

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING THE COMPLEXITY OF PSYCHODRAMATIC THEORY

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SUMMARY

While being best known as a method of group psychotherapy, classical psychodrama takes on much broader and more complex meanings associated with: theory of roles, education, interactive improvisation theatre and many other contextual frameworks. The meta-theoretical context in which psychodrama is analysed in this work is first of all clinical, psychiatric and psychotherapeutic.

In the past ninety years the development of psychodrama in the world has been influenced by many social events and sundry psychology movements. In her work the author describes and analyses the theory of psychodrama in the context of a behavioural and psychoanalytic perspective. She illustrates its origin and connects it with the influence of ancient drama and the developmental concept of modern European theatre in the first half of the last century, the magic/religious tradition of Indian tribes, constructivism and postmodernism, and the deterministic chaos theory. All the mentioned theoretical backgrounds have in their different ways co-created and contributed to the flexibility, integrity and universality of the psychodramatic method and are mutually intertwined in both the theoretical and the practical, clinical sense.

Key words: psychodrama - ancient drama – “system” method of role playing – behaviourism – psychoanalysis – deterministic chaos theory

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THE INFLUENCE OF ANCIENT DRAMA

Ancient Greece and Rome knew and used the magic power of a group. In honour of ancient gods, various rituals were performed in temples and had an important cathartic meaning for people.

Thus in ancient Greece the so-called Dionysia, the orgiastic nocturnal festivals, were held periodically in honor of Dionysus – the god of wine, wine growing, drama and theatre. The participants were women (*Menades, bakhe*) dressed like Dionysus's chaperons. They were his worshippers who sacrificed animals and ate raw meat, believing that in this way they were receiving Dionysus's blood and body (Mindoljević Drakulić 2012).

The most important were “Greater Dionysia” staged at the end of March, which had the longest tradition in Athens. These festivals abounded in performances in which a chorus of singers dressed in kid skin sang to the accompaniment of dance movements – so-called *dithyrambs*. These satyric choral songs or chants gradually evolved into Greek tragedies and comedies. It was in the Dionysian theatre underneath the Acropolis that many works by Aristophanes, Aeschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles had their premieres (Zamarovsky 1985).

In ancient Greece, *chorus*, apart from its dramatic meaning, also had a psychotherapeutic role. The group that constituted the chorus had the function of testing the reality, as well as a kind of superego function preaching justice and truth in a drama.

The masking of an actor in the Dionysian theatre meant a renouncement of his own identity in honour of the god. It also offered a possibility for an entirely different person to speak out through the actor. Dionysus was also a god of ecstasy. The idea of ecstasy is explained as the highest degree of delight, union with deity, fascination, or a state of affairs “out of oneself”, which in ancient drama indicated the actor's complete renouncement or waiver of his individuality. The actor succeeded in it by using the role reversal technique, which today is a real Dionysian tool in psychodrama psychotherapy group work (Moreno et al. 2000).

The role reversal as the basic technique of Moreno's psychodrama has become something like a transitional moment for undergoing the so-called ecstatic experience, the one that rejects “*stasis*” (staying) and speeds up the assumption of the role of other persons (Mindoljević Drakulić 2012).

In ancient theatre, at first only one person played the role of the protagonist (leading character), the author and the director. Only at a later stage the roles were also given to other actors. Moreno took the concept of a protagonist from the ancient Greek drama, implying that the protagonist follows the “Dionysus journey”. He regarded such a journey as a lonely affair of encountering a series of negative feelings, such as the fear of death, humiliation, shame, and sorrow. That is how Moreno linked psychodrama with Greek tragedy where the protagonist's social and mental *status quo* disappeared as soon as Dionysus made his appearance. The characteristic of Dionysus was change and continuous movement as opposed to stagnation (Røine 1997).

Moreno considers the ancient tragedy as an archetypal representation of the world surrounding us, through which man's reality is mirrored without any excessive moralising or determining the right or wrong living response. Also, Moreno insists that the ancient tragedy, just like today's psychodrama, is hostile to a man's self-indulging fantasies and desires (Moreno et al. 2000). The classical psychodrama today has retained the dramatic play as the principal media. This therapeutic technique has gradually developed and upheld four basic work principles, each with its own rules: warming up, action (play), sharing and reintegration. Regardless of the patients and their diagnoses in psychodrama treatment, there is a wide range of props that can be used in the psychodrama therapy along with obligatory furniture (chairs and tables): puppets, a pre-prepared scenario ("script training"), even a make-up and light or music effects. By means of such dramatic tools, modern psychodrama becomes a stage on which the protagonists are simultaneously resolving a number of complex problems entering and exiting the play and thereby changing reality and fantasy.

THE INFLUENCE OF MAGIC-RELIGIOUS TRADITION OF INDIAN TRIBES

Group psychotherapy aided by stage art also stems from the magic-religious tradition of the American Indian tribes. Our well-known child psychiatrist and doyen of analytical psychodrama Professor Staniša Nikolić (1934-2010) in his book "Performing Expression and Psychoanalysis" mentions some anthropological observations from the fifties of the last century by two authors, C. Levi-Strauss and M. Leiris.

These anthropologists observed the behaviour of a Pomo Indian from California who got scared at the sight of a wild goose. Since then he was showing signs of sorrow and concern. The healer from his tribe and his assistants set the stage for a re-encounter of that Indian with a wild goose, where the role of the goose was played by the healer personally. In that play the Indian relived the earlier experience with the wild creature, his anxiety and weakness disappeared and he soon began to feel a lot better.

Referring to this example of the magic world of our ancestors, Moreno argued that "by means of psychodrama the primitive healing methods can be raised to a scientific level" (Nikolić 1983, Nikolić 2004).

STANISLAVSKI AND MORENO'S ROLE THEORY

In the first and second decades of the 20th century, Vienna, Austria and the entire Europe were enraptured with theatre. Having discovered the richness of stage expression, in the early 20th century Moreno published in Austria his first psychodrama protocol, "Divinity As

an Actor" ("*Die Goetheit als Komödiant*") and founded the Theatre of Spontaneity ("*Stegreiftheater*"). At the same time in France, Antonin Artaud (1896-1948), a prominent poet, dramatist and theatre artist, defined in his main work "Theatre and Its Double" the latest vision of modern theatre at the time. He tried through radical theatrical innovations to transform the stage into the only possible reality and thus realise the eternal truths of life that can be believed (Nikolić 1983). In Moscow, Constantin Sergeevich Alexeyev, known under the artistic name Stanislavski (1863-1938), whose father was a rich local industrialist and mother a famous Parisian actress, followed Artaud's innovative ideas. Stanislavski became a distinguished Russian actor, director and teatrologist who cherished the tradition of literary realism of internationally renowned Russian writers (especially Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy, Anton Pavlovich Chekhov and Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin) and created the famous method of acting/role playing that he called "*System*". At the Moscow Art Theatre, co-founded by him, he taught actors the easiest ways of focusing on character development on the stage. In the "*System*" actors made use of their own "*emotional memory*". Recalling the moments and events from their own life, they exploited the sought emotion in order to play their role in a natural way. The actor asks himself: "What would I do if I found myself in the same situation as the person enacted by me?" In this way the actors learned to analyse the assigned roles and endeavoured to understand the emotions and motives of the characters played by them. Likewise, they acted as mediators between the audience and the playwright. What Stanislavski achieved in this way was the disappearance of excessive operetta-like theatricality. The false pathos of speech was gone and actors were becoming almost ordinary people with a difference in that they showed deep feelings on the stage and spoke freely and spontaneously, filled with natural inner enthusiasm. As argued by Stanislavski, the actor's creativity begins with the syntagma "*as if*". This means that the actor switches over from everyday reality to an imagined world where he believes everything, just as children believe in the power of their toys. The theatre masks, the stage, the décor, are also a part of the truth, of whatever the actor sincerely believes, whatever constitutes his inner truth of feelings. For the stage truth to appear realistic and less black-and-white, Stanislavski used to advise his actors: "When you perform a goody, seek where he is bad, and when you perform a baddy, seek where he is good." (Stanislavski 1945). Moreno and Constantin Sergeevich Alekseyev, independently and not knowing each other, pursued the same goal: they searched for truth, which lends a person the experience of an authentic encounter with self in the context of the surrounding world (Mindoljević Drakulić 2012). Stanislavski's influence on Moreno manifested itself first of all in the notion that the

members of a psychodrama group and the protagonist should also put themselves into “other people’s shoes” and succeed in being in an “as if” situation. Actually, the basic technique and the cornerstone of Moreno’s psychodrama is to be able to assume the role of another person and to observe oneself from a different angle. In Moreno’s view, the role as the main tool of psychodrama means a bridge between individual and social psychodynamics. He believed that each personality consisted of a series of roles and sub-roles and that the goal of every person was to develop the widest possible repertoire of roles, so as to show creativity, maturity and, finally, health. He also pointed out that a role should never be a rigid pattern of behaviour, that it should be instead a flexible and creative part of any personality. A good performance, according to Stanislavski, requires the actor’s bodily freedom and spontaneity, and Moreno was reasoning in a similar way. He was using the warming-up process, creating a possibility for a group or a potential protagonist to express with their body what they feel. Both of them thought that the creativity of a protagonist/actor/group member required complete psychophysical concentration. Just as Moreno demanded from the protagonist to set the stage carefully and feel in the process all the key components of that moment (colours, scents, texture of various materials, temperature, time and many other sensations), Stanislavski, too, argued that the actor with his full sensory immersion helped his own warming-up (Lippe 1992). In Moreno’s opinion, spontaneity is an universal human trait. It is a term that derives from the Latin *sua sponte*, which means free will and the Latin word *responsum* which means the answer. Spontaneity is therefore a response to some external or internal stimulus without coercion and/or thinking, which is manifested in accordance with individual’s desire and social norms. In the 1920’s Moreno offered a simple spontaneity training as a development method, introducing the so-called experimental theatre by playing different roles in the psychodrama. Spontaneity according to Moreno’s understanding, is a creative phenomena and a very important part of the psychodrama process which allows self-actualisation and self-accomplishment. He called it “an unconservable form of energy”. In psychodrama these valuable skills are acquired: how to use one’s own spontaneity, productivity, creativity, become more spontaneous in all areas of human activity, primarily in communication with “significant others”.

Psychodrama is a technique in which actors/protagonists can at least for a moment change their established roles and play the role of their interlocutor, feel and perceive them as an act of emphatic identification. Although, the scene play in psychodrama is not real, the protagonist emotionally, in a fantasizing way, realizes desires and unconscious drives (Mindoljević Drakulić 2010). Moreno thought that spontaneity was a

kind of catalyst for creativity, and if creativity was to be presented graphically on a continuum, then at one pole there would be anxiety, and at exact the opposite pole - creativity. He also believed that a person could have creative ideas, but without spontaneity one couldn’t accomplish them fully on a practical level. Creativity, creative potential and spontaneity in every psychodrama/sociodrama process, as well as in psychotherapy in general, is the main initiator of positive change. The main goal is to achieve corrective emotional experience in therapy (Mindoljević Drakulić 2007). Man is also a “role player”.

Moreno was fond of saying that in a psychodrama it is particularly important to play out “the right role in the right time”. Roles can be learned, varied or changed in relationship. He also emphasized that the roles were implicit and explicit social contracts with others (Veljković & Đurić 2003). If man’s “bearing” or main role that supports his ego is out of function, then a crisis and collapse ensue. In his book “The Essentials of Sociometry” Moreno defines the role as a position taken by a group member who is determined by his personality structure as well as the group’s reaction to that structure (Nikolić 2004). He also thinks that the real ego of a person cannot be clearly understood, but it is easier to notice when placed in different roles.

According to Moreno, there are three types of roles: psychosomatic (first arisen in a person’s life, when in the child’s development mind and body integrate), social (the roles of: mother, teacher, fireman etc.) and psychodramatic (imagined roles of fantasised persons, animals, things or phenomena, i.e., all the roles played in a psychodrama).

BEHAVIOURISM AND PSYCHODRAMA

As taught by the American psychologist John Broadus Watson (1878-1958), human development is primarily a result of the conditioning and learning process. As the founder of behaviourism, a psychological doctrine from the start of the 20th century, Watson believed with a certain amount of scientific rigour that the purpose of psychology was to discover the patterns of behaviour, the potentials of anticipation, control and change in behaviour, above all those that could be observed and measured. According to behaviouristic teaching, the subjective understanding of how mind operates internally by means of introspection had no place in experimental psychology, nor did behaviourists consider it worth the effort of scientific research (Vasta et al. 1998).

Any human behaviour, according to Watson, starts as a simple reflex, no faculty is innate, and children are entirely a “product” of the environment and learning.

Although denying that he was a behaviourist, Moreno’s works and his way of conducting psychodrama sessions were powerfully coloured with beha-

viourist psychological theory. He used a behavioural skills training which included: mindfulness that enables the experience of true feelings, learning about emotional functioning and regulation of actions and feelings, and interpersonal effectiveness in communication. The one of the goal was to recognize the problem, to understand (maladaptive) behaviour and finally to develop insight (Goldner Vukov & Moore 2010). As we know, fundamental to psychodrama is the concept of role. According to Moreno, role is a tangible form the self takes. Every person is characterised by a certain range of roles which dominate their behaviour. Moreno felt that in our modern society we each potentially had a very large role repertoire and our task became finding the roles/behaviour that best suited our own uniqueness (Dayton 2005). Moreno favoured environmental factors, action and the present moment, criticising excessive brooding over the past.

While in 1909 Watson was presenting behaviourism to the scientific community in the USA, in Europe, it is interesting to note, Sigmund Freud presented for the first time his theory of personality development. Both trends in psychology were simultaneously spreading their influence in the 20th century and had a considerable influence on Moreno's work. Thus the access of an individual to a psychotherapeutic psychodrama group was at first limited by mostly behavioural and interpersonal interventions, whereas in the succeeding years of psychodrama development the analytical discourse was also increasingly used. In this way both conceptual models were intertwined, from behaviour training for certain situations to a search for unconscious contents and exploration of relationships with important objects/parental figures from (early) childhood.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND PSYCHODRAMA

The influence of psychoanalysis should be understood in the light of Vienna events from the early 20th century. At that time Moreno was intensely engaged in writing philosophical articles for "Diamon" journal, fascinated and inspired by the works of the authors and philosophers of that time: Henry Bergson, Martin Buber, Otto Weininger and others. He particularly supported Bergson's understanding of creativity as the principal essence of reality, of the present time. Thus Moreno emphasised the creative action in the "*category of the moment*" (Veljković & Đurić 2003). He never accepted Freud's views. There is an anecdote about a meeting between Moreno and Freud:

After Freud's lecture on dream interpretation at the University of Vienna, Moreno came up to him. Freud asked him what his occupation was and Moreno answered: "Mr Freud, I start where you end. You analyse people in the artificial set-up of your office. I am meeting them in natural ambiances. You analyse

their dreams, I teach them to start dreaming again." (Veljković & Đurić 2003). In 1925, when he emigrated to America, he was surprised to see that psychoanalysis as a psychotherapeutic approach was accepted even more widely than in Vienna, its cradle. In defiance of a strong competition from psychoanalysis, which had more followers in America than in Europe, on the new continent Moreno started to fight for the status of psychodrama as a new and in all respects an original and specific psychotherapeutic technique.

He believed that the world was not moved only by subconscious, libidinous and aggressive impulses, but also by human face-to-face encounter. In the forties of the last century at Saint Elizabeth Hospital in Washington Moreno worked with his fellow psychodramatists James Enneis, Robert Hass and others. Their psychodrama sessions were also attended by patients with quite serious mental illness, with none of the psychodramatists being acquainted with the medical history of the members of a psychodrama group. The only thing taken into consideration was what the patients talked during the session in a "*here and now*" situation. The past and the dreams were used by Moreno's colleagues as a material for plays, not for clinical understanding of the mental disorders of their patients (Nikolić 1983).

In spite of his initial hostility to Freud and psychoanalysis, this exceptionally important trend in psychotherapy marks most Moreno's works. His fundamental disagreement with psychoanalysis is reflected in his reasoning about how wrong it is to just analyse action. In his works he also makes references to negativism and pessimism that pervade the psychoanalytic theory and criticises the tendency of psychoanalysts to associate the origin of human life with various negativities, misfortunes and calamities (Moreno 1967).

He views aggression not only as a destructive, but also a defensive and liberating action; "*acting out*" does not mean being irrational and perhaps committing a crime, it also means self-expression, active exteriorisation of one's needs. He criticised psychoanalysts for their excessive "reliance on the past, so that they keep their patients immobile, in the jaws of the cold and aloof analytical silence with the presence of the therapist as an almighty father." (Nikolić 1983). He believed that he "leads his patients towards the future, helps them in a brotherly spirit and touches them". The psychoanalytic terms of transfer and countertransfer he considers insufficient to explain interpersonal relations in a psychodrama. For that reason he highlights the "*telos*" phenomenon that contains three equally important instances: intuition, empathy and transfer. *Telos*, of course, is a concept taken from ancient Greek tragedy and drama, meaning: in distance, or far away. In ancient plays the term was used to describe feelings created at a distance between the actor and the audience, which thus empathises with the plight of the protagonist. Moreno considers *telos* as an authentic,

emotional contact between two persons at a distance, in a “*here and now*” situation, which, contrary to the psychoanalytic transfer phenomenon, cannot be used to explain the repetitions of past events and relationships (Karp et al. 1998). Nevertheless, there are certain analogies between psychoanalysis and psychodrama work when it comes to understanding the concept of transfer. Transfer in psychodrama work occurs and develops with the protagonist in his meeting and action with the auxiliary ego, whereas in psychoanalysis it occurs and develops in the relationship between the analysand and the psychoanalyst. A comparison between these two therapeutic approaches shows a certain complementarity, because the analysand also sometimes uses the analyst as an auxiliary (super)ego, who beside this role has the function of the patient’s substitute or surrogate ego. Such a psychoanalytic situation could be in the first place compared with the work in the so-called individual psychodrama (“*psychodrama a deaux*”).

When it comes to catharsis, this highly important as well as controversial psychotherapeutic phenomenon, Moreno advocated it as a basis of healing, whereas Breuer and Freud had discovered earlier in the case of Anna O. that the effects of catharsis were not permanent, but that they also suggested a person’s histrionic character.

As far as the bodily aspect is concerned, Moreno was literally touching his psychodrama clients, whereby he tried to unearth a series of information: about their muscular tension and hidden sides of their verbal statements. By touch he also encouraged them, gave them support, understanding and warmth. While Freud refused to touch even the forehead of his patients, Moreno laid emphasis on the body as the place of spontaneous experiences, the means of personal expression, which is more difficult to control than the verbal statement. For Moreno the body is an “organ of relationship with which a person communicates with the world, first of all with mother, developing his or her “*identity matrix*” (Nikolić 1983).

The phenomenon of the unconscious was accepted by Moreno in a way different from the one discussed by Freud. While both considered the unconscious as the cradle of absent-mindedness, forgetfulness and non-recognition, Moreno additionally regarded this part of the psyche as positive and creative, like a hidden treasure for human beings who needed more freedom for self-expression.

What psychodrama and psychoanalysis may have most in common is the universal phenomenon of play. The distinguished paediatrician and child psychoanalyst Donald Woods Winnicott (1896-1971) said: “Being able to play is being able to be analysed” (Nikolić 2004), and psychoanalysis is situated at the point of contact between two areas of play: the patient’s and the therapist’s. A therapy is aimed to bring a person to a state where they can start playing, and the magic of

psychodrama is in this idea: with the as-if richness of the symbolic form, externalise your dreams, your internal and external world, subjectively and objectively, be it a soliloquy, a projection of the future, mirroring, look-alike playing/doubling, or a host of other psychodrama techniques.

It was only in later years that Moreno recognised the importance of Freud’s work, especially his interactionist notion that human development is the result of a combined action of inheritance and environment. In the second half of the 20th century, about ten years before his death, he closely co-operated with Helena Deutsch and the founder of group analysis Siegfried Foulkes, both well-known analysts of the time. Modern psychodrama today relies in many respects on Moreno’s tradition of role-playing games, however, with obligatory psychodynamic interventions into the content.

The “new” psychodrama is in fact eclectic, because it includes and compiles all (group) therapy actions that in a psychodrama technique (such as mirroring) have proved healable over the past decades.

THE INFLUENCE OF CONSTRUCTIVISM AND POSTMODERN BEGINNINGS

Back in the twenties of the 20th century Vienna, the centre of the scientific and cultural developments of that time, Moreno positioned himself as a man of encounters. His clients, including children in the parks or prostitutes, were encouraged by him to strengthen their spontaneity and creativity (Baim et al. 2007). Only together, he believed, sharing their troubles and problems, can people improve their current situation. These ideas were in fact built upon the logical positivism and constructivism of that time. The constructivist outlook puts emphasis on experiential learning, social processes, internalisation of various forms of knowledge, adaptation tools, “exchange” with other persons. Besides, the world was viewed and understood in an active way, through participation in it, rather than passive observation of the environment.

Similar views were also propounded by Moreno, especially after he emigrated to America and acquainted himself with the ideas of the philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey (1859-1952), whose saying: “An ounce of experience is better than a ton of theory.” he fully supported (Cindrić et al. 2010).

One more epistemological form influenced Moreno’s work – the ideas of postmodernism that in their early forms had appeared at the time of expressionism, surrealism, dadaism and the beginnings of the theatre of absurd. All the above mentioned, art movements of the second decade of the 20th century in Europe, as the powerful Austria-Hungary was falling apart, advocated a need to explore the human soul stifled by social pressures, emphasising the fantasy and imaginative component of art, talking about the importance of a

direct emotional expression and of emotional experience, debunking the nonsense and absurdity of modern civilisation that destroys its own values. Moreno synthesised the ideas of these trends and embarked on the construction of his own psychodrama philosophy of the time. The richness and diversity of psychotherapeutic psychodrama techniques such as we know today can be traced back to the mentioned cultural and historical values. It is on their foundations that the canon of creativity in psychodrama was built, which could no longer be credited exclusively to the artistically minded intellectuals of that time.

For Moreno, creativity is the prime mover of positive changes in psychodrama work and an important factor of man's entire everyday functioning. Along with creativity, there is another important category – spontaneity. He defined spontaneity as a universal human trait and a catalyst of creativity. With the canons of creativity-spontaneity he gave psychodrama a clear form and structure that in the course of action he again broke down into smaller components.

He perceived psychodrama as a three-storey house with three wings where three concepts dominate: theatre of spontaneity, group psychotherapy and sociometry. On the roof of the imagined house is the “meeting” and that is where the scenes take place. This unique structure, which on the first floor is engaged in research, on the second floor in methodology development, on the third floor in psychodrama strategies/techniques – he described as “*triadic*” (Oudijk 2007).

In this dialectic, interactive and highly layered process of construction, fragmentation and reconstruction of the parts of psychodrama sessions we can find the beginnings of the postmodernist perspective. And just as children construct their play, in psychodrama work, by means of mental (de)constructions, action takes place supported by didactic and therapeutic interventions of the group psychotherapist – psychodramatist (Oudijk 2007).

DETERMINISTIC CHAOS THEORY AND PSYCHODRAMA

In Greek mythology, Chaos (gr. *khaos* – vacant space) was the beginning and source of everything in the world (Mindoljević Drakulić 2007). It was conceived as infinite space, incorporeal and formless primordial matter that lives in infinite darkness. With the myth of god Chaos as a materialised primordial condition ancient Greeks explained the origin of the world and life. In his epic “The Birth of the Gods” Hesiod (8th-7th century BC) depicted Chaos as the origin of life, and in his cosmological poem “Theogony” chaos precedes everything (Sardar 2001).

On the other hand, determinism is a doctrine that there is an universal causal connection between natural and social events, so human behaviour is necessarily determined by either external (physical, objective) or

internal (mental, subjective) conditions. According to the philosophy of determinism, all events can be explained by current conditions. If the initial conditions are known, it is possible to define the appearance of a system in any future time. Today the deterministic chaos theory tries to explain many complex multi-dimensional systems, like weather change, population growth, changes on financial markets, even the functioning of dynamic social groups such as families, partner communities, or the functioning of human organs and the nervous system.

Since people have always tried to control their environment, scientists have been keen to describe and predict events and the structure of the world by means of a single equation. The French scientist and mathematician, marquis Pierre Simon de Laplace (1749-1827) asserted in his study of the universe that if he knew the position and speed of all particles in the universe and of all the forces occurring amongst them, he could predict all future events (Sardar 2001).

Based on Laplace's study of celestial bodies, the famous French mathematician, physicist and astronomer Jules Henri Poincaré (1854-1912) had a hunch that non-linear effects in the motion equations were likely to lead to the breakdown of determinism, especially if we kept in mind that any measurement of initial conditions had a limited accuracy. Poincaré thus came to the conclusion that an imperceptibly small initial cause may have a powerful impact on further events.

In the middle of the last century this argument was also proved by the American mathematician and meteorologist, the pioneer of the deterministic chaos theory, Edward Lorenz (1917-2008). That is when the modern study of deterministic chaos was launched. Lorenz discovered that a chaotic system was extremely sensitive to the tiniest difference in initial conditions and called this “*butterfly effect*”. He noticed that in addition to predictable solutions there were also those unpredictable ones. In an experiment with a simple pendulum he demonstrated the *butterfly effect*. The simple pendulum consisted of a thread on which an iron ball was suspended. The ball swang under three magnets placed on the tops of an equilateral triangle. When the ball was released, its orbit would be unpredictable and it would stop at one of the three magnets. When released again, the orbit of the ball would differ from the previous orbit, so that the place of its stopping and the end of swinging were questionable.

According to the deterministic chaos theory, a psychodrama action is a similar system in which after a certain time equal initial conditions may lead to an entirely different outcome. However, in psychodrama work chaos is not something undesirable or dangerous. A certain degree of chaos is actually useful, even crucial for the course of the thinking process. Thanks to chaos, man can adapt more easily and respond more efficiently. The intertwinement of regularity and chaos, which in a harmonious combination and mutual

relationship are crucial for the dynamics of a group process, with their potentials of adaptation and error correction, reveals itself in the richness of a psychodrama session (Remer et al. 2007).

Chaos in psychodrama is also the moving force behind the development of a group and the protagonist. Each member of a psychodrama group brings into the group a set of their patterns of thought, feelings, standpoints, behaviour and interaction with other members. In terms of the theory of chaos the group members together with the leader are “*attractors*” – complex (mathematical) systems with their established conditions and properties. They are also *strange attractors* whose pattern contains the self-similarity of individual fractals. Concealed within such a form is a repeatable pattern whose structure marks the nature of chaos, indicating that a breakdown of predictability may occur at any time (Remer et al. 2007).

Through meetings with others, warming up, choice of the protagonist, sorting out of scenes in action, selection of auxiliary egos and the like, the protagonist’s energy and spontaneity gains momentum, while the auxiliary egos and the audience, also by means of such activities, redefine and explore their own space. As the events unfold, the psychodrama action receives its non-linear aspect, which produces alterations and oscillations of the system – the so-called *bifurcations*. That can be seen in the application of some techniques, such as reality upgrade. The attractors are organised to produce new symbolic fractals, but they also integrate present components in an unpredictable way. The strange attractors are in fact personal features possessed by every member of the group. This model is not algorithmic, nor predictable, nor does it follow a regularly arranged set. It is fluid and relatively flexible.

In the same way, in terms of the deterministic chaos theory, other important psychodrama elements can also be observed. Thus time, timelessness and a series of other time components in a psychodrama have their fractal structure, which makes the very essence of the theory of chaos.

Similar considerations apply to the body: here, too, a chaotic dynamics is at work, and particularly manifested in an action where individual parts like the heart, the head etc. are visualised (“awaken your heart that beats fast in fear”, “sound your head which is empty and feels nothing”). At any case, with this frightening and controversial theory we still cannot answer all the questions that may be raised and all the unpredictabilities that may arise in psychodrama work, but it may be provided by a model in which possible solutions should be sought. To quote Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900): “*Ich sage euch: man muß noch Chaos in sich haben, um einen tanzenden Stern gebären zu können*” – „I tell you: one must still have chaos within oneself, to give birth to a dancing star”. (Nietzsche 2009).

CONCLUSION

Over centuries the development of psychodrama has been in touch with the world in a continuous change (like changes in family functioning, like political and cultural changes, changes associated with human rights, new educational challenges, etc.), as well as with many conceptual movements in psychology and psychotherapy. Each of these trends was in its time variously evaluated in relation to psychodrama and had its share of primacy. Today, in spite of different styles applied in conducting psychodrama sessions, it is impossible to single out a referential theoretical framework as the most important component of psychotherapeutic action in a psychodrama. For example, cognitive behavioural psychotherapy is complementary to the psychodrama process in behaviour training for role-playing, as well as to changing the models of thinking and convictions; the “empty chair” technique is well-known in gestalt therapy and psychodrama as well; the psychodrama attitude to the body speech has strong contact points with the techniques of body psychotherapy, etc. For that reason, the value of psychodrama theory lies in the simultaneous incorporation and dynamic integration of all up-to-date movements in psychology and psychotherapy. Their understanding and joint action in the therapeutic sense of the word offer an opportunity for better self-understanding, growing and a more permanent change.

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