



RICERCA E PROGETTAZIONE PER LE ARTI PERFORMATIVE

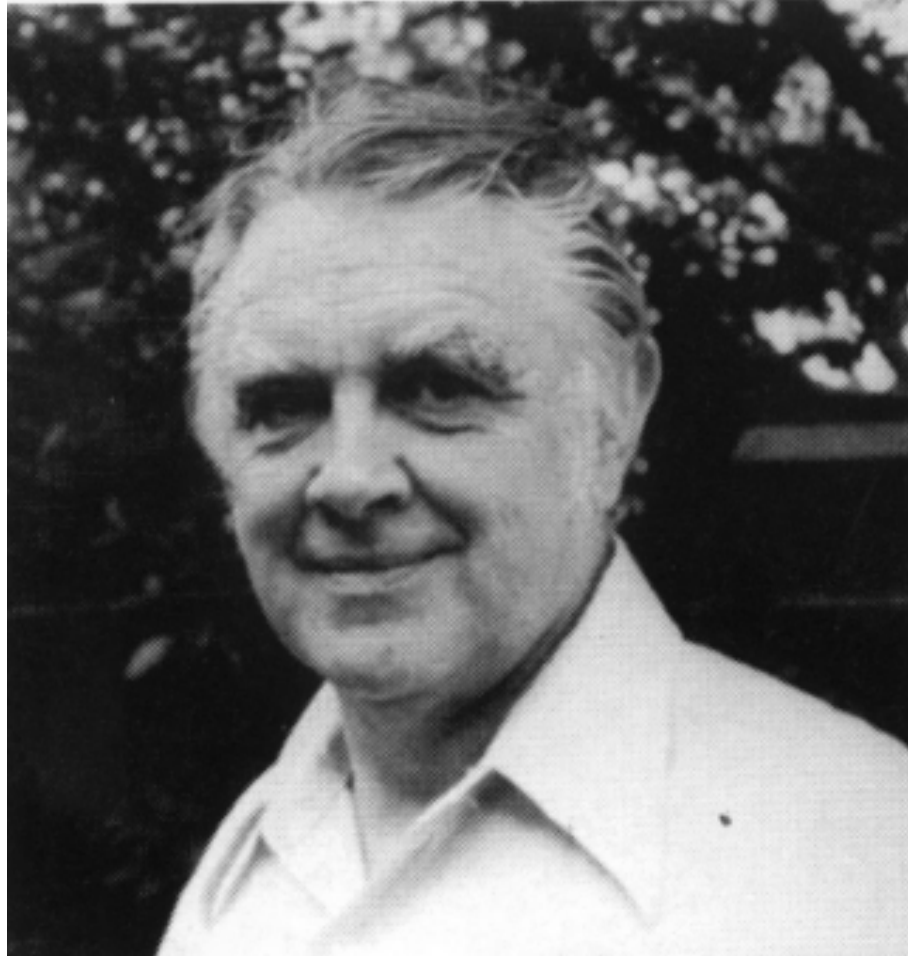
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CdS MediaArtiCulture - a.a. 2019-20

A. Fondamenti di Performance Studies

Il rituale

Victor W. Turner (1920-1983)



-
- ▶ **Social Drama**
 - ▶ **Ritual Process**
 - ▶ **Liminality**

Social Drama

Breach



Crisis




Redressive Action




Reconciliation or Schism (= Separation)

Social Drama


The peaceful tenor of regular, norm-governed social life is interrupted by the **breach** of a rule controlling one of its salient relationships.



This leads swiftly or slowly to a state of **crisis**, which, if not soon sealed off, may split the community into contending factions and coalitions.

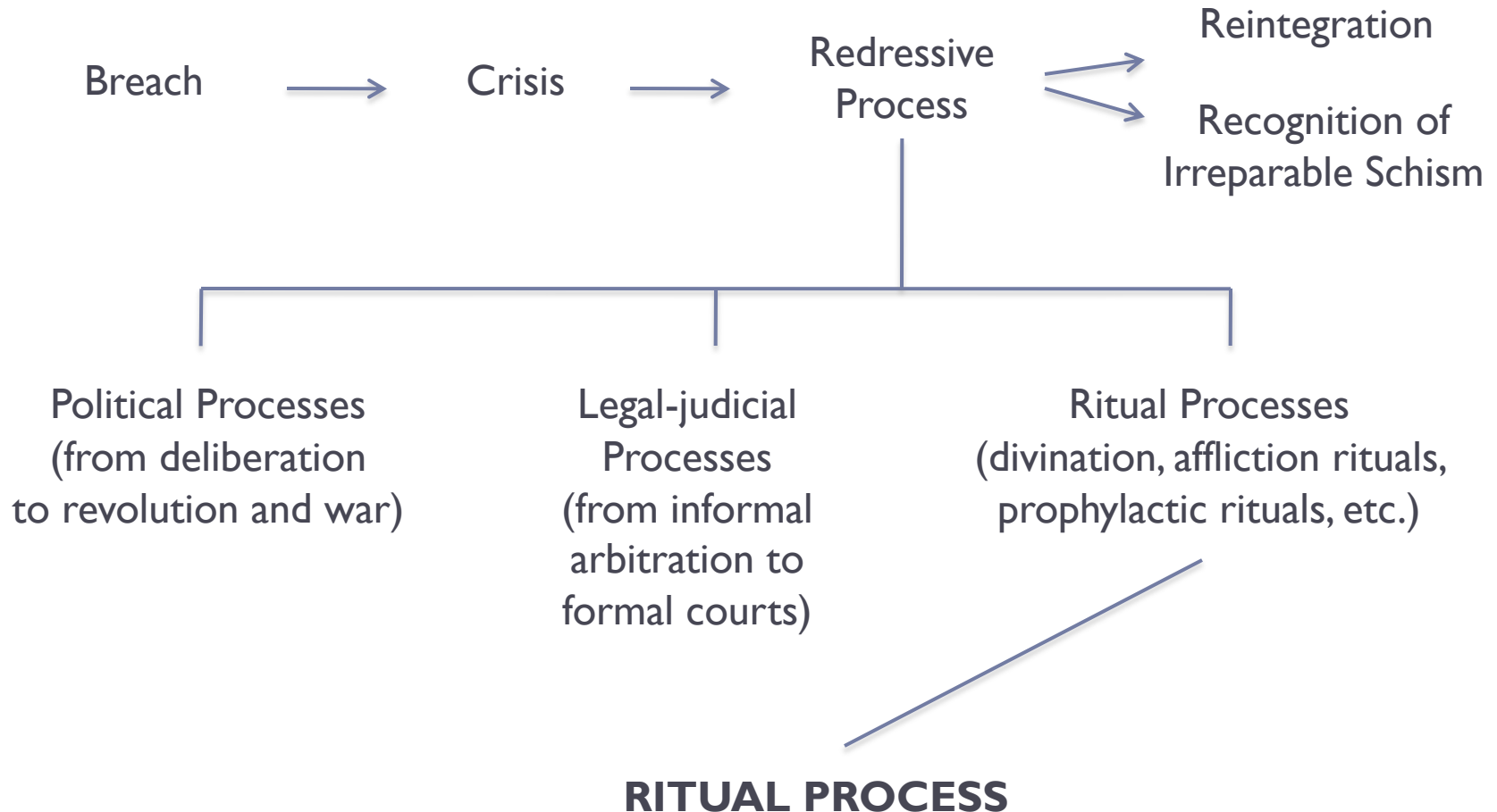


To prevent this, **redressive** means are taken by those who consider themselves or are considered the most legitimate representatives of the relevant community. Redress usually involves ritualized action, whether legal, religious or military.



If the situation does not regress to crisis, the last phase involves alternative solutions: **reconciliation** of the conflicting parties; or consensual recognition of irremediable breach, usually followed by the spatial **separation** of the parties.

Social Drama/Ritual Process Relationship



Social Drama

The social drama [...] I regard as the experiential matrix from which the many genres of cultural performance, beginning with redressive ritual and juridical procedures, and eventually including oral and literary narrative, have been generated. Breach, crisis, and reintegrative or divisive outcomes provide the content of such later genres, redressive procedures their form. As society complexifies, as the division of labor produces more and more specialized and professionalized modalities of sociocultural action, so do the modes of assigning meaning to social dramas multiply – but the drama remains to the last simple and ineradicable, a fact of everyone's social experience.

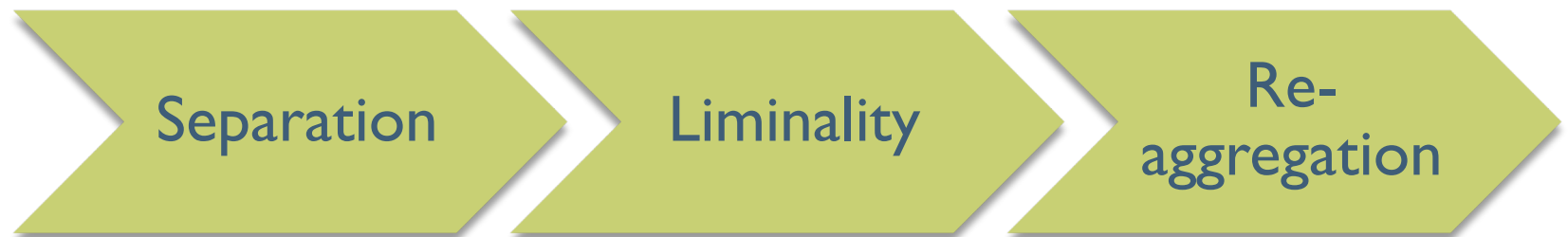
[V. Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 1982: 78]

Social Drama

Ritual and juridical procedures represent germinative components of social drama, from which, I suggest, many performative and narrative modes of complex cultures derive.

[V. Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 1982: 78]

The Ritual Process



The Ritual Process



Liminality

a period of time when a person is “betwixt and between” social categories or personal identities. [...] The liminal phase fascinated Turner because he recognized in it a possibility for ritual to be creative, to make new situations, identities and social realities.

[Schechner, *Performance Studies. An Introduction*, 2006²: 66]

Attributes of liminal “personae” (1)

- ▶ necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space
- ▶ liminal entities are “neither here nor there”
- ▶ this ambiguity and indeterminacy is culturally expressed by a rich variety of symbols and symbolic behaviour

Attributes of liminal “personae” (2)

- ▶ being reduced or ground down to a uniform condition
- ▶ to be endowed with additional powers to enable them to cope with their new situation in life
- ▶ people undergoing the ritual become temporarily “nothing”
- ▶ exposed to vulnerability but open to change
- ▶ then they are inscribed with their new attributes and identities

Liminality and Performance

- ▶ affinity between the liminal “personae” and the condition of actors and performers
- ▶ the workshop-rehearsal phase of performance composition is analogous to the liminal phase of the ritual process