

# **THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED**

IMPROVISATION THEATRE AS MEDIUM TO  
DISCUSS SOCIAL CONFLICTS

– An Ethnographic Field Study

**3-ECTS PRACTICAL PROJECT IN CHILE**

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# OUTLINE

- **Introduction**
- **Background**
  - Academic
  - Personal
- **Project**
  - What?
  - How?
- ➔ **Conclusions**
  - Academic
  - Personal

# INTRODUCTION



Augusto Boal, 1931 – 2009 Rio de Janeiro  
Founder of the TO

# ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

1. Concepts of Role and Personhood  
→ **TO**, Augusto Boal
2. Oppression and Equality  
→ **Power Structures; Systems of Advantage**
3. When Culture Meets Language  
→ **Maintenance** of Power Structures; **Ethnography**  
Clifford Geertz, Stuart Hall

# PERSONAL BACKGROUND

1. **Theatre** Passion
2. Connect a visit of artist **friends** in **Chile** with **university** life

# PROJECT: WHAT?

- Cooperation with **NgullumapuRedTO**
- **3 workshops**
  - Recognising & undoing sexist stereotypes in my own behaviour
  - The most violent experience in my life
  - Breaking free from daily routine
  - Sharpening perception inside & outside of body
  - Meaning is created through bodily expression
- **10 Interviews**
  - Contextualise TO into life

# PROJECT: HOW?

- Ethnographic field study
  - Participant observation
  - Ethnographic journal
  - Semi-structured interviews
- Travelling to Santiago, Concepción, and Valparaíso

# ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

- Augusto Boal's theatre method = practical implementation of Clifford Geertz theory
- **Geertz**: unravelling of the layers of culture → understanding its meaning
- **Boal**: “deconstruct the body”; getting aware and exploring the infinite capacities of bodily expression

→ *Meaning = bodily expressive act*

# PERSONAL CONCLUSIONS

- Application of theoretical knowledge
- Appreciation of creative work
- Political person
- Anthropology master
- Culture shocks