

Metaphorical analogies in approaches of Victor Turner and Erving Goffman: Dramaturgy in social interaction and dramas of social life

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Abstract. Metaphorical analogies have been popular in different forms of reasoning, theatre and drama analogy among them. From the semiotic perspective, theatre is a representation of reality. Characteristic to theatrical representation is the fact that for creating representations of reality it uses, to a great extent, the materiality and cultural codes that also constitute our everyday life; sometimes the means of representation are even iconically identical to the latter. This likeness has inspired numerous writers, philosophers and, later, social scientists to look for particular similarities between social life, drama and theatre. In this paper I chose two particular approaches from the social sciences that make use of the metaphorical analogy of theatre in quite different, yet, to certain extent, also overlapping ways — Victor Turner’s concept of “social dramas” from anthropology and Erving Goffman’s “dramaturgy” of social interactions from sociology. The former bases his analogy more on the structure of the dramatic text and on a key resemblance in the (dramatic) conflict, whereas the latter builds his analogy on the principles of performing used in theatre, and regards characters and roles as major resemblances between action on stage and in social space. This paper examines these key resemblances and sheds light on what kind of interpretations of culture and society emerge when theatre analogies are put into action. In the concluding section some general problems, related to extended metaphors and analogical explanations the researcher needs to face with, are discussed.

So the value of Turner's model, like Goffman's, is that it allows us to escape a certain solipsism, or one-eyedness, by enlarging our field of reference. When Goffman says that people are like stage performers and Turner says that social conflicts are like plays, we are applying a model from one semantic network to a subject in another network whose characteristics we wish to elucidate by metaphorical comparison. [...] The metaphor, if it is a good one, will draw out some of the characteristics of the phenomenon but will leave others obscure or invisible that might well be picked up by still other metaphors seeking still different characteristics [...]. (States 1996: 7).

Introduction

Metaphors and analogies rely on certain resemblances between the source and the target domain, and their function is to explain or enlighten something about one domain while using comparative examples from the other. For most people in Western culture, the reasons for comparing culture or society with drama or theatre is intuitively understandable — our socio-cultural behaviour includes numerous aspects (scenes, characters, roles, dialogues, conflicts, etc.) that are also present in dramatic texts, and vice versa. In other words, there is always something drama-like or theatre-like in human social behaviour and, in turn, drama/theatre resembles our social reality, since they represent it in one way or the other. By studying dramatic texts and theatre performances, we can, in turn, study not only the aspect of mimesis, that is, the ways humans and societies have been represented, but also what these people, their knowledge, values and relations to the society have been like. Theatre or drama analogy thus functions in both ways — by examining theatre-like situations in social life we get to know something about social interaction, and

theatre stage or dramatic text, in turn, may give us new insights into how we act and communicate with one another. (Similar to other arts, both theatre and drama invoke a feeling of defamiliarization with real life through particular ways of coding and signification.)

However, it is precisely this likeness or similarity between theatre and real life that is the major argument in criticisms against the suitability of theatre terminology for explaining social situations. According to theatre researcher Eli Rozik, theatre is a representation, a description of real life, and its signifying principle is based on the principle of *similarity*, or more precisely on iconicity (on the material reality on stage — the actors' bodies as well as the objects are identical to the ones in reality), and for this reason he considers theatre to be a false, misleading and inappropriate analogy for the social scientists. He suggests that a social scientist should pay more attention to the *differences* between theatre and real social interaction, primarily to their distinct systems of signification and communication (Rozik 2002: 185–205).

Nevertheless, when a metaphorical analogy is drawn, social life is considered theatre/drama-like, instead of being identical with the latter, and thus what we may get to know is *how* metaphorical models are used as conceptual tools for making sense of social reality. Consequently, by pursuing the ways in which certain metaphors have been adapted and applied, we may inquire deeper into the epistemological changes in disciplinary as well as interdisciplinary knowledge in the social sciences.

In the present paper I will focus only on certain aspects of the similarity of everyday life to drama or theatre, by way of analogies created by Victor Turner and Erving Goffman — the structure of the dramatic text and the issue of conflict in the case of Turner, and character/role and acting in the case of Goffman. It is not my purpose here to demonstrate the correctness or incorrectness of their metaphorical analogies in terms of similarity-difference indicated by Rozik; instead, I am interested in how they applied their analogies and what their heuristic strengths were, despite their limits. Namely, what

sort of interpretations of social life have Goffman and Turner created in their approaches, and, furthermore, what kind of epistemological shifts are related to their contributions to the social sciences.

1. Drama and theatre as metaphorical analogies

There are numerous works dedicated to the role of metaphors and analogies in human cognition, including scientific reasoning (Lakoff, Johnson 1980; Ortony 1993; Holyoak, Thagard 1995; Gentner *et al.* 2001; Fauconnier, Turner 2003). In the present paper I will not take part in the discussion over the relationships between analogy, similes and metaphors or analogies-theories-models. Instead, I will proceed from the position that a metaphoric comparison, based on certain familiar similarities between two domains — theatre and social life — can be further developed into a metaphorical analogy by specifying these particular characteristics that create resemblances between them, and by critically considering not only likenesses but also differences arising from this comparison (Rigney 2001: 3). Despite the fact that the cognitive and heuristic value of analogies and metaphors are much-discussed topics in social sciences, one may argue that, in general, both analogies and metaphors (or metaphoric analogies) function as so-called cognitive tools (see Baert 2005; Hollis 1995; Maasen 2000; Rigney 2001), and thus rather than assessing the proper or improper application of analogies, it is more relevant to study what, why and how analogies are used in explanations. Despite their explanatory ambiguity and ambivalent interpretations by different scholars, metaphorical analogies provide creative insights in all scientific disciplines. In terms suggested by Charles Sanders Peirce, analogies play an important role in abductive reasoning, leading to creative ideas and new explanations (CP 6.525, 7.202).¹

¹ It must be noted, however, that Peirce distinguishes metaphors and analogies as different types of icons.

The semantic field of the word ‘drama’ in English allows us to distinguish between two main domains — theatre and everyday life. ‘Drama’ may signify the text of a play written for theatre or television, or, more precisely, a genre of play (next to comedy and tragedy). Etymologically, the word drama also refers to acting (Greek $\delta\rho\alpha\upsilon$ > Latin *drama* — to do, to act in a broad sense), thus the strong intertwinedness of drama and theatre. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle defines the art of drama — at his time, tragedy — as a form of imitation (*mimesis*), arguing that “it represents men in action and does not use narrative” (Aristotle *Poetics* 1449b 1, 20). The art of drama is thus by nature a mimetic presentation whose primary distinguishing characteristic is an immediate connection of dialogues and remarks with the context of action, and, unlike other literary genres, plays do not narrate events by commenting on them (as for example, in epic narratives), but rather by presenting events as taking place in the present, immediately in the dramatic activity and the dialogue of multiple subjects.

Figuratively speaking, drama refers to an exciting, emotional or unexpected event or circumstance; a well-known phrase is “to make a drama out of something” (that is, to exaggerate the importance of something)². Numerous examples of this usage are provided by current media discourse that strives to magnify the importance of certain events and tries to manipulate the readers’ attention and emotions (for example, the *dramatic* news published in the English-language press during 2010: “volcanic dramas” in Iceland and Indonesia, the Polish “air crash drama”, the Chilean “mine drama”, etc.).

The roots of the drama-analogy date back to the lengthy tradition of using it as a metaphor in philosophical, fictional, and everyday discourse; the impulses originating from these sources are partially transferred to applications of drama as an analogy in the social sciences. Comparisons of life to a play or theatre on the basis of their

² Source: Oxford English Dictionary Online. Available at: www.oed.com. Accessed: November 20, 2010.

mutual similarities are already present in Ancient Greek and Latin literature (in his dialogue *Philebos* Plato describes the earthly, mortal journey as a “tragedy and comedy of human life”; acting on the stage of life is later referred to by Lucius Annaeus Seneca (*Moral Letters to Lucilius*, AD 62–65) and Gaius Petronius (*Satyricon*, ca. AD 61). The metaphors of life as theatre gained their widest popularity during the Renaissance and Baroque periods, the most famous of which are the theatrical metaphors employed by Shakespeare (“All the world’s a stage...” in *As You Like It*, 1623). In these earlier texts, the idea of the world as a theatre stage and humans as characters in a play written by God(s) usually refers to the belief that humans cannot create and stage their lives only by themselves, and that their choices in roles to play may not be voluntary, but rather provided to them by the (godlike) stage director. Metaphors associated with drama and theatre are also widely used in literature and philosophy in the ensuing centuries.

However, throughout the 20th century, theatre and dramatic texts have been shifting borders with social reality, showing interest in the similarities between performative behaviour (and cultural scripts) in diverse cultural practices (for example, rituals, games, plays, sports etc.) and theatre acting (and dramatic texts); breaking out of both spatial as well as mental conventions (Schechner 1988). In consequence, the theatre researcher Hans-Thies Lehmann justifiably questions the validity of the drama-analogy. Despite the fact that even today the art of drama is considered as the “latent normative idea of theatre”, the genres, forms and borders of both theatre and drama have changed considerably over the past century — the actual text may be but a minor element in a performance, it may be created during the process itself, narratives can be told on stage using nonverbal signs, etc. (Lehmann 2006[1999]: 25). At this point it must be admitted that metaphoric comparisons are always simplifying in one way or the other, and that the source domain of a metaphor is always more complex than what is selected from it for the purposes of the analogy. If a comparison between theatre/drama and social life were to

encompass the entirety of contemporary dramatic arts in its complete heterogeneity, the analogy would be exceedingly difficult to build. Creating an analogy thus inevitably presumes that some prior knowledge forms the basis for creating and modelling new knowledge, and that analogical reasoning always functions on the basis of a selective similarity by bringing into focus certain common properties and qualities in the source of the analogy and the object to be described (and frequently also overemphasizing them), while paying no attention to other properties and qualities (Genter, Jeziorski 1993: 448). If the analogy was isomorphic to the object being described, it would no longer function as an analogy.

This difficulty is also noted by the anthropologist Clifford Geertz, when he describes the “blurring of the genres” in social sciences — he welcomes the interpretive turn but warns against a too enthusiastic application of theatre terminology by social scientists, as quite soon they will find themselves “drawn into the rather tangled coils of its aesthetic” (Geertz 1983: 27). Mapping the situation in cultural studies of the day, Geertz brings out the strengths and weaknesses of the two main applications of drama-analogy — ritual theory and symbolic action theory — noting that in order to be in touch with contemporary developments in theatre and theatre studies, social scientists are in a desperate need for a closer cooperation with theatre researchers. Furthermore, the theatre researcher Bert States refers to a more general problem related to metaphorical reasoning: the mutual impact of vehicle and tenor (that is, theatre and the other domains that are compared with it), in that there seems to be forgetfulness in the usage practices, where metaphors tend to work more like “one-way streets” (States 1996: 2). In other words, it should not be forgotten that any application of analogy works both ways; when analysing a particular cultural phenomenon as a drama, we bring over to social theory, in addition to the specific primary conceptualization, also a particular understanding of drama as an aesthetic phenomenon.

Richard H. Brown (1977: 160) calls “drama” a “root metaphor” in the social sciences. A root metaphor cannot in itself be considered a model or a theory; nevertheless, a root metaphor provides as if a foundation, on top of which different models can be built by way of systematization, clarification, and formalization. In other words, there is no singular dramatic model for describing culture; instead, many different models, all based on the drama-analogy, can be invented. One of the major problems in using the concept of drama as an analogy are the close connections between drama and theatre — dramatic texts are primarily meant to be staged and performed in theatre; characters in the drama represent the connecting link between the text, the actor and the role. If we treat drama as a root metaphor or basic analogy, the so-called umbrella-analogy “society as theatre” will inevitably begin to operate alongside it (see Rigney 2001: 143–161). Drama, staging, performance — all three metaphorical concepts have in turn been interpreted and elaborated differently as analogies, and thus refer to different ways of interpreting social processes, and provide distinct understandings of the relations between individual agency and social structures (for example, “scripted” ideologies and “staged” events seem to underline the manipulation of the individual by the society, whereas social roles performed by human agents lend a more active part to those embodying them).

The inevitable bottleneck of metaphoric analogies is indeed the instability of its heuristic potential, since metaphors cannot be defined definitively and they are applied differently in different cases, owing to the fact that there are different reasons for why different cultural phenomena are called dramas or performances. “Since the vehicle never specifies the intended meaning or application one is free to find *similarities* that apply in one case but do not apply in another” (States 1996: 2). On the other hand, R. H. Brown considers the internal ambivalence of drama as a root metaphor to be its strength and not its weakness — the many significances of drama force the social scientist to ponder again and again the relations between freedom and

determinism, causality and awareness, author and actor, actor and dramatic character; all the while every one of these aspects can cast new light on understanding others, and vice versa (Brown 1977: 157–158). Both of these positions are in fact necessary, and a researcher making use of metaphoric analogies must inevitably show a heightened criticism and sense of reflection, and, despite the extensibility of metaphors, must take extra caution about the heuristic shifts that such extensions may bring. Analogies based on metaphors unavoidably highlight some features of the subject matter currently being analysed, and leave others indistinct or invisible.

By providing new explanations and ideas about a particular phenomenon, analogies can draw the social researcher's attention to unexpected connections, but undoubtedly there is also the danger that the analogy may force the object being studied into its own Procrustean bed, changing into blinders that let the researcher see only whatever is familiar and fitting to the analogy (Rigney 2001: 200). Thus for the social scientist the question is: *what similarities* are examined, and *how*, if something from social reality is studied using theatre or drama analogy?

2. Social dramas and dramaturgy of everyday life: Victor Turner and Erving Goffman

In what follows I will take under closer scrutiny two different and simultaneously yet independently born metaphoric theatre-analogies — the anthropologist Victor Turner's conception of social dramas, and the sociologist Erving Goffman's dramaturgic perspective on social life. Both authors are aware of the metaphoric nature of their analogies and reflect on the limits of their applicability. In case of Turner, I will focus on his earlier study, *Schism and Continuity in an African Society. A Study of Ndembu Village Life* (1996[1957]) and on certain later works (*Dramas, Fields and Metaphors. Symbolic Action in Human Society*

(1974) and others), as they provide the clearest outline of the model and concept of social drama. In case of Erving Goffman, I will mostly confine myself to his first, most famous and also most misinterpreted book, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1990a[1959]), as this work provides the most systematic elaboration of the perspective of dramaturgy. Both Turner's and Goffman's approach to culture grew out of ethnographic fieldwork and from a persistent interest in the ways that people act in particular situations, for which reason Turner has been called "practice theorist" (Kapferer 1996: xii) and Goffman a "theoretically oriented empiricist" (Collins 1980: 174) or "cultural pragmatist" (Alexander, Mast 2006: 2–5).

Although Turner's drama-analogy proceeds from the classical structure of a dramatic text, and Goffman's drama-analogy stems from the dramaturgical principles of performances (theatrical productions), there are relevant connections between the two approaches even despite their considerable differences, and this in turn has provided the opportunity to several authors for comparing Turner's and Goffman's analogies (States 1996; Rigney 2001; Grimes 2004; Rozik 2002). Both Turner's and Goffman's early studies provided an important impetus to the development of interpretive and reflexive anthropology and sociology. Both were interdisciplinary scholars who exceeded the limits of disciplinary thinking, and their metaphoric — drama and theatre based — analogies have inspired many other social scientists and theorists, but also produced considerable misinterpretations and criticism (see Psathas 1980; Wilshire 1982; Rozik 2002; Bell 1992; Grimes 2004). For example, the theatre researcher Eli Rozik believes that theatre is a thoroughly false analogy for social sciences due to its excessive *similarity* to the real world on the one hand, and due to its inevitable, often already metaphorical, model-like representation of life on the other hand (Rozik 2002). I will nevertheless suggest that while all metaphorical analogies have their limits, as long as their *likeness* is kept in mind we can still expect them to provide a heuristic and explanatory contribution, perhaps even more so if the

materialized and embodied model of reality is transformed into a mental model or a cognitive tool for the purposes of explaining reality.

The works of both authors have also been considered relevant for semiotic theory, since both take an interest in symbolic interaction, in codes and frames that constitute social communication, and in symbolic signs and symbol systems used in culture that require metacommunicative skills (MacCannell 1983; Vester 1989; Heiskala 1999; Riggins 1993; Babcock, MacAloon 1987). The concept of “social drama” is seen to be “one of the basic units of understanding cultural processes for Turner, it is a concept that combines synchronic analysis of village structure with diachronic exegesis of the social drama’s ‘regular processual form’ of ‘breach/crisis/redress or schism’”; the units of rituals (and other cultural performances) in turn were “symbols, woven into complex semiotic tapestries” (Babcock, MacAloon 1987: 6–7). According to Goffman, the way that the *self* is presented in interactions of everyday life is close to the idea of semiosis, yet limited by the immediacy of face-to-face interaction. “Goffman’s signs are always produced by a person for another person who is immediately present. They are dependent upon and produced by the voice, face or body, and they are interpreted as self-referential, as conveying an aspect or quality of their human signifier” (MacCannell 1983: 24).

The major difference between Goffman and Turner lies in their different objects of study — for the former, they are micro-situations of everyday communication (that is, social performances) in Western culture; for the latter, they are conflicts and rituals that encompass large social groups and which deviate from everyday life. Thus Goffman uses dramaturgy to study the experiences of everyday life, whereas Turner uses social drama for understanding experiences that deviate from routine everyday situations.³ Furthermore, there is also a

³ In fact, Turner and Goffman understand experience in relatively similar ways — both pay attention to immediate embodied experience. For Turner, who elaborates the concept of *Erlebnisse* (“lived experience”), originally developed by the philosophers Alfred Schütz and Wilhelm Dilthey, the study of experience is so

difference in the scale and focus of the things that interest the two scholars. “Goffman’s typical ‘performer’ is a single person moving in a world infested with behavioral do’s and don’t’s; Turner’s performers are usually ‘disturbed social groups’ caught in the agony of competing political claims” (States 1996: 8).

Goffman’s main contribution to sociology was to turn the simple and ordinary daily communication — face-to-face interaction — into an object of study for sociology.⁴ By using the analogy of dramaturgy (or theatrical performance)⁵ for describing the myriad communicative situations in his contemporary society, the coded nature of which most of us fail to notice, Goffman puzzled his contemporary readers, drawing attention to the fact that even apparently mundane activities encompass a number of different codes and reciprocal behavioural strategies. Studying the society of the United States in the 1950s in particular⁶, Goffman arrived at the idea of the dramaturgy of social

important that he sometimes calls his approach “anthropology of experience” and his object of study the “structures of experience” (Turner 1982a), as opposed to abstract social structures. Turner studies the structures of experience by way of social dramas and cultural performances, concentrating on the “doing” of culture — on embodiment, experiences, and performances. Goffman uses the concept of “organization of experience” when discussing the different “frames” of social life that structure behaviour (including the frames of performance and ritual). It is the individual who is aware of the organization of experience — organization is located “in the mind of an individual actor, not in the organization of society” (Goffman 1971: 11–13). The ways in which experience is considered by both authors are an excellent example of approaches that fuse agency and structure.

⁴ One should not, however, forget the sociologist Georg Simmel, who, even before Goffman, drew attention to the complex field of everyday behaviour, to something that may perhaps be called “small interpersonal rituals” (Manning 1992: 21).

⁵ Later he would use the analogies of *games* and *rituals* for analysing social interactions.

⁶ In his doctoral dissertation, published in 1953 and out of which grew his *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman studied the communities of Shetland Islands in Scotland.

behaviour, by way of which the interaction of people in the most mundane situations and cultural scenes (in shops, restaurants, at the workplace, in relationships, etc.) can be studied and interpreted.

Ever since his earliest studies, and unlike Goffman, Victor Turner was interested in exceptional, borderline situations in the life of a community or society — conflicts, crises and the rituals for resolving them — that may lead either to a reconciliation or a complete parting between the parties, but which in most cases bring about non-mundane experiences and heightened reflexivity. Turner’s “social dramas” focus on events that can be clearly isolated from the everyday life of a culture, and are thus definable and describable, and characterised by a comparatively universal basic structure. Taking as his field of research situations of social crises and rituals associated with them, Turner analyses the ways in which conflicts of different type arise, develop and are resolved in a society. He argues that it is precisely during such borderline cases that the parties in a conflict tend to be more sharply aware than usual of the rules and principles that govern their mutual relations.

In what follows I will present a more precise comparative analysis between Turner’s and Goffman’s analogies, limiting myself to a closer treatment of certain primary characteristics of their complex and versatile analogies of theatre and drama.

2.1. Social drama: Analogy based on the resemblance of conflict

By studying the Ndembu tribe⁷ in central Africa, and, later, other social groups, Victor Turner developed an interpretive scheme based on an analogy with drama, wishing particularly to provide explana-

⁷ The territory of the Ndembu tribe is located in the southern regions of Central Africa, being divided between three countries — Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia), Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Belgian Congo) and Angola (formerly Portuguese Angola).

tions for conflict situations and their resolutions, as well as to the transformative dynamics of social processes more generally. Following the example of earlier anthropologists-ritual researchers⁸, Turner notes how social dramas “constitute isolable and minutely describable units of social process” that decrease tension, resolve or even avoid conflicts in a society (Turner 1974: 33). But what sort of a drama does he have in mind, considering the complexity of the significations of this world in Anglo-American culture? Initially Turner seems to proceed from the narrow, classical, Aristotelian drama theory, that is, from the structure of a four-act play (tragedy)⁹, since he distinguishes the following phases in social dramas: (1) a radical change in normal social relations between the members of a society or a particular group (*breach*); (2) a crisis or the widening of the breach, if the conflict cannot be resolved quickly (*crisis*); (3) mechanisms of reconciliation and compensation, brought into play by the leaders of the social group (*redressive action*); (4) a renewed integration of the members of the group, or the acknowledgement of an incorrigible disruption by the general public, and the acceptance of this disruption (*reintegration*) (Turner 1974: 37–42).

⁸ Turner’s conception of social dramas was partially influenced by the studies of ritual by the early social scientists Arnold van Gennep and Émile Durkheim, but also by his interest in (drama) literature and theatre (particularly in his contemporary British and American theatre). Parallels can also be drawn with the approaches of the anthropologist Milton Singer, Turner’s contemporary, who in the 1950s, in his studies of Indian ceremonial rituals as “cultural performances”, based this analogy on several structural and external similarities between rituals and theatre performances: a definable beginning and end, “an organized program of activity”, a set of performers and an audience, a “place and occasion” (Singer 1972: 71).

⁹ In the history of drama theory, much effort has been spent on describing the rules of composition of plays. In his work from 1863, *Die Technik des Dramas*, the literary theorist Gustav Freytag (1886[1863]) outlined the structure of a classical, closed form, five act play (tragedy), later known as Freytag’s pyramid, which for a considerable time was quite influential in normative drama theory.

Conflict is certainly not the only similarity between theatre and the social situations that were of interest to Turner, but I wish to highlight it here as one distinctive basis for generating this comparison, since the connection between dramatic conflicts and antagonistic social processes is very evident. The importance of conflict as a central feature of dramatic works that structure their entire activity and relations between characters was emphasized in his dialectical theory of drama by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (*Aesthetik*), and this dialectical understanding of history is also noticeable in Turner's conception of social drama (see Rigney 2001: 158). The conflict is expressed by a struggle between two contradictory forces, and the more balanced these forces are, the more intriguing the dramatic tension that will arise. (In drama, conflict can of course also be realized as a conflict between a character and society, or as a character's internal conflict.) Accordingly, drama as a genre of literature typically concentrated on those situations and social processes in which there is naturally more tension and conflict than is usual, and which are then intensified and amplified (especially in tragedies and melodramas). Looking at the developments of 20th century dramatic arts, however, one should not overemphasize conflict and consider it as a unique and universal property of drama only.

According to Turner's antagonistic treatment of culture, then, social dramas are first manifested as a violation of certain social norms, be they moral rules, the law, customs, etc. This violation may be either conscious or non-conscious or even premeditated by certain individuals who desire to bring about a particular social change (Turner 1982b[1981]: 70). Conflict can develop into a deeper crisis, which may even result in war, but in most cases there is an attempt to resolve the situation by using ritual proceedings that follow particular rules (legal proceedings, sacrifices, etc.). Once the rule(s) have been broken and conflict begins to develop, the leaders of the offended group usually attempt to bring into play certain placating or counterbalancing measures (both formal and informal), according to the nature of the

conflict. These redressive mechanisms can vary from personal suggestions to public rituals, such as making an actual or symbolic sacrifice, creating situations for expressing ritual violence, etc. The solution to the crisis may be either the restoration of the situation to the way it was before the conflict, or the development of a new tense situation and its acceptance; in some cases, the solution may come in the form of the inevitable final solution of a tragedy — catastrophe (murder, banishment, etc.).

The nature of conflicts and their resolution largely depends on the type of society — in traditional societies, it is the clans, families or different religious groups that get into conflict, in contemporary Western societies¹⁰ it is usually different ethnic groups, social classes, etc.¹¹ Turner finds that all of the four phases of social drama are much clearer and more distinct in the first, often cyclically developing type of cultures (especially because of a stronger communal consensus), and the role of individuals in beginning and ending social dramas is much more marked in traditional societies than in contemporary Western-type societies, which tend to change more rapidly and in more complex ways, and in which the course of social dramas is frequently controlled by institutions such as the police or the military (Turner 1982a: 92). Indeed, in his later writings Turner stresses that unlike theatrical dramas (especially tragedies), social dramas frequently do not have clearly marked solutions, and often there develop circumstances in the fourth phase that may lay the foundation for the birth of yet another drama. The theatre researcher Bert States claims

¹⁰ Turner calls these post-industrial or complex societies.

¹¹ Although starting out from the study of Ndembu rituals, Turner is in fact interested in the dynamics of social conflicts more generally, in how political and economic changes bring about an increasingly complex society, with its increasingly difficult solutions to conflicts (including the repertoire of social dramas). In his later studies Turner transfers the concept of social drama back to the context of Western society and studies, among other things, the “crisis rituals” in the political life of the United States in the 1970s.

that Turner's purpose is not to argue that all social conflicts are similar, but that he speaks about the causal structure of human experience more generally, and about certain universals in the development and solving of conflicts. Interpreting social conflicts by the application of dramatic structure is clearly a metaphoric explanation; nevertheless, States notes that this metaphor loses its impact if it was reversed (that is, dramas are structured as social conflicts); for some reason we have today "forgotten the Aristotelian idea of mimesis, that social conflicts precede their dramatic representations" (States 1996: 5–6).

What, precisely, is the place of rituals in the course of a social drama? In his earlier works, rituals were, for Turner, one aspect of the process of social dramas (frequently functioning as mechanisms that guarantee social stability); in later works, however, the liminality and transformative potentiality of rituals becomes increasingly relevant, and in his last writings he devotes considerable attention to reflexivity as it arises in the participants of a ritual.¹² In his first major study, *Schism and Continuity in an African Society* (1957), in which he first develops his conception of social drama, Turner dedicates just a single chapter to rituals, focusing on the politically integrating function of rituals (Turner 1996[1957]: 288–317). The early Turner sees in rituals above all a compensatory mechanism that resolves particular tensions that have appeared in the secular order of a society. In the social drama model, rituals are part of the redressive phase, dedicated to resolving the crisis situation with various formal or less formal ritualized activities, and to preventing the community and/or social order from disintegrating (Turner 1982a: 92). Nevertheless, Turner's early views on rituals are not purely functionalist, but rather reveal his

¹² Turner argues that rituals (as well as several other cultural performances) are not so much the reflections of a culture, but rather provide the participants an opportunity for reflexive cognition, providing an opportunity to consider the relationship of oneself to one's culture as if from a distance. Thus reflexivity is, for Turner, related to metacommunication in Gregory Bateson's sense.

interest in the forms of expression of human creativity.¹³ This interest becomes increasingly prevalent in his later works, in which Turner also takes an interest, in addition to rituals proper, in several other ritual-like genres of cultural performances.

For Turner, rituals have a considerable, even a decisive role to play in the process of social drama, since they are used for performing the symbols and values of the culture. In other words, culture or a social group manifests itself in rituals. Turner argues that the most typical, inter-cultural forms of rituals are frequently organized according to a “dramatic structure” (that is, a particular kind of plot or narrative sequence), and that the energetic and emotional tinge of ritual activities intertwines cognitive structures and sensory experiences in ways different from the mundane (Turner 1982b: 81). Although Turner considered it important to distinguish between rituals in traditional societies (such as the Ndembu tribal society) and ritual-like events in his own contemporary Western society, in his later works he claims that both rituals and ritual-like events are characterised by a larger or lesser degree of “liminality”. This concept refers to the moment of being placed into a borderline situation that provides one with an opportunity for sensing, with greater clarity than provided by everyday life, what does it exactly mean to be a member of a particular culture, and what do the values and norms of that culture mean.¹⁴ Whereas in Turner’s day anthropology mostly emphasized the so-called mirror function of rituals (rituals as a reflection of a particular

¹³ Turner’s interest in creativity was influenced by some of his other interests — Turner’s mother was an actress, hence his early interest in theatre. Before studying anthropology, he studied literature in the London University College. His interest in literature was life-lasting, and something of a belletrist can be noticed even in his anthropological studies.

¹⁴ Turner’s idea of liminality as a “fructile chaos, as a fertile nothingness, a storehouse of possibilities, not by any means a random assemblage but a striving after new forms and structure [...]” (Turner 1990: 12) is closely related to Juri Lotman’s treatment of the function of “borders” in culture (Lotman 1990: 131–142).

culture), for Turner, over the course of the 1970s and 1980s, the heightened “plural [collective] reflexivity” became increasingly relevant (Turner 1982b: 75). A heightened perception of one’s own culture and oneself not only allows one to affirm and reinforce social values and norms, but also offers a possibility for transforming these values and norms (at least on the symbolic level, but this may later lead to concrete changes in social reality). Thus rituals can function as catalysts of social transformations.

Turner has noted that his interest in the drama-analogy was due to his interest in changes in interactions between human beings at different times, and he has admitted that because of his Western cultural background he was unable to describe the “public activities” that he was studying as anything other than dramatic (or theatrical) (Turner 1984: 19). The concept of social drama was thus born out of an interest in cultural processes related to change, in its own turn leading to a choice in favour of rituals related to all kinds of transitions or crises. All the central concepts in Turner’s early works — drama, transition, activity, process — refer to dynamics, changes, development. Over time, social drama becomes, for Turner, a general model, applicable for describing processes of social transformation; in his later studies, this is extended to Western-type complex societies in addition to traditional ones. By 1980s, Turner had become convinced that he was dealing with a cultural universal — that social drama is “a spontaneous unit of social process and a fact of everyone’s experience in every human society” (Turner 1982b: 68) that is present in “in some corporate group, such as family, lineage, clan, tribe, nation, etc.” (Turner 1982a: 92). The claim for the universality of social drama does not, however, mean that it would be expressed in the same way in all societies (for example, in some cultures social dramas proceed

relatively discreetly), or that the socio-political forces¹⁵ that prompt social dramas would be the same (Turner 1982b: 71–72).

The idea of the universality of social drama leads to the main criticism of Turner's analogy — it has been argued that he has read into non-Western cultures what is not really there, mainly because of his desire, as a Western researcher, to see “drama” everywhere (see Handelman 1998[1990]: xliii). Even if we accept the analogy, rituals may nevertheless not always appear in the redressive phase of social dramas, nor is it inevitable that social crises would develop in precisely four phases, even were we to approach them by applying the drama analogy (there may be more or fewer phases), and so on. Thus researchers should, in their applications of the social drama model, observe its particular homology with Turner's empirical examples, and be aware that it is but one particular way of perceiving culture as drama.

2.2. Dramaturgy of everyday life: An analogy based on the resemblance of characters, roles and acting

Erving Goffman's ideas about dramaturgy as something that organises people's interaction in everyday life were derived from empirical data quite unlike Turner's — ethnographic fieldwork on the Shetland Islands near Scotland, and later in the United States. For Goffman, dramaturgy does not refer to the rules of composition of a dramatic work (that is, based on a textual analogy), but first and foremost to the dramaturgical principles of a theatre performance. The central elements of dramaturgy on stage are not the structure of the dramatic text, but rather action that, in its turn, connects the dramatic text and

¹⁵ What these forces are, what impact do they have on the course of social dramas and in what ways they legitimate the events taking place in them becomes especially significant for Turner beginning from the 1960s, due to the political events taking place in both the United States and Europe at the time.

the performance — the logic of action (continuity, connections, motives, etc.), the techniques of acting (how something is done) and dramaturgical choices made by both the stage director and the actors (including choices made from among the theatrical means of expression) (see Barba 1995). From the point of view of social sciences, the dramaturgical perspective connects the individual as a dynamic agent in a social interaction with social scripts and norms that guide this action.

By combining the concept of immediate interaction with the concept of social structure, Goffman provided a vital contribution not only to the development of the so-called micro-theories, but to the development of integrated sociology as a whole (which has traditionally mostly focused on general social structures; Roberts 2006: 63). Yet since Goffman's dramaturgy is, strictly speaking, not a theory or a method, but rather a perspective or a view on social life, its shallow application may lead either to functionalist determinism (individuals merely re-present roles prescribed to them by social norms and conventions) or to extreme individualistic relativism (everyone has a possibility of always manipulating others). Goffman's approach has nevertheless inspired many social scientists, who have tried to explicate and further develop or to criticize the potentiality of the theoretical framework present in this analogy-driven perspective (see Brissett, Edgley 1990; Riggins 1993; Treviño 2003).

In his *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1990a[1959]), Goffman does not put dramaturgy forward as a clearly definable or precisely applicable analytic model; instead, he examines certain "principles" or "techniques" that govern everyday social interactions that are used for self-expression and for understanding the behaviour of others. Dramaturgy does not refer to a particular, specific type of behavioural repertoire, to concrete "poetics" of everyday behaviour, but rather strives to describe certain general principles of social behaviour (within the framework of the empirical subject matters Goffman studied). Goffman lists the following six major drama-

turgical principles: (1) performance (analogous with a theatre performance, involving certain codes that enable theatrical communication, and other elements that constitute the performance on stage); (2) team (analogous with the group of people involved in producing a performance (actors, director, scenographer etc.)); (3) regions (distinguishing “front” and “back” by analogy with the stage and the backstage in theatre); (4) discrepant roles (these could be contrasted with ambivalent roles that some actors might perform, or certain miscommunications between actors and the audience); (5) communication out of character (here a parallel can be drawn with different acting styles and techniques); and (6) arts of impression management (the equivalent of which in a theatrical performance could be the actor’s consistency in performing a role, as well as the persuasiveness of the performance).

Dramaturgy in everyday life does not direct us towards representations of social scripts that, independently of individual agents, guide people’s behaviour and communication, but rather to the examination and interpretation of particular interactive face-to-face situations that Goffman calls “performances”. While Turner considered social dramas to be the basic units of his analysis, for Goffman they are the performances of everyday life. Goffman defines performance as a form of interaction that aims to have a mutual impact on its actors: “performance may be defined as all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants” (Goffman 1990a[1959]: 26). The dramaturgy of social performances, then, does not refer to a theatrically exaggerated behaviour or to deception, but rather to the most mundane, immediate everyday communicative situations, although ones in which the purpose of individuals is admittedly to influence each other by applying different strategies of expression.

Although dramaturgy may indeed be considered to be based on a general analogy with theatrical performances that involve multiple elements, I would like to limit my scope to considering just some aspects

of the concepts of *character* and *role* in relation with *acting*, as well as certain “real techniques”, as these may be considered to be the key similarities on which Goffman builds up his approach to social performance. Goffman divides an individual into a *performer* (the one engaged in making an impression on others using self-production) and a *character* (the figure that the performer wants to evoke in the others, i.e. the desired impression of the *self* in a performance) (Goffman 1990a[1959]: 244). As in theatrical performances, he makes a distinction between actors and acting, and imaginary or fictional characters emerging from role performances. Moreover, Goffman argues that the *character* and the *self* (that is, the performer) cannot be equated, despite there being a tendency to do so in Western culture (compare: character = personality). There is nothing essential about the self as a “performed character”; it is “a product” of the scene of social interactions and not “a cause of it” (Goffman 1990a[1959]: 245). In Goffman’s dramaturgical perspective, one cannot stage and perform one’s self as a particular character without the assistance and feedback from other performers. By studying the ways of self-staging and self-performing, Goffman was in fact interested more generally in the relations between the individual and the society, not just in staging the “self” as a strategy for identity creation, but the “self” as social production.

As was already noted, it is the *character* that forms the link between the dramatic text and the theatrical performance — characters are part of the text of a play, yet gain their concrete realization in the role of an actor. Although both theatre and everyday life preserve some essential features of “social characters”, the individual embodied realizations — roles — are nevertheless not at all irrelevant. In addition to the concept of character, Goffman also employs the concept of role, sometimes conceiving it as being identical with the character, sometimes as a concept that encompasses the entire performer-character interaction (see Goffman 1974: 128–129). Roles (including social roles), however, intertwine the dramatic character and its idiosyncratic interpretation by a specific actor. (Moreover, it is not only the inter-

pretation by two different actors that may vary, but also the same actor's role in different performances.) In the social sciences, it is not the concept of character but rather that of social role that has become widely accepted, even though the latter is understood more or less in the same sense as "character" is understood in the context of theatre (a socially accepted way of behaving in certain situations). As social agents (actors), we perform social roles (for example, a parent, a teacher, a boss, an employee, a customer, etc.) that are, to a certain extent, prescribed by the society. In other words, roles refer to a "consistent pattern of behavior or a structure of attitudes and expectations" (Brissett, Edgley 1990: 28).

In his analyses of particular social performances, Goffman, however, takes on the role of a theatre scholar — his interests are not limited to the more abstract social and linguistic messages carried on in face-to-face communication; in addition to these, he carefully revises strategies and techniques of performing, and nonverbal means used in immediate interaction (facial expressions, gestures, postures, etc.). In addition, Goffman makes an important distinction between expressions "given" and expressions "given off" by social actors (Goffman 1990a[1959]: 14) — the former consist of consciously produced signs by a social actor, whereas the latter are signs emerging in the face-to-face interaction that he or she might not be aware of, yet which are interpreted by others in their own ways.¹⁶

Similar to the theatre stage, where the actors (independently of the aesthetics of acting or the particular theatrical genre) must be convincing for the audience with their performances, the credibility and persuasiveness of performers in social performance have an important part to play in the effectiveness of the performance. The performers' dedication — their belief in the character being performed,

¹⁶ Intentionality and self-awareness of the social actor is a hotly debated issue in Goffman's approach (see Heiskala 1999). In the flow of social action, while being engaged in doing something, we are usually unaware of "being in the role" in the same sense as the actor on stage is.

and/or in their own performance — is associated with the attitudes that the performers have towards themselves and the character being performed. But just like in the case of theatrical roles, so too in life there are different strategies for creating a convincing role, suggesting the fact that a persuasive performance does not necessarily have to be a sincere one. Goffman (1990a[1959]: 28–29) does indeed distinguish two strategies in social performances, the first of which consists in being sincerely engrossed in the reality of the performance, and the other in a cynical attitude towards one’s own performance, observing the situation as if from a bystander’s perspective.¹⁷

A particular case closely examined by Goffman is “communication out of character”, usually appearing on the “backstage”, yet something that may likewise happen if the performer “forgets himself and blurts out a relatively unperformed exclamation” (Goffman 1990a[1959]: 168). In addition, Goffman focuses on another interesting aspect of role action in social life and theatre that he calls “role distance”. Role distance is the process by which the individual effectively expresses the separateness between himself and his “putative role” (Goffman 1990b[1961]: 103). In other words, role distance refers to role-awareness as well as reflexivity towards certain roles, and to our ability to adapt to role-performing situations. The more our self is alienated from or resistant to a particular role that we need to perform in a particular situation, the more likely we are to feel distanced from it (frequently this may result in commenting on our own behaviour in front of others or even in self-mockery)¹⁸. Goffman contrasts the

¹⁷ In Western theatre, one may broadly distinguish two widely recognized acting techniques, the first of which consists in a psychophysical settling into the role (the Stanislavskij school), and the other in demonstrating the role to the audience, thereby maintaining the distance between the actor and the character (the Brechtian school).

¹⁸ A later interpretation of Goffman’s concept states that role distance is a good example of the social constructedness of the (postmodern) self as a web of roles and relationships, and that the distance is “less an issue of motivation than an

feeling of distance with “embracement by the role”, that is, being fully engaged in the situation, so that the distinction between the performing self and the role disappears¹⁹.

Goffman’s dramaturgy has sometimes been shallowly treated as an analysis of mere individual manipulation or strategies of deception. Such a simplified conception does not take into account the fact that the central feature of Goffman’s approach is *interaction*, for which reason the need to be accepted and understood by others is essential for every social performer. In his discussions of the different arts of impression management²⁰ in performances between individuals, Goffman emphasizes the importance of “dramaturgical loyalty” between the performers, as well as the necessity of “dramaturgical discipline” in performances, indicating the need for consciously staying in the role in order to guarantee the consistency and continuity of the performance, which tends to develop tactfulness towards others (Goffman 1990a: 207–112, 227–230). It thus cannot be asserted that, according to Goffman, individuals have endless opportunities for playing with others; in every performance, individuals must be prepared to adjust their initial intentions according to the reactions of the others.

Consequently, one of the key questions of agent-structure dynamics in sociology is related to the concept of social role. Before Goffman, it was common to treat roles in the deterministic functionalist paradigm, whereas he, together with other interactionists, saw roles from a complementary perspective — roles are created in social interaction between individuals (which in turn constitutes social order), as well as in personal interpretations (see Brissett, Edgley 1990).

agonistic property of [contemporary western — E.V.] society” (Battershill 1990: 175).

¹⁹ This understanding of engagement in the role is similar to the concept of “flow” later introduced by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1988).

²⁰ Unfortunately, Goffman fails to be terminologically consistent, since he uses, in quite a similar sense, concepts such as *staging*, *conduct*, *organization*, *management*, that evoke more or less theatre-related connotations.

Contemporary sociology, too, treats role as an analytical concept that allows one to combine social structure with individual behaviour (Franks 2007: 3945). For Goffman, dramaturgy refers to activity in a situation of performance that foregrounds expressive, not instrumental aspects or causal backgrounds of said activity (Roberts 2006: 66). Dramaturgy brings out the individuals' skills in choosing, using and manipulating certain social rules, skills for performing the self and of influencing the co-performers or the audience. Staging and performing the self cannot, however, take place without the counteraction of other participants in the social performance (this fact is corroborated by all the mutual considerations in social interaction); even so, Goffman sees in everyday dramaturgical strategies also a possibility for individuals for contributing to the active shaping of the social life of both themselves and others (Branaman 1997: xlv, lxiii). In addition, just like an actor in theatre, a social performer is capable of being aware of the fact that they are acting in a particular situation, and sometimes even of the characters they are currently playing; this awareness, however, does not always mean a rationally calculated or heightened self-consciousness, but rather a situation-based awareness that arises from immediate presence and interaction (compare Harré 1993: 172).

Goffman's own relation to the theatre-analogy is, in the end, ambivalent — on the one hand, he returned to it in some of his later works (Goffman 1961, 1967, 1971, 1974), yet on the other hand, in order to better understand Goffman's application of the theatre-analogy one should in fact begin by first reading his book's conclusion. There he admits that his use of the "language of the stage" was an attempt to develop this particular analogy as "a rhetoric and a manoeuvre", and that one should be critically aware of the differences between the *illusionist nature* of theatre acting and the *real consequences* of acting in everyday life. The main criticism of Goffman's dramaturgical approach is indeed targeted against its/his basic assumption that social life is *like* theatre. Theatre creates fictional

representations of reality that are “existentially distinct”, whereas interaction in real life, in turn, employs a different system of signification and communication (action is not the same as “enacting an action”) (Rozik 2002: 185–205). In addition, it has been argued that Goffman’s understanding of theatre is too narrow, being mostly limited to the realistic and commercial Western theatre, whereas theatre in its multiple forms, including various acting techniques as well as ways of reception, would afford for much more detailed comparisons (compare States 1996).

Nevertheless, Goffman believes that there exist basic “real techniques” involved in the successful staging of characters by the performers, be it on stage or in situations of social life (Goffman 1990a[1959]: 246–247). In fact, he took a broader interest in the “organization of experience — something an individual actor can take into his mind — and not the organization of society” (Goffman 1974: 13). It appears to be possible to survive in the “dramaturgical puzzle” if we keep in mind the limits of this metaphor and metaphorical analogy, indicated by Goffman himself as well as his supporters and detractors, and struggle to look not only for similarities but also for differences between theatre and social performance currently being studied, as well as the particular kind of theatrical style or acting school that would help explain some particulars about acting in social life.

Conclusion: The burden of metaphorical analogy

The question — in what aspects is social life *like* theatre? — rises every time that a researcher begins to apply Turner’s or Goffman’s theatrical terminology. The sociologist Stephen Harold Riggins argues rather cynically that the metaphor *life is like theatre* is tautological — “to say that social life resembles theater is the same as saying that nature resembles photographs” (Riggins 1993: 161). Yet at the same time he admits that people have a tendency to compare representations of

reality (books, TV-shows, films) with what is going on in the everyday realm, and thus it might sometimes help make sense of our lives in a different sense. Even if theatre metaphors are mostly descriptive and not explanatory, they provide us with an opportunity to recognize certain resemblances from a perspective that might explicate not just familiar but also unfamiliar similarities. It might be that the power of the theatrical analogy lies not so much in directing us, time after time, to look for dramatic structures, conflicts, characters, and roles in social life, but rather in making us reflect critically upon the kinds of differences in ways of representation that arise from these comparisons, once we begin studying human social action in its temporal flow.

Somewhat paradoxically, it seems that the closer the source and target domains of the metaphorical analogy are, the more seductive it is to compare them and, yet, the more challenging is the role of researchers in their responsibility not to mix *likeness* with *sameness*. Furthermore, it is unlikely that these perspectives can be applied without reflection on the mutual appropriateness of social drama/dramaturgy and the phenomenon/a being studied — not all social situations and events in social life can be explained by using theatrical terminology, primarily because of the lack of some prerequisite resemblance between them. It seems that the most fruitful applications of social drama have been those that have managed to explain something about certain aspects of social reality that are similar to theatrical/dramatic events, yet at the same time managed to demonstrate the differences between the two. An appropriate suggestion is provided by the sociologist Daniel Rigney, who proposes that we pay attention to “theatrical analogies” as well as “disanalogies” while applying the metaphor of theatre to social life (Rigney 2001: 144–151).

When evaluating certain homologies between the analogy and the objects under study, and consequently the appropriateness of these analogies, we can note the difference between Turner’s and Goffman’s approaches — the first takes an interest in rituals (that is, non-mundane experiences), and the other pays attention to daily social

interaction (that is, mundane experiences). Hence it can be argued that for studying rituals or social crisis situations, it is suitable to treat them as having a structure similar to those dramatic texts that have a certain order and clearly distinguishable phases, in which changes on the structural level are more substantial than in the dramaturgy between individuals. For the study of everyday interactions, however, it is more suitable to pick performance dramaturgy (that is, different ways of acting, embodying characters and roles etc.) that does not necessarily need consistent scripts or major conflicts.

Both Turner's and Goffman's approaches were foundational for interpretive anthropology and sociology, intertwining aspects of dramatic structure (in the sense of social structures and norms) and performer: for Goffman, the connecting links were, for example, performances and roles (in which the individual interpretations of social actors are expressed), for Turner, they were rituals and the redressive phases of social dramas (in which individuals are capable of initiating social changes). Both perceive the public social space as equivalent to the theatre stage, even though the latter, as a "frame", works differently by creating double significations and representations of reality, whereas the "frames" of social situations must be reconstructed by knowledgeable social actors (see Eco 1977; Goffman 1974). From the methodological perspective, social encounters on stage are indeed more organised and conceptualized, but they might allow one to perceive social interactions offstage in a similar manner and thereby, using theatre as an example, it is easier for the researcher to transform the flow of social life into more manageable dramas or role performances (Riggins 1993: 163). In the end, Turner's social drama and Goffman's dramaturgy both demonstrate that the topics that they attempted to dissect with drama and theatre analogies are in fact the very basic problems of social sciences — the impact of social structures and processes on the individual, the relations between social norms and individual freedom, the relations between stability and dynamics in society.

While selecting the dynamic model (performance dramaturgy), Goffman simultaneously studies the stability of social order, whereas Turner uses the firmly structured social drama model to observe processes of change that nevertheless strive towards preserving social stability in the society. Goffman and Turner both see dramaturgy/drama primarily as analogies based on processes and actions. Nonetheless, “social drama” is characterised by a relatively regular and repetitive narrative structure, allowing one to draw comparisons about the stability of the dramatic text (even if its interpretations may vary throughout time); whereas the dramaturgy of social performances is rather more similar to experimental improvisational theatre, where there are no roles in the traditional sense, based on scripted characters; instead, “characters” emerge within the process itself, in concrete interactions between actors and in relation to a particular audience.

Goffman himself acknowledged that even though dramaturgic principles of social interaction are quite universal in Anglo-American society, “we must not overlook areas of life in other societies in which other rules are apparently followed”; moreover, “we must be very cautious in any effort to characterize our own society as a whole with respect to dramaturgical practices” (Goffman 1990a[1959]: 236–237). Furthermore, throughout his career Goffman strove to develop and test various different analogies, making it clear both to himself and his readers that no theoretical conception was so important for him that he would be incapable of assessing it critically and/or giving it up. There are many metaphorical perspectives from which to look upon reality, and there are many ways of comparing it with theatre as well, since there is no such singular thing as “the theatre”. The most problematic aspects of extended theatre metaphors in the social sciences during the 20th century have been “popular assumptions about [...] conventional western theatre” (Schieffelin 1998: 202), while in fact “theatre” has no universal properties that could be taken as the foundation for all theatrical analogies. There are only particular types of theatre, and thus any similarity or difference between theatre and

social life may be contradicted by a different kind of theatre practice, either from Western or non-Western cultures (see Brissett, Edgley 1990: 31).

The major problem of metaphoric theatre-analogies is indeed their ambiguity or inconsistency with respect to what sort of drama or theatre is it precisely that has been picked as the basis for the analogy. Sometimes the drama-analogy refers to the structure of classical tragedy (as with Turner), and sometimes to the dramaturgy of performances in improvisational theatre (as with Goffman). The more general problem of (metaphorical) analogy seems to lie in the fact that it must be selective in order to work as an analogy, and each selective choice impoverishes both the source domain and the target domain. Indeed, theatre in all its aesthetic forms and styles is a far too complex phenomenon to be reduced to simple universal characteristics (such as dramatic structure or acting a role) that would make it similar to social life, and social reality, in turn, is much too diverse to be explained with theatrical analogies only. Perhaps it is one of the characteristic habits of our minds that it seems to prefer operating with already familiar resemblances, rather than questioning them or looking for unnoticed resemblances as well as differences?²¹

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Метафорические аналогии в подходах Виктора Тернера и Эрвинга Гоффмана: драматургия социальных интеракций и драмы в социальной жизни

Метафорические аналогии, в том числе и аналогии социальных отношений с драмой и театром, были популярны в разные эпохи и использовались писателями и философами. С семиотической точки зрения театр представляет собой репрезентацию реальности. В силу специфики театра в этих репрезентациях используются те же культурные коды и материальность, которые составляют нашу повседневную жизнь, и иногда средства репрезентации даже иконически идентичны с этой жизни. Подобная аналогичность подвигла многих писателей, философов, а позднее — и социологов к более подробному исследованию конкретных сходств между жизнью общества, драмой и театром. В данной статье я выбрала два подхода, применяемых представителями социальных наук, которые используют театр в качестве метафоры при изучении общества: концепция «социальной драмы» Виктора Тернера и «драматургия» социальной интеракции Эрвинга Гоффмана. Первый из них основывает свою аналогию в основном на структуре драматического текста, где одним из ключевых сходств является конфликт (драматический), в то время как второй за основу своей аналогии берет используемые в театре принципы представления и считает, что персонажи и роли можно обнаружить и в социальном пространстве. Настоящая статья иссле-

дует указанные ключевые аналогии и обращает внимание на то, к каким интерпретациям культуры и общества можно прийти, используя их. В заключении приводятся и некоторые общие проблемы, связанные с использованием метафор и аналогий, с которыми сталкивается исследователь.

Metafoorsed analoogiad Victor Turneri ja Erving Goffmani lähenemistes: sotsiaalsete interaktsioonide dramaturgia ja draamad ühiskondlikus elus

Metafoorsed analoogiad, sealhulgas draama- ja teatrianalooogia, on olnud populaarsed erinevates mõtlemisviisides. Semiootilisest perspektiivist kujutab teater endast reaalsuse representatsiooni. Teatrite eriomaselt on reaalsuse representatsioonide loomisel kasutatud suures osas sama materiaalsust ja kultuurilisi koode, mis moodustavad ka meie igapäevase elu, mõnikord on representatsiooni vahendid isegi viimasega ikooniliselt identsed. See samataolisus on inspireerinud paljusid kirjanikke, filosoofe ja hiljem ka sotsiaalteadlasi täpsemalt uurima konkreetseid sarnasusi sotsiaalse elu, draama ja teatri vahel. Selles artiklis valisin kaks sotsiaalteadustest pärit lähenemist, mis kasutavad teatrit kui metafoorset analoogiat üsna erineval ent siiski ka sarnasel moel — Victor Turner'i „sotsiaalse draama” kontseptsiooni antropoloogiast ja Erving Goffmani sotsiaalse interaktsiooni „dramaturgia” sotsioloogiast. Esimene neist rajab analoogia eeskätt draamateksti struktuurile ning üks võtmesarnasusi selles on (dramaatiline) konflikt, samas kui teine võtab oma analoogia lauseks teatris kasutatavad etendamise printsiibid ja leiab, et tegelased ja rollid on peamised sarnasused inimeste tegevuses nii lavadel kui ka sotsiaalses ruumis. Käesolev artikkel uurib eelmainitud võtmesarnasusi ja pöörab tähelepanu ühtlasi sellele, milliste kultuuri ja ühiskonna tõlgendusteni me teatrianalooogiaid kasutades jõuame. Kokkuvõttes tuuakse välja ka mõned üldisemad laiendatud metafooride ja analoogiapõhiste seletustega seotud probleemid, millega uurija kokku puutub.