

Dramatic ritual/ritual drama: performative and reflexive anthropology

Victor Turner

Though many social scientists frown on the terms performance and drama, they seem to me central. Performance is derived from the Middle English parfournen, later parfournen, which is itself from the Old French parfournir - par ("thoroughly") plus fournir ("to furnish") - hence performance does not necessarily have the structuralist implication of manifesting form, but rather the processual sense of "bringing to completion" or "accomplishing." To perform is thus to complete a more or less involved process rather than to do a single deed or act.