Symbolic meaning and representational and reflexive perspectives remain dominant orientations in the analysis of ritual. While these must be crucial, this essay argues that a focus on the perceptual dynamics of rite, especially as these are located in ritual aesthetics, may expand an understanding of the force of rite. The discussion develops critically upon Victor Turner’s seminal work, suggesting ways in which ritual analyses may be redirected. The related concepts of dynamics and virtuality (distinguished from the cyber-technological kind) are developed, indicating that these may be critical for understanding how rites change or transform the situations to which they are directed. Ritual as a dynamic in virtuality that has no essential or necessary relation to the ordinary realities that surround it may, because of this fact, be greatly empowered as a force that can pragmatically intervene in ordinary realities.
22 Bruce Kapferer, “Ritual Dynamics and Virtual Practice: Beyond Representation and Meaning,” in Ritual in its own right: Exploring the
added. 24 See McKenzie, Perform or Else. Performance Ethnography. 29. Take for instance theatre scholar Jill Dolan who draws heavily
from Turner’s concept of communitas and social drama when theorising utopian performance. Ritual Dynamics and Virtual Practice:
Beyond Representation and Meaning. not write of ritual in the Durkheimian sense as a kind of collective representation, a symbolic
spatial dynamics in performance of music and dance, their relation to the production of theMoreover, the meaning that may be more. In
his historical analysis of the role of archaeological representation in the museum, he identifies the sociological creation of universal
heritage. He theorizes a notion of the universal citizen-heir as the implied benefactor of this universal heritage. In the second section,
Mathews elaborates a commentary on this historical analysis of archaeology, tourism, heritage and the museum.