *Revista de Antropologia*, vol. 56, no. 2, julho-dezembro 2013, p. 28; and *Antropologia e performance: ensaios Napedra*, edited by John C. Dawsey, Regina P. Müller, Rose Satiko G. Hikiji, and Marianna F. M. Monteiro, São Paulo: Terceiro Nome, 2013, p. 40). Cf. Diana Taylor's *The archive and the repertoire: performing cultural memory in the Americas*, published by Duke University Press in Durham and London, in 2003.

37 Ricardo Dionísio Fernandes is the technician at the Laboratory of Image and Sound in Anthropology (LISA – Laboratório de Imagem e Som em Antropologia), who is filming and taping the interview.

as engaged in the dialogue. We are the “stars of the show”, and he is kind of observing. Now that I have acknowledged him, he smiles and the smile says “ok, thank you, somebody has noticed me over here, so I don’t have to just rock back and forth like a chimpanzee trapped in a cage”. You know, when primates, such as us, are caged, they tend to rock back and forth like that.

JD [01:09:19]

Maybe he is the classic anthropologist, observing and participating a little bit.

RS [01:09:23 – 01:09:44]

Maybe now he is, because he is now a participant observer. We brought him into the dialogue and he is no longer rocking. [RS speaks to Ricardo and chuckles.] Now, you start to rock again, that’s great.

JD [01:09:48]

You said Turner’s model of experience is a little soft, right?

RS [01:09:50 – 01:13:52]

Yes, I think so. When dealing with experience, I am talking about descriptions of behavior, or, in other words, embodiments – which is another way of saying what your behavior is. I respect experience, but we have to work to get at it. That is what the rasabox exercise is about.<sup>38</sup> I think that Victor, to some degree, having not worked in theater, having not worked directly as an artist, and having come from anthropology and, also, from the tradition of writing ethnography, had a kind of experience envy. Let’s put it that way. We wanted his work, and he wanted to enjoy experiences in work as he was doing it. He wanted to convey the enjoyment he had in participant observation rather than just observation. He wanted to move the emphasis, in a certain sense, or redress the imbalance, because, although anthropologists speak of participant observation, there has been, in classic anthropology, more observation than participation.

So, where were we? Ok, I misinterpreted that. That is very good. So, Ricardo is rocking back and forth. Ok, that we agreed. And I said that it showed that he was a little bit bored, that he was not being taken account of. And he reported “no, I was rocking back and forth because the battery was going low and I was anxious about whether we were going to have enough battery to finish the interview”. So that is beautiful. Thank you Ricardo, because you demonstrated my point exactly. The behavior was the same, but the interpretation was totally different. Unless I find out from you what was really going on, what your experience was, I could not derive from the behavior what was going on. And we often misread behaviors.

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<sup>38</sup> Regarding the rasabox exercise, see footnote 31.



Now, the case of people smiling when they do not really mean it is a kind of performance of deception. We do it all the time in social life, to appear nicer than we are. But, the case of Ricardo going back and forth, within my frame of reference, as I proposed, goes back to chimpanzees in their small cages. They are both kind of anxiety gestures. One is the anxiety of being trapped, the other is the anxiety of not being able to finish one's job effectively because the battery runs down. But, I had suggested that it might have to do with boredom. [...] Anxiety and boredom are part of the same continuum, but boredom is not enough stimulation and anxiety is too much to cope with. So he had too much rather than too little. So, I was part right and part wrong.

First, the behavior. Then you have to work on the interpretation. In Turner's terms – and this is very brilliant of him –, interpretation depends on experience. What was Ricardo experiencing? He was experiencing an anxiety over the battery; he was not experiencing boredom because he is standing up and we are sitting down, and because this has been going on for hours, and he has to keep watching this thing. Well, I think that Turner may have had, to some degree, a performance experience envy, because he had trained to observe more than to participate. Now you were saying...

JD [01:13:52 – 01:14:11]

In regard to “participant observation”, I was thinking of the play on words, turning them around, as some anthropologists have done, speaking of “observant participation”, with emphasis on participation.

RS [01:14:14 – 01:25:28]

Right. So, Turner wanted more participation. I agree that you can learn something by watching and recording the behavior. [...] But, you have to really get inside the cultures, embody the experience, and embody

knowledge to begin to understand. You want to see with the eyes of the other. This has to do with ancient performance or acting techniques. Actors learn by imitation, they learn by emotional recall, they learn by putting themselves in somebody else's circumstances. We call it the given circumstances. For example, if you want to experience the sadness of Ophelia over the death of her father, you have to imagine those given circumstances. I have a beloved father, so I say who he was in my life. Maybe it is not my father who is really beloved by me, so I can imagine, is there anybody who I loved and suddenly died? Maybe not murdered, but suddenly died? So, that person may still say, "no, I don't have such a person". Well, do you have a pet that died? If not, do you have something that you lost, maybe a pen, a ring? Finally, you can find something that can stand in for something. In that way, by recalling how you felt when you lost your ring or misplaced it, or when your pet died, and so on, you can begin to reawaken the emotions. Then those emotions are experience that will be applied to the event at hand.

That is an exercise in affective memory or emotional recall. I am sure that somebody like Kathia Bissoli,<sup>39</sup> who was playing the mannequin and weeping, was doing some degree of emotional recall. We saw her on the dumpster, but her experience may be something else. You experience things yourself. Now, according to a theory of mind, empathy has to do with mirror-neurons, so that one actually is having the experience of another, not just appreciating these experiences. There is a fuzzy boundary between sympathy and empathy. Earlier we were, by contagion, doing this salivating. But, in a nursery, when one child begins to cry, they all begin to cry. Maybe the first child that cries is uncomfortable, but the second child may not be uncomfortable, but is empathizing. They are lining up emotionally. We are a species that has to learn to shut out empathy – not learn how to have empathy. As early infants and children, we are inherently very empathetic to others. And emotions are very contagious. Then we learn to control them, because this is a little bit dangerous. We can control them. But, for example, a parent will feel something in his stomach when the child is not well. [...] I don't think it is genetic, because, if you have an adopted child, you may feel the same thing. You are mapped on that child and that very experience becomes your experience.

I think that Turner was interested not only in the behavior being described, but also in the experience being felt. I would now call attention to embodiment. [...] I am not saying that the theory of restoration of behavior is invalidated. I think it is a very strong theory. But, I do think that embodiment is an equally strong theory, and it connects to taking

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39 Kathia Bissoli was one of the actresses in the play *Bom Retiro 958 metros* presented by the *Teatro da Vertigem*.

on to the body of the other, or to the gestures of the other, in order to experience what the other is experiencing, something parallel to that. Turner was much into that. And, I agree. I think this is a very powerful tool. It heats or warms up anthropology.

I think anthropology in its classical sense sometimes is too cold. If you read Malinowski's ethnographies and then read his notebooks you would note more in the notebooks than in the ethnography. The notebook is always full of complications and so on. If you read a novel like *Heart of darkness*<sup>40</sup>, you get a vision of colonial exploitation and of a certain kind of anthropology that is going on. You have the descriptions and so and so. But you are getting it from a highly experience-marked source. Obviously it is a novel, but it is a very powerful novel. It is an early twentieth century novel. I think ethnographers should read that novel because it also gives a feeling of "at that time" between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, of how people felt in regard to other cultures, to so called "exotic cultures", truly "savage" and "dangerous" cultures – "the horror, the horror". They had that feeling even though they repressed it, and that affected those kinds of diaries they tried to understand. But, they had a hard time experiencing and empathizing. Now we live in a different world.

This morning, my performance studies colleague, Diana Taylor, and I had a discussion.<sup>41</sup> She said human rights trump cultural rights. We were talking about feelings about female circumcision, cruelty to children and so on. And she says human rights must always trump cultural rights. And I was saying that I agree, from my perspective. But I also think your human rights are relative. In other words, I agree with Diana because I am who I am, but I cannot say that human rights are inalienable. I think we have to work for them and I don't think we can impose them. I think we have to persuade. [...] Because I have seen, let's say, unintended consequences of good actions. It is horrible to say this on tape, but I am going to say it because I have thought it. Take the introduction of modern medicine, which leads to overpopulation. We don't want people to die of diseases, but unless you introduce, along with the cure, effective conditions for economic rising up and measures of birth control and population control, the consequence of saving lives will be

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40 Joseph Conrad's *Heart of darkness* was first published in 1899, in *Blackwood's Magazine*. In 1902, it was included in the book *Youth: a narrative, and two other stories*, by William Blackwood.

41 Diana Taylor's publications include the following books: *The archive and the repertoire: performing cultural memory in the Americas* (published by Duke University Press in Durham and London, in 2003); *Disappearing acts: spectacles of gender and nationality in Argentina's dirty war* (published by Duke University Press of Durham, North Carolina, in 1997); and *Theatre of crisis: drama and politics in Latin/o America* (published by University of Kentucky Press of Lexington, Kentucky, in 1990).

to wreck the lives. So we always have to think that there is a ying and a yang to all our actions, even the best of our actions. And it would be easy to say that George Bush went in into Iran just for the oil. Ok, that is terrible, and I am sure, that was a big part of it. But, I also think that he thought he was overturning a dictator and would bring democracy.

That is where you get the liminoid tragedy coming in. People have mixed motives and one does not cancel out the other. You can say, “yeah, we want the oil”, and “yeah, this guy is a bad guy”, and “yeah, we are making them culturally better”, etc. So, then, do we intervene? Do we not intervene? Who are the “we”? Certainly, the early missionaries thought that they were bringing enlightenment with Christianity. They did not think they were simply exploiting people and getting more money for the churches. They thought that they were bringing the holy savior Jesus Christ, they were believers. It would be much too easy to think that everyone is a cynic. There are cynics, but many people really feel they do good.

I think part of the way we can recuperate good anthropology is to have trained anthropologists from other cultures to study us. One of the critiques of anthropology that I have is that when somebody comes from, let's say South Asia, or from Indonesia, or from Africa, as a trained anthropologist, it is almost to assume that they will be going back to their countries to do anthropology there. When we train a European American – you are a Brazilian, I am an American or North American – it is almost assumed that they will do some “exotic” place. Not among their own people, you don't train people here (I am not talking about the Amazonian) to do what we would call sociology. I always thought of sociology as the anthropology of the West on the West. Durkheim is as important to anthropology etc. etc. But, I feel [...] we should be having people from Central Africa doing studies in São Paulo, or doing studies of European peoples, and writing anthropological ethnographies to be published back in Nigeria about the strange people that they have seen and lived with. We have to have this. Either eliminate any notion of exoticism or make it really back and forth. And to do that, of course, we have to think about our indigenous methodologies.

JD [01:25:30 – 01:26:04]

The second part of my question has to do with the fourth and fifth moments of Turner's suggested model of experience. The fourth has to do with the creation of meaning which occurs when images of the past articulate with the present. And, the fifth or last has to do with expression of experience, or performance. Is meaning always created in experience?

RS [01:26:07 - 01:32:14]

Well, I think meaning is created through interpretation. In this respect, I will go along more with Geertz. I think meaning is an interpretation

of a behavior making it into an action. As we said before, I do not think meaning is inherent in behavior. I think meanings are inherent in actions on the part of the person who is behaving. But, I am also a Freudian to the degree that we are not always aware of what meaning will convey. There is a lot of psychoanalysis that is rejected as being mystical. But, the underlying assumption that we can do things and not know what we are doing, I think, is absolutely true. The second underlying assumption is that dreams can speak to us. I think this is absolutely true. And I think that is something in regard to which modern or Freudian culture and traditional culture are in harmony. Both say that dreams are extremely important. Dreams are conveyors of knowledge. According to Freud, they are the royal road to the unconscious and so on.

Turner's notion that through experience we get meaning is correct. But meaning is true self interpretation and interpretation of others. Meaning is not inherent in the behavior. Meaning is what is made from the behavior. And this I know so well from theater. As a theater director, I am using gestures all of the time. And, then, I have to decide how to make them do what I want them to do. The gesture itself has much less "natural meaning" than you think it would have. For example, take blowing a kiss. Ok, the meaning may seem obvious. But, what if Iago does it, as in Shakespeare's play? What if Iago blows a kiss to Othello? We know the history of what is happening between the two. In those circumstances, what does blowing a kiss mean? So we may have Juliet doing it to Romeo and Iago doing it to Othello – the same behavior, yet totally different meanings. We have to know the context etc. There is nothing inherent in the blowing of a kiss that says "I love you". It says many things. There is where I feel one should not be naïve.

There is a famous account from Poland that I will give you. During the period of *Solidarity*,<sup>42</sup> before *Solidarity* grew strong, there was martial law in Poland. A famous actor, who had supported the government, was very much hated by the people. But, you could not really demonstrate against him. So, after this actor had come out in favor of the government, people went to a performance he was giving, and when he appeared on stage, everyone stood up and gave him a standing ovation. He was so happy, feeling they had understood him. When he began to utter his first line, the people stood up again and they kept giving him

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<sup>42</sup> *Solidarity* "is a Polish labour union that was founded on 17 September 1980 at the Lenin Shipyards under the leadership of Lech Wałęsa. It was the first trade union in a Warsaw Pact country that was not controlled by a communist party. Its membership reached 9.5 million members before its September 1981 Congress (when it reached 10 million), which constituted one third of the total working-age population of Poland. Access: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solidarity\\_\(Polish\\_trade\\_union\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solidarity_(Polish_trade_union)) on October 30, 2017, 11:44 am.

standing ovations until the humiliated actor had to leave the stage. But what could he complain about, that he was being applauded? So the communication was very clear, although not at the beginning. It went from very positive to extremely negative by using a gesture that no government could contest or say was wrong. On one level of observation, all that was being said was, “we are so happy with this man”, “we are so proud of him”. But, he was never able to give his performance.

I do not think animals can do the same thing. But, to some degree – and we can see this in evolutionarily terms –, animals mimic, disguise, use camouflage, etc.. I do not think they do this through agency. They do it through natural selection. So I think this business of expression, even then, is context specific.

I am very much a context specific person because, within the framework of theater and the practice of art, everything is in quotation marks. That is why John Austin did not think any utterance on stage was a performative,<sup>43</sup> because it was always in quotation marks. I agree with Goffman:<sup>44</sup> all gestures and expressions in life are in quotation marks. The only difference, for me, between the stage and life, is that on stage we emphasize utterance. We point to it; the utterance or gesture is underlined. Like when a stain reveals the real shape of the cell, it shows some things more than we had seen before. It is not that in ordinary life we are always being authentic and doing real performatives, as Austin would say. But, more like Goffman, we perform with a high sense of performance on stage, but we also perform in everyday life. That is, we deceive, we put things in quotation marks. You need to know the context of everyday life. And I think the people that we feel are masters of traditional knowledge – such as shamans or Pinguim, the capoeira teacher<sup>45</sup> – they are often very cunning. They are both accepted and feared because they are cunning, because they speak with many different tongues, because they can master expression, and they can use expression aggressively or constructively.

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43 John Austin discusses the concept of a “performative” in *How to do things with words*, published by Harvard University Press of Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1962.

44 Among other books, Erving Goffman wrote *The presentation of self in everyday life* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959); *Interaction ritual: essays on face-to-face behavior* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967); *Frame analysis: an essay on the organization of experience* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1974); and *Forms of talk* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983).

45 Mestre Pinguim (Luiz Antônio Nascimento Cardoso), as mentioned previously, leads, teaches, and directs the University Culture and Extension Center in Afro-Brazilian Arts (Núcleo de Cultura e Extensão em Artes Afro-Brasileiras) at USP. Richard Schechner visited and interacted with Mestre Pinguim and participants at the Center on June 26, 2012.

JD [01:32:14]  
As he did with us

RS [01:32:17]  
Yes. So I think we should take these things into account.

JD [01:32:23]  
As to the idea that performance is the expression of experience, what are your thoughts?

RS [01:32:30 – 01:36:46]  
Well, performance may be a heightened expression of experience. But performance is also many other things. Take artistic performance. Artistic performance is critical thought and it is also a way of experiencing for free that which, in ordinary life, we pay a high price for. Therefore, we want to limit the experience, make it less painful. There is a lot of emotionally painful experience in real life, as when a lover rejects us, or a loved one dies or something. In real life, we express the grief, but we want to bound it as much as possible. When a loved one dies, if you are an Irish Catholic, you go to a wake, you drink, you tell happy stories, you try to move through the liminal light and get to the other side. It is hard to say things like “I enjoyed the death of my mother” etc. etc. But, in artistic performance, we are given the license to explore those feelings – to have feelings of grief, to find them and defy them, including the pleasure side of them. The world of make believe, or the dream world, which is not as realistic as other worlds, is consequential in its ways of expanding our knowledge and experience of experience. It is not consequential in the way that the loss of a loved one is preeminent. Tragedy in performance is something that we can enjoy and we go to. Actually we pay money to feel tragedy. As I said earlier, to be truly tragic you have to exchange your life for knowledge about your life, so theater gives you that, or the arts give you that. The arts have many functions that are commercial, where the art gets sold and this and that. But part of its epistemological function is to allow or to add experience. The idea is to allow us to expand our scope of experience in order to enhance our knowledge of certain emotional states that otherwise we would avoid. Ceremonies do that, not only artistic ceremonies but, also, ritual ceremonies. You see people weeping, you see people laughing, you see people overly exuberant about their feelings, doing things that they cannot do in their ordinary lives. This is the place to do that. It is very healthy and very good for the individual, but occurs within this boundedness. So, when *candomblé* says to go and eat, you leave behind those feelings. You know, Aristotle was right. You have a catharsis, you have experienced the feelings, you have gotten rid of them, in a certain way, at least temporarily, you have been

given your license, and then you move on. You move out. This is a kind of bounded ritual, and it is also aesthetic. It is so valuable that way. Although I am not a believer – being an atheist, ideologically speaking – I am a believer in the efficacy of religion – not the ideology of religion. I also go to synagogue. I enjoy it. It is not the ideology I am enjoying. I enjoy standing up. I enjoy saying the prayers. I enjoy seeing people next to me. This is all very healthy for me. Yes, I can stand outside and say that God does not exist, but the act of singing and moving my body and all, that is not imagination; it is real. I enjoy Hinduism too. When I was in Abu Dhabi, I went to the mosque. I enjoy those things. So, I separate very much the experience of ritual process and the experience of religion from the ideology. I reject the ideology, but accept the experience.

END OF FIRST PART.  
BEGINNING OF SECOND PART.

### QUESTION 7: THE “INFINITY LOOP” – RELATIONS BETWEEN AESTHETIC AND SOCIAL DRAMAS

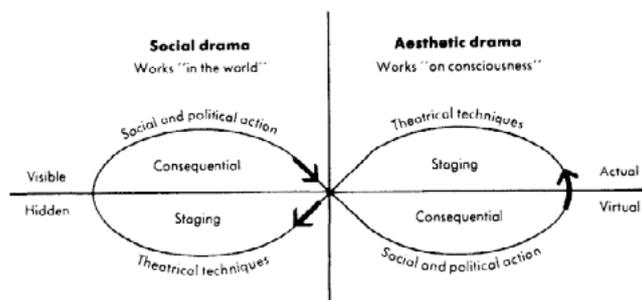
JD [00:00:01 – 00:00:23]

I want to ask you about the figure eight, which you developed.<sup>46</sup>

RS [00:00:25 – 00:01:20 ]

Let me just say one thing and then you can ask the question. I took Turner’s idea of social drama then I invented the figure eight, which is also the

<sup>46</sup> In “Selective inattention”, as a way of discussing relations between aesthetic drama and social drama, Richard Schechner presents his diagram of the “infinity loop”, a figure eight in the horizontal position (or symbol of infinity), as follows:



Schechner writes : “The ‘infinity loop’ depicts dynamic positive feedback. Social dramas affect aesthetic dramas, aesthetic dramas affect social dramas. The visible actions of a given social drama are informed – shaped, conditioned, guided – by underlying aesthetic principles and specific theatrical/rhetorical techniques. Reciprocally, a culture’s visible aesthetic theater is informed – shaped, conditioned, guided – by underlying processes of social interaction.” The diagram and quote appear in Schechner’s *Performance theory*, published by Routledge in New York and London, in 1988, p. 190.

infinity symbol. I would not have invented the figure eight without knowing Turner. [...] This diagram is kind of 80% Turner and 20% Goffman because it also has to do with Goffman's notion of performance in everyday life. [...]

JD [00:01:20 ]

I was going to ask you about the idea that art imitates life and life imitates art.

RS [00:01:25]

Yes, but do you want to do more on the figure eight?

JD [00:01:27 - 00:02:04]

Well, I was also thinking of Gordon Craig's dolls or über-marionettes.<sup>47</sup> And I am guessing there is a relation there with the "infinity loop".[...]

RS [00:02:04]

Gee, I had not thought about that. What would the relationship be?

JD [00:02:08]

At a certain point, if life imitates art and art or whatever we call art is doing something, like a doll you know, or...

RS [00:02:22]

Like art is controlling the puppet, which is life, is that what you mean?

JD [00:02:26 – 00:02:59]

No, I mean like maybe the puppet is doing something to us. We create puppets, say, from elements which emerge from social drama. We create them and they become real, and we put them on stage or place them in a ritual. Then we do feel that they do something to us. I was wondering what you would think of that.

RS [00:03:00 – 00:08:30]

Craig's theory of the über-marionette really comes from quite a different impulse. He felt that actors were unreliable. And he wanted life-size puppets literally so that the director, himself, could make them do exactly what he wanted them to do. He felt that actors were all doing what they wanted to do. And, he never said so, but I think he admired the puppet theater, especially some of the puppet theaters of Asia. Certainly, he

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<sup>47</sup> Among other books, Edward Gordon Craig wrote *On the art of the theatre* (1911), *Towards a new theatre* (1913), and *The theatre advancing* (1919). See also Craig's "The actor and the über-marionette", found in *The twentieth-century performance reader*, edited by Michael Huxley and Noel Witts, and published by Routledge of London and New York, in 1996, p. 159-165.

admired some of the Italian puppet theaters, which he did see. But, your application is a very interesting one, a very creative and different one.

I do not think that way exactly, because I think of all of these relations as processual – and that is a generic and, therefore, up for grabs. In other words I never wanted to use puppets in my theatrical work, for the very reason that Craig admired them. They do not have life of their own. Puppets can be controlled, so I would rather have the actor betray me, to some degree, and surprise me, and cause me an accident – like my bad behavior last night during the play when I was moving through and in the back always, and challenging the woman with the chair.<sup>48</sup> I like to think that in theater things are in play.

Now play, at least in English, has two meanings. There is the common meaning of play as a game and so on. But, there is another, such as when the rope is loose and we say there is play in the rope. In this case, the meaning is that things are a little bit unpredictable. There is room for change. Play is seen as more flexible than other forms of behavior. So we are not talking about strictly rule-bound play. Even in rule-bound play, the rules give you the boundaries, but what goes on between determines what is a good player or a bad player. They are both following the rules, but the winner is able to find space to kick the ball through the goal. [...]

So, I think that the relationship between art and life is that they are each revising each other. They are not so much following each other. Art imitates life and life imitates art, but also, art makes life and life makes art. I would rather think of it like that. Maybe I did not write it that way.

The mimetic model would be the Aristotelian model. That becomes manifest throughout 19th century realism, with the idea of the fourth wall and all of those theatrical conventions. It also becomes prominent in much of early

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<sup>48</sup> Schechner's behavior before and during the presentation of *Bom Retiro 958 metros*, by *Teatro da Vertigem*, called attention. As spectators were gathering at the appointed meeting place on a dark street, waiting for the play to begin, a woman (who turned out to be an actress) placed a chair on the sidewalk and began to read a book. Schechner immediately crossed the street and got very close to her to see what she was reading. After a while, the actress left the scene, disappearing from sight as she turned the street corner. Schechner again crossed the street to get the chair which she had left behind. When the actress came back, he was sitting in the chair. Schechner only gave back the chair after some discussion, which was translated back and forth from English to Portuguese and vice-versa. During the presentation, as spectators walked from scene to scene, Schechner tended to walk ahead surprising actors backstage as they were setting up each scene. He was especially attracted to an actress named Kathia Bissoli, who played the role of a discarded mannequin and seemed to be on the margins of action in some of the early and middle scenes as spectators walked by. She also appeared in the final dumpster scene.

film, realistic films and so on. Film is a highly realistic mode, at least at the level of visual representation, if not at the level of narrative. But, then, as we go into later film we get all these forms of musicals, destruction films and science fiction, all of this stuff in which film is making its own reality, in other words, in which film becomes fantastic, surrealistic. I see a film like *Avatar*, which I kind of like, and it is so obvious, and it creates this world divided between good and bad, and yet the special effects are impressive. And you have the “green people”. The animator must have known this: there is a famous ad for nibbles green corn, called Jolly Green Giant – have you seen that? It is an ad for canned corn with this green guy with a corn stalk. I said, “Hey! Whoever made the movie must have been remembering that ad when he made these green people.” Obviously, green is life and all, but then there is the Jolly Green Giant who is out there in the advertising world. Only those who are old enough can remember. There is a recuperation of this figure in the film. The Jolly Green Giant also has Spock’s ears – you know, the human-Vulcan character on *Star Trek* –, so, it is a little bit from *Star Trek*. The pointy ears show high intelligence, etc. [...] Anyway, where was I?

Yes, I was talking about art imitating life. Art affects rather than imitates. They both operate on each other. They change each other. We model our behaviors very often on popular culture and arts, and so on. At the same time, art models what it is going to show. So it is a kind of continuous, deepening, positive feedback loop. That is the infinity loop. I think I drew it so that it moves the whole system, right? It is not static. It is a processual and spiraling thing; and it changes.

## QUESTION 8: THE “NOT ME... NOT NOT ME” EXPERIENCE

JD [00:08:36 – 00:09:32]

Let me ask you about the “not me... not not me” experience.<sup>49</sup> At one point you refer to the relation between body and mask in these terms, which makes me think of a sort of friction, maybe with the R in parentheses [so that it may be read as f(r)iction]. I am interested in the development of this idea of “not me... not not me”. You have mentioned Donald Winnicott in several places. During your discussion, the other day, on rasaboxes, you mentioned other sources as well.

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49 Schechner describes the experience of performers as “not me... not not me”. In “Points of contact between anthropological and theatrical thought” (p. 6) he remarks that various ritual and theatrical traditions make no effort to hide the body behind the mask, thereby highlighting a liminal or transitional experience. In his essay “Restoration of behavior” (published in the book *Between theater and anthropology* by The University of Pennsylvania Press of Philadelphia, in 1985, p. 109) Schechner points to the relevance of Donald Winnicott’s research on babies: “Winnicott called certain objects ‘transitional’ – in between the mother and the baby, belonging to neither the mother nor the baby (the mother’s breasts, a security blanket, certain special toys).”

RS [00:09:34 – 00:21:09]

It happens to be *neti neti*, “not this, not this”, from ancient Hinduism.<sup>50</sup> [...] It comes from several sources. [...] In theater, an actor is not the character, but an actor is not not the character also. When you are a director and you are talking to somebody, and you are playing let’s say Henry V, I may say “Hey, Henry V, why don’t you...?” No, I say “John, when you are in this scene and you are saying the Saint Crispin’s Day speech, I would like you to say it with a little more enthusiasm”. I do not say “Hey, Henry, when you’re saying your talk...” That would be someone that is not a director, I don’t do it anyway. I would call you John, you are John. I do not call you Henry, but I know that you are doing Henry and that when you get up there and speak, you are going to say “Those who have been there...”, you know, the Saint Crispin’s Day speech. But, I also know that the spectator knows that you are not Henry. Henry is back in the 15th century and you are here. They have paid money to see John Dawsey play Henry V. [...] You are not Henry V, but you are also Henry V.

The first thing was the “you are not, but you are”. That did not strike me as a powerful idea. So being contrary, being Richard and this, I thought, “not and not not”, because I like mathematics. You know one times one equals one, but minus one times minus one also equals one. Minus two times minus two equals four. That always amazed me. Minus two times two equals minus four. And two times two equals four. But minus two times minus two equals four. The logic of it is that a minus cancels itself out. So you can eliminate the minus there and get the plus. That is arithmetic or algebra, but I felt that it is also conceptually true – that these two negatives working against each other yield for the audience a positive experience, the experience of seeing Henry V. But, it also gives the actor the freedom to interpret Henry and to become Henry in many different ways. If actors really are Henry, then they are chained. Pirandello wrote a great play about this, and it is called Henry V, I think, or Henry VI, or something.<sup>51</sup> Not the *Six characters in search of an author*, but the other one, in which the actor really thought he was the character, and how this was nuts.

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50 Wikipedia: In Hinduism, and in particular Jnana Yoga and Advaita Vedanta, *neti neti* is a Sanskrit expression which means «not this, not this», or «neither this, nor that» (*neti* is sandhi from *na iti* «not so»). It is found in the Upanishads and the Avadhuta Gita and constitutes an analytical meditation helping a person to understand the nature of Brahman by first understanding what is not Brahman. It corresponds to the western *via negativa*, a mystical approach that forms a part of the tradition of apophatic theology. One of the key elements of Jnana Yoga practice is often a “neti neti search.” The purpose of the exercise is to negate rationalizations and other distractions from the non-conceptual meditative awareness of reality. Access: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neti\\_net\\_i](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neti_net_i), on October 30 2017, 5:22 pm.

51 Schechner is referring to Pirandello’s play, *Henry IV*.

We do have accounts in film history where actors get locked into characters, like Bela Lugosi as Dracula. It ruined his life. He complained that he could not get other roles because people only saw him as Dracula. He had this Hungarian accent and he could not get rid of it, so he was Dracula in the people's imagination. But that was so limiting. So he was not so much "not Dracula" and "not not Dracula", he was Dracula. And whenever people or, at least, North Americans think of Dracula they remember those Hungarian accents of Bela Lugosi and the movies of this particular figure. [...]

The freedom that a double negative gives you of not making a final choice is a profoundly processual formula, to "not" and "not not". It means not for the first time, but only for the second time. The three most important parts of that theory are these. First, the future creates the past. That is the idea that what I want to do tomorrow determines what I reconstruct or restore from yesterday to play today. The future creates the past. Second, nothing is ever done for the first time, but only for the second to the endless time. Three, everything that is done exists in the field between not and not not. [...]

This is really a theory on human behavior and knowledge. It is an epistemological and experiential theory. We are doing this interview, but it is not for the first time. This particular constellation is for the first time, but the language we use, the grammar we use, the equipment we use, the words we use, the ideas we begin to play with, all of them are restored behaviors. We are selecting what we are doing from my past and from your past, doing it today in service of this future project which will be this film or whatever you are going to make from it. So everything is restored behavior.

Now I will tell you the *neti neti* story. Before I developed this theory, I was living in South India. This would have been in 1976. I was reading some of the *Vedas* and other sacred Hindu writings. [...] In one of them, there is a narrative of the student who goes to his teacher, or guru, and says, "guru, please tell me what is the fundamental structure of the material universe", and the teacher says "*neti*", "not that, not that". So, the student thinks for a while and says "what is the essence of the spiritual world?", and the teacher says "*neti, neti*". Then the student says "what is the essence of the universe, the idea of God?" Again the guru says "*neti neti*". He goes on through a whole list of possibilities of what is the essence and the core, and every time he gets the answer "*neti neti*", "not this, not that". Finally, the student has the illumination that *neti* is the answer. The essence of the universe is "not that". The "not that" is what the universe is.

This is so contemporary. Some of the recent discoveries about the physical nature of the universe are particularly interesting. At the core of the

universe scientists encounter dark matter. This, it may be suggested, is the not of the universe, the matter that we cannot directly observe.

Also, I was very affected by Keats' poem or essay, where he talks about negative capability.<sup>52</sup> Keats writes that Shakespeare is so great because he has a negative capability. What did Keats mean? Keats said in his essay that Shakespeare has the capability to become anyone, therefore he is no one. If he were to have a personality, he could not be all these other personalities which he is capable of being. Shakespeare has a negative capacity. This is so brilliant. This also relates to my attraction for a sort of emptiness, or point zero and such. These are scientific ideas and, also, mystical ideas. These mystical ideas appeal to me because they reduce things to zero. I just did a piece called *Imagining zero* in which I talk about zero, what is zero. Zero is nothing, but it is also a multiplier. [RS opens his notebook and writes as he talks.] Here, we will do a little thing. We can use the notebook. Here is zero. Zero is nothing. [RS draws a number one next to zero.] Now, what is that? It becomes ten. If you draw another zero, like this, it becomes a hundred. Then, it becomes a thousand, or ten thousand. So, nothing becomes everything. Take this computer. This whole thing, this lovely computer, is a system of ones and zeros. That is all it has. It has ones and zeros. Now, how to arrange them and how to program them is everything that is on that chip.

If we develop more advanced chips, which I am sure will happen, whatever else they may come to have, they will have zero. That much I will predict. And if we go to mysticism, whatever else God must be, it must be zero. If God has anything beyond zero, then it has already been created. So this is not just me. There is a huge amount of mystical and, I think, very powerful thought on zero.

#### QUESTION 9: *JO-HA-KYU* AND THE VARIETY OF AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

JD [00:21:12 - 00:21:52]

I wanted to ask you about *jo-ha-kyu* and some other things.<sup>53</sup> [...] Of course,

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<sup>52</sup> The term "negative capability" was first used by the Romantic poet John Keats in a letter to George and Tom Keats on December 21 or 27, 1817. Access: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/69384/selections-from-keatss-letters>. October 30, 2017, 5:44 pm. In a letter to John Woodhouse, sent on October 27, 1818, John Keats writes: "As to the poetical Character itself (I mean that sort of which, if I am any thing, I am a Member...) it is not itself – it has no self – it is every thing and nothing – it has no character". Cf. J. Keats, *Letters of John Keats*, ed. M. B. Forman (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 227.

<sup>53</sup> In "Theatre anthropology" (published by *Drama Review* 94, 2:5-32, 1982), Eugenio Barba writes: "The expression of *jo-ha-kyu* represents the three phases into which all the actions of an actor are subdivided. The first phase is determined by the opposition between force which tends to increase and another which holds back (*jo* = withhold); the second phase (*ha* = to break) occurs

Victor Turner developed the social drama model and Clifford Geertz' criticism of the model is well known.<sup>54</sup> But, your discussion of *jo-ha-kyu* allows us to think of many possible aesthetic forms beyond the one which inspires Turner's writings. What are your thoughts on that?

RS [00:21:52 – 00:25:32]

Well, *jo-ha-kyu* is a theory developed by Motokiyo Zeami – Zeami is the family name. His father was Kan'ami, and, together, they started the Kanze school of Noh drama. Come to think of it, the *noh* of Noh drama is a N-O-H word. It has no relationship to the numerology we were talking about earlier, but that is interesting. Anyway, Zeami says that the basic, aesthetic rhythm of Noh drama is *jo-ha-kyu*, which means “slow-medium-fast”. So *jo-ha-kyu* would be... [RS taps notebook with pen.] Now, we have not the number, but the notion of going slow, as in *jo*, then slowly accelerating to *ha*, and then on to a very rapid *kyu*, then we stop. He says that when you do all the gestures of Noh, let's say, extending your arm, you do not do it like this [RS extends arm at even pace], you do it like that [RS extends arm at a *jo-ha-kyu* pace]. [...] Walking, speaking, and all movements can be done this way. This idea of an underlying *jo-ha-kyu* rhythm is so reductionist and, yet, so elegant. The end of it is called a break. Well, actually, it does not break. It goes “pa-pa-pa...pa”. You can have a little break at the end. There are different ways of ending it. [...] But, he says that his is the basic aesthetic rhythm, one you should follow in your performing and in the construction of poetry. I think some of this is very valuable in performing. I never follow these things slavishly. Sometimes you want to use that rhythm, sometimes you want to use another. And there is also the notion of flow. There is flow, which is like this [RS demonstrates with movement of arm], and bounded flow, which is like that [RS demonstrates]. With bounded flow, I am pulling

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in the moment in which one is liberated from this force, until one arrives at the third phase (*kyu* = rapidity) in which the action reaches its culmination, using up all of its force to suddenly stop as if face to face with an obstacle, a new resistance.” This excerpt is cited by Schechner in “Points of contact between anthropological and theatrical thought” (In: Schechner, R., *Between theater and anthropology*, published by University of Pennsylvania Press of Philadelphia, in 1985, p. 12).  
54 Victor Turner's model of social drama appears in many of his writings. In *Schism and continuity in an African Society* (published by the University of Manchester in 1957), where the concept was first developed, Turner writes: “In short, the *processional form* of the social drama may be formulated as 1) breach; 2) crisis; 3) redressive action; 4) re-integration or recognition of schism.” (p. 92). In his criticism of Turner's use of the model, Clifford Geertz writes: “With differing degrees of strictness and detail, Turner and his followers have applied this schema to tribal passage rites, curing ceremonies, and judicial processes; to Mexican insurrections, Icelandic sagas, and Thomas Becket's difficulties with Henry II; to picaresque narrative, millenarian movements, Caribbean carnivals, and Indian peyote hunts; and to the political upheaval of the sixties. A form for all seasons.” This citation comes from Geertz' essay “Blurred genres: the refiguration of social thought”, in *Local knowledge*, published by Basic Books, in 1983, p. 28.

in and there is a going out, which you can see as resistance. I am pulling back as I am moving forward, opening a relationship. Resistance gives me a relationship from here to up there. Pulling back is mere resistance in here, but I imagine the two. But *jo-ha-kyu* and bounded flow are very powerful. Once you learn these rhythms, you can play with them. Obviously, they are in Noh drama, they are in dance, whatever.



JD [00:25:57]

In some writings, I have come across translations where *jo* means “retention” or “retention of forces”, *ha* means “break” or “rupture” (allowing for liberation of forces which had been retained), and *kyu* means “velocity”.<sup>55</sup> Would this be something different? [...]

RS [00:27:18 – 00:27:34]

Well, I would have to check, but my understanding has been that the literal meaning in Japanese is “slow-medium-fast”. The other does seem a lot like social drama, doesn’t it?

JD [00:27:34]

I guess so. But, in *jo-ha-kyu*, as I had understood, the moment of “rupture” or “break” would be liberating, while, in social drama, it would be something that creates problems that will have to be resolved. But, I may be misreading it. [...]

RS [00:27:55 – 00:39:03]

I have a course that I give on compared aesthetics. There is dramaturgy in which the dramatic structure – with a beginning, middle and end – is

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<sup>55</sup> According to Eugenio Barba, who is quoted by Schechner, as mentioned in footnote no. 53, *jo* = withhold; *ha* = to break, and *kyu* = rapidity.

based on *agon*, that is, on conflict and conflict resolution. That is the social drama model which Turner derived from aesthetic dramas, of course. But there are other kinds of dramaturgy. So, this course is meant to explore comparative performance theory and practice. As you know, *praxis* is the Greek word for action and action is Aristotle's key term. And tragedy, in this view, is an imitation of an action of a certain magnitude with a beginning, middle and end. So, action is at the center of that theory. [...]

In India, we come across *rasa* aesthetics. The *Natyaśāstra* is an ancient text roughly 2000 years old of Indian classical aesthetics and it deals with everything from the mythic origins of the performing arts – including theater, dance and music – to its theoretical underpinnings; to its practical applications – the gestures, the costumes, the three different kinds of theaters: triangular, rectangular and square; to forms of acting; to the ten different kinds of plays; etc. It is a complete compendium. The theory of *rasa* is at the core of it. And *rasa* literally means “juice” or “flavor”. It is an idea of something that pervades and inhabits, or aromatizes, rather than something visual. I have written quite a bit about it. I do not want to go over it too much, but *rasa* treats emotions or rather feelings as flavors. We have the flavor of the taste of happiness; the flavor of the taste of courage; or the flavor of the taste of sadness; etc. And there are eight targets, eight *rasas*. [RS opens his notebook.] I will give them to you: *śringāra*, which means “desire” or “love”; *raudra*, “anger”; *bībhatsa*, “disgust”; *karuṇā*, “pity”, “sadness” or “grief”; *hāsya*, “humor”. “mirth” or “laughter”; *adbhuta*, “surprise” or “wonder”; *bahyaṅkā*, “fear” or “shame”; and *vīra*, “energy”, “vigor” or “courage”. The theory says that you can make all the feelings that humans are capable of by expressing a *rasa* purely or in combination with other *rasas*. When you combine two or three or four, they can get quite complicated.

This was Bharata Muni's theory about 2000 years ago. Then about a 1000 years ago, Abhinavagupta, a devotee of Shiva, who was also a Buddhist, had another idea. Buddhism, I might note, was a breakaway from Hinduism. Buddhism is to Hinduism roughly what Christianity is to Judaism. Anyway, this devotee of Shiva had the idea that there will be a ninth *rasa* called *śānta* which means “peace”, “bliss”, “release”. If you blend the eight *rasas*, you transcend them, you have bliss. Like when you blend all colors, you have white.

We do not have the original *Natyaśāstra* text manuscript form. We have fragments from around five or six hundred years ago to eight hundred year ago. I am not exactly sure about all of the fragments, but it was the German and English Asiatic scholars who, from a bunch of manuscripts, put together what is called the *Natyaśāstra*. [...] They put it together. I have to accept that. I am not so interested in the textual history; I am interested in learning about this underlying theory of emotions.

So, Aristotle developed a theory of action. *Rasa* is a theory of emotions. Then *ch'i* is the Chinese word for the area of the body between the navel and the pubic bone, here. *Ch'i* is your basic energy. In the Indian system, there is the *kundalini* [RS stands to show where the *kundalini* is located], which is at the base of the spine. Then you work it up the spine to the *chakra* circles. [...] The *ch'i*, the *kundalini*..., they are all related. They are all interior and, I believe, they relate to what I talked about the other day, the enteric nervous system (ENS), the notion of the brain in the belly, the “belly brain”.<sup>56</sup>



We have a great number of nerve cells from our esophagus or our anus, and on through the digestive system, in which the neurons are exactly the same as those in the brain. But we are not so aware of it all the time. The information travels on the vagus nerve. I have to check that, but it travels more like on a one way street. I think there is more stuff coming up and giving the head brain information than going down. So, we have a kind of brain in the belly. The *ch'i* part of it practices imitation and performance, and *rasa* is the mixture and the mastery of emotions. My rasabox exercises are about that. The *ch'i* is more about the center of energy. Martial arts contain bodily energy. Yoga also deals with the *ch'i*. They do not call it *ch'i* in India. Yoga is different from the *rasa* stuff. So, where are the sources of our energy? Both *rasa* and *ch'i* theories say we can activate and find out about our enteric nervous system, and train it just like we train the nervous system up here. [RS touches his head.]

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<sup>56</sup> Richard Schechner discusses the enteric nervous system (ENS) and the “belly brain” in “Rasaesthetics” (published by *The Drama Review* 45, 3, T171, Fall 2001) and “Pontos de contato’ revisitados” or, in English, “‘Points of contact’ revisited” (published in the *Revista de Antropologia* 56, 2, julho-dezembro 2013, pp. 23-66, and in the collection *Antropologia e performance: ensaios Napedra*, by Terceiro Nome of São Paulo, 2013, pp. 37-68, edited by John C. Dawsey, Regina P. Müller, Rose Satiko G. Hikiji, and Marianna F. M. Monteiro).

*Hana* is Zeami's word for flower and, as I was saying, it is the essence of Noh drama. In it, flower means delicacy and beauty and ephemerality. The Greeks really felt permanence. We still have the Greco Roman ruins. When they made things, they intended them to last. Noh drama, however, is ephemeral. You can dream and, like a dream, it is gone. It is a waking dream. You are supposed to watch Noh drama in a hypnotic state. This is why people always make fun of me about going to sleep in the theater, which I do. But, sometimes, I am half asleep, kind of listening and kind of not listening. But in Noh drama everybody in the audience is like this – sometimes for five hours or so. You are hearing, you are kind of half seeing. It is like a dream. You are there and you are kind of hypnologically mixing what's in front of you on the stage with what's going on in your own mind. So it is an open attention, rather than a focused attention. There is not much in terms of theatrical action in Noh drama. The dramaturgy is very simple. You come to a place and the guard there is saying that this is a place where somebody committed suicide, or where a great battle took place, or something happened. And you say that that is very interesting. You are the Buddhist monk. You are always the observer – that is kind of the anthropologist. There is a middle point of the play where the *kyogen* comes out and does a kind of comic interlude. It is a whole other thing. In the second part of the play, this keeper or something turns out to really be the ghost or the spirit of what they are talking about. He comes to you and dances the last moment of that person's life or whatever it was that made them what they are.

Again as the Buddhist monk counts the beads, and kind of exercises, so now the Buddhist monk is also a shaman. Noh drama combines Buddhism and Shintoism, the indigenous religion of Japan, which is very shamanistic. Remember that Japan is geographically not so far from Siberia, and it is not so far from Alaska. In fact, the northern people are called "the hairy".<sup>57</sup> I knew them. They do not look like Asiatic Japanese. They look more European Asiatic, or Siberian. They have heavy beards and so on. That is a shamanic culture as well, and the Chinese came over. So, there is a mixture in Noh drama which preserves and enacts some of the shamanism as well as the Chinese stuff. Korean ceremonies, in which exorcisms occur during the concluding moments, are also highly shamanic.

In Noh theater you are kind of watching it and it goes away. It is so beautiful, but, like a flower, it goes away. Flowers are not leaves, leaves last the whole season. The flowers disappear, especially in Japan with the spring blossoms. What is it called? Yes, the cherry orchard, the cherry trees. The cherry blossoms come like the snow, a snow of cherry

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<sup>57</sup> RS is referring to the Ainu people.

blossoms falling and, then, they are gone. Obviously, this was true in Zeami's time as well. *Hana* is about the ephemerality of performance. That is what I love about performance, that it is here and it is not here, it is here and it is gone. It is not like the Acropolis, it is not built to last. It is built to evoke and to last in memory. I love that kind of art as well. My course teaches the relationships between these concepts.

## QUESTION 10: PALEOLITHIC PERFORMANCE

JD [00:39:05 – 00:39:22]

We are coming towards the end, but I wanted to ask you about cave art and Paleolithic performance. What can we learn from this?

RS [00:39:26 – 00:50:55]

Well since I first wrote about that, there has been a lot written, so I want to recommend certain things. David Lewis-Williams, who is a South African anthropologist, has written *The mind and the cave*.<sup>58</sup> Do you know this book? It is a very good book. And Yann-Pierre Montelle has written *Paleoperformance*.<sup>59</sup> A little earlier, John Pfeiffer wrote an important book called *The creative explosion*, also about this Paleolithic thing.<sup>60</sup>

Let me say several things. First of all, we have these caves and new ones are still being discovered, like Chauvet which was found only 20 or 30 years ago.<sup>61</sup> Werner Herzog did a film, *Cave of forgotten dreams*, about Chauvet.<sup>62</sup> Lascaux and others are known for more than a century, but Chauvet has been known for barely 30 years. And it is one of the oldest ones. So we have no reason not to believe that more will be discovered. [...]

Clearly, what is going on here is performance. These are not art galleries. Why do we regard them as art galleries? The images are beautiful, but there is so much evidence showing that these places are better described as performance centers, rather than art galleries. They are hard to access. There was no really sustained source of light. We are seeing them with electric light of flash photography. The only light back then would

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58 David Lewis-Williams' *The mind and the cave* was published by Thames and Hudson of London, in 2002.

59 Yann-Pierre Montelle's *Paleoperformance* was published by Seagull Books of London, New York, and Calcutta, in 2007.

60 John Pfeiffer's *The creative explosion* was published by Harper & Row of New York, in 1982.

61 It was found in 1994.

62 *Cave of forgotten dreams* is a 2010 3D documentary film by Werner Herzog about the Chauvet Cave in southern France, which contains the oldest human-painted images yet discovered. Some of them were crafted 30 thousand or more years ago.

have been animal with torches. [...] A lot of the art is superimposed on other art. These are palimpsests, and that means that the making of the art would have been more important than the regarding of the art. If the regarding were more important, we would say “well, don’t paint over that one, I want to look at it, let’s paint over here”. And then there are things like hand prints, and things that are not so beautifully represented. [...] I have never been inside these caves. I would like to go, but I missed my chance, I guess. I could have gone with Montelle and I didn’t.

There have been lots of interpretations about what is going on there, but the two that I like the most go like this. As to the first, we could call it initiatory. I would not even call it initiatory. I would say life cycle, some kind of ritual having to do with life cycles. There are footprints. At least in one case, you find small footprints and large footprints. So, there are children and adults. And, they are going around in a counterclockwise circle. You can tell by the feet. They have that ancient and still persistent directionality of which nothing much has been written. I would like to find out why counterclockwise. That is an interesting question; we talked a little bit about it. So, that is one possibility for what is going on in there.

The other possibility is some form of shamanism, maybe spirit journeys involving connections with beings, nonhuman beings. A lot of this art is obviously animal art, it is about the animal. I do not think these are naturalistic paintings of animals we love. You have aurochs, you have great cats, you have horses, and you have elands, which are a kind of antelope. You do not have the small animals that must have been around, like hare. Probably there were domestic dogs by then. The images in the caves are of large animals that would be feared. You have bear. Animals that are feared or hunted seem to make up the repertory of animals that are there.

There has been some talk that this is also animal magic, having to do with mastery over animals. Perhaps. Whatever it is, I think it is ceremonial. It shows performance, that is, the combination of preparing an environment, using an environment, and doing something in the environment, not just looking at something. It is not an art museum. All come together at what are still the earliest known developed places of human culture. You see these things kind of explode out of nowhere. They are beautiful. You have seen them, of course. They are beautiful renditions. These are not practice shots. They and they only have one chance to make them and sometimes they use the environment beautifully. And we are talking like Chauvet 35 to 45 thousand years ago down to 18 thousand years ago. Still, that is beyond our cultural imaginations. We think of Mesopotamia, which is what? Eight thousand years ago? Egypt is seven thousand years ago. Then, we get down to more recent things. Obviously, there are the early humans, you know, “Lucy”, several

million years ago. And then, we do not really have access. I mean, we have access and all, but we do not have good records from any of that early stuff. We have skeletons and partial skeletons. We are wondering whether Neanderthals in Europe and humans interbred. We have Neanderthal flutes from around 30 thousand years ago. Have you seen the recording? Have you heard that? A guy replicated the flute, so he played on it. It is kind of nice. We have no guarantee that that is the music they were playing, but we do have the flute. Anyway, around 40 to 30 thousand years ago this work comes into existence. Probably we are going to look at this old typewriter one day like that. [RS refers to the typewriter on the desk next to the skeleton, “Napedra Grandmother”.]



I do not think they just went in and, suddenly, did such good art work. There are several ways of explaining this. One is they were painting at the entrance of the caves but then all of that has been erased by time. So what we have is what has been preserved, not the whole record of it. The other is that there are other caves with more practice stuff, or maybe the practice stuff and paintings of lower quality were done outside and only the masters could go inside, only the ones the community recognized as the best painters could go inside to paint. The others could paint outside. In other words, there are lots of explanations that cannot be proven or disproven, but it seems illogical to me to think that 35 thousand years ago people who did not paint at all would, suddenly, have painted these masterpieces. You know, I cannot paint or draw like that, you probably cannot paint like that, yet they were painting like that with whatever they used for brushes, doing marvelous things. There is also sculpting.

And the interesting thing about it is that these caves apparently were ceremonial centers in which one can witness continuity between animal and human life. Later on we develop all kinds of theories of taboo,

of totems and so on. I do not know what to think in regard to totemic theory and so on. But, the point is that humans felt themselves as part of the web of life.

I think that in Europe, at least in the Renaissance, we learn to break from that, but that is the temporary thing. I think now that even the European and the Euro American are trying to come back to that unity. I believe many traditional cultures never left that unity. They felt that they were part of the web of life. Associating with animals and with other parts of nature was nothing unusual. The anomaly is the five or six hundred years of this thing. This has been a catastrophic anomaly. These cultures became so strong, they were able to dominate, and they were able to take from the world the resources, the oil, this and that. Traditional cultures were obviously sustainable. They had no choice. They did not have ecological theories. The Indians were hunting as much as they could, but, until the rifle came, they were not efficient enough to eliminate the buffalo. Then they did. They shot as many as the settlers. It was not that the earlier people were so good, but it had to be sustainable, because they were hunting by primitive methods. If you fish by hook, that is one thing. If you try to fish whales by harpoon, ok. But, if you have a gun that can shoot them, if you have a thrower that can just scoop up the whole ocean, that is another thing. It is hideous.

Make it a fair fight. You can take a big cannon out there to shoot a thinking mammal. I mean, I did not even want to do it with harpoons, but I can see how that could be. It is a long way from Moby Dick to these whale industry ships. It is a long way from that to these caves. But I guess what I am saying is that the ceremonial relations with animals and the web of life are represented in those places.

#### QUESTION 11: THE “BELLY BRAIN”

JD [00:50:55]

I wanted to ask you again about your recent work on the brain. In your presentation on *Revisiting “points of contact”* you speak of two brains, the brain in the head and the brain in the belly, the “belly brain”.<sup>63</sup> Can we also think of a belly in the brain?

RS [00:51:27 – 00:53:40]

Well yes. The rasabox training is to train the enteric nervous system, and, to some degree, to open access to it. It starts in the brain in the head, of course. If you can access and know what is going on with these neurons, if you can feel what is going on with these, then we should be able to train that. Some

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<sup>63</sup> See footnote 56. The notion of a brain in the belly, or “belly brain”, was also discussed in regard to question 9: *jo-ha-kyu* and the variety of aesthetic experience.

of the Asian martial arts tend to do that. I am not knowledgeable enough of African dance and ceremony which also involves this type of training. But I would say that a lot of these things that Turner would have seen as having to do with the limbic system, which is down in the base of the head, have to do with both the limbic system and the enteric system. Persistent drumming, the up and down movements, and so forth, obviously affect these things. I think that there is quite a bit of local knowledge about this and that we should be in collaboration with local masters who may know the technique more than the theory. We have very sophisticated modes of theory, and local masters have very sophisticated modes of training. We can marry the two. [...] I wish I had more years left than I do because I would love to work on this with local masters, setting up some experiments. [...]

## QUESTION 12: ETHOLOGY AND PHYSICS

JD [00:53:42]

I want to ask you about ethology and physics.

RS [00:53:48]

I got the ethology. What would the physics be? The Large Hadron Collider?

JD [00:53:56]

Yes. I think one very interesting dimension of your work is that of thinking not only of performance of humans, but, also, of performance of animals. Now, it seems to me that you are even going in the direction of the physical particles, and the physical universe. In “Revisiting ‘points of contact’”,<sup>64</sup> at the end of your essay and presentation, you bring attention to the circling movements of candomblé dancers and of the Large Hadron Collider. I would be interested in your comments.

RS [00:54:37 – 00:59:43]

That is really at the beginning of things. I am really at the beginning of that thought. Obviously the physical universe is universe in motion almost by definition. In the introduction of performance, I begin by saying there is being, there is doing, there is showing doing, and there is explaining showing doing.<sup>65</sup> So being is what is, doing is in action, showing some-

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<sup>64</sup> “‘Points of contact’ revisited”, or, in Portuguese, “‘Pontos de contato’ revisitados”, was presented on July 4, at the 28th Meeting of the Brazilian Anthropological Association, held in São Paulo, during July 2-5, 2012, and published in the *Revista de Antropologia* (Vol. 56, no. 2, julho-dezembro 2013, pp. 23-66), and in the collection *Antropologia e performance: ensaios Napedra* (São Paulo: Terceiro Nome, 2013, pp. 37-68), edited by John C. Dawsey, Regina P. Müller, Rose Satiko G. Hikiji, and Marianna F. M. Monteiro.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Richard Schechner’s *Performance studies: an introduction* (published by Routledge of London and New York, in 2002), p. 22.

thing is performing, and studying showing doing is performance studies. But I might say that all being is doing. There is no being without doing, there is only abstract being. I mean, the *neti* or the “not that” of God, if there is a God, is pure being. We do not have motion yet. But once the “big bang” has occurred, once the singularity moves, once the expansion, there is only expansion and contraction, there is no stillness anymore. According to most basic physics, about 17 billion years ago from the so-called singularity came the “big bang”, right? The cosmic egg or whatever you want to call it. Before that is beyond conception, it is pure being.

Pure being is out of our realm. It is purely in the realm of mysticism or divine agency. Doing is what the universe does. The question is what the direction of this would be, whether indeed the Large Hadron Collider goes counterclockwise. I have to check that out. Does it go counterclockwise for the same reason that the *candomblé*, the Sufi Dervishes, and countless others do? [...]

Would it have to do with being south or north of the equator? I think it is everywhere, so I would say it is something in the brain. But it may be something in the cosmos. Maybe the basic direction of the cosmos is counterclockwise, which I read as left handed because if I am facing the clock the movement counterclockwise goes from left to right. Right, it moves that way, not this way, so, of course, with my infantile narcissism, I like the idea, as a left handed person, that the whole the universe would be going from left to right.

I am very much at the beginning. I am glad you ask it at the end of the interview because this is so far out there, I do not know what to do with it. First, I have to find out about whether the spin is mostly left to right or not, whether the Hadron Collider which is not spin... How do you send the electrons when they are going to collide with each other? Now, probably, if they are going to collide with each other, they have to go two ways. How else are they going to collide? Some have to go counterclockwise, others have to go clockwise. The whole thing about the colliders is that they collide. I just thought about that this moment. How else are they going to collide? They cannot go just in one direction to collide. I have to see how to solve that.

I do not know if that final sentence [in “Revisiting ‘points of contact’”], which is so elegant is going to survive research. That is another interesting thing. I will say it to the camera here. [RS speaks to the camera.] Sometimes when I come up with an idea that is kind of an eureka idea – something, you know, that can happen when you wake up in the morning and then you get into the bathtub –, there is no proof. It is just an idea. Then I have to go check, and a lot of these ideas get thrown out. They are wrong. The Large Hadron Collider may be going in both directions because they have to collide, or it may be going in one direction and, then, at a

certain point, they put a barrier or something. I do not know. I have to find out. But sometimes good ideas do not pan out. So one of the things you have to be able to do as an artist and as a scientist, is to be quite satisfied with saying “that was cuckoo, that was wrong, I give it up”.<sup>66</sup>

### QUESTION 13: THE “RICHARD SCHECHNER WITH LIES” AUTOBIOGRAPHY

JD [00:59:47]

You say that you thought of writing an autobiography with the following title: “Richard Schechner with lies”. What lies would you tell? Would you have anything to say about your childhood, school, or whatever?

RS [01:00:03 – 01:06:42]

What I meant was that I would like to have the opportunity to use my life as the basis for a novel. And I would like to have the opportunity to recognize that everybody’s autobiography is full of lies. We cannot help that. There are overt lies, like if I said I lived in San Francisco for ten years. I never did. And, more interesting lies, if I told that story about when I was child and I was in trouble all the time. Maybe I was in trouble all the time, maybe I wasn’t. I remember it as being in trouble all the time, but that does not mean that I was in trouble all the time.

I would like to have the opportunity to first of all let my reader know that this autobiography is no different from any other autobiography. It is to some degree self serving and it is to some degree as honest as it can be. But, you cannot be totally honest. That was part of it. The other part was that I would love to do with an autobiography what I am able to do in art and in science, that is, to let my mind go free. So if you are writing an autobiography in the authorized way, you are supposed to be tethered to what actually happened. I have my notebooks, I have my memories, I have other people. I am able to reconstruct fairly much what happened,

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66 In “Revisitando ‘pontos de contato’” (“Revisiting ‘points of contact’”) (In: *Antropologia e performance: ensaios Napedra*, São Paulo: Terceiro Nome, 2013, pp. 37-68, ed. John C. Dawsey, Regina P. Müller, Rose Satiko G. Hikiji, and Marianna F. M. Monteiro), Richard Schechner does not actually say that the movement of the Large Hadron Collider goes in a counterclockwise direction. In the last paragraph of the essay, he writes: “What performance does is create worlds or – if you accept at face value what masters of sacred ceremonies aver – gains admittance to other worlds and interactive relations with nonhuman beings. What the physicists are doing at CERN is also attempting access to another world, one which these scientists believe is fundamental to, yet barely perceptible by, the world we ordinarily live in. The dancers I saw at the Candomblé near Rio in July 2012, had located their Higgs boson. Isn’t our job as anthropologists and artists – as human beings with big brains – to foster actual and respectful communication between those possessed by the orixás and those possessed by the Large Hadron Collider?” (p. 63).

I think. But what I like about the theater, what I like about novels, what I like about the imagination, is that what ought to have happened, what could have happened, what is interesting to have happened, you can put it as if it really did happen. I know you cannot put it in quotation marks.

When I was 7 or 8 years old I set a fire in an empty lot next to a large apartment area where my house was. This fire became quite large and the fire department had to come put it out. It was dangerous. It could have got these apartments. Maybe people would have been hurt or killed, but they put it out. I was too young to be criminally prosecuted for arson. But they took me. I do not remember if they took me to a court or something like a judge, but I would like to write that they took me to a judge. But I do remember what the punishment was. And I do not know if it was just the police that did this, or my parents, or the judge, or whatever. I had to go to the firehouse every week, once a week. Now I cannot remember if it was once a week, twice a month. I had to go there and learn about fire safety. I wanted to know how the fire truck was. So they put me on the fire truck and they rode me around. The other kids were jealous of me. I was learning that doing something bad could have good consequences. I set a fire and my punishment was to ride in a fire truck. Hey, if life gets like this, I better continue to set fires. [...]

I used to build what I would call jetties near the ocean. There were these sticks that I hid into the sand and I let the waves hit them. I imagined that the sticks were actual cities or people and things would get smashed or drowned. I used to have these violent fantasies as a child.

In the autobiography, maybe I would take these fantasies and report them as actualities, move them forward, in other words, to erase some of the distance between so called accurate recollection and so called fiction. That is what I meant and that would be a chance to try to construct for myself a reasonable recollection of life. What happened? Why did it happen? I would call on my notebooks and so on and so forth. Now whether I will write such an autobiography, I do not know. One publisher, at least, has approached me with what they call “memoirs”, and I said no. Basically, because it would be embarrassing, or it would be improper, or it would be something I would not want people to know at the present moment. But if I left something out, I would say “why do this?” I have dedicated my life to a certain kind of intellectual honesty. Now the intellectual honesty is that, at least in my notebooks, at least in myself, I know what I did and I know what happened. But that does not mean that everything that I did or that happened you should know, or the world should know. There is such a thing as privacy. Shakespeare put his privacy to work for his characters. We know very little about his biography, so why should I write an autobiography at all? Why not just write dramas and sublimate that stuff? I do not know, but I do know that I would like to be truthful rather than honest. [...]

Usually one can be honest but not truthful. You know what happened, but you do not really know how to construct it into a narrative that says something about life. I would like it to be truthful. So, if I am going to write about my life, I would like it to be like the *Brothers Karamazov* or *War and peace*. I would prefer to have truth in it rather than just honesty.

JD [01:06:44]

Wonderful! Richard, I cannot thank you enough. A rare privilege

RS [01:06:51 – 01:07:13]

You asked such good questions, truthfully. They were thoughtful and they were about deep aspects of my work. It showed a real familiarity with what I have thought and written about. You even asked me about *jo-ha-kyu*. You really know where I have been intellectually, so it was a real pleasure. [...]

JD [01:07:18]

Can we get a last image here with our grandmother?

RS [01:07:18]

Sure. [...] Hi grannie!



## AFTERNOTE

After the interview, Richard Schechner said that Claude Lévi-Strauss was possibly his main inspiration for the concept of restored behavior. The comment was made on a city bus going to the municipal market and popular shopping district of the Rua 25 de Março downtown São Paulo.<sup>67</sup> On the bus, John Dawsey had commented with Schechner that his discussion of restored behavior had reminded him of Lévi-Strauss' writings. Even if unmentioned in the essay "Restoration of behavior", Lévi-Strauss is extensively cited by Schechner throughout his work.<sup>68</sup>

Schechner's affinities with Victor Turner are well known. Also well known, are Turner's deep misgivings in regard to Erving Goffman, on the one hand, and Claude Lévi-Strauss, on the other. It is interesting to note how Richard Schechner finds deep affinities with all three: Victor Turner, Erving Goffman, and Claude Lévi-Strauss.



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<sup>67</sup> See footnote 33.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Richard Schechner's "Restoration of behavior" (In: *Between theater and anthropology*. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985, pp. 35-116). In Schechner's *Environmental theater* (which was published by Applause of New York and London, in 1973) Claude Lévi-Strauss is cited in chapters 3 ("Nakedness"), 4 ("Performer"), and 5 ("Shaman"). In Schechner's *Performance theory* (which was published by Routledge of New York and London, in 1988; and which was first published as *Essays on performance theory* by Ralph Pine, for Drama Book Specialists, in 1977) Lévi-Strauss is cited in the following essays: "Approaches" (p. 1-34); "Drama, script, theater, and performance" (p. 68-105); "Toward a poetics of performance" (p. 153-186); "Ethology and theater" (p. 207-250); and "Magnitudes of performance" (p. 251-288). In Schechner's *Between theater and anthropology* (see reference above), Lévi-Strauss is cited in the essay "Performers and spectators transported and transformed" (p. 117-150).

### JOHN C. DAWSEY

Professor of Anthropology at the University of São Paulo (USP), Ph.D. in Anthropology and Master's in Theology (Emory University). At USP, he is the director and one of the founders of Napedra (Research Center of Anthropology, Performance and Drama), f. 2001. Among other books, he is the author of *Why sugarcane cutters laugh: anthropology and theater diaries* (2013). He is also a co-author and collaborating editor of *Anthropology and performance: Napedra essays* (2013), and of other collections. Research interests include anthropology of performance, anthropology of experience, and Benjaminian anthropology. Various concepts result from these studies: tension-thick description (descrição tensa), f(r)iction (with r between parentheses), corpoiesis, extraordinary or astounding daily life, margins of margins, etc.

### RICHARD SCHECHNER

Richard Schechner – a “Jewish Hindu Buddhist atheist living in New York City”, as he says – is one of the main formulators of performance studies. In 1980, he played a leading role in the creation of the Department of Performance Studies at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. As a theater director, he founded The Performance Group (TPG) and East Coast Artists. He is also the founding editor of TDR: The Journal of Performance Studies and of the Enactment books series. Along with Victor Turner and other anthropologists, he inspired the “performative turn” in anthropology and other areas of knowledge. His production as author and theater director is vast. Approaching performance as an object of analysis which includes a broad spectrum of activity – such as art, music, dance, ritual, theater, play, festivity, politics, religion, revolutionary movements, and everyday life –, Schechner also sees performance as a methodological lens for study and research.

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