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Legislative Theatre: Art for Community Conflict Resolution. From Desires to Laws

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Abstract

This paper argues that Legislative Theatre, as an artistic methodology for active citizenship, creates a process of collective reflection to produce solutions to community conflicts. Boal used this tool of transitive democracy to conceive legal proposals in favour of marginalised groups. Thirteen of these proposals were approved by the legal system in Brazil. The analysis of a Legislative Theatre workshop in Spain using Boal's methodology allowed the identification of some interesting elements but also the limitations of the tool. Aspects including the ideology of the audience, the scope of the legal proposals and the role of the joker are seen as important. Other conditioning elements and positive aspects are also discussed.

Keywords

theatre of the oppressed, legislative theatre, total language, transitive democracy, conflict resolution

OVERVIEW. WHAT IS LEGISLATIVE THEATRE?

Created by Augusto Boal, Legislative Theatre[1] is a branch of social theatre that brings social responsibility and political commitment to scenic arts.

Legislative Theatre can be defined as a political and artistic process of emancipation. Enriched with resources from the Theatre of the Oppressed and other techniques, it aims to develop a transitive democracy that can contribute to more active and responsible citizenship in communities.

On the basis of a real conflict, the method sheds light on a social problem that affects more than one member of the community to produce solutions, agreed at the community level, that can be presented to a legal system (municipal, regional or state) as new laws or amendments of existing ones.

> "Citizens in a democratic society should not be mere spectators of their parliaments. They should take responsibility for their life through action."

> "Transitive democracy implies dialogue, interaction and change."

> Augusto Boal, 1998, pp. 19 and 22

Boal, aware of the limitations of both direct and representative democracy, designed a democratic methodology which involves collective reflection, dialogue and transformation. He baptised it *transitive democracy*. He then transformed the Forum Theatre into a Legislative Theatre

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1 For more information see Boal et al. (2010).

adding a participatory methodology that closes the cycle from *desires*, or *wills* to *laws*.

WHAT IS THE RATIONALE OF THE LEGISLATIVE THEATRE?

The Legislative Theatre methodology has three main phases: a) collective creation, b) Forum Theatre and, c) legislative phase and make up a Legislative Theatre workshop. I would call the second and third phases a Legislative Theatre session.

During these phases, certain stakeholders in the Legislative Theatre process become the main protagonists. Among them, the actors, the facilitator, the public and the legal and thematic experts, who are called the "metabolising cell". The different levels or stages of participation also imply different levels of impact.

The first phase of collective creation starts with group building activities for the actors. Confidence raising and group cohesion games are proposed so that participants interact freely and there is open space for individual and collective creation. This warming-up stage is critical for any activity related to dramatic or emotional expression. Once

the adequate mood is reached, the facilitator proposes a theme of exclusion and the actors present examples of violence related to the theme which have been experienced by them directly or indirectly.[2] One of these is then selected in a participative fashion after reviewing each of them.

Before the end of this phase, the group concentrates on the preparation of a play on the selected problem of exclusion, with the special input of the actor who proposed the case. The drama session is normally designed in three acts which describe in detail the key aspects of the problem. Imagination and symbolism are important in the dramatic creation so that the language of the art and theatre is fully used.

The second phase is called the Forum Theatre and written proposals for solutions are submitted just before the start of the performance. At this point, the public enters the theatre space and receives a blank sheet of paper with three cards, green, yellow and red, for the final voting of proposals. The facilitator initiates the session by introducing the methodology of the Forum Theatre and explaining the Legislative phase. The real story of a conflict that does not have an easy solution is then enacted with music and props. This type of theatre should be directly or indirectly linked to a conflict with an institution. At the end of the play the actual Forum Theatre session takes place.

Phases	Description and Aim		Who
Collective creation	Group cohesion of acting participants and theoretical aspects.		Facilitator and acting trainees
	Group work on identification of oppression and selection of a representative performance.		
	Collective and artistic creation of play, script, actors and music.		
Forum Theatre and written proposals	Presentation of objectives of Legislative Theatre.		Public, training participants, metabolising cell
	Forum Theatre performance on selected theme of social oppression.		
	Submission of written proposals for law from public.		
	Spect-actors act their proposals, replacing an actor. Re-enact. Public observe.		
Legislative phase	Reception of proposals and systematisation.		Public, training participants, metabolising cell
	Reformulation of proposals by metabolising cell, according to existing laws. Explanation to public.		
	Voting on proposals.		
	Common approach on advocacy and action plan.		

2   The origin of the oppressing situation is deemed to be caused by structural violence e.g.: institutional violence, incoherence in laws, etc.

The public is then invited to decide whether it reflects a real social situation, and they can also determine how to resolve the conflict fairly. For this purpose, the spectators are allowed to intervene on stage and become *spect-actors*,[3] and can replace an actor in one of the acts. In the interaction on stage with the other actors, the public, also the spect-actor, can verify whether the new strategy makes sense or not. This process of discussion stimulates critical analysis of the conflict by the public. Immediately after the Forum, the public start elaborating their written proposals.

The third or Legislative phase commences when the aforementioned proposals are gathered by the metabolising cell. These legal specialists take time to check whether the proposals are within the current legal system. They will also summarise them into a few concrete measures which will later be explained and voted on by the public. According to Boal, as proposals have been agreed some actions should be planned to lobby politicians.

THE TOTAL LANGUAGE OF THE THEATRE

"There are so many dimensions to what happens that words are hardly able to catch it all."

Galtung, 1998, p. 81

After seeing the power and impact of the theatre and drama exercises, Motos, (2003, p. 914), introduced and developed the word *total* to define the language of theatre. Theatre understood in broad terms. On one hand, theatre as a creation and performance that is experienced by the public who can also be actors. On the other hand, theatre as drama games which are part of collective creation that participants of a workshop experience. Depending on the exposure to this total language, the impact can vary.

With regard to the components of total language, Motos describes different dimensions such as the *affective*, *cognitive*, *cultural* but also *bodily* aspects.

Firstly, nonverbal communication aspects such as proxemics, kinesics, and tones of voice or facial expressions are essential to visually recreate the affective and emotional aspects of a conflict. The affective element helps theatre to easily reach the audience which, in certain conditions, can generate cathartic, resonant or identification processes.[4]

However, the idea is not to create emotional identification with emotions purified by a healing catharsis. Boal's theatre aims to provoke a certain energy of dissatisfaction in the public. Some action of solidarity with those marginalised then becomes a need.

We should also note current discoveries in neuroscience on the role that the amygdala and the emotions play in the development of knowledge.[5] Drama given its fully fledged emotional experience emerges as a privileged tool. Firstly, as a training performance that puts into practice the *total* language of the theatre. Secondly, spect-actors transforming a reality, and, by doing so, transforming themselves.[6] Thirdly, as a form of vicarious empathetic learning that the audience experiences through different emotional channels of representation: identification of the self and the protagonist that is more powerful when they have shared values. Moreover, adding to the dramatic experience, other relation-oriented methodologies such as the psychodrama or Gestalt's hot seat, where switching roles can further enhance an empathetic emotional exchange with the antagonists and one's self. In cases of trauma, it can also help relive the experience under the right conditions so that healing starts to take place. Galtung states that "Re-living is relieving".

Secondly, bodily dimensions and movement can help generate confidence and cohesion in group work. Communication with gesture and movement can help express views and emotions without the use of words. The symbolic dimension of a conflict may create mental images which remain in the emotional memory for a long time. Again, body work and movement can allow encrypted memories a safe release, be expressed and possible wounds healed more easily.

Thirdly, a cognitive dimension may come with the public's interpretation of the events presented in the play and the subsequent search for solutions to the conflict. A strategy for change means, in fact, a scenario projection of a desired situation seeking a new equilibrium or resolution to the conflict. Equally, the dialogue at the Forum Theatre stage requires the capacity to verbalise and formulate adequate proposals.

Finally, the cultural aspects are embodied in all the previously mentioned concepts. However, it can be said that dramaturgy, props or music can be the more visual aspects of culture. Other less visible aspects can be attitudes, conflict resolution traditions, male dominance or other intricate cultural elements that increase the complexity of the conflict.

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3 Boals's public is made up of so-called spect-actors understood as an audience that can ask to step on stage and give their opinion during the forum discussion so that it is witnessed and evaluated by the public.
4 The concept of identification and resonance is useful for pedagogical, psychological and even political purposes.
5 See Rogers (1961).
6 Boal (2004, p. 95).

WHAT ARE THE OTHER MODALITIES OF BOAL'S THEATRE?

"As in Forum Theatre the spectators become actors, in Legislative Theatre the citizens become legislators."

Boal, 1998, p. 19

As previously mentioned, Legislative Theatre has been enriched with resources of the Theatre of the Oppressed. It was in fact the last methodology developed by Boal with the all the accumulated experience of the Forum Theatre, the Rainbow of Desire, the Image Theatre and the Invisible Theatre.

The Forum Theatre was the source and the basis of the other forms or modalities of the Theatre of the Oppressed, including Legislative Theatre. It entails the dramatised performance of a situation of social oppression followed by public discussion, also allowing the spect-actor to replace an actor and show proposals of change, repeating the play. The idea is to visually check on the proposals and see whether they make sense and produce a better outcome in a real situation.

The *Rainbow of Desire* (Boal, 1998, pp. 42) is another type of Theatre of the Oppressed aimed at dealing with oppression through psycho-dramatic performance of human emotions and their images. Collective and individual construction of images help release emotions in a secure environment and establish communication without words. In a group protected from judgements, the main idea is to identify significant emotions that arise in a given inter-personal or intra-personal conflict, perform them and seek a new situation in which to relocate them and register a positive outcome in the emotional memory.

In addition to all these types of theatre, *Image Theatre* is a resource frequently used during the Theatre of the Oppressed sessions. The images, as mentioned before, have a certain transforming power. Recent studies on cognitive development show how images and emotional memory are located in the mind. Theatre then becomes a symbolic intervention when reliving a former experience that focuses on the origin of the problem. In some cases, it can continue with a search for a desired solution to a conflict.

Finally, *Invisible Theatre*, another type of Theatre of the Oppressed, is performed by actors in a public space[7] without informing the audience[8] in that space. This strategy of street acting allows the public to address and confront their daily attitudes towards issues such as stereotyping and racism.

DRAMATIC CONFLICT AND WILLS

Ancient Greek tragedy can be considered one of the first studies on conflict analysis in the western world. The standard plot structure entails a description of a conflict, showing evident but also subtle forces. The first act normally involves the introduction of the protagonist with their motivations, purposes and background. Soon after, the antagonist appears as a potential barrier that can increasingly prevent the protagonist from achieving their goals. This act normally includes the structural causes of the conflict (McManus, 1999). At the climax, the confrontation between the protagonist and the antagonist creates greater tension (*pathos*)[9] but also enigmas (hope and sadness). The play ends with an outcome that is normally unexpected. The stress among the main characters is reduced. (Aristotle, 1970, pp. 1456) leaving the public with answers but also new questions.

With some conceptual influence of Freud but also Foucault, Boal introduces the concept of will into the theatrical world (Boal, 1998, p. 60). This proves that his idea of conflict goes beyond the polarity of protagonist and antagonist. Instead, it entails a contradiction of incompatible wills. This analysis of wills also demonstrates the network of contradictory forces that a complex conflict can have.

The simplest version of will is what Boal calls the *single will*, the case of a single subject that needs a single object. If the object can be reached by the subject, there is no conflict. *Dialectical will*, however, entails two opposing single wills e.g. two individuals requiring the same object. Boal's theatre often uses this type of Manichean polarities combined with Hegel's dialectics. The search for the object means that one of the two uses violence to keep the object. This clash of wills and opposite emotions provokes pathos. Those who do not have the tools to counteract the pressure are likely to end up accepting the oppression[10] or violence as normal,[11] especially if it has a structural and cultural dimension.

Plural wills reflect the common vision in a group or community. In this case, an example could be the will of

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7 E.g. at a market, on a street, bus or similar.
8 Audience understood in this case as the consumers, pedestrians or travellers.
9 Pathos entails the emotions of fear and pity of compassion (Aristotle).
10 Oppression understood as activity from a particular group, individual or society that consciously or unconsciously tends to restrict the individual or collective freedom of certain social groups to impede the full exercise of their rights. Free translation from Portal (2009, pp. 26-27).
11 "Os oprimidos, que introjetam a 'sombra' dos opressores e seguem suas pautas, temem a libertade a medida em que esta, implicando na expulsão desta sombra, exigiria deles que 'prenchessem' o 'vazio' deixado pela expulsão com outro 'conteudo'. O de sua autonomia. O de sua responsabilidade, sem o que não seriam livres." Freire (1960, p. 18).

one group to exclude an individual from their community; a typical case of racism or xenophobia. In addition, there is the *will as an expression of a necessity and the lunar will*, a will borrowed or imposed by someone else. The lunar will can represent manipulation. In this case, the real intentions and needs are rarely expressed or accepted. By means of intrigue, orchestration or lies, the antagonist manages to manipulate the protagonist into doing something that favours him. Other wills can appear simultaneously in the same individual: the *will* and *the counter will*. We could encounter these types in situations of doubt when we may "hear" the inner voices of a "white angel" and a "dark red devil" at the same time. Finally, *fundamental will*, above all others, would be the true motivation of the individual. According to Boal, oppression, and the wills behind it, should have a hierarchical ethical order. Thus, a woman who is subject to domestic violence could simultaneously behave oppressively by exerting excessive control over her children at home. The fundamental will in this case should be considered a priority vis-à-vis the other wills.

VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT IN DRAMA

According to Galtung's triangle, one type of violence, direct violence, involves physical destructive behaviours leading to the elimination of the other (Galtung, 1998). According to Freud, all wills seek satisfaction (Boal, 2005, p. 29),[12] but not all wills are confrontational, some are collaborative. Direct violence is a confrontational approach whereby one opponent imposes an obstacle to guarantee satisfaction of their will at the expense of the other person's. Emotions such as envy can be another reason for violence hampering the protagonist's satisfaction of needs. Theatre genres such as comedy may base dramatic conflict on emotional reactions to the dissatisfaction of wills. Emotions can, therefore, play a role in increasing, reducing or diverting the tension of a conflict.

Another illustrative example of Legislative Theatre is *Custodia con partida*[13] (shared custody). With a script based on a real experience of direct violence, the play describes the limitations of laws that are supposedly designed to protect the victim of violence. In this case, the proposals that were produced during the session showed an improvement in the victim's personal security. Nevertheless, unless the fundamental wills of the different stakeholders are solved, the solution will only be temporary and the conflict likely to re-appear.

Galtung's second type of violence, structural violence, is understood as a set of structures and laws that prevent a certain group from legitimate satisfaction of their needs (or wills). *The Story of Assane*, performed at the international session on Legislative Theatre, depicts what institutional violence means. The case elaborated in detail in the following sections shows how certain laws stop specific ethnic groups from exercising their basic rights.

Assane's simple will is to attain papers for his son's trip to Senegal. His fundamental will is to present his newborn son to the family. However, the opponent's will, in this case the civil servant, is to maximise the number of obstacles and make it difficult. The civil servant's fundamental will may be to keep his job and his plural or counter will is to stop non-nationals from entering the country. Other unspoken wills may not be present such as that of the boss, or even a more symbolic will such as fear of foreigners or a sense of superiority. So in this case, we can see a combination of cultural and structural violence that makes the case more complicated to resolve.

Quoting Gandhi, Galtung (1998) reminds us that, in a given society, "If social contradictions are not extreme the best outcome will be democracy. However, if the contradictions […] are very acute the best response would not be through politics but non-violence."

Finally, connected to Galtung's idea of cultural violence, Forum Theatre uncovers how social attitudes and images can legitimise racism or even xenophobia. The Forum Theatre play *Mustafa és al replà* (Mustafa is on the landing)[14] shows a case of a subtle aspect of violence. In Boal's terms it is the attempt of a racist's lunar will to influence the plural will of the community in order to exclude somebody. The violence is also connected to stereotypical imagery that creates symbolic exclusion, verbal violence which can, in some cases, lead to physical violence.

Perhaps inadvertently, Boal applied Galtung's ideas as he also believed that only by overcoming all forms of violence can we attain positive, sustainable peace.

BOAL IN ACTION: ORIGINS OF THE LEGISLATIVE THEATRE IN BRAZIL

The Legislative Theatre initiative was born in 1992, when Augusto Boal from the Theatre of the Oppressed Centre (CTO) in Rio de Janeiro, agreed to run in the municipal elections. A theatrical campaign was launched to gather

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12 Galtung (2008, p. 7) focuses on the fulfilment of needs.
13 Pa'tothom (2010).
14 Id.

social and political support with the help of sixty groups formed by community organisations. These organisations included schools, associations, churches, black college students, domestic workers, landless rural workers, people with physical disabilities, and young marginalised people living on the street. In 1993, Boal was elected alderman on the Municipal Council of Rio de Janeiro and he introduced the Legislative Theatre as his main methodology to conceive and propose laws in the Council.

During Boal's mandate, the action was simple: the groups organised a Forum Theatre and members of the council were invited to participate in a street performance near the Town Hall. This gave politicians the chance to interact directly with their electorate to discuss problems on, often controversial, decisions simultaneously with the Council plenary sessions. Few representatives accepted the offer, but up to five, over 10% of the total, did participate.

From 1993 to 1997, thirteen municipal bylaws were approved in the Council.[15] Other proposals were rejected by other major parties who voted against them. Although Boal left the council in 1997, but the theatre was continued and the council managed to enact the first municipal law on the Protection of Witnesses Crimes through a Legislative Theatre process.

In 1998, the Theatre of the Oppressed Centre obtained support from the Ford Foundation, which allowed them to open seven new groups on specific social issues, from adolescent pregnancy and AIDS prevention to domestic workers' rights. In 2001, there was another success: The community of Rio TF Corpo Incense approved the first national law on the public responsibility to provide volunteer staff to prepare ex-offenders without resources for university access.

According to Boal (1998), this topic only came to the notice of the public because of the symbolic pressure that the Legislative Theatre groups attained. In 2004, another state law was passed in west Rio on the obligation to sell condoms in hotels, motels and similar premises. Another law was passed on aspects of the state creation of new health centres. With expansion in eighteen states and the support of a member of parliament, up to 100 bills were presented. All of these underwent the Legislative Theatre procedure. However, as no concrete results were seen, they searched for alternative solutions in the law using the participative Legislation Committee (PLC). This is another official body that allows legally registered institutions to submit proposals to Parliament without support from deputies. Through this new approach, it was possible to pass three bills.

WORKSHOP IN BARCELONA: THE STORY OF ASSANE[16]

The Brazilian Experience was tested during the sessions of the Sixth International Meeting of Theatre and Education held in Barcelona in November 2010 at the Pa'tothom School of Theatre of the Oppressed.

One of the thematic sessions of the meeting was on racism. As usual, it started with the collective creation of a play with a group of Legislative Theatre trainees. The first activities before the conception process and selection of the play were a full warming-up session, with exercises that were gradually more interactive. Each of the participants presented a case of personal ethnic discrimination and the group selected the most representative for the Legislative Theatre. Finally, it was decided to act out the personal experience presented by Assane, president of the association Llano Acoge in Granada.

The play explores Assane's problems with immigration officials after living in Andalusia for fifteen years. Assane's wife gives birth and the couple wants to introduce the child to relatives in Senegal. That is when the nightmare starts. As they are not Spanish nationals, their child is not entitled to Spanish citizenship and cannot leave the country. Nor, paradoxically, would the baby be given Senegalese nationality as he was born in Spain.

The script was divided into three simple acts, each lasting no more than ten minutes. The first act shows the arrival of the Senegalese couple in Spain and the birth of their first child; a time of hope and love. In the second act, Assane encounters the first administrative obstacles when he requests the travel documents for his child. Helpless, Assane thinks that the officials are not doing their job although they are very courteous. In the third act, he returns home and announces to his wife that he has been unable to register the child and, therefore, they cannot present him to the family.[17] The play ends with the wife in tears holding the child, with sadness and frustration.

After the play, the Forum session took place with some discussion but also with spect-actors going up on stage to act out the role of Assane. The different strategies tested by the spect-actors did not bear much fruit. It only added to Assane's surprise and frustration to observe that Senegalese *teranga*[18] was definitely not a quality of the Spanish Immigration Authorities. At a certain moment, it became apparent that there was a structural deadlock that could not be solved by changing the actor's attitude. It could only be solved by changing the laws.

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15 Schechner et al. (1998, p. 78) and Boal (1998, pp.102-104).
16 For more information see Salvador (2011b).
17 The full story was longer. In fact, Assane did travel to Senegal, but the child was stopped at customs. As an act of protest and also being under pressure, Assane finally ended up leaving the child with Spanish customs officials and went to Senegal. Assane's story was a major news item not only in Spain but also in Senegal.
18 *Teranga* (hospitality) is considered one of the main values of Senegal: "La devise nationale du Sénégal".

The public was then given time to note down law proposals to be collected by the team of immigration experts from the NGO SOS Racisme,[19] the metabolising cell.[20] After revising the proposals, they concluded that, to solve Assane's case, the Spanish Civil Code regulating the rights of citizenship should be improved or modified. Article 17 c[21] was, in fact, not being applied by the civil servants. Assane's son was left stateless for eight years.

Modifications to the Spanish Civil Code would require advocacy at state level: a Parliament decision. The theatre session concluded with a declaration in favour of Assane's case. After the meeting, a question was asked as to whether awareness had been sufficiently raised to promote the development of a new movement.

WERE THE PURPOSES OF THE WORKSHOP REACHED?

The workshop's main goals were the completion of a Training of Trainers (ToT) session, the preparation of play with a Forum and a Legislative session. The assessment of the trainer's performance is normally considered important. Limited resources often do not allow to assess the participants' performance and other less visible aspects.

Boal's concept of spect-actor and transitive democracy implies different and innovative approaches of assessment as the public no longer has a passive role and they cannot be seen solely as an independent variable.

The participatory ToT evaluation of the meeting recorded some open satisfaction among the participants about the whole training process. However, more space for actors' initiative was requested for future sessions. Additionally, during the Forum session, the joker's role, which had encountered various difficulties, was solved by improvising a replacement in the middle of the session.

There were other remarks on the voting methodology applied in a Legislative Theatre session. Hand-raising did not safeguard the secrecy of the vote. This may have dissuaded people from giving more personal opinions against the majority feeling. This can create a dilemma on the extent to which the transitive democratic process should emphasise discussion of opposite views, or whether the main focus should be on the side of the oppressed, as Boal and Freire defend.

The methodology seems best suited to communities that already have some previous common values. When the public have mixed views and ideologies, the tool may be less efficient. In this situation, it could be interesting but it is unclear whether there would be sufficient time for discussion to reach agreements in a Legislative Theatre session.

An analysis of groups may be useful to ascertain the role that each group has played throughout the process. The groups in a Theatre Session can be organisers, jokers, protagonist, antagonist, public, speaking public, acting public, remaining audience, metabolising cell, press and community associations. Each may have had a moment of leadership during the session and a possibly relevant impact.

ELEMENTS OF LEGISLATIVE THEATRE STILL TO BE ASSESSED

The qualitative research undertaken[22] and other analyses have proved that there can still be some unanswered questions which should be assessed in future studies. Issues for particular analysis could include:

a) In the Collective creation and the Forum Session, the nature of the community groups and stakeholders involved in the Legislative Theatre process could be analysed in more detail (public, associations, actors, organising structures, jokers, etc.).
b) Whether the process allows the free expression of thoughts and the degree of impartiality of the organising team (the joker, metabolising cell, organising team, and the actors) during the Forum and Legislative session.
c) Check the public reactions and understanding of the problems portrayed.
d) Evaluate the readiness of people to change habits or mobilise as a result of the presented conflict.

Other questions are:

e) What form of awareness can Legislative Theatre actually raise?
f) To what extent can a play develop social consciousness?
g) What are the conditions that could help trigger "insights"?

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19 Mar Carrera and Angel Panyella from the NGO SOS Racisme made up the metabolising cell that assisted the voting process and the explanation of the existing laws.
20 According to Boal (1998, p. 93) the role of the metabolising cell is to "separate the wheat from the chaff". In other words, to select proposals that could become law within the existing legal framework.
21 Article 17 c of Spanish Civil Code establishes that Spaniards are those born in Spain to foreign parents when neither parent has a nationality or if the legislation of their country (in this case Senegalese) does not grant citizenship to their children born in Spain. Royal Decree, 24 July 1889, modified by single article, Law 18/1990, 17 December (RCL 1990, 2598).
22 Some of the conclusions of this article have been extracted from qualitative research on a Legislative Theatre workshop undertaken by the author in 2010. For more information, see Salvador (2011b).

h) What is the connection between the script and performance in relation to the success of the play?

i) Are there cultural elements that should be modified according to a country or continent?

Political and economic elements to analyse the implications of the laws could be:

j) Who pays for the costs of the new law (state, businesses, people)?

k) Who benefits from the current situation and who would benefit from the changes?

l) Nature of the laws and further parallel changes required.

m) What are the alliances and what is the opposition to the proposals?

n) Type of connection of the Legislative Theatre groups to parliamentarians: whether a minister should be linked or not.

o) To what extent can the proposed law change the conflict situation and which non-legal aspects should be in place?

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Analysis of a social theatre tool can be undertaken from different perspectives. One is a theoretical approach that takes into account the purposes of Boal. Another evaluates the performance and the methodology crosschecking its pros and cons.

Legislative Theatre has evolved from the Forum Theatre, the basic tool of Boal's Theatre. While Forum Theatre's main goal is to help raise consciousness, confronting and testing ideas on stage, Legislative Theatre's target is to draft laws and ensure they are voted on. The Forum phase implies the creation of a play that gives an audio-visual image of a conflict that otherwise might not be visible.

Theatrical and social drama approaches can be useful for different purposes with regard to transforming situations of conflict. Firstly as a relational diagnosis of the conflict, the play and the Forum discussion helps understand the problem showing, visually, the contradictory wills. Secondly, the whole process as a means of raising consciousness, from the first phase of the creation of the play to the final legislative phase, implies an effort of collective empathy. Thirdly, as a means to reduce stereotypes, the aim is to confront socially accepted beliefs that may be false. For this, theatre can include elements of irony or humour that facilitate smooth and spontaneous learning, and even self-criticism. Additionally, with the assistance of the metabolising cell and the public's comments it favours an exercise of collective public intelligence. Finally, drafting laws requires a great effort of synthesis and a great sense of reality. The process is designed to facilitate full understanding so that the decision can be more easily taken.

Coming back to Boal's experience, the success in Brazil has set the standard very high. Boal's charismatic leadership coupled with his elected position in the council has brought formerly unexplored dimensions, obtaining tangible results in terms of laws, to the theatre. Legislative Theatre in Europe may have a long way to go before it reaches the levels of Brazil. The workshop in Barcelona was proof of the limitations of one session when it comes to mobilising groups with different ideologies or levels of conscience.

However, the existence of a critical mass of participating public can definitely help improve the results of this process. A similar unifying conscience, or sharing the ideology of an association that deals with similar problems, are also elements that facilitate the process. In connection to this, the social and political conditions in a country or region, such as an economic or financial crisis, can contribute to the development of these elements.

Other non-tangible outcomes that can be reached in the Forum phase relate to the attitudes of the participants and their perception of reality; what is also referred to as stereotyping.

Finally, it can be concluded that lines of research based on phenomenological or qualitative approaches are critical for improved data collection on the multidimensional impact of the theatre and its "total" language.

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