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THE THEATRE OF AUGUSTO BOAL

By

Edgar Quiles

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ABSTRACT

THE THEATRE OF AUGUSTO BOAL

By

Edgar Quiles

This study analyzes the contributions of Augusto Boal to the theory and practice of contemporary theatre, and examines how he applied them between the years 1956 and 1980. Focusing upon Boal's development as a director and playwright with the Arena Theatre of São Paulo, this study describes Boal's poetics of the oppressed as it takes form in his more than 20 books and plays; in theatre reviews and articles which appeared in the newspaper, O Estado de São Paulo, from 1956 to 1978; and in the manuscripts and notes drafted by Boal for future publication.

The fundamental idea behind the poetics of the oppressed is that theatre, in itself, can be a liberating force in society. His theatre aims to return the means of theatrical production to its origins in the masses of society. This goal is based upon Boal's firm belief that theatre can be a collective tool through which people can not only understand society, but can also liberate their own powers to change it. That is, theatre can teach people to act.

Boal's theatre attempts to transform the spectator from a reflective and passive position to a more active one. This study examines how Newspaper Theatre, Invisible Theatre, Forum Theatre,

and Image Theatre try to remove the walls between actors and spectators by creating theatre forms in which all participate. Also Boal's theatre attempts to undermine the notion that a character in a play is the private property of an actor, a notion which arose when a wall was constructed which separated protagonists from the chorus. This study looks at the theatre techniques developed by Boal, such as The Joker System, exercises for actors and non-actors and the dialectical structure of interpretation, which all aim to reunite protagonists and chorus.

This study concludes that Boal's theatre can be characterized on the one hand by an aesthetic which asserts that theatre can take place in many different places, at any time, and in any form; and on the other hand by a social perspective that demands that theatre focus upon social problems which affect the masses of society.

DEDICATION

This Dissertation is dedicated to

my daughter

Mariana Mercedes Quiles Fabián

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation analyses the contributions of Augusto Boal to the theory and practice of contemporary theatre. The theoretical importance of Boal's poetics of the oppressed will be explained, and the practical elements of his notion of a people's theatre will be described. Furthermore, in presenting the scope of Boal's contributions it will be necessary to explore not only the political nature of his theories, but also the political impact of the application of those theories in the dynamics of actual theatre performances.

Justification

Augusto Boal is a prominent Brazilian director, playwright, and theoretician. The diversity of his interests is reflected in the breadth of his published work. He has written five books on dramatic theory, ten plays which range from satires to musicals, various books on practical exercises for actors, numerous essays, some short stories, and more than fifty articles published in various international theatre magazines, journals, periodicals, and newspapers.

In recent years Boal's work has influenced much of Latin American theatre. Also, Boal has achieved international recognition as a theoretician with the translation of his Categories of Popular Theatre, The Theatre of the Oppressed, and 200 Exercises for Actors

and Non-actors into French, German, Italian and Spanish. However, only The Theater of the Oppressed has been translated into English.

This dissertation will serve to increase North American access to the depth and diversity of Boal's work. This should prove to be a timely service as the importance of Spanish and Portuguese languages grows in North America, and as Hispanic culture continues to flourish in the United States.

Research Methodology

Primary sources used in this dissertation are: books, articles, and pamphlets written by Boal from 1956 to 1980; Latin American, North American and European theatre periodicals; theatre reviews of Boal's work that appeared in the Brazilian newspaper O Estado de São Paulo, as well as other Latin American and European newspapers such as La Opinión of Argentina and Le Monde of France; my own personal interview with Boal in January 1980, and my own direct participation in Boal's workshops on people's theatre at his Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed in Paris, France.

Secondary sources used appear in a theoretical bibliography of the Latin American people's theatre, and in a bibliography of the history of Latin American and Brazilian theatres, and in the citations referring to other researchers dealing with Boal's work.

Scope

The structure of this dissertation is as follows. This first chapter introduces two concepts central to Boal's work and also

presents a biographical sketch of Augusto Boal and a brief outline of the history of Brazilian theatre. Chapter II focuses on the theoretical aspects of Boal's conception of a new theatre poetics. Chapter III presents the poetics of the oppressed and describes the motivations behind this work in terms of Boal's own practical experiences. Chapter IV reviews Boal's analysis of the Latin American people's theatre. Chapter V discusses Boal's conception of an actor's training and also describes the actor training exercises developed by Boal in connection with his theatre of the oppressed. The final chapter studies Boal's work as a theatre director and as a playwright.

Definition of Terms

"Poetics" and "spectacle" are two concepts which are basic to most of Boal's work. By a "poetics" Boal means not only a critical treatise which deals with dramatic theory, but one which concerns dramatic practice as well. And by "spectacle" Boal means not merely a public performance, but a performance which intends to convey a particular message to an audience. Oftentimes Boal will use the idea of performance as a synonym for spectacle.

A Sketch of Augusto Boal's Intellectual Development

Augusto Boal was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1931. In the early 1950s, while studying chemical engineering at the University of Brazil, Boal wrote one act plays and also acted in various student productions. From 1953-1955, he attended graduate school in the

United States at Columbia University in New York City. While specializing in the study of plastics, Boal continued to develop his strong interests in theatre and studied playwriting in the Theatre Department at Columbia University.

In 1956 Boal returned to Brazil and became the artistic director of the Arena Theatre in São Paulo. His success with the Arena Theatre led, in 1960, to a professorship of playwriting at the National School of Dramatic Art of Brazil. Boal continued his association with the Arena Theatre and from 1960 to 1964 he received numerous awards for his work both as a director and as a playwright.[1]

Boal wrote and produced Arena Narrates Zumbi[2] in 1965. This was Boal's first play to use the performance style of the "Joker System." This system was refined two years later in a play both written and directed by Boal, Arena Narrates Tiradentes.[3]

In response to political repression in Brazil during 1970, Boal developed the technique of Newspaper Theatre. This was the catalyst for the later development of his Theatre of the Oppressed. Boal eventually became the victim of the political repression which he fought against and was forced to flee from Brazil in 1971. He continued to develop his theories of a people's theatre by giving lectures and conducting workshops at various Latin American and international theatre festivals. In 1973 he became involved in the Peruvian government's National Literacy Program. His work there exerted a practical influence upon the ideas which later appeared in his Theater of the Oppressed.

Today, Boal lives in Paris, France. Here he operates a Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed. This people's theatre explores novel techniques, acting exercises, and theatre forms which both reflect and generate new theoretical concepts for the contemporary theatre.

A Brief History of the Brazilian Theatre

In order to appreciate the uniqueness of Boal's theatre, it is first necessary to have a rudimentary sense of the development of the Brazilian theatre up to 1956. The following outline begins with Brazil's colonization in the 16th century and chronologically presents only the most elemental factors which characterize theatre in Brazil during each century. For the purpose of this dissertation, it is more important to present the historical direction of the Brazilian theatre, than to provide a detailed analysis of the characteristics of each period.

The Sixteenth Century

The first documented theatrical performances in Brazil were autos which were produced by Portuguese Jesuit monks in the second half of the sixteenth century. Autos were European medieval theatre forms whose didactic structure was efficiently employed by the Jesuits in their efforts to convert the new world to Christianity. Autos celebrated important religious events. Their performances included music and dance. This air of festivity strongly attracted the Indian populace. The Jesuits adapted the auto form to include

a representation of Indian culture, and a plurality of language which mixed Portuguese, Spanish and many Indian dialects. The distance between spectators and actors diminished as everyone in the village took part in the production and performance. Here actors served as the very vehicles of their own religious conversion.

While these autos inevitably exerted the influence of European and Christian culture, many monks wrote autos that represented elements of Brazilian culture. The most well-known of these authors was a Jesuit father by the name José de Anchieta (1534-1597). He wrote more than ten autos. All of them were in verse, and portrayed characters and situations reflecting Brazilian colonization. Anchieta wrote some of them completely in the Indian dialect of Tupi.[4]

The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

In the seventeenth century the religious character of the autos disappeared, interest in them declined, and the theatre moved into the secular sphere. Theatre as a social activity no longer involved the entire populace of villages. It became increasingly directed toward the colonizers rather than the colonized. Influenced by the recent European migration, theatres presented operas.

Two theatre halls were built in Brazilian cities: the Opera House in Rio de Janeiro, and the Vila Rica theatre in Minas Gerais. The success of these theatre halls laid the foundation for the future development of Brazilian theatre. Other opera houses were

soon constructed in numerous Brazilian cities. This not only encouraged theatre productions, but also theatre attendance as a regular social activity.

However, while there was constant and lively theatrical activity, a vacuum yet existed in the area of original Brazilian playwriting. Perhaps the only exception was Antônio José da Silva (1705-1739), who was considered one of the most distinguished authors of operas. His fanatical nationalism firmly placed his operas in the category of native Brazilian dramatic literature.

The Nineteenth Century

Despite the work of José da Silva, the nineteenth century began with very little original Brazilian dramatic literature. The early part of the century merely reflected much of the eighteenth century theatre. Numerous theatrical halls were constructed in many of Brazil's most vital cities: Diamantina, Recife, São Paulo, Pôrto Alegre, Salvador, Rio de Janeiro, and others.

In 1822, Brazil achieved political independence and the theatre underwent a radical transformation. Independence brought to Brazil not only a significant increase in its economic growth, but also a development in cultural and artistic spheres of life. The struggles between Brazil and Portugal nurtured and cultivated the nationalism that was widespread in the Brazilian theatre at that time. New ideals of liberty and love of homeland were characteristic themes developed by the theatre in those revolutionary years. This was the first century in which a substantial number of Brazilian

playwrights were represented: Manuel Antônio Álvares de Azevedo (1831-1852), Antônio Gonçalves Dias (1823-1864), Antônio de Castro Alves (1847-1871), Joaquim Manoel de Macedo (1820-1822), and José Martiniano de Alencar (1829-1877).

Along with nationalism, romanticism gained importance and developed as a strong independent movement within the Brazilian theatre. Gonçalves de Magalhães began a romantic movement in Brazilian theatre which continued until the end of the nineteenth century. Greatly influence by Victor Hugo and the romantic school of Paris, Magalhães's dramas invariably applied romantic criteria to Brazilian culture.

In 1838, the Royal theatre of São João[5] was constructed to accommodate the new Brazilian playwrights of the post-revolutionary era. This theatre stimulated the creation of national companies. João Caetano, a famous actor, headed the most important of these national companies, and also gave Brazil the basis for the development of an entire generation of Brazilian actors. He established a school of dramatic art from which the majority of the Brazilian actors of that period emerged. Caetano supported new Brazilian playwrights, especially Martins Pena, who instituted the Comedy of Manners in Brazil.[6]

The comedies of Martins Pena accentuated popular character and documented Brazilian customs. Martins Wilson characterizes the Brazilian comedies that followed Pena's original success as typically dealing with the principal themes of nationalism and bucolism.[7] In the last half of the nineteenth century a different kind of theatre

developed out of Pena's work with comedy--a theatre characterized by musical reviews, vaudevilles, and light comedies. These productions had many popular characters and they reflected a tradition of in which theatre primarily offered entertainment. An important material result of the success of these productions was the construction of many new theatre halls.

The Twentieth Century

During the first two decades of the twentieth century Brazilian theatre continued the trends of nationalism and romanticism set by the nineteenth century playwrights. However, in 1922, the "Week of Modern Art" placed Brazil in contact with international and vangardist movements which set Brazilian theatre on a radically new course of development.[8] The influence of the "Week of Modern Art" materialized in a mature form in 1932 with Joracy Camargo's God Bless You.[9] This play radically broke from the comic and review forms of theatre by launching a social critique that upset the tradition which viewed theatre merely as entertainment. Under the direction of the Polish director, Zbigniew Ziembinski, God Bless You revolutionized Brazilian theatre. Earlier theatre traditions began to disappear as new authors, directors, scene designers, and acting techniques arose.

The second major play of the first half of the twentieth century was Nelson Rodrigues' Wedding Dress.[10] Rodrigues's play was first performed in 1943 by an acting company that introduced Brazil to new theatrical concepts.[11] Martins Wilson notes that while

Camargo's God Bless You marked a revolution in playwriting, Rodrigues's Wedding Dress marked a revolution in theatrical spectacle: for the first time in Brazil, it was not the play but the representation itself that attracted the greatest attention.[12] Afrânio Coutinho attributes this effect to the way in which Wedding Dress rediscovered the fundamental idea of directing: the idea that spectacle should integrate text, scenery and actors into a unity of artistic vision.[13]

After Wedding Dress Brazilian playwrights divided into three groups. One group continued writing the kind of farce and comedy typical of vaudevillian theatre. The other two groups wrote with the idea of theatre as a means of artistic expression and social critique. The more conservative of these two sets of writers attempted to form a transitional group capable of writing modern plays, but ones less revolutionary than those of Joracy Camargo and Nelson Rodrigues. The more radical group comprised of young authors such as Ariano Suassuna, Jorge Andrade, and Dias Gomes attempted to create a new playwriting school. One of the effects of this antagonism among Brazilian writers was to fragment the audience of the Brazilian theatre, which has been characteristically homogeneous for centuries.

It was not until the 1950s that Brazilian theatre could actualize the spirit of nationalism which lay not only behind the works of Rodrigues and Camargo, but also behind many works of nineteenth century playwrights. The interest in current European theatre which grew out of the "Week of Modern Art" in 1922 brought to Brazil

numerous designers, directors and technicians. Brazilians themselves became involved in all areas of theatre. So that, by the early 1950s Brazil had a generation of directors schooled in contemporary theatre, a number of stable professional theatre companies, and a large number of native Brazilian scene designers, lighting technicians, etc.. In addition to the great number of theatre halls already constructed, and the various school of dramatic art, Brazil also had its own national theatre company, The Brazilian National Theatre of Comedy, established in São Paulo in 1948.[14] All this served as the material means by which the country could now effectively produce a theatre which was more Brazilian and less European. The Arena Theatre of São Paulo led in the effort to establish a truly Brazilian theatre.

The Arena Theatre was an experimental theatre hall created by José Renato in the early 1950s. Modeled after the Arena Stage in Washington D.C., the Arena Theatre is considered to be the first playhouse in South America with central staging. In the early years of its operation the Arena Theatre worked much as any traditional theatre company. But in 1956, when Augusto Boal joined the company, the theatre changed dramatically. Reflecting the mood of the 1950s, the Arena Theatre now broke with European influence and for a period of time only performed works of Brazilian playwrights. The Arena Theatre also encouraged an authentic Brazilian theatre movement by establishing a laboratory of interpretation and a seminar for playwrights.

The efforts of the Arena Theatre to actualize a Brazilian spirit of nationalism brought success not only to Augusto Boal but

to other playwrights such as Gianfrancesco Guarnieri, Oduvaldo Viana Filho, Milton Gonçalves, Nelson Yarier, and others. Guarnieri and Filho centered the themes of their plays on contemporary urban life and they became foremost in the public's eyes during de 1960s. Boal's fame can be traced back to his early comedies, especially Revolution in South America, which was a political satire staged in the style of Bertolt Brecht.[15] However, Boal's major contributions to Brazilian theatre lay in his experimental concepts of a people's theatre, and his innovations of a Newspaper Theatre, and a "Joker System."

NOTES CHAPTER I

[1]See Appendix B.

[2]Arena Conta Zumbi.

[3]Arena Conta Tiradentes.

[4]See Na Aldeia de Guraparim, the longer play written by him in Tupi.

[5]O Real Teatro de São João.

[6]Comédia de Costumes.

[7]See Wilson Martins, ed., Teatro brasileiro contemporâneo (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966), p. 6.

[8]Semana de Arte Moderna.

[9]Deus Lhe Pague.

[10]Vestido de Noiva.

[11]Dos Comediantes.

[12]Martins, op. cit., p. 8.

[13]Afrânio Coutinho, A Literatura no Brasil, vol. II (Rio de Janeiro: Editorial Sul-Americana, S.A., 1955), p. 278.

[14]Teatro Brasileiro de Comédia (T.B.C.).

[15]Revolução na América do Sul.

CHAPTER II

THE BASIS FOR A NEW THEATRE POETICS

To comprehend Augusto Boal's theories regarding theatre it is essential that one understand the theoretical basis which motivated Boal to develop his new Poetics.

This chapter discusses at length that theoretical basis, which is comprised to two elements: Boal's vision of what theatre is and Boal's view on the historical development of the theatre. In addition, we shall analyze Boal's definition of theatre from his subjective point of view--that theatre is a political activity, a means of communication and an artistic language.

A. Boal's Definition of Theatre

1. Theatre as a political activity, as a means of communication and as an artistic language.

To Boal, theatre is a "weapon; a very efficient weapon,"[1] which he also perceives as a political weapon, since theatre is a political activity, as are all of man's activities. Inasmuch as theatre is a social and collective means that satisfies the human need for communication, it ultimately transcends the realm of political activity. Boal elaborated on some of his ideas concerning theatre as a means of communication in an interview with Charles Driskell, published September 1, 1975, in the periodical Latin American Theatre Review. In answer to a question about the effects

of his experiences outside of Brazil on his theatre ideas he said:

> ...what we are doing all over South America is rescuing the theatre and giving it back to the people so that they can use it as a means of communication to discuss their problems. We think theatre can be a means of discussing and "rehearsing" revolutionary acts themselves.[2]

The meaning that Boal conveys about theatre as a medium of communication is so implicit that he sometimes uses the word "theatre" as a synonym for language:

> You have to make the kind of theatre in which everything is tested. This is the kind of thing I have been involved in, creating several ways, to get everyone started making theatre. Not for the sake of going to the theatre. It is theatre as "language" than can be used by anyone.[3]

In an article entitled "From Illusion to Reflection, From Reflection to Action - Concerning the Theatrical Techniques of Augusto Boal",[4] Alicia Saco gave her definitive interpretation of Boal's view of theatre: "Theatre is an artistic manifestation with a plurality of expressive resources."[5] Saco's theatre possesses that characteristic of having a "plurality of expressive resources;" therefore, it is more closely related to language than any other aesthetic revelation. So, inevitably, theatre evolves as a very vital means of communication for society.

This was revealed by Boal when, in 1973, the Peruvian government invited him to participate in the National Literacy Campaign,[6] with the sole objective of eradicating illiteracy within four years. He has asked to use theatre as a vehicle of social change and as a means of massive communication to help alleviate the nation's illiteracy problem. Boal prepared a general working plan consisting of four stages. In this short synopsis, these stages and their

definitions once again substantiate Boal's view of theatre as language.

> First Stage: Knowing the Body; a series of exercises by which one gets to know one's body...
> Second Stage: Making the Body Expressive; a series of games by which one begins to express one's self through the body...
> Third Stage: The Theatre as Language; one begins to practice theatre as a language that is living and present...
> Fourth Stage: The Theatre as a Discourse; a simple form in which the spectator-actor creates "Spectacles" according to his need to discuss certain themes or rehearse certain actions...[7]

These stages will be discussed and analyzed in more detail in the next chapter of this dissertation. At this juncture, it is enough to present them as evidence that Boal believes that theatre is the most direct and persuasive means of communication that society has. It is for this reason that theatre is susceptible to political maneuverings. For Boal, theatre's history has been the efficient political maneuvering of this means of communication. This was the reason that he wrote Theater of the Oppressed in 1974. In the foreword of his book, he states:

> This book attempts to show that all theatre is necessarily political, becuase all of the activities of man are political and theatre is one of them. Those who try to separate theatre from politics try to lead us into error--and this a political attitude.[8]

In the same work, Boal, in analyzing the relationship between art, theatre and politics, reaches the conclusion that "nothing is alien to politics, because nothing is alien to the superior art that rules the relations among men."[9] He speaks here of politics as a "superior art," as well as a "sovereign art."

> Medicine, war, architecture...minor and major arts, all without exception--are subject to, and make up that sovereign art.
>
> ...that the arts and sciences correct nature in all its faults, and at the same time are interrelated under the domain of a sovereign art which deals with all men, with all they do, and all that is done for them: Politics.[10]

In further examination of art as politics, Boal continues by showing how Greek society organized the arts and the state. According to Boal, the arts and the state were arranged hierarchically, depending upon the nature of each particular activity. In the arts, they were distributed between the major and minor arts. Any group of minor arts formed a major art. Boal notes, as an example of this, that:

> ...the art of manufacturing paints, the art of manufacturing paint brushes, the art of preparing the best canvas, the art of combination of colors, together constitute the art of painting.[11]

In this same vein, Boal says that Politics is the sovereign-major art within which reside the minor arts. These are human activities, e.g., working, worshiping gods, voting, and all of the real arts, including theatre. However, in spite of this, he still considers theatre a political activity. This is his reasoning in regard to this concept:

> So then, if there are minor arts and major arts, the latter being the ones that contain the former, there will be, therefore, a sovereign art which will contain all the other arts and sciences, and whose field of action and concern will include all the fields of action and all the other arts and all the other sciences. This sovereign art, of course, will be the one whose laws rule over the relations among men in their totality. That is Politics.[12]

It is paramount here to include another quote of Boal's from his book 200 Exercises and Games for Actor and Non-Actor Wishing to Say

Something Through Theatre.[13] This will demonstrate the emphasis that Augusto Boal has placed on the reaffirmation that all theatre is Politics:

> Todo teatro es político, aunque no trate de temas especificamente políticos. Teatro político es un pleonasmo, como lo seria "hombre humano"; todo teatro es político como todos los hombres son humanos...[14]
> (All theatre is political, even if it doesn't speak about specific political themes. Political theatre is a redundancy as is the expression "human man": all theatre is political as all men are humans...)

2. Theatre as a popular expression.

So we have seen that for Boal theatre is a means of communication, an artistic language, and a political activity. Moreover, Boal feels that theatre must be totally popular--meaning that it should be performed by the people, and not by an "artistic elite" or a minority of the population. In Boal's opinion the essence of theatre has always been popular:

> Popular theatre existed always, because the people always existed. Theatre is a language. The people always expressed themselves through that language.[15]

Boal considers that there is a reason why the elite of society do not want theatre to be popular. He believes that they try to separate the "artistic phenomenon" from the "political and moral phenomenon." In this manner, they are denying that all aesthetic manifestations should be political and moral at the same time. We have already seen that this is an impossible assumption as it relates to Boal's ideas. Politics are present in all of man's manifestations, and any aesthetic manifestation is political, even man's moral values.

Adding to this concept, we can readily see how Boal was compelled to approach the concept of popular theatre from a more radical perspective--the perspective of change.

> El teatro es una forma de communicación entre los hombres; las formas teatrales no se desarrollan entre si, de manera autónoma, si no que responden siempre a necesidades sociales bien determinadas y a momentos precisos. El espectáculo se hace para el espectador y no el espectador para el espectáculo: el espectador cambia, por la tanto tendrá que cambiar también el espectáculo.[16]
>
> (Theatre is a form of communication between men; the theatrical forms do not develop by themselves, in an autonomous manner; they always correspond to social needs and to precise moments. The spectacle is made for the spectators, not the spectators for the spectacle. The spectators change and so the spectacle must change, too.)

This idea of change is the most important element in defining theatre as being popular. According to Boal, what defines theatre as being popular is not the theme itself nor the form itself. Theatre's popularity does not merely speak of workers or peasants only, nor does it only present spectacles in the streets and marketplaces for viewing by the poor masses. What defines the popular character of theatre is that which "has the people's perspective, the perspective of change."[17] With this statement, it is apparent that Boal is talking about a certain specific people--a particular segment of society. This specific group of people encompasses those who are in constant change and those who accomplish or who are trying to achieve social change. For this alone it behooves us to understand that the theatrical spectacle" is made for the spectator" (in this instance, meaning the people), and they are capable of change. Subsequently, the theatre must change along with the spectator. This is crucial when Boal speaks about the popular character of theatre.

It is this idea of people and change which Boal expresses as being "revolutionary" theatre. He thinks that theatre, in order to be "popular," should be "revolutionary"--for it matters little where the spectacle is performed. Theatre reaches its most revolutionary pinnacle when theatre is used as a communication tool by the masses of society.

> ...el propio pueblo lo practica, cuando deja de ser apenas el inspirador y el consumidor y pasa a ser el productor. Cuando se communica através del teatro.[18]
>
> (...the people practice it, when the people stop being the source of inspiration and the consumers of theatre and begin to be the producers themselves. When people communicate through theatre.)

To paraphrase Boal, it is when theatre is used by the people as a political weapon that theatre realizes its revolutionary potential.

In the Arena Theatre of São Paulo, Brazil, Boal developed a series of techniques, exercises, and games in order to reach that revolutionary peak in his popular theatre. This will be elaborated on later in this dissertation. In summary, there are two critical components in the definition of popular theatre: the presence of the people and the necessity of change. This exemplifies the profound influence of Bertolt Brecht. In his interview with Charles Driskell, Boal admits that Brecht has exerted the "greatest influence" on him, as well as the rest of the Latin American theatre, especially the Brazilian theatre.

> In my case especially--and in that of other Brazilian authors there were two tremendous influences. One of them was Bertolt Brecht. He was a great influence because he taught us that our obligation as artists was to shed light on reality, not only to reflect and to interpret reality, but to try to change it...[19]

A Latin American theoretician, Alicia Saco, said, in 1975, that the political theatre of Bertolt Brecht has been developed in Latin America through what we call "Popular Theatre"[20] whose most controversial figure is Augusto Boal. In paraphrasing Boal's ideas, she said:

> Este sería básicamente el teatro que refleja los intereses del pueblo, no reduciéndose a la simple presentación de las contradicciones sociales sino configurándose como una actividad artística que se engarza dentro de una acción de transformación de la realidad.[21]
>
> (This would be basically the theatre which reflects the interests of the people, present not only the social contradictions, but shaping itself as an artistic activity within the action of transforming reality.)

In both the political theatre of Bertolt Brecht and the popular theatre of Augusto Boal, there is a commonality--the participation of the spectator (the people) against the hypnotic magic of the theatrical illusion.[22] The difference between the two is that for Brecht the spectator's participation is fundamentally reflective and for Boal the spectator's participation is active. As indicated before, theatre reaches its revolutionary peak when the people become the "producer" of theatre. To realize this, Boal developed various theatre forms: Forum Theatre, Image Theatre, Invisible Theatre and others, which will be discussed later.

The article by Alicia Saco studies in depth the difference between Boal's popular theatre and Brecht's political theatre. She concludes that Boal is continuing Brecht's ideas and improving upon them when he transforms the spectator from a reflective stance to an active one. So, we have a third component defining popular theatre, the action. This factor can be seen in the technqiues and theatre

forms created by Boal. Later, we will see how Boal achieves this effect--that of giving the spectators an active role in the theatrical phenomenon. For now, it is enough to discern that this factor constitutes the principal difference between Boal's theatre and Brecht's.

3. Theatre as art: as an aesthetic manifestation.

To conclude with Boal's definition of theatre, it is significant that we consider his most recent opinion or idea, which he expressed to me during an interview conducted in January of 1980. He discussed the concept of aesthetics, in which all of his former ideas about theatre were implicit, especially his ideas on change and communication. All of the arts for Boal are productions of images of the world, and the theatre is "the production or ordered images of the world."[23] He further clarifies this by stating that there are two methods by which art can face the ordering of the world. One method is to present the world in constant transformation, and the other one is to present it in a static form, unchangeable. According to him, this static interpretation represents the ideology of the ruling class, whose intentions are to maintain the status quo at all costs and to circumvent any modification movement that will threaten or endanger their domination and control over the poor masses.

> Now there is a way of ordering the world which shows the world as being finished, a world that needs almot nothing to be completed. This is a kind of ordering of the ruling class, who want to present a perfect world. But there is a second kind of ordering which is the image of the world in perpetual change, in transition.[24]

With this idea in mind, we shall discuss "Elite theatre" and "Popular or people theatre." For Boal, there are two distinct forms of art expression: theatres that are completely different and the two diverse orderings of the world. For him, theatre is an aesthetic form through which human beings can learn about reality. This concept of aesthetics, says Boal, has been misunderstood and deliberately mystified. For him, aesthetics does not mean "beauty"... "prettiness"...that produces pleasure when we see it, and so forth. Aesthetics is "communication which proceeds through the senses."[25] Finally, for Boal, theatre develops into "the supreme aesthetic because it uses all the senses and all of the rest of the arts."[26]

B. Boal's Views on the Development of the Theatre

1. General perspective.

We have reiterated before that the artistic elite of a society tries to separate the artistic manifestation from the political manifestation of theatre, and that, in Boal's perception, this is both an error and a political attitude. Boal reasons that this separation has occurred because the society's elites have attempted to deny that theatre is a communication medium that can be readily utilized by the people as a legitimate form of knowledge. For Boal, theatre has always been a collective means to be used to transmit the knowledge of a society. In order to maintain their dominance over the society's masses, these elites have taken possession of theatre. To understand better the process of how they began to

dominate theatre, we must look at Boal's conception of historical theatre development.

Throughout the history of the theatre, the most powerful elites of a community have been pirating theatre from the people or the masses. In the beginning, theatre was a collective emotional experience where everyone was able to participate.[27] There were the dithyrambic chants sung by the whole community. Theatre was a collective communication medium whereby the people learned about their history, their heroes and their gods. Later, the elites began to use theatre for their own political ends. They defined what was aesthetically pleasing and what was good theatre according to their own tastes and interests, while ignoring the tastes and interests of the masses. Theatre was removed from the hands of the people--walls between spectators and performers were erected, dividing the participants into "people who act and people who watch"[28] (passive people versus active people).

Soon theatre art was appropriated by the elites from the people and placed directly under their control. The definition of theatrical concepts (what is drama, mimesis, spectacle, theatre) began to be defined for their (the elites') perspective. Even when the masses participated in the process of creating theatre, the content, the form and the manner in which the spectacle would be performed was defined and controlled by the elites. The Corpus Christi festivities during the Middle Ages were a prime example of this. The religious elite controlled the spectacle's planning and implementation. Somewhat later, theatre was defined by the

aristocracy, after the church's decline. Eventually, the aristocracy was replaced by wealthy merchants and they seized control of theatre. While the elites changed and the concepts within theatre were modified, the use of theatre by these elites did not change. It was consistently used as a means of "coercive indoctrination."[29]

This "coercive indoctrination" of the people by an elite group subverted the original impetus of theatre as a collective emotional experience through which people learned about their lives in the community. Throughout the periods in which theatre was dominated by an elite, the original nature of theatre as a collective, popular experience was continually kept active by such rudimentary theatrical means such as strolling players, mimes, and singers in marketplaces. Today, the theatre of Augusto Boal continues this return to the origins of theatre. Thus, when Boal speaks of the right of people to originate their own theatre, he attempts to return theatre to a collective manifestation of community life. He attempts to turn theatre away from a "coercive indoctrination", and towards a communicative means by which people can better understand themselves and their social lives. This was the first objective of his popular theatre technique of "Newspaper Theatre"[30] which endeavored to "popularize the means of doing theatre so the people themselves can use them and do their own theatre."[31]

He felt that it was important to bestow upon the people all the possibilities of theatre as a valid means of social communication.

With those ideas in mind, Boal studied the following periods in the historical development of the theatre: the Greek and Roman;

the Medieval; the Renaissance and Romantic; and the Modern and Contemporary. He analyzed the social and cultural milieu in which the "coercive indoctrination" of people through theatre occurred during these tumultuous periods.[32] As the theoretical framework for this study, he used a book entitled The Social History of Art, by Arnold Hauser.

2. Greek and Roman Periods.

For Boal "Theatre was the people singing freely in the open air...the carnival. The feast..."[33] Then the ruling class, the Aristocracy, took possession of the theatre and erected walls that divided the spectators from the actors. This division between the passive receiver of theatre and the active transmitter of theatre was the first initial separation in the theatre. Later on another division was conceived. The actors began to represent the Aristocracy (protagonists) in the plays, while the other performers were representative of the masses (as the chorus). According to Boal this second division of theatre was devised so that the spectacle could more efficiently reflect the ideology of the Aristocracy. It was in this period of history that "coercive indoctrination" had its beginnings. Aristotle was the first renounced theoretician of the Aristocracy who propelled theatre in this insidious direction.

The intent of Aristotle's Poetics was to eradicate every idea or belief in the spectator that was not palatable to the ruling class of that period. Through the famous concepts of catharsis and purgation, the people's ideas on changing the society were destroyed.

This system was called by Boal "The Aristotelian Coercive System." Aristotle, in his Poetics presented the protagonists as exceptional creatures--human beings that possessed superior character qualities.[34] They were symbolic of the Aristocracy, not the masses (the people).

> In the beginning, the theatre was the chorus, the mass, the people. They were the true protagonists. When Thespis invented the protagonists, he "Aristocratized" the theatre which existed before in its popular forms of mass manifestation, parades, feasts, et cetera. The protagonist-chorus dialogue was clearly a reflection of the Aristocrat-people (commoners) dialogue. The tragic hero, who later begins to carry on a dialogue, not only with the chorus, but also with his peers (deuteragonist and tritagonist) was always presented as an example which sould be followed in certain characteristics but not in others. The tragic hero appears when the state begins to utilize the theatre for the political purpose of coercion of the people. It should not be forgotten that the state, directly or through certain wealthy patrons, paid for the theatrical productions.[35]

During the Greek and Roman periods, this was the theatre that prevailed, based on the Aristotelian tragic system, which only responded to the interests of the ruling class or Aristocracy. With the inception of a new social order, a new ruling class usurped the previous ruling class' power and a new social era in mankind's history began, the Middle Ages.

3. Medieval period.

A new theatre sprang up and a new ruling class came with it. The Clergy and the Nobility of that period developed a new art. This new art form tried to immobilize society by perpetuating the existing system, whose principal characteristics were "depersonalization," "deindividualization" and "abstraction."[36]

The theatre, as in the other arts of that period, showed a tendency toward abstraction. The characters of the dramas were not human, but rather abstractions of moral and religious values. The real and the concrete world, presented in the Greek and Roman tragedies, did not exist during this era. The most typical characters were named Sin, Virtue, Devil, Angel, and so on. As Boal says: "They were not characters--subjects of the dramatic action, but simply objects acting as spokesmen for the values they symbolized."[37] Abstract concepts were the characters of the Middle Ages' theatre. As in the Greek and Roman eras, these characters symbolized the Middle Ages' ruling class. Boal establishes that both of these theatres were Aristotelian, even though there were fundamental differences between them. They were both used by the elites to insure that any attempt by the masses to transform society would be theatrically purged.

> In tragedy, what was important for Aristotle was its cathartic function, its function as a "purifier" of the citizen. All his theories combine to form a harmonic whole which demonstrates the correct manner of purging the audience of all ideas or tendencies capable of modifying society. In this sense, the medieval theatre was Aristotelian, though it did not utilize the same formal resources suggested by the Greek theoretician.[38]

When a new ruling class appeared, the Bourgeoisie, a new social and economic system was established. This marked the fall of the feudal system and the beginning of the capitalist society, as well as a new period in theatre history, the Renaissance.[39] To Boal, this was a transitional period entitled the "Bourgeois Concretion" in which Machiavelli was the primary theoretician. A second period

ensued that correlated with the eighteenth century Romanticism that had Hegel as its principal theoretician. Both the Renaissance and the Romanticism period were part of what Boal calls the Bourgeois Theatre. All of the poetics that were developed for that theatre were inextricably related to the origin and development of Capitalism. Boal entitled these poetics "The Bourgeoisie's Poetic of Virtù."[40] These poetics existed up until the 20th century breakdown, and according to him, they are still in existence.

4. Renaissance and Romanticism.

In this period the new elite transformed the protagonists of Medieval drama into exceptional individuals. They ceased to be symbols of moral values and were transformed into human beings as in the Greek and Roman periods. There was a dissimilarity. They were no longer one-dimensional characters, but rather multi-dimensional. As in the Greek and Roman periods, they were separated from the people as the new aristocrats. This new theatre was to present human beings as concrete realities and not as abstractions. The bourgeoisie believed that the individual aspect of concrete man was the most relevant concept and its presentation was vital. Bourgeois man possessed two motivations for his life, his own "Virtù" (his own efforts) and the "Praxis" (his own work). Boal says that:

> The Bourgeois owed nothing to his fate or his good fortune, but only to his own virtù. With his virtù he had surmounted all the obstacles which were placed before him by birth, the laws of the feudal system, tradition, and religion.[41]

Furthermore, abstract characters such as the Devil disappeared from the stage and were replaced by humans who possessed some of the identical characteristics, i.e., Lady Macbeth, Iago, and Richard the III. It is for this reason that Boal refers to this period as the "Bourgeois Concretion";[42] the moral and religious values of the Middle Ages still were evident in the theatre but in concrete form. The ordinary man, in this era, appeared to be analyzed in an individualized and multi-dimensional manner. Again, the character of the drama was the subject of the dramatic action, as was true in the Greek theatre, but man was no longer an object symbolizing moral values.

Boal postulated that the human being was liberated from all of the moral and religious values of the Middle Ages. This gave theatre the opportunity to communicate the new ideals of liberation among the masses. The new protagonists were characters that convinced the people of the urgency of freedom. When the Bourgeoisie seized power and dissolved the old ruling class, this kind of theatre appeared to be very dangerous to them. So began the search for new methods of control to limit the new man and the power of the theatre. A formal freedom existed that was impossible to eliminate. Therefore, it was crucial that a new doctrine be established that could limit this liberty.

> It was necessary for someone to come along who, without renouncing the freedom recently acquired by the dramatic character, could impose some limitations upon him, working out a formula that might preserve his formal freedom though insuring that the dogmatic pre-established truth would prevail. That someone was Hegel.[43]

Hegel believed that good actions i.e., truth should live in the theatre, and bad things, i.e., lies, should die--and that drama should illustrate a conflict of moral and spiritual values where morality (truth) would prevail over evil. To achieve this effect, the struggle of antagonistic characters was shown. The action ended in harmony. This equilibrium and harmony was attained by the destruction of one of the antagonists. This occurred in two distinct forms: by the death of one of the irreconcilable characters, or by the repentence of one of the characters. Hegel established that the hero must die if his death would make the truth shine more brightly. Here is where we can readily see how the limitations are being imposed. A concrete character, with all of his freedom, is presented to and accepted by the audience. The ultimate value presented is not that the human being is a valuable entity, but rather that his moral values have prevailed.

For Hegel the character is again the subject of the dramatic action. This is different from the Greek period, since his moral values are what prevailed at the close of the drama. Hegel also confirmed that only men who have the time and the money to cultivate these spiritual and moral values will be the heroes in these dramas, the bourgeoisie and the aristocrats, not the poor or common masses. The characters are "absolute subjects" who respond to their own actions and are given the freedom to select either good or evil; therefore, if they are poor, it is because they have selected incorrectly. This corresponds to the development of the Romantic drama.[44]

The Romantic drama followed Hegel's ideas. It resolved on the spiritual level the problems men were faced with in society. For Boal this was the first limitation imposed on theatre by the Bourgeoisie, the first reduction of the Bourgeoisie's Poetic of Virtù. Once again the theatre is seized by the ruling class and used as a coercive instrument.

5. Modern (From the Nineteenth Century to the Present).

After Romanticism, a strong theatre movement was born, the Realism of the nineteenth century. This new movement transformed dramatic characters into objects again, but they were objects of social forces. Parallel to these changes, the expansionism and consolidation of the social and economic system known as Capitalism occurred. During this period, the Bourgeoisie developed to its zenith as society's aristocracy. As a result, the Bourgeoisie's Poetic of Virtù clearly symbolized this ruling class. Due to this Realism and Naturalism are still very strong theatre movements. In fact, this is so in a much greater degree than ever with the development of new similar arts, the cinema and television.[45]

Boal believes that this Realism was the second reduction of the Bourgeoisie's Poetic of Virtù. Human beings become direct products of their environment, without the consideration of other influential factors, except their social milieu. Again the characters become unidimensionals on the stage. An objective theatre movement that isolated other subjective possibilities developed. Everything

appeared on the stage as it occurred in reality and the subjective opinion of the author was eliminated.

During the twentieth century, a series of subjective styles appeared: Expressionism, Impressionism, Surrealism, and Absurdism. The characters were shown as subjects of abstractions, and the limitations as well as the reductions continued. With these changes, human beings experienced even more diverse reductions. They were transformed into new abstractions: psychological, moral and metaphysical orders. This was the theatre of the Bourgeoisie with its Poetic of Virtù. It began with the Renaissance and ended with the innovative, subjective and relativistic theatrical forms of the twentieth century.

In response to this movement, a new theatre was started. This new theatre was ordained by a new social class that had its birth in a Capitalist society, the working class. This new theatre which was originally abstract was called by Boal "Dialectical Theatre." Its characters still revealed their conditions as simple objects--objects of social and economic forces. These forces were the catalyst for a system that defined the dramatic action when they (these forces) entered into contradiction. This was the theatre created by Erwin Piscator and Bertolt Brecht. Piscator created the basis for this with his Political Theatre, and Bertolt Brecht became its principal theoretician with his Alienation Theory.

Bertolt Brecht answered all of the previous poetics by transforming the characters theorized by Hegel as "Absolute-Subjects"

into objects. His transformations were distinctly different from the theoreticians of the Middle Ages, whose characters represented religious and moral values, and supernatural forces. Brecht's characters were the objects of social and economic forces which determined their thoughts and actions.

The poetic developed by Brecht was centered on the creation of a reflective attitude in the spectator concerning the social and economic forces that influence life's human conditions. With this, Brecht hoped to demonstrate that society is changeable. Through his epic or political theatre, he wanted to contribute in an artistic manner to the transformation of capitalist society.

Boal needed a new poetic that would transform the spectator from a reflective position to a more active one, and one that would destroy the wall erected between the actors and spectators by the ruling class. This poetic would invariably remove the wall between actors and spectators by creating a theatre where all could participate; secondly, it would eliminate the wall that separated the protagonists from the chorus. In conclusion, the protagonists and the chorus would unite and become as one. This is his theory called the "Poetic of the Oppressed."

Boal's experiences in Brazil, Argentina, and especially in Peru, verify that the destruction of the first wall is a feasible proposition. The work he developed in the Arena Theatre of São Paulo demonstrates the possibility of eliminating the second wall.

NOTES CHAPTER II

[1]Augusto Boal, Theater of the Oppressed (New York: Urizen Books, 1979), p. ix.

[2]Charles Driskell, "An Interview with Augusto Boal," Latin American Theatre Review, 19, no. 1 (Fall 1975), 74.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Alicia Saco, "De la ilusión a la reflexión, de la reflexión a la acción-en torno a nuevas técnicas teatrales de Augusto Boal," Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana, 1, núm. 2 (Julio-Dic. 1975), 115.

[5]"El teatro es una manifestación artística con pluralidad de recursos expresivos."

[6]"Operación Alfabetización Integral."

[7]Boal, op. cit., p. 126.

[8]Ibid., p. ix.

[9]Ibid., p. 11.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid., p. 10.

[12]Ibid., pp. 10-11.

[13]200 Ejercicios y Juegos para el Actor y No-actor con Ganas de Decir Algo A través del Teatro.

[14]Augusto Boal, 200 Ejercicios...(Buenos Aires: Editorial Crisis S.R.L., 1975), p. 13.

[15]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980.

[16]Boal, op. cit., p. 11.

[17]Ibid., p. 27.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Driskell, op. cit., p. 72.

[20]Teatro Popular.

[21]Saco, op. cit., p. 116.

[22]The theory of Brecht's epic - political theatre includes, among its principles, a radical position against the illusionistic theatre and its process of empathy which was developed to its perfection by Stanislavsky and supported by all its tradition of playwrights at end of the nineteenth and beginning of twentieth century. Brecht rejected the eagerness of meticulous reconstruction of reality; but basically he rejected the identification of actors and spectators with the characters, and the hypnotical magic created on stage which prevent and destroy any critical attitude. In contraposition to illusionistic theatre, he created the Epic or Dialectical theatre (also called Political Theatre), in which, through a series of alienation techniques, he obtains the critical attitude on actors and spectators toward society, history and human behavior.

[23]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

[27]See Augusto Boal, "Teatro del oprimido," Crisis, 2, núm. 14 (Junio 1974), 25-32; Theater of the Oppressed, p. 119; and Teatro Libero-Palermo (Ed.), Momenti: Godrano - Agosto 1977 (Palermo: Teatro Libero Palermo, 1977), p. 15.

[28]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. 119.

[29]See Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, pp. 1-50.

[30]Augusto Boal, Categorias de Teatro Popular (Buenos Aires: Ediciones CEPE, 1972), p. 73; and Augusto Boal, Técnicas Latinoamericanas de Teatro Popular (Una revolución Copernicana al revés) (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Corregidor Saici YE., 1975), p. 52.

[31]Augusto Boal, "Teatro Jornal: Primeira Edição," Latin American Theatre Review, 4, no. 2 (Spring 1971), pp. 57-58; and Augusto Boal, Técnicas Latino-Americanas de Teatro Popular Uma revolução copernicana ao contrário (São Paulo: Editora Hucitepec, 1979), p. 43.

[32]Those periods correspond to the four social and economic systems which developed throughout the history of human beings: Slavery, Feudalism, Capitalism and Socialism.

[33]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. 119.

[34]See Barret H. Clark, comp., European Theories of the Drama (New York: Crown Publishers Inc., 1977), pp. 3-22.

[35]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. 33.
The same idea is shown in Arnold Hauser, The Social History of Art, Vol. I (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 75-76. In this respect, he says: "Tragedy is the characteristic creation of Athenian democracy; in no form of art are the inner conflicts of its social structure so directly and clearly to be seen as in this. The externals of its presentation to the masses were democratic, but its content, the heroic sagas with their tragic-heroic outlook on life, was aristocratic. It unquestionably propagates the standards of the great-hearted individual, the uncommon distinguished man... it owed its origin to the separation of the choirleader from the choir, which turned collective performance of songs into dramatic dialogue..."

[36]Boal, op. cit., p. 55.
Arnold Hauser analyzes the function of this Mediaeval Art in The Social History of Art, Vol. I (Page 164), as an authoritarian one, which tried to inculcate in the people a solemn attitude of religious respect for the status quo. Boal thinks that this is coercion, because it represents a static and stereotyped world in which the generic and homogeneous prevailed.

[37]Boal, op. cit., p. 56.

[38]Ibid.

[39]See Arnold Hauser, The Social History of Art, Vol. I.

[40]See Augusto Boal, "A poética da 'Virtú', I-II," O Estado de São Paulo, 13, 20 de outubro de 1962, Suplemento Literário-Teatro, p. 5.

[41]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. 61.
Alfred Von Martin in his book Sociology of the Renaissance (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), makes an analysis similar to Boal, but from a sociological perspective. For him, virtue and competition were the new ideology of humanistics; and he considers that Individualism (one of the principal characteristics of this moment) was the one that covered the concept of virtue, which meant man of "theory and practice". His thesis is that the Bourgeosie wanted, in the first years of this existence, to destroy all the restrictions imposed on men through the laws, traditions, and

religious values of the Feudal system; and after the old social order was eliminated to impose their own restrictions.

[42]Machiavelli was the primary theoretician in this respect. His literary writings were an artistic vision of Bourgeoise man. He also gave great importance to the concept of virtue as a fundamental characteristic of the new individualized human being.

[43]Boal, op. cit., p. 73.

[44]What occurred in Romanticism, says Alfred Von Martin, was that the Bourgeoisie was aristocratized. For him, this moment became the "Feudalization of the Bourgeoisie." In his book The Sociology Of The Renaissance, he makes the following analysis. At the beginning of the Renaissance, the Bourgeoisie was violent, revolutionary. The concept of society included the whole community: the people. Then it changed. The fear of risk made it conservative. This occurred after they took political power. So, dictatorship was born as a result of their fear and loosing their power. Their humanism changed also to a "Romantic Humanis,," more isolated from the masses and more elitist. The spiritual ideas returned. And the Capitalist system, which at the beginning was in close relation with Humanism, was separated from it.

[45]Boal believes that the cinema and television were the younger offsprings of Realism.

CHAPTER III

THE THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

This chapter will discuss and clarify the development of the Theatre of the Oppressed and its fundamental concepts and principles. We shall also analyze three critical developmental periods of this theatre (from 1964 to 1973, Boal's experience in Peru during 1973, and from 1973 to 1980). Finally, we shall discuss one of the most controversial issues related to the Theatre of the Oppressed--whether it is fiction or reality.

A. Fundamental Concepts and Principles

For Boal, the spectator was the fundamental element of communication through theatre,[1] and this was why the Theatre of the Oppressed had as its first principle the liberation or transformation of the spectator.[2] Boal used these words (liberation and transformation) synonymously and, to him, the liberation of the spectator implied a transformation. The word liberation was used for the first time, in 1978, in an interview with the Canadian Theatre Review:

> I want the spectator to act, not watch. It is obscene for a human being who is fully capable of "doing" to merely watch. The first principle in my Theater of the Oppressed is liberation of the spectator. The Theatre of the Oppressed does not imply a reflection of the past but a preparation for the future.[3]

Later, in 1979, he altered this first principle's meaning by substituting the word "transformation" for the word "liberation."

He also more accurately established what constituted this transformation: making the spectator a protagonist. In his pamphlet, Pratique du Théâtre de l'Opprimé, published in Paris, in 1979, he wrote that the first fundamental principle of his theatre is: "To transform the spectator into a protagonist."[4] This first principle is the key to understanding his poetics of the oppressed since it is the principal objective of his poetics; "to transform people--'spectators,' passive beings in the theatrical phenomenon--into subjects, into actors, transformers of the dramatic action."[5]

The second principle is a direct result of the first one. It encourages the protagonist in a wider perspective to prepare for future change, not only to interpret or to reflect upon the past.

Based on these two principles Boal establishes his poetics, not as evangelical nor propagandist nor even didactic. It is not evangelical since the Theatre of the Oppressed will not convey the good word, the actual theatre, or even perfection; nor is it propagandist since it will not attempt to convince spectators to follow certain propositions nor to accept specific political positions. On the contrary, it will try to understand the propositions and political positions of the spectators. Finally, this poetics theatre is not didactic since it does not pretend to know more than the spectators. In other words, this theatre does not pretend to teach a moral lesson or to give ethical lessons to the spectators; therefore, this theatre is more than anything else "pedagogical,"[6] and, in this sense, everyone, spectators and performers, will learn together.

Taking into consideration what the Theatre of the Oppressed is not and what its two fundamental principles are, the poetics of the oppressed seeks the following:

(1) To dynamize spectators instead of promoting a catharsis and not to purge from the spectators tendencies to transform reality (hamartia), but the contrary, to stimulate these tendencies by fortifying and increasing them.

(2) To help spectators to reproduce situations by finding their own solutions to their own problems through their own forces.

Another crucial point is that this theatre always selects its spectators, and the reason why is that Boal's theatre wishes to serve only the oppressed and not the oppressors--which oppressed people is irrelevant. He clearly defines the oppressors and those who are oppressed:

> The Theatre of the Oppressed is the theatre of the oppressed classes and all those who are oppressed within those classes. It is not the theatre of the oppressor classes, although there you can find oppressed people. It is not of the oppressed who are essentially oppressors; but of the oppressors who are essentially oppressed.[7]

Ultimately, the Theatre of the Oppressed is for those whose fundamental character is being oppressed within an oppressed class. This is the reason why this theatre selects it spectators.

Finally, Boal believes that this poetics "must show a problem and try to effect identification of the spectator with that problem."[8] However, this identification process should occur through "analogy,"

and not "identity." To simplify this, the spectator says, "It seems much like my reality," and not "It is my reality." Lastly, this is a theatre of osmosis and empathy, and according to Boal this "transforms the spectator into a passive being."[9] This identification through analogy transforms the spectator into an active being when he says, "It seems...." If there is no identification with the problem, then the Theatre of the Oppressed is non-existent. This is applicable to Bertolt Brecht's poetics, too. In it, all identification is eliminated and the reaction of the spectator is through what Boal defines as "solidarity," for the spectator only says, "I must agree, although it doesn't seem to be my reality." Here, the spectator does not identify with the problem, but only demonstrates his solidarity.

In this manner Boal delineates the differences between his poetics, and Aristotle's and Brecht's:

> Aristotle proposes a poetics in which the spectator delegates power to the dramatic character so that the latter may act and think for him. Brecht proposes a poetics in which the spectator delegates power to the character who thus acts in his place, but the spectator reserves the right to think for himself, often in opposition to the character. In the first case, a "catharsis" occurs; in the second, an awakening of critical consciousness. But the <u>poetics of the oppressed</u> focuses on the action itself: the spectator delegates no power to the character (or actor) either to act or to think in his place; on the contrary, he himself assumes the protagonic role, changes the dramatic action, tries out solutions, discusses plans for change--in short, trains himself for real action.[10]

Now, we can begin to analyze the development of Boal's poetics of the oppressed. We shall present it from a chronological perspective to clarify its basic techniques and fundamental changes.

B. The Development of the Poetics of the Oppressed: The First Steps (1964 - 1973)

1. Boal's experience in Brazil: 1964-1970.

a) The political situation.

In Brazil, from 1960 onward, there were political upheavals which influenced the social and cultural development of that country, and the theatre as well. The following is a summary of the most relevant changes that have directly or indirectly affected the development of the Brazilian theatre and the Theatre of the Oppressed.

The early 1960s experienced relative democracy and an increase in the progressive forces. General elections were held and President Jânio Quadros, was elected. After his resignation two years later, vice-president João Goulart assumed the presidency. The secretary of the army, Marshal Denys, was opposed to that nomination. An agrarian reform plan was instantly announced and a proposal to modify the constitution was also presented. A measure was passed to curb President Goulart's liberal policies--the House of Representatives[11] agreed to limit presidential powers and created the post of Chief of Government.[12]

In a meeting of the Organization of American States (O.A.S.), in 1962, Brazil stated its position of non-intervention in Cuba. A year later, in a landslide referendum vote, the people voted for a presidential system. The General Confederation of Labor and the National Union of Students verbally attacked Governor Lecerda of the state of Guanabara, because he was opposed to the constitution's modification. A resolution for minimum agrarian reform was signed

in 1964. This provoked the Navy and the governors of Minas Gerais, São Paulo and Guanabara to revolt against President Goulart. As a result, Ranieri Mazilli was named as interim president. The military leaders signed a constitutional amendment that would cancel all previously legislated parliamentary bills. The congress elected Marshal Castelo Branco as President of the Republic. This was the first coup d'état and it opened the way toward the imposition of censorship and repression in Brazil and brought to a close the democratic period.

Boal believed that the years between 1960 to 1964 were characterized by a kind of "populist," "liberal" and "unfolding government."[13] The theatre experienced tremendous development because it evolved into a more popular form and content.[14] Nearly 1,000 popular theatrical cultural centers existed for the people. The theatre received a great deal of government support, and this stimulated the development of many national playwrights.[15] Many professional and amateur theatre companies performed for workers and peasants in the different popular centers sponsored by the government. This significant increase in theatrical activity was interrupted by the 1964 coup d'etat and subsequently all centers were closed. All theatre productions that were held in the streets, in the workers' unions, and other popular places were discontinued.

In response to the coup d'etat of 1964 a massive cultural movement was started. Most of the theatrical performances--the new nationalistic dramas written by many rebellious authors were targeted against the military regime. The forms and styles varied, but,

ultimately, the essence was the same: to criticize the political situation:

> In the mid-sixties a new trend in the arts brought forward more politically-tinged writing and active criticism of the "establishment" than had perhaps ever been experienced in Brazil. With it came a growing freedom of expression, with the abuses which occasionally tend to accompany new liberties. Writers used a much more forceful language and focused upon the lower classes of society, usually avoided as subjects in the past.[16]

Thus appeared a great number of plays characterized by social concerns: Dias Gomes' Invasion[17] and Birthplace of a Hero,[18] recalling Ibsen's An Enemy of the People; Ferreira Gullar's Dr. Getulio Vargar, His Life and His Glory,[19] a musical carnival version of the story of a Brazilian dictator and president; Plínio Marcos' Knife in the Flesh;[20] Opinion,[21] a series of dramatic anti-establishment pieces by different authors; Antônio Vivar's Cordélia Brasil; Augusto Boal and Gianfrancesco Guarnieri's Arena Narrates Zumbi; and many others, such as Liberty, Liberty[22] and Electra.

The above plays, although they faced censorship, were performed without major incident. However, with the inauguration, in 1967, of a new president, General Artur da Costa e Silva, repression intensified. His government was characterized by austere economic measures accompanied by political reprisals and imprisonments. Promised elections were postponed; criticism of the government was viewed as subversive. The theatre realized its impact when many productions were banned or cancelled and theatres were closed. Actors, directors and playwrights were arrested. Foreign writers were also included under the censorship law: Leroi Jones, Brecht, Sophocles,

Gogol; even Tennessee Williams' A Streetcar Named Desire was banned because of the words "cow" and "gorilla" which were favorite epithets of students and demonstrators for the police and other repressive forces.

Due to this repression, theatre started losing its homogeneity. One faction was associated with the right wing--acceptance of the new government; the other faction, the leftist, was fragmented into three splinter groups which displayed tendencies labeled by Boal as: "Neo-Realistic," "Exhortative," and "Neo-Romantic Tropicalism." Only the second one held its position of "attacking the triumphant lie";[23] this was the Arena Theatre of São Paulo under the direction of Augusto Boal.

It was during these turbulent years that Boal created in the Arena Theatre a new method and style of performing and writing plays entitled the Joker System. He presented various productions, until 1968, when the political situation worsened and a second, more violent coup d'état occurred. Repression increased alarmingly and Boal called this second coup "the fascist coup d'état."[24]

An increase in protests against the opposition to the prevailing political climate reached a climax when representatives of the performing arts and others from different cultural sectors initiated a week-long protest strike:

> All theatres were closed for three days and street demonstrations continued for almost a month. Banners proclaimed: "Down with censorship!''''Culture, not Censorship!'' A formal set of conditions was prepared and submitted, including the following:
> 1. The release of plays and films banned by censors.

2. Suspension of the penalties assessed against the producers of A Streetcar Named Desire.
3. Decentralization of censorship authority.
4. The formation of a new code of censorship, recognizing artistic freedom.[25]

This confrontation between the intellectuals and the government demonstrated how volatile Brazilian politics and the arts had become by 1968. Another faction was evident in Brazilian society, the Right Wing, which felt that the authorities were too lenient and took its own action. Three fascist organizations were created: The Brazilian Society in Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (T.F.P.); the Anti-Communist Movement (M.A.C.); and the Command to Hunt Communists (C.C.C.). All of this agitation caused the country to experience, in 1968, an average of four bombings a month directed against the police, security forces, foreign firms, government representatives, and newspapers' and publishers' offices. Theatre activity experienced this same kind of repression.

> The leading lady of one production was kidnapped by the police in São Paulo, whisked off to Rio de Janeiro to be interrogated by representatives of the military, and released twenty-four hours later, after a most unpleasant and frightening experience. On several occasions bomb threats were made at various theatres. Teatro Opinião (Opinion Theatre) of Rio de Janeiro, after such an attempt, put up a banner which said, "This is the way fascism treats art." It also accused the government of being passive in the face of increasing terrorism. The government's reaction was to close the theatre for two days. Certain popular productions were invaded and their casts beaten. The Primeira Feira Paulista and Roda-Viva were particular targets.[26]

Other cases occurred in São Paulo. During a performance, the theatre of Ruth Escobar was almost destroyed and the actors placed under arrest. Only the Arena Theatre of São Paulo, with Boal as its director, and the Teatro Oficina, under the direction of

Fernando Peixoto and Martinez Correa, were not intimidated by the repression into discontinuing their activities.

Between 1964 and 1968, the Brazilian theatre's content continued to be popular but not its form--for it could not be performed in popular places such as, streets and marketplaces. After 1968, it was impossible to do theatre for the people and because of the repression it was reduced as a cultural activity. For example, in 1969, only six out of 20 theatres that existed in Rio de Janeiro were open and half of them were used for musical spectacles. It was typical to see only one theatrical performance a year in São Paulo.[27]

Censorship increased, as well as terrorist acts and political persecution, and in 1971, nine more plays and twenty-four films were banned. Augusto Boal's unwarranted arrest in 1971 was an example of this:

> But perhaps the most alarming and unpleasant action in the theatre world was the reported sudden arrest and imprisonment of one of the country's leading directors, Augusto Boal of the Teatro Arena of São Paulo, reportedly for statements made while his company was visiting the United States and Argentina.[28]

During those years, from 1968 to 1971, the Arena Theatre was a part of the underground theatre movement in Brazil. This was when Boal started to develop his technique of the Theatre of the Oppressed, using his Newspaper Theatre. He also felt the need to begin defining popular theatre from the Latin American perspective and these theories were later written in his first books. Forced into exile by torture and political persecution, Boal left the country in 1971.

After this brief presentation of Brazil's political climate, we can now analyze the development of the poetics of the oppressed.

b) The Joker System: nucleus of the Theatre of the Oppressed.

When in 1965, the Arena Theatre performed the play Arena Narrates Zumbi, a new period in the development of this group began, named by Boal "the Musicals".[29] This play was the first of a series of performances called "The Arena Theatre of São Paulo Narrates..."[30] With that spectacle, Boal and his group discovered and created a new narrative story formula which was later perfected in another musical spectacle named Arena Narrates Tiradentes. According to Boal, this first spectacle created the necessary chaos to begin Tiradentes--the creation of a new system.[31]

This new formula was originally named "Una nueva manera no tradicional de montar espectáculos"[32] ("A new non-traditional way of performing spectacles"). Later on it was called the Joker System. The word "joker" has the same meaning as the "joker" playing card, which has more mobility than any of the other cards in the deck, this system permits the creation of a kind of interpreter who can play various roles: actor, character, chorus, and protagonist. The texts could be written for this sytem or adapted to it, permitting the scenic director to set up plays by any playwright. These texts would be submitted to the group and they would determine the spectacle's form and structure.

Not until 1969 did this system take form as a solid instrument of theatrical work, by creating a system of interpretation.

Before presenting a clear description of the functioning of this system, we must discuss the first proceedings relating to its creation with the production Arena Narrates Zumbi.

The first step involved the disconnection of actors-characters --all actors and actresses represented all of the characters. This was not new in theatre. In the Greek tragedies, we find this disconnection--two or more actors alternated in the interpretation of all the characters. Masks were used to avoid confusing the public. The actors of the Arena Theatre used masks also, but not material masks. They used what Boal calls "Social Masks."[33] Social masks were composed of rituals, whole systems of actions and reactions, pre-established and mechanized. For example, to cross a street we have to wait for the green light; when we enter a church we speak in a low tone of voice. Even the relations between human beings were processed according to actions and reactions that were more or less pre-established and mechanized by laws, traditions, habits, and customs. For Boal, ritualized behavior was a death behavior: man doesn't create, he only performs established routines. The number of roles performed by each person in the society created for him a social mask. Each profession had its own social mask with its own rituals: the rituals of the priest in the church--talking to his parishioners, saying mass, and praying--were not the same as those of a worker or a clerk. When the worker reached his home, he would act very differently from the way the priest or the clerk would act outside their professions. These rituals influenced the way of

walking and of looking of each individual. This made it possible for us to distinguish between a military man and a teacher when we would see them walking, talking, and acting. In general, these behaviors, once ritualized, were the social masks of human beings.

These mechanized actions and reactions were part of the actor's characterization. With Arena Narrates Zumbi, independent of whom an actor represents in each scene, the group held onto the permanent mask of the character by accentuating a psychological feature. So, for instance, violence was typical of the character Rei Zumbi.

The second proceeding was the consequence of the first one. The spectacle was not performed from the character's individual point of view, but it was narrated by the whole group according to collective criteria. They were searching for a level of collective awareness: "Nosotros somos el Teatro de Arena, y nosotros, todos juntos, vamos a contaros una historia como colectivamente la vemos e interpretamos"[34] ("We are the Arena Theatre, and we, together, are going to tell you a story as we see and interpret it collectively").

The third proceeding was called the Genre and Style Eclecticism.[35] Within the same spectacle, in this case Zumbi, the genre changed without preparatory transition from simplistic melodrama to the most absurd drama--this was also applicable to the changes in styles. Boal said that with Zumbi, a healthful aesthetic chaos was created, with the changes in styles. Some scenes were expressionistic, others were realistic, symbolic, or surrealistic. The reason:

"En teatro cualquier ruptura desentumece"[36] ("In theatre any rupture eliminates numbness"). Boal explained that in order to eliminate numbness, the american playwriting norms recommend comic relief as a form of stimulus. Here, in the example of Zumbi, what was recommended was a kind of stylistic relief.

The fourth and last proceeding was the use of music, totally independent from the concepts. This rapidly prepared the spectator for accepting the simplified texts.

After Zumbi, the Joker System was more tightly structured and defined, with the play Arena Narrates Tiradentes by Augusto Boal and Gianfrancesco Guarnieri. Using as its basis the proceedings already described, the schematic of the Joker System involved two structures: the structure of the text and of the cast.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE TEXT:

At least once, it included each of the following elements:

> Dedication.--A song or scene in which the cast dedicates the show to a person or event.
>
> Explanations.--Breaks in the dramatic continuity of the show, given by the Joker as lectures, articulating the point of view of those presenting the play (in this case the Arena Theatre). The Joker is a man of our own time and does not belong to the universe of the play but to the universe of the audience; the explanations may include anything that needs to be explained, including recent events which can be related to the play. They also change according to the nature of the audience.
>
> Episodes.--Each play is usually divided into five episodes, three in the first act and two in the second; the explanations come between episodes.

> Scenes.--Each scene has its own style; several are linked together into a whole episode by the commentaries.
>
> Commentaries.--These are written mostly in poetry, sung by the Joker or the orchestra. They hold the play together illusionistically; as the scenes' styles may change suddenly, the commentaries make the audience aware of those possible changes, giving information about the rules of the game in the next scene.
>
> Interviews.--There are many devices which show the audience the true mind of the character; for instance, the soliloquy, the aside, etc. This one is taken from non-theatrical rituals like soccer. During the intermission of a soccer game the broadcaster usually interviews the players on the field. In our system, whenever it is necessary to show the audience the inside story of the character, the Joker asks him those questions the audience wants answered. During the interviews, the Joker addresses the character, not the actor.
>
> Exhortation.--After the play ends, the cast sings a song in which they urge the audience to act according to the play's examples.[37]

In 1971, there appeared in Spain an article in a theatre periodical, Primer Acto, by Boal explaining the Joker System. In it, the description of the structure of the text differed somewhat from the article in The Drama Review quoted above, inasmuch as The Drama Review article was published in 1970, and the material in it was obtained from a six-week Ford Foundation supported trip through seven Latin American countries, including Brazil, made by Richard Schechner and Joan Pottlitzer in 1968. Therefore, the Spanish periodical probably presents the Joker System in a more updated manner since its information was obtained in 1971 when the Arena Theatre participated in the Nancy Theatre Festival in France. By

then, the Joker System was already consolidated and structured as an instrument of theatrical work, and this occurred in 1969 after the production of Arena Narrates Tiradentes by Boal and Guarnieri. Because of this, we must present the structure of the text of the Joker System that appeared in the Spanish periodical in 1971. We shall only outline the components, as follows:[38]

1. Dedicatorias - (Dedications)
2. Explicaciones - (Explanations)
3. Capítulos - (Chapters)
4. Episodios - (Episodes)
5. Comentarios - (Commentaries)
6. Entrevistas - (Interviews)
7. Moraleja - (A brief moral observation)

As we can readily see, the first two parts stayed the same. The first change was the reorganization of the episodes and scenes. "Chapters" replaced the word "scenes." Many times the chapters consisted of short scenes about a similar theme or situation or, at other times, only one large scene. Everything depended on the type of dialogue, the theme discussed, and the situation.

The second change occurred in the last part. Instead of an "exhortation," the spectacle would end with a "moraleja," a brief moral observation. The "moraleja" went beyond an exhortation. At the end the cast not only urged the audience to act according to the play's examples, but also to deduce a moral contained in the play, not as a lesson but as a principle to have in mind when action

occurred. For instance, at the end of the spectacle Arena Narrates Tiradentes, the "moraleja" was the following: if Tiradentes would have had the power of his confidants, and if they had had the goodness of Tiradentes, and if they all wouldn't have been isolated, Brazil could have obtained its liberty 30 years earlier: therefore, it would continue to be free and to struggle to gain additional liberties as needed.[39] In the spectacle Arena Narrates Zumbi, we can see the "moraleja" with an exhortative character. Ganga Zumba realized that to fight is a way of growing and of obtaining something--it is the reason for being: "the whip whipped but taught; it whipped so many times that one couldn't resist and reacted."[40]

Now, we shall examine the second structure: the structure of the cast which was also the structure of the performing group. Subsequently, this structure was established according to the dramatic-theatrical functions that could be accomplished by the performers and not for the textual characters' point of view.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE CAST:

> The Protagonist.--Sometimes we make an identification of the actor and the character, but only for the protagonist; e.g., Tiradentes, our national hero of Independence. In these cases, the acting is naturalistic: to eat, the character needs food; the fight, he needs a weapon, e.g., Stanislavski, Antoine. He has only the character's level of consciousness, not the actor's. He is a photograph. He never abandons this reality even when he is interviewed by the Joker.
>
> The Joker.--Exactly the opposite, magic reality; the actor as Joker can play any role, including the protagonist. Master of Ceremonies, lecturer, judge, raisonneur, stagehand, he can interrupt the action,

repeat certain actions in order to demonstrate them better, use slides, films, diagrams, statistics.

The Chorus.--The cast may be divided into two choruses: antagonist and deuteragonistic; each chorus may have a coryphaeus. The actor may change from one chorus to another, in order to play a scene with many characters, but the coryphaeus may not. Most of the time we use one chorus and each actor can play any character.

The Coryphaeus.--May substitute for the Joker, for example, when the Joker is playing the protagonist.

The Orchestra.--Guitar, bass, drums; they sing part of the text, help the Joker to demonstrate, and also sing in the chorus.[41]

This scheme could be changed, depending on the play. Thus, in the preparation of a spectacle, the outline employed could be summarized as follows:

Outline of the Spectacle

Structure of the Text	Structure of the Group
Dedications	The Protagonist
Explanations	The Joker
Chapters	The Chorus
Episodes	Deuteragonist
Commentaries	Antagonist
Interviews	The Coryphaeus
"Moraleja"	The Orchestra

Before describing each part of the spectacle, let us present the eight reasons given by Boal for the creation of that system. These reasons can be classified as aesthetic, economic and political. The aesthetic ones are the following:

1. To present in the same spectacle the play and its analysis (exegesis).[42]

2. To propose a permanent system of spectacle, which would be the structure of the text and of the group, that centralized all the processes, techniques, genres and styles, and considered each scene as independent from the rest of the elements. In this way the multiform character of the spectacle imposed itself, and the plurality of styles was reduced to one style only through the explanations of the Joker who transformed the spectacle into a forum of ideas and facts.
3. To establish a series of rigid rules which permitted the spectator to know all the scenic possibilities of each spectacle before the play began.
4. To restore the liberty of the subject-character inside the rigid outlines of the social analysis. According to Boal, this was a coordinated liberty which prevented the subjectivistic chaos which leads to lyrical styles such as expressionism and surrealism.

Besides those aesthetic reasons there are two economic reasons:

1. The mobility for doing tours.
2. The reduction of financial obstacles to performances and productions, so all of them could be possible.

The progressive impoverishment of the population necessitated the creation of a system with a fixed and reduced number of performers--the number of characters in a play did not matter.

Finally, there are two more overriding reasons that are political.

1. With this system, Boal and the Arena Theatre wished to increase the popularization of the theatre.
2. Through the analytical function of the Joker, the ambiquities in the interpretation of the play were eliminated, and the interpretation was always one which expressed itself in the text's lines.

Further explanation of the aesthetic reasons for the system's creation will be given inasmuch as they were the theoretical basis of it. The first one (to offer in the same spectacle the play and its analysis) attempted to show the author's or the director's or the performers' opinion about the play. The author's point of view of the play has always been exposed. The use of the monologue in various plays fits this intention. The chorus in Greek tragedy analyzed in various moments the behavior of the character. Too, the famous "raisonneur"[43] of the Ibsen plays could be the spokesman of the author or even the narrator in various modern-contemporary plays such as, After the Fall, by Arthur Miller.

It is apparent that in the performance of any play analytical criteria differ. For instance, in a play such as The Tragedy of Julius Caesar, by Shakespeare either Brutus or Marcus Antonius can be identified as the principal character. There are varied interpretations even within the same text. These interpretations are a particular analysis of the play. They are different forms of

focusing the action from a pre-established and pre-determined perspective.

According to Boal these interpretations always existed, as in the above-mentioned examples. What Boal wanted to create was a new form of revealing to the audience what the author and/or the director thought about the conflict presented on stage. Boal said that the previous forms--the monologues, the chorus, the raisonneur, the narrators--created a kind of character closer to the characters of the play than to the spectators. "Coros, narradores, raisonneurs, etc., acaban por formar parte del argumento en vez de compartir la vida de público."[44] ("Choruses, narrators, raisonneurs, etc., wind up becoming a part of the plot instead of sharing the life of the public"). Boal desired the contrary. He wanted the Joker to be more closely related to the spectators than to the play's characters. That is why the explanations were part of the Joker System. With these explanations, the system tried to develop the spectacle on two different and complementary levels: the level of the fable which could use all the illusionistic and conventional resources of the theatre, and the level of the lecture, where the Joker became an analyst.[45] In this manner, the Joker moved more toward the spectator's universe than toward the character's. Thus, Boal created a new form that revealed the author's or director's opinion or point of view of (as in this case) that which the company had about the play and its interpretation.

The second aesthetic reason for the creation of this system (i.e., to propose a permanent system of spectacle that centralizes

all the processes, techniques, genres and styles, considering each scene as independent from the rest of the elements) implies finding a solution to the problem of unity. Instead of thinking of the problem in relation to the whole play, the Arena Theatre thought of it in relation to each isolated scene. With this system, each scenic problem had to be solved aesthetically according to its own separate problems. What usually happens when a play is produced is that the techniques used are from only one style. The style selected is one that is considered proper for the most vital scenes, but for others it is inadequate. In this manner, the stylistic unity of the whole play first, reduces the number of techniques which can be used and, secondly, limits the developmental capacity that each scene possesses. With the Joker System, the director or the author can use at any given moment techniques from realism or surrealism, or any other effective style.

But, of course, the system did not forget nor eliminate the problem of stylistic unity for the whole play. After the problem was solved for each scene, it was necessary to solve it for the whole play. Boal knew that it was a dangerous precedent to do a play without unity in style in terms of its totality. Working only with the scenes in isolation and combining non-unified styles, could create chaotic anarchy. To avoid this and to find a total unity for the whole play, Boal and the group gave great weight to the Joker's explanations. In the Joker System the style of these explanations fitted into the general style of the play, serving as a point of reference for the rest of the elements.

> We are speaking here of writing plays that are fundamentally judgements, trials. And, as in the courtroom, the fragments of each intervention, or testimony, can have their own form, without damage to the particular form of the trial. In the "Joker" also; each chapter or episode can be treated in the manner that fits it best, without damage to the unity of the whole, which will be provided not by the limiting permanence of a form, but by the stylistic variety existing in reference to a single perspective.[46]

In discussing the third aesthetic reason (i.e., to establish a series of rigid rules which permit the spectator to know all the scenic possibilities of each spectacle before the play begins), we must clarify that this rigid system did not suppress originality. Boal maintained that he wanted his system to create an unalterable identical structure, with enough flexibility to assimilate any innovative discovery.[47] In other words, inside that unalterable identical structure the originality of each scene, chapter, episode, or explanation should exist. Boal, to illustrate this point, presented an analogy with a soccer game:

> Soccer has pre-established rules, a rigid structure of penalties and off-sides, which does not hinder the improvisation and surprise of each play. The game would lose all interest if each match were played in accordance to rules made up for that match alone, if the fans had to learn during the match the rules governing it. Previous knowledge is indispensable to full enjoyment.[48]

With theatre this could occur, too: the public would be cognizant of the rules of the spectacle beforehand while still experiencing the enjoyment of it. The improvisations and surprises in each spectacle, scene, chapter, episode, and explanation would relax the rigid structure of those rules. In this sense, originality did not contradict the rigid structure.

Finally, the fourth aesthetic reason (i.e., to restore the liberty of the subject-character inside the rigid outlines of the social analysis) implies solving the problem of what the character really is: a subject of moral, spiritual, and internal forces, or an object of social and economic forces. Those who accept the first one ignore the great influence that the social and economic forces have over the character, and those who accept the second one reduce the liberty and the individual forces of the character. With this point of view, the liberty of a character as the subject of the dramatic action is removed and the dramatic action is reduced to the conflict of social forces, and the characters are only the objects of those forces. With the Joker System, the structure of the dramatic conflict was always a product of the social forces, but the character behaved as if he were unaware of them. However, the character was not only an object of those forces, but also a subject of his actions. Social and economic forces were influential but not determinants in the development of the dramatic action. Therefore, the liberty of the subject-character was rescued from the rigid outlines of this social analysis. Boal recognized that both the social and economic forces of the society and the moral, spiritual and individual values of the character were important forces that were present in the development of the dramatic action.

Let us examine more closely the different areas which formed the structures of the Joker System by starting with the structure of the cast. The Arena Theatre of São Paulo decided to eliminate the traditional distribution of character roles. Instead of representing

the characters of the play, they decided that what should be represented were the "functions"[49] that the characters portrayed, and not the characters themselves. These functions sprang up from the "general structure of the conflicts in the text."[50] In this way the first function was the protagonist's, who presented the concrete reality. This was the only time where a perfect and continuous link between actor and character was permitted. One actor represented the protagonist and the only the protagonist throughout the play. The first function had the following characteristics:

1. The actor cannot perform any task that exceeds the limits of the character as a human being; to eat he needs food, to drink he needs drink, to fight he needs a sword.
2. The space in which he moves must be thought of in the terms of Antoine.
3. A "protagonic" character must have the outlook of the character and not of the authors.
4. He will continue his action "really" like a character from another play, lost on a theatre stage. He is the "Slice of life," the detail, the real thing.
5. The actor must not only be guided by criteria of verisimilitude; this scenographic conception must do it, too: his clothes, his other personal items must be as authentic as possible.
6. The audience must always have the impression of the absent fourth wall, even though the other three may also be absent.[51]

This protagonic function had the objective of recovering empathy. According to Boal empathy was a theatrical mechanism which could be used correctly or incorrectly. The Arena Theatre wanted to project empathy, while simultaneously presenting the analysis (exegesis). Therefore, the character selected to be the protagonist would be that character whom the director wanted to link empathically with the public.

The second function was the Joker function which is the opposite of the protagonic. This was the magic reality created by himself. If it was necessary, he could invent fantastic walls, combats and soldiers. To fight he could use an imaginary weapon and to kill himself he could create a sword which did not exist. His characteristics were as follows:

1. The "Joker" is polyvalent; his function is the only one that can perform any role in the play, being able even to replace the protagonist when the latter's realistic nature prevents him from doing something.
2. The outlook of the "Joker"--actor must be that of the actor or adaptor which is assumed to be above and beyond that of the other characters in time and space.
3. He is omniscient. He knows the development of the plot and the objective of the play.
4. He is magical.
5. He is polymorphous.
6. He is ubiquitous.[52]

If need be, the Joker can be assisted by the coryphaeus or by the choral orchestra.

The third function is the choral function. The rest of the actors of the company are grouped into two choruses: deuteragonistic and antagonistic. The actors of the first chorus will perform any character or any role which supports the central idea--the idea of the protagonist. The actors in the second chorus will perform the characters' roles which oppose the idea of the protagonist. The characteristics of the chorus function are as follows:

1. The choruses do not have a fixed number of actors; they may vary from one episode to another.
2. Actors and actresses, without regard to sex, will be able to perform masculine or feminine roles, with the exception, of course, of the scenes in which sex determines the dramatic action.[53]

The coryphaeus function was employed with the chorus function and followed, in general, the functioning of both choruses. Each chorus possessed its own coryphaeus, and in one of these, two coryphaei, perhaps even a third one, might be substituted for the Joker while he performed another function, for instance, the protagonist's.

Finally, the last function is that of the orchestra. At least three musicians could compose it. Besides performing music, the members of the orchestra would sing alone or with the coryphaeus all the commentaries with were informative or illusionistic.

The structure was rigid, but a certain flexibility was permitted. For example, if the play required a third group in conflict, a third chorus named tritagonist could be created. Also, one could possibly have two protagonists such as, Romeo and Juliet, or even abolish the protagonistic function and create two Jokers. Sometimes instead of a Joker, a play could have a Joker chorus. Above are a few examples of this rigid cast structure's flexibility.

Any spectacle that started with a Dedication which took the form of a choral song, a scene, a poem, or a mixture of them, then shortly thereafter an initial Explanation followed that presented the company, the author, and the adaptor, and revealed to the spectator the techniques employed in the performance of the play, together with the text intentions. The rest of the Explanations, which would be inserted throughout the entire text, would be in prose and spoken by the Joker in a lecture tone. For the Explanations any usual lecture resources could be used: slides, poetry readings, map showings, documents, letters, and films. The

Explanations set the general tone of the performance: debate, forum, or tribunal. The characteristics of the Explanations were as follows:

1. All the explanations can and should be extremely dynamic, changing as the play is staged in other cities or on other dates.
2. If on the day of the performance some important event occurs which is related to the theme of the play, that relationship should be analyzed.[54]

Aside from the Explanations the structure would be divided into Chapters and Episodes. The Episodes would develop scenes more or less interdependently. Each scene would be a total unit of small dimensions which would contain, at least, a variation in the development of the dramatic action. It could be in dialogue or song or even reduced to a simple poem reading. These scenes would be connected through the Commentaries which would be written in rhymed verse. They would be sung by the coryphaeus, the choral orchestra, or both at the same time. Inasmuch as each scene had its own style, the Commentaries could take note of the changes in style.

Other relevant parts of this spectacle structure were the Interviews. They would appear only if necessary. The interviews were done by the Joker and they could include spectators, characters, and actors. To accomplish the interview, the Joker would stop the the action of the play. If a character was interviewed, the actor who performed the role would respond, using the character's consciousness and not his own.

Finally, the spectacle ended with a Moraleja or a brief moral observation. This could be in either prose or verse, or even

a song performed by the Joker or the chorus. In some cases it could be a combination of all of the above.

This Joker System existed until after 1969, when the dictatorship became more repressive and censorship more stringent. The second dictatorship made it impossible to perform theatre for the people either in terms of its forms or even its contents. Because of the open political persecution, theatre in the streets was impossible. The Arena Theatre of São Paulo wanted to continue doing theatre for the people, but it was much too dangerous. They wanted to create a new theatrical form that would reach the people and could not be suppressed by the military nor through government censorship. Due to this, the first techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed were born, beginning with the techniques of the Newspaper Theatre.

c) The first techniques: The Newspaper Theatre.

The Brazilian political situation forced the Arena Theatre to find a different way of performing theatre, whereas the principal objective was not to popularize the theatre itself (as in the creation of the Joker System), but to teach the spectators to perform theatre for their own purposes.[55] Instead of presenting a finished production for the spectators, an invitation was extended to the audience to see how they performed theatre for themselves. What the Arena Theatre wanted was "to popularize the means of production instead of popularizing the finished production."[56]

This Newspaper Theatre transformed articles in a newspaper into a short theatrical scene that could be performed anywhere. Boal had this idea in mind since 1960 to produce a kind of theatrical revue about the events of the week. He wanted to form a team of poets, playwrights, plastic artists, and composers for this purpose. Later, during the rehearsals of São Paulo's First Fair of Opinion,[57] which brought together six playwrights, six composers and a number of plastic artists, Boal again thought of producing a weekly theatrical review, but it was impossible. After the second coup d'etat, in 1968, censorship and repression increased, and Boal's idea became "obligatory,"[58] a project for the Arena Theatre group. A team was created to work only on the development of basic techniques, collectively creating a new form called Newspaper Theatre, because they first used items from newspapers. However, it could be used with other kinds of texts: chapters of books, lectures, discourses, or any written text.

From the work accomplished by the group, Boal selected and structured the spectacle named Newspaper Theatre: First Edition[59] in September, 1970. This first spectacle was a practical demonstration of the first nine techniques. The objective was to stimulate student's and worker's groups to use the techniques of this theatre for their own interest.[60]

The first nine techniques

1. Simple Reading. This was not really a proper technique since it was only the reading of the news without

interpreting it. In a newspaper all of the news was written in relation to other information. Sometimes the news was presented with the reporter's comments. In addition to news items there may be other information: diagrams, pictures, statistics, letters, or advertisements. These were implicit comments which influenced the sense of each news item. In other words, in each newspaper each bit of news had a context which determined the meaning of it in relation to the reader. For instance, a news article about the social life of a country, if it appeared in the sports section, would not have the same impact as if it appeared next to the editorial page. So this first technique's purpose was to present the news out of context. The performers tried to internalize the most critical events of the article.

2. Improvisation. As a laboratory exercise the actors improvised a scene with information from the newspaper. Usually, the newspaper item was used as a general outline, like the canovacci of the Commedia dell'Arte. The actors could improvise from the facts or even the motives the causes for those facts. The improvisation not only served to present spectacles for public viewing, but, additionally, as an actor's technique for his personal development. Finally, in the improvisation two levels could be created: the level of illusion where performers

totally integrated with their role, or the level of commentary where performers do not integrate, do not live, and do not pretend to be the role that they were performing. With a combination of the previous two even a third level could be created.

3. Reading with Rhythm. The newspaper was read as a song, using various styles and rhythms: sambas, tangos, and Gregorian chants. Each rhythm awakened certain emotions, images and ideas. To read with rhythm is to interpret the facts within the rhythm's perspective.

4. Parallel Action. The performers did pantomimes during the reading of the newspaper. These pantomime actions explained or criticized the newspaper article. Sometimes these actions contradicted the text of the newspaper to provide criticism.

5. Reinforcement. The newspaper item was sung or danced to, or both. Slides, jingles, songs, publicity material, or any other kind of reinforcement could also be included.

6. Crossed Reading. Two different newspaper items were read simultaneously. Sometimes articles which contradicted each other were published in the same newspaper and read simultaneously, each complemented the other.

7. Historic. Historical background was added to the newspaper article to assist in the spectator's understanding, by establishing relationships between the newspaper event and the history of the country. For example, a newspaper article about the wage problems of contemporary workers could be preceded by a scene in which the same relationship between slaves and masters in early Brazilian history was shown. The intent was to present the current event in other historical or national contexts.

8. Text Out of the Context.[61] This technique consisted of an actor reading an item as though in a situation other than the expected or actual one. When a text was taken out of its habitual context, a sitution was created through which the social meaning behind the text became more understandable. As Boal said:

> An actor gives the speech about austerity previously delivered by the Minister of Economics while he devours an enormous dinner: the real truth behind the minister's words becomes demystified--he wants austerity for the people but not for himself.[62]

9. Concretion of the Abstract. The subtext of the newspaper was presented: the implicit idea. This technique clarified through analogies, symbols, or any other equivalent, certain words and facts which, due to excessive use, had lost their capacity to evoke in the reader or spectator

the appropriate emotions. For instance, a mass media entity, such as television, has desensitized people with the presentation of such brutal programs that when a tragedy (e.g., a violent death) does occur there is no emotional response. Subsequently, the information does not inform and death merely becomes an obscure abstraction. For example, the Arena Theatre in one of its performances of Newspaper Theatre wanted to present information about the death of a worker who was incinerated in an oven. After using the Improvisation and Historic techniques, the cast updated the worker's death by burning small animals or puppets whose incinerated odor reproduced the burning smell of human flesh. The smoke helped to awaken the spectators so that they could understand that kind of death.

These were the first nine techniques of the Newspaper Theatre that Boal developed with the Arena Theatre in 1970. Later, from his experiences in Argentina, Peru and other Latin American countries, two new techniques were added which appeared in his book, Técnicas Latinoamericanas de Teatro Popular.[63]

The last two techniques

10. Complementary Reading. "Data and information generally omitted by the newspapers of the ruling classes are added to the news."[64] The newspapers of the ruling classes often hide crucial details, an act which gives

a prejudicial slant to the news. Sometimes the lack of a word or a phrase biases the reality presented. In this case the news is not false but incomplete, e.g., a newspaper published information about Paraguay saying that the restaruants there served the best quality meat. This could be true, but perhaps it is only partly true, so its partial presentation lies about the reality. With complementary reading, the performers presented the truth more completely. In the above case they added the information that those restaurants were the most expensive and could only be patronized by the very rich.

11. Insertion Inside the Real Context. The news was taken out of the newspaper and reconstructed in its real context. For example, Boal narrated a piece of information that appeared in a television program that specialized in showing the negativism attributed to the city of Buenos Aires. The information concerned a child who died because a doctor improperly diagnosed the infant's illness and gave him medication to cure a simple cold when the infant had pneumonia. The newscast held the doctor solely responsible for the child's death. The performers repeated the scenario with the identical words used by the reporter, but they showed additional scenes of the conditions that were part of the dead infant's environment--the lack of adequate and proper health care

and extreme poverty--both contributing factors in infant mortality.

These elevan techniques developed by the Newspaper Theatre constituted the first techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed. With this Newspaper Theatre, the Arena Theatre of São Paulo wishes to fulfill the following objectives:

Objectives

1. To return theatre to the people.
2. To demystify the pretended objectivity of journalism.
3. To teach how to read correctly.
4. To make theatre more popular.
5. To demonstrate that theatre can be practiced by any person, in any place.

With the first objective, the Newspaper Theatre hoped that theatre again would become a collective experience where the people participated, as in the case of the dithyrambic song. With the second objective, the technique of the Newspaper Theatre demonstrated that the importance of any news item and its meaning depended on its relationship with other parts of the newspaper. In Boal's Técnicas Latinoamericanas de Teatro Popular, he presented the following argument of Orson Welles, from the film Citizen Kane, about the true state of a newspaper's objectivity: that no news item was important enough to deserve the first page of a newspaper, but news that was placed on the first page of a newspaper would become an important news item;[65] and this was how public opinion was manipulated. The

Newspaper Theatre tried to reveal those subjective elements behind the supposed objectivity of journalism, and this implied the third objective of the Newspaper Theatre. To read correctly means to analyze, to understand not only words, sentences and phrases, but also their context and implications--it is to extract the maximum information that words, sentences and phrases have.

The last two objectives are interrelated. In general, in so-called popular theatre a finished product is imposed upon the people: a product without the people's point of view. The Newspaper Theatre intended to do the contrary: to popularize theatrical performing so that the people could use it to produce their own theatre.

Theatre, like soccer, can be used and performed by everyone. Soccer has become increasingly popular because everyone plays it, including non-athletes, and it needs no stadium. The pleasure in performing theatre as a genuine communication medium is legitimate for everyone. Everything can be translated into theatrical terms. As Boal says:

> Podemos defender nuestras ideas en una asamblea sin contar con el recurso de la oratoria. También podemos representar y defender nuestras ideas en el teatro sin que sea necessario recibirse en arte dramático. Y de la misma manera en que todas las personas son potencialmente "artistas de teatro," así también todos los espacios son potencialmente "espacios dramáticos" y todos los temas son potencialmente "temas teatrales."[66]
>
> (We can defend our ideas in a meeting without the device of oratory. We can also represent and defend our ideas in the theatre without it being necessary to study dramatic art. And in the same manner in which all persons are potentially "Theatrical artists," all spaces are also potentially "dramatic spaces" and all subjects are potentially "theatrical subjects.")

Boal published these objectives in different books, articles and pamphlets between 1970 and 1975. In each publication, the order and number of them varied. In most, he presented only three objectives, but they were never the same. The order we present is based on the chronological order in which his published theories appeared.

In the Newspaper Theatre, theatre was done by the people and for the people. For the first time the people were not only a source of inspiration for or patron of theatre, but also a creative agent. They were active because they produced theatre. With the Joker System, for instance, the intermediate presence of the artist intervened, but with the Newspaper Theatre the people were the artists, terminating the relationships of active artist-passive spectator.[67]

This Newspaper Theatre, together with the Joker System, was the product of Boal's experience in Brazil with the Arena Theatre of São Paulo, between 1964 and 1971. In that last year, when Boal was arrested, tortured, and later liberated, he went into exile in Argentina to continue working on the ideas and theories he had already begun.

2. Boal's experience in Argentina and the technique of the Invisible Theatre: 1971-1973.

a) General explanations.

When Boal was exiled to Argentina, he continued working with popular theatre and doing various Newspaper Theatres. This country, too, was eventually taken over by a military dictatorship which prohibited any theatrical street performances because all popular

demonstrations were forbidden. Boal believed that using the Newspaper Theatre would be inadequate. So it was necessary to create a new method of performing theatre that would be invisible to the military troops who were constantly on the streets--a new kind of theatre the police could not do anything about. Thus was born the technique of the Invisible Theatre.

This theatre entailed the performance of a scene in a specific place (but not in a theatre) and in front of persons who were not traditional spectators. The place could be a restaurant, a street, or a train. The people would not realize that they were viewing theatre since this would transform them into spectators.

> It is always very important that the actors do not reveal themselves to be actors! On this rests the invisible nature of this form of theatre. And it is precisely this invisible quality that will make the spectator act freely and fully, as if he were living a real situation--and, after all, it is a real situation![68]

This theatre required the very detailed preparation of a specific scene. Rehearsals included possible interventions by the spectators. All the actors had to be able to incorporate into their actions the spectators' actions. Boal called these spectators' interventions, "optional texts."[69]

The Invisible Theatre attempted to generate a discussion about a specific theme with the spectators. With this the wall between spectators and performers was destroyed. According to Boal, many kinds of attempts were made to eliminate that wall. For example, performers asked the spectators to come to the stage and dance with them, but the essence of the wall remained because the

spectators knew that the actors governed them. The actors decided when to dance and when to invite the spectators. Another example was The Great Magic Circus, where the public was invited to work with the scenery until some member of the acting collective told them that the show was over. No matter what kind of innovation, there was always a wall which divided those who acted and those who watched.

But with the Invisible Theatre, spectators did not know that they were spectators, and since they did not know this, they were actors, acting under egalitarian circumstances, with the performers. Mareso, the place where Invisible Theatre was performed was not prepared beforehand, but was theatralized when the scene took place. For this reason the terms "theatre in the street" or "theatre in the train" were inaccurate; instead "street-theatre" or "train-theatre" were used. "Theatre in the train," for example, would be a form of performing theatre in a train previously prepared for that purpose. But train-theatre means that the place selected, a train, becomes a theatre. This idea may be clarified by examining two scenarios tried by Boal in Argentina.

b) Invisible Theatre scenarios.[70]

(1) Train-Theatre: who is responsible?

Actors enter a train and sit separated from each other throughout the car. During the first two station stops they take preliminary measures, such as closing windows to improve the

accoustics, looking around for enough security, talking with the passengers to warm up the atmosphere, and resolving any unexpected problems.

After the third stop or when the ideal conditions prevail, an actor acts as if he were recognizing some friend and both begin to talk. In the conversation one of them declares that he works for Standard Oil. He discloses that he had asked for an increase in salary and that the company had given it to him, but because of inflation, life was still intolerable. Both ask themselves who is responsible. The first actor responds that the "hortaliceros"[71] are responsible because this is a country which exports meat. Because of the financial crisis people cannot afford meat, but eat vegetables instead. The "hortaliceros" know this and, taking advantage of the situation, increase the prices.

Up to this point, the other actors do not participate--they just stimulate the passengers to listen to the conversation by concentrating their attention on the scene. At the next stop the actors decide whether to continue the scene, dependent upon the amount of attention and interest demonstrated by the people on the train.

If the people on the train are becoming interested, the discussion begins again. An actress turns and protests, saying that that is not possible--that her husband is an "hortalicero" and that he increases prices because the owners of trucks which transport vegetables are increasing their prices. Of course, a man stands up and comments that he is a trucker--that he is on the train because

his truck has a flat tire. He informs them that the price of gasoline is increasing so he has to increase his transport prices.

Another actor enters the discussion and states that the reason for increasing gasoline prices was the workers' demands for higher wages. They went on strike and the company was forced to increase gasoline prices. So, if someone is responsible, it is the first speaker, who works for Standard Oil. The worker defends himself by saying that he asked for a salary increase because his wife was pregnant, and they needed more money to survive the effects of inflation. His wife, who sits beside him with a huge articicial belly, stands up and enters into the discussion. The participants agree that the one responsible is the baby who is yet unborn, but who has already disrupted the nation's finances. After this conclusion the actors who have intervened leave the train, but those who acted as animators stay to facilitate discussion.

(2) Restaurant-Theatre: The Law.[72]

The actors enter a restaurant and sit at three or four separate tables, yet close enough to hear each other as they talk among themselves.

The protagonist-actor enters alone and sits apart. He calls the waiter and asks for the "commercial lunch."[73] An Argentinian law permits the poorest people to eat a "commercial lunch" without paying anything by merely registering the number of their identification cards (this is somewhat similar to America's food stamp program).

The problem is that many restaurants did not obey this law and refuse to serve the "commercial lunch."

If the restaurant is one of these, the scene continues. The protagonist, after the waiter has said they don't have the commercial lunch, asks for another type of lunch, but emphasizes that he doesn't want wine or dessert. The waiter serves him and the actor eats. The actor can talk with other clients. He should insist, even if no one asks, that he is not drinking wine and he will not eat dessert. In the meantime, the rest of the actors warm up the atmosphere, provoking political discussions about actual themes.

The protagonist calls the waiter and asks for the bill. The waiter brings it and the actor signs it and writes his identification number. The waiter doesn't understand. The actor informs him that he doesn't have money, and because there is a law to protect those persons who don't have money, giving them the right to eat (excluding wine and dessert) without payment, he is just giving the waiter his identification number. A discussion then follows. The actor should always insist that he is merely following the letter of the law.

If it is necessary, an actor-lawyer can intervene. He should inform those present that the restaurant is violating the law and that the patron is only exercising his rights. The actors ask the rest of the patrons for their opinions and a volatile discussion ensues.

With scenes like this, the cast must take the following precautions: first, a supporting-actor should watch the entrance to avoid any external interference during the discussion; second,

another supporting-actor should stand up and volunteer to pay for the bill to avoid any further discussion; and third, another supporting-actor should be near the telephone to prevent anyone from calling the police.

The above illustrations reveal the basic elements of Invisible Theatre. This theatre form should not be confused with the Happening, which, according to Boal, is a "chaotic and unusual"[74] theatre form in which everything can happen anarchically. Invisible Theatre uses a structured and defined outline with a conflict and a specific theme. Everything is rehearsed, even the improvisations and the possible spectator's interventions. The actors will keep watch to avoid any kind of physical danger. However, as soon as spectators become actors, they will direct the action.

The general characteristics of Invisible Theatre are as follows:

1. It is an attempt at art and, because of this, it is an organization of a determined knowledge of reality processed through the senses.[75]
2. The Invisible Theatre has an ideology. It seeks to demonstrate that ideology and it uses, as do the rest of the arts, the sensorial means.[76]
3. Spectators don't see and don't know who is or isn't a spectator; the spectators don't even know that there are actors' they don't perceive that what is being said has been previously planned.[77]

4. Invisible Theatre presents a specific vision of reality.[78]

5. Invisible Theatre is organized and coordinated so its vision about the world and about reality is also a coordinated and organized one.[79]

Later, because of his popular theatre experience in Peru, Boal continued developing and improving this form of theatre, but it was not until he moved to Europe, particularly France, that the Invisible Theatre became vital--structuring itself into a more clearly, completely defined form of the Theatre of the Oppressed.

C. Boal's Experience in Peru: Basis of the Theatre of the Oppressed (1973)

1. General background.

In 1973, the government of Peru began a national literacy program, Operation Total Literacy.[80] The objective was the elimination of illiteracy nationwide in approximately four years. In the republic of Peru, there are three to four million illiterates out of a population of fourteen million. One of the most salient problems that the government is faced with is the numerous, diverse languages and dialects. Because there are many other languages besides the spoken and written forms, and the ability to use a new language form offers to the people a unique way to know reality and to transmit that knowledge to others, the government set two essential goals: first, to promote literacy in both the native and the Spanish languages without abandoning the native form; and second, to use

non-verbal communication as much as possible, especially artistically: theatre, photography, and movies. To make theatre a part of that language program, Boal established as an essential objective the transformation of the people from passive spectators into active performers--transformers of the dramatic action.

For many years, Boal had been working with theatre forms to achieve that transformation. Boal wanted to make all the production means of the theatre readily accessible to the people. The problem was how to achieve that transfer in non-verbal communication. He used, to illustrate the process, an example from the photography section of the literacy plan. Photographic obsolescence in such a campaign would be to take pictures of the streets, people and places, and then to show and discuss them. The instructors taught them how to use cameras and then gave a camera to each person. The instructors posed various questions in Spanish, asking people to answer those questions only with pictures.

With photography it was very easy to put into practice the above process. But how could it be done with theatre? The production means of photography are cameras, which are easy to use, but production means of theatre are human beings, and are not easy to use. Following this reasoning, Boal affirmed that the first words of the theatre vocabulary are "human-body,"[81] the principal source of sound and movement. To control the production of theatre, man must first control his own body to make it more expressive.

Boal systematized a general plan for the conversion of the spectator into an actor or performer.

a) First stage: Knowledge of the body.

Sequence of exercises where the performer begins to be aware of the possibilities and limitations that his body has.

b) Second stage: Making the human body expressive.

Sequence of games and exercises where the performer begins to express everything, using only the body.

c) Third stage: Theatre as language.

Theatre as life--as a vivid and present language. This stage is subdivided into three levels:

(1) First level-Simultaneous dramaturgy. The spectator writes, while actors simultaneously act out a play or scene.

(2) Second level-Image Theatre. The spectator makes a direct intervention, using images made with the actor's body.

(3) Third level-Forum Theatre. The spectator makes a more direct intervention into the dramatic action and acts.

d) Fourth stage: Theatre as discourse.

Single forms that the spectator-actor performs--according to their need to discuss particular themes or rehearse various actions.

(1) Photo-novel Theatre.

(2) Breaking with Repression.

(3) Myth Theatre.

(4) Trial Theatre.

(5) Masks and Rituals

(6) Newspaper Theatre

(7) Invisible Theatre

These stages constituted a new theatre theory--a new poetics based on popular or people's theatre. These stages were also the culmination of the process which had begun with the development of the Joker System in 1964. Boal's first experiments in Brazil and Argentina (Newspaper Theatre and Invisible Theatre) were not eliminated, but integrated with these stages, creating the basis for the Poetics of the Theatre of the Oppressed.

2. Details of the stages of the plan.

a) First stage: Knowledge of the body.

Boal had to work with people who did not know much, if anything, about theatre: workers, peasants, and villagers. They might know something about television, and according to Boal, this was a distorted knowledge of theatre. They commonly associated theatre with luxury and allure. The simple fact that a literacy worker came with the mission to teach tended to separate him from the people. Whereas the teaching process often imposed a new layer of knowledge on its pupils, Boal's theatre intended to bring out what already existed inside the people. Therefore, this process was less threatening to the people and less likely to be rejected. Boal began with body exercises so that the people could begin to know their own bodies and use them to express their innermost feelings.

There were a great variety of exercises to create body awareness. For example, the exercises tended to compare the muscular structures of a worker's body with that of a clerk's. According to Boal, the number of social roles that a human being had to play imposed on him a mask of behavior. That is the reason why people doing identical kinds of work end up looking very similar to each other. This idea is based on the concept of the Social Mask, which Boal had developed with the Arena Theatre of São Paulo in the Joker System. The exercises of this first stage had the objective of analyzing the muscular structures of the participants.

Boal felt that, if a person could recognize his own muscular structures, he surely would be capable of re-creating muscular structures of other professions; in other words, interpreting other characters physically. Boal presented seven examples of the first stage of exercises:

Exercises

1. Slow-motion Race: The participants are invited to run with the objective of loosening up. But the running is done in slow motion with the slowest "runner" winning the race. The runners must use the same movements (i.e., moving the knees high in long strides and arms pumping) as in normal running. They must keep moving, but as slowly as possible, with the result that each participant expends more energy than he would in a normal race.

This exercise promotes body control, good balance, and body awareness in the participants.

2. Cross-legged Race: This race is similar to the traditional three-legged race with a few notable exceptions. Each pair of racers must race with the leg adjacent to his/her partner intertwined with the partner's leg. This created "third" leg is never to touch the floor. So the pair is forced, through using body control and balance, to walk using only the left leg of one partner and the right leg of the other.

3. Monster Race: A monster of four legs and no lead is created in this exercise. Participants are paired off. One member of the pair will lie down while the other member positions himself over him facing the partner's feet and bending down to grasp the prone partner's lower trunk. The prone partner raises up to grasp the lower trunk of his partner so that now both of their trunks are linked. This results in a spider-like monster of four legs and no head. The partners then must walk forward, racing the other pairs. This exercise also reinforces cooperation as well as muscle control and balance.

4. Circle Race: Participants pair off and one partner lies down on the floor with knees bent. The other partner,

placing his feet on either side of his partner's head, bends over his partner and grasps his partner's ankles. The prone participant also grasps his partner's ankles and the race begins with the uppermost partner ducking his head and somersaulting, while the prone partner begins to sit up and take the uppermost position. In this way their bodies form a wheel and the wheel moves forward through the somersaulting of the partners. This exercise requires as much energy from the prone partner as from the upper one, if the wheel is to keep moving smoothly and not to break.

5. "Hypnotism": One participant takes the role of "hypnotist." He puts his hand a distance of one to five inches away from the face of his partner. His partner is obliged to maintain this distance between his face and his partner's hand by concentrating on the hand and following its movements. The "hypnotist" begins to move the hand slowly and the "subject" follows it by moving in whatever way necessary to maintain the required distance. As the exercise progresses, more "subjects" can be added to the "hypnotist's" field of power" and each must follow the hypnotist's hand.

6. Boxing Match: The participants are invited to practice boxing, but they cannot touch their partners--everything should be reaction.

7. Wild West: Improvised scene typical of the wild west genre of films. A saloon scene with fist fights and dance hall girls would be a typical example. But the improvisation must be very violent and without sound and without actual harm to anyone. All is focused on reactions.

The participants were asked to invent exercises of this kind, by combining imagination and practice. This experience produced about 200 exercises which Boal later published in 1975 as 200 Exercises and Games for Actors and Non-Actors Wishing To Say Something Through Theatre.[82]

b) Second stage: Making the human body expressive.

Boal believed that people are accustomed to expressing everything through words, eliminating all the broad capacities of expression that the human body has. After the participants finished the first stage and had knowledge of the limitations and potentials of their bodies, they begin to express themselves through their bodies.

In this stage a series of games helped the participants to turn their bodies into expressive instruments. This simple game is an example.

Pieces of paper are distributed with names of animals, both female and male. The participants have ten minutes to give a bodily representation of the animal they received. They are forbidden to speak or make any noise. The communication must be exclusively through their bodies. Then each participant tries to find his mate.

When a couple is convinced that they are a pair they leave the group. When everyone has found his mate and the game is over. The crux here is that all make an effort to express with their bodies the characteristics of the animals.

A variation of this game can occur. Instead of the names of animals, the papers can give the names of the participants. In this way each one can represent another participant as he sees this person, a view which can incorporate a sense of criticism or praise.

Like the first stage it is vital that each participant create and produce his own new game. In this way he is not a passive receiver, but an active being.

c) Third stage: Theatre as language.

As soon as the participants passed through the first two stages, they were able to begin using theatre as language. This stage was divided into three language/theatrical levels. Each level represented a more direct participation of the spectator, as subject instead of object. The previous stages were preparatory, centered around the body of the participants. This third stage promoted the spectator to action.

(1) First level-Simultaneous dramaturgy.

The participants interpreted a short scene of ten to twenty minutes, proposed by any of the participants. The actors could improvise the scene or write it and memorize their lines. The scene ran until the conflict required a solution. Actors then stopped the action and asked the participants to present solutions, which were

then performed. The audience could stop, go back, make connections or interrupt. Thus, while the audience wrote the play, the actors simultaneously performed and interpreted the play. All solutions were discussed and presented in a theatrical form. For instance, a lady presented a simple, short story scene about a problem of machismo. An old man had two wives. His legal wife was illiterate. One day she requested that her neighbor read her a letter she had just received before her husband arrived. Unfortunately, it was a love letter addressed to her husband. She became furious over the situation and she wanted revenge.

After a series of discussions, the various solutions proposed were, first, to leave her husband, second, to lock the door with the purpose of forcing him to stay out, third, to cry a great deal to give him a guilty conscience, and fourth, when the husband came home to take a huge stick and hit him with it many times. After she had beaten him to the point where he felt sorry for his infidelity, she would kiss him, make love to him, and forget everything. This solution was unanimously accepted.

(2) Second level-Image Theatre.

Here the spectator would participate more directly. A spectator expressed an opinion about a specific subject of common interest that the participants wanted to discuss. The subject could be concrete or abstract. The participant had to express his opinion but without words--using only the bodies of the actors. He used them as statues and himself as the sculptor. He determined the

position of everyone, including their expressions. When everyone unanimously accepted the whole composition of the actor-statues, the sculptor had to create another grouping, showing how he would like that topic or theme to be. In other words, in the first composition the sculptor made the theme as it existed in reality or the Real Image. In the second composition he made the Ideal Image.

Finally, he had to show the Transitional Image: how to move from the Real Image to the Ideal Image. For example, a woman placed a man reading in a corner and writing something. Five other persons were placed there, too, trying to read, but with their eyes closed and their hands tied behind their backs. Behind the man who was reading and writing there were two women, one giving him something, the other representing an old teacher. This was the image that this woman had about her country and the problem of illiteracy--a pessimistic and defeatist image--but reality.

The most critical part, the transition from the Real Image to the Ideal one (everyone with books reading and writing in a classroom), presented various alternatives. Much experimentation was allowed but without talk. When someone said, "Not that way; I think it is possible to...." he was interrupted, "Don't say what you think, come and do it."

The solutions were first to obtain a change in the attitude of the upper classes offering the learning opportunities to the lower class. This was classified as a magic solution. The second was to change the attitude of the person transforming the scene. If the person identified with the teacher, the scene would become

the teacher taking action. If this person identified with the illiterates, the scene was changed to the illiterates taking action. In the third solution, social changes were made by the whole people together and not by one or two persons.

Image Theatre was very attractive because it was very easy to put it into practice and because it had an extraordinary capacity to concretize ideas. Other techniques or variations in this Image Theatre could be used. For instance, each participant transformed into a statue could, by movement or a gesture, transform the whole composition, or the sculptor-participant, after having finished his work, could put himself into his composition. Furthermore, the participant could memorize the Ideal Image, then returning to the Real Image, and finally do the movements necessary to again obtain the Ideal. Showing the totality of images permits an analysis of the viability of the transitions.

Boal reaffirmed that the crucial point in all of this is always the analysis of the possibility of change.

(3) Third level-Forum Theatre.

Here the spectators modified the dramatic action by direct participation in it. First, the participants narrated a story with a specific difficult problem; second, they improvised and/or rehearsed scenes which illustrated the problem; third, they performed a ten to fifteen minute scene with a proposed solution; fourth, they discussed the proposed solution. Each one of the participants could present any solution, but he had to do it on stage through performing.

Fifth, they evaluated the various solutions. Each scene was presented again, with each person having the right to change the action, perhaps even to present his own solution.

This Forum Theatre did not impose any idea. The people were given the opportunity to experiment with their own ideas, of rehearsing all possibilities, and verifying their ideas in actual practice. The spectator-performer practiced a real act. For example, while he was trying to find out how to organize and study, he was actually organizing a study. While he rehearsed how to study, he was learning how to study, so the epxerience for him was a real and concrete one.

d) Fourth stage: The theatre as a discourse.

There were seven basic techniques.

(1) Photo-novel (photo-romance) Theatre.[83]

This was the performance of any scene which followed the style of the popular photo-novel literature. The general lines of a plot of any photo-romance or photo-novel were read, without telling the source of this plot. Then the participants acted out the story. Finally, they discussed the differences between the photo-romance and the acted versions.

(2) Breaking with Repression.

The participants were asked to think for a moment of an incident when they felt that they were repressed but accepted the repression. Then they re-created the situation, but tried not to accept it and/or tried to change the repressive conditions. They

then analyzed the Explanations for the conduct which contributed toward their repression and its acceptance. This technique attempted to make the people aware of the possibility of change. Both scenes, of repression and of facing repression, were to be acted out with sincerity and objectivity, rehearsed as if they were acts in a real play.

(3) Myth Theatre.

This very easy technique consisted in representing the myths and folklore of any country with an analysis of their meaning and true history.

(4) Trial Theatre.

A participant narrated a story; everyone rapidly improvised it. Then the group separated each character into its various social roles. The participants selected a physical object to symbolize each role. For example, the role attributed to a policeman was, first, that of a worker because he rented his labor. So the physical object to symbolize this role could be a tool. His second role was a repressive agent. So the physical object could be a revolver. Another role was a teacher because he taught others how to be policemen. In this case the object could be a book.

After each character was assigned all possible roles with their respective objects, the story was narrated again, but the participants removed or even changed some of the roles. For instance, the policeman could have one of the roles usually

attributed to a priest, and the story would therefore be acted out differently.

Boal wanted to demonstrate that human and characters' actions are not only the result of individual psychology, but also of social forces which determine a type of behavior, a social mask pre-established and pre-determined.

(5) Masks and Rituals.

In this variant of the fourth one, characters in the scene were assigned new social masks, which would affect their behavior and actions. The scene followed the usual rituals, but when the actors changed their social masks, they modified these rituals. For example, a man goes to confess his sins. All follow the usual rituals: the man kneels, he confesses his sins, and the priest hears the penitence; but not all men confess identically or even follow identical rituals.

Then the social mask of landlord is assigned to both characters. The scene is performed again and the variations are discussed. Subsequently, the scene is presented a third time; now the preist is a landlord and the man a peasant. Later, the priest is the peasant and the man the landlord. Finally, both characters are peasants. The scenes will show different types of relations between the two characters, according to the social masks they perform.

(6) Newspaper Theater and (7) Invisible Theatre.

These last two techniques have been previously described and discussed.

These seven techniques were implemented by Boal in Peru's literacy campaign. In them were present all of the techniques of his later Theatre of the Oppressed. Therefore, a Boal's experience with the people's theatre in Peru is the most significant stage in the evolution of his Theatre of the Oppressed. Although Boal has improved and developed more fully each component, technique, and theatre form, the essence of his theatre had gone unchanged.

3. Final considerations.

From that experience in Peru, Boal concluded that being a spectator is a negativism and, therefore, the spectators must be liberated. They must think and act for themselves; thereby Boal reaffirms the idea that theatre is or should be a social action. The result of this experience was that theatre was returned to the people.

With this experience, Boal demonstrated that theatre could be used as a vehicle for social change and that theatre possessed an inherent strength that could be used by the people for their own purposes. Many experiments of this nature occurred throughout the Third World countries with groups of peasants, workers, small farmers, and landless laborers. As Ross Kidd, who studied those theatre experiments in Latin America, Asia and Africa, says, "they are rediscovering the potential of people's theatre as a weapon in their struggle for land, better working conditions, and political rights."[84]

According to Kidd, on Boal's experience in Peru, the popular theatre was used for "the development of revolutionary

consciousness."[85] In this sense Boal followed the ideas of his colleague, Paulo Freire, A Brazilian educational philosopher, who wrote Pedagogy of the Oppressed. For Freire and for many other Latin American philosophers, the development of a critical consciousness is the key component in the struggle for liberation.[86] However, Kidd concludes that Boal's kind of theatre is not enough to fulfill or meet the requirements of the liberation struggle. It is not even effective unless it has organization and real struggle:

> Moreover "conscientization theatre" which is aimed at liberation (in a Freirian sense) cannot operate in a vacuum on the margins of class struggle; it must develop a sense of history and relate to the current struggles of workers and peasant organizations...: On its own, people's theatre will never by anything more than an interesting and exciting spectacle, a chance to let out grievances and frustrations. It will work as a medium for social transformation only when it is woven into an on-going process of critical analysis, organization, and struggle.[87]

Ross Kidd's article offers excellent clarification and analysis of Boal's experience in Peru, even though it is focused from a non-formal educational point of view. For Boal that experience can be studied from several different perspectives: pedagogical, sociological, political, cultural, and even theatrical.

The salient point here for Boal is that again the spectators, who are the people, act. The destruction of the wall which separates actors and spectators (performers and people) is achieved. Through active participation, everyone becomes the protagonist of the social transformations. In this sense, the people are the active subjects in the theatrical phenomenon. The people seize control of the means of theatrical production to use for their own purposes. According

to Boal, this should be the Poetics of the Oppressed: "Thus we arrive at the Poetics of the Oppressed, the conquest of the means of theatrical productions."[88]

D. The Theatre of the Oppressed Between 1973 and 1980

After his experience in Peru, Boal established his residence in Argentina. From there, he traveled throughout Latin America delivering workshops, performing his plays, and participating in theatre festivals as lecturer, organizer, and judge. Between 1974 and 1976, he dedicated his life to writing the bulk of his theories about the Theatre of the Oppressed, as well as various plays. But mostly his theatrical career was focused on organizing the concepts behind his experiments and experience with the Latin American people's theatre--halting practice to formulate theory. His practical experience continued after his exile to Europe in 1977. Due to the political repression that occurred in Argentina, Boal was forced to continue his exile in Europe, selecting Portugal as his first alternative. There he experimented with the Theatre of the Oppressed, but his work was basically conventional. However, from Portugal he could establish contact with other European countries and promote his theories about the Theatre of the Oppressed in Europe.

It wasn't until 1978, when he moved to France, that he continued developing his Theatre of the Oppressed through his tours, conferences, lectures, and workshops delivered throughout Europe. In Paris he created "The Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed,"

to promulgate his theories throughout Europe. In Europe, between 1978 and 1980, the Forum Theatre, the Invisible Theatre, and the Image Theatre received his greatest attention. Other theatre forms, such as Newspaper Theatre, were rather scantily developed. So, for the development of the Theatre of the Oppressed, the years between 1978 and 1980 were a new stage. This new stage represented the consolidation of the Invisible Theatre, Forum Theatre, and Image Theatre.

1. The Invisible Theatre form.

> É preciso que fique claro: teatro invisível é teatro! Deve ter un texto escrito básico que será inevitavelmente modificado segundo as circunstâncias, attendendo às intervenções dos expectadores. Elegese um tema que seja realmente candente, que interesse verdadeiramente aos futuros espectadores. Com ele faz-se uma pequena peça. Os atores devem interpretar seus personagens como o fariam se a peça fosse representada num teatro convencional e para espectadores convencionais.[89]
>
> (It must be clear that invisible theatre is theatre! It should have a basic written text which will be modified inevitably according to circumstances, taking into consideration the spectators' interventions. A theme which will be really controversial is selected, one which will truly interest the future spectators. From it a short play is put together. The actors should interpret their characters as they would do if the play were presented in a conventional theatre hall and for conventional spectators).

As previously indicated, the Invisible Theatre is the development of a specific idea with role interpretations and physicalization of characters. Each scene should be rehearsed frequently and include possible spectator suggestions. In 1979, Boal prepared the following seven operating standards, or "rules of the game,"[90] for an Invisible Theatre performance:

a) Rules of the game of the Invisible Theatre.

(1) The objective of the Invisible Theatre is to make visible the oppression (any kind of oppression) currently in existence.

(2) The performers (actors and actresses) should never act violently against the spectators. This implies also that actors should not impose themselves upon the spectator's participation.

(3) The scene should be theatrical and capable of developing by itself without the participation of the spectators.

(4) The performers should rehearse the possible interventions of the spectators, during the rehearsals.

(5) All the actors should be prepared to dynamize the spectators into action, at the moment the action begins; at the same time they should motivate the discussions or the dialogues with the spectators, facilitating the integration of the improvised texts of the spectators with the thematic contents of the piece.

(6) The performers should keep in mind all the possible security measures to guarantee the total success of the performance. They should understand that each country has its own rules, laws, etc. and its own dangers. These things are not the performer's impositions upon the spectators; they are just external control measures to facilitate the best development of the spectacle.

(7) The Invisible Theatre should not undertake illegal actions, because the end of this form of theatre is precisely to put into a new perspective and to discuss the legitimacy of legality.

b) An example at the Paris subway in 1978.

The title of this piece was Sexual Abuse.[91] This play was performed three times in the Paris subway at the Château de Vincennes line. The last subway car before the first class cars was the place selected for the action. Four actions constituted the whole play. In the first action, all the cast, except two actors, took the subway in the first station. They placed themselves thus: two actresses stayed standing up near the central door; another actress seated herself in the front; an actor representing a Tunisian man seated himself beside her; a mother and her son were two seats behind. The rest of the actors were seated throughout the coach. Between the first two stations nothing abnormal happened: they read newspapers and talked with the other passengers.

The second action began in the third station when an actor entered. He seated himself in front of the actress who was alone or else remained standing beside her. After a few seconds, he started to touch the leg of the actress with his leg. She protested. He responded that it was just an accident. Nobody defended her. Later he continued with his overtures, but this time he not only touched her leg but other parts of her body. She again protested. No one supported her and she changed her seat. Only the Tunisian man agreed with and supported the aggressor in his actions. This was the end of the second action.

The third action was at the fifth station. A good-looking young actor entered. The two actresses standing up near the central

door started to discuss his good looks. After a few moments, one of the actresses--the feminist--went toward him and asked him for the time. He answered. Then she asked him at which station he would get off. He protested. The actress tried to convince him to go out with her, but he refused. Later she tried to kiss him, but he resisted her again. The discussion had developed from a simple argument to a climax, which was heard by everyone. At that moment, the actor-passenger's interventions began. The man who had tried to touch the girl in the second action came to defend this young man. But the actress of the second action supported the feminist woman, saying that when she had been attacked by a man no one defended her, and that if a man had a right to attack a woman, a woman must also be allowed the equal right to make sexual advances, even if they are unwanted, toward a man she's interested in.

In the fourth action the feminist woman, her friend and the actress tried to sexually attack the first aggressive actor, who ran out. The rest of the actors stayed in the car to hear what the passengers would say and to guide the comments or discussions about the sexual abuse that occurs in the Paris subway or any other place.

To make sure that all the passengers knew what was going on, the actress playing the mother, asked her son what was happening. The son moved closer to the action and in a loud voice informed his mother. The theme of this short play was very clear: Neither men nor women have any right to commit sexual aggression.[92]

c) The experience in a supermarket in the city of Liège.

This experience was carried out in October 1978 at the city of Liège in Belgium. A complete description of Boal's experience with his Theatre of the Oppressed in Belgium appeared in the Bulletin d'information de Centre d'étude et de diffusion des techniques actives d'expression, no. 1, 1979, pp. 32-43. The piece was divided into six actions.

In the first action, twelve actors entered a supermarket to buy their groceries. In the second action the protagonist, named François, entered, taking just indispensable groceries and nothing extra which could be considered a luxury. The rest of the actors then arrived later at the cash register. The third action began when François arrived at the cash register. Before the person in charge of the cash register started to calculate the total price that François should pay for his groceries, François explained that he wanted to pay for everything, but that there was a problem. He was one of the 600,000 unemployed that existed in Belgium and he did not have money to pay, but he wanted to and he promised to pay later. The person at the cash register responded that that was his problem; that if he wanted those groceries he should pay for them. François said, "all right," but explained he would do so differently from the normal, traditional way. Instead of money he would pay with "work-hours." The cashier explained that it was difficult to use the cash register to calculate "work-hours" since it just calculated value in terms of money. François concluded that he could not accept that normal process.

The fourth action was the interventions of the other actors. First was an actress who protested against François, calling him a bum or an idle vagrant. She said that all of the people that were unemployed were really bums because they did not really want to work. In a second intervention an actor announced that he also was like François, unemployed, and that he admired the courage of François, because he had exposed the economic situation of the Belgians who were looking for jobs. A third actor advised François to try to find a job in another place. In those interventions, the actors were amplifiers of typical spectator comments. The cashier finally called the manager. At this point a great discussion was generated with the customers directly participating in the action: discussing unemployment, high prices, and low salaries.

The fifth action began with the entrance of the manager. She tried to reason with François. She was very polite, sincere, and tactful, but she had already called the police. Finally, one of the actors took the initiative to ask all to help François by collecting the money to pay for his groceries. François paid the difference and at that moment the police arrived.

The entrance of the police initiated a new and final action that the actors had to resolve. Everyone protested vehemently in favor of François because he wasn't a thief. The policemen were perplexed. The chief asked the manager if François was a thief or not, and why she had called them to arrest him. The manager accepted the fact that he wasn't a thief, but demanded his arrest because he had incited a riot. Due to the insistence of the manager François

was taken to the police station, faced with the decision to continue the play or to explain everything.

François went there with Annie Declerk, who had been filming this Invisible Theatre performance, by hiding her camera inside the grocery cart. There they continued performing their roles. The interrogation took six hours. At the end François revealed the truth, presenting his papers which proved that he was not unemployed but an active actor (a professional actor who worked, receiving a monthly salary). The police chief couldn't believe that the incident was Invisible Theatre. He could not understand how a person or a group could create chaos like that: disorganizing the order of a place, provoking riots, merely to perform an experiment in theatre. Therefore, the police chief decided to charge François with performing a public spectacle without the appropriate authorization. The argument François and Annie used against that accusation was as follows. To request a license or an authorization for performing a public spectacle of Invisible Theatre would reveal the theatre visually and in this way destroy the very essence of Invisible Theatre. The spectators would again assume their passive roles, losing their more human, full and active roles as protagonists. In summary, the Invisible Theatre could not submit to the same police rules which limited the conventional theatre. Therefore, to ask for an authorization for performing Invisible Theatre implied a barrier to aesthetic research. Since there was no censorship in Belgium and the demand for a license would be a form of censorship, the actors who participated in the spectacle could accuse the police

of abuse of power. With that argument everything was resolved and the actors (Annie and François) were freed.

Although many other Invisible Theatres were performed in Belgium, the most important and significant was the performance in Liège because with it new elements were added for defining what is really Invisible Theatre. The Invisible Theatre form presents fictitious scenes, but becuase it presents them without the circumstances of the rituals of the conventional theatre, those fictions become a reality. As Boal says: "Teatro invisível não é realismo: é a própia realidade"[93] ("Invisible Theatre is not realism; it is its own reality").

A description of some additional scenes presented in Stockholm, Sweden, will further clarify the development of Invisible Theatre.

d) The experience in the ferryboats of Stockholm.

The first play was entitled The Baby of the Queen. The problem presented was the health services. Boal had been invited to participate at the festival of Skeppsholm in Stockholm. An experiment with the Invisible Theatre form was to be performed on July 19, 1978. On the morning of July 10, the newspaper Svenska Dagbladet published a news article announcing the première of an experiment in Invisible Theatre at the subway of Stockholm, and advising the passengers not to be surprised by this new theatre modality. Therefore, Boal and the cast decided to change the place of the performance to the ferry boats which travel from the city

of Stockholm to a series of small islands in eastern Sweden. During those days, the baby of the Queen was about to be born. There was a general feeling of dissatisfaction in the population because of the high cost of remodeling the hospital, where the baby would be born, and because medical assistance for ordinary pregnant women was unsatisfactory.

In the first action of the play a young pregnant woman (an actress with an artificial pad on her belly) talked with her girl-friend about her great admiration for the Queen and the royal family. An actor representing a passenger disagreed with her. In the ensuing conversation they discussed prices, salaries, royal wealth, republic and royalty, medicine and socialism.

The second action began with the labor pains of the pregnant woman. Another actor, who portrayed a doctor, appeared and tried to help her, but she rejected his help. When she asked where he came from, he answered "from the hospital"--that he had been working all through the night attending five women in labor. The actress responded that because of that she didn't want him to help her. When she had her first baby, the doctor who attended her was so tired that he ended up doing an unneeded Cesarean on her because he wanted to finish as soon as possible. Now, she said, she wanted to be attended by one of the four doctors of the Queen. She asked for help to move her to the place where the doctors of the Queen were. The scene continued with the actors discussing with the passengers the health system in that country. Half of the spectators

participated in the discussions. The other half attentively followed the discussion, but without intervention.

The trip from the city of Stockholm to the next island took seven to ten minutes, which was the duration of the spectacle. When the ferry boat arrived at the pier, the officer of the ship had already contacted the hospital by radio, and an ambulance was waiting for the pregnant woman. This was the third and last action. Since the cast already knew that the ambulance would be waiting for her, they had their own ambulance there, thus avoiding any possible revelation of her true condition by ambulance attendants. When the cast left in their own ambulance, the discussion among the spectators at the pier continued.

Aside from this short spectacle, there were many others, including some on racism. In one, Racism II: The Black Woman, the first action began when a black actress seated herself where everyone could see her in one of the ferry boats which traveled from Slussen to Djugarden, a botanical garden. Because the ferry boat was full of passengers, this spectacle provoked the most volatile reactions.[94] Actors portraying an Italian man, a business manager, and a drunken woman stood on the ferry. The woman had a beer can in her hand and provoked reactions from the spectators concerning her behavior.

When the boat departed the second action started. After a few minutes the Italian man approached the black lady and asked her what she was doing seated there--that here she was a black, seated, and he was a white, standing up. A violent discussion was

generated with the passengers concerning racial equality. The black lady, irritated, gave her seat to the Italian, who began to read his Italian newspaper. Then the drunk who saw the scene, approached the Italian, and the third action began. The drunk requested that the Italian give her his seat even though this was a white country, it was a country of white Swedes, not dark Italians. New discussions about nationality, race, and human rights began. Finally, the Italian gave his seat to her.

The fourth action began when the businessman approached the drunk and requested that she give him her seat, because although she was Swedish, she is an unproductive drunkard, and, besides, seating should be assigned not only according to nationalities and race, but also according to social classes. He was white, Swedish and a business manager. The cumulative effect was extraordinary. A great number of people protested and defended the drunk lady, and at the same time they defended the existence of basic human rights, regardless of nationality, class or race.

In the fifth action an actor tried to convince the black lady to return to her seat, but she refused. Other actors, seated in different seats, stood up in a protest against racism. "I stand up because I am Brazilian! I stand up because I am Indian! I stand up because I am poor..."[95] At the end there were many empty seats as a sign of protest; people remained standing up, pressed against each other, staying closely entwined as a mass of entangled bodies, until the ferry boat reached its destination. Boal described the

effect of this particular Invisible Theatre as more astonishing than any that he had ever experienced.

Through those years of experience with Invisible Theatre some ideas were clarified. The spectator had been transformed into a protagonist of the action, but he was not aware that he was becoming a protagonist. He was a protagonist of the reality he saw because he ignored the fictitious origin of that reality. Boal thought that the spectator should go beyond this ignorance and participate in the dramatic action with full knowledge of what was going on. In achieving this objective the Forum Theatre form has played a very meaningful role.

2. The Forum Theatre form.

At first Boal had simply rehearsed Forum Theatre with a small number of homogeneous spectators. However, between 1978 and 1980 in Europe, he prepared larger productions of Forum Theatre, with a great number of spectators. From that experience, the Forum Theatre consolidated as a new form of performing theatre with its own "rules of the game."

(1) The playwriting:

(a) The text should characterize clearly each character; it should identify each with such precision the spectators can recognize the ideology of each character.

(b) The solutions proposed by the protagonist should have at least one political or social mistake to

analyze in the forum. That mistake should be clearly demonstrated inside well-defined situations.

(c) The play can be in any style (realist, symbolic, expressionist) but surrealist or any other irrational styles, because what Forum Theatre intends is to discuss reasons in concrete situations.

(2) The mise-en-scène:

(a) The characters should do physical actions well identified with their ideology, with their work, with their social function, and with their profession. It is important that the characters move about, otherwise, the spectators will tend to remain seated, doing "forum" without theatre.

(b) Each significant scene should find its own image.[96] This image should accord with the public preference; it should be agreed upon by everyone. This image can be selected or found during the presentation of the scene or in an earlier discussion with the spectators.

(c) Each character should be presented visually so he can be recognized independently of his words. Costumes and props should be easy for the spectators to use.

(3) The game-spectacle:

(a) In the first part, the spectacle is performed exactly as if it were a conventional theatre piece.

(b) Then the spectators are asked if they agree or disagree with the solution presented by the protagonist; presumably they will say, no. Then they are informed that the spectacle will be performed again in the same way. The conflict of the game consists of the actors trying to finish the play in the original manner and the spectators trying to modify it to show that new solutions are possible. This means that the actors present an image of the world, which they will try to maintain. The spectators will rehearse other images of the world.

(c) The spectators are informed that anyone can substitute himself for the protagonist by approaching the stage and saying, "Stop." All of the actors freeze in their positions. The spectator immediately says where he wants the scene to begin again. Then the actors perform the scene from that point with the spectator being the protagonist.

(d) From the moment the spectator substitutes himself for the protagonist, a new solution begins to be rehearsed, the rest of the actors become repressors, showing the spectator all of the difficulties involved in transforming reality. So it is the

players in the game and the spectator who attempt a new solution--to transform the world--versus the actors--who try to convince them to accept the world as it really is. If the spectator desists, he leaves the game and the original actor replaces him, bringing the play to its already known conclusion. Another spectator could approach the stage and say, "Stop," stating from which point he wishes to begin the play again. The play will be repeated from that moment and a new solution will be tried.

(e) At some point finally the spectator will be able to break with the actors' imposed oppression and then the actors should desist. From that moment the spectators are extended an invitation to substitute for any actor to demonstrate different forms of oppression that the actors may not be aware of. Then it becomes spectator-protagonist versus spectators-oppressors. The oppression and how to end it is discussed by the spectators. Each actor who has been replaced on stage continues working as an auxiliary ego.

(f) One of the actors should perform the auxiliary function of the Joker.[97] He will explain the rules of the game and correct the mistakes.

(g) The knowledge gained from this investigation will be the greatest that some social and human groups

will ever attain. The Joker should not be a lecturer. He is not the owner of the truth. He will merely show that those who have knowledge can explain that knowledge better.

(h) After the forum is finished, a final model of fixed action should be constructed that will be performed by the spectators.

One example of this form of theatre, which occurred in the small town of Godrano in Sicily, clarifies the rules:

a) "The cooperative: the character assumes his own role and refutes the actor"[98]: A Forum Theatre experience.

Boal was invited by the Teatro Libero de Palermo to participate in a cultural festival held in the small town of Godrano in 1977. In addition to workshops and lectures on Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, two performances of Forum Theatre were given by the group directed by Boal. "The cooperative..." was the second one presented at 9:00 p.m., August 13, 1977, in the Piazza Principale di Godrano.[99]

In Godrano the shepherds wanted to create a cooperative to solve the problem of the lack of a market for their cattle. The shepherds accused the mayor of preventing the cooperative from finally doing something beneficial. A play centered on that theme was prepared and performed in front of thousands of people, including the mayor.

Four actions constituted the whole play. In the first one, three actor-members of the cooperative discussed their problems

with the mayor. They decided to question him and to request certain measures. The second action started with the arrival of the actor-mayor and another actor. The mayor explained that he had selected that gentlemen as president of the cooperative because of the great knowledge he possessed about its problems. The three members of the cooperative protested that the president should be a person from Godrano who was familiar with the local problems, not a person from the outside who ignored them. The mayor persisted in his arguments--imposing his wishes on the cooperative.

In the third action, the president presented his plan for constructing the cooperative at a site some distance away since ideal conditions did not exist near the small town. The members again vehemently protested, but the mayor's argumentative skills won the debate. In the fourth action, the mayor insisted on obtaining the signatures of the three cooperative members as a necessary part of the bureaucratic process. The members refused but were finally defeated again.

During the forum, great tension was created. The accused mayor was present in the audience and when the actor-mayor spoke everyone looked at the real mayor. But the spectators continued their interventions and discussions. Many times the play was interrupted by a spectator saying, "Stop"; then the group performed the new alternative. One of the spectators exclaimed that if the cooperative really worked as it should, he would not have been forced to emigrate to Germany. Another spectator denounced the advantages that the mayor enjoyed due to the non-functioning of the cooperative.

Other spectators proposed (always inside the theatre action) that the mayor should be removed from the cooperative.

At some point the inevitable occurred. The actual mayor screamed "Stop" and substituted for the actor who was performing his role. He tried to transform this theatrical game of the Forum Theatre into a new game which was not theatre. Boal called this new game--this new intention of the mayor--"the parliamentary game."[100] The mayor wanted to discuss the problem without theatre: "Okay. Now, finally, we are going to start talking seriously. Until now you were doing theatre--joking about serious things. Now, we are going to talk seriously."[101] But the moment he began to say something which was not true, someone said, "Stop," and going onto the stage contradicted what the mayor had said. The mayor kept trying to change the theatrical game to his game, the parliamentary game. He continued pressing for an end to the acting: no more theatre performance, no more scenes. But each time that someone said "Stop" the theatre game continued. It continued until the mayor lost control and screamed: "This is my cooperative. If you want, create another one!"[102]

This spectacle, which began at nine o'clock, changed from Forum Theatre to forum alone. At two o'clock in the morning people were still discussing the problem of the cooperative.

This Forum Theatre with the mayor of Godrano demonstrated that this form of theatre is not dogmatic nor does it impose the performers' ideas on the spectator, instead it liberates the

spectator; it stimulates him and transforms him into a protagonist. In this game the spectator rehearses actions that he will use in reality. In the Godrano experience the question raised was the pertinent issue of the dilemma of the limits of Forum Theatre: is Forum Theatre reality or fiction? In Godrano real people discussed with the real mayor of their small town their real problems. The only elements which were not real were the rituals of the theatre: the rehearsals of the play, the characterization, the written text, the costumes and props, and the movements on stage.

3. The Image Theatre form.

The next book by Boal will concern the Image Theatre, the new theatre form that was developed during his stay in Europe. Techniques and Games of the Image Theatre will cover the exercises and the techniques developed with the Image Theatre. By January, 1980, when I interviewed Augusto Boal in Europe, eight techniques and twelve exercises had been developed.

a) The objective.

The Image Theatre intends to establish the differentiation between "looking" and "seeing."[103] The exercises developed for the Image Theatre try to show people how to see what they are looking at by stimulating their visual sense. Inasmuch as this sense, which we use most in our daily lives, has been atrophied by advertisements, publicity and the mass media in this complex twentieth century society, it needs to be developed. According to Boal we are

accustomed to using our eyes for looking, but in reality we actually see very few things.

Publicity, particularly, has acclimated us to looking without actually seeing. We devise associations of impossible images which are contradictory, antagonistic, and irreconcilable.

> Olhamos o corpo seminú de mulheres lindíssimas seduzidas por um jovem musculoso e esbelto que bebe whisky com a garrafa e a marca em primeiro plano, mas não vemos que o alcool pode, quando muito, conduzir à impotência mas nunca à excessos de virilidade. Olhamos as duas imagens e fazemos uma associação impossível.[104] (Italics mine).
>
> (We look at the semi-naked-bodies of beautiful women seduced by a muscular and slender young man who drinks whiskey from a bottle that has its trademark in plain view, but we don't see that alcohol can provoke sexual impotency rather than an excess of virility. We look at both images and make an impossible association).

Since human beings are accustomed to looking at images which prevent them from seeing other images which can give diverse information, the objective of Image Theatre is to help us to actually see what we are looking at.

b) Some techniques.

Basically each technique is divided into two segments. The first is the construction of a model--a visual image of some theme, problem, or concept constructed only through the bodies of various actors. Everything is visual, no one talks. The second part is dynamization of the model, a kind of analysis of the model also utilizing the actor's body in three different stages, from the simple to the complex. In the first stage, the model is dynamized individually; in the second, the model is dynamized collectively,

establishing relationships; and in the third stage, the dynamization creates the contradictory image of the model.

These rules are not always consistent. Each segment varies depending upon the type of group, its participants, and many other circumstances. Not all of the techniques follow all of the above steps, though, in general, these rules are the basis for the elaboration of the techniques.[105]

(1) First technique: to illustrate a theme with one's own body.

(a) The model:

In this case, the model can be constructed in two distinct ways. First, the Joker[106] asks five performers to show with their bodies the theme or themes selected, one after another. None of the five should see what the others do. Then the Joker asks if any other participant has a different image that he wants to project. When all have presented their images, the Joker asks for the dynamization of the model. The model can also be constructed as follows. In a circle all of the participants simultaneously create with their bodies an image of the theme. A few seconds later they will observe the image of the others, maintaining their positions in the images they personally created.

(b) The dynamization:

First, the Joker gives a signal. All of the participants who created images go to the center and repeat the images, seeing each other's image at the same time. In the model everyone had shown his image in the subjective form. With this first dynamization stage, the group can have a multiple vision of the theme. This is an objective vision. Here it is not essential to know what each person thinks, but what the whole group things about the theme.

Second, the Joker gives another signal. Everyone should try to establish an interrelationship with the participants according to the images shown. Each one can select one or more images with which to interrelate. Each can choose to integrate with or separate from another image. If in the first dynamization the social vision was the most important, here it is the organized social vision: the organic vision.

Third, the Joker gives a final signal. All of the images must be changed into their opposites. For example, if all of the participants created images of victims to illustrate a theme such as oppression, now they should transform into oppressors. Boal wants each participant to act

as an object and as a subject. With this third dynamization, each participant can penetrate more profoundly the vision of his image. This opposite image complements the first one, and a clearer vision of all the facets pertaining to the model is obtained.

(2) Second technique: to illustrate a theme using the bodies of the others.

(a) The model:

The Joker asks one participant to construct an image of the theme proposed by the group, using the bodies of all the participants. When the model is completed, the participant should consult the group, but not verbally. The group can agree with the model (the model then is kept), but the group can also disagree (the model is then destroyed). But the group can also agree with reservations. In this case, the Joker consults the group and eliminates everything the group disapproves of or considers imperative. It is always the group who should construct the collective image of the theme.

Boal emphasizes that it is an absolute for the person who is sculpting the image with the actor's bodies to do it rapidly so he will not

be tempted to think in terms of words. Those words will be translated into images or visual language, and according to Boal, the actor should think in images.[107] When he does not think in images but in words, the images produced are very poor.

(b) The dynamization:

First, the Joker gives a signal. The actors inside the model should do a rhythmic movement according to the content of the image. For example, a man who eats is a static image. There are many ways a man can eat, and there are many rhythms for eating. He can do it sadly, and with sadness the rhythm will be different than if he does it happily. This rhythmic movement will add supplementary information to the original information given by the static image.

Second, the Joker gives a new signal. Then the actors should do the aforementioned rhythmic movement, but now they should say a phrase which corresponds to the content of the image. It should be clear that the phrase should be said by the character, not by the actor.

Third, the Joker gives another signal. Then the participants in the model should again do the

previous parts, but also construct a conclusion. For example, if the image eats with sadness, what will he/she do afterward? If the image walks, to what specific place is the image walking?

The purpose of this second technique is the construction of an action, very well-defined, coordinated, and integrated. It is necessary that in each dynamization the participant should take into consideration the rest of the actors in the model.

(3) Third technique: the image of transition.

(a) The model:

This model works in the same manner as the previous technique until it reaches the construction of a model which can be accepted by the entire group. But here that model must have a theme of oppression proposed by the group. Thus, according to Boal, it would be a real model of oppression. Then the Joker asks the group to construct an ideal model, where the oppression is eliminated. The Joker immediately returns the group to the real model and the dynamization starts.

(b) The dynamization:

First, the Joker informs the group that any participant can give his opinion about which features are to be transplanted from the real image (oppressive) to the ideal one (without oppression). The

participants can discuss the changes, but cannot use words, just movements and visual language. Then the group in the second dynamization should begin to experiment with the suggestions to verify which ones are practical.

Second, the Joker gives a signal. All the figures of the image will begin a movement. Each time the Joker claps, each figure, each actor inside the image, will have the right to do a movement according to the position his character represents. Those who are in the oppressed situation will make a movement toward their liberation. Those who are in the oppressor situation will make a movement to reinforce the oppression. Those movements should be made according to the characters and not according to the person who represents them.

Third, after various movements have been performed, the Joker suggests that all of the figures continue their movements in slow motion. With each clap they will make the movement more and more slowly, permitting them to stop and carefully look at themselves so they can know where they are in relation to the others. The movement will end when all of the possibilities of liberation have been studied visually--when the image reaches an

> almost total repose--when all the conflicts have been resolved in one way of another, with or without a happy ending.

This third technique permits greater concentration on a single problem--only one form of oppression--one concrete case. As Boal says: "The macrocosm is shown in a form of microcosm."[108]

(4) Fourth technique: the multiple image of oppression.

Sometimes the solutions to the problems of oppression and a more complete understanding of them can be found not in the social microcosm, but in the social macrocosm.

(a) The model:

The model to be constructed here should be multiple and complex. Whatever the theme is, it should not use one image, but rather various images which show the dissimilar perspectives of that theme. It is vital that the images not be repeated unless that repetition is characteristic of that kind of repression.

(b) The dynamization:

First, the sculptors who have shown oppressed images should substitute for one of the individuals inside of the image so they can give their personal perspective of the oppression. The sculptor has

the right to move the other figures of the image to show the ideal image.

Second, the image returns to the original model, and after the Joker gives a signal, all of the participants move slowly from the real to the ideal according to the wishes of the sculptor. But each figure will choose his own movement. Whether or not the solution proposed by the sculptor is possible or impossible is verified in this process.

Third, the image again returns to the original model. The Joker gives a signal and starts clapping his hands. The figures now start their movements in character (as in the second dynamization of the third technique) toward the ideal image. In this way, the proposal of the sculptor is completely verified.

(5) Fifth technique: the multiple image of happiness.

(a) The model:

Half of the group is sent out of the room. The rest construct a model as in the previous techniques: some of the participants sculpt their images of happiness with the bodies of the actors. Those images are placed throughout the room so each one can be seen by everyone and yet be isolated from the rest.

(b) The dynamization:

First, the Joker brings in the individuals who were out of the room so they can see all of the figures clearly. Each selects the figure which, in his opinion, best portrays happiness and then substitutes for that figure. The persons that have been replaced leave the room. If two persons select the same figure as the best portrait of happiness, the first person to reach the figure will substitute for the figure and the other will substitute for his second choice.

Second, at the Joker's signal all of the persons who were replaced have the right to reenter the room and to select the best portrayal of happiness. This time instead of substituting for the individual each should put his body beside the body of the figure chosen, imitating the same position. If two or more persons select the same figure, they will all imitate the same position.

Third, the Joker gives the signal and all of the participants, including the original individuals selected to be statues and those who sculpted the images, will more simultaneously, establishing interrelationships which portray an expanded view of happiness. At this stage everyone is a subject and no one is an object.

If a person sees a figure or figures that he wishes to interrelate with, he will move in that direction. But perhaps since that individual or group is also moving, when the first person reaches his destination no one is there. Thus, the participant may need to reevaluate his path, the general structure, the multiple image in all of its aspects.

(6) Sixth technique: the image of the group.

(a) The model:

This model constructs, creating with all of the participants, an image of the group itself. This technique can be used when problems arise inside the group; for example, when some individuals do not want to participate or when there is no agreement on the images and solutions proposed. The intention here is to demonstrate how the group is working and to detect reasons for any problems within the group. Boal recommends the use of this technique when there is an impasse.

(b) The dynamization:

First, the Joker explains that everyone is included in the general image of the group, even though some of the participants are observing from the outside and others are in the middle, forming the

image which caused the disagreement. Thus, there will be really two images: the global, general image of the whole group, and inside the general one, the nucleus image of a problem that has not been resolved.

The Joker asks those persons inside the nucleus who are satisfied with the image to stay in their positions and those who are dissatisfied to leave with the others who are looking on. Also the Joker tells the spectators that if they feel uncomfortable in their positions as spectators, they can integrate with the nucleus image.

Second, the Joker asks the participants who have moved out of the nucleus image to rejoin it, but in whatever way they wish, not in the manner earlier imposed on them.

Third, the final image of the global group will reveal the capacity or lack of it that the group has to work harmoniously. The problems and their causes reveal themselves through the image of the group and offer the clues necessary to understand the problem more precisely.

This technique has been used by Boal consistently, not only in experimenting with his Theatre of the Oppressed, but also in traditional theatre. Sometimes, during the rehearsals of a traditional play, Boal encountered problems with the actors in terms of

characterization, lack of discipline, and cast integration. Many times Boal faced problems that were not within the context of theatre, personal problems among actors, professional jealousies, and so forth. Many of these problems were hidden by the actors. With this technique, those problems revealed themselves, and in this manner Boal knew how to face them and thus began to resolve them.

These six techniques were typical of those developed by Boal with his Image Theatre form between 1978 and 1980. He developed many others and is in the process of developing many more. But these six exemplify the highest developmental point the Image Theatre has reached. Besides these techniques, there are also exercises to enrich this theatre form.

(c) Exercises used with Image Theatre.

Boal has developed at least three principal sequences of exercises to assist actors to actually see what they are looking at. The sequences are the mirror sequence, the sculpture sequence, and the marionette sequence. Some exercises from the mirror sequence best illustrate this method for accomplishing the objective of the Image Theatre:

(1) Simple mirror.

Two lines of participants are created, one line facing the other. The persons in line A are "subjects," and the persons in line B are "images." Each "subject" initiates a series of movements

and facial expressions which should be reproduced in detail by the "image" facing him. The "subject" should not consider himself an enemy of the "image." This is not a competitive exercise involving impossible movements or abrupt changes of expression. The exercise is designed to achieve perfect movement synchronization between subject and image. The movements should be done very slowly and continuously, excuted as perfectly as possible so the exterior observer cannot distinguish between the one who originates the movements and the one who follows them.

(2) Change of Subject and of Image.

After a few minutes, the Joker, who directs the exercise, gives a signal. The participants who were subjects become images and those who were images become subjects. Here, also, the exterior observer should not be able to tell who was originating the movements at the moment of the change nor, more importantly, that a change was performed.

(3) Subject-Image, Image-Subject.

After a few minutes, the Joker again gives another signal, and both participants (subject and image) become simultaneously subjects and images. All of the participants, face to face, have the right to originate any movement they want and they also have the obligation to reproduce the movements originated by their partners. The communication is exclusively visual and the attention of each participant should be concentrated on his partner, especially

on his eyes. Boal reaffirms that it is imperative to do this exercise without any oppression or without any participant tyrannizing his partner.

(4) Everybody takes hands.

The Joker gives another signal and everyone takes the hands of the people next to them. Each participant now will be looking at his partner in front and also have the hands of his fellows at his right and left sides. Now, the communication, besides being visual between opposite partners, is also physical and muscular between participants within each line. The subjects continue doing their movements, but now taking into consideration their cohorts on each side. Again, the vital point is to do everything very slowly so that the reproductions and synchronizations will be perfect. No impossible and/or abrupt changes are permitted. Everything should be continuous. The actor who does an impossible movement should begin again with another that is easily followed. If the movements are performed slowly and continuously, there will be a visual and muscular coordination which will permit both lines to be identical.

(5) The two lines do a curve.

The Joker moves one participant at one end of the one line to form a U-curve with that line. The second line reproduces the U-curve. It is supposed that between the two lines is an imaginary mirror. The participants move, looking at the eyes of those on the opposite line. Thus, there is direct visual communication between

two people, and muscular and visual communication among three, and now the actors have become conscious of the totality of each line.

(6) The symmetric groups.

The Joker gives a signal and everyone releases hands. Now, the line constructs a collective and symmetrical image, imagining a mirror which divides the room. The participants in the line can create more than one block of images, but one person must never perform an isolated image. The other line will mirror the images of the first. Again, it is important to do everything slowly and continuously to achieve perfect synchronization.

(7) The mirror breaks.

The imaginary mirror at the center breaks, creating pairs of performers facing each other. The couples look at each other, establishing subject and image, reproducing the movement originated by one of them, but without tyranny, slowly and continuously. Each participant should enlarge his capacity for concentration. The space within which they operate now becomes more dynamic and changeable, and their attention and concentration should be more intense.

(8) The partners exchange.

The Joker gives a signal and the participants exchange partners with someone near. Each should try to find a new partner who best corresponds with him. Then they should establish a new visual dialogue or attempt to continue the visual dialogue they had with their first partner. The participant should continue the movements

he was doing with his first partner until he finds the new partner. If he cannot immediately find a new one, he should keep moving until he can. The process, at a signal from the Joker, is repeated twice with partners increasingly farther away.

If two participants select the same person, they will analyze the visual communication. The one who communicates best with him should stay and the other should find another partner. It is paramount that with a new partner, when communication is created, the actors should be cognizant of the differences between that communication and the previous ones.

(9) The deforming mirror.

The Joker should explain before he gives the signal the next step in the exercise, so the sequence of all the exercises is maintained.

At a new signal by the Joker, the relationships and communication of the couples are totally transformed. Up to this point all of the movements and expressions were identically reproduced; in this exercise the comments and the answers are reproduced. Each person moves as he wishes. The partner "answers," "comments on," "increases," "reduces," "caricatures," "ridicules," and "destroys,"[109] the movement message. In other words, he produces an image related to the image he receives, but in contraposition to that image.

It is vital that both the image and the answer should be performed almost simultaneously and continuously instead of one partner waiting to respond.

(10) The narcissist's mirror.

The previous exercise represented the destruction of the partner's mask. After that each participant looks at himself in the mirror and sees himself as being beautiful. Everyone should try to produce all of the happy expressions he/she has experienced in his/her life. But each should remember that the image he/she sees is the image of his/her partner in front of him/her. The participants see their own images in the body of the other person. The idea of this exercise is that the participants try to find themselves in the others.

(11) The rhythmic mirror.

In seeking oneself in the other, the dialogue becomes a monologue. Both participants look for movements which can be rhythmically reproduced and which are pleasant for both.

(12) Unification.

Finally, on the Joker's signal, all of the different couples strive for unification. This is an attempt, not an obligation. There are three possibilities. First, at the end of the sequence all of the group members may be already unified in one rhythm, one movement. Second, the group may already be unified in rhythmic and complementary movements which are not the same but are harmonized. Third, the different groups never unify--they finish in different groups and/or subgroups--each repeating its own rhythm and movement.

When the participants try to unite, they should remember not to compete or to impose one group's actions or rhythms upon others.

Boal's intent here is a rhythmic study to visualize the degree of compatibility and dialogue of the participants, in other words, the capacity of the group for collective work.

Unification concludes this sequence of Image Theatre exercises. Boal, in an attempt to amplify the visual dialogue, created a series of exercises known as the sculpture sequence. These seven exercises adhere closely to the form of the mirror sequence. One participant is the sculptor and the other the statue. The movement is also similar to that of the mirror sequence: from individual positions toward the creation of a collective sculpture of the whole group.

In the mirror sequence the dialogue is in mime. In the sculpture sequence the dialogue should be translation. The actor sees what his partner does and then translates the movement by modifying his own body. The intended result is not to reproduce the movement seen but rather to show the consequences of the movement. For example, one actor who performs the function of the sculptor arranges the body of his partner who performs the role of the statue. No words or facial expressions are required of the sculptor. The sculptor will try to construct a statue which reflects an image. The actor who is the statue will respond with movements and physical expressions stimulated by the sculptor's touch. The participants are not performing synchronized movements, but instead two different ones--one is the cause and the other is the effect.

Boal also created another sequence of exercises to enlarge the visual dialogue. This sequence is called the marionette sequence.

Strings supposedly connect the subject (the puppeteer) and the object (the marionette). The actor playing the part of the marionette should do the movements that the distant puppeteer orchestrates. For each part of the marionette's body there will be an imaginary string through which the puppeteer will work. If the puppeteer raises his left arm, as if pulling up a string, the marionette must lift his left arm. A few movements and exercises are practiced in this manner. Later, a new condition is added to the scenario. In the middle of the room between the two actors there is an imaginary pole, three meters in height. The imaginary strings of the marionette lead from the puppeteer's hands over the highest point of the pole to the marionette's body, creating inverse movements. For instance, when the puppeteer wants to raise the marionette's hand he needs to move his own down. So for each movement of the marionette there is a corresponding opposite movement from the puppeteer.

All three exercise sequences of the Image Theatre function through visual dialogue to develop the actors' capacity for observation. According to Boal the Image Theatre tries to develop visual language. The introduction of any other kind of language--words--creates conflicts and superimposes itself on the language which is developing. These sequences even avoided symbolic or obvious signals, such as moving the head to indicate yes or no, because they are too closely linked with verbalization.

Finally, silence is an integral element in the accomplishment of these exercises. Silence helps the actor's concentration and

will increase the interest of the participants in enriching the visual dialogues which can be created.

E. The Theatre of the Oppressed: Fiction or Reality?

The question of theatre style now arises. How can this theatre be described? Is it realistic, symbolistic, or expressionistic? Where does reality end and the magic of the theatre begin? Where do we place the Theatre of the Oppressed on the reality/fantasy scale?

For Boal all of the theatre styles (expressionism, realism, symbolism) can be included in the Theatre of the Oppressed with the exception of such irrational ones as surrealism. Boal constantly reaffirms this idea. Irrational elements which go beyond reality, like surrealism, cannot be included. To attempt the transformation of reality, the Theatre of the Oppressed must consistently examine reality. But reality may be in many forms.

Related to this issue is another implicit problem, considered by Boal as one of the most vital problems of the theatre: whether or not objectivity exists--especially the objectivity of realism. Is it possible to show life as it really is? According to Boal the answer is no. The only way to show life as it really is would be for the artist to assume "a cosmic point of view."[110] And this is impossible, since, according to Boal, the artist was, is and will always be immersed in society. He cannot see life divorced from the perspective of the society which molds him. Total objectivity does not exist. For Boal, the realistic style is not only as subjective

as any other, but it is more dangerous because it is the opposite of what the conventional theorists desire theatre to be. Boal and his Theatre of the Oppressed realize that we must identify with someone who is real and not a mere abstraction.

Boal does not consider his Theatre of the Oppressed as realistic. He says it is "in a way but not as it is usually defined."[111] He describes his theatre as "objective expressionism"[112] because this style implies the perception of a reality through one person--one specific character--but this reality is not shown in the realism style. Realism presents a photographic reality which was essential in the nineteenth century to counterbalance Romanticism but is not today. Today, what is essential is change, to create a new reality, not to describe a present one.

The Theatre of the Oppressed is also objective. Reality is perceived through many people instead of through one. Expressionism is an individualistic approach, psychological realism. Everything is perceived through the eyes of one character. So objective expressionism attempts to transform the perception of reality from psychological to sociological. An example will illustrate this:

> If you ask twenty workers what a policemen looks like, how he moves, how he behaves, you will get twenty different answers but with a great deal of overlap. The portrait created by this overlap is the description of how they, as a class, see a policeman.[113]

This is objective expressionism: the sociological perception of reality.

Of all the forms of the Theatre of the Oppressed, it is the Invisible Theatre which is most astonishing, for the reason that in

it the spectators are not aware that they are viewing theatre and not reality. With this kind of theatre, the Theatre of the Oppressed is evolving from the fictional toward reality, but not yet reaching total reality. The fiction is always present, but it becomes reality when it is presented to the spectators:

> In the Invisible Theatre, for example, actors bring with them the ficticious, which is the scene they are going to perform. They come with the model already rehearsed and prepared. But when they reach the spectators and perform the scene, this fiction becomes reality for the spectators. For them, the scene and its problems are real.[114]

This is the essence of Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed: the continuing conflict between fantasy and reality. What occurs is what Boal called the explosion of the Theatre of the Oppressed, that violent confrontation between reality and fiction. For the spectators the place is always real: streets where vendors sell their goods, restaurants, trains, subways, and ferry boats. In actual reality a theatre scene explodes, astonishing the spectators. Sometimes they are even aware that it is theatre (Forum Theatre); at other times they are unaware that they are experiencing theatre.

How should the Theatre of the Oppressed be classified? Boal answers: "The Theatre of the Oppressed is exactly on the limit between fiction and reality; this is the explosion of the Theatre of the Oppressed."[115]

NOTES CHAPTER III

[1]Augusto Boal, 200 Ejercicios y Juegos Para el Actor y No Actor Con Ganas de Decir Algo Através Del Teatro (Buenos Aires: Editorial Crisis S.R.L., 1975), p. 15.

[2]Thomas Mellgren, "Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed," Canadian Theatre Review, no. 19 (Summer 1978), p. 113; Augusto Boal, "Teatro del Oprimido," Crisis, II, núm. 14 (Junio 1974), 26; and Augusto Boal, Pratique du Théâtre De L'Opprimé (Paris: Centre d'étude et de diffusion des techniques actives d'expression, 1979), p. 2.

[3]Mellgren, loc. cit.

[4]Boal, Pratique du Théâtre de l'Opprimé, p. 2.

[5]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed (New York: Urizen Books, 1979), p. 122.

[6]Boal, Pratique du Théâtre de l'Opprimé, p. 2.

[7]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. 122.

[11]Câmara de Deputados.

[12]Chefe de Governo.

[13]See Augusto Boal, "Brasil: Teatro de la represión," Primer Acto, núm. 146-147 (Julio y Agosto de 1972), pp. 32-33; and Oscar Fernández, "Censorship and the Brazilian Theatre," Educational Theatre Journal, 25, no. 3 (October 1973), 285-286.

[14]Primer Acto, "Boal habla de 'Zumbi' y de la situación Brasileña," Primer Acto, núm. 146-147 (Julio y Agosto de 1972), p. 69.

[15]Nelson Rodrigues, Ariano Suassuna, Pedro Bloch, Gianfrancesco Guarnieri, Plínio Marcos, Dias Gomes, Augusto Boal, and others.

[16]Fernández, op. cit., p. 287.

[17]Invasão.

[18]O Berço do Herói.

[19]Dr. Getúlio Vargas, Sua Vida e Sua Glória.

[20]Navalha na Carne.

[21]Opinião.

[22]Liberdade, Liberdade.

[23]Boal, "Que pensa você da arte de esquerda?," Latin American Theatre Review, 3, no. 2 (Spring 1970), 48-51.

[24]Boal, "The Politics of Torture. The case of Brazil in Latin America," Lecture delivered at the conference "An Inquiry Into the Literary and Political Climate of Latin America," sponsored by The Freedom to Write Committee of P.E.N. American Center, New York, February 7, 1980. (Tape recorded)

[25]Fernández, loc. cit.

[26]Ibid., p. 289.

[27]Boal, "Teatro de Arena de S. Paulo," Primer Acto, núm. 135 (Agosto de 1971), p. 71.

[28]Fernández, op. cit., p. 294.

[29]Musicales.

[30]Boal, "¿Qué piensa usted del arte de izquierda en el Brasil?," Primer Acto, núm. 132 (Marzo de 1971), p. 20.

[31]Boal, "Teatro de Arena de S. Paulo," Primer Acto, núm. 135 (Agosto de 1971), p. 72; and Augusto Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. 168.

[32]Boal, "Sistema Coringa," Primer Acto, núm. 132 (Mayo de 1971), p. 19.

[33]See Augusto Boal, 200 Ejercicios y Juegos para el Actor y No Actor Con Ganas de Decir Algo A través del Teatro, pp. 16-21.

[34]Boal, "Teatro de Arena de S. Paulo," Primer Acto, núm. 135 (Agosto de 1971), p. 73.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Boal, "The Joker System: An Experiment by the Arena Theatre of São Paulo," The Drama Review, 14, no. 2 (Winter), 93-94.

[38]See Augusto Boal, "Sistema Coringa," Primer Acto, núm. 132 (Mayo de 1971), p. 19.

[39]Augusto Boal and Gianfrancesco Guarnieri, Arena Conta Tiradentes (São Paulo: Livraria e Editora Sagarana, 1967), p. 163.

[40]Augusto Boal, Gianfrancesco Guarnieri and Edu Lobo, "Arena Cuenta Zumbi," Primer Acto, núm. 146-147 (Julio-Agosto 1972), p. 97.

[41]Boal, "The Joker System: An Experiment by the Arena Theatre of São Paulo," The Drama Review, 14, no. 2 (Winter 1970), 93.

[42]Boal, "Sistema Coringa," Primer Acto, núm. 132 (Mayo de 1971), p. 19.

[43]See Augusto Boal, "Las Metas del 'Sistema Comodín'," Primer Acto, núm. 146-147 (Julio-Agosto de 1972), p. 57; and Theater of the Oppressed, p. 175.

[44]Boal, "Las Metas del 'Sistema Comodín'," Primer Acto, núm. 146-147 (Julio-Agosto de 1972), p. 58.

[45]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. 175.

[46]Ibid., pp. 176-177.

[47]See Augusto Boal, "Las Metas del 'Sistema Comodín'," Primer Acto, núm 146-147 (Julio-Agosto de 1972), p. 59.

[48]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. 177.

[49]Boal, "Las Metas del 'Sistema Comodín'," Primer Acto, núm. 146-147 (Julio-Agosto de 1972), p. 60; and Augusto Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. 180.

[50]Ibid.

[51]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, pp. 180-181.

[52]Ibid., p. 182.

[53]Ibid., p. 183.

[54]Ibid., p. 185.

[55]Boal, "The Theatre of the Oppressed," Lecture delivered at the Center for Interamerican Relations, New York, February 6, 1980. (Tape recorded).

[56]Ibid.

[57]Primeira Feira Paulista de Opinião.

[58]Boal, Categorias de Teatro Popular (Buenos Aires: Ediciones CEPE, 1972), p. 79.

[59]Teatro Jornal: Primeira Edição.

[60]Boal, Técnicas Latino-Americanas de Teatro Popular Uma revolução copernicana ao contrário (São Paulo: Editora Hucitec, 1979), p. 43.

Before this spectacle, Boal wrote various editions of this Newspaper Theatre, explaining the functioning of the techniques of this type of theatre. When he believed that the conditions were favorable for the presentation of a spectacle based on these techniques, he performed this first edition. These first nine techniques of the Newspaper Theatre were originally published in Latin American Theatre Review, 4, no. 2 (Spring 1971), 57-60.

[61]In the first edition of the Newspaper Theatre, Boal used as the title "Entrevista de Campo" which means Field Interview. The meaning was the same. Because of the confusion he changed those words to "Texto Fuera de Contexto" which means "Text Out of Context," when he published these techniques in his book Categorias de Teatro Popular in 1972.

[62]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. 143.

[63]See Augusto Boal, Técnicas Latinoamericanas de Teatro Popular (una revolución Copernicana al revés) (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Corregidor Saici Y E., 1975), pp. 51-73.

[64]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. 143.

[65]Boal, Técnicas Latinoamericanas de Teatro Popular (una revolución Copernicana al revés), pp. 53-54.

[66]Ibid., p. 55.

[67]Boal, Categorias de Teatro Popular, p. 72.

[68]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, pp. 146-147.

[69]Ibid., p. 144.

[70]These scenarios appeared on Boal's book Técnicas Latino-Americanas de Teatro Popular Uma revolução copernicana ao contrário, pp. 73-82.

[71]People who sell the green groceries in an open market.

[72]A Lei.

[73]"Almuerzo Comercial."

[74]See Augusto Boal, Técnicas Latino-Americanas de Teatro Popular Uma revolução copernicana ao contrário, p. 72.

[75]See Appendix A.

[76]Boal, op. cit., p. 73.

[77]Ibid.

[78]Ibid.

[79]Ibid.

[80]"Operación Alfabetización Integral."

[81]A detailed explanation of this experience of Boal in Peru appears in chapter IV of his book Theater of the Oppressed, pp. 120-156.

[82]The book appeared later in 1977 in Portuguese with the title 200 Exercícios e Jogos Para o Ator e Não-Ator com Vontade de Dizer Algo Através do Teatro. In 1979 the book was translated into the French.

[83]"Foto Novela". A soap opera, presented in a magazine through the use of a series of captioned still photographs.

[84]Ross Kidd, "People's Theatre, Conscientization, and Struggle" (Toronto, January 1980), p. 1. (Typewritten paper).

[85]Ibid., pp. 2-8.

[86]The theory elaborated by Freire in his book Pedagogy of the Oppressed, is based on the idea that the human being, although he may be submerged in the "Culture of Silence", into ignorange, etc.; is capable of looking critically at his world. In so far as he

learns and participates in an educational experience which seeks this goal, he comes to a new awareness of himself, and his world becomes radically transformed. This man is no longer a mere object who responds to the changes around him, but a subject who transforms reality.

[87]Kidd, op. cit., p. 12.

[88]Boal, Theater of the Oppressed, p. X.

[89]Boal, Técnicas Latino-Americanas de Teatro Popular Uma revolução copernicana ao contrário, p. 141.

[90]For more details see Augusto Boal, Pratique du Théâtre de l'Opprimé, pp. 17-18.

[91]For more details see Augusto Boal, Jeux pour Acteurs et Non-Acteurs: Pratique du Théâtre de l'Opprimé (Paris: François Maspero, 1979), pp. 24-27.

[92]Boal, Técnicas Latino-Americanas de Teatro Popular Uma revolução copernicana ao contrário, p. 143.

[93]Ibid., p. 148.

[94]See Augusto Boal, Jeux pour Acteurs et Non-Acteurs. Pratique du Théâtre de l'Opprimé, pp. 31-33; and Augusto Boal, Técnicas Latino-Americanas de Teatro Popular Uma revolução copernicana ao contrário, pp. 145-146.

[95]Ibid.

[96]See the second level of the third stage from the Boal experience in Peru, where the concept of Image is discussed. Pages 93-95 of this dissertation.

[97]See pages 48-56 of this dissertation. The Joker in the Forum Theatre will have the same functions of the Joker System.

[98]See Teatro Libero-Palermo, Ed., Momenti: Godrano-Agosto 1977 (Palermo: Teatro Libero Palermo, 1977), p. 24.

[99]Ibid., p. 20.

"Piazza principale" refers to the central square of a small town where people meet and socialize.

[100]"Il Gioco Parlamentare." For more information see Teatro Libero-Palermo, ed., Momenti: Godrano-Agosto 1977, p. 25.

[101]Ibid.

"Bene, Ora finalmente cominceremos a parlare seriamente. Fin qui voi stavete facendo teatro, giocavate con cose seria. Ora parleremo seriamente."

[102]Ibid., p. 26.

"Questa e la mia cooperativa. Se volete fatevene un'altra!"

[103]See Appendix A.

[104]Boal, "Sistematização do Teatro Imagem: exercícios, jogos e técnicas do teatro imagem" (Paris, January 1980), p. 1. (typewritten manuscript).

[105]These techniques, such as the exercises of the Image Theatre appear in the Boal's writing: "Sistematização do Teatro Imagem: exercícios, jogos, e técnicas do teatro imagem," typewritten manuscript, 39 pp.

[106]In this case, the Joker is the director and coordinator of the group.

[107]Boal, "Sistematização do Teatro Imagem: exercícios, jogos e técnicas do teatro imagem," p. 17.

[108]Ibid., p. 22.

"O macrocosmo é mostrado em forma de microcosmo."

[109]Ibid., p. 5.

[110]Ibid., p. 16.

[111]Mellgren, op. cit., p. 110.

[112]Ibid.

[113]Ibid., pp. 110-111.

[114]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980, see Appendix A for more information.

[115]Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

BASIC CONCEPTS OF BOAL'S PEOPLE THEATRE: A LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

This chapter will analyze Boal's concepts of People's Theatre and will be limited to the Latin American perspective. Studying Boal's ideas concerning the differences between "people" and "population," as well as his views on culture, education and language will clarify the Latin American people's theatre concept.

A. The Difference Between "People" and "Population"

Understanding the diversity between the concepts of people and population, is the key to comprehending Boal's idea of people's theatre from the Latin American perspective. In the countries of Latin America the concept of people's theatre is closely linked to the social and political struggles of the masses against their oppressors. Sometimes the words "popular theatre," "political theatre," and "radical theatre" are used in an arbitrary and often confusing way to mean the same theatrical event--the people's theatre. Nevertheless, behind all of those terms is the clear objective to differentiate the "people" from the rest of the population. According to Boal:

> We cannot confuse the people with the population. "People" are those who sell their labor power: peasants, workers, etc. The population is everybody. The Bourgeoisie is part of the population but not part of the "people."[1]

For Boal the population is the totality of inhabitants in a given country, region or society. But the concept of people is more restricted because it includes only those who "sell their labor power."[2] The concept of the people for Boal includes workers, peasants and those who are temporarily or occasionally associated with them, such as students, teachers, and some intellectuals. For Boal, those who constitute parts of the population, but not the people, are the proprietors--the landed gentry--the bourgeoisie and its associates (executives and administrators) and in general all of those who think as they do.[3] These persons are called by Boal "the anti-people."[4] The people are the majority of the population, the masses, and the anti-people are the minority of the population, a privileged elite. The population pyramid, according to Boal's definition, would have at the top the minority elite, the anti-people, and at the bottom the majority of the population, the masses, who are the people. Therefore, one should be cognizant of this diversity when analyzing the basic concepts of the Latin American people's theatre.

B. Boal's Concepts About Culture, Education and Language

For Boal, the concept of culture contains two senses: one that is quite broad and the other more narrow. In the broad sense culture is all of the human activities accomplished in any particular society at any specific moment. He offers an example. To eat is an animal activity, but how you eat is a cultural activity. How you eat, at what time you eat, what you eat, how the food you

eat is prepared, who eats and in what place are manifestations of culture.[5] For Boal activities such as working, fighting, teaching, studying, cooking, painting, and performing theatre are accomplished by the human being in the society through cultural forms established by each society in each historical moment. In the narrow sense, culture refers to certain determined and limited sectors of human activity; for example, "artistic culture," "scientific culture," "humanistic culture," and "sport culture."[6]

Boal believes that both concepts of culture have a commonality in that culture is produced by the society and so will reflect clearly what kind of society it is. For example, a society which is divided would produce a divided culture. In the case where the society has a population divided into people and anti-people, the culture also will be divided into "people's culture" and "anti-people's culture."[7]

When the society is divided into classes, as modern society is, the ruling class tries to institute as "culture" its culture and the culture of the other classes is not considered to be culture.[8] Many times the culture of the people is given the status of folklore--the knowledge of the people--and, according to Boal, this demonstrates something crucial about the society which produces these "cultures." Each society tries to universalize its culture. Each society tries to make its culture homogeneous, imposing a specific culture upon the individual or upon the people. This process of imposition is called "acculturation."[9] For Boal acculturation can be accomplished in two different forms: first, through a

dogmatic process or, second, through an educational process. The dogmatic process is the imposition of the values of one culture upon another or upon individuals in a mechanized manner. The educational process is a dialectical relationship in which the educator society not only permits, but also requires that those receiving the education act as subjects. Any one receiving the education must not be passively assimilated by the educator society. The educator offers his values and knowledge, not for passive acceptance, but to transform the subject.

The vehicle or the means through which the educational process is accomplished is language. But there are various languages. According to Boal, language in general is a system of symbols and signals which permits communication between human beings, animals, and/or human beings and animals. But the simple emitting of symbols and signals is not language. The existence of language requires the existence of interlocutors who accept and use it. If someone invents a language, he also needs to find a speaker or interlocutor who accepts it. When the interlocutor or the speaker appears, then the language appears, too.

Each language has a lexicon or vocabulary and a syntax. For example, the lexicon of painting is its colors and its forms, and the syntax is the style: cubism, impressionism. For a total and complete communication between two speakers, it is necessary that both know and utilize the same lexicon and syntax.

Boal believes that having knowledge of the lexicon is imperative and fundamental to understanding reality, but only knowledge of

the syntax can promote its transformation. The reason is the transformation of reality is the most critical element in Boal's theories on art, communication and theatre. He places the most emphasis on the syntax of any language. He says that the fundamental category of the lexicon is the substantive (the noun) and the category of the syntax is the action (the verb).[10] Applying these ideas to the theatrical arts, Boal affirms that the fundamental category of theatre is the verb, the action. Scrutinizing all of the arts, Boal feels that theatre is the one which best corresponds metaphorically to the syntax. When Boal talks about theatre as language, he is talking about action. Theatre is constant action--the consistent transformation of reality.

Based on these ideas, a general overview presentation of Boal's people's theatre will facilitate a better understanding of Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed. Since his Theatre of the Oppressed is part of the Latin American People's theatre, it is essential to present the basic elements of this people's theatre.

C. Latin American "People's Theatre

1. Categories of People's Theatre.

This classification of the people's theatre was created by Boal between 1970 and 1972. During his exile in Argentina, he implemented these categories, which were published for the first time in 1972, in Buenos Aires, under the title of Categories of People's Theatre. Later, between 1975 and 1979, they appeared as chapters in several of his books.

There are four categories of People's Theatre presented and studied by Boal. Only three of them can be classified as real people's theatre for they possess the perspective of the people and not that of the anti-people. Boal wanted to demonstrate that there can be two diverse perspectives on how to view the world and reality. He also wanted to demonstrate that there are two different ways to perceive the people. The first perspective reveals the world in permanent transformation, with its contradictions and forms of liberation, showing that human beings can change their situations. Life and our world is always in transformation and this constant state of motion is necessary to promote change. From this first perspective, the people are the protagonists--the transformers. This is the perspective which favors the people.

The second perspective shows the contrary, a world "as being finished, a world that needs almost nothing to be completed"[11] in other words, a world that does not have to be transformed for it is already perfected. This is the anti-people's perspective where the people are passive beings.

With these two perspectives in mind, Boal establishes the following category outlines:

I. Theatre of the People and for the People (First Category)

   A. Agit-Prop

   B. Didatic

   C. Cultural

II. Theatre of the People for the Anti-People (Second Category)

A. Implicit

B. Explicit

III. Theatre of the Anti People for the People (Third Category)

A. Explicit

B. Implicit

IV. Theatre of the People (Fourth Category)

A. Where the People take possession of the means of producing theatre

B. Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed; for example, Newspaper Theatre.[12]

In the first two and the fourth categories the perspective of the spectacle is that of the people. Only the third category is the perspective of the anti-people. Now, let us examine each category more precisely.

a) First Category: Theatre of the People and for the People.

This is the kind of theatre whose performances are generally done for a large concentration of workers: in labor unions, the streets, the circuses, and many other public places. Three kinds of people's theatre can be performed under this category: agit-prop, didatic, and cultural.

(1) Agit-Prop:

The expression "agit-prop" defines the essense of this kind of theatre. It is theatre for agitation and propaganda. It concentrates on themes which are very specific and immediate--the most

important and urgent problems of the communities. Basically, it consists of performances of short scenes no more than ten minutes in length. It is political propaganda through theatre. This kind of theatre is used frequently before political rallies. It dramatically presents themes that the political speakers will present later. The sole idea is to propagandize a specific ideology and/or mobilize the people for some kind of action. The themes presented can be international or locally oriented. The audience may be either large or small.

(2) Didactic:

While the agit-prop theatre presents immediate themes, the didactic theatre presents generalities. This kind of theatre is not intended to mobilize a public faced with an imminent event--an election, a strike vote, or a demonstration--but it intends rather to offer practical and theoretical teaching. Any theme, for example, justice, is selected. Oftentimes the themes are so abstract that they are not readily understood by the people. For this reason the didactic theatre tries to expose the theme selected in a concrete and sensory manner. Then a written play which better illustrates the

proposed theme is sought. Various changes are made in order to facilitate a better understanding of the theme: changes in language, in the protagonists and antagonists, and in the order of the scenes. Sometimes a character or scene can be added or eliminated. Then the play is performed for the people. The following example illustrates didactic theatre.

Lope de Vega's The Best Mayor, the King was performed by the Arena Theatre of São Paulo for three months in street markets, churches, trucks, and street corners for a public of workers, peasants, maids, and students. In the play, Sancho, a peasant, is in love with Elvira, another peasant. She asks him to ask her father, Don Nuño, to consent to their marriage. Don Nuño agrees but asks them to inform the landowner, since he is the traditional lawmaker. The landowner, Don Tello, proud of having faithful servants, decides to give them as a wedding gift cows and sheep. Don Tello later falls in love with Elvira because of her great beauty and sends his men to capture Elvira and bring her to his castle. The traditional justice of the period decreed that the bride during the first night of the wedding belonged to the landowner. So Don Tello, assisted by the

law, wishes to exercise his right. The young peasant, Sancho, goes to the King for help.

From this moment on the play was adapted as follows. The King is immersed in warfare and needs the support of Don Tello. Therefore, he refuses to solve the peasant's problem. Pelayo, a peasant friend of Sancho, decides to disguise himself as the King, and with other peasants arrest Don Tello. He then establishes a judicial tribunal to reach a just and fair verdict. Arguments are presented for two differing concepts of justice: that of the peasants and the bridegroom, and that of Don Tello and the nobility. How can they accomplish total justice? By doing both. The trail begins. In the first case Pelayo judges Don Tello from the nobility's point of view. Since the bride was raped, and the law enacted by the nobles did not permit a man to marry a bride if she was not a virgin, then she could not marry Sancho. Pelayo condemns Don Tello by forcing him to marry her even though she is a plebeian. Sexual violation is punished by a forced marriage between a noble and a plebeian. At this point, Boal says that all of the performances were interrupted by screams of disapproval from the audience.

Then the second case begins. Pelayo now utilizes the peasant's concept of justice. Since the noble is condemned to die, Elvira, due to the forced marriage becomes a widow--receiving half of the noble's possessions and regaining her honor. The play ends with the marriage of Elvira and Sancho. At the end of the performance the didatic theatre discusses and analyzes the theme with their audience to ensure a better understanding of it. In this example, the didactic theatre fulfilled its purpose of teaching, in this case that the concept of justice has various interpretations and that as long as social classes and divisions exist among men there will always be differing concepts of justice.

(3) Cultural:

This kind of theatre uses the classical plays of the past, the traditional folklore of the country, and any other artistic and cultural manifestations of what Boal calls a genuine popular perspective. It is Boal's opinion that Shakespeare, Molière, Aristophanes, and Goldoni can serve the purposes of the people's theatre.

The genuine popular perspective of the theatre means that the themes presented have the perspective

> of the people, not that of the anti-people. The performance shows the constant transformation, the struggle against exploitation. For Boal the people's theatre is a matter of approach and not just of themes. If a classic play presents the people transforming reality for a better life, it is people's theatre. When the contents are not clear and many interpretations surface, the spectacle of that play may or may not be classified as people's theatre, dependent upon the approach the director and/or performers use in their presentation. So the theme is not as vital as the approach. Thus, any classic play can be transformed or used from a people's perspective, becoming then people's theatre.

b) Second Category: Theatre of the People for the Anti-People.

In this category the spectacles present the perspective of the people, but the audience is not really the people. Sometimes it is the anti-people. It is the theatre that needs the support of the ruling class, the government and the bourgeosie. Boal says that it is a kind of theatre which presents the people's perspective in a "camouflaged"[13] manner that is still intelligible to the public. To this category of people's theatre belongs the Brecht plays, Sarte's The Flies, and many others that during the Nazi

reign were written to reveal the need to struggle against that fascist regime.

Under this category two kinds of productions can be presented: implicit and explicit.

(1) Theatre of implicit content:

In this theatre the productions do not immediately reveal their true meaning--their people's perspective. Examples are: The Caucasian Chalk Circle by Bertolt Brecht; The Best Mayor, the King by Lope de Vega; The Flies by Sartre, and The Inspector General by Gogol.

(2) Theatre of explicit content:

In this theatre the people's perspective is obvious. These are the plays that are performed in a theatre hall and cause protests, censorship, and volatile discussions among the populace who view these performances. Due to their extreme political radicalism, these plays authored by traditional and sometimes classic playwrights, are rejected by certain segments of the population.

c) Third Category: Theatre of the Anti-People for the People.

According to Boal this is the category that is greatly supported by the ruling class and it is at the same time the only

category that lacks the people's perspective or perhaps merely its appearance. There are two characteristics of this category: first, it tries to avoid the controversial social themes of the society by presenting all of the problems and their solutions from an individualistic point of view; and second, it exalts the ideas or characteristics which perpetuate the present status quo. Docility, goodness, and an aversion to violence says Boal are the values that are held in highest esteem in this category. As with the previous category, the message can be presented explicitly or implicitly. In the explicit form, the people are seen clearly as enemies of goodness, and as the cause of every misfortune and adversity, including their own condition. In the implicit form, the people are presented as good, but guilty of committing errors which in the end are forgiven.

This category intends to reach the people directly. The presence of the people is very necessary in order for this category to function smoothly. We are now in what Boal called the universal political character of the theatre: the ruling class using the vehicle of theatre as a political instrument for the ideological penetration of the masses.

d) Fourth Category: Theatre of the People where the People take possession of the theatrical means of production.

In the previous categories, the people passively received or viewed a finished production. The theatre was done for the people, but not by the people themselves. In this last category, the theatre is done by the people themselves for the people. Here

the people are not passive beings but rather they are active. This is the category which includes Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed. All the theatrical forms and techniques elaborated by Boal in his Theatre of the Oppressed are part of this last people's theatre category.

2. The technique of the Bible Theatre: a new theatre form.

During the years Boal lived in Argentina, he not only developed the techniques of his Theatre of the Oppressed, but also worked with a theatre form which, because of its relationship with the spectator, was not classified in that theatre. This was the Bible theatre. In it the spectacle was presented as a finished production. Although the spectators were not totally passive, they were still basically receivers of the theatrical message. The Bible theatre belongs in the first category: cultural theatre--of the people and for the people. It illustrated Bible themes from a people's perspective and updated them with politically contemporary themes instead of traditional religious ones. The social, economic, and political conditions of Latin America were analyzed, discussed, and presented through various Bible passages. One or more ten to sixty minute scenes were produced, rehearsed, and finally performed in a church, in a street, or in a classroom.

Bible theatre did not intend to deny what for Christians is the most essential truth, the divinity of Jesus Christ. Bible theatre was really a historical interpretation of the Bible. Its purpose was to offer a historical vision of those activities in the

Bible which are replete with political meanings. Its purpose was not to show a historical Christ in opposition to the divine Christ, but rather to show a unique aspect of certain events which commonly had not been taken into consideration. The Bible theatre forced its audiences to think about how Jesus would act if he were alive and among us today, and how he would react toward the injustices of the present century. Finally Boal stated that the Bible theatre did not impose a vision from outside, but instead, enlarged the venerable vision that the people already possessed of Jesus.

a) Stages.

In the preparation of a Bible theatre scene the following stages are recommended:

(1) Theme and analogy.

The group working on Bible theatre selects a Biblical theme whose relationship to current events they wish to analyze. For example, the famous "Render up to God what is God's and to Caesar what is Caesar's." This phrase has been interpreted many times, but it can still have another interpretation. After the theme has been discussed and unanimously accepted, the next stage begins.

(2) Scenario of improvisation.

The story is constructed collectively. The performers divide the story into stages so that each

stage has a complete dramatic nucleus: a conflict, an action determined by the conflict, and a change determined by that action. What every performer is going to say is generally predetermined.

(3) Improvisation of the structure.
Each scene or stage is improvised separately and important phrases or actions are written down, born of the improvisation, which will serve later as the outline of the spectacle. Each scene can be improvised either "coldly" or "warmly."[14]
This means that the performers say what they think their characters would say, but without total identification with their characters (the "cold" method), or as if they themselves were really living the action (the "warm" method).

(4) Round table rehearsal.
The improvisation is studied. Everything that is inconsistent is eliminated. The remaining material is placed in order within the structure of the story.

(5) Improvisation with the Biblical text.
Although the text can change subtly each time the scene is presented, it is important that each character have a basic sequence of objectives.

This sequence should be unaltered so that everyone in the cast can have a common outline.

(6) Blocking.

The basic movements which best illustrate each scene are identified and blocked in.

(7) Presentation.

The aim of presentation is not to reach new peaks of artistry, but rather to expose specific themes to public view and discussion.

This form of theatre was presented during a Catholic Mass many times. Boal affirms that although this theatre form can be performed in any place and for anyone, it is during the Mass that it acquires its extraordinary power. In this way, it is similar to the Theatre of the Oppressed. This Bible theatre is performed by non-professionals in front of parishioners instead of spectators, in a church instead of a theatre, and represents a non-play--a testimony which is an identical theme to the Mass of the day. The idea is to use theatre to facilitate a more complete understanding of the Biblical test. Boal justifies this use of theatre by saying that in the same manner that the Mass uses the arts, for instance, the oratory of the priest and the singing of the choir, it can

> use the theatre as an additional art form.[15] In Bible theatre, theatre does not exist as an autonomous art, but rather serves directly as a non-artistic manifestation.

b) An example of a Bible theatre scene.

A scene taken from the Boal play Torquemada illustrates perfectly this form of theatre. Boal included this scene as the third episode of the play he began to write while in prison. The story narrates a Biblical event that has received little attention and that possesses great relevancy for contemporary events. It is the story of the Maccabees tribe which appears in the Second Book of Maccabees, Chapter VII: "The glorious martyrdom of the seven brethren and their mother."[16]

DOMINICAN FRIAR: One day Jesus Christ called his Apostles and narrated, as an example, the story of the seven Maccabee brothers and their mother. The Roman imperialists invade the Maccabees' house and capture the seven brothers. All of them had struggled for the liberation of their country. Their interrogation begins. The officials wanted to know the whereabouts of the leader of the Maccabeean resistance, Judas Maccabeus, information which the seven brothers have.

SON NO. 1: We don't know it.

GENERAL: Here everybody says the truth, for which we pay a price. Where is Judas Maccabeus? The price is your life and we offer that price.

SON NO. 1: And the death of Judas. We don't know!

SOLDIER: My general, this old lady is the mother of the seven brothers. We can kill her in front of them so they will confess.

CAPTAIN: I have a better idea; we kill each one of them in front of her. With her supplications, with her mother's reasoning, she will know how to convince them to confess the whereabouts of Judas Maccabeus.

MOTHER: These seven are my sons.

SOLDIER: Do you want your sons to live?

MOTHER: I want them living honorably.
SOLDIER: Do you want your sons to die?
MOTHER: I want to die in glory.
CAPTAIN: Allow each one to talk with his mother so that she, with her supplications, can save the life that she gave to them. We want Judas--just this one life. The one who commits treason against Judas saves many lives. Bring first the youngest son.
SON NO. 1: Mother, I have doubts. I said no, but he is right. I know where Judas is and if I say it by giving up Judas' life, I save seven. I save mine. I am a prisoner and now things are different. It is my life against his life.
MOTHER: No, I have seven sons, but the life of Judas is more costly than the seven lives of my sons. He is the leader. If they kill him, he will not continue struggling nor will all that are with him. If they kill you due to your defense of your leader, Judas is saved and you also. With Judas a part of the struggle lives or dies; with you a soldier lives or dies, and perhaps treason lives. I have seven sons and the life of Judas is more costly. If I had seven families, the life of Judas would still be more costly.
SOLDIER: What is your answer?
SON NO. 1: No!
SOLDIER: Second son!
SON NO. 2: Mother, I have doubts. Now that they have arrested me I see everything more clearly. Yes, I know that I committed a mistake by entering the struggle. There are people who know how to fight, who can and who like to. There are people who don't know, who can't do it. who don't want to do it. I entered in the struggle without knowing well what I was doing, without understanding well what it was, without being sure about the risks. Now, mother, that I'm a prisoner, now I know that I committed a mistake; I want to go back, I want my liberty to start again. I'm not a revolutionary.
MOTHER: When you decided to enter the war of liberation, you decided to give your life and you cannot ask for it back. You cannot say, "Yes, I want to fight until they arrest me and then the party is over...." No, it is not a party. If you want to abandon the struggle, yes, but not until after they let you go free, or after they kill you.
SOLDIER: What is your answer?
SON NO. 2: No.
SOLDIER: Second form of torture, the dragoon chair. The prisoner is hanged over a metal chair and under the chair a fire is lighted. The chair gets hot. When

he tries to get out, he inflicts on himself an electrical current and receives electrical shocks until he dies.

SOLDIER: Third son.

SON NO. 3: Mother, I have doubts. I think that what we are doing is terrorism as they say. And this doesn't accomplish anything. I think sincerely that it's necessary to end the resistance. So I think that I should denounce Judas. In this way the resistance will end rapidly and soon we can start the peace negotiations with the enemy.

MOTHER: The people started the armed struggle and not you. You went to the people, not the people to you. The people, only the people, can say when and how the struggle should end. You can decide to enter into the struggle of the people, but you don't have any right to decide that the people stop the struggle.

SOLDIER: Your answer?

SON NO. 3: No!

SOLDIER: Third form of torture, hit him every day without much force on specified parts of the body, over many months. Ankles, thorax, face, head...the prisoner will die without many obvious exterior symptoms.

SOLDIER: Fourth son. He is a married man. He has a wife and sons. Bring all of them.

SON NO. 4: Mother, I have doubts. Now, I understand my error. Of course, I dreamed of a better life with all of the people working for all of the people. But I have a family--a son to bring up. No, it was a mistake. I must stay quiet. If I wasn't doing anything, nobody would have persecuted me. I won't struggle for the life I dream of, but I will live a possible life.

MOTHER: And is it valuable to live the possible life? What will that life be? Will it be to not live and fight for a better life? Not to do the things you think are right and not to fight for them? Is that life for you? Die today. Fighting here--this is life.

SOLDIER: Your answer!

SON NO. 4: (To the soldier) No!

SOLDIER: (Speaking to the other soldiers). Fourth form of torture, to torture a son and a wife in front of the husband and father. She will be hanged from the Percha and with an electrical apparatus attached which destroys her vagina. The child is also hung from the Percha and a fire is lighted beneath it. The method of torture is called Galleto o Pollo Allo Spiedo.

SOLDIER: Fifth son.

(The tortures are always partially shown to the audience. Each time a new torture is to be shown a drum is played,

and for a few seconds the rest of those tortured repeat the demonstrations of the effects of the tortures).

SON NO. 5: Mother, I have doubts. There is something that looks to be unjust. We are fighting to change the system. We want to create a new one. But the person now in power reached it honestly, inside the rules of the game. We are the ones who want to change the rules of the game and that is not fair. Because we are losing because the people are hungry, we want to change the rules of the game into rules which allow us to win. That is selfishness and it is unjust.

MOTHER: We know that the rules of game are unjust and we want to change them, not for us, but for all of the generations which will come after us. Our generation will not win anything, because when there is a change in the rules of the game, the generation which makes the change sacrifices the most. We are fighting for those who will come after us.

SON NO. 5: (To the soldier) No!

SOLDIER: Fifth form of torture, combined action. A telephone is used. Hit the ears hard until his ear drums rupture. Pieces of small wood are placed under the fingernails, striking them into place with a hammer.

SOLDIER: Sixth son.

(In each representation a sixth and seventh form of doubt is selected and the answers of the mother are given. Also the forms of torture are selected and explained).

MOTHER: For the second time I gave life to my sons. Now, they are all dead. I'm twice a mother to each one.

FRIAR: It is said that Jesus used this story to prevent the betrayal of the popular armies which struggled against the Romans. And it is also said that the people were convinced by his words and that after they heard Jesus the people didn't betray each other anymore. It is a very beautiful story and true.[17]

NOTES CHAPTER IV

[1]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Augusto Boal, Técnicas Latino-Americanas de Teatro Popular Uma revolução copernicana ao contrário (São Paulo: Editora Hucitec, 1979), p. 25.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Boal, Técnicas Latinoamericanas de Teatro Popular (Una revolución Copernicana al revés) (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Corregidor Saici Y E, 1975), p. 144.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid., p. 145.

[8]Boal, Técnicas Latino-Americanas de Teatro Popular Uma revolução copernicana ao contrário, p. 95.

[9]Ibid., p. 96.

"Aculturação."

[10]Ibid., p. 98.

[11]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980.

[12]Boal, Categorías de Teatro Popular (Buenos Aires: Ediciones CEPE, 1972), p. 19; Técnicas Latino-Americanas de Teatro Popular Uma revolução copernicana ao contrário, p. 13; and Técnicas Latino-americanas de Teatro Popular (Una revolución Copernicana al revés), pp. 16-73.

[13]Boal, Categorías de Teatro Popular, p. 43.

[14]See Augusto Boal, Técnicas Latino-Americanas de Teatro Popular Uma revolução copernicana ao contrario, p. 66.

[15]See Augusto Boal, Técnicas Latinoamericanas de Teatro Popular (Una revolución Copernicana al revés), p. 95.

[16]The Bible, The Second Book of Maccabees, chapter 7, pp. 1071-72.

The Maccabees was a Jewish dynasty of patriots, high priests, and Kings of the second and first centuries B.C. Four books were written that narrate the story of this family. They are part of the so called Old Testament Apocrypha. In the Protestant churches, all four books are apocryphal; but in the Roman Catholic church the first two are canonical.

[17]Boal, Torquemada, in Teatro Latinoamericano de Agitación, edited by Casa de las Américas (Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1972), pp. 154-162.

CHAPTER V

BOAL'S ACTOR'S TRAINING

This chapter will discuss the basic elements of Boal's theory related to actor's training and four aspects of that training: first, the theory in relation to the ritual and social mask; second, the new structure of actor interpretation, and, finally, a series of training exercises and games.

A. The Ritual and the Social Mask Concepts

These two concepts are fundamentals in the theoretical structure of the theatre of Augusto Boal. The concepts were briefly presented in Chapter II, when the nucleus of his Theatre of the Oppressed, the Joker System, was discussed. These concepts not only are fundamental to and evident in his Theatre of the Oppressed, but also are a principal part of the actor's training. Perhaps, it is here that these concepts acquire their greatest relevancy because of the number of exercises developed around them and inasmuch as actors are the instrument through which the theatrical language is processed. The word "actor" refers to those who accomplish the theatrical spectacle. It is synonymous with "performer," and is in striking contrast to "spectator."

1. The Social Code, the Ritual and the Rite.

Each society establishes behavior norms, which are accepted by all. This is necessary for the optimal functioning of the whole society. Chaos and anarchy destroy not only the society as a totality but also its individual members. So, it is necessary that each group of human beings who wish to create a society establishes functioning and behavior norms among its members. In this manner, all societies regulate the relationships between their members: relationships between fathers and sons, men and women, neighbors, citizens, co-workers, and fellow students.

In that way, A Social Code is created by the society to dictate behavioral norms established and generally accepted by the society. Everyone then should submit to and follow that code; not only should everyone respect it, but practice it as well. For Boal, a society would be non-existent without a formal social code. For him, the social code is absolutely necessary and material.[1]

From the social code springs the ritual. When a social code does not respond to the needs and wishes of the persons to whom it is applied, and when the persons perform acts they do not wish to perform, or are not able to accomplish those acts which they wish to accomplish, or when they feel obliged to carry on those acts pre-established by the social code, then the social code is transformed into a ritual. Thus, the ritual is a kind of social code which obliges and confines its subjects. Boal defines the concept of ritual as follows:

> Un ritual es todo sistema de acciones y reacciones predeterminadas. Para cruzar la calle hay que esperar la luz verde. Al entrar en una iglesia uno habla en voz baja. Las relaciones entre los seres humanos se procesan según acciones y reacciones más o menos preestablecidas por las leyes, tradiciones, hábitos, costumbres, etc.[2]
>
> (A ritual is every system of pre-established actions and reactions. To cross a street, one must wait for the green light. Upon entering a church, one speaks in low tones. The relations among human beings are processed according to actions and reactions more or less pre-established by laws, traditions, habits, customs, etc.)

According to Boal, human beings need rituals if they want to enter into relationships with one another. An example of this clearly illustrates how a social code is transformed into a ritual. For example, an actor, inspired by his role of Hamlet each night interpretes his performance with loving dedication, and enjoyment. Everyday he repeats the same words and the same movements, as if he readily obeys a social code which is equally obeyed by the other actors. Then after several performances the actor becomes fatigued. He continues with his performances, but minus the same loving dedication and interest. Each subsequent performance is repetitive--identical words and movements--but now with a total absence of enthusiasm and passion. The actor is now mechanized, and the spectacle is truly for him a ritual which he must continue to joylessly repeat.

According to Boal the same things occurs in our lives. How many things do we do in obedience to a ritual? How many things do we do because we do not want to break an established ritual? These rituals eliminate a large number of the possible "original responses"[3] in human beings. So, these concepts should be approached by the

actors in a dialectical way: actors should understand both that the rituals are absolutely necessary and at the same time should be continuously destroyed and replaced by other rituals. In this manner, says Boal, the relationships among human beings can evolve.

Therefore, Boal affirms that the actor should begin with an analysis of character rituals and stress them in his interpretation. What are the rituals which accompany the character selected and what is the social code within which the character unfolds?

A rite is a social code which has been transformed into a ritual and which includes all the participants in an event. Rites are ritual events which determine the structure of spectacles. For example, the mass, a military parade, and the opening of a bank are rites. The theatre spectacle is a rite where a division between performers and spectators is established, too. Since actors should approach this process (Social Code———> Ritual———> Rite) from a dialectical point of view, Boal asserts that it is a prerequisite to understand and to study the traditional ritualized theatre and to simultaneously break with its rituals, rites and codes in order to create new ones. This is what Boal is doing with his Theatre of the Oppressed.

2. The Social Mask concept.

What determines the social masks are the rituals. The number of ritualized roles achieved by each individual in a society creates a mask for him.[4] The social mask is the totality of behavioral rituals that the individual assumes and practices inside a

specific society. It is the totality of all the pre-established and mechanized behavior which is imposed on individuals through laws, customs, and the habits of a particular society. However, there are various social masks inasmuch as not everyone performs uniform social tasks, uniform functioning patterns, habits, or customs. The human beings who execute similar tasks will assume similar social masks. Students, actors, landlords, laborers, military personnel, and teachers will each assume the masks of their specializations.

Through rituals are made apparent what social mask a character wears at a given moment. For example, by analyzing the ritual of two persons greeting each other, we realize what kind of workers they are: soldiers, students, or professors. Two university professors would not greet each other in the same manner as two members of an urban delinquent gang. The social mask greatly influences the individual's way of thinking, walking, appearing, and even, says Boal, of acting and reacting.

To detect this mechanized behavior, these pre-established cultural and psychological patterns, and, therefore, the social mask, are for Boal the principal task of character analysis, the way in which the actors have to internalize their characters to reach the true essence of the character.

In the Arena Theatre of São Paulo, Boal used this method of character analysis for many years. Each actor had to create the diverse social masks of his character for each scene, situation, episode, and action. Each mask had to be defined, with its own

rituals and rites, its social and psychological actions, and all elements had to be clearly ordered and outlined. Diversified exercises and techniques were developed by Boal to facilitate this analysis. These will be summarily described in Section 3.

It is imperative not to confuse the concept of the social mask with the concept of the cliché.[5] According to Boal the clichés used in theatre, especially to portray elderly characters and drunkards, were always arbitrarily selected without any analysis or verification of social rituals. The social mask is not arbitrary. It is the result of a detailed investigation of the rituals that the character performs.

For Boal, the rituals that each character performs determine the shape of his relationships with the other characters. The relationship can involve a human activity or feeling shared by all of the characters--for example, loving--but the particular form in each case is determined by the social rituals which impose a mask upon each character.

The construction of the social mask begins by detecting what Boal calls the nucleus of the mask. The nucleus is composed of the social or the collective needs that the character possesses. According to Boal persons who belong to an identical group or social class have common characteristics which are part of the mask. All of those individuals' actions are a function, not of their psychological characteristics, but of their social needs. The detection of the nucleus will allow the spectators to understand that all the

members of a group will always act as members of that group. Regardless of their individual differences, there will always be something which defines them as members of that social group. Therefore, this is something which is universal to all individuals who are part of a society.

After the nucleus has been defined, the actor reconstructs the rituals and rites the character must follow in each situation. The nucleus is the element which will show if the rituals and rites selected correspond to the character's social mask. After the complete social mask of the character is constructed, the actor can proceed to analyze the psychological or internal behavior of the character in relation to the social mask. For Boal, then, the collective, social conflict of the characters is first, rather than the individual internal or psychological conflict.

Through this method of character analysis, Boal asserts that the actors can also begin to analyze the dramatic action, not as a conflict of free wills as defined by Hegel, but as a "contradiction of social needs"[6] as explained by Brecht and Erwin Piscator.[7]

Boal says that a character can be revealed in a universal form. The best examples of this were the medieval theatrical characters: the demons, vices, virtues, and angels. However, in contemporary theatre, characters can be revealed in universal form as well: common men, peasants, dictators, beggars, and misers. In the universal form, characters do not exhibit strong psychological and internal forces. The unconscious personal level of character does

not exist and everything is quite general and abstract. The characters show that they are manipulated by outside forces; often these forces are social needs. The individual psychology of the characters is not a determinant of the action.

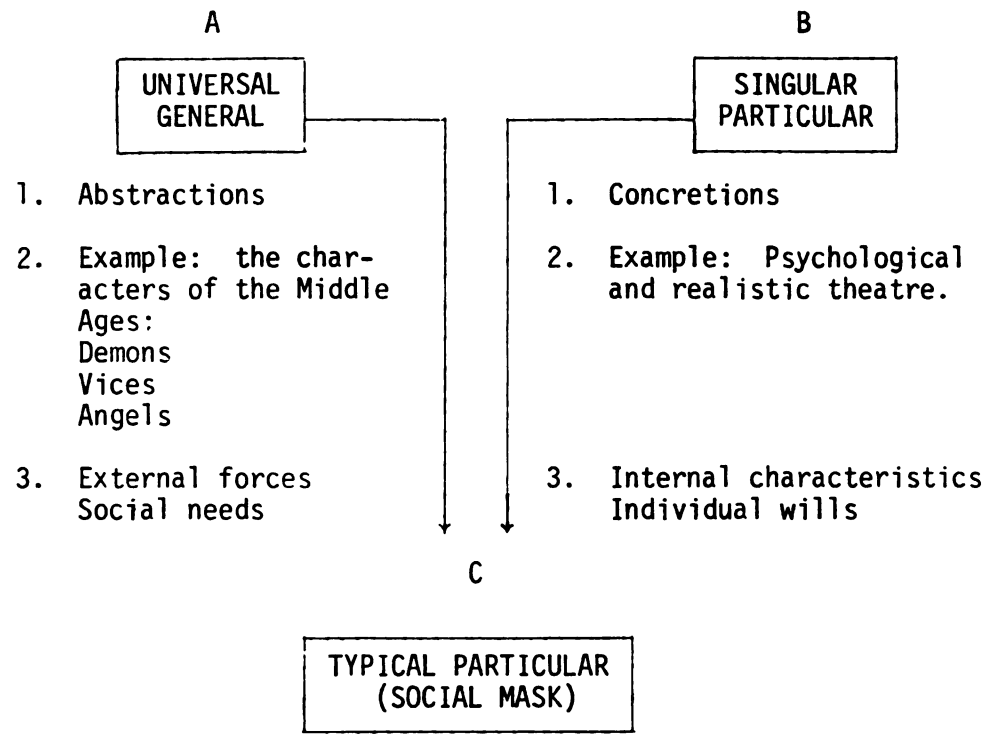
But there is a second form of character revelation in a play: the singular form. This form opposses the universal one. It is, says Boal, the psychological theatre, the realist theatre which dedicates itself to presenting the unique cases of specific individuals. Here, the inner feelings of the characters are the most vital. His internal, psychic, and mental conflicts are the basis of the actions of the character. The only elements clearly visible in that kind of character are his psychological and individual motivations. We see the character constantly in concrete situations. Here, abstractions do not exist, unless as functions of the concrete fact, or individual characteristics.

Finally, Boal maintains that characters in a play can be revealed through a third form, "Typical-particular."[8] This form is a combination of the previous forms, including both the singular individual and the universal characteristics applicable to him. This final form can be presented on two dissimilar levels: the empathic-realism, and the non-empathic. The first one reveals characters as private individuals and also as representatives of their class. But here their social need is presented in its psychological and individual concretion. Boal says that the perfect examples are the plays of Arthur Miller, particularly his Death of a Salesman. The second

level of non-empathic revelation presents characters who clearly show the subjective characteristic of the social needs and the objective characteristic of the individual will; in this instance, Brecht's plays are excellent examples.

For Boal, this form of revelation is not only a dilemma in playwriting but also in interpretation. Any play can be interpreted by any one of the above two forms of typical-particular revelation. A Brecht play can be empathically interpreted and a play by Miller non-empathically. Everything is dependent upon the analysis and objectives that the actor, director, and performers have in their presentation of a play. Finally, Boal considers that the construction of the social mask of the character is nothing other than the character interpretation through the typical-particular form. Figure 1 shows a summary outline of these forms of interpretation.

Following this idea of the universal form, Boal establishes the difference between the social mask and the cliché. He states that the cliché can contain just the universal essence. The social mask contains not only the universal essence, which works as the heart of the mask, but, additionally, other characteristics which are not universals but circumstantial elements of character.[9] For example, the traditional ways elderly citizens or drunkards walk are usually accepted clichés, as well as the unintelligible way in which they speak. These are universal characteristics of elderly citizens and drunkards, but not all of them manifest themselves uniformly. The motivations for being a drunkard vary from one to another. Not



1. Includes the singular - particular (B) and all the characteristics of the universal - general (A) of that species.

2. Levels:

   a) Empathic Realism-Example: Miller's plays.
      (1) Character is at the same time himself and the representation of a social class. (Death of a Salesman)
      (2) Social needs are presented in their psychological and individual reality.

   b) Non-empathic - Example: Brecht's plays
      (1) Spectator can see clearly the individual will and the social need.
      (2) But here social need is the subject of the dramatic action, and the individual will is the object.

FIGURE 1.--Forms of Interpretation and/or Revelation of the Character

all of the elderly have led similar lives nor performed the same work nor have had the same emotional and physical difficulties. There are a variety of specific differences between individual elderly persons and drunkards (to be an elderly person is something universal, but to be a frustrated one is something particular.) Both elements are essential in character analysis: the universal and the typical-particular.

Boal does not reject the use of a cliché in character analysis and its interpretation. If he did he would be rejecting his own social mask concept. He only demands that we do not confuse the cliché with the social mask, for the latter is something which includes the former. It is from this point of view that Boal recommends the use of clichés in theatre, not as a fundamental in the interpretation, but as an aid in the construction of the character in its totality.

Boal, to facilitate construction of the social mask of a character, developed a series of exercises and techniques which the performers can use as tools in their development. These exercises help the actor to discover the rituals and physical manifestations of those rituals that are to be found in a society's members. For Boal it is essential to discover the rituals of each society since they visualize the existing oppressions inside that society.[10] He believes that oppression inevitably provokes visible signs that are translated into forms and movements which leave their mark on the social mask.[11] If social oppression can be discovered through the

speeches made by individuals, then it can also be discovered through the analysis of rituals that exist in society. Theatre can analyze and demonstrate these rituals. These exercises are examples of those developed by Boal to accomplish this goal.

3. Some techniques and exercises.

a) Techniques.

A technique often used by Boal when he works with his Image Theatre can help the actor in working with the above concepts. An actor is asked to go to center stage and there perform ritual gesture. The rest of the actors observe him. When someone thinks he has surmised what ritual the gesture belongs to, he goes to the center of the stage and complements that gesture with another from that ritual. After everyone has done this, the director gives a signal for everyone to recreate a rhythm related to their positions and the gesture they have already performed. This rhythm will increase the revelation of the ritual. After this the director gives another signal for everyone to repeat several times, just one verbal phrase, related to the rhythm and the gesture already performed. The director then interrupts, and everyone will say the identical phrase, but one after the other, so everyone can hear. Then the process is analyzed and discussed. Oftentimes, the discussion reveals that someone has misunderstood the first ritual gesture. In that case, the group discusses why the mistake occurred.

The process continues. At the director's signal, each participant starts a continuous movement until the director says stop.

At this point, the ritual gesture has been transformed into a real ritual: movements, actions, words, and gestures--mechanized and pre-established.

Another technique is commonly used by Boal. A situation is improvised for ten to twelve minutes. It should include a conflict and a solution. Then discussions ensue to verify the accuracy of each character's actions and reactions. Irrelevancies are eliminated and the scene is improvised again, but in pantomime only, and following the rites and rituals which accompany that situation. Oftentimes, this segment of the improvisation is performed like the silent movies to detect ritual actions which are pre-mechanized and pre-established. For example, a young man invites his girlfriend to his apartment with the idea of convincing her to make love. The scene unfolds (he tries to convince her, she says no, they argue), until the conflict is resolved by either one of the two possibilities. Then they repeat these movements which are rituals and/or rites of that particular situation: for example, the ritual of turning the lights off, of playing some romantic music on the stereo system, or giving her cocktails (in some countries the rite involves discussing certain themes, crying a little, and the girl's refusal even if she does desire to make love).

The improvisation is repeated several times, assigning to the scene dissimilar types of characters: youths, the aged, adolescents, reticent individuals, or aggressive ones. Later on, the group is assigned to specific social classes and professions. In

each improvisation discussions were generated to correct the errors and to facilitate a more incisive analysis of the rituals.

Boal often used this type of improvisation in the rehearsals of his plays and/or performances. A crucial aspect of his rehearsals is to first improvise the scenes of the play only to illustrate the dissimilar rites and rituals which are manifested in each scene. Character analysis, voice, and reactions are not yet taken into consideration; only ritualized movement is rehearsed.

Besides these and other techniques, Boal created in the Arena Theatre of São Paulo, between 1956 and 1971, a series of exercises invented specifically for working with the concepts of ritual and social mask.

b) Exercises.[12]

(1) To follow the teacher:

In this exercise, an actor (the "teacher") starts to speak and move naturally and the other actors try to reproduce his mask. The actors imitate the "teacher" but not through traditional clichés; they try to re-create the actor's internal force. The idea of this exercise is that the actors try to discover the social rituals that the actor has developed which motivate him to act in that way.

(2) To follow two teachers in metamorphosis:

This exercise follows, in general, the line of the previous one, with the difference being that instead

of one teacher and one group, there are two teachers, each with his group of followers. As the two teachers talk, each group of followers imitates the mask of its teacher. Later on, the two teachers slowly exchange their roles and each group of followers also imitates the other.

(3) Rotation of masks:

This is a very simple exercise which is used to help the integration of the cast by giving the members more knowledge of each other. Five or more actors observe each other's movements. After several minutes the director names one of them, and the rest imitate his mask. The exercise continues until everyone has been imitated.

(4) Recognition of the mask:

This is another simple exercise which helps in the integration of the cast. The group is divided into two parts. One groups moves and talks freely; the other group carefully observes. After a few minutes the observers take a piece of paper naming one of the actors in the first group. The observers start to imitate the mask of that actor. The actor has to discover who is recreating his mask.

(5) Unification of masks:

In this exercise, the actors try to imitate the mask of just one actor in the group. When this actor realizes that he is the one everyone is imitating, the exercise is over.

(6) Collective creation of a mask:

Here, all the actors talk and walk naturally in a circle, creating a wheel. The first actor adds any way of walking or talking that he wishes to his actions. The rest try to discover that characteristic and to reproduce it. As soon as everyone is reproducing this first characteristic, the second actor in the wheel adds another one. This process continues until everyone is doing the same mask.

(7) Added masks:

The actors add one or more elements from the masks of the others without losing the characteristics of their own masks. Then they should each analyze how these new elements would contradict or reinforce the elements of their own masks.

(8) To exaggerate and to annul the mask:

In this exercise an actor, after he is aware of his own mask, will try to reinforce its elements through exaggeration, carrying his mask to its most

excessive form. Later he will try to annul it, adding opposite characteristics.

(9) To follow the teacher in his own mask:
This exercise was basically used to help actors who experienced difficulties in destroying or exaggerating their masks. The actor who has problems is placed in the middle of the group. Four actors are beside him. The one in the middle talks, and the other four follow him. When the five masks are unified, the fourth one changes the mask to its natural opposite, and the actor in the middle follows the actions of the rest of the actors.

(10) Change of masks:
In this exercise, an actor moves and talks naturally. The rest say how they see each element of the mask and how they want to change it. They suggest each element of the mask and the actor makes the change.

(11) Interchange of mask:
In this exercise, a typical situation which has traditional rituals is improvised. A good example is the one presented in the techniques already discussed: a young man invites his girlfriend to his apartment, wishing to seduce her. But, here, the improvisation does not reach conflict and

resolution. Instead, the purpose is to improvise the basic rituals of that situation. The female role imitator at first acts as the non-aggressor and the male role imitator acts as the aggressor. Later both masks are exchanged, but the rituals are not. She will be the aggressor and he the desired; but their sex roles will be the same, and the ritual performed will still be seduction. So, each creates a new social mask, but within the structure of the usual ritual language involved in seduction.

(12) Substitution of the mask:
This exercise is nearly the same as number eleven. But when the masks are changed, the rituals performed by each actor are changed, also. Boal gives the following example. The masks of a priest and a parishioner in the ritual of the confessional are substituted for the masks of a landlord and a peasant. Therefore, the rituals will also change to the rituals of an economic dispute.

(13) Change of the class element in the social mask:
A situation is improvised, establishing the social masks for each character. For example, in a family dispute the father will have a social mask of

aggression and cruelty; a mother, one of docility and oppression, and a daughter, one of rebellion. During the improvisations each will keep the same social mask. First, the improvisation presents a situation about the worker or poorer social class. Later, it presents an upper social class situation. The differences between both improvisations are analyzed and discussed.

(14) Exaggerate the mask to its fullest degree:
Each actor will exaggerate the elements, characteristics, and movements of his mask, including its rituals, until everything is transformed into a mechanized movement, with no human element remaining. The actor becomes a mechanical robot without any human feelings.

(15) Exchange of actors inside the same ritual:
A couple begins the scene; they establish their masks and their rituals. After a few seconds a new actor substitutes for one of them. He will follow the scene, keeping its same mask and rituals.

(16) Game of the profession:
The actors write down the name of a profession or occupation. The papers are shuffled, and each actor chooses one. Then they begin to improvise

the profession but without talking about it. The actors will try to guess the professions.

These exercises can have a great number of variations. For example, instead of professions the actors can improvise animals or tasks. All of them seek to help the performer in detecting the rituals which accompany each situation's social mask.

B. Dialectical Structure of Interpretation

From 1956 on, under the direction of Augusto Boal, the Arena Theatre of São Paulo started to study methodically the works of Stanislavski, and a laboratory of interpretation was created, based on Stanislavski's works, which gave priority to emotion as a determiner of form. Emotion became the axis of character interpretation. For some time they worked diligently without any difficulties. But, eventually, they were confronted with the following dilemma: how could the emotions freely manifest themselves through the body of the actor if that instrument is mechanized, muscularly automated, and insensitive to ninety percent of its possibilities? Boal understood that a newly discovered emotion ran the risk of being channeled through the mechanized actions and reactions already established in the actor.[13] Therefore, Boal concluded that the Arena Theatre should continue its work based on Stanislavski's ideas, but now it was essential to begin what he called the "de-mechanization"[14] of the actor. This process would force the actor to rid

himself of his own mechanical responses and to assume the mechanizations of his character's interpretation. It was an absolute that the actor feel certain emotions and sensations that he had previously utilized but had somehow forgotten. In order to achieve that de-mechanization process in the actor, the Arena Theatre focused all of the Stanislavskian study on performing sensorial and memory exercises. Everything that related to the imagination and emotion was studied and practiced intensively.

Boal asserts that the exercises concerning emotion became quite routine for the actors of the Arena Theatre. They practiced them constantly: on the stage, in the office, in the street, in the restaurants, and in their homes.[15] Since the actors of the Arena Theatre were very young at that time, they could easily practice all of those exercises, using their bodies and emotions, without abandoning theoretical study; so, the emotional content was very critical to them.

However, this process of de-mechanization through emphasis on the emotions presented a dilemma--extreme emotions forced the actor to become, in effect, a new mechanized human being. The actors could feel an immense number of emotions; they could change rapidly from one state of emotion to another, profoundly feeling each emotion, but everything occurred mechanically, without any rational understanding of what actually took place. It was from that point that Boal started to stress the element of rationalization in this process. He stated that extreme use of emotion was very dangerous if one did

not later make a "rational analysis of what had happened."[16] Boal stressed that the objective of those exercises on emotion was to create understanding. Any experience must not only be felt but understood as well: why the actor feels a particular emotion, what is the nature of that emotion, and what are its causes.

For Boal, emotion, like any experience, is crucial, but its meaning is even more vital. Boal has always considered theatre to be a political activity, and, therefore, theatre people should be familiar not only with the phenomenon, but, above all, within the laws which rule the phenomenon. All art, according to Boal, serves not only to demonstrate how the world is, but also why the world is that way and how it can be transformed.[17]

Excessive use of emotion created another difficulty within the Arena Theatre. An actor could become alienated from the others, while profoundly experiencing his emotions, but in total isolation. For Boal, this situation constituted a separation from the true-life experiences of perilous human conflict and from the actor's creative experience of interrelationships with others.

Thus, conflict evolved into the major focus of the Arena Theatre--it was seen as a wonderful source of theatricality. Boal called it the "dialectical emotion."[18] This term implies that all emotions are dynamic, not isolated, and that they depend in some degree on relationships with other characters' emotions. Boal worked at length on defining this concept and reached the conclusion that the dialectical emotion is the emission of what he called a "sub-wave."[19]

The sub-wave is one of the two levels on which communication between two human beings occurs. One level is the wave level, the consciousness. The sub-wave is the unconscious level of communication, all of the communication processed without using the conscious mind. According to Boal, human beings are capable of emitting or sending forth many more messages than those that they think they are. In addition, they are capable of receiving more messages than those they consciously think they are receiving. For this reason, Boal reached the conclusion that communication is conducted through those two levels: wave and sub-wave.

How does this apply to characterization? Boal offers the following example. Many times an actor portrays a uniform role in a uniform manner in two consecutive productions. In one of them, the spectators can enjoyably feel themselves engrossed in the actor's characterization. In the other, this enjoyment may not occur--the sub-wave of the actor transmitted messages which lacked a commonality with the messages transmitted by the wave of the actor. What the actor was consciously sending forth contradicted what he was thinking and sending forth unconsciously. Wave and sub-wave contradicted each other. Boal asserts that the only element that makes the messages compatible is the actor's concentration.

However, for Boal, concentration should be rationally utilized to avoid any kind of possible mechanization. The actor should never permit a mechanization which forces him to play his role always in an identical way, while he himself thinks and feels differently each time. To avoid this, his concentration should be

rational. For Boal, the actor's experience should be a total and complete submission of the actor to his task.

After the Arena Theatre attained this level of interpretation, the group began to develop what Boal called the dialectical structure of interpretation. Around 1970, the Arena Theatre had, as a structure of interpretation, the product of a process which started with Stanislavski and integrated ideas of Bertolt Brecht's dialectical theatre. The philosophical and theoretical basis of this structure can be found in the Hegelian and Marxian theories of Dialectics.[20] Figure 2 summarizes the functioning of this structure. It appears on page 52 of Boals book 200 Ejercicios y Juegos para el Actor y No Actor con Ganas de Decir Algo A través del teatro.

Five elements or variables compose this structure: the Will, the Counter-Will, the Dominant, the Quantitative Variation, and the Qualitative Variation. The actor should analyze and develop his characterization by following this structure.

The first concept is the Will of the character. The Will means "to want." For Boal and the actors of the Arena Theatre, the fundamental element in the character is not the concept of being but the concept of wanting, the Will. The actor should not ask himself who he is but what he (as the character) wants. For Boal to answer the first question implies the creation of emotions in an irrational way. The answer to the second question is more dynamic, active, and dialectical; it is more rational. This Will is not arbitrarily selected by the actor. It is the result of a serious study and

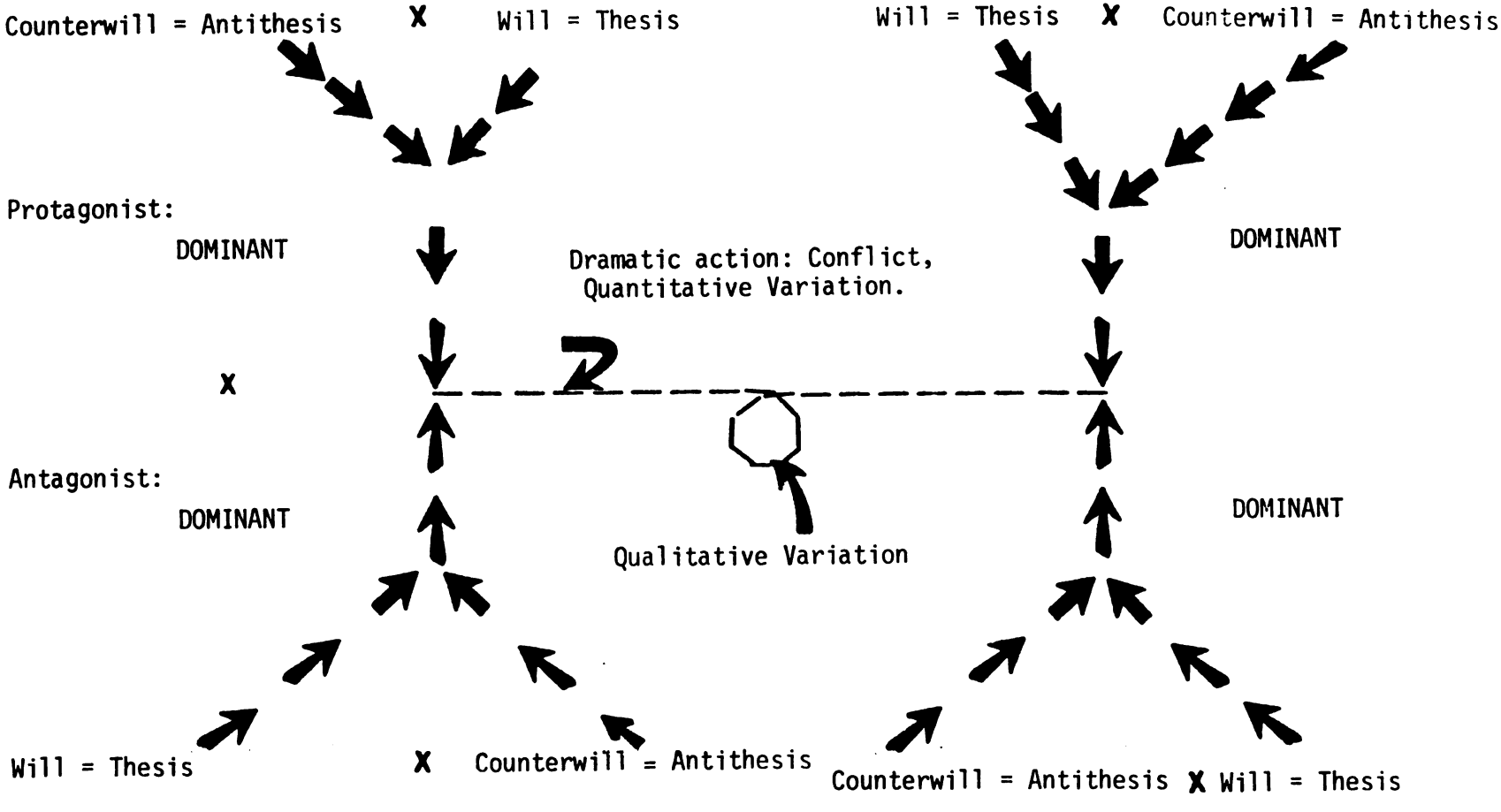


FIGURE 2.--The Dialectical Structure of Interpretation.

analysis of the whole play. This Will should be something concrete, real, and alive. The Will is not the idea; it is the translation of the idea into something specific. For example, according to Boal, it is not enough for Macbeth to want power and glory, in general; he should want to murder King Duncan. To exercise the Will means to wish something, and this something should be concrete. An actor who goes on stage portraying abstract desires of love will not be sufficiently convincing until his character objectively wants to make love to or to kiss someone under specific circumstances.

The Will, to be concrete, should also possess a transcendent meaning. This meaning comes from an idea which is discussed throughout the entire play and which the characters' Wills make concrete. Continuing the example of Macbeth, Boal says that the struggles between Macbeth and his adversaries should not be reduced to psychological fights between those who want to dispute power. For Boal Duncan symbolizes the feudal system and Macbeth the rising new ruling class. Thus, the central idea of this Shakespearean play is the struggle between the developing Bourgeoisie and the feudal lords; and the characters' Wills make possible and concrete that central idea.[21]

From the central idea of the play are deduced the characters' central ideas. Thus, idea and Will are more or less one and the same: the idea is the Will in abstract form, and the Will is the idea in concrete form. After the central idea of the play is discussed and established, Boal recommends that everyone respect that

central idea when he constructs the central ideas of his characters. This structure of ideas (of the play and of the characters) becomes the skeleton of the play or production. The central ideas of the characters are the ones which confront and create the conflict. So, the central idea is a struggle between two opposing forces. In this form, Boal presents the following equation: "Central Idea = Thesis versus Antithesis."[22] The Thesis, according to Figure 2, is the Will, the aspect which wishes affirmation. The Antithesis is the Counterwill, the aspect which symbolizes the negation. It is in opposition to the Will.

For Boal and the actors of the Arena Theatre, the identity between Idea and Will was the creator of emotion. But Boal clearly stresses that not all ideas are theatrical. For an idea to be theatrical it must become a Will and, thereby, be translated into specific concrete circumstances. For example, the idea of love and being loved has no emotional content. But, if that idea is placed in a situation, if it is translated into Will, the emotion can be produced. If a scene presents a man who desperately tries to convince a woman to love him, the idea of love and being loved can produce a profound emotion. Boal establishes the following relation: "Idea———>Will———>Emotion———>Theatrical Form."[23] In other words, any idea can be theatrical if it is presented in its concrete form, in specific circumstances, in terms of Will. This Will will evoke in the actor the emotion which will discover the valid theatrical form for the spectator.

Besides the Will, the other component of this dialectical structure is the Counterwill. For each Will there exists its negation, the force which opposes it, the antithesis, inasmuch as no emotion is pure, isolated, or complete within itself. All emotions in human beings are dialectical; and this implies that they have forces which affirm them and forces which oppose them. What we see in reality, says Boal, is that contradiction of emotions: we want and we do not, we love and we do not. Ultimately, Boal also feels that it is crucial to clarify that the Counterwill of a character is not a contradictory Will; rather inside each Will there is a force against it. There are not two opposing Wills. So, Boal believes that if an actor really wants to immerse himself in his character and not merely illustrate it, it is an absolute necessity that he discover the Counterwill for each of his Wills. In some plays, this is easy to discern. For example, in Hamlet, the Prince wants to revenge the death of his father, but at the same time he does not want to murder his uncle. He wants to be and he does not want to be. In other instances discovering the Counterwill is extremely difficult. For example, Lady Macbeth seems to lack any internal conflict, what Boal calls the "monomotivated character."[24] However, this case, being an exception, does not matter. For Boal and the actors of the Arena Theatre, the Counterwills of each character should always be present, and analyzed by the actors through special rehearsals. The more an actor develops his Counterwill, the more energy will appear in his Will. This internal conflict of Will

and Counterwill maintains the actor's dynamic aliveness on stage, constantly exhibiting internal movements as real characters do. If actors do not have Counterwills, they will be static and, therefore, non-theatrical.

The third component of the dialectical structure is called the Dominant. The Dominant is the result of that dialectical process between Wills and Counterwills. It is what the Dialectic's philosophy calls Synthesis. According to Dialectical theory, all processes or living things exist because they possess internally two opposing forces struggling between each other (thesis and antithesis). When this struggle ends, the process ends and the original entity ceases to exist as well. This struggle is named the Law of Contradiction.[25] One of the fundamental principles of this law is the following: if the antithesis becomes the negation of the thesis, the synthesis becomes the negation of the antithesis (the negation of the negation). So, the synthesis is the confirmation of a new thesis. It is the final result or product of that struggle between thesis and antithesis. It is really the start of a new process, the creation of a new idea or thesis; it is the element which dominates at the end of that process.

Returning to character interpretation, from the internal conflict of Wills and Counterwills, results a Dominant which exteriorizes itself. This Dominant, a final result of that conflict or the element which dominates at the end, is identical to a new Will which enters into conflict with the other characters. It should be clear that the Wills and Counterwills of a character do not enter

into conflict with the Wills and Counterwills of other characters. This is an internal process, an internal struggling inside each character. What enters into conflict with other characters is the Dominant. It is this which determines the dramatic action or conflict of the play. The actor should understand that the conflict between Will and Counterwill is not as important as the conflict between characters. Boal says that when an actor places more emphasis on the conflict of Wills and Counterwills than on the conflict between the characters (between Dominants), he will present an autopsy of his character and not a truly, living existing character.

For Boal, until the Dominants are fortified, the spectacle will remain unstructured, for the characters on stage must live not internally but externally. For that reason the interrelationship is fundamental for character analysis. So, as soon as the actor has finished with the internal analysis of his character, through the seeking of Wills and Counterwills, he should begin the external study of his character, the establishing of the Dominant and its interrelationships with the other characters. The Dominant of each character will depend on the central idea. The central idea of a play varies according to the interpretation that each director or group of performers decides to give it. So, it is imperative, stresses Boal, to keep in mind the play's central idea, when the actors are working in the construction of the Dominant of their characters.

Dramatic action is attained in this way. It is the conflict between the characters or through the characters. It is the

struggling of the different Dominants. So, this dramatic action is what Boal calls the movement of the internal and external conflicts. For him, any conflict is theatrical if it is in movement, and if it has quantitative changes and qualitative changes. According to Dialectic theory, all processes and things possess these two types of change in their development and in their movement. The quantitative change is experienced by the process or the entity without suffering any transformation in itself. In the quantitative change, the entities maintain their essence; they persist as they are. The movement is only a displacement and not a complete transformation. Transformation implies a maximum of change, not in the quantity, but in quality.

The qualitative change totally transforms the phenomenon. Any phenomenon becomes new when a qualitative change occurs. In this type of change the phenomenon is no longer what it was originally. It becomes a unique phenomenon. An excellent example is water. When it is cold and someone heats it, it gets hot; and this is a quantitative change. But when the water is chilled to a certain degree, then it becomes ice; or when it is heated to a certain degree, it evaporates. A qualitative change has occurred: the water is no longer water; it is ice or vapor. The water sustained small quantitative changes in temperature until finally it changed qualitatively. Boal says that the same thing occurs with the movement of any dramatic action. It has quantitative and qualitative variations or changes. When the conflict increases quantitative change is occurring. But when the action reaches its climax, totally

transforming the characters and the situations, the qualitative change occurs. The emotions of the characters also have quantitative and qualitative changes. Boal emphasizes that the actor should construct the emotions of his character following these types of changes. The actor should seek the quantitative and qualitative variations of his character by preparing the opposite of what will happen to his character. For example, if the character of Iago, in Othello, will eventually have the courage to lie to Othello, it is necessary that the actor thinks of him first as a coward. This fear was initially the Dominant. From this fear will be born courage, and it will fortify the actor's characterization. The fear will increase quantitatively until the qualitative variation is produced: the transformation of this fear into courage. The Dominant becomes not fear, but courage. The same process can occur with other types of emotions, for instance love or hate.

This was the structure used by the actors of the Arena Theatre for a long time. For Boal, this structure was the "motor"[26] of the interpretation: the heart of the character. The elements can be summarized as the Central Idea of the play, which determines the Central Ideas of the characters, which is translated in terms of Dialectical Will (Will versus Counterwill); and from the Will conflict, the Dramatic Action, is born--having quantitative and ultimately, qualitative variations.

C. Training Exercises

The exercises in this section, together with the next section (Training Games) were systematized, between 1972 and 1975 and were the ones used and developed by the Arena Theatre in São Paulo, between 1956 and 1971 for the training of actors. Boal himself affirms that detailed study and practice of the ideas and exercises of Stanislavski and Brecht assisted him in the creation and development of these exercises.

When, in 1972, Boal started to work on this systematization, he had in mind various purposes. First, he wanted to structure a system of exercises which could be practiced by actors as well as non-actors (including students, workers, and peasants) whether they wish to use theatre as a legitimate form of communication or as a political manifestation.[27] Boal explains that he created a series of exercises which are more like collective games than traditional laboratory exercises for actors in order to increase the interest of a cast of non-actors in the acting task.

Boal's second purpose was to respond to the concept developed by Jerzy Grotowski of "poor theatre."[28] Originally Boal wanted to publish a book which summarized his theories about people's theatre and described his exercises. The title was supposed to be "From a Theatre of the Poor."[29] The idea of this systematization of his exercises was to recoup the artistic and expressive potentialities of all human beings. These, of course, are the opposite of Grotowski's investigations, which are oriented toward consecrating the role of the actor.[30]

Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed opposes the elitist theatre of Grotowski. The actor's task does not have a sacred character as Grotowski proposes; it has a social character. For this reason, Boal wants, through these exercises, to teach the actor to ignore acting instructions which involve the use of subconscious myths. He wants the actor to develop his capacities for speaking directly to the conscious, demonstrating to the people the rituals that the ruling classes use for continuing their oppression.[31]

1. Warm Ups.

a) Physical warm ups.

The purpose of these series of exercises is dividing the human body into parts so that the actor achieves mental control over each muscle and part. It follows the traditional body composition: thorax, head, pelvis, legs, and arms. The exercises are divided into three groups in the following sequence (massage and relaxation, horizontals and verticals, and circular and straight movements); one group of exercises without sequence; and one trying to relate the body to the exterior world.

Sequence 1: Massage and Relaxation

(1) One actor relaxes his body, and eight actors lift him with their hands. They will try to move their hands like the waves of the sea, up and down.

(2) An actor on the floor is slowly massaged by the rest of the actors, with forceful and monotonous rhythmic movements.

(3) The actors face each other. Each actor massages his partner's face. First, the massage is slow and tender, then it becomes more rapid and forceful.

(4) Breathing: On the floor the actors relax their bodies. They put their hands on their abdomens and expel all the air inside their lungs. They take in air again and expel it in the same way. Then the actors do the same with their hands on their knees, then with their hands on their shoulders. The actors repeat the above breathing process, now leaning against a wall at an angle with the feet farther away from the wall then the rest of the body. First, they begin the process, supporting their bodies with their hands, and then with their elbows. Then they repeat the whole process standing in a perfectly vertical position. These and other similar exercises are performed increasing tension in all the muscles of the body when they inhale the air and relaxing them when they expire it. Boal stresses that the breathing should be an act of the whole body.

Sequence 2: Horizontals and Verticals

The actors move the different parts of their bodies separately in horizontal motions. First, the actors keep the whole body rigid, moving only the head forward, then

backward. To the head motion is then added the neck, and the horizontal movements are repeated. Then the movements change from back and forth to right to left, and vice versa, always trying to keep the motion perfectly horizontal. The same movements are done for the thorax; then for the pelvis, until all the different parts of the body have performed horizontal movements.

The vertical sequence starts with the actors seated on the floor, their arms and legs are at right angles to the rest of the body. Each actor thinks that his body is divided vertically into two parts: each part has a leg, an arm, a shoulder, half of the head, and half of the pelvis. He will try to move forward, first moving the right side of his body and then the left side. After a few minutes the actor should repeat the process, but not instead of moving forward, he will move backward. Then the actor repeats both movements (backward and forward), but instead of being seated on the floor he will be in a prone position, with his arms and legs extended in straight lines, parallel to each other. Finally, the actor repeats the process but now moving to the sides: first to the right and then to the left.

Sequence 3: Straight and Circular Movements

(1) The actors move, using stiff leg, arm, and head movements as if they were robots. These movements should be abrupt, without defined rhythms.

(2) Now, the actors use circular movements. The head should circle in relation to the whole body. These movements should be slow and rhythmical.

(3) They alternate circular movements with straight movements.

(4) The left side of the body makes circular movements as the right side makes stiff movements. After a few minutes, the movements are repeated for the opposite sides of the body.

(5) The body is divided in two with the waist as the middle point. The upper part does circular movements and the lower part, straight movements. After a few minutes the movements alternate.

(6) The actor performs any variations he can to demonstrate all the parts of his body that he can separate from the rest of the body.

(7) The actors walk, trying to completely separate all the parts of their bodies. They will try to feel the vertical division of the whole body. The movements will be stiff. Then they slowly begin to make their movements more circular. The body starts to

shrink, reuniting the differint parts, until the movement ceases when the body reaches the form of a ball. Again, the movement starts, but not in reverse.

(8) The actors perform all the previous exercises but moving backwards.

Exercises without Sequence

(1) Music and Dance:

The actors move their bodies following the rhythm and melody of different types of music and dances. They can move in any way they want: jumping, walking, or running. The idea is to stimulate the muscles of the body.

(2) Wheel of Rhythm and Movement:

The performers form a circle. One of them goes to the center and does any movement accompanied by a sound and within a pre-established rhythm. The rest of the performers will follow him, trying to reproduce his exact movements and rhythmic sounds. Another actor goes to the center and slowly changes the movement, rhythm and sound of the first actor. Everyone then follows the second performer until everyone has reached the center of the wheel.

(3) Wheel of Animals:

The performers walk in a circle and slowly transform themselves into different animals according to a pre-established sequence; for example, first a monkey, then a rabbit, and then a chicken. The transformation should start with the legs, then the trunk, the arms, the head, the face, and, finally, the voice.

(4) Rhythm:

All the actors begin a group rhythm with their voices, arms, and legs. After a few minutes they slowly change until a new rhythm is imposed. This continues for a few moments.

(5) Sound and Movement:

A group of actors makes vocal sounds and another group creates movements compatible with the sounds.

(6) Dance of the Backs:

The actors form couples. They link their backs and dance. One of the couples commands the movements, and the other follows him.

(7) To Complete the Empty Space:

Two actors stand, one in front of the other. One moves, and the other fills the empty space left by the first actor.

(8) The Uncoordination of Coordinated Movements:

This exercise was created because the coordination of movements, says Boal, hardens the muscles and determines a physical mask. The actors should study their movements through the uncoordination of these movements. Example: one leg moves in a rhythm different from the other; one hand makes gestures contrary to the gestures made by the other hand.

(9) Race of Legs and Hands:

Each actor, on hands and knees, starts a race forward. Then the race is run backward.

Exercises to Relate with the Exterior World

(1) Image of the Group:

Each actor, using the rest of the actors, will do a sculpture which illustrates his opinion of the relationships inside the group.

(2) Half Blind:

Two lines of actors are created, one in front of the other, the members of one line with their eyes covered. Each blindfolded actor will try to feel with his hands the face and the hands of the actor in front of him. Then the actors who are not blindfolded will change their positions in the line. The blind actors will try to discover, touching

the faces and hands of each member of the other line, who was the actor in front of them.

(3) Blind with a Bomb:

An actor with his eyes covered imagines that a bomb is going to explode if he keeps contact with someone. The rest of the actors surround him. When he touches someone, the blindfolded actor should move away as rapidly as he can, trying to avoid contact with the others as much as possible.

(4) Interrelationship of Characters:

An actor starts an action. A second actor wordlessly enters, and through physical, visible actions, relates to the first one according to the role he selects. The first actor should try to discover the role of the second actor to better establish the interrelationship. A third actor immediately enters and relates to the first two, then a fourth actor and so on. The purpose of this exercise is to develop the relationships of each actors with the exterior group through the senses and not through words.

(5) To Discover the Object:

An actor with his eyes covered and his hands tied behind him will try to discover an object in front of him. He will use the rest of his body.

(6) Character in Transit:

One or more actors go to the center of the group and perform a scene with actions which illustrate where they come from, what they do, and where they are planning to go. The rest of the actors should discover those three things.

(7) Observation:

One actor attentively looks at his fellows for five minutes. Then, with his eyes blindfolded, he will try to accurately describe them, using verbal communication.

(8) Complementary Activities:

An actor starts a movement, and the rest try to discover what the activity is so that they can perform complementary activities. For example, the first portrays a taxi driver and is complemented by the rest portraying passengers.

(9) To Discover the Change:

The actors form two lines, one in front of the other. Each actor attentively observes the opposite actor. Then they turn their backs and change some detail of their characters. When they turn to look at each other again, they will try to discover the changes.

(10) Difficulties with the Body and the Object:
Boal believes that we are so accustomed to our activities that we do them mechanically because we know our bodies and the objects we use. But what if something happens to that body and/or those objects? For example, if an actor has one hand tied behind him, how will be set the table for dinner? The exercise should be performed several times until the actor can accomplish it as quickly and easily as possible. Variations in this exercise can be how to dress himself if he has just one leg, if he can only walk backwards, or if he does not have fingers. For Boal, all the physical and environmental problems provoke and immediately increase the sensitivity of human beings to their bodies.

(11) There Are Many Objects in One Object:
An object is given to each person; each one discovers a possible use for it. For example, a stick can be a cane, a horse, an umbrella, a bridge, a tree, a spoon, or a violin.

b) Vocal Warm Ups.

(1) All the actors, facing a wall and separated from each other by short distances, try to pierce the

wall with their voices. All should try to produce the same tone.

(2) Two groups of actors--each produce a different tone. Both should try to force the other group to follow its tone.

(3) All the actors lie face down on the floor and try to project their voices through that floor.

(4) An actor lies on his back on a table, his head hanging over the edge. He emits a loud sound. He continues until the vibration in his nose prevents him from continuing to make the sound and the exercise becomes impossible.

(5) An actor emits a sound directed toward another actor who is a certain distance from him. This second actor starts to move away a little, first one meter, then two, then five. The first one tries to adjust his voice according to the distance, so that its volume level always seems the same to the second actor.

(6) The above exercise is performed using singing.

c) Emotional Warm Ups.

(1) Abstract Emotion:

This exercise will try to eliminate any concrete motivation. The exercise starts with the actors amiably reacting with each other. They try to see

pleasant characteristics in each other. To eliminate any possibility of motivation the actors must use numbers instead of words. Then they begin to change that feeling quantitatively. They start to love each other more, then less, until they start to change qualitatively, from love to hate, or vice versa. The hate is increased until it reaches the most violent tension. Then gradually they start to discover again the good things in each other until they again love each other. The physical security of the participant should not be affected. This exercise should be done without physical violence of any kind.

(2) Abstract Emotion with Animals:

This is a variant of the first warmup. The actors move away from an emotion until they reach the contrary emotion, returning them to the first one. But instead of using numbers they will use the sounds of different animals.

(3) To Follow the Teacher in Abstract Emotion:

Two actors face each other in the center. These two will be the teachers. Each one will have four actors who will follow him. The two teachers start a discussion about any theme, sensible or nonsensical. They can use words, numbers, or sounds.

The rest of the actors repeat the sounds, movements of the body, movements of the face, and the tones of their teachers. They will try to do them exactly as their teachers do them. The teachers should force their emotions to their extremes until eventually they return to the original calm of the group with the increased and new understanding gained from the exercise.

(4) Animals or Vegetables in Emotional Circumstances: Animals or vegetables are selected to do a scene where the environment will affect their feelings. The feelings should change from positive to negative or destructive. For example, an actor pretends to be a coconut tree on the beach. It is a summer day. The weather, (performed by other actors) changes, and a storm approaches. The happiness of summer changes to the fear of being destroyed by the storm. Another example could be a fish happily swimming until he bites a fishbook.

Boal states that in these animal exercises the sounds should be very expressive. Human beings have words to express their emotions, but the animals have only sounds. Yet poor human expression is poor in sensorial experience.

The above exercises allow the actors to rescue a great deal of the sensorial possibilities of expressions which language has deprived them of.

d) Ideological Warm Ups.

For Boal the theatre demonstrates images obtained from the social life according to a specific ideology. The ideology of either the ruling class or of the people is always present in any given theatre.

The ideological development of the actor is part of his training. According to Boal, his theatre does not want to alienate the actor from the social and political reality in which he lives. Actors are human beings, integral parts of a society, and so political and social problems affect their lives, too. Wanting to be alienated from that situation implies an error, because for Boal actors are the culture's workers. They are of the people, and so they have to understand what their roles are in the society.

Boal asserts that the actor should always have in mind the progressive mission of his work, his pedagogical character, and his combative character[32] because for Boal theatre is both an art and a weapon.[33] The following are four ways in which the actor can be kept ideologically warmed up.

(1) Dedication:

All the rehearsals, meetings, and performances of the cast are dedicated to someone or to some major

historical fact or event. The person or the event should symbolize the ideology of the group. This keeps the group from mentally divorcing their work from their ideology and their mission.

(2) Reading of Newspapers:

It is essential for actors to read and discuss the social and political events of the day, explaining their meanings, to assist in the cast's awareness of the social milieu. In this way, alienation from those social and political problems of society is avoided. From this idea, the form of Newspaper Theatre, already discussed, was born.

(3) To Remember a Historical Event:

When it is possible, the cast should remember a historical event which has parallels to the current situation for analysis and discussion. The similarities and the differences between the past and present events should be revealed in this discussion. This collective learning helps the cast understand history and analyze the mistakes of the present. Moreover, it aids them in a better analysis of future plays as well.

(4) A Class:

Depending on the group and its political and historical knowledge, a short class on basic important

concepts can be set up. The group can invite an expert to lecture on a specific subject they desire to learn about. Or one of the members can assume that role, sharing with the class his/her expertise in a given area.

2. Masks and Rituals.

These exercises have already been presented in the previous discussion of those two concepts. It should be stressed that Boal wants these exercises not to ritualize theatre, but to help the actor learn how to reveal the rituals of the society in order that theatre may destroy those rituals and make possible the creation of new ones.[34]

3. Rehearsal Training Exercises.

a) General Exercises Without Text.

(1) Improvisation:

To avoid mechanical improvisation and to make them constantly dynamic, the actors must use the dialectical structure of interpretation. Each actor finds a dominant will, the result of the struggle between Will and Counterwill, which determines an internal and subjective conflict. The dominant will enters into conflict with the other wills to create an external and objective conflict. And, finally, the conflict moves quantitatively and

qualitatively through changes. The themes for the improvisations should be found in the newspaper of the day to facilitate the political and ideological discussion.

(2) Dark Chamber:

An actor is seated in a dark room with a tape recorder beside him. He closes his eyes. As the tape records the exercise, the director tells him to imagine himself in a particular place. The actor describes with as much detail as possible the place he imagines, including his clothes and the faces of the persons there. Then, as the tape continues, the director tells him to imagine an action. The actor should describe everything that is happening. This is an emotional exercise. Then the exercise finishes, and the actor listens to everything he has said. Then he will try to recreate a second time all of the actions and all of the emotions he felt.

(3) Interrogation:

An actor, in the center, is interrogated by the whole cast about his character, about what he thinks, about the rest of the characters, and about the circumstances of the play. The character is placed on trial in an imaginary way. In this way everyone learns more about the character.

(4) Story Narrated by Many Actors:

An actor starts narrating a story, which is continued by a second actor, and then a third until all of the cast has a part in narrating the story. Another group of actors can pantomime the story.

(5) Change of Story:

In this exercise, fantasy is of great significance. When a play relates a story, it is narrating what is happening. But, according to Boal, all plays also contain in themselves the negation of what is happening; in other words, what is not happening. In order to give the actors the knowledge of those things which could have occurred, but did not, it is helpful for them to rehearse scenes which did not occur; for example, the marriage of Hamlet and Ophelia or how Othello forgave Desdemona.

(6) Change of Roles:

Each scene is rehearsed several times with the actors interpretating different characters. This way each actor can give his version of the other characters, as well as study the versions that the other actions give of his character. Thus, all of the cast can contribute in the creation of all the characters.

(7) A Phrase Said by Many Actors:

Each actor will say just one word of a phrase already selected by the cast, but will try to use the inflections as if only one actor were speaking. Sometimes one actor can say the whole phrase as he wants everyone to say it. The rest will imitate him, but say one word each.

b) Rehearsals of Motivation with Text.

(1) Commentary:

All the actors who do not speak in a scene will speak their thoughts in a low tone while the others say their text lines. In this way, all of the actors will be talking at the same time, giving a new dynamic to their acting and avoiding static moments in their portrayals. This rehearsal helps the actors to prepare their sub-text.

(2) Isolated Motivation:

Each of the components of a motivation is rehearsed in isolation, using at least three stages: first, the Will; second, the Counterwill, and, finally, the Dominant. This helps the actor to dominate each component and to integrate it into the totality of his interpretation.

(3) Aritifical Pause:

The actor is not permitted to talk or act on cue. On the contrary, he should occasionally pause for five to ten seconds in his acting. According to Boal this makes it possible for the actor to lose the mechanical support that the rhythm gives to him. His senses and attention, says Boal, are awakened. For Boal the repetition of the same words and movements during the rehearsals tend to create an hypnotic effect upon the actor which can mechanize his acting. This rehearsal can aid in avoiding this mechanical delivery of text and character.

(4) Contrary Thought:

This is an exercise similar to the previous one. But, here, during the pause the actor thinks or says to himself exactly the opposite of what he says or does in the script. Thus, his text and his action will include all of the possible variations.

(5) Repetition of the Cue:

Here, again, an artificial pause is required before the actor begins to speak. In this pause, the actor thinks or speaks a summary of what his fellow has said before him. Thus, the actor includes in his action the actions of the others, integrating his performance with the general structure. After

hearing so often the words of others, an hypnotic effect is produced in the actor which must be broken. The actor no longer hears or understands what the others say. So, this rehearsal helps the actor to avoid another kind of mechanization.

(6) Before and After:

These are improvised rehearsals of what happens before the actor enters and of what will happen after his exit. This gives continuity to the action and warms the actor up before he enters.

(7) Mute:

This is a rehearsal to develop the sub-wave. The actor, respecting all of the blocking, or rhythm, intensely thinks of his text lines, trying to transmit them only through the sub-wave. He cannot say anything. This requires a high degree of concentration. The use of pantomime or facial expressions should be avoided in this rehearsal. Sometimes the Arena Theatre performed this kind of rehearsal in front of spectators, and the spectators were able to discuss the play perfectly without feeling the lack of dialogue.

(8) Opposite Circumstances:

Each scene is rehearsed according to its opposite. For example, when a scene normally requires violence, it will be rehearsed without violence. The actors

should transmit the same violent content without the original words and without physically expressing violence. Actors always have a pre-knowledge of what they are going to do and say. This pre-knowledge tends to mechanize acting and sometimes the actor does not perceive what happens on stage. This kind of rehearsal destroys this type of mechanization. The opposite circumstances' exercise can also work in relation to the scenery, the movements, and other elements besides dialogue.

(9) Change of Genre:

This is a variation of the previous exercise. Many rehearsals of a scene are done, each time changing the genre and the style of the original text. For example, a naturalistic or realistic scene should be done as a circus spectacle, as a farce, as melodrama, or as a tragedy.

(10) Invisible Character:

One of the characters of a scene is removed. The rest of the actors perform the scene as if the character were there acting with them. This forces the cast to visualize and listen carefully to this invisible character. This is not a rehearsal when an actor is absent and the stage manager or any other person reads his lines or when they simply

omit his lines. Actors should have to figure out everything which belongs to the invisible character: his lines, tones, rhythm, movements, and reactions. Boal believes that many actors obtain a more precise perception of their fellows when they do not see them.

(11) Free Rehearsal:

The cast is permitted to do anything they want; they can change the movements, the text, everything. The only limitations are that they cannot move far away from the real story of the play and they cannot cause any physical harm to the others. According to Boal a great part of the artistic creation is rational, but not all. The unexpected always occurs.

(12) Caricature:

This can be rehearsed in either of the following two forms: the actor can ridicule or exaggerate his own character and interpretation, or another actor can ridicule or exaggerate the character and interpretation of his fellow. The caricature produces laughter because it presents an automated behavior. If an actor can see what is automated in his interpretation, through a caricature, he can change and revitalize his work.

(13) Change of Characters:

A rehearsal is done using role-reversal, especially for those characters involved in close relationships in the play. For example, the husband plays the role of the wife, the father becomes the son. They do not have to memorize all of the lines, but only attempt to get inside the role of the opposite character.

(14) Rhythm of the Scenes:

A rehearsal with the real text is done where the actors select a proper rhythm for the scene. They try to interpret their characters inside that rhythm. The rhythm should change when the content of the scenes changes. The idea is not to sing the scene; it is to perform it rhythmically.

c) Sequence of Rehearsals Named Pique-Pique.

(1) Simple Pique-Pique:

All the actors are placed against the wall. The director then says any phrase of the text and suggests a manner of doing the scene (caricature, exaggeration, etc.). Immediately all the actors who participate in the scene where that phrase occurs occupy the positions they have when the phrase is said. They start the action from that phrase in the manner suggested. After a few minutes

another phrase and another manner or motivation is given, and the process continues. The whole play is rehearsed but not as it was originally constructed.

(2) Pique-Pique Taca-Taca:

The actors who were in the first scene and not in the second will continue interpreting the first one. So, both scenes are interpreted at the same time and in the same place. If some actors from the first scene are also in the second one, the actors in the first scene perform the exercise of the invisible character. The exercise uses a maximum of five scenes. Three to five scenes are done simultaneously in three to five different ways. When a scene finishes the actors continue with the next scene. If the last one finishes before the others, they start with the first one. When a new scene starts the actors cannot all move to the new scene. There should be at least one actor in a scene. The rest of the characters lost to the new scene will be invisible in the original scene. So, at the end of the rehearsal there will be five simultaneous scenes, each one with at least one actor.

(3) Pique-Pique Taca-Taca Ping Pong:

This is a more difficult variant of the previous rehearsal techniques. In the previous ones the actors pass from one scene to the next and do not return to the previous ones. Here, if the actor does not have lines in the last scene he moves back to other scenes where his character has lines and an important physical action to accomplish. Sometimes the actor who had to move back to a previous scene finishes his role and has to move forward or backward to other scenes where his character has importance. Boal says that this rehearsal is a constant ping ponging of actors through the scenes. The actors have the possibility of jumping between five scenes and performing in five different manners.

These exercises are the most important illustrations of the actor's training that Boal and the Arena Theatre developed and practiced during the time of its existence. No exercises were related to acrobatics, even though acrobatics have been considered fundamental for actor instruction in contemporary theatre, especially in the political theatre. Boal answers criticism of this omission by saying that acrobatic exercises tend to create the mask of the athlete.[35] These exercises are intended to relax and stimulate muscles not used

> much in the daily routine. But Boal's exercises are intended to change the habitual circumstances of the actors, which mechanize and ritualize the actor's body, its movements, its senses and even its ideas, creating rigid structures. Boal reaffirms that the actors, through these exercises, must destroy those structures and not substitute them with others as acrobatic exercises would do. In addition to exercises, Boal developed a series of games to help the actors in their training as collective beings.

D. Training Games

These games were developed by Boal, especially to help those persons considered traditionally as non-actors, to practice and use theatre as a legitimate vehicle of communication. The majority of these games were created by Boal during his experience in Peru. Later, many others were added as a result of his experiences with the People's Theatre throughout Latin America. The following selection best illustrates Boal's purpose. The majority have already been explained in Chapter III.

1. Integration of the Cast.

(1) Mimics

This is the traditional charade game. Two groups are formed. One group proposes a theme to a member of the other group. This person acts out for his group the

theme proposed to him. His group tries to discover the theme within two minutes. The game ends when everyone has participated.

(2) Game of the Assassin:

The director secretly designates one member of the cast who is supposed to be an "assassin." All of the participants should try to discover who it is. Every ten minutes the assassin can "kill" one of the members of the cast with a pre-established signal; for example, winking one eye or touching twice someone's shoulder. The actors who were "killed" by the assassin should wait a few seconds before "dying" so they will not give away the identity of the assassin. During the process, the cast, by majority vote, can "kill" those who are suspected.

This game activates the actor's capacity for perception. The actors start to see in more detail, all of their group, because all of them are potential assassins. The director can select more than one assassin or even no one. The group's search for a non-existent assassin reinforces the tension in the game and the attention among the participants.

(3) Guerrillas and Policemen:

This is a variation of number two. Two groups are created; policemen and guerillas. They will try to discover who are enemies and who are friends. They will

try to "kill" the enemies with a pre-established signal. The game ends when the members of just one group are "alive". Observation and imagination are developed through this game. It is important that each one creates his own story of his identity which he can reveal to his friends and which he can use to deceive his enemies. In this game, small groups can be created and also interrogation can be done.

(4) Phrase Completed:

Two or more phrases are selected. Each actor then will receive, on a piece of paper, just one word of each phrase. No one will know who belongs to his group. Each actor asks questions in order to find who are the actors who belong to his phrase. Also, each actor should answer all the questions asked by the other actors, but he will include in his answer the clue word he received on the piece of paper. The game ends when a group of actors discover among themselves all those who possess a word which completes the phrase.

2. Breaking with Repression.

This game follows, along general lines, the same technique Boal used for non-actors in his experience in Peru. An actor tries to remember some moment in his life when he felt an intense repression. The game is done in three stages. First, the actor tries to reproduce the exact moment, without adding or eliminating anything,

in great detail. Next, the protagonist does the same scene, but without accepting the repression he suffered. Boal affirms that repression exists because it has the support of the victim. In this second stage, the protagonist starts to become conscious of this reality. For Boal, this recognition begins the liberation of the protagonist. In the third stage, the roles are changed. The protagonist becomes the oppressor. The protagonist who has broken with the repression moves toward realizing its meaning through pretending to exercise the repression himself.

Finally, another means of breaking with repression is used, repeating the above process again, but in a contrary form. Instead of beginning the exercise playing the role of the one repressed, the actor will begin as the oppressor. He thinks of a moment in his life when he repressed someone, when he acted as an oppressor. The process then follows the above-mentioned stages. So, when he reaches the third stage, he will not look at himself as his executioner, but as his own victim.[36]

Both processes can have different variations depending on the group and on the types of repressions they wish to work with. Basically, these games are more associated with Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed than with traditional theatre forms. The other exercises were oriented not to the theatre forms developed by the Theatre of the Oppressed, but to the more traditional theatre forms where the wall between spectators and performers existed. This means of actor training represented an innovation for the theatre in Brazil and in other Latin American countries.

NOTES CHAPTER V

[1]Augusto Boal, "Sistematização do Teatro Imagem: exercícios, jogos e técnicas do teatro imagem" (Paris: January 1980), p. 29.

[2]Boal, 200 Ejercicios y Juegos para el Actor y No Actor con Ganas de Decir Algo A través del Teatro (Bueno Aires: Editorial Crisis S.R.L., 1975), p. 20.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., p. 21.

[5]Ibid., p. 17.

[6]Ibid., p. 18.

[7]For more information see Irwin Piscator, Teatro Político (Habana: Instituto Cubano del Libro, 1973).

[8]"Particular Típico."

For more information, see Boal, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

[9]Boal, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

[10]See Boal, "Sistematização do Teatro Imagem...," p. 27.

[11]Ibid.

[12]These exercises appear amply discussed in Augusto Boal, 200 Ejercicios y Juegos para el Actor y No Actor con Ganas de Decir Algo A través del Teatro (Buenos Aires: Editorial Crisis S.R.L., 1975), pp. 92-102.

[13]See Boal, 200 Ejercicios...., pp. 37-38.

[14]Ibid., p. 39.

[15]Ibid., p. 43.

[16]Ibid., p. 47.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid., p. 51.

[19]Ibid.

[20]For more information see George Politzer, Elementary Principles of Philosophy, 2nd ed. (New York: International Publishers, 1978).

[21]See Augusto Boal, "A poética da 'Virtú'. II," O Estado de São Paulo, 20 de Outubro de 1962, Suplemento Literário, p. 5.

[22]Boal, 200 Ejercicios..., p. 54.

[23]Ibid., p. 55.

[24]Ibid.

[25]See Politzer, op. cit., pp. 143-153.

[26]Boal, 200 Ejercicios..., p. 60.

[27]Ibid., p. 9.

[28]See Jerzy Grotowski, Toward a Poor Theatre. Preface by Peter Brook (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), pp. 15-25.

[29]"Desde un teatro de los pobres."

[30]See Roberto Jacoby, "Para Boal, hay que borrar las fronteras entre actores y público," La Opinión (Buenos Aires), 11 de Octubre de 1972, p. 23.

[31]Boal, op. cit., p. 16; Boal thinks that the technique developed by Grotowski is one oriented toward the sub-conscious processes of human beings. And this can have good application in countries like Poland, but not in underdeveloped countries of the Third World such as those in Latin America. In underdeveloped countries, the oppression is not in the sub-conscious; it is in the consciousness; it is in reality. So theatre should help liberate the human being from that reality which oppressed them, and not from sub-conscious myths which also are oppressive.

[32]Ibid., p. 86.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid., p. 16.

[35]See note on page 85 of Boal's book 200 Ejercicios...

[36]The last experiment done by Boal, using this technique of Breaking with Repression, was for three months in Paris during 1980. In his Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed, he prepared a workshop-course for non-actors, entitled: "The Policeman in Your Head" (Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980). In it he used all the theatre techniques employed to help actors to accomplish their characters, for assisting the non-actors to accomplish the character they would want to be in their real life. To enter this course it was necessary that a person have the desire of doing something to liberate himself from an oppression which he suffered (Letter from Augusto Boal to the author dated October 15, 1979, Paris-France). With this experiment, his technique started to drive his Theatre of the Oppressed toward a theatre characterized by a cathartic process.

CHAPTER VI

BOAL AS A DIRECTOR AND PLAYWRIGHT

Two important aspects of Augusto Boal's theatre are his work as a director and playwright. From the beginning of his professional career, in 1956, his plays have always been closely related to his development as a director. Not only does Boal direct most of his plays himself, but even those which were collectively written were products of an intensive collective laboratory with the Arena Theatre under his direction. Some of his plays, such as his musicals, Arena Narrates..., were directorial experiments which he accomplished with members of the Arena Theatre. Thus, Boal's playwriting is closely linked with his ideas on the task of theatre direction.

A brief description of Boal's artistic career indicates a parallel between the development of his playwriting and his development as a director.[1] For investigatory purposes this chapter will place more emphasis on those plays which have been performed, while at the same time it will use as its basis the theatre criticisms which appeared in the Brazilian newspaper O Estado de São Paulo.

A. His Years as a Student: (From 1950 to 1956)

As a student Boal's interest in theatre was expressed primarily through acting. However, playwriting became his principal interest after 1950, when he wrote The Horse and the Saint.[2] Although

it was never performed, Boal was satisfied with this first attempt, and continued writing one-act plays centered on the same theme: the life of the fishermen from the "Penha" region. Unfortunately, all of these manuscripts have disappeared, and thus it is impossible to extract any ideas concerning the structure, content, and language, to help delineate the beginning of Boal's development as a playwright.

However, Boal's recollections relate the basic plots of all of these plasy. In general, the author was preoccupied with the problem of alcoholism; this problem and how it affected living conditions was reflected in his principal characters. Although the plays presented personal aspects of these characters' lives, the problem received a more social treatment. Boal says that with those plays he attempted to demonstrate the economic and social roots of alcoholism. According to Boal, his characters' misfortunes rather than alcoholism were the cause of their economic conditions.

To present these economic problems in the lives of the Penha fishermen was Boal's motivation for writing those one-act plays. The language was simple, using concise phrases rather than whole sentences, in keeping with the personality and situation of the characters. The action of the plays was centered around two characters whose dialogues developed the plot. In this sense the first two of Boal's plays were similar: colloquial and rapid speech little action, and a great deal of discussion between two persons.

Three years later, in 1953, Boal decided to travel to the United States to complete his graduate studies in Chemistry and his undergraduate theatrical studies at Columbia University. There

he encountered such prominent people as Langston Hughes, Maurice Valency, John Gassner, and Norris Houghton. He was given an opportunity to demonstrate his directorial capabilities.

With two one-act plays, in the same genre as he had written earlier, Martin the Fisherman and The House Across the Street,[3] Boal's first attempt as a theatre director was at the Malin Theatre in New York, in 1955. However, his effort, dedication, and work ended in disappointment. For reasons beyond his control, the plays were cancelled a few days before opening night. Nonetheless, this experience convinced him to continue working as a director when he returned to Brazil. Boal considers this experience as very enlightening. He understood that as a director his task was to unify all of the production elements: text, interpretation, actors' characterizations, scenery, lighting, costume and color.

Discipline and attention to the message of the spectacle were the two pillars of his work as a director. Boal has said that discipline is fundamental to attaining any artistic goal. For the director, whose taks is also to coordinate and control, discipline becomes a necessity. Boal felt that all spectacles depended primarily upon the content of the text. His views as a playwright dominated his views as a director, principal importance given to the text--for him content was more vital than form.

After this experience, in 1955, he became more involved in playwriting, joining the Brooklyn Writers Group and studying playwriting under John Gassner.

Then, in 1956, after completing his studies in the United States and returning to Brazil, there was a temporary suspension in his life as a playwright and director, while working as a translator of mystery novels for six months. He rejoined the theatrical realm when the Arena Theatre of São Paulo offered him the artistic direction of the group. Once again Boal had the opportunity to develop as a theatre director.

B. The Beginning of his Professional Career; First Successes and Failures: (From 1956 to 1960)

Boal began his professional career with notable success, directing John Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men for the Arena Theatre. During the days which preceded the opening night, the public of São Paulo and the theatre critics voice many expectations about the possible production problems and Boal's directorial capabilities.[4] Finally, on September 26, 1956, the public of São Paulo, filling the Arena hall to its capacity, welcomed with warm enthusiasm the new theatre director named Augusto Boal. Most of the critics focused their attention on criticizing Boal's directorial expertise. In the October 5, 1956, newspaper edition of the newspaper O Estado de São Paulo, its theatre critique begins by saying that the debut of Augusto Boal as a director was very good--good because of its artistic value as well as its meaning....[5]

The article analyzes Boal's directorial work by comparing his style with one of Brazil's most famous theatre directors, José Renato. It says that Boal's style is more "...calm...less vibrant,"[6] that he uses pauses effectively, leaving the actors to repose in

their positions. The author of the article understood that this style created the psychological tension and rhythm of the play and that Boal is an expert at this.

In this play, Boal gave special attention to the characters' and actors' presentations. The emphasis was placed upon the actor's work and not the message of the text. Boal appeared to view himself as both teacher and as the group's director. With this first experience, Boal demonstrated his exceptional expertise with an emotionally powerful play. Many critics agreed that the play's success rested upon the "excellent representation done by Boal"[7] and not upon the text itself. Due to this impressive success, Boal was awarded "Best New Director of the Year,"[8] by the São Paulo Association of Theatre Critics.[9]

Immediately after this momentous event, the Arena Theatre decided to organize the first playwriting seminar in the city of São Paulo. Boal was selected to direct and coordinate it. For several months, the members of the Arena Theatre worked on one of the most critical aspects of theatre activity: playwriting. This seminar has been considered by various analysts of Brazilian dramatic literature as a significant moment in the development of contemporary Brazilian dramatic literature.[10] This seminar catapulted many influential and controversial Brazilian playwrights into the theatrical limelight, during the fifties and sixties: Gianfrancesco Guarnieri, Henrique Pongetti, Rui Barbosa, Oduvaldo Vianna Filho, and Boal himself. The theatre magazines, periodicals, and newspapers

of those years show that these authors were the most often represented on the Brazilian stage.

From that seminar, Boal emerged with much more control over his playwriting technique, especially comedy writing. For several years he had wanted to write a different kind of play. Instead of continuing with short one-acts, he wrote a lengthy social satire on the urban life of contemporary Brazilians. His first three-act comedy was, Skinny Husband, Boring Wife.[11]

The play, directed first by Boal, was performed on January 5, 1957, at the Arena Theatre. It attempted to capture the social psychology of Brazilian youth, satirized by Boal as "Coca Cola Kids."[12] It takes place in the Copacabana area, where the middle and upper-middle class of Brazil live, near a beautiful beach with the same name. Only two characters (the skinny husband and the boring wife) perform practically the entire dialogue. The play maintains the colloquial tone established in Boal's first one-act dramas. He uses short phrases as in his first plays, but with more explanations, resulting in lengthier dialogue. The comic situations and discussion held between the two young characters move the action at an accelerated pace. The female character is more well-developed. She embodies the meaning of the play and is the nucleus of all of the dialogue and action. The male character is involved in a dependent relationship with the female; he merely reacts to the stimuli which she offers.

The text of the script indicates that Boal knows what qualities transform a text into a play. Each line is accompanied by short

descriptions of the required vocal inflexion, facial expression or body movement. Therefore, each phrase was carefully constructed to obtain a particular effect. Boal's clear notation on gestures and movements allows the reader to experience the illusion of seeing the play performed on stage. Thus, the comedy possesses two values. One is social--what the play teaches about the Copacabana area, the Brazilian middle class, and young Brazilians. The second is visual--the total piece exhibits the scenic functioning that any text by a good playwright can reach.

This aspect of the comedy was very favorably received by the critics. The newspaper O Estado de São Paulo stated that the author demonstrated "the perfect dominion of the comedy technique,"[13] because of the scenic value that the play possessed. For other critics, the real theme of the comedy was not really the "Coca Cola" youth of Copacabana, but the theatre itself, because of that scenic quality.

Besides the favorable reviews on Boal's script, his direction was also very favorably critiqued. One review characterized his work as "splendid" saying that without his direction the play would risk obscurity. Boal's psychological development of characters was described by critics as excellent. The theatricality of the production was reinforced by a great deal of movement on stage, creating a farcial atmosphere, in perfect relationship to the play's style. These directorial descriptions indicated a change in Boal's direction concepts--a greater emphasis on form rather than content. He was now a more technical and less literary director.

Because of Boal's phenomenal success as a director, the National Library named him the "Best Young Director of 1956;"[14] and, in addition, he was invited to direct with the National Theatre Company of Brazil.[15] From this point, Augusto Boal gained national notoriety. He was invited by several companies and associations to direct or collaborate on various productions, and one of these was the renowned Black Experimental Theatre of Brazil. Nevertheless, Boal, wanting a remain a member and director of the Arena Theatre, rejected other opportunities. His next two directing experiences were with the Arena Theatre's production of Sean O'Casey's Juno and the Paycock, and Sidney Howard's They Knew What They Wanted. These marked the first failures of his professional career. They were disappointments to him but, in retrospect, helped him to analyze his faults for continuing self-improvement.

Boal's work with Juno and the Paycock illustrates some of his difficulties. Boal was enthusiastic about the play and its production. For practically two months he rehearsed the play meticulously. Boal was extremely careful with the play's interpretation because of its unusual complexity. He felt that this complexity was essential to the text, and that any director should take it into consideration when faced with the problems of text interpretation. The play moves from drama to melodrama, and from comedy to farce. What is absolutely vital in the play is its extreme diversity: poetry combined with vulgarity, and suffering with ridicule.

Boal apparently erred in this production because he did not know how to preserve all of the text's rich ambiquity and

ambivalence.[16] Neither the seriously tragic scenes nor the absurdly funny scenes convinced the critics that they had been well-articulated and efficiently performed. Many of those criticisms concerned the "traditional ways"[17] in which Boal approached the comic situations.[18]

However, the production was considered successful in its excellent use of scenic apparatus: good balance on the acting levels, very well coordinated lighting, scenery, and movements. Boal had achieved the technical unity needed to transform the production into a fine spectacle. In the perspective of the text--the content of the spectacle--he was not successful. Unfortunately, this omission incurred the strongest criticisms of Boal's directing technique.[19]

Boal's next directing experience was They Knew What They Wanted in January of 1958. If the production of Juno and the Paycock was the first partial failure of Boal's as a director, the production of Sidney Howard's play was his first total failure. Regrettably, adverse conditions existed when Boal directed Howard's play. Although with Juno and the Paycock he had had some success in spite of negative reviews, in this experience failure was a certainty for several reasons. First, the Arena Theatre hall was being used for two productions. Second, most of the more experienced actors of the Arena Theatre were performing outside of São Paulo. Third, the remaining members of the group lacked the experience to rehearse a production such as this in less than a month. These conditions led Boal to disagree with the choice of Sidney Howard's play; additionally, the group faced numerous financial problems.

With so many disadvantages, the result was what everyone expected a poor production.[20]

Juno and the Paycock played for one and a half months, but this production lasted only three and a half weeks. This production was unsuccessful both artistically and as popular entertainment--the audience was too apathetic. Although this play had won the Pulitzer Prize, in 1925, to the Brazilian public thirty years later, the piece held little interest. According to the critics, Boal erred by stressing the melodramatic elements, which were unacceptable to the Brazilian public of that era.[21] An additional problem occurred within the production organization. During this year the Arena Theatre faced a crisis in the composition and ideology of its members. Its prestige and acceptance began to decline. Other failures moved the group to change its orientation. To focus its attention on Brazilian national writers, the group began an untried stage called Brazilian National Realism.

In spite of the above disappointments Boal continued to direct. After the failure of Sidney Howard's play in January of 1958, Boal assumed directing responsibility within ten days over Society in a Baby Doll[22] by the Brazilian writer, Henrique Pongetti, one of the authors who had participated in Boal's playwriting seminar. This risky effort again won Boal the admiration and respect of São Paulo's critics. In fact, Boal's attitude won laudable comments from the critics. He had assumed complete responsibility for the production, and the results, though not totally successful,

were very rewarding and encouraging. With this piece, Boal demonstrated his ability to use caricature, to communicate the message of the play, a capability which was subsequently noted by the critics. All of the exaggerated movements, gestures, and interpretations were controlled so that the play's credibility was maintained. Boal himself says that caricature itself is an exaggeration of some detail, but without the loss of credibility. At the moment that it loses its credibility, caricature transforms itself into something grotesque. Boal's directing in this respect was congruent with what he proposed: to caricaturize the play's situations without becoming grotesque or improbable.[23] For him, theatrical comedy and/or satire fulfills its social function only if presented as something probable and credible; and, according to the critics, Boal succeeded in this with Henrique Pongetti's Society in a Baby Doll.

With this production Boal regained his stellar reputation with the São Paulo public and the theatre critics. In addition, the Arena Theatre was revitalized with the performances of plays by authors who had participated in Boal's playwriting seminar. A nationalistic mood in those years was very evident in theatrical activity, and the Arena Theatre played a major role in sustaining this mood. Meanwhile, Boal continued working enthusiastically as director both for the Arena Theatre plays of national playwrights and for international authors outside of the Arena Theatre, achieving tremendous success.

C. The Climax of a Director's Career and the Artistic Maturity of a Playwright: (From 1960 to 1965)

The first half of the sixties were significant years in the artistic life of Augusto Boal. He was named Best Actor, in 1960, and given the Saci award by the newspaper O Estado de São Paulo. In the same year, he became a professor of playwriting at the School of Dramatic Art of Brazil. All of the plays under Boal's direction received very positive reviews. In 1963, he was once again named Best Director of the Year for his production of Machiavelli's The Mandragola. His play, Revolution in South America, had a monumental impact on Brazil's theatrical activity. For more than a year, it was performed in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and many other notable cities with unusual success. As Sábato Magáldi has said, with this play Boal became the most controversial and renowned Brazilian playwright of that period.[24]

In 1962, the Arena Theatre entered into a new phase, The Nationalization of the Classics, which artistically transformed the theatrical activity of São Paulo. Many classical texts were adapted to the political and social reality of contemporary Brazil. A laboratory of interpretation was created under Boal's direction. The plays of the authors that took part in Boal's playwriting seminar became famous, tanks to his works as artistic director of the Arena Theatre of São Paulo.

A chronological evaluation explains these results. In 1960, Boal successfully directed Benedito Rui Barbosa's play, "Cold Fire."[25] The play, the author's first, was a realistic drama portraying the

social and economic conditions of the coffee zone in northern Brazil. The whole play was exemplified by a strong emotional content, sadness and happiness intermingled, to characterize the Brazilian peasant's psychology in this area. The play was very well-constructed and it received significant support from the public of São Paulo.

The criticism of this play demonstrated the importance that the directing talents of Augusto Boal had in its success. O Estado de São Paulo, in its edition of April 27 (p. 10), says that Boal's technical direction was a lesson in how to transform an amateur's text into a highlevel professional production. According to this review, Boal balanced the different moods presented throughout the text, to effectively preserve the play's realism. In some scenes, Boal had to accentuate the comedic intent of the text to counterbalance the sad scenes. An excellent example of this was the relationships between the characters, Anita and Zuza, whose scenes were full of liveliness, happiness and comedy.

Boal also diligently delineated the psychological aspects of the characters. The aforementioned review also points out that the strongest unity in the characterizations occurred where the hand of the director was evident. The acting styles and levels were aimed at attaining the unity required for a realistic play. Here, again, the critics recognized the value of Boal's directing. The spectacle was well-constructed with Boal lending a sense of cohesion to the whole production, resulting in high appreciation from the reviewer.

With this production Boal had already inspired respect from the theatre critics. His name as a first-rate director had spread

throughout Brazil, and his stature with the professional theatre of Brazil was increasing. However, it was through his play, Revolution in South America, that he gained fame. Sábato Magáldi commented in his Panorama do Teatro Brasileiro, that Boal up to this point had not produced a text capable of placing him among the most talented writers of his time. But Revolution in South America claimed that position for the author.[26] In general, the play brought to São Paulo and Brazil a political and artistic controversy. There were numerous positive and negative criticisms regarding its content, form, political thought, and dramatic value. This play revolutionized the total theatre activity of São Paulo. One single incident demonstrates the impact the play had.

One of the major theatrical critics of São Paulo wrote on September 16, 1960, the day after the opening, a review that praised the author and the play for its social and political content. He talked superficially about the structure, dialogue, and action of the play, but he focused his attention on the political thesis. He described the emotional impact he felt on opening night and how it affected the spectators. His last words were: "Soon we shall speak again about the piece and about the spectacle with more serenity and calm."[27] One September 25, he wrote another review of the play. Now, he stated that he intended to analyze the play from the dramatic point of view. After a long analysis of the principal character's development, he astonished his readers with many meritorious comments. In order that the readers would believe that he

was being objective, he touched upon the play's negative elements as well, and ended by criticizing Boal for an excessive need to politicize, but, nonetheless, praising Boal as a playwright.

Two days later, he wrote another review on an area he had not touched upon previously: the spectacle performed by the Arena Theatre. This review was very positive, too, emphasizing that such an artistic creation had never been seen before by São Paulo's public.[28] The same thing occurred in many other theatrical periodicals, e.g., Revista Brasiliense, which contained lengthy articles analyzing and criticizing Revolution in South America. Apparently, the play had such an enormous impact that the critics needed time to absorb it and analyze its relevancy to Brazilian life. What were the reasons for that controversy? What kind of play produced such an impact?

The play cannot be classified as either comedic, farcical, satirical, musical or even as a circus spectacle--it is all of these and more. It is documentary theatre about the Brazil of that era. It is a protest drama, too, denouncing the political leaders and conditions that existed in Brazil during that period. The play is divided into two acts, with a prologue and an introduction. It has fifteen scenes--with music, songs, dance, and dialogue sections--and more than thirty characters, as well as choruses and extras. It is a simple story. It concerns the life of an impoverished worker, José da Silva, in the last days before his death, as he tries to improve his pathetic economic condition. He loses his job for requesting a pay raise. He is convinced by Zequinha Tapioca

to foment a true revolution, although Tapioca later betrays him by joining the opposition forces. In addition, he is deceived by the political leaders who revived him when they needed his vote and then abandoned him until he died.

José does nothing to improve his situation; instead he complains and maintains faith that better days will come. He rejects the idea of politicizing himself. He embodies all of the negative qualities of the working class. He only exerts himself in an effort to get a better lunch, and that is enough for him. He never contemplates the causes of his situation. He is a character easily manipulated by others: his wife, who convinces him to ask for the raise which results in his dismissal; his friend, who deceives him, and the workers' leaders, who feed lies to him. Finally, he dies of starvation. But, as many theorists have said, the hunger of José da Silva is a political symbol. It is representative of the hunger experienced by human beings who confront the political interests that control their country.

Since the play has no sympathetic character, several individuals disagreed with the content and the message that was presented. Boal, later answering that argument, stated that such a character was not necessary. He wanted to present a "disaster," and the "disaster" was a sufficient warning.[29] He pointed out: "I just wanted to photograph the disaster."[30]

At the beginning of the play the spectator and the reader are very perplexed. The first act appears chaotic. The apparent lack of structure is only an illusion; however, in the second act,

the organic whole of the play, its unity and cohesiveness, becomes apparent. The unity is established through the protagonist. His story is the heart of the complex plot.

What was the purpose of this choas and complexity? Boal explained that "the original version was based on a circus spectacle where all of the characters were performed by clowns."[31] The objective was to write a piece which presented the unique social and psychological characteristics of the society. He wished to write a play that would not analyze a character faced with a specific problem, and for that reason he used technical elements from the cinema, the epic, and the circus. As he indicated, "I tried a panoramic vision of the society....Although the play is not in itself realistic, reality was in all cases the starting point."[32]

Each scene in the play has its own title, plot and style. For this reason there was some controversy among the critics concerning the epic procedure employed by Boal. For example, to José de Oliveira Santos, the play was an exact copy of Brecht's style.[33] Santos believes that Boal succeeded in finding a common denominator between the epic form and the Brazilian stage. Other critics felt that Revolution in South America was a frustrated attempt to imitate the epic theatre forms and the play lacked any dramatic merit, while having spectacle value, such as a circus review. For others, the fact that the principal character was the unifying element, reminded them of Mother Courage walking, without stopping and looking, for a way to survive. The worker, José da Silva, basically

performs identical actions, going to several different places, trying to find his lunch.

Besides these similarities to a Brechtian play, there is another similarity in the didacticism in several of the songs which ended some of the scenes. Even though for some critics those songs were supplementary to the spectacle, rather than an organic part of it, the didactic element of the Brecht-epic theatre was constantly present in Boal's play.

Other analysis, Sábato Magáldi for one, believe that the roots of Revolution in South America are not in epic theatre, but in the "spirit of Aristophanes' comedy."[34] Identical to the comedies of this Greek author, Boal's piece is against everything: it is only in favor of the protagonist who is dying of hunger. Moreover, Boal's exaggeration of reality had the same goal that Aristophanes had with his comedies: to achieve the profound essence of that reality. Both authors also transform their characters into types such as circus clowns.[35]

As comedy, Magáldi affirms that Revolution in South America is gross, coarse, rough, plain, and without sublety, keeping all of the joyful and attractive vitality of the primitive comedy. Like most of the characters in Aristophanes' plays, José da Silva possesses all of the characteristics of the types he represents.[36] He is not a real model but rather the ideal model; according to Boal, he is the negative ideal model. In other words, all of the negative characteristics of the characters José da Silva portrays were

representative in one person--this was typical of the primitive comedy, too.

Not only in structure, form, and content, but also in language and dialogue, the play presents many shades of meaning. All of the phrases, word-games, and use of ambiguities were carefully developed to provoke laughter and an easy understanding of the language. Prologues, circus-like scenes, songs, pantomimes, and music were all used as components of one central idea which consistently threads its way through the spectacle.

Of the faults attributed to the play, there are two upon which all critics agree: the redundancy of certain jokes and the lengthiness of the second act (double the first one).

The critics were very laudable concerning the form of the piece. As Oliveira Santos stated, it was "almost perfect."[37] First, the form was perfectly adapted to Brazilian tastes. Second, it clearly presented the author's thesis. Third, it was not diluted by any sentimentalism. Finally, it prevented the spectator from being absorbed in the action on stage.[38]

Revolution in South America shows a playwright in the process of maturity. A style was established which can be categorized as "circus-like" and which would become a constant in the rest of his plays. His dramaturgy began to have more defined characteristics: heavy, spectacular, gross, rich in variety, and over all very Brazilian, definitely due to the use of Brazilian dance and music (an idiosyncratic part of the spirit of the Brazilian people).

After this experience, Boal continued accumulating triumphs as a director, especially with the plays directed by young Brazilian writers from his playwriting seminar. His next experience as a playwright was, in 1962, with the comedy Joseph from Birth to the Grave,[39] a continuation of Revolution in South America. José da Silva again is the central character, and it continues in the same style as the previous one. However, here, the general picture was more ambitious, specifically in its political content. Boal wanted to show the deterioration of the system through the destruction of the protagonist, who tried absolutely to follow the precepts and principles of that system.[40] This play concerns a family's financial woes. Through it, Boal exposes capitalist principles: respect for lawful order and religion, the cult of individual initiative and free enterprise, and respect for private property and the philosophy of individualism. José da Silva follows those precepts and the plot exhibits his defeat.

This play had a more political focus. Boal wished to write a play that characterized the mechanics of the class struggle while simultaneously attacking the present society's organizational structure. The critics said that it had a brilliant creative outline, but its dramatic value was inadequate.[41]

The criticisms of Joseph from Birth...were generally uncomplimentary because of Boal's adherence to Marxist doctrine. Apparently, the clear emphasis on political analysis turned the play into a political pamphlet. For many critics, the play was only a simple application of the "A B C's of Marxism."[42]

Identical to Revolution in South America, this play's unification was also through the principal character, but, as Décio de Almeida Prado indicated in his critique, "without achieving the level of spontaneity which characterized the representations of the Arena Theatre, which are freer from the theoretical point of view."[43]

Another area that was greatly criticized was the play's strong reliance on the Brechtian formula. The circus-like spectacular element, highly developed in Revolution in South America, was insignificant in Joseph..., there was more unemotional dialogue. There was less adaptation of the Brechtian form to Brazilian tastes. The experience was closer to German theatre than to Brazilian, except in its content.

The text is practically a repetition of Revolution in South America, with the exception of the too-obvious political ideology. The first part presents the theme: religion is the opium of the people. The second part demonstrates that in the capitalist countries the profit goes to the bosses and not to the workers. Finally, the third part shows that a man in that society turns into an object, losing his human.

Apparently, the play's difficulty lies in the faulty balance of content and form. The techniques of the circus revues, the cinema, and the epic used in Revolution in South America this time could not successfully combine with the heavy political content of Joseph from Birth to the Grave.

The comedic quality of this play approaches the bizarre losing its credibility. For example, in one of the scenes, a

few-months old child is learning her first words. Her mother first wants her to learn the word "mother";[44] to convince her, she shows her a piece of fruit saying that its name is "mother." Her grandmother first wants the child to learn the word "grandma,"[45] and follows the same procedure as the mother's. Finally, the child screams the words "workers of the world, unite."[46]

The spectator was surprised into laughter by such a farce; and, as Décio de Almeida Prado says, by the total triumph of the circus-like comedy.[47] But believability and the true meaning of the words were lost, as well as the political message. As farce, Joseph from Birth to the Grave is excessively didactic. As a political play, the farcical elements forced the political message to be distorted and unacceptable.

Not all of Boal's works were negative experiences. In this same year, of 1962, Boal expanded his career as a director with classical dramatic productions adapted to Brazilian reality, specifically the production of Machiavelli's The Mandragola. As was mentioned before, the Arena Theatre had initiated an untried stage called Nationalization of the Classics, in which plays by Lope de Vega, Molière, Shakespeare, Gogol, and Ben Johnson were adapted to Brazilian political reality. Boal was the person behind this change of orientation, from 1962 to 1965, in the Arena Theatre, and justifiably received the Saci aware as Best Director of 1962 because of hiw work with The Mandragola.

The spectacle was well-received by the critics as one of the best in the history of the Brazilian theatre. As an adaptor, Boal

was showered with accolades--as a director Boal was considered as the best, the most innovative, the most controversial, and the most valiant--a risky speculator. A survey of the newspaper O Estado de São Paulo, from September to November of 1962, indicates Boal's value as a director. It was during that year, as a result of that production, that he wrote the first articles about the "Bourgeois Poetic of Virtù,"[48] articles that were later included in his greatest work, The Theater of the Oppressed.

For the adaptation of The Mandragola, to clarify its political meaning, Boal added scenes and included songs and phrases, many of which were from other works by Machiavelli, particularly The Prince. By doing this, Boal placed greater emphasis on the comedy's social and human criticism, thereby making the piece easier to understand for the Brazilian public. According to the critics, this risky undertaking resulted in an astonishing victory. The production was performed, from 1962 to 1963, in São Paulo, and later continued on tour throughout the country.

Boal's work as a director was classified as one of "high delicacy and intelligence,"[49] "delicacy" for his dedication and care in the adaptation and preparation of the spectacle and his careful directing of each detail of the whole production. According to the critics, he demonstrated a deep knowledge of the author, the historical period in which the play was created, and notably of Machiavelli's political thought.[50] In fact, the critics emphasized that the directing seemed to actually be that of Machiavelli himself; instead of the direct attack, Boal preferred "an insidious line,

oblique."[51] This approach was effective because the spectator was totally involved.[52] Other critics stressed that Boal's direction presented everything without ambiguity, and that his ability to communicate the play's message could be classified as "truly Machiavellian."[53]

The critics also elaborated on Boal's excellent working relationship with his actors. No one actor was exceptional; thus, this was indicative of a very successful and collective work style. All of the acting was unified by Boal. The cast had a very clear understanding of the script. Boal succeeded in achieving an unobstrusive stylization and simple elegance, as well as revealing the heretofore undiscovered humor in some of the scenes.[54]

From this directorial work, Boal developed his own method, which he used for many years. It was based on the idea that both the written text and the spectacle have their own autonomy--that the text, in particular, does not impose any pre-conceived direction on a spectacle. Each performance should be considered only in relation to the cast or group circumstances, the potentialities and needs of the cast, and in its political and social context. So, if there are needed changes in the scenes, styles, or phrases of the text, this should be done. The text is merely the raw material and the spectacle should not be subjugated to it. So, any piece, written according to romantic or neoclassic standards, could be presented realistically, romantically, or follow any other theatrical style.

Until 1965, Boal successfully continued as a director using this method. His many play adaptations brought him heavy support

from the Brazilian public as he travelled throughout the country's interior presenting these adaptations. For example, the adaptation of Lope de Vega's The Best Mayor, the King to the Brazilian peasant's reality was a huge success, as well as Shakespeare's Coriolanus, Molière's Tartuffe, and a few Brazilian classics. Then, in 1965, the Arena Theatre inaugurated a new stage, The Musicals. For it, an innovative performance system was created, The Joker System, which has been previously discussed. This system's foundation was rooted in the directorial method employed by Boal in those adaptations.

D. Boal as the Director of His Own Plays; The Musicals: (From 1965 to 1970)

The years from 1965 to 1970 marked a complete transformation of theatrical activity in Brazil. The coup d'état of April, 1964, greatly reduced the number of public performances, notably those considered by the critics as innovative or radical. Many were cancelled because of fear of repression, and many theatre halls were closed by order of the state. This situation affected artistic conceptions concerning the function and aesthetic value of the theatre. If there had been a preoccupation with integrating the artistic quality of a performance with its political content, now the principal preoccupation was with protest alone, and this was what the spectacle Opinion[55] came to be: a protest against what Veiga Fialho classified as "Cultural Terrorism."[56]

In this production, prepared and directed by Boal, three singers and two popular composers sang their own songs and dramatized

the actions and scenes described in their melodies. In addition to singing, they discussed and criticized their own lives, censuring Brazil's current social injustices. The effect Boal wanted to achieve was a musical and verbal picture of Brazilian society. The general text was written by him in conjunction with other writers: Vianna Filho, Armando Costas, and Paulo Pontes.

Boal understood that Opinion could be a curious experiment in playwriting, one in which the song lyrics represented the textual outline of a possible drama. Unfortunately, the critics placed no emphasis whatsoever on the dramatic value of the show. It still was a triumph in terms of the public's reaction and reception. Some critics pointed out that its success should be attributed to the Brazilian public, as a symbolic "cry of protest."[57] The show's political comments, anecdotes, and caricatures gave it a very simplistic, but clear and precise, dramatic form.

The show was categorized as "conformist"[58] even though it was clearly a protest against governor Carlos Lacerda, it still implied the idea that the ghetto's poor conform to their environment, an attitude which can hardly be considered progressive. According to Paulo Francis, no one could feel offended by the spectacle, except certain representatives of the "lunatic fringe"[59]--the right wing. To this critic, its major flaw was that it lacked the kind of content which could compel the public to political action.

At this time in Brazil, any artistic endeavor could have made an impact if it had value as a political event. According to

some critics, Opinion was not really a political event; it was just a cry of protest by the sentimentalist Brazilian left wing.[60] As political theatre, it was further criticized for its lack of agressiveness, and its high level of sentimentality. The misfortunes of the oppressed were maudlinly portrayed in an idealized form. The text of the show failed to show the oppressed as being as truly complex as they actually were.

The performance itself and Boal's work were more positively critiqued. According to the critics, the spectacle succeeded in achieving a "good dialogue with the present spectators."[61] This represents a change in Boal's directing objectives; he had become more preoccupied with the communication between spectators and performers. According to Boal, the majority of the spectacles and performances of the Brazilian theatre before this year were characterized by a total lack of communication: "The theatre here, the public there."[62] He wanted to correct this fault with Opinion. Apparently, he accomplished this, according to the reviews, published during this period. It was because of this unique communication that the spectacle was considered a "work of art."[63]

The show's objective was to work from a realistic perspective, in the sense of working with current situations. According to the reviews, Opinion demonstrated that the inclusion of reality in any artistic work was necessary, for the reason that the Brazilian spectators of that era "demanded the concrete and the specific, and not abstractions or universalizations."[64] Thus, the reviewers believed

Boal's direction to be perfect; it achieved the level of communication with the spectators that it was looking for.

With Opinion, the Arena Theatre began an innovative stage in its development, The Musicals. This stage was the result of the skills learned in the prior stages being applied to present conditions. In it, two principles were combined: "universality and specificity."[65] The photographic realistic theatre was combined with the technique of adaptation to Brazilian reality.

Finally, Boal impressed the critics for the considerable value that his direction gave to the work of the performers. Up to this point, the Brazilian theatre had placed more emphasis on the authors of plays than on the performers or interpreters of plays. This was an intellectual approach said the critics, which had voided the creative power of the Brazilian interpreters, and was yet another cause of the lack of communication between audience and performer. According to the critics, Boal was capable of preparing a spectacle for the Brazilian theatre performers and not just for the Brazilian playwright. Opinion was created with that catalyst, using other non-dramatic aspects of the theatre, such as the compositions and the musical talents of famous singers, Maria Bethânia, Zé Kéti, and João do Valle.

Boal had become a director preoccupied with the spectators, especially in their relations, not with the text itself, but with the interpreters of that text. This experiment in directing moved the Arena Theatre to the creation of a system of performing named

The Joker System, already discussed. Boal followed the style of work initiated with Opinion in collectively producing a new musical spectacle entitled Arena Narrates Zumbi. In it, Boal combined his talent as a playwright with his talent as a director. The impact created by this musical was so immense that it was performed for a year and a half (between 1965 and 1966) in São Paulo. When the analysts of Brazilian theatre history discussed those years, they isolated this spectacle as the event which revolutionized the Brailian theatre during the sixties.[66]

Boal has said that with that musical the Arena Theatre accomplished the creation of a national form of theatre expression, a new form which corresponded to the needs of the Brazilian public and at the same time sought its inspiration within Brazilian reality. Arena Narrates Zumbi proposed a fable of universal character taken from Brazilian history and was collectively prepared. The play has an entertainment element because of the inclusion of popular Brazilian music. But, at the same time, it is very polemical, for in its folklore and politics are inexorably intertwined. This was a vital factor in the group's avoidance of censorship.

The play is characterized by a long narration, the story of the last king of Palmares (a Black republic founded by African slaves in the interior of northeast Brazil in 1605 and destroyed in 1696). It presents with music, songs, dialogues in verse form, verse and prose narrations, and dances the heroic struggle of those slaves led by Zumbi and his last descendants against the armies of the Portuguese

Empire. The first act, with fourteen episodes, narrates the history of the slave trade during the sixteenth century, the first flight of slaves from their owners, the struggle for survival in the Brazilian jungles, the construction of Palmares and its development, the commercial traffic between Palmares and the white slave traders, the death of the first leader, Gongoba, and the birth of Ganga Zumba-Zumbi. The second act, with five episodes, narrates the process involved in the republic's destruction. The first four episodes present the preparations made by the Portuguese Empire to destory Palmares while Ganga Zumba, the new leader, seizes the leadership from Zumbi. Finally, the last episode presents the destruction of the republic, and the musical ends with a pulsating speech about continuing the struggle at the present time.

This short summary cannot truly depict the richness that the spectacle possesses. Its scenes of violence, inspired directly by the actual occurrences of the 1960s (specifically the torture scenes in the first act), alternated with comic episodes, with moments of high lyricism, with songs of love, of victory, of mourning, all of them inspired by the popular tradition of Afro-Brazilian music and songs.

The structure of the play is simple: two acts, one very protracted, which develops the plot until the crisis point (the destruction of Palmares), and then a final, shorter one, which is the historical result of the first one. Each episode has its own autonomy in style and form, and narrates one part of the story-fable.

To facilitate a better understanding of the relationship between Brazil's history and the political reality of the 1960s, the episodes are not arranged chronologically. What was essential in the play was not the chronology of the historical event, but its meaning for modern Brazil and its similarities to the present political situation.

Numerous characters, many taken from history and Brazilian Black mythology, appear in each episode. Again, through the use of multitudes, the play appears to be a circus spectacle. Each of the actors represented all of the characters of the play. So, to these successive interpretations, the examination of the psychology of the characters was not essential. To portray the social, historical, and political aspects of all of the characters was established as the most necessary element. This is reminiscent of the Brechtian theory about the objectivity of the characters. Boal reached that objectivity in this play but from a different perspective.

With this experience, Boal started to polish his concepts about playwriting and theatre itself. He thought that the theatre "always tries to present images from real life. But always the images are very static..., the traditional theatre tends to paralyze changeable realities. Playwriting has hardly tried to translate into the language of art the concept of change and transformation."[67] For this reason, continues Boal, the modern process of analysis uses antiquated forms from other realities, and this is the limitation

of the theatre today. With this musical, Boal and the Arena Theatre ignored traditional definitions of theatre. They simply wanted to narrate a story from their own perspective. In this form, fresh techniques of playwriting were born which were linked with the concept of the spectacle's directing: characters completely isolated from the actors, fragmented narrations without chronology, important events mixed with insignificant facts, dramatic scenes tied together with documentary facts, events lost in time, news from the most recent newspapers, and the most varied anacronisms.

Boal, as director and playwright, had held onto a taste for variety. This can be seen in the content and form of the play. The style he created with Revolution in South America was maintained in this musical with a few slight variations: more lyricism, more poetry, and less satire. Again, the unity of the whole play was created through one element. Before, it had been through the protagonist; here it was through the character who symbolized the central idea, liberty. This was the central idea contained in the text, in the spectacle, and in the performance.

In the previous musical (Opinion), Boal presented the concept of liberty in a more concrete form. As he says, the reality was singularized; the concrete event was simplified. With Arena Narrates Zumbi, he tried to use the concrete event, reality, with more profundity while being aware of the necessity of universalizing it. This is the reason for using verse, poetry, lyric music, and the legends of Zumbi, the principal character.

This spectacle was the greatest triumph of all for Boal and the Arena Theatre. It was a double triumph according to Boal, from the artistic point of view as well as the public point of view on account of its polemical character. The production initiated discussions again on a major episode from Brazilian history, using it for what Boal called "a modern vision."[68] The production also glorified the slaves' struggle to gain their freedom, transforming it into a model for contemporary struggles.

From the artistic point of view, Arena Narrates Zumbi represented a revolt against theatre traditions and conventions which, according to Boal, persisted as "mechanical aesthetic limitations in creative liberty."[69] As Zumbi fights out this aesthetic struggle, many of its innovations can be seen as foreshadowing the Joker System which Boal fully developed as the organizing force in Arena Narrates Tiradentes.

In terms of Arena Narrates Zumbi's structure as a text, the general contours of the Joker System emerge in the opening episode with a song by the entire cast dedicating the spectacle, and in the closing episode which again places all the actors on stage and ends with a brief moral observation. Zumbi's structure as cast contains the Protagonist, Chorus and Orchestra functions. However, instead of a Joker who interviews and assumes the point of view of the spectators, a more traditional cast function is operated by narrators who explain aspects of the story and spectacle. These narrators are therefore limited, in ways that the Joker is not, to the universe of the performers and the narration.

Reviewers admired Boal's direction of Zumbi. His success reflected the possibility of unifying the fragmented text structure of a play at the level of cast through the activity of narrators. It was if Boal's direction of Zumbi tested the relationship of text to cast at the breaking point where the structure of cast threatened to dissolve the text structure into itself. Given the experiment of Zumbi, one would expect Boal's next play to present a more fragmented text even further subordinated to the cast structure. However, with Arena Narrates Tiradentes, Boal restores a unity to the text through a less fragmented story which is centered in a traditional protagonist.

The story of Tiradentes narrates events of Brazilian history around 1792 when a group of revolutionaries organized the first uprising against their colonial masters. The narration begins with the trial of Tiradentes, who is accused of treason. The story then moves chronologically backwards and explains the actions leading to the treason trial. The text finally returns to the scene in which Tiradentes is condemned to death. Thus, the structure of text appears more solid and coordinated, and less ambiguous and fragmented than in Zumbi.

The characterization in the text structure is also more traditional than in Zumbi. While Zumbi presents many mythological characters, Tiradentes chooses its characters from Brazilian history. Tiradentes represents Joaquim José da Silva Xavier, the leader of the revolutionaries of 1792. Replacing myth with history serves to concretize the nature of characterization and to unify the structure of the text along the traditional lines of realism. This drift

towards a more realistic unity also evidences as Tiradentes presents less music and song than Zumbi, and utilizes more dialogue and less narration.

However, while the structure of the text in Tiradentes became more realistic than Zumbi, the structure of the cast became much more radical. The commenting narrators of Zumbi were replaced by the interviewing Joker, thus diminishing the distance between spectacle and spectators by extending the performer's universe to the audience. Except for Tiradentes, each character in the play was in turn performed by every member of the cast. Each actor was given the freedom to interpret each role he performed according to his own perspective and taste. This multiple representation of character was tempered by "identical exterior elements,"[70] which avoided confusion in the audience by allowing them to recognize objects or colors which consistently signified a particular character. An excellent example of this is the character of Tomas Antonio Gonzaga, a young romantic revolutionary intellectual who always appeared on stage with a flower in his hand. When scenes occurred rapidly and on a crowded stage, the "identical exterior elements" were added to the costume of the characters. This seemingly simple resource lent theatricality to the text and created a circus-like atmosphere.

With Arena Narrates Tiradentes, Boal achieved a double structural unity of text and cast. The protagonist and semi-realistic story presented a traditional unity of text which was played against a radical cast structure unified by the Joker. Tiradentes was

enthusiastically received by authors, directors and theatre critics. And, in spite of the political repression and unstable conditions in Brazil during 1967, the public filled the Arena Theatre hall to capacity during the evening performances.

The following years were marked by increased political repression in Brazil. The Arena Theatre faced not only stricter censorship but also a fear-ridden public which significantly reduced the size of the audiences. The Theatre responded to these conditions with weekly Ferias de Opinião, which was a ten minute musical show in which artists were invited to present their opinions about Brazil. Boal directed these musicals, but they were presented only sporadically and never attained the kind of influence exerted by his previous works. The Arena Theatre eventually moved out of Brazil and presented productions throughout Latin America and Europe. Boal continued experimenting and seeking new theatre techniques which could be adapted to the current conditions.

E. The Dramas of Boal's Exile (From 1970 to 1980)

The seventies were very significant for the development of the theories, techniques, and theatre forms of Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, previously discussed in the beginning chapters. In 1970, Boal created, inside the Arena Theatre of São Paulo, the group "Nucleus" to experiment with his ideas about People's Theatre, especially street theatre. This group developed the techniques of Newspaper Theatre. This Nucleus group existed until 1972, when it occupied the São Pedro theatre hall, becoming an independent company until 1974.

With this group, Boal prepared short spectacles, characterized by a didactic and simple tone, and by collective work. The purpose of these spectacles, Boal tells us, was to force the public to think about certain realities from a specific point of view. Boal stressed that the importance of these spectacles was not "to gratify the public aesthetically, but to provoke them to reflect on their own reality."[72] The earlier Arena Theatre productions had been equally concerned with aesthetic values, but not the message was the most crucial element because Nucleus was developing an innovative theatre aesthetic. Boal called it "the aesthetic of the street or the truck,"[73] because it was performed in the street, on trucks or somewhere outside a traditional theatre hall.

As well as street theatre, Boal continued presenting the spectacles of the Arena Theatre throughout Latin America and in Europe. During 1970, his work centered around the development of his theories regarding People's Theatre. In 1971, Boal wrote his next play, Torquemada. He began it while in a Brazilian prison and completed it in Argentina. Torquemada is a social-political drama based on Boal's experiences as a political prisoner. The inhumane conditions under which the political prisoner lives and the torture he suffers are the core around which the story is constructed.

The drama is divided into three episodes, composed of one prologue and thirteen scenes. Boal says that he wanted to use the technique of a theatre inside the theatre. The action occurs in a barracks-like prison cell, where a group of political prisoners will

perform a play about Father Tomás de Torquemada, a famous Spanish Inquisitor, who developed a torture system used by the Inquisition Tribunal. The scenes about these historical events are intertwined with scenes of the daily life of the contemporary prisoners. Political discussion, analysis of their successes and failures, and stories of their experiences are presented through these scenes. To relate the past (the scenes of Father Torquemada) to the present political situations under which the prisoners are living, there are a few explanatory scenes where the actors, stepping out of their roles, discuss and analyze the political issues of the moment and make the connection between both periods of time.

The play includes scenes which use the techniques of the Newspaper Theatre to present and analyze the news. An example of this is the first scene of the second episode, where the technique of "crossed reading"[74] is used. The prisoners interrupt the action to clarify a point, to add something else or to discuss a particular point. Only the scenes where the prisoners actually discuss their own problems are realistic; the others vary in style. For example, the scenes of torture are very expressionistic, almost surreal. Others are very symbolic, particularly those where Torquemada discusses with the liberal Bourgeoisie the uses of torture and the concept of humanity. The language in this scene mixes modern concepts with medieval arguments,[75] explaining present conditions in light of past history.

The whole drama moves on two levels: the realistic, where the prisoners act, enclosed in their own cells, and the non-realistic

level of the narration, Torquemada and his story. This final level can also be categorized as the fantasy level for the prisoner characters because they play the characters of this Torquemada story. Some of the characters become actors to represent a past story that has a relationship to their own lives and their present situations.

Thus, two stories are presented to the audience: one about Torquemada and his victory at imposing a system of torture on the Bourgeois liberals who desired to rule and maintain their political power in Europe and another about the political prisoners, revolutionaries from Brazil or any other Latin American country, who were imprisoned after a fascist coup d'état.

The story of the prisoners is Boal's autobiography. It presents Boal's real experiences when he was arrested in 1971. He wrote a long novel, Miracle in Brazil,[76] as a testament to his days in prison; and the contemporary scenes in Torquemada are also part of that testament, dramatically written through very well-constructed dialogue.

With this play, Boal abandoned the satire, spectacular elements, and music and songs of his earlier plays, and limited himself to writing a powerful drama characterized by an atmosphere of violence. It is documentary theatre: where the dialogue is weighty, with long sentences, few short phrases, many political and philosophical discussion, and a great deal of statistical data. Again, the didacticism of previous plays is obvious. Boal's political thesis is presented at the very beginning of the action: lack of unity

drives people to defeat. The political content of the play is profound, presenting a large number of ideological views regarding the struggle for liberation. All of the possible political positions that existed in the revolutionary movements of Latin America are represented in the prisoners, each offering clear and convincing arguments for his beliefs.

The dialogue is very well-developed to clearly delineate these political positions, keeping the tense discussions alive. In fact, the whole play keeps the spectators on edge from beginning to end. Even the explanatory scenes that break the action of the stories maintain this level of lively tension, since they present a new perspective of the violence. As a result, the end of the play is striking: all of the prisoners screaming (each time more desperately and loudly) the words "I am alive."[77]

This drama is among those most often performed in Latin America. Three qualities make it the most attractive of Boal's plays to the politically radical groups of Latin America. First, it is documentary theatre, which agitates, and it is propagandist. Second, it possesses a strong, clear political content without becoming just a tract. Third, it depicts very clearly an integral component of Latin American politics: torture and violence.

Torquemada was presented for the first time in Buenos Aires in June of 1972, in the Teatro del Centro with such huge success that on October 12, 1972, it was performed again at Planeta Hall. It has been performed in other countries as well. The theatre at New

York University translated the play and performed it in 1972. It was performed in Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Ecuador and in Lisbon, Berlin, Paris, and other cities in Europe. It was vigorously acclaimed.

This drama is perhaps one of Boal's better pieces written thus far. His previous works were more objective in content, touching upon themes far from his reality. In Torquemada he began to work with events closer to his own experiences. In his next drama, written in exile, this subjectivity becomes even more evident.

Between 1971 and 1978, Boal while in exile, concentrated on developing his theories about the Theatre of the Oppressed and allotted little time to playwriting. He wrote various adaptations[78] and one or two comedies--these were not significant to the development of his playwriting. It is with the drama The Fist Upon the Knife's Point[79] that Boal demonstrated his improved playwriting skills. Boal was again a playwright whose theatre was not only presented for enjoyment, but for struggle and change, too, with a historical vision of reality. With The Fist Upon the Knife's Point. Boal continued using his theme of exile; and, as the critic Gianfrancesco Guarnieri says, "It is the piece which most transmits the authentic, the real Boal."[80]

This drama was very similar to Torquemada. It is based on actual experiences of Boal's. The drama, full of emotional content, moves away from the previous pieces, where irony, rational humor, and mordancy were predominate. The psychological elements in the characters are strong, creating a very simplistic drama

without any circus-like influence. The dialogue is of major importance. The only music is a few songs sung by the actors as part of the dramatic action. There are no epic elements, statistics, documentary scenes, nor explanations to break the development of the action. Nothing is fragmented; everything follows chronologically.

The play is an excellent exposé on the conditions of exile: the horror of persecution, and the promiscuity of some refugees. The six characters are very well-developed; they are both typical and universal. Each of them possesses a distinct personality, developed through dialogue. But they are also exiled, and this commonality gives unity, cohesion, and a sense of identity to them. Each represents a different type of exile. Paulo is the poet, the composer, and the idealist who struggles constantly against reality. For this reason, he is the strongest one, the one who maintains the group's unity and refuses to allow himself to be defeated by the situations of exile. His wife, Maria, reflects in her personality the marks of her physical suffering, and her moral mutilation. She is the exile who cannot survive. This exile has driven her insane: her macabre obsession with blood drives her to commit suicide in the end. Doutor represents the intellectual who tries to find a rational explanation for everything. His wife, Marga, is a Brazilian Bourgeois, placed into a situation she is unsuited for. A conflict-ridden character, she is the disassociated element in the group, not fitting into the group and not suited for exile either. Barra is a sailor who, as a former political prisoner, is familiar with prisons

and their tortures. Foguinho, his girlfriend, is a politicized woman with experience as a political militant.

The play was performed for the first time in São Paulo on October 4, 1978. The play's dramatic value was very positively critiqued. Its universal quality was vigorously acclaimed inasmuch as its characters can be found in any contemporary city, facing an eternal nostalgia for their land, wishing to return, and confronting the universal problem of losing their identity.[81]

Although the drama tries to demonstrate the total insecurity in which the exile lives and how he loses his sense of identity, it is not a defeatist drama. At the end of the play, when Maria dies and Paulo stays alone, he proclaims: "I am alive. Listen, listen. I am not silent. I am not silent. Listen."[82]

With this drama, Boal demonstrated that he knew well the situation of the protagonists. This forced nomadism, these human beings racked by the fear of further persecution, represent a part of Boal's own experiences as an exile. The action begins in any Latin American country a few minutes before the fascists accomplish a coup d'état. The play continues days later in Argentina, the first country of exile selected, and ends in a city in Europe, probably Paris. This pattern of exile was followed by Boal in reality. Even though each character is not specifically an aspect of Boal's personality, together they represent what he has lived, what he has seen, and what he has known.

Due to his personal experiences, Boal could construct his characters with ease. All of them live with their own conflicts in

diverse ways. There is no ambiguity: each one resolves his conflict in a unique manner. For some, the results are very tragic, and, for others, they are not. But each character is affected by the theme of exile. In this, Boal demonstrated an unusual dominance--over his form of expression. In this drama, Boal is a mature playwright, with more control over his dramatic techniques. This play is evidence not only of the influences of both his exile and his Theatre of the Oppressed, but also of the techniques of the Image Theatre. As Boal says:

> This is the last play I wrote. It is the produce of my experience here in Europe....(One new element) is the influx of the Image Theatre.... For example, all the scenes depend on the use of suitcases. Sometimes they become walls in the embassy; later they are islands; other times they are furniture. I can say that everything is related to images. The actors also are constantly giving images. An example is when they reach Paris, and everyone throws down their suitcases and acts on top of them....[83]

The influence of Image Theatre has affected Boal's directing style as well. I closely observed his work as director of a production in French. When I visited him in Paris in January of 1980, I went to the last general rehearsals and saw the production twice, including the opening night. I saw a director who is a perfectionist, working attentively on even the most minute details, consistently resolving and eliminating any possibility of error. For example, what I saw in the general rehearsal, before opening night, was not what I saw the night after. There were various distinct changes in the directorial conception. For example, at the beginning of the play, in the middle of the stage, there was a box used as a table,

with a cross inside it, covered with a blanket. The color of the blanket, the position of the box, the cross (and this affected the general blocking) were changed for the opening night. When I saw the performance for the third time, he was still changing certain details.

Not all performances are the same; each one is special. The character interpretations of actors are not always the same; each time new surprises occur on stage. But there are always certain fixed elements, particularly in the directing--the general movements, the color of the scenery, and costumes.

When I approached Boal, inquiring about those changes and the reasons for them, he informed me that this play has been performed a few months earlier in Paris; then it had toured in some French provinces and presently they were performing it again in Paris. Boal said that many changes were instituted in that process, and that the changes would continue, inasmuch as the theatre is dynamic and when he, as director, is dissatisfied with something, he changes it. Sometimes in a rehearsal he is satisfied with one movement or color (as was the case I observed with the box, the cross, and the blanket), so he leaves it alone. However, if later, in one of the performances he feels that it is necessary to change those elements, he does not hesitate to institute the changes. The audience is not always static, nor does it react to identical images in the same manner. It is imperative to study the audience to be aware of how it will react toward certain signs and stimuli. This is the reason for that perfectionist attitude in Boal's directorial

conception. This is original with Boal and it is obviously a product of the Image Theatre's influence.

I also noticed a serenity in his style. The discussion at the end of the rehearsals, his advice, and explanations were given by a calm, poised director, a man with a great deal of self-confidence. He explained, analyzed, and discussed each minute detail he had observed in the rehearsal. Although this was a traditional performance and his task as director was conventional, he gave the actors the liberty of developing through their own creativity. In spite of his high degree of perfectionism, he is not a dictator or a tyrannical director, but rather a coordinator with a high sense of responsibility and discipline.

This experience, The Fist Upon the Knife's Point, shows a playwright and theatre director greatly affected by his exile. Serenity and calm totally transform his approach. As a playwright, this serenity is presented through the play's high level of emotional development, by slowly building these emotions to a climax, where the characters calmly face, with a kind of stoicism, all of their misfortunes.

All of the characters of the play struggle to control their internal emotions. In this is shown the huge influence of the Theatre of the Oppressed. For Boal and his theatre, internal and external struggles are part and parcel of the performance outline.[84] The characters should struggle, both with themselves, inside themselves, and in their relations with others. The Fist Upon the Knife's

Point represents an original treatment of emotional development through the internal and external struggles of the exiles.

NOTES CHAPTER VI

[1]See Appendix B of this dissertation.

[2]O Cavalo e O Santo.

[3]Martin Pescador and Do Outro Lado da Rua.

[4]See the newspaper O Estado de São Paulo during the month of September 1956.

[5]For more information see Palcos e Circos, "Ratos e Homens," O Estado de São Paulo, 5 de outubro de 1956, p. 6.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid.

[8]"Revelação do Diretor de Ano."

[9]"Associação Paulista de Críticos de Teatro."

[10]See Sábato Magáldi, Panorama do Teatro Brasileiro (São Paulo: Difusão Europeia do Livro, 1962); and Joel Pontes, "Dramaturgia contemporânea no Brasil," Luso Brazilian Review, 3, no. 2 (December 1966), 25-42.

[11]Marido Magro, Mulher Chata.

[12]Juventude "Coca Cola".

[13]Palcos e Circos, "Marido Magro, Mulher Chata," O Estado de São Paulo, 9 de janeiro de 1957, p. 6.

[14]For more information see "Entrega dos Prêmios aos Melhores," O Estado de São Paulo, 9 de Abril de 1957, Teatro, p. 8.

[15]"Teatro Brasileiro de Comédia" (T.B.C.)

[16]Palcos e Circos, "Juno e o Pavão," O Estado de São Paulo, 9 de junho de 1957, p. 12.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Palcos e Circos, "A Mulher do Outro," O Estado de São Paulo, 18 de janeiro de 1958, p. 6.

[21]Ibid.

[22]Palcos e Circos, "Society em Baby Doll," O Estado de São Paulo 21 de Janeiro de 1958, p. 7.

[23]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980.

[24]See Magáldi, op. cit., pp. 250-253.

[25]Fogo Frio.

[26]Magáldi, op. cit., pp. 250-251.

[27]D. G., "Revolução na América do Sul," O Estado de São Paulo, 16 de setembro de 1960, p. 7.

[28]D.G., "O Espetáculo de Arena," O Estado de São Paulo, 27 de setembro de 1960, p. 8.

[29]Augusto Boal, Revolução na América do Sul (São Paulo: Massao Ohno Editôra, 1960), p. 7.

[30]"Eu quis apenas fotografar o desastre."

[31]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980.

[32]Ibid.

[33]For more information, see José de Oliveira Santos, "A Revolução na América do Sul' de Augusto Baol," Revista Brasiliense, núm. 32 (nov./dez. 1960), p. 158.

[34]Magáldi, op. cit., p. 251.

[35]See D. G., "A Peça do Teatro Arena," O Estado de São Paulo, 25 de setembro de 1960, Teatro, p. 10.

[36]Magáldi, op. cit., p. 252.

[37]"Quase perfeita." See José de Oliveira Santos, op. cit., p. 163.

[38]For more information, see O Estado de São Paulo from September 15 to 27, 1960.

[39]José, do Parto à Sepultura.

[40]See Magáldi, op. cit., pp. 252-253.

[41]Ibid.

[42]See Décio de Almeida Prado, Teatro Em Progresso. Crítica Teatral (1955-1964) (São Paulo: Livraria Martins Editôra, 1964), p. 225.

[43]Ibid.

[44]"Mamãe."

[45]"Vovó."

[46]"Operários de todo o mundo Uni-vos."

[47]See Prado, op. cit., p. 230.

[48]See O Estado de São Paulo-Suplemento Literário from October to November 1962.

[49]"Muita finura e inteligencia." for more information, see "'A Mandrágora' pelo elenco do Arena," O Estado de São Paulo, 14 de setembro de 1962, Teatro, p. 8.

[50]See Augusto Boal, "Maquiavel e a Mandrágora," O Estado de São Paulo, 27 de outubro de 1962, Suplemento Literário-Teatro, p. 5; and Maurice Capovilla, "Terapêutica Teatral," O Estado de São Paulo, 10 de novembro de 1962, Suplemento Literário-Teatro, p. 3.

[51]"Uma linha insidiosa, oblíqua." for more information, see "'A Mandrágora' pelo elenco do Arena," O Estado de São Paulo, 14 de setembro de 1962, Teatro, p. 8.

[52]Ibid.

[53]See Capovilla, loc. cit.

[54]"'A Mandrágora' pelo elenco do Arena," loc. cit.

[55]Opinião.

[56]A. Veiga Fialho, "Teatro no Brasil: Balanço de 1964," Revista Civilização Brasileira, I, num. 1 (março, de 1965), 215.

[57]Ibid., pp. 218-221.

[58]See Paulo Francis, "Novo Rumo para Autores," Revista Civilização Brasileira, I, num. i (março de 1965), 215.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Ibid.

[61]See "Nova Peca no Teatro R. Escobar," O Estado de Sao Paulo, 13 de abril de 1965, p. 15.

[62]"O Teatro cá, o publico la," for more information, see "Nova Peça no Teatro R. Escobar," O Estado de São Paulo, 13 de abril de 1965, p. 15.

[63]Ibid.

[64]Ibid.

[65]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980.

[66]See Bárbara Heliodora, "A influência estrangeira no teatro Brasileiro," Cultura, I, núm. 1 (janeiro a março de 1971), 42-51; Casa de las Américas, Teatro Latinoamericano de Agitacion (Havana: Casa de las Américas, 1972); and the volumes XLII to XLIV of the Brazilian periodical Visão.

[67]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980.

[68]Augusto Boal, "Teatro Arena de S. Paulo," Primer Acto, núm. 135 (agosto de 1971), p. 72.

[69]Ibid.

[70]"Elementos exteriores idênticos." For more information see "'Tiradentes', a estréia de hoje," O Estado de São Paulo, 21 de abril de 1967, p. 7.

[71]See Appendix A of this dissertation; where Boal narrates an experience he had with the censor when he was presenting the musical Arena Narrates Bahia.

[72]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980.

[73]See Boal, Técnicas Latinoamericanas de Teatro Popular (una revolución Copernicana al revés) (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Corregidor, 1975), p. 10.

[74]See chapter III of this dissertation.

[75]See the discussion about industrial development at the episode two, scene four of Torquemada.

[76]Milagre no Brasil.

[77]See Boal, "Torquemada," in Teatro Latinoamericano de Agitación published by Casa de las Americas (Havana: Casa de las Americas), p. 176.

[78]See Boal, Duas Peças: A Tempestade. As Mulheres de Atenas (Lisboa: Plátano Editora S.A.R.L., 1979).

[79]Murro em Ponta de Faca.

[80]See Gianfrancesco Guarnieri, "Prefácio," in Augusto Boal, Murro em Ponta de Faca (São Paulo: Editora Hucitec, 1978), p. VIII.

[81]For more information see "O drama de exilio na peça de Augusto Boal," O Estado de São Paulo, 4 de outubro de 1978, p. 12.

[82]"Eu estou vivo. Escutem. Eu não me calo. Eu não me calo. Escutem."

For more information, see Augusto Boal, Murro em Ponta de Faca (São Paulo: Editora Hucitec, 1978), p. 93.

[83]Interview with Augusto Boal, Paris, France, January 11 and 13, 1980.

[84]See the "Dialectical Structure of Interpretation," in chapter V of this dissertation.

SUMMARY

The fundamental idea behind the work of Augusto Boal is that theatre, in itself, can be a liberating force in society. Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed aims to return the means of theatrical production to its origins in the masses of society. This goal is based upon Boal's firm belief that theatre can be a collective tool through which people can not only understand society, but can also liberate their own powers to change it. That is, theatre can teach people to act.

This summary section describes how two major influences on Boal's early ideas, the Brazilian circus and the epic theatre of Bertolt Brecht, are transformed by this theme of action into the functions for a Theatre of the Oppressed. Boal's class analysis of the history of theatre is then outlined as a demonstration of Boal's argument that if the means of theatrical production are kept from the masses, then theatre becomes a hegemonic tool teaching people not to act. The closing pages of the summary briefly indicate how Boal goes about returning theatre to its origins by re-opening the power of theatre to the masses of society.

Nearly all of Boal's spectacles take on the appearance of circus reviews. Scenes are presented in many different styles with action that is heavy, violent, and gross. The number of characters, along with the music, dance and song combine to create a circus-like

atmosphere. However, the diversity of a circus show becomes in Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed a technique of objective expressionism which attempts to transform the perception of reality from an individual to a social point of view. The norms of realism based on individual points of view explode into social perceptions of reality based upon social points of view. Thus, Boal uses the circus-like atmosphere to destroy elements of realism which lull audiences into the false security of passive individuals observing a safe, organized and ultimately untouchable reality.

This notion of objective expressionism and many other theoretical principles behind Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed are rooted in Bertolt Brecht's epic theatre, which sought to engage audiences in an active analysis of the theatre spectacle. Brecht sought to transform the role of spectator from the passivity of viewing to the activity of reflection. Boal extends Brecht's transformation of spectators still further. With the Theatre of the Oppressed, spectators move not only from passive reception to active reflection, but to action itself. In Forum Theatre, Invisible Theatre and Image Theatre, the spectator actually transforms the dramatic action of the spectacle, and this dramatic action leads to the spectator's realization of the power to act politically--to act in the world to change the conditions of social existence.

Boal has developed a class analysis of the history of the theatre which views the origin of theatre in the collective experience of dithyrambic song. These original theatrical performances,

"created by and for the people," served as a means of social communication through which the people, as participants, came to understand the conditions of their social existence. Boal conjectures that this communal experience of theatre broke up with the advent of a ruling class which used theatre as a political tool to perpetuate their hegemeny over the population. Thus the changes in the theatre reflected, and were used to legitimate, class divisions within society. As the aristocracy distanced themselves from the masses, barriers were set up distancing the people from the means of theatrical production.

According to Boal, the first barrier separated the masses from the spectacle. Actors faced the audience with the moral that some people were meant to act while most others were meant to watch. A second barrier distanced the masses further by incorporating their roles as spectators within the actual performances. Actors, themselves, now symbolized the masses in the body of a chorus, while the aristocracy maintained the dominating voices of the protagonists. As the ruling class developed, walls were extended still further. The protagonist separated from the rest of the characters, and the tragic hero emerged as the therapeutic tool by which the aristocracy treated anti-social tendencies in the spectators.

Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed aims to eliminate these barriers that have placed people outside theatrical performances. He recognizes theatre as an instrument of social communication and uses it to reverse the indoctrination of the masses. The primary

objective of the Theatre of the Oppressed is to cast the people, themselves, as the protagonist; to cast the spectators as the active subject of the dramatic action; to return theatre to its origins in a collective, communal experience.

The social conditions in Brazil both called for and muted Boal's labors to realize a Theatre of the Oppressed. The repressive dictactorship ensuing from the fascist coup d'état of 1964 levied a strict censorship across the country. Boal responded by developing the technique of Newspaper Theatre which gave the means of theatre production to readers, by teaching them how to use theatre techniques for themselves.

During these years Boal and the Arena Theatre worked to attract wider audiences by attempting to reflect the living conditions of Brazilian people in the very form of theatrical performances. Musicals were staged which were created and performed by the entire group. To facilitate their production Boal designed a training system for actors and non-actors. This later developed into Boal's Joker System which aimed to abolish characterization as the private property of a single actor.

In this Joker System, each character in the play is performed by every member of the cast, and each actor is granted the freedom to interpret and represent the character according to his own perspective. This multiple representation of character eliminates characterization as private property by demonstrating the collective production of a character's masks, and by demonstrating the process through which social motivation takes physical form.

As Boal's general project for a Theatre of the Oppressed tore away at the barriers historically erected by ruling classes, he naturally collided with the political dictatorship in Brazil. While exiled to Argentina, Boal continued his deconstruction of the walls separating spectators and spectacle and formulated his notion of Invisible Theatre. According to Boal, when theatre is visible, an audience is conscious of viewing a representation. They lose their internal cohesion as a unique group, and assume passive roles as atomistic spectators, each lost within an individual emotional response. With Invisible Theatre, on the other hand, spectators become active subjects, not passive objects. They are not viewers, but actors participating in the performance. They are not an aggregate of individuals lost in separate emotions, out rather, they become a social group, self-consciously sharing a collective emotional experience.

From 1973 to 1974, the Puruvian government gave Boal the freedom to actualize a Theatre of the Oppressed while contributing to its National Literacy Campaign. In this atmosphere of encouragement and cooperation, Boal was able to materialize his alternative to bourgeois theatre. He developed new exercises for actors and non-actors which approached theatre not merely as an instrument of social communication, but as an essential vehicle of actual social change. Forum Theatre, Image Theatre, and other theatre forms emerged through which the spectators became protagonists, actualizing changes in their conceptions of themselves, and in the conditions of their social existence.

Today, Boal lives in Paris, France, where he operates a Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed. This people's theatre explores novel techniques, acting exercises, and theatre forms which both reflect and generate new theoretical concepts for the contemporary theatre.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

EXCERPTS FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH AUGUSTO BOAL

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW WITH AUGUSTO BOAL

EQ: What is theatre for you; how do you define it?

AB: Theatre, as are all arts, is a production of images of the world. It is the production of ordered images of the world. Now there is a way of ordering the world which shows the world as being finished, a world that needs almost nothing to be completed. This is the kind of ordering of the ruling class, who want to present a perfected world. But there is a second kind of ordering which is the image of a world in perpetual change, in transition.

EQ: Many times, you have talked about theatre as a legitimate communication means among men. How are we to connect this with what you have said about what theatre is?

AB: Here we would have to talk about the concept known as Aesthetic. This concept has been too mystified. We have heard that aesthetics is beauty, that which produces pleasure when we see it, prettiness, that which is beautiful, etc. It isn't. Aesthetics is...communication which proceeds through the senses; and theatre is one of the aesthetic forms through which you can know reality. Theatre is the supreme aesthetic because it uses all the senses and all of the rest of the arts.

EQ: Why do you call your theatre "Theatre of the Oppressed"? Is it because of some political motivation.

AB: For that, it is necessary to understand what the Theatre of the Oppressed is. Theatre of the Oppressed, as far as I understand it, is not the "proletarian theatre." The Theatre of the Oppressed is the theatre of the oppressed classes and of all those who are oppressed within those classes. It is not the theatre of the oppressor classes, although there you can find oppressed people. It is not of the oppressed who are essentially oppressors; but of the oppressors who essentially oppressed.

(Here Boal explains this idea by giving the following examples: The wife of a bourgeois man could feel oppressed by her husband;

she is an example of the oppressed who is essentially an oppressor. On the other hand we have the wife of a worker who could also feel oppressed by her husband; her husband is an oppressor who is essentially oppressed.)

Let us look at the case of the Algerian Revolution. There, man's oppression of woman existed; it always existed. In that Revolution, women were convinced that first they should solve the problem of France's oppression over Algeria, and then later they would solve the problem of woman's oppression. In that way, women took an active part in the National Liberation of Alberia. Rightly, the French aggression was solved; but women continued to be oppressed. I think that her liberation is (should be) simultaneous with national liberation. With this, what I want to say is that in the working class there is also oppression; and Theatre of the Oppressed is for oppressed people within the oppressed class. If you take the hierarchies of a worker area, within them elements of oppression are present. But although there are oppressors (there), its (the area's) fundamental character is that of the oppressed. And it is for them that the Theatre of the Oppressed exists.

EQ: So, the Theatre of the Oppressed, as I understand it, is for those whose fundamental character is that of being oppressed?

AB: Correct, inside of an oppressed class. Because it (my theatre) could be used by the Bourgeoisie, for example in the case of the wife of the bourgeois man. But I'm not concerned with her.

EQ: Let us clear up some points related to your Theatre of the Oppressed, especially the concept of "Popular Theatre," because this has been extensively discussed and many people affirm that all theatre done to satisfy the pleasure of the population is popular.

AB: I once spoke about the difference between the words people and population, when I talked about the Popular Theatre. For this I refer you to my book Categorias de Teatro Popular (Categories of Popular Theatre). We cannot confuse people with population. "People" are those who sell their labor power: peasants, workers, etc. The "Population" is everybody. The Bourgeoisie is part of the population but not part of the people. So there are categories of popular theatre. (Here, Boal discusses his book Categories of Popular Theatre, emphasizing that the essence of Popular Theatre is the idea of change.)

The popular perspective is one of transformation, of change, of improvement of the social class.

EQ: In your book Theater of the Oppressed, you observe the fact that theatre was always an instrument of politics used by the ruling class...

AB: Always. Because theatre possesses a great strength...

EQ: But while the ruling class used theatre for their own political purposes, did the oppressed people use it for their liberation?

AB: Yes, of course; this was always so. It was the same during the Middle Ages as during the Greek Era. Popular Theatre always existed. For example, I have read a play from the Middle Ages where the virginity of Mary was questioned. Maybe today this wouldn't have much impact or importance. But, think of it, that in that moment such a play (and I believe there were many) destroyed all the dogma of the sacred theatre. So beside the religious theatre, there was, yes, a theatre of the people which questioned and ridiculed the established order.

EQ: And the intention, of course, was to liberate them from an established order which oppressed them?

AB: Right. Popular Theatre existed always, because the people always existed. Theatre is a language. The people always expressed themselves through that language. The thing is that there was not the means to project (the existence of) that theatre outside in a powerful way.

EQ: Regarding the influences on your ideas, which types of theatre have been the most significant.

AB: In relations to my theories: Brecht.

EQ: And in relation to your plays?

AB: Brecht again, and the Circo do Brasil (Brazilian circus).

EQ: In what manner did Brecht influence you?

AB: Brecht was very revealing for me. He was, with his points on which we agree, and even more importantly on those which we disagree. It was very significant for me to study Brecht after I studied Stanislavsky.

EQ: And the influence of the Circo do Brasil? Brazilian circus

AB: Many of Brecht's ideas are present in the circus' acting. Especially the alienation, the game with the spectators, etc.

EQ: But in relation to your plays...

AB: For example, Revolução na América do Sul (Revolution in South America) is a circus spectacle. It is gross, violent, strong, heavy. The same is true of A Tempestade. And that is the style I like.

EQ: How do you classify your style?

AB: Circensial (circus-like). When I write, I don't think of style, but of communicating something. But at some point, I wish a scene to be realistic or symbolic...it depends.

EQ: You have worked with many groups which could be defined as being inside the Latin American movement of "Collective Creation." In fact, much of your work with these groups was on collective creation productions, such as the techniques of the Newspaper Theatre, Forum Theatre, etc. From this perspective, how do you see the individual playwright?

AB: I don't reject the individual playwright. The majority of my plays were written individually. I wrote others in conjunction with other persons. But I think the important thing here is that any kind of theatre, it doesn't matter if its collective of not, must show a problem and try to effect identification of the spectator with that problem. The spectator should identify with the problem, not by identity, but by analogy.

EQ: Could you explain more fully how they should identify by analogy?

AB: That spectator says: "It seems much like my reality," and not "It is my reality."

EQ: So we can establish that the process of identification has two relations: "identity relations," where the spectator says that his problem is the same as the problem presented in the scene; and secondly, "analogy relation," where the spectator understands that the problem presented is similar to but not the same as his reality. How do you relate this to your "Theatre of the Oppressed"?

AB: In the Theatre of the Oppressed, the process of identification must be through analogy. If the relation with the spectator is not of identification, in other words, it is of solidarity, then it is not the Theatre of the Oppressed. It is not because the process of identification was not produced.

If spectators identify totally with what has been presented on stage, they say "It is my truth". The identification here is given through identity, and this is theatre of osmosis, of immersion, of empathy, which transforms the spectator into a passive being.

If that identification is through analogy, then the spectator says "It seems to...", then the spectator is activated; he thinks; and this is really the Theatre of the Oppressed.

If the reaction is not any of those previously mentioned, the spectator doesn't identify with the problem, he only demonstrates solidarity, saying "I, must agree, although it doesn't seem to be my reality". This is not Threatre of the Oppressed.

For example, when we participate in a spectacle against the Viet Nam war, we agree with what the show presents against the war, but that reality is completely different to ours. Not only is it clear that it is not our reality, but also that it isn't similar to our reality. So, what we could do here was only to feel solidarity with the problem. Here, identification doesn't exist.

EQ: I understand that here is where your differences with Bertolt Brecht occur. Brecht tends more toward solidarity. But where then do we situate the Theatre of the Oppressed? Near reality or not? For example, your Invisible Theatre where the spectators should not know that what they are looking at is theatre. So I ask, is it reality or not?

AB: In the Invisible Theatre, for example, actors bring with them the fictitious, which is the scene they are going to perform. They come with a model already rehearsed and prepared. But when they reach the spectators and perform the scene, this fiction becomes reality for the spectators. For them, the scene and its problem are real. So the Theatre of the Oppressed is exactly on the limit between fiction and reality; this is the explosion of the Theatre of the Oppressed.

EQ: Why, here in Europe, have you developed more greatly the techniques of Forum Theatre, Invisible Theatre, and Image Theatre? Why not, for example, the Newspaper Theatre Technique?

AB: Newspaper theatre demands more time, work and duty. More patience. Really, it's because there is not enough time. Invisible Theatre, Forum Theatre, and Image Theatre - the people produce more and it is more contagious, more immediate. However, here in Europe I could develop the Image Theatre more. In fact, my next book will be about Image Theatre, Techniques and Games of the Image Theatre. There are twelve exercises of the mirror including the transition from one exercise to the other. It is interesting to note that here in Europe the Image Theatre has developed more. There are eight techniques of Image Theatre, inclusively.

EQ: Let's talk a little about your next book.

AB: The outline is the following. The first part has five chapters. The first chapter talks about the Theatre of the Oppressed in Europe. The second chapter is a report of eighteen Invisible Theatres done in Europe. The third one is titled "Forum Theatre and Psychodrama". The fourth chapter is a systematization of the Image Theatre. I try here to explain the difference between "looking at" or "seeing" and "looking into" (To look vs. To see). There are exercises of the image, trying to show the forms developed from it. It is not to help show how to look at (something), but to help us to see what we are looking at. It is a question of the capacity to see.

The fifth chapter is a discussion of theatre as language and theatre as a craft. In this chapter, I want to make clear that the language of theatre doesn't need the craft. For example, to deliver a letter it is not necessary to be a mailman. But there is the profession of mailman, a mailman's craft. Craft means specialization. In other words, to do theatre, theatre for communication of something, theatre as language, it is not necessary to be an actor. But the profession, the actor's craft exists. The craft implies a hypertrophy of some parts of the body, and at the same time an atrophy of the rest of the body. For example, the one who specializes in playing the piano hypertrophies some parts, if not all, of his body in order to play the piano. But at the same time, he is atrophying other possibilities, such as being able to carry the piano. The same occurs with the guy who moves pianos: he hypertrophies his body for that task but atrophies his possibility of playing the piano.

The second part of the book is the construction of the Forum Theatre model. In this is included the play-writing rules of the Forum Theatre, an explanation of how to rehearse Forum Theatre (mise en scène), and an explanation of how the spectacle is created. I will try here to define more the "Joker". I have found that the function of the "Joker" varies. In the two weeks of Theatre of the Oppressed that recently took place in France, and where groups from all over Europe took part, there were "Jokers" who were very aggressive, others who were passive, rhythmic, etc.

EQ: We have talked about Invisible Theatre, when we used it as an example to clarify the concept of identification through analogy, etc. Let's begin now to talk about the technique of Forum Theatre. You said that the third chapter of your book will be Forum Theatre and Psychodrama. I understand that with this, you want to clarify some doubts. Is it true that the Forum Theatre has been confused with psychodrama?

AB: Yes. In psychodrama, the psychological part is more important rather than the political and sociological elements. It is not this way with the Forum Theatre, rather to the contrary.

EQ: What, then, makes it possible for Forum Theatre to be different from psychodrama?

AB: Two things: that the oppression scene multiplies, that the problem was that of everybody...

EQ: And not of one person? Could you give an example?

AB: (Boal explains a situation where all the proposals for doing Forum Theatre were very individualistic, and no one was in agreement with any proposal. He explains that it is always important that all the spectators should agree, not with whether to present a given proposal, but that the proposal should be an oppression suffered by everybody).

The second thing is that in the Forum Theatre must be the desire to solve the problem; in other words, that the action must be present.

The Forum Theatre has also awakened great interest because of the three elements: first, that the communication runs from the base upward toward the direction, and not in reverse; this is the democratic character of the Theatre of the Oppressed. Second, implicit in the first element is that it is a democratic weapon. And third, that it corresponds to a defense against authoritarianism.

EQ: Because you have had contact directly with the theatre in Latin America, North America and Europe, would you tell us what differences you have found?

AB: Here in European countries, I notice some constants. They pay a lot; there are many subsidies given to the theatre; but they determine the content. The Bourgeoisie is very rich. The German Federal Republic, for example, allocates 500 million dollars annually to the development of opera, ballet and theatre. It doesn't depend on the ticket office. They are factories of spectacles. But they have an ideology. I note in Europe a double tendency: number one, a factory of spectacles with a tendency toward Aestheticism. For example, now in Paris there is a spectacle about Arrabal done by the Comédie Française. It is beautiful, both technically and artistically? Lights, scenery, costumes, etc. Everything very well done. In other words, all the money is spent for the "beauty genre". Second, parallel to this aesthetic approach is the popular theatre which is not subsidized. But that is really a living movement.

As regards the theatre in U.S., what I note is something like the "manager empire" satisfying the tastes of the spectator. There are, more or less, the spectacles of television, the movies; neither aesthetical.

In Latin America, I observe a kind of popular theatre didactic, but in the bad sense of the word. They reproduce the relationship: artist who knows everything - and spectator who comes to learn. But there is great proliferation of popular theatre. For example, in São Paulo, Brasil, I was awakened to the fact that there are around 130 groups doing popular theatre. But the official theatre follows the model of the U.S.: no subsidies; enterprising characters satisfying the tastes of the spectator.

EQ: How was your last experience of November, 1979, in Brazil?

AB: Traumatic. Friends have changed. Nine years of exile and dictatorship produce in me great impact. Many things were destroyed. It was a great emotional shock. In July and August of this year, I will return with all my family to try to see if we want to return home. We have to think of our children, who in Brasil will be exiles. (Boal speaks to the fact that France and not Brasil is now perceived by the children as being their home.)

In the theatre, I saw that it did not have before the deep division that exists today. Today popular theatre is more alienated from the "theatrical world." It is not like before where a professional actor worked doing popular theatre. Now the popular theatre is closer to the people; the good thing is that now the popular theatre is in the people.

EQ: What projects do you have in mind for the future?

AB: By now, only to develop the Center of the Theatre of the Oppressed, and the publishing of the book on Image Theatre.

EQ: What immediate objectives does the Center have now?

AB: To extend and make better known the techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed, especially Invisible Theatre, Forum Theatre and Image Theatre.

EQ: In particular, what projects will you do?

AB: I will do a Forum Theatre session where the ritual and the social mask are shown. I also plan to present my play <u>As Mulheres de Atenas</u> (The Women of Athens) which is an answer to Aristophanes. I have in mind an idea to start three months of workshops

entitled "The Policeman In Your Head." The idea is to use acting techniques in the development of characterization, to help non-actors to liberate themselves from an oppression. That they, the non-actors, can create the characters they always wanted to but never could before. It will be working with the person as if he/she were an actor or actress.

As I told you before, the importance of the Theatre of the Oppressed is that it works on the limits between fiction and truth, and what happens after. Forum Theatre is cathartic. You do something that you never do in real life.

EQ: Do you think that there is a universal quality in theatre that we can talk about?

AB: No. Art is language which needs two interlocutors to accept it. Because there is no universalization of speakers, there is no universalization of aesthetic values. What the people of Tibet do is not the same as what the people of Rio de Janeiro do. The quality and the art of each is not universal. You have the same aesthetic values of only one culture. Culture is production that is done inside of people. The capacity to understand cultures different from your own is Erudition. Erudition is knowledge you have about other cultures. Each culture produces its own art, which is a part of the conception of the world that the culture has. So it is impossible to talk about a universal quality.

(Paris: January 11 and 13, 1980)

EQ: Why was the "Joker" system created?

AB: The "Joker" system came from an economic reality. The Arena Theatre of São Paulo had a capacity for only 160 spectators. This forced us to have a small cast no matter what type of play was to be performed.

EQ: But how is it that the Joker character works?

AB: We presented the play, or rather the scene. Immediately, we interrupted it, the Joker interrupted the action. We discussed the scene with the public and then we returned to the scene and the action continued.

EQ: Is it in that interruption where the function, the power of the Joker is realized?

AB: The power of the Joker, we could visualize it in the following: Its power was in the rupture of the spectacle universe and its movement toward the universe of the spectator. In that manner,

we made contacts with the public on egalitarian terms. In other words, it was like placing two speakers on the same level. We did this, first, by writing our own plays: Arena Narrates Zumbi, Arena Narrates Tiradentes, etc. Later it was true in the case of Arturo Ui. In both cases, the power of the Joker was to create egalitarian conditions with the spectator.

This was perhaps the prelude of the Theatre of the Oppressed. It was its nucleus.

EQ: What differences were there between one production and the other, between Arena Narrates Zumbi and Arena Narrates Tiradentes?

AB: With Arena Narrates Zumbi the Joker was more intuitive. It was the beginning of a new technique. Zumbi was a text which possessed too much fantasy; although the character was real, he himself was too full of legends. With Tiradentes the explanations of the Joker were more rational; the division into chapters was more solid than in Zumbi. Tiradentes, also, was a more concrete character; we had more information and documents following a clearer outline. But, like Zumbi, there was a great number of historical characters.

EQ: Which one was more effective?

AB: Zumbi; and maybe it was because it had many more musical elements, many more songs, dances, etc. It appealed more to the Brazilian spirit. More than Tiradentes.

EQ: How long was it in performance?

AB: From 1965 to 1966. Almost a year and a half.

EQ: And Tiradentes?

AB: From 7 to 8 months, in 1967.

EQ: After Arena Narrates Tiradentes, what followed?

AB: The musicals: Arena Narrates Bahia and Arena Narrates Bolivar. In 1971, after Bolivar, we produced Arturo Ui.

EQ: Tell me about Arena Narrates Bahia.

AB: Bahia was the capital of Brazil during one part of the colonial period. Bahia was not really a play; in it there wasn't any dialogue; everything was music. There were 6 singers who came from Bahia, and who narrated the story of the northeastern "Retirante" (the man who emigrates from the arid region of the

northeastern part of Brazil to the southern part in order to escape the drought). All the problems that he faces in the south are exposed: unemployment, health, malnutrition, etc. Finally, he decides to return to the northeast.

The interesting point about Bahia was that although there wasn't any dialogue and everything was sung, the music was sung as though it were dialogue. The singers sang as characters, not as singers. The censor cut many songs and at the end we had to forget it, and not continue.

(As an aside, Boal relates an experience he had with the man who was the censor. When the censor came to see the spectacle, the performers told the audience that the play was changed by the censor and they pointed him out and explained what parts were cut. At one point, Boal threatened the censor, telling him that if he cut more, they would sing two songs ridiculing him. "What two songs?", the censor asked. Boal answered, "Happy Birthday and God Save The Queen." The censor relented but went to the police station and an order for the arrest of the entire cast was issued. The cast decided to perform the play but also to tell the spectators what had happened.)

The play was performed for one month only.

EQ: Augusto, how do you see your own exile? What impressions do you have about it after years of experience outside of your homeland?

AB: Exile is the most immoral penalty, because it goes beyond the limits of the accused. In exile, not only is the accused affected, but also his wife, sons, relatives, etc., who don't know or understand what is going on.

In the case of Tiradentes, not only was he condemned but also three more generations of his family.

EQ: Are there constants in the plays that you have written?

AB: First, a distance, an escape from Realism. Because I think that Realism, when it proposes a world which pretends to be objective, is not true. Because what really happens is that Realism proposes a world according to the author's perceptions, in which case there isn't an objective world. Because of that, there is always a deformation. I prefer instead to hide these deformations in order to reveal them.

Secondly, I find in all my plays the influence of the "Circo do Brasil" (Brazilian circus). All my plays tend to have a heavy element. It is a type of acting and more notably a type of

playwriting. For example, the drunken in A Tempestade (The Tempest), the manner he uses in speaking, etc. There are ample, large, extensive, violent and open discussions. Another example is the scene of the escape to the embassy together with the use of the chest to symbolize a burial in my play Coup de Poing sur la Pointe du Couteau (The Fist Upon the Knife's Point). But this last play is something different.

EQ: What is the difference?

AB: This is the last play I wrote. It is the product of my experiences here in Europe. There are two new elements in it that are not in the other plays.

First is the influx of the Image Theatre, which was greatly developed here. For example, all the scenes depend on the use of the luggage. Sometimes they become walls in the embassy; later they are islands; other times they are furniture, etc. I can say that there is much involved in image. The actors also are constantly giving images. An example is when they reach Paris and everyone throws down their luggage and acts on top of it.

Secondly, never before have I written things that are so close to me; nor so psychological, such as in the obsession that the character of Maria has toward blood. Before, I wrote about other things. It is not that I represent the characters, but that they represent what I have lived.

EQ: What differences do you see in the plays written following the "Joker" system, in both the musicals and those which weren't musicals?

AB: Well, you could see that with the "Joker" the plays are always updated, because the "Joker" discusses the news and events which are currently taking place. In that way the "Joker" changes the scenes, introduces new explanations according to contemporary events.

EQ: This would not occur with the other type of play?

AB: No. I will give you an example from my play Revolution in South America. When I wrote it, the protagonist José da Silva represented a guy from a working class which was different from the working class of today. In that moment, he was a great example of that class. He symbolized the great number of workers who followed and really believed in the traitorous leaders of the day. Today the same working class has evolved; it is different and more organized. When I was in Brazil in November of 1979, this play was being performed; and I suggested to them that

since it wasn't the same working class, why didn't they make the spectators change and correct the character of José da Silva? In that manner, the representation was updated.

With the "Joker", this wouldn't have been necessary. With the "Joker" the performances are always up to date.

(Paris: January 15 and 17, 1980)

APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGICAL BIOGRAPHY OF AUGUSTO BOAL

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CHRONOLOGICAL BIOGRAPHY OF AUGUSTO BOAL

1931 - March 16, born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

1950 - Writes O Cavalo e o Santo (The Horse And The Saint) about black workers.

1952 - He graduates in Chemical Engineering from the National School of Chemistry at the University of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro.

1. Period defined by him as "Culturalist"; works with the Black Experimental Theatre.

2. Investigates and writes about similarities and differences between Greek mythology and the mythologies of some Brazilian black religions. Ex. Nagô mythology.

3. Writes a few one-act plays about the life of the fishermen from the poorest Brazilian region known as "Penha".

1953 to 1955 - Goes to U.S. to do his graduate studies in Chemistry; Industrial Chemistry, specializing in Plastics at the Columbia University in New York. There, he studies theatre with John Gassner, Maurice Valency, Norris Houghton, Langston Hughes, and others.

In 1954, writes Martim Pescador (Martin The Fisherman), which won the first prize of the Columbia University Literary Exchange in 1955.

Member of the "Brooklyn Writers Group".

His first experience as director with his plays: Martim Pescador and Do Outro Lado da Rua (The House Across the Street) at the Malin Theatre.

1956 to 1958 - Arena Theatre begins its period known as Brazilian Realism with foreign plays.

Boal returns to Brazil.
Works as a translator of mystery novels for 6 months.
Assumes the artistic direction of the Arena Theatre directing John Steinbeck's play Mice and Men. Receives the diploma

"Revelação de diretor do ano" from the Asociação Paulista de Criticos de Teatro because of his success with Mice and Men.

In 1957, writes and directs Marido Magro, Mulher Chata (Skinny Husband, Boring Wife) at the Arena Theatre.

The director of the National Theatre Company named "Teatro Brasileiro de Comédia" invites him to direct a spectacle with the company.

Directs Sean O'Casey's Juno and the Paycock. Receives the award of "Best Young Director of 1956" from the National Library.

Directs Sidney Howard's They Knew What They Wanted.

Directs the first playwriting seminar.

Tours with his play Marido Magro... throughout the interior of Brazil: Salvador, Belo Horizonte, Bahia, etc.

Directs Ternura for the Black Experimental Theatre.

His play Do Outro Lado da Rua is performed at the Experimental Theatre of the National Theatre Company.

The "Sociedade Brasileira de Autores Teatrais" (Brazilian Society of Playwriters) publishes Boal's Marido Magro.

1958 - Arena Theatre begins its period known as Brazilian National Realism.

Directs exclusively young Brazilian writers: Society em Baby Doll by Henrique Pongetti; Fogo Frio (Cold Fire) by Benedito Rui Barbosa; Eles Não Usam Black Tie (They Don't Wear Tuxedos) by Gianfrancesco Guarnieri.

Writes Laio se Matou (Laio Killed Himself), performed by the Black Experimental Theatre.

Directs the first laboratory of interpretation.

1960 - Professor of playwriting at the School of Dramatic Art.

Arena Theatre performs his play Revolution in South America; a musical satire.

Receives the SACI award as the best actor of the year, given by the newspaper O Estado de São Paulo.

Directs A Engrenagem by Sartre.

1961 - Directs O Testamento do Cangaceiro (The Bandit's Testament) by Francisco de Assis.

1962 - Arena produces Boal's José, do Parto à Sepultura (Joseph From Birth to the Grave).

Arena Theatre begins its period known as Nationalization of the Classics.

Directs Molière's plays, Lope de Vega's plays, The Mandrágola by Machiavelli, The Inspector General by Gogol, etc. Translates Coriolanus by Shakespeare.

Writes the first texts of The Bourgeoisie Poetic of Virtú.

1963 - Receives the SACI Award as the best director of 1962, because of his work directing Machiavelli's Mandrágola. Directs O Novício by Martins Pena.

1964 to 1965 - Directs Tartuffe by Molière.

Arena Theatre begins its period known as The Musicals, where it combines two principles: the principle of the photographic realistic theatre, and the principle of the classic theatre applied to Brazilian reality (the universality with the particularity).

Directs Opinion, a spectacle with music where three singers narrate and sing what happens to their particular lives.

Directs the spectacle Arena Narrates Zumbi, initiating the creation of a system of performing called "The Joker System."

1967 - Writes and directs Arena Narrates Tiradentes, where the "Joker System" is consolidated.

1968 - Starts the "Férias de Opinião" where artists are invited to present their opinions about Brazil.

Small shows of ten to twelve minutes: songs, plastic arts are included.

He resigns from the School of Dramatic Art because of the political situation.

1969 - Because of the repression, he goes on tour in foreign countries with spectacles such as Arena Narrates Zumbi and Arena Narrates Bolivar (México, Perú, Argentina, Uruguay, France, U.S., etc.)
The "Joker System" is developed also as a kind of interpretation system for actor's character analysis.

1970 - Repression prevents the performances of popular theatre spectacles in popular places such as streets, schools, worker's unions, etc. Boal develops his techniques of Newspaper Theatre with the spectacle Newspaper Theatre, First Edition.

1971 - Arena Theatre in France at the Nancy Festival performs experiments with Boal's Newspaper Theatre and the spectacle Arena Narrates Zumbi.

Boal is arrested on Feb. 2. On Feb. 8 he is tortured, and in May is released.

Starts to write while in prison his drama Torquemada.

Goes into exile in Argentina, where he directs his play Tio Patinhas e a Pílula (Uncle Sam And The Pill), an attempt to destroy fascism in Brazil.

Works doing theatre in the churches using the life of Christ to discuss the political problems of Argentina (Bible Theatre).

Travels throughout Latin American countries expressing his ideas about People's Theatre.

Starts to write the first manuscripts of his Theater of the Oppressed.

Directs Arturo Ui by Brecht using the "Joker System." Starts working with his Invisible Theatre techniques.

1972 - Participates in various Latin American and International Theatre Festivals, as lecturer, organizer of workshops, etc.

Publishes his first book entitled Categorias de Teatro Popular (Categories of Popular Theatre).

1973 - Invited by the Peruvian government to participate in the National Literacy Program called Operación Alfabetización Integral. This experience was the basis for the development of his Theatre of the Oppressed.

1974 - Exiled in Argentina, he dedicates all his time to writing. Writes for many periodicals and newspapers. Publishes his second and most important book, which includes all his theories regarding the Theatre of the Oppressed: Teatro del Oprimido y otras Poéticas Políticas (Theatre of the Oppressed and other Political Poetics).

1975 - The Arena Theatre is condemed.

Publishes: 200 ejercicios y juegos para el Actor y No-actor con ganas de decir algo a través del teatro;

Teatro do Oprimido e Outras Poéticas Políticas;

Técnicas Latinoamericanas de Teatro Popular;

Treŝ Obras: Torquemada; Tio Patilhudo, e Revolução na América do Sul.

1977 - Goes into exile in Portugal.

Conventional theatre work.

Few experiments on the Theatre of the Oppressed.

Performs a big spectacle of Forum Theatre at the city of Oporto for 1,000 persons.

Writes columns and articles for the weekly Opção.

Directs the threatre grouo La Barraca.

Travels throughout Europe.

Publishes: Crônicas de nuestra América;

A deliciosa e sangrenta aventura latina de Jane Spitfire, espiã e mulher sensual.

Le théâtre de l'opprimé.

200 exercícios e jogos para a ator e não ator com vontade de dizer algo através do teatro.

1978 - Moves to France, and creates the Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed.

His writings are translated into French, Italian, English, and other European languages.

The Theatre of the Oppressed is known throughout Europe: Paris, Nancy, Dijon, Strasbourg, Sèvres, Grenoble, Lurs, Avignon, etc. in France; Norrköpping and Goethebörg in Switzerland; Hambourg and Berlin in Germany; Palermo in Italy; Liège in Belgium; Godrano in Sicily; Stocholm, Skeppsholm in Sweden; Denmark; and Finalnd.

Publishes Murro em Ponta de Faca (The Fist Upon the Knife's Point), a play about the exile.

1979 - Publishes: Duas peças: A Tempestade. As Mulheres de Atenas;

Jeux pour acteurs;

Milagre no Brasil (Romance)

Pratique du théâtre de l'opprimé;

Técnicas Latino-americanas de Teatro Popular;

Theater of the Oppressed.

1980 - Continues working with his Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed.

Has in plan the publication of a book about the Image Theatre, the translation into English of his book 200 ejercicios..., and his returning to Brazil.

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