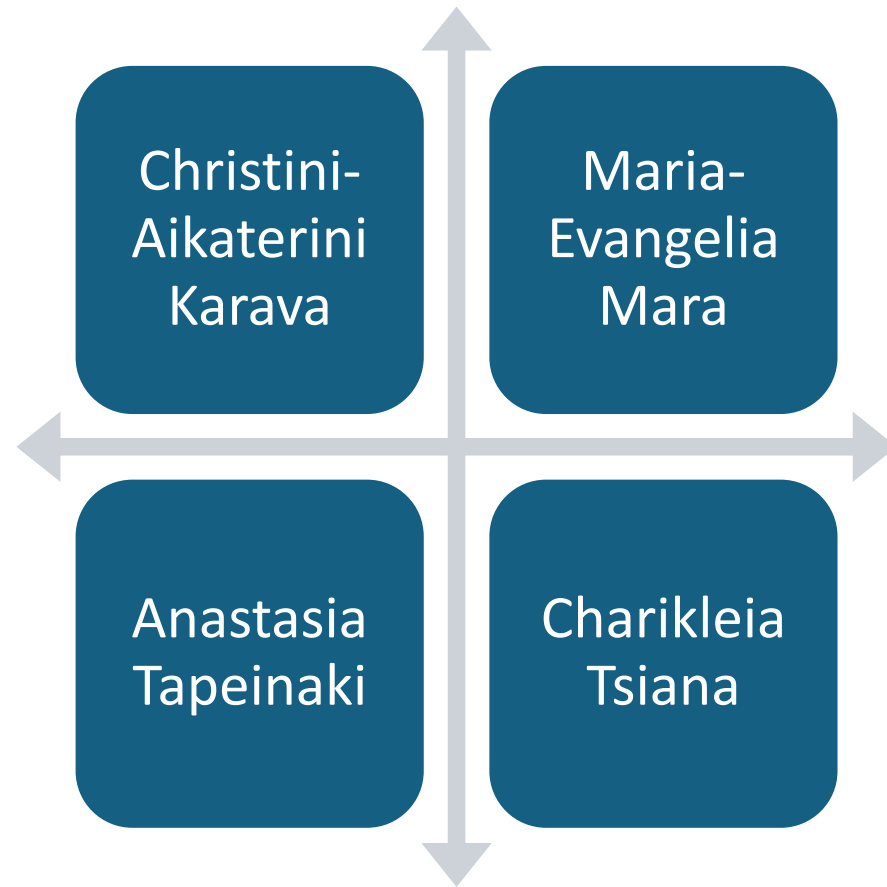# *Applied and Environmental Theatre 2st Symposium*
Community Theatre and Environmental Pressures in the Coastal Communities of the Mediterranean (THEATRE2SEA)
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The Impact of Human Activity on the Degradation of Tropical Forests

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Full Plan of environmental theatre

- Title: The Impact of Human Activity on the Degradation of Tropical Forests

- Reference group: A community in a mountainous village

- Central Question: How can aggressive human actions towards nature ultimately jeopardize the future of humanity?

- Common Role: The Chosen Ones

- Roles of the Animator: Oregianos, Chrysokrates

- Where: Amazon Rainforest

Storytelling

- Once upon a time, deep in the tropical rainforest of the Amazon—though no one knows exactly when—there stood a magnificent tree believed to be the tallest in the world. Within this tree lived the Chosen Ones, a group of people who had once resided in a city but left it behind for reasons that remain a mystery. Since that time, the Chosen Ones have dedicated themselves to advising and assisting the communities of the Amazon.

Building space activities

- **Activity 1: The animator will ask the reference group to outline the tallest tree of the Chosen Ones using leaves and branches, ensuring there is enough space for everyone. They will also construct an entrance and exit that will be used exclusively for entering and leaving the space.**

- **Activity 2: The animator will divide the community members into groups and ask each group to use their bodies—arms, legs, and heads—to represent how they envision the tallest tree where the Chosen Ones live. This living sculpture will be enhanced through shadow theater; with appropriate lighting, they will create shadow illusions on a white surface to enrich the overall visual experience.**

Building role activities

- **Activity 1: The animator will instruct the reference group to form a circle. They will pose the question: "What are the values of a Chosen One?" Members of the reference group will take turns speaking while passing a pinecone or a coconut, symbolizing "from the tallest tree," which will be provided by the animator. It is important for each member to listen carefully to what others say, as, when it's their turn, they will need to repeat all the values previously expressed by others before adding their own.**

- **Activity 2: The animator will instruct the community members to create the Hymn of the Chosen Ones. There are two conditions for this activity: A) the use of fifteen-syllable verses (decapentasyllabic meter), and B) it must reflect on the reason why the Chosen Ones left the cities. The prompts for the Hymn will include the question, "Why did the Chosen Ones leave the cities?" and the poem "Statues of Man" by Thiago De Mello.**

The instructor will read this part of the poem *Statues of Man* by Thiago De Mello

- "It is decreed that money shall never be worth more than the life of any human being.
  It is decreed that children shall be free to run, laugh, and sing in the streets without fear of punishment.
  It is decreed that people shall not be separated because of the color of their skin, their eyes, or their hair.
  It is decreed that the air shall be clean, the river clear, the forest preserved, and that humanity shall be free"

Storytelling

- The animator gives instructions: "Now you are ready to ascend the tallest tree in the Amazon and become the Chosen Ones. The first visitor to arrive will wear a large necklace." A strict boundary applies to the animator as well: "When I put on the necklace, I am in character," and "When I take off the necklace, I step out of character."

Action, 1st point of view

- "Good evening, Chosen Ones. I am Oregianos, and I come from a tribe in the Amazon. In recent years, we have suffered greatly. Our trees no longer bear fruit due to heavy rainfall. Life is not what it used to be; the tropical climate has changed. The air is suffocating with humidity, and most fruits have already rotted. Some days, the sweltering heat prevents us from going out to hunt.Recently, Mayor Chrysokrates came to visit me. He proposed that we sell him our tribal land because his city is facing overpopulation. In return, he promised to integrate us into the city. Of course, you've heard the rumors regarding his intentions toward the forests and wildlife. However, the claims made by other tribal leaders have yet to be confirmed. In the city, people seem to live well; climate change does not appear to affect them. They have many inventions and technologies, including vaccines that save lives—at least, that's what I've heard. They also have plenty of food: fruits, vegetables, meat, and fish, while our children are dying from hunger.We have made our decision. The majority of our tribe will leave to try a different way of life. You have seen the city; we never had that chance before. We have no other option; we are dying. Still, I must come to you because, as you may remember, when we formed our tribe, you set an unwritten law that for any major decision, we must have your consent."

Assimilation activity A

Activity 1: Creation of a banner and division into two groups. One group will represent the citizens who support selling the tribe's land to move to the city for a better economic future. The other group will represent the minority within the tribe who wish to remain on their land and stay close to nature. The banner will be a single piece divided in half, where participants will write words that reflect their group's position.

Assimilation activity B

- **Activity 2: The animator will give the instruction: "Please divide into groups and create a political campaign advocating for the integration of the tribe's members into the city. Develop a motto and write a brief political speech supporting the inclusion of those living outside the city into the urban center."**

Storytelling

- The animator instructs, "Now you will ascend the tallest tree in the Amazon once again. Remember, you are in character. Do not forget the boundaries, as another visitor will join soon." At that moment, Chrysokrates appears and shares his perspective, discussing the issue of overpopulation in his city. The animator, while in character, is wearing a jacket.

Action, 2ˢᵗ point of view

- "Good evening, Chosen Ones. I am Chrysokrates. I have come to reassure you that the undertaking with Oregianos and his tribe, which requires your approval to sell the land, is in our collective interest. Our goal is to expand the city quickly so that every citizen can enjoy a sustainable future. We will ensure prosperity by building farms, greenhouses, and large apartment buildings. We will not harm the tribe's animals; instead, we will find different ways to utilize them. I do not engage in unfair practices—those are just rumors. What can I say?" The animator actively engages with the text, listening attentively and considering the various viewpoints and arguments presented.

Assimilation activity
A_Forum Theatre

- The animator gives the instruction:**"Forum Theatre"**. A brief narration will be provided: *"At night, after returning from the tallest tree of the Chosen Ones, Chrysokrates had a dream: As he was coming back from the Chosen Ones, a tree lowered its branches, blocked the path, and began to speak to him."*

- The entire group forms a circle. The symbols (the jacket and the green scarf) are passed around. The dialogue may be interrupted by any participant wishing to take on a role, but the conversation must resume exactly from the point of interruption. The animator may also initiate or receive the symbols if he/she want to emphasize an aspect that has not yet been addressed.
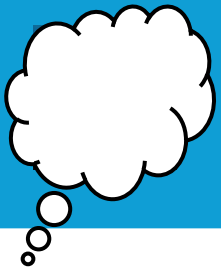
Assimilation activity B

The facilitator will bring four objects related to the city and four objects related to the nature of the tropical forest. The objects will be:

For the city – a vaccine, house keys, money, and a brick.
For the forest – a rotten fruit, a tree leaf, a withered plant, and seeds.

The facilitator gives the instruction:
"Walk past each object and describe your inner thoughts about each one."

Storytelling

"You climb the tallest tree and become the Chosen Ones, entering deliberation. A decision must be made."

Action - announcement of decision

Oregianos returns

"Good evening Chosen Ones. Its now the time to reach a decision regarding the fate of the land and the tribe. Are you going to give us your consent to the proposal presented by Chrysokrates?"

Reflection

- The animator gives the instruction: "You have found Oregiano's diary and opened it to the page he wrote two years after the events. What do you believe he would have written? Each of you, write one sentence."

Instructions

"Designate the tallest tree of the Chosen Ones, with its branches and leaves, ensuring that there will be enough space for everyone to fit inside. You will create one entrance-exit. You must enter and exit strictly through that point only."

"With your whole body — hands, feet, head — embody the shape of the tallest tree, the one where the Chosen Ones live"

"Form a circle and respond with a single word to the question: *'What are the values of a Chosen One?'* Remember to listen carefully to the other participants, because when it's your turn, you must repeat all the values that have been said before and then add your own thought. Speaking turns will be passed using the pinecone."

"Create the Anthem of the Chosen Ones in rhyming couplets using the fifteen-syllable verse, inspired by the reason why the Chosen Ones left the cities. You may use Thiago de Mello's poem *Statues of Man* as a stimulus"

"Now you will climb to the tallest tree of the Amazon and become the Chosen Ones. Pay close attention to the strict boundary and the entrance-exit point. The first visitor to arrive will be wearing a large necklace. The necklace means that the animator is in a role. When I remove it, I'm not in a role"

"Split into two groups. One group will represent the citizens who want the land to be sold and are willing to move to the city for a future with greater financial security. The other group will represent the few tribe members who wish to stay on the land and remain close to nature. Create a banner, divided in half, and write down words according to the group you belong to"

Instructions

"Split into groups and create a political campaign for the integration of the tribe members into the city. Come up with a slogan and prepare a short political speech promoting the inclusion of those living outside the city into the urban center."

"Now ascend again to the tallest tree of the Amazon. That means you are now in role. The second visitor will be wearing a jacket. The jacket means that the animator is in a role. When I remove it, I'm not in a role"

"Pass by each object from the city and the nature and express your inner thoughts and feelings"

"At night, after returning from the tallest tree of the Chosen Ones, Chrysokrates had a dream: As he was coming back from the Chosen Ones, a tree lowered its branches, blocked the path, and began to speak to him."Make a circle for The Forum Theatre. The symbols — a jacket and a green scarf — are exchanged. The dialogue may be interrupted by any participant who wishes to take on a role, but it must continue exactly from the point it was interrupted."

"Ascend again to the tallest tree to become, one last time, the Chosen Ones. The time has come to make your decision"

"You have found Oregianos' diary and opened it to the page he wrote two years after the events. What do you think he would have written? Each of you, write one sentence"

Materials

Leaves and branches	Form of Light (flashlight) and a white surface	A pinecone or a coconut	Necklace	Jacket	Banner and markers
Green scarf	A vaccine	House keys	Money	A Brick	A rotten fruit
	A tree leaf	A withered plant	Seeds	Oregianos' diary and markers	