

Self-Presentation in Amazigh Pre-Theatrical Forms: The Anzar Ritual as a Case Study — A Socio-Cultural Approach

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Abstract

The study of popular literature, pre-theatrical forms, and ritual practices is regarded as one of the most significant areas in folklore studies, as these practices reflect social and anthropological dimensions and address various societal issues.

This research is grounded in the reality of culture and draws upon **Erving Goffman's** theory of social interaction. It focuses on the popular traditions practiced by the Amazigh, with particular attention to the pre-theatrical forms of Béjaïa region, which warrant careful examination. The study seeks to connect the theoretical framework with practical applications by analyzing the interactions of participants during ritual practices from the perspective of the social study of Amazigh pre-theatrical forms.

The social study of Amazigh pre-theatrical forms aims to provide answers to the following research questions:

- What is meant by pre-theatrical forms ?
- How do these forms interact with the dramatic structure itself, which underlies the theatrical experience ?
- How have these forms evolved, similarly to their development in Greek theatre, from a stage of artistic absorption to a stage of aesthetic awareness ?
- How does the dramatic framework suffice to generate the social interactions that occur among individuals during the practice of these rituals ?
- What is the reality of individuals' engagement with the dramatic dimension of these forms, and what are the motivations that drive them to participate in this engagement ?

Key words: Social Interaction Theory of Erving Goffman, Pre-Theatrical Forms, The Anzar Ritual, Performance, the backstage, the interaction, region of the Front, the personal Front, the team, The Definition of the Situation.

Pre-Theatrical Forms

1.1 The Concept of Pre-Theatrical Forms:

Pre-theatrical forms refer to the earliest dramatic seeds that later gave rise to theatre. They are termed “pre-theatrical” because they do not yet adhere to the Aristotelian rules outlined by Aristotle in his *Poetics*. The term encompasses a set of celebratory rituals involving dance and song, which establish a collective effect characterized by a sense of sacredness, as well as a structured sequence or program. These rituals — whether religious or social — are performed

within a human gathering and are generally understood as types of celebration or ceremonial acts (Mary Ilyes & Hanaf Kassab, 1997, p. 296). Primitive forms of these rituals continued to exist as a natural expression of social interaction and human engagement with the earliest signs of communal life, laying the groundwork for the emergence of theatre. Arab scholars have defined this type of phenomenon as pre-theatrical forms, noting that, although they did not evolve in the same way as early Greek theatre, they share a similar function: the beginnings of theatrical forms eventually developed in Greece into structured genres such as tragedy and comedy, becoming part of the universal dramatic heritage (Ali Aklaa Eressan 1987, p. 21).

The reasons for the lack of development of these forms remain largely a subject for further study and research. Fundamentally, this is linked to the connection of Arab peoples to the land, as we will observe later in Amazigh phenomena. As Ali Aklaa Eressan (1987, p. 21) notes:

"Each people has what it accepts or rejects; each environment provides its own tools, data, and circumstances; and each people has its own way of expressing, communicating, and presenting, of influencing and being influenced, and of experiencing and directing themselves toward both enjoyment and knowledge."

It also served as a mythological reference, as the Greeks were accustomed to linking celebratory rituals with myth. For example, they practiced annual celebrations in honor of Dionysus, the god of fertility and growth. These rituals functioned both as religious festivals and as occasions to ritually reenact sacred events from a mythological past. As Mircea Ilyade (1988, p. 67) explains: *"A religious festival, as a ritual act, initially and periodically reenacts a sacred event that occurred in a mythological past. The ordinary flow of time is suspended to reintroduce the myth into the present, allowing the sacred event to be relived and repeated."* During these rituals, the choir sought to revive the sacred mythological times of Dionysus, aiming to bring the extraordinary deeds performed by the god into the present. This also symbolically helped humanity to overcome the hardships of the struggles of hunting.

3-1- The Most Important Amazigh Pre-Theatrical Forms

The Amazigh people observe numerous and diverse ceremonial celebrations, sharing with other peoples the practice of commemorating annual festivities, social events, and national occasions. These rituals are often based on a mythological reference. We have chosen to focus on those linked to fertility myths, which are periodically reenacted and reflect the strong connection of individuals to the land. They also demonstrate the community's efforts to influence the seasonal cycle and to witness the rebirth of plant life after winter or periods of drought.

The Anzar Ritual

The "Anzar" ritual: is a celebratory practice that involves extensive performance and spectacle. It is one of the oldest rituals known among the Amazigh across North Africa, dating back to pre-Islamic times. Although it has not remained continuously practiced to the present day, it is performed in response to periods of drought. This raises the questions: What does "Anzar" mean and how this ritual is carried out?

An ethnological study indicates that “Anzar”, an Amazigh term, generally refers to rain. According to local beliefs, it governs the coming of rain. The word for “rain” is called “Aghbar” in Kherrata region, and it has the same meaning as “Anzar.” It corresponds to “Aqfour,” “Lqra,” and “Lywi” in Béjaïa and Tizi Ouzou regions. However, the term “Anzar” is not used or mentioned in daily life except during the performance of the rainmaking ritual (Chahira Boukhanouf, 2012, p. 143).

The interpretation of drought in any given village, even after the Islamic period, has been linked to religious beliefs. It was understood as the result of divine anger caused by human corruption and wrongdoing on the earth. In response, the villagers would seek to appease God through the performance of ritual practices, hoping to draw closer to Him and obtain rain. During these occasions, the community would gather and collectively agree to perform acts of communal devotion.

The ritual begins by gathering children who actively participate alongside an elderly woman, who moves through the village in a ceremonial procession. A young child carrying El-maghrfa (the ladle) also called for “ad-dumya” who goes from house to house, reciting prayers and invocations to request rain from God, precedes her. Upon reaching the threshold of each house, the participants raise their voices in song so that those inside can hear. The elderly woman then emerges, holding a water jar and sprinkling the contents with El-maghrfa (thegnja) as a symbolic act to induce rainfall.

The children continue the procession until they have gathered sufficient provisions to convene with the rest of the village, who are accustomed to participating in this ritual at various locations, such as the village square, the valley, the surrounding mountains, the mosques, and the shrines of local saints. Men bring firewood, while the girls and elderly women prepare couscous and distribute it. During the course of the ritual, El-maghrfa is immersed in water, and in recent times, the village has limited the practice to sprinkling water only, without distributing couscous (Chahira Boukhanouf, 2012, p. 144/146)

Thus, the Anzar ritual is not merely a narrative recounting of a myth; its performance is essential for reenacting the myth and renewing life in nature.

Spring Reception Ritual: Shou-rbia

This is a celebratory ritual traditionally practiced by community members during the spring season each year. The questions arise: What is meant by the term “**Shou-rbia**”, and how is this ritual performed?

The term “**Shou-rbia**” is a compound word composed of two elements:

- **Shou-**: the first element, meaning “beginning” or “the start of something.”
- **-rbia**: the second element, referring to the spring season. It is originally an Arabic term that entered the region due to its proximity to the plain of The Upper Plateaus Region (Setif) (Chahira Boukhanouf, 2012, p. 176).

Preparations for the Shourbia ritual begin with the women before sunrise. They go from house to house collecting eggs and cleaning the corners of homes, while also washing clothes and bathing. The women ensure that all household necessities are ready for the preparation of the ritual feast. A few hours before sunset, the children—both boys and girls—are brought from the surrounding areas, carrying the plants “Adergis”, “Bounafaa”.

The women and elderly women receive the children while wearing ceremonial attire, with their faces marked with a cross-like symbol (+) written with ash. The plants are washed three times and then placed outside the house for a period, exposed to sunlight. Afterwards, the women begin preparing the couscous while chanting:

"Arb l-baraka, Arb l-ghurraf"

(O Lord, bless us; O Lord, grant abundance)

"Arb thfekhd anghd aif ntmanna, Arb thsrbhd thamourth"

(O Lord, provide us with what we wish; O Lord, grant us sustenance)

At dawn, the mother prays and places eggs in her right hand and, the Adergis plant in her left hand to invoke blessings. After completing this, she says Douaa, and when finished, she immediately begins preparing the Shou-rbia ritual feast, combining the plant and eggs in a pot. She then cooks the couscous over steam while reciting:

"Ya Rabb al-baraka"

(O Lord, bless us)

"Arb l-khir"

(O Lord, grant goodness)

"Arb th-sah yidhd kulsh, Arb th-sb'add l-balb"

(O Lord, revive all things; O Lord, keep misfortune away from us)

After the cooking is complete, a large dish is prepared, filled with couscous to which olive oil and sugar have been added, also decorated with eggs and plant roots, taking care that any broken eggs are discarded rather than placed in the dish. The couscous is served for breakfast. Immediately afterwards, the eldest girls accompany the children and go from tree to tree, spreading the plant leaves and scattering the eggshells behind the trees to promote growth and increase the fruit yield.

In the subsequent stage of the ritual, the mother prepares the "Shou-rbia" pie, whose preparation follows the same steps as bread making. However, she exercises creativity in shaping it to resemble a human face, placing symbols of the sun and the moon, and ensuring that a tree is positioned at the center of the pie. The entire surface is then coated with egg yolk.

In addition, the mother prepares other thin pies alongside this main one, known as "msaman".

The mothers then give each child a small bag containing a Shou-rbia pie, thin flatbreads, dates, oranges, and other food items. The children go out to the wide fields surrounded by towering mountains and eat what they have brought once they feel hungry. If the weather is rainy, however, the celebration is held indoors, where they continue chanting their spring folkloric songs:

"Shurbie, Shurbie"
(Shou-rbia, Shou-rbia)

"Taqrīd t-takked, nek rruzay"
(The hen gives, and I trade)

"Arb th-shiyyed kulsh"
(O Lord, revive all things)

"Arb th-kfed l-xir"
(O Lord, grant us all goodness)

(Chahira Boukhanouf, 2012, p. 177–183)

These ritual practices reflect the deep connection between individuals and the land, which has long been their primary source of sustenance. When the land withholds its bounty, people express their needs through religious rituals, seeking closeness to God in order to obtain His favor and the blessings of the earth.

2. Erving Goffman's Dramaturgical Perspective:

In his sociological studies, Erving Goffman focused on analyzing social interaction among individuals. He viewed human behavior in the presence of others as closely resembling theatrical performance, arguing that social life itself constitutes a stage on which individuals share roles and skillfully perform them in order to achieve their objectives. Accordingly, Goffman adopted the dramaturgical perspective as an analytical framework for understanding social interaction. He explicitly articulated this view in the introduction to his book **The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life**, stating:

"The perspective employed in this study is that of theatrical performance; the principles derived from it are dramaturgical principles. I shall examine the ways in which the individual presents himself and his activity to others in ordinary work situations".

Goffman argues that the individual is concerned with the ways in which the impression formed about him is directed and controlled, as well as with the kinds of actions he may or may not undertake in order to preserve his performance before others (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 19). According to Goffman, the behavior of the performing individual in face-to-face interactions with others constitutes a *performance* of a specific role determined by his social status. This performance generates a particular impression within a defined group of observers. Consequently, the individual seeks to employ various strategies—deliberately or spontaneously—to engage in *impression management*, thereby exercising as much control as possible over the impressions produced in the minds of others.

Following his doctoral research on social interaction and social cohesion, Goffman was able to further develop this perspective through a grant from the Ford Foundation, administered by the Department of Social Anthropology and the Committee on Social Science Research at the University of Edinburgh, under the supervision of Professor Edward A. Shils (E. A. Shils)

at the University of Chicago (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 17). In his study, Goffman drew upon reliable and well-established research, as well as personal memoirs, using them as illustrative examples. He also conducted field studies on active individuals and carried out research on a small island community in the Shetland Islands.

From these investigations, he identified six (06) dramaturgical principles, which he outlined in his book under the following headings: performances, teams, regions and regional behavior, communication outside the character, and the arts of impression management. Within this perspective, he introduced a comprehensive set of concepts to support his analysis, including situation, performance, team, front stage, personal front, back stage, preparation, and control.

Goffman devoted particular attention to the concept of impression and to all matters related to the ways in which it is controlled—both in relation to the self and to the impressions formed by others—through a set of techniques aimed at sustaining the performance.

3. Dramatic Analysis of Social Interaction in the Anzar Ritual:

As previously noted, Goffman's dramaturgical perspective identifies a set of key concepts. In this section, we seek to apply a social approach to the Anzar ritual according to this perspective.

3-1. Al-Wad'iya: *The Definition of the Situation*

Goffman defines the situation as “what is going to happen in a given setting, and for what purpose” (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 21). From the first observation, the situation can be defined in terms of what occurs in the Anzar ritual, where socialization, habits, and traditions allow participants to anticipate the reactions of others and the atmosphere of the ceremony. This gives insight into the status and roles of the participants, and allows an understanding of how they will behave (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 21).

In this case, the celebratory context signals the presence of drought, and the community has traditionally performed this type of ritual to invoke rainfall.

3-2. the team

The team is considered one of the fundamental concepts highlighted by Goffman. It plays an active role in generating social interaction and, by nature, is “a set of individuals who must cooperate to maintain a given definition of the situation” (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 112–113). The members of the team work collectively to achieve a shared goal, and the team itself can take various forms depending on the context.

In the Anzar ritual, the team consists of a group of young children under the supervision of an elderly woman, who directs their participation in the procession. Additional participants assist in providing provisions from the households, and some help in performing the celebratory rituals after the chosen host has prepared the food and distributed it among men and women. According to Goffman, a team “is a gathering, but a gathering tied to a social or organizational structure through interactions or symbols; these interactions maintain an appropriate presentation of the situation” (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 112–113).

The interactions of this team continue throughout the ceremonial ritual, which begins with supplication and prayer, proceeds to the offering of gifts or alms, and concludes once again

with prayers to God, asking Him to bless His servants and grant rainfall, so that the earth — that has long been a source of sustenance — may flourish.

In Goffman's sense, the team, as a group of individuals managing the presentation of a situation, corresponds to what Aristotle referred to as the chorus in dramatic performance. In this view, the team embodies the dramatic seeds or proto-theatrical forms that would later contribute to the emergence of theatre.

3-3. Performance:

Performance is one of the fundamental concepts highlighted by Goffman, as it grants social interaction its structure in everyday life and imparts a dramatic quality to it. This is what led Goffman to compare social performance to theatrical performance and to frame it within the dramaturgical perspective. According to Goffman, performance is *"the total activity of an individual during a period in which he is present before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers"* (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 39). Goffman's research primarily focused on the expressions conveyed, particularly verbal expressions, which he considered the most theatrical and contextually meaningful. In the Anzar ritual, one of the elderly women explained:

"At first, the young and the old performed the ritual. If the older children performed before the younger ones, rain would not fall. Since that time, it has been preferred that the younger children perform first." (Chahira Boukhanouf, 2012, p. 159)

This statement illustrates the extent to which the individuals' performance is consciously oriented toward producing the desired impression and outcome of the ritual. The careful sequencing and participation reflect the performers' understanding of their role in achieving the social and symbolic goals of the ceremony.

In theatrical performance, spectacle is realized through the interaction of three elements: the actor, the stage, and the audience. According to Goffman, "The individual actor on the stage presents himself in a personal theatrical persona to other actors, while the audience constitutes a third party in this interaction: a fundamental element that would not exist if the performance were not real. In everyday life, these three elements are compressed into dual roles: the individual's performance is guided by the roles of the others present, who they form, the audience" (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 19).

In the case of the Anzar ritual, the performance is essentially collective and is directed by an elderly woman, who unifies the participants and coordinates their actions into a ceremonial procession, akin to the coordinated movements of a theatrical troupe. The ritual begins with the handling of the "thegnja" (the ceremonial of El-maghrfa or ad-dumya), followed by the recitation of songs, chants, and prayers. Implicit performances are interwoven throughout the procession, including sprinkling water with El-maghrfa, engaging the children in the ritual, and collecting dry grains as part of the communal offerings.

Goffman's analysis primarily emphasizes expressions conveyed through verbal and performative acts, which he considers the most theatrical and contextually meaningful. In the Anzar ritual, these verbal expressions—chants, prayers, and songs—serve as the performative medium through which the ceremonial objectives are enacted and socially reinforced.

3-4. the personal Front:

Goffman notes that the personal front is one of the most distinctive expressive tools, signaling other elements of expression. This can be observed in certain ritual acts, such as when the elderly woman selects the carrier of El-maghrfa (thegnja, the ceremonial of ad-dumya). She carefully chooses an orphaned girl, and according to local informants: "We select the orphaned girl because she is poor and mournful, so that our prayers reach the Almighty Lord, and He may grant us rainfall" (Chahira Boukhanouf, 2012, p. 163).

Mohamed Oussous also emphasizes this in his work *Studies in Amazigh Mythical Thought*, noting that the orphaned girl holds a special significance in these rituals, as her vulnerable condition evokes the sympathy of cosmic forces, thereby increasing the likelihood of the ritual's success (Mohamed Oussous, 2008, p. 49). From another perspective, the ritual assigns great importance to the choice of the El-maghrfa carrier, as this expressive tool embodies symbolic and mythological references, as discussed earlier in the description of the Anzar ritual. Once the elderly woman finds the girl, she guides her in leading the communal procession while holding El-maghrfa, which, along with the carrier, functions as an implicit symbol of fertility and abundance. The ritual seeks to harmonize the performance of the team (the group of participants) with these symbolic elements to make the enactment more expressive and impactful, thus invoking divine mercy and support.

The selection of an innocent child, rather than an adult, ensures the ritual's purity and integrity, allowing the personal front to serve as a symbolic mediator of the general social situation and a means of impression management, aiming for divine favor and the successful outcome of the ritual.

3-5. region of the Front:

Goffman defines the "**setting in which the performance occurs**" as a key component of social interaction (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 116). In the context of the Anzar ritual, this setting takes the form of a celebratory event, during which participants move throughout the village. Consequently, the "**region of the front**" is not confined to a single fixed location, except at the conclusion of the ritual, when the community assembles at a designated site to prepare the communal feast, offered as an act of charity.

The selection of this site is **neither arbitrary nor incidental**; it is carefully determined prior to the ritual. The process considers the village's geographical features, such as the presence of water sources—whether a canal or a river—as well as sacred sites, including mosques and the tombs of local saints. In other instances, the ritual may be conducted in the expansive green fields surrounding the hills (Chahira Boukhanouf, 2012, p. 150).

The sanctity of the chosen location carries **implicit symbolic meaning**, necessitating careful reflection and understanding. This observation aligns with Goffman's assertion that certain elements of performance are intimately tied to the region of the front, and that the collective decision of the villagers regarding the site contributes to the establishment and preservation of the ceremonial framework (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 116).

3-6. the interaction:

The material dimension of interaction concerns the reciprocal effects of individuals on one another. Goffman notes that social interaction constitutes "the immediate influence of individuals upon one another, which can be observed in the totality of interactions occurring

on a given occasion” (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 33). In this context, the interaction is understood as the gathering of individuals in a specific situation, wherein each participant anticipates the impressions of others and simultaneously acts to avoid mistakes or atone for them.

Such interactions carry a solidarity and cooperative dimension, especially in response to crises such as drought. Within the Anzar ritual, the mutual engagement of participants reinforces social cohesion and collective resilience in the face of environmental hardships. Moreover, these interactions are not limited to merely observing or anticipating the impressions of others; they also include active participation in ritual practices with the intention of securing divine favor and blessing. The ritual thus exemplifies how social interaction and cooperation are intimately tied to both communal survival and spiritual objectives.

The Anzar ritual is **organized around a group of children**, as previously noted. Goffman, however, emphasized in his study that children represent **the pinnacle of social interaction required in daily life** (Erving Goffman, 1956, p. 211). This point is further illustrated in certain ritual practices. One elder recounted that in the past, **the elderly woman leading the procession would conceal some of what she knew from the children during the ritual**. She explained:

"Itouy fbikṛḍif thlbtist ntmagarth l- 'aşur tiddr asmi dhmf dṛiya Anzar, bṣah anfiy-ula dāšu teydr, thqma-antskef"

“In the old days, there was an elderly woman who would chant words unknown to the children as they performed the ritual, so that we would not reveal anything to them, as she did not wish to generali

e it to them.” (Chahira Boukhanouf, 2012, p. 159)

This practice reflects a **dramaturgical loyalty** and is one of the qualities that members of the participating group (*the team*) must cultivate in order to **maintain the integrity of the performance**. Goffman, in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, also identifies **three defensive traits—physical loyalty, discipline, and caution**—as essential within dramaturgical engagement.

3-7. the backstage:

Goffman refers to the **back region** as the area where individuals **prepare for their roles or step aside from them**. In the Anzar ritual, this was manifested in **all the preparatory activities carried out by the elder woman, including arranging the ceremonial El-maghrfa (thegnja), training the children in the chants of the procession they would lead, and practicing the popular march songs**. The back region also encompassed **periods of rest, corners used for setting up ritual materials such as plates and food supplies, and the time devoted to preparing the location selected for the communal feast**. In short, it was the space where all **logistical, material, and preparatory arrangements** were made, ensuring that the performance in the front region could proceed smoothly and effectively.

3-8. the settings:

This refers to **all matters related to furniture, decor, and physical design**. In the ritual, these were embodied in the following elements:

1. El-maghrfa:

El-maghrfa is one of the key **expressive tools** within the ritual. In the context of this ceremony, it functions as a symbolic object representing the **desired rainfall**. It embodies the figure of the bride who, according to myth, is to be offered to Anzar.

An elderly woman is responsible for preparing this tool and the related ritual settings. She brings El-maghrfa, decorates it, and selects the children who will lead the ceremonial procession through the village. In earlier times, El-maghrfa was preserved for use on such occasions, being decorated with care, adorned with symbolic markings, and sometimes dressed with human-like features to resemble a real bride.

During the ritual, El-maghrfa is sprinkled with water, symbolically mirroring the bridal processions in Amazigh weddings, where the bride is similarly showered with water. This act of sprinkling is intended as a **suggestion of rain**, invoking its arrival (Mohamed Oussous, 2008, p. 17).

2. The Chant:

The chant represents one of the primary expressive tools adopted in the ritual, functioning as the textual script upon which the performance relies. The elderly woman trains the children to memorize and recite this chant during the ceremonial enactment. According to one informant, the text of the chant is as follows (Chahira Boukhanouf, 2012, pp. 144–145):

“Anzar, Anzar”

(Anzar, Anzar)

“Arb th-kfdd d aghbar thgnjait t-qmulih”

(O Lord, grant us the rain; the scoop is hot)

“Rniḵ uxa– uqmiḵ, Arb thṣ r-wit mmiḵ amaf, amaf iqnay Arb th-kfd l-ḥmali”

(In the humble house, O Lord, water the earth well; water from the sky)

“Aymmi ‘ishi awid l-‘sha, Aymmi ḥawa’ awid amaf l-ywi nur, nur agh bar”

(O mother Aisha, prepare the evening meal;

O mother Hawwa, bring the water of the sky, light, light of the rain)

“Arb sqa th-ihyar”

(O Lord, water the plants)

C- Dry Grains:

One of the expressive arrangements on which the ritual is based is the distribution of dry grains. The women of the village are responsible for giving the participating children dry grains such as chickpeas, beans, and lentils, so that they multiply in the harvest and bless the ritual’s components. These grains are distributed in measured amounts in a pot and their dryness symbolizes the barren land, which returns to fertility after being nourished by rainwater. Moreover, the arrangements within the ritual suggest the necessity of continuity between humans and nature to ensure blessing and abundance.

Conclusion:

The research focused on summarizing the main points as follows:

Goffman, in his theory of social interaction, emphasizes the symbolic structures underlying our simple daily practices, which we may perform without consciously attending to their symbolic significance. However, it can be noted that daily interactions are not purely accidental; rather, they are guided by implicit principles.

In theatrical practice, even what may appear accidental is actually structured. Similarly, in everyday life, the flow of actions constructs meaning, just as in a theatrical performance, where each act, from the beginning of the play to its conclusion, follows a coherent course, with each character's action appearing justified on stage, shaping the trajectory of the performance.

The Anzar ritual is a celebratory event grounded in mythological references, which necessitates repeated practice as required. This type of ritual has been performed historically and continues to the present day. It involves many forms of spectatorship, and it is appropriate to invoke here the set of concepts that Goffman developed in his dramaturgical perspective.

The ritual is organized around a **“team”** composed of a group of children and an elderly woman, who take a specific part of the village—the **“region of the front”**—as the stage for presenting themselves. This is based on the fact that the ceremonial procession is mobile. The **“definition of the situation”** is established by this: the ritual is a rain-invoking event, and by the end of the ceremony, the performance reaches one of the sacred sites chosen by the elder to display the remaining offerings.

The preparations and intensive rehearsals associated with the ritual constitute the **“back region”**, analogous to the theatrical backstage. This includes rest periods, corners where cooking utensils and other materials are stored, and so on, as the ritual always concludes with an act of charity.

The group performs their presentation **“with the personal front”**, one of the most intimate expressive tools. Here, the elder selects an orphaned girl or a small child to create a greater impact, and the performance incorporates **“impression management”** aimed at achieving the desired effect during the ritual.

The ritual also relies on a set of **“props and settings”**, including **El-maghrfa**, dry grains, and the well-known Anzar chant of the region. All of these ritual elements symbolize the necessity of water.

The combination of these elements ensures that **interaction** occurs among the team members in the presence of observers, thus contributing to the overall success of the ritual.

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