THE POWER OF PSYCHODRAMA
Zvonko Dzokic
The Power of Psychodrama
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AS LONG AS PLAY EXISTS,
WE SHALL EXIST TOO!

My friend Goce, in the role of the messenger
of an unknown author
The Power of Psychodrama

FOREWORD

This book is written for all those who are interested in encountering the practical magic of psychodrama. That is why the title is ‘The Power of Psychodrama’. It is written for beginner psychodramatists and experienced practitioners, trainers as well as students, postgraduates, psychiatrists, psychologists, managers, screenplay writers and directors. Nevertheless, it is mainly written for the wider audience of readers, for the ‘ordinary’ men and women who will, I hope, be enabled through the contents of this book to use the power of ‘the magic of psychodrama’ in their everyday life.

When I published my first book ‘Psychodrama’ in Skopje in 1995, the first of its kind in this field to be written in the Balkans, I thought that I had given a fundamental and final contribution to this field. I thought in this way because in the following period I was dedicated to the development of other, quite diverse projects in my creative work. As that book was intended for the beginners, students and non-professionals, it was written in simple and understandable language. Soon after
it had been published it became a reference book at many universities and was sold out. In the meantime, other books in this field, dedicated to certain theoretical and applicable aspects of psychodrama, have appeared in the region and in the world.

After twenty years of constant use in several areas of professional engagement, I have come to realize that the experience I have acquired in the practical application of psychodrama over this period constitutes valuable material that should be shared with others. This is even more the case in view of the fact that, due to certain circumstances, I have used psychodrama in very different situations and projects—sometimes controversial to the accepted logic.

This is the reason for the selected topics in this book having been mainly divided into two parts: theory and practice. There are chapters in the theoretical part which I think every book striving to be a standard, introductory and comprehensive work on psychodrama must contain. Texts from the previous book are used in this part. The second, practical part contains chapters aimed at introducing the reader to psychodramatic practice in order to see its applicable value in those fields where I think its power is most striking. Thus in this second part I provide examples and expert comments on the application of psychodrama to fear disorders, suppressed anger, in dealing with traumas, transference relations, character shields, psychosomatic disorders, working with children, in sociodrama, human re-
source trainings in business and governmental sectors and, as a special value, its application as a healing art. I hope the reader will not be bothered by the occasional use of my knowledge and experience in the fields of clinical psychiatry, psychoanalysis, stress management, curing traumas, communicational skills in my expert comments of practically performed sessions which have the sole purpose of rendering a more comprehensive insight. In general, this is my integrative approach to psychodrama.

I leave the reader the freedom to be the judge of such a concept through reading and experiencing this book. I hope that by reading this book the reader will reach the moments that Marcia Karp described (1994) in the foreword of my first book: 'Each new book on psychodrama opens life improvement to non-professionals and professionals alike. I envy anyone who reads it for the first time. To be inspired by the practical magic of psychodrama is a joy to behold.'

I am thankful to psychodrama for what it has given me in these twenty years, enriching my personal life, professional opportunities and my creative opus.

The Author
THEORY
HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

The history of psychodrama is closely connected with the life, philosophical views and creative opus of Jacob Levy Moreno. In addition to psychodrama, Moreno created sociometry and established the foundations for group therapy in general.

For long there was some confusion as to the exact time and place of Moreno’s birth due to a story told by Moreno himself that he was born one stormy night in 1892 on a ship without a flag which had sailed on the Black Sea between the Bosporus and Constanta. Analysts have found the reason for such poetic play with the beginning of his own history in several crucial moments related to his emotional life: the birth of his brother William; the history of the Sephardic Jews who had left Spain four hundred before and whose community Levy belonged to; the discovery of America by Columbus; and Moreno’s personal conviction that he was a citizen of the world.

The truth is less poetic. According to the evidence, he was born on 18th May 1889 in the house of his parents in Bucharest. His father was not there at
the time but was travelling through Serbia, Greece and Turkey as a salesman. His mother was only fifteen-years old when she gave birth to Jacob Levy, the first child in the family. In the next five years he was to gain five brothers and sisters. Moreno was closest to William, who was also a big fan of his eldest brother and later became the first of his siblings to emigrate to the USA. He also financed Moreno’s stay in Vienna and New York.

From an early age, Moreno enjoyed privileged status in his family. One event from his early childhood probably helped him in obtaining such a position and was to be passed on as a family myth. When he was one-year old he fell seriously ill, struck by a severe form of rickets. Helpless doctors told his mother that the child would most probably die. One day when the desperate mother had taken the child out in the yard, a gypsy woman appeared and, noticing the worried young mother asked her why she was so worried. When she had found out the details, she advised her to put the child on the hot sand and expose him to the sun. The gypsy woman told the suspicious mother that one day the child would be a great man and that people from all over the world would come to see him.

That the atmosphere after young Moreno’s recovery and his special place in his mother’s heart and in the family created exceptional affinities in Moreno from an early age is also shown by the following anecdote. When he was four-years old he organized the neighbourhood children in a joint game, as he usually did.
His idea was to create a pyramid from the furniture in the room and on the top of the pyramid to place a chair which should represent the heavens. Moreno climbed the pyramid and sat on the chair to take on the role of God while the other children circled the pyramid, waving their arms in the roles of angels. At one moment a child asked Jacob: ‘Why don’t you fly, too?’ Carried away in his game, Moreno truly tried to fly by jumping from the top. He fell and broke his arm.

This event may serve to illustrate the essence of his later ‘positive megalomania’ as one of the foundations in interpreting his philosophical views and standpoints. As he later said: ‘My job is psychotherapy of the fallen gods.’ As children we have the sense of God’s power, which I would call normal megalomania. However, as society imposes its demands on us, our sometimes-unlimited horizons become narrower and we feel small while our frustrations create emotional disorder. Psychodrama helps people to regain something of their primary being, their lost divinity. The very course of his life and the obstacles set before Moreno challenged the persistency and predetermination which he had in him from his childhood.

The family moved to Vienna in 1885, where he started his elementary education. In 1905, the family moved to Berlin. After a short period of time, Moreno, unable to adapt, returned to Vienna with the permission of his parents to continue his education. He lived there with friends of the family. From then onwards,
from the age of fifteen, he would never again live with his parents. In the meantime, his father, due to a problem with the Berlin police, had to move his family again, this time to Chemnitz. Moreno visited his parents only once during their residence in that place. Soon afterwards they were divorced. After the divorce, his father went to Constantinople. He died in Romania in 1925, completely forgotten by his family. In certain comments later, when talking about his relation to psychoanalysis and Freud, Moreno stated that, apart from as a biological son he was never ready to be a son to anyone: ‘In my life I tried and managed to become ‘a father’ quite early. Both, Freud and I were ‘fathers’, rulers’.

There is little data about Moreno’s life for the period till 1908. At that time he started an experiment in creative drama with children in the parks of Vienna. Fascinated by children’s play, he took part in it by encouraging the participants to play roles from the stories he had told them, and then to act out without a script whatever they wanted. Those were usually experiences from everyday life. During this, Moreno noticed more and more the meaning of spontaneity in awakening the vital and creative inner powers. In 1911, he founded the theatre of spontaneity for children.

In the meantime, in 1909, he had enrolled at the University of Vienna to study theology, philosophy and medicine. In 1917 he became a medical doctor. During his studies he had shown great affinity with the existentialist ideas of that time. As one close to his views and
standpoints he accepted Bergson’s philosophy in which the creative process takes the central role as an essence of reality. Moreno stressed ‘the moment as a revolutionary category’, speaking in favour of the idea that the moment contained the potential for creative procedure. With that he created the expression ‘here and now’ – active creating at the moment of experiencing.

Between 1909 and 1919 he wrote many publications: ‘A Man, a Child’, ‘The Kingdom of Children’, ‘God as a Comedian’, ‘An Invitation to a Chance Encounter’, ‘Silence’, ‘God as an Actor’, ‘God as a Creator’. In his work ‘An Invitation to a Chance Encounter’ the word ‘encounter’ was used conceptually for the first time. This notion, which was much later adopted by the approach called the ‘encounter group movement’, was an essential foundation for the development of many psychodrama techniques: ‘An encounter of the two: eye to eye, face to face, and when you are close I’ll switch my eyes with yours and you’ll switch yours with mine and I’ll look at you with your eyes and you’ll look at me with mine.’

During his medical studies, Moreno visited psychiatric departments where he learnt of the therapeutic concepts being applied at that time in the treatment of patients in Vienna and he was left with the impression that such treatment was not generally satisfactory. It was at this time that Freud was holding introductory lectures on psychoanalysis in Vienna. There is an anecdote regarding their only encounter, which took place.
in 1912. Namely, after the lecture in which Freud analyzed a telepathic dream, Moreno was among the students leaving the hall. Freud noticed him due to his extravagant clothes, which usually included a green cloak, and asked him what he did. Moreno answered: ‘Well, Doctor Freud, I begin where you stop: you meet people in the artificial ambience of your office. I meet them on the streets and in their homes, in their natural environment. You analyze their dreams and I try to give them courage to dream again. I teach people how to play God.’

In the same year, Moreno organized ‘self-help’ groups for members of those social classes which, as he noticed, ‘were not acceptable either for the bourgeoisie or the Marxists, not even for crime.’ These were the prostitutes in Vienna, who at that time were without basic legal rights, without the possibility of protecting their interests—eternally lost. He approached them with the aim of improving their status and giving them dignity without any need to analyze them or reform them. Organizing them in groups and taking part in these groups, Moreno started to notice and discover group phenomena which later he formulated in four principles that became the foundations of all later forms of group psychotherapy: the anonymity of the group; group structure and group diagnosis; the problem of collectivity; the problem of the anonymity of members of the group.

In 1917 Moreno was involved in organizing living conditions for refugees from Tyrol in a camp in
Mittendorf, a suburb of Vienna. There was chaos in the camp due to insufficient attention on the part of the warden to the diverse religious affinities, different living habits and social status of the members of such a community. Adapting to and resolving the problem, Moreno created the first sociometric concepts; concepts which proved successful through the creation of groups of similar affinities and the final introduction of order and peace in the camp.

In the same year he published a literary magazine entitled ‘Daimon’, which became a leading existentialist journal of its time. The magazine gathered talented creators, writers, and wise men like Alfred Adler, Oskar Kokoschka, Max Scheler, and Andreas Peto, and published the early works of Franz Kafka. In the period that followed, Moreno became a family doctor in Bad Vöslau where he developed a spontaneous approach which he called Theatre Reciproque. The basic technique was re-enactment of the conflict situation ‘in situ’. With this he established the foundations of family therapy and the systemic approach.

On 1st April 1912 he founded ‘Das Stegreif-theater’, the theatre of spontaneity which bore the true seed of psychodrama. Moreno gathered together a few young and talented actors who daily organized plays without concepts written in advance but through the enactment of themes which sprung from communication with the audience. Chance and Fate decreed it that the husband of the main actress, Barbara, turned to Moreno for help. The husband was more and more des-
perate because of his wife’s unpleasant behaviour at home; behaviour which was in complete contrast with her usual role in the theatre as a tender, caring and sensitive woman. Moreno saw this as a challenge and an opportunity to give Barbara the role of a brutal woman for the first time, and he repeated this until one day her husband turned up, happy and grateful to Moreno for having ‘cured’ his wife. After this event, Moreno focused his attention on the therapeutic effect of enactment on the stage, switching the actors in the theatre with ordinary people whom he would instruct to enact events from their lives in which they had experienced emotional traumas. Born in this way, psychodrama was improved more and more and enriched in the conceptual and technical sense.

In 1925 Jacob Levy immigrated to the USA and it is interesting to note that he acquired his immigration documents because a large American company was interested in an invention of his—some kind of prototype of cassette players. In his unstoppable creativity Moreno thus proved himself as an innovator as well.

In the new environment he was surprised by the great popularity of psychoanalysis at that time when it was experiencing difficulties in its institutionalization in Europe.

At the same time, Moreno had to face traditional American intolerance and rejection of eccentricity. It seemed to be a challenge for him and a drive for further professional development. Between 1927 and 1929, he presented a ‘role-playing’ technique at Mt. Sinai
Hospital in New York. He organized *Impromptu Theatre* in Carnegie Hall in 1929-1930. In 1931, he was involved in research into relations amongst prisoners held at the Sing-Sing prison. For the first time he applied group-centred interaction methods with the prisoners, different from the known methods which were exclusively sociotherapeutic, counselling, and informative. With this he established the foundations of group therapy. At the meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in Philadelphia in 1932, presenting the results of this research, he introduced the expression ‘group psychotherapy’ for the first time, an expression that was to become associated with Slavson, who used it later on.

Over the next two years, Moreno worked as a Headmaster of the Hadson School for Girls in New York. Besides the application of ‘role-playing’ and ‘role-training’ techniques, he established the basic principles of sociometry. In 1934, he published ‘Who Shall Survive’, in which he created a new approach to human relations. At the same time he presented psychodrama at the large psychiatric centre, St. Elizabeth Hospital, in Washington.

In 1936, Moreno gained American citizenship and shortly afterwards opened the Beacon Hill Sanatorium, sixty kilometres from New York. It was his private psychiatric hospital where he had a psychodrama theatre, which, beside its therapeutic role, soon became a centre for the education and training of new therapists. In 1937 he published the first professional journal ‘Soci-
ometry: A Journal of Interpersonal Relations’, creating the expression ‘interpersonal relations’ long before Henry Stack Sullivan. In his ‘second sociometric phase’, he applied his sociometric tests at the Public School 181 in Brooklyn. The Theatre for Psychodrama was created at St. Elizabeth Hospital in 1941. In the following year, Moreno organized the American Society for Group Psychotherapy—the first association of group therapists. Later on it was to become the official authority of the American Society for Group Therapy and Psychodrama. Two years later, the name was changed to ‘group psychotherapy’. He created the first volume of ‘Psychodrama’ in 1946. Numerous publications in the field of psychodrama, sociometry and group psychotherapy in general were to follow.

The 1940s were years of expansion for psychodrama. It gained special momentum in organizational and educational spheres with the third marriage of Jacob Levy, this time to Zerka Toeman. They married in 1949 after his two failed marriages: the first to Beatrice Beecher from 1928 to 1934, the second to Florence Bridge from 1938 to 1948, with whom he had a daughter, Regina. According to biographers, Moreno’s third life companion represented for him ‘... an alter ego, an inspiration, a co-therapist, an associate in research and, above all, true love.’ They had a baby boy, Jonathan, in 1953, when Moreno was 63.

In that period, psychodrama entered its most fruitful phase. The Moreno couple became inexhaust-
ible in their creative, organizing and publishing activities. In addition to their work at the sanatorium in Beacon, as well as in the field of sociometry and group psychotherapy, their approach was being adopted in a great number of other institutions, such as schools, the army, in the training of managers, in the training of various professional roles from teachers to sales persons, in rehabilitation programs, recreation... At the same time, Moreno provided his constant support for innovations in psychotherapy, showing a particular interest in Art Therapy.

In 1951 he organized the International Association of Group Therapy. Three years later, he organized the First International Congress of Group Psychotherapy in Toronto. He was giving lectures as a visiting professor of sociology at the High School of Arts and Sciences in New York from 1951 till 1966. Among his numerous activities and contributions was also his lecture in the USSR in 1959. The First International Congress of Psychodrama was organized with his support in Paris in 1964. He also took the main role in organizing the First International Congress of Sociometry in Baden, Austria, in 1968. In the same year, Moreno became an honorary doctor in the Medical Faculty of Barcelona University. In the following year he was awarded a Golden Honorary Diploma (PhD) from the University of Vienna.

Moreno died at the age of 85 at his home in Beacon, New York, on 14th May 1974. A series of strokes that left him completely paralysed presaged his death.
With a clear mind he decided to stop taking food, but he did not stop receiving friends who came from all over the world to see him for the last time and bid him farewell. He explained his decision simply: ‘It’s not a time for sorrow—I’ve lived a fulfilling life.’ His last wish was for the following words to be put on his tombstone: ‘Here lies the man who put the smile back on psychiatry.’ It was granted to him.

After his death, the main pillar of the further development of psychodrama became Zerka Moreno. She showed an extraordinary ability both in organizing education and training in ‘classical psychodrama’ and in the systematization of the Moreno’s work. Training continued to take place in Beacon up to 1980 and afterwards in Horsham Clinic till this centre was closed in 1984. The original psychodrama stage was moved to Jonathan Steiner Hall, Brighton Palace, New York (High Land).

As the need grew for supervising and maintaining the quality of education and training in psychodrama, the American Council of the Researchers of Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Therapy was founded in 1975. The highest level is a TEP (trainer, educator and practitioner).

In the meantime, psychodrama has been accepted as a psychotherapeutic method and has been functioning in many countries throughout the world: in addition to Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Great Britain, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Mexico, France, Sweden, Spain and Russia. It has also begun to be applied
The Power of Psychodrama

in other countries. Psychodrama has been applied in
great number of psychiatric institutions in the USA.

The organized application and study of
psychodrama in Europe began in 1974, with the com-
ing of Marcia Karp, who had studied under Moreno, to
England. With her husband Ken Sprague she founded
the psychodrama theatre in Holwell, which today is the
main European centre for psychodrama education.

In the late 1980s, education in psychodrama was
organized in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia at the initiative of the Belgrade psychiatrist, Dr. Dušan Potkonjak, as a project under the auspices of the British Council. The training, which lasted several years,
was conducted by many British experts such as Professor Andrew Powell, the mentor of the project, Marcia Karp, Susie Coombs, Michael Watson, the President of the British Psychodrama Association at the time, John Casson, Ken Sprague, and Rudie Noygard, a student of the British School from Denmark.

Through this education, several members of the
Yugoslav group of that time, amongst whom is included
the author of this book as a representative from Skopje,
acquired a basic knowledge in psychodrama. In 1991,
seven members of that Yugoslav group—Dr. Dušan Potkonjak, Dr. Zoran Đurić, Dr. Vlada Milošević, psychologist Jasna Veljković, Dr. Zoran Ilić, psychologist Valentina Aćimović and the author of this book—gained
their certificates in the clinical application of
psychodrama.
Since that time I have conducted continuous education in this field in the Republic of Macedonia and occasionally in other countries. I initiated the establishment of the Macedonian Psychodrama Association in 1993. I published the book ‘Psychodrama’ in 1995. This was the first work of its kind to be produced in the Balkans. In 1997 I organized the First Balkan Psychodrama Conference in Ohrid, Republic of Macedonia. In the same town in 2007, I also hosted the Fifth Cross-Cultural Psychodrama Days conference with the participation of psychodramatists from many countries. In the meantime, I have organized more than a hundred psychodrama seminars and workshops, a great number of continuous experiential and educational groups, a hundred training sessions within the projects in which psychodrama techniques have been used, as well as training courses for selected groups and individuals with specific aims.
PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS

Before getting to know the philosophical views and concepts of J. L. Moreno, it is first necessary to establish his role in this field. It should be taken into consideration that he was more of a visionary than a systematic philosopher, more of an unusual creator and a practitioner than a theoretician.

We may perhaps best place Moreno as belonging to that philosophical tradition of people who have stressed the role of creativity and potential for spontaneity in their works. This is the field in which great contributions have been made by individuals such as Alfred Adler, Alfred North Whitehead, who understood creativity to constitute the fundamental process in the universe; philosophers such as Charles Hartshorne, Leibniz, Spinoza, Bergson, Berdyaev, Charles Pierce, Teilhard de Chardin, Ken Wilber and others. What determines Moreno’s specific place alongside these great minds is that Moreno’s philosophical views are firmly woven into verified possibilities for practical application in two other important aspects of human existence, the social and the psychical, and this is the approach that Moreno personally adopted in his daily life.
Moreno’s philosophy is founded on the phenomena of spontaneity and creativity. This theoretical foundation is based on the potential each of us possesses: the ability to create what is going on in our minds. Progress occurs and is seen in the realization, the action in the real world that surrounds us, in the practical use of individual experiences and ideas that every person carries inside and that make every person different from the other, contributing to changes that improve the environment the person lives in. Moreno’s approach is aimed at the development of spontaneity through strengthening the freedom and flexibility of the mind in accepting the responsibility for actions undertaken. The practicing of certain psychodramatic methods provides skills that direct a healthy wish and a will to explore the possibilities of taking the initiative, enabling and developing the sense of possessing the power to experience oneself as a creative being, acquiring self-confidence and self-respect. The possibility of free reaction also includes the existence of alternatives, of experiencing oneself as the subject-initiator of an effective action. These features can be developed in actions which release spontaneity. Releasing spontaneity leads to the creation of a free mind, a mind that comprises characteristics like curiosity, expressiveness, challenging of limits, objectivity, abundance, exploring, seeking attention, imaginativeness, intuitiveness, freedom in social experimentation, responsibility... These elements of spontaneity are our natural inheritance which always has to
be looked for and reintegrated over and over again if we want to use the enormous psychical energy which can serve as a source of solutions in mastering the challenges of the outer world which changes ever more rapidly. The basis of such potential is seen in the human capacity for imagination, the potential that makes a difference between humans and other living creatures. Psychodrama has evolved as a group of methods that use this dimension of mind. First of all, imagination is a central component of spontaneity and creativity. Creativity relies on imagination when it springs unique solutions, new combinations of existing elements, and new directions of possible results.

Moreno considers spontaneity and creativity to be at the heart of the psychodramatic process, but also of healthy life in general. He looks for their roots and essence in the phenomenon of free play, which he comprehends as a natural path towards socialization and exploring and expanding our repertoire of roles for active participation in the events in our life’s surroundings. However, the universal nature of play at the same time inevitably results in creating resistance, both cultural and individual, in the environment. According to Moreno, modern culture condemns spontaneity and creativity, attributing negative qualities to them which cause in the individual a feeling of guilt and fear of rejection, blocking of the further development of one’s spontaneity and creativity and accepting the rigid roles that unreservedly maintain ‘the cultural tin’. Spontane-
ous initiative is a threat to the established authoritarian and hierarchical model of culture.

Moreno defines spontaneity as a new answer to an old stereotypical situation and an adequate response to a new situation. He calls it a ‘non-conserved form of energy’. According to him, spontaneity does not need to be dramatically expressed, but most differently, often unpredictably, unexpectedly. Apart from its expression through action and behaviour, spontaneity can be expressed as openness of mind, freshness in approach, a wish and readiness to take initiative, a way of integrating into the outer reality with inner emotionality, intuitiveness and rationality. Spontaneity does not mean impulsiveness but an intention for a constructive result, whether it is a practical, social or aesthetic one.

Spontaneity is also comprised in reproduction, in its interpretation and bringing to life, which means readiness to express such a subtle quality of mind. Spontaneity and creativity are expressed at the moment of action, which Moreno pinpoints as ‘a revolutionary category of the moment’. Action and changes are created here and now, at the moment of the happening, an expression that would later be taken up and adopted by some modern existential approaches.

Moreno wrote with an inspiration dedicated to his vision for people to recognize the divine nature in themselves. He developed methods that help them experience an encounter with the other in a way that stirs the world towards more creative and more conscious
modes of living together. He pointed out that, nowadays, when a man does not have true heroes to identify with, that same man is forced to turn to himself. The need to recognize the meaning of the live encounter is imposed on him. In this age of robots, computers and more sophisticated technology, a man should be encouraged to direct communication with the people he meets on the street, in the workplace and at home, in order to recognize their constant and immortal value, without experiencing them as numbers in a game.

In this way, ‘an encounter’ is defined with an active meaning. In such a way, communication between two human beings is laid at a much deeper level: ‘There is no-one and nothing that can teach you more about your neighbour than what you can discover and experience yourself, an encounter of two, eyes to eyes, face to face. And when you are close, I shall switch my eyes with yours and you will switch yours with mine and I shall see you with your eyes and you will see me with mine.’

One of the most important aspects of psychodrama is its ability to mobilize the strength of the group in curing and healing its each and every member and itself as well. Thus it recognizes and confirms the deeply embedded social essence and need for belonging of every individual. With this, besides the psychological and sociological determinations of man, the meaning of the moral implications is reached because man as a co-creator accepts responsibility for
himself and everything else that surrounds him (co-responsibility). Moreno believed that collective responsibility can be cultivated. He tried to improve spontaneity in interpersonal relations by enabling groups to share their experiences among one another in a systematic way. He believed that the development of sociometric and similar methods for enabling authentic encounters made it easier for people to reach their creative reserves which they had earlier not been aware they possessed.

Moreno recognized that the social structure has a need for healing as well as the individual. Psychodramatic methods and techniques have been created to be an effective approach towards the treatment of both entities. Moreno considers relevant the need for a method of social therapy – ‘Sociatry’. As a central problem of society he pinpoints fear and the lack of power to express interpersonal conflict directly and authentically, the ignoring of methods for resolution. According to him, people are afraid to face experiences about themselves which perhaps are unwanted or disrespected. They do not believe that they can change this state in case they realize it. They also cannot discover how their mistakes might be corrected, nor how to correct the wrong experiences of others and by doing so achieve a positive result. This further leads to mechanisms for avoiding and manoeuvring which often, in the end, paradoxically create the same positions they have been previously afraid of. Defences
of experiencing rejection and humiliation force actions which end in rejection of others. Observed in this way, this raises awareness of the need to discover methods in the field of interpersonal relations which would correct the immature modes of our culture.

Moreno advocated a meta-medical field called sociatry as a sort of applied social psychology. This imposes an integrating idea: what would happen if we started treating ‘ill’ elements in our society with a holistic approach? The emphasis of the concept lies not in the creation of ‘medicine’ but in stressing the importance of developing a theory and a method that will relate to social as much as to individual emotional meanings. It seems that our time is not ready to accept these concepts yet.

In the construction of psychotherapeutic conditions which, according to Moreno, should use life as a model and should contain all modalities of living, he sets up four categories: time, space, reality and cosmos.

When talking about time, he does not define it as a philosophical, mystique or a phenomenological category but as a psychotherapeutic concept. A man lives in time: present, past and future. He can suffer from pathology that refers to each of them and the problem that arises is how those are to be integrated in the psychotherapeutic procedure. With regard to psychoanalysis, Moreno concludes that it is concerned only with the past. According to him, psychoanalysts go as far as it is possible deeper into the past, to the uterus
and further if possible: ‘... till they get tired, after which they start to come back.’ Moreno thinks that no matter how important the past is it is just one dimension of time, a one-sided position of ‘reduced time’ that neglects and distorts the complete influence that it has on the psyche. According to him, the present carries the dynamics of a decision, action, enactment, encounter, creation and resolution of a conflict. The dynamics of the moment is that ‘revolutionary category’ of active living and changing ‘here and now’ (hic et nunc). Man also lives in the future, according to Moreno, even more than in the past. He lives the present according to his plans and hopes for the future. Psychodrama enables that supposed future to be enacted ‘here and now’ and by doing so provides an opportunity to explore the reality of the approach and of the set goals, to notice and adjust the possibilities in advance, in a protected therapeutic situation where newly discovered roles are worked out and improved. The meaning of the future was also stressed by Adler, Horney, and Sullivan, but the configuration of the future remained unstructured and depersonalized.

Moreno claims that space is completely neglected in all psychotherapeutic approaches. In a typical therapeutic setting, one is merely reduced to a chair or a couch. The client is instructed to talk and the therapist to listen. Moreno claims that the space in which the patient has suffered a psychical trauma cannot be provided in these conditions. The pioneering idea which
The Power of Psychodrama

psychodrama performs, which is action-oriented and seeks to embrace all dimensions of life, is that it is for the protagonist to describe and set boundaries and actualize the space in which the situation that follows will be portrayed with horizontal and vertical dimensions, with the objects in it and the relations among them. It is not insistent on the smallest details. Psychodrama claims that the form, the look of the space as a part of the therapeutic process, is of enormous importance. It warms up the protagonist to be and to act as in the authentic life situation.

Moreno distinguishes a third category when talking of three kinds of reality: infra-reality, life or actual reality, and surplus-reality. As an example of infra-reality he takes a typical therapeutic situation. He considers this to be a reduced reality since the contact between the therapist and the patient, according to him, is not an authentic dialogue but more an interview or a projective test. Whatever is going on with the patient is not in the form of a direct confrontation and actualization since it remains on the level of imagination, thought, feeling, fear, etc.

The life and actual reality of every person comprehends one’s life at home, at work, in one’s relations with other individuals one meets—husband/wife, children, parents, teacher, superior—and the world as a whole. The way we live in reality, in our relations with important persons in our everyday life, can be defective or inadequate and perhaps we would want to
change that, to try a new way of living. However, the change can seem frightening or very difficult so we more often choose to stick to the old path than to risk a possibly unfortunate result which we could not cope with. That is why, according to Moreno, it is necessary for a therapeutic situation to be a place where reality can be simulated, giving a chance to people to develop new modes of living without risking serious consequences or a misfortune in real life.

Surplus-reality comprises the untouchable, invisible dimension of the inner and outer psychical life. It is necessary to perform certain additional operations and manoeuvres in the therapeutic situation in order to express and make the surplus-reality accessible to the experience. One of the basic techniques of surplus-reality is role-reversal. With the help of this technique the protagonist enters the role of another person, important for the current situation, temporarily taking his/hers identity, behaving and feeling like the other person, telling messages from his/her point of view, thereby comprehending and experiencing oneself from the other side, from the role of the other. After returning to one’s own identity, one carries with oneself the notions acquired in the role of the other that have gained different meaning with the encounter; one’s own insight into and understanding of reality is enriched by the other reality. Moreno predicted that one day this technique for improving human interactions would be as popular as travel by airplane. He believed that in the future people would
play the role-reversal game amongst one another and with the inhabitants of other planets as well.

The other instruments of surplus-reality are: an auxiliary ego, role-play, an empty chair, a magic shop, etc. Its place among them includes bodily contact, a taboo practice in all psychotherapies, especially in psychoanalysis. Moreno finds its power and its role in those situations when the suffering of a patient cannot be resolved by any kind of word or verbal expression. In such moments, physical contact can mean much more.

The fourth category introduced by Moreno is cosmos, a notion which very often was misinterpreted by others and the reason why Moreno was called a megalomaniac and a mystic. Moreno stresses the fact that man does not carry in himself only individual and social features but cosmic ones as well. He emphasises that man has always tried to understand his position in the universe, to control the phenomena that determine him: evolution, sex, birth, death, the functioning of ‘the creator’ of the world. Thus man has created religion, myths, fairy tales and rigid rules of submission to the laws of the universe as he understood them. The modern age, the age of nuclear bombs, computers and other technology, increasingly questions the finality of such determination. It becomes more certain that God perhaps does not exist at all, that He is not a super-being. More and more questions are posed to man, who survives in the world of ever-accelerating changes which make him feel threatened. Moreno finds power in what we can
create in our imagination, exactly the place where these questions and ideas were previously created. In psychodrama, these issues are overcome by the help of techniques of the surplus-reality. Thus differences in gender, age, birth and death are overcome. Both the unborn and the dead can come to life in the psychodramatic space and what has not been experienced can be experienced for the first time. All this is connected to the subjectivity and imagination of the protagonist. In the psychodramatic cosmos, a man can embody even animals, any form of living or imaginary creature—be part of the universe not as regression but as creative involvement. Moreno states that one of the biggest dilemmas of contemporary man is loss of faith in the existence of the super-being. Moreno resolves this dilemma with the answer that psychodrama gives for the death of God and this is that God can be easily brought back to life. Instead of one God, there are millions of people who could embody God in themselves living in reality. The main act, according to Moreno, is ‘embodiment’. He says that there were many people intellectually more superior to Christ, but they were passive, feeble intellectuals. Instead of making an effort to embody the truth the way they felt it, they only talked of it. Leaders, prophets and healers of all times have always tried to play God and to impose the power and superiority over the little man. In the psychodramatic world, the position is reversed. The appearance of God can take a concrete form and can be embodied in every human being.
Moreno has set clear boundaries in psychodrama’s relation to the theatre. Psychodrama for him does not have any theatrical origins. The influence of theatre on psychodrama came later and he thought it was more negative than positive. It gave him directions towards, as he said, what not to do. He thought that psychodrama was the most radical rejection of theatre since the time of Socrates and Plato. Agreeing with their opinion, he thinks that reality of common man a quite poor imitation of the lofty lives of the immortal gods. Thus, according to him, theatre is ‘an imitation of imitation’ and with that it is alienation and distancing from life more then it is a liberating and driving force.

At the end of this chapter we may return to a statement from the beginning. The unstoppable need to find creative resolutions and practical applications of the ideas that poured out of Moreno impact upon any attempt at orderly systematisation in modelling his philosophical views. This has proved a challenge for the further development and shaping of his ideas by certain authors.
PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

A central place in Moreno’s psychological concept which generated psychodrama, sociodrama and sociometry, concerns the theory of roles. We may consider his theory a contribution to the development of those theories that strive to establish a bridge between psychiatry and the social sciences.

Looking for the origin of the word ‘role’ shows that it is a French word which originates from the Latin expression ‘rotula’. In ancient Rome this expression described the way an actor memorised his role, trying to learn it ‘by heart’ as a prompter was reading it to him. This word lost its meaning in the Middle Ages, only to return in the 16th and the 17th century with the arrival of the modern theatre, then characterising each part in a scene. Thenceforth, natural continuations were developed: role player, a role to act, a role to perform, a role of expectation and, finally, psychodrama and sociodrama.

According to Moreno, a role can be defined through the actual and tangible forms that the self takes. Thus he defines a role as: ‘...a functioning form that an
individual takes in a specific situation which involves other persons and objects. The symbolic presentation of this functioning form, noticed by the very individual and others, is called a role.’

A role is created from past experiences and the models of the culture of the society in which an individual lives and might be satisfied with as a specific means of performance. Moreno claims that the modern theory of roles is not a sociological concept, although certain authors like George Herbert Mead and P. Linton developed a sociological concept of role-taking without realising the basic dependence on the process of taking over the roles from psychodrama. Later, Moreno stated that many American sociologists, like Talcott Parsons, monopolised the concept of roles, turning it into sociological property. Moreno claims that every role represents a sum of individual and collective elements and that every role has two sides, the individual and the collective. The concept of roles stretches over several scientific fields: physiology, psychology, sociology and anthropology, and connects them all into new relations.

According to Moreno, the psychodrama theory of roles, carrying in itself the psychiatric orientation, encompasses the concept of roles through all dimensions of life, both individual and social. It creates models in which a role begins its interaction from birth. The process of the creation of roles does not begin with the period of speech development but has its beginnings in the nonverbal phases of development. Therefore the
theory of roles cannot be limited only to social roles. According to Moreno, there are three dimensions in the concept of roles: *psychosomatic* roles, which develop physiological dimensions; *psychodramatic* roles, which refer to psychological dimensions of the self; and *social* roles, which show social dimensions. According to him, the primary roles are psychosomatic and psychodramatic roles that are later upgraded through development with social roles.

Each individual carries in himself or herself various roles which seek to become active, but at the same time they are at different levels of development. If there is active pressure on the part of these numerous units upon the official role, the latter will often bear the feeling of anxiousness and tension. A role also has the function of entering from the social world into the unconscious in order to bring form and order into it. A person is composed of a spectrum of roles which an individual notices in oneself, in the same way as one deals with the numerous contra-roles through which one notices the other roles around oneself. All these roles are at different levels of development.

The tangible aspects of what is known as the *Ego* are the roles with which it acts in the system of role relations that are directed towards an individual. The creation of roles and the relations amongst them can be considered as the most important development in each specific culture. A role is a unit of culture; *Ego* and roles are in constant interaction. A perceptive role,
for example, is comprehensive and anticipates reactions and answers that follow. An executive role is a skill in performance. A high level of perceptive role might be accompanied with a low degree of skill in an executive role. The role of enactment is in a function of the former two roles. A preparatory role represents a practising of roles for an appropriate performance in future. According to Moreno, regressive behaviour is not truly a regression but a form of enactment role. He thinks that in paranoid behaviour, for example, a repertoire of roles is reduced to a distorted playing of one role. A paranoid person is thus unable to carry out the role for the given moment. One might also overplay or underplay a part when inappropriate perception is combined with distorted playing.

A role can be:

1. rudimentarily developed, normally developed, or overdeveloped;
2. almost or completely non-existent in a person (indifference);
3. twisted into a hostility function.

Any role of the abovementioned categories can also be classified according to the relation of development in time, according to whether the role:

a) has never existed in a person;
b) exists in one person but does not exist in another;
c) once existed in a person but does not do so any more.
This concept recognizes a person as a ‘role player’ and is directed towards cognition that every individual is characterized by a certain range of roles which manage one’s behaviour and that every culture is defined by a certain set of roles imposed on its members with a varied degree of success. Psychodrama represents an axis for experimental and control studies of roles. It allows concrete observations of individuals in their life situations in which these roles are directly involved.

Moreno expanded the notion of conscious and unconscious with the notions co-conscious and co-unconscious. As a starting-point in his explanation, he takes the phenomena developed in conducting the method of role reversal. With the help of role reversal, one individual tries to identify with another. This is easier if the individuals are closer to each other than if they are divided by psychological or ethnic distances. Moreno finds the reason for this distinction in the development of co-conscious and co-unconscious states. According to him, the concepts of individual unconscious (Freud) and collective unconscious (Jung) cannot comprise these states unless their meanings are supplemented. He explains this with the example of two persons, A and B. It is assumed that the free associations of person A could be the path to the unconscious of person A only. The free associations of person B are also the path to the unconscious of person B only. From this it follows that for person A to have direct communication with the unconscious of person B, the basic condition would be
that these two share at unconscious levels. The concept of the individual unconscious, according to Moreno, excludes the possibility of the reversal of states between A and B. He thinks that this lays an objective need for structuring a concept for existing two-way, simultaneous processes which do not derive from a single psyche but from even profounder reality in which the unconscious states of two or more individuals are interconnected in the system of co-unconscious states. This plays an important part in the lives of people who are intimately close, like father and son, husband and wife, brothers and sisters, twins. This also applies to other kinds of intimate companionships like work-teams, fight groups, people in concentration camps, charismatic religious groups, etc. That is why marriage and family therapy have to be conducted in such a way that the ‘inter-psychical’ of the whole group is enacted again so that their tele-relations, conscious and co-unconscious states are brought to life. Co-conscious and co-unconscious states are, by definition, states that partners have experienced or created together and therefore can only be reproduced or enacted again with mutual participation. Co-conscious and co-unconscious states cannot be the property of only one individual but are always a joint property and can be reproduced only by joint effort. If a repeated happening of such states is desirable or necessary, then this resumed enactment has to take place with the help of all the partners involved in such a situation. The logical method for such a repeated en-
actment is psychodrama. No matter how great the ingeniousness of perception of one of the members of the group, one cannot reproduce such a state alone because partners have joint co-conscious and co-unconscious states which are also the matrix for their inspiration and knowledge.

Moreno also created the notion ‘tele’, which is an integral part of the previous concept. With it he denotes a process that attracts individuals to one another or repulses them from one another. This represents a two-way process which at the same time takes place between two or more individuals if they are in a group. Moreno describes this process as a flow of feelings, thoughts, ideas and experiences that a social nucleus is made of, i.e. a connecting net in a group. It is different from phenomena such as sympathy, empathy, transference, countertransference, etc., which are usually one-way processes. Experiencing tele between two individuals can remain at a potential level until those two individuals come close to each other or until their feelings or ideas meet through some channel. Following the phenomenon of tele is necessary in the elaboration of large-scale sociometric studies and at the same time it is an inseparable part of the psychodramatic process in which a director should recognize happenings at this level in a protagonist and in a group.

Moreno dedicates special attention to mental catharsis as a therapeutic effect of psychodrama. In his psychological system it represents a method of purify-
ing, a solution to a disturbed psychological balance, or ‘disequilibrium’, in order to achieve balance, ‘equilibrium’. The reasons for these derangements of balance could be physical, mental, economic or social. When such clashes occur, an individual is driven to a state of ‘disequilibrium’ in which spontaneity is paralyzed and the individual comes to function through rigid, stiff roles in their inability to develop other roles. It is very important to add that Moreno observes that if such disequilibrium has been created in interpersonal relations, then it is common for other individuals who have participated or been part of a social network of communications on the level of tele, also to develop a certain level of disequilibrium. These states create pressure on the energetic level, a tension that demands to be solved. Speaking further of possibilities for a solution, Moreno excludes the possibility that it can be done only verbally. He is resolute in his opinion that the solution can only be achieved through the concrete and specific repetition of the situations and states in which this disequilibrium occurred. Through this repetition, repeated enactment of the conflict created in the interpersonal interaction or in correlation among the parts of the self of the individual, will be found a more adequate solution for the individual and the situation. In this way, blocked energy is freed by bodily reactions, gestures and verbal expression; and, in their joint action, a mental catharsis, resuming the equilibrium and releasing the spontaneity, will occur. Moreno claims that psychodrama is the
only possible medium for this solution because, according to him, it offers the possibility of a repeated enactment of reality in a safe place, far away from the true reality, during which a great amount of energy is being saved, since otherwise it would be wasted in a possible attempt of the individual to change the same surroundings according to his/her own unchecked and unclear way. Psychodrama, at the same time, enables participation and solution for several individuals who took part in the creation of the disequilibrium from which everybody has suffered. Disequilibrium can be partial, relating only to a verbal or non-verbal part of an individual who, by repetition of the conflicting positions, is freed through mental catharsis in order to integrate himself with the other parts of their personality.

Finally, this is the place to mention that many former interpreters of Moreno’s work considered his approach to catharsis a reductive one, reducing it to a level of bodily enactment or non-verbal ventilation, disregarding a final, integrative approach.
RELATIONS WITH OTHER THEORIES IN PSYCHOTHERAPY

Psychodrama is an action-oriented, intensive method of group psychotherapy which offers possibilities for maximum correctional emotional experience, as well as its application in individual treatments with a defined psychotherapeutic goal. In its foundations it is a holistic approach but at the same time it is eclectic, open for exchange and complementation with all other psychotherapeutic theories. By creating psychodrama, as well as sociodrama and sociometry, Moreno established numerous psychotherapeutic approaches and techniques which later became starting-points or important elements in the creation and development of other psychotherapeutic theories.

Although certain authors like Abraham Maslow (1968), Eric Berne (1970), and Will Schutz (1971) clearly confirm the importance of Moreno’s role as the source of many new techniques, there is an impression that his importance is more often wholly or in large part neglected by the authors and followers of those theories in their historical reviews. Reasons for such an atti-
tude should certainly be sought not only in their conscious and irrational strivings but also in the nature of Moreno’s personality and his bearing.

Specifically, Moreno was outrageously creative and so carried away with creative impulses that he frequently hurried towards the discovery of new areas and possibilities without dedicating enough attention to what he had already created in order to make it more profound or systematize it. This was probably due to his style of writing and method of conducting public presentations, which left space for speculative interpretations of his ideas. He was considered a narcissistic person, his ideas megalomaniac and his lectures exhibitionist. Quite simply, everything he did and the way he presented it contrasted strongly with the established models of that period. At that time, psychoanalysis was highly institutionalized in the USA, accepted to a greater extent than in Europe, while behaviourist and fast growing humanist theories offered psychologists an attractive model of identification in order to gain equal status with psychiatrists, who were considered to be more privileged in the institutions. On the other hand, although Moreno gathered a lot of students through his attitude towards them, which was often unexpected and whimsical, Moreno did not manage during his lifetime to create an educational system that would comprise the quantity, quality and continuance of his teachings. For a system to be accepted, it is not enough to contain great ideas and powerful techniques. It also has to be
clearly theoretically founded, coherent, professionally sustained and scientifically consistent.

Due to the all abovementioned factors, Moreno’s approach has not always been publicly acknowledged to the extent it deserves. The aim of this chapter is to give a more precise view of his contribution to other psychotherapeutic theories.

Between 1930 and 1950, articles relating the latest innovations in the field of psychotherapy and social psychology were issued in a number of journals that Moreno published (Sociometry, Group Psychotherapy). Among the authors of these articles were Rudolf Dreikurs (a student of Adler), Marian Chance (a pioneer of family therapy), Ronald Lippitt (one of the founder of the T-groups). It is interesting to mention that Moreno’s co-operation of Dreikurs continued further on because he thought that individual psychology (Adlerian therapy) was naturally complementary to psychodrama. He later urged Adaline Starr to visit Moreno’s Academy and to develop co-operation. Since then, psychodrama has become an integral part of the programme of the Alfred Adler Institute in Chicago, adapted and integrated by Nahum Shoobs, O’Connell and others.

Moreno encouraged and urged the development of group psychotherapy, the forming of national associations, innovations in psychotherapy and the exchange of new approaches. Among those were ‘the social clubs’ of Joshua Bierer, the family therapy of Virginia Satir, the
therapeutic community of Maxwell Jones, the application of the art-therapy techniques of George Vassilou, etc.

Virginia Satir has enriched family therapy, which owes a lot to psychodrama, with the ‘family sculpture’ technique which is the embodiment of the psychodrama ‘action sociogram’ technique. Her idea for ‘the parts party’ is identical to the psychodrama technique called ‘multiple parts of the self’.

After emigrating from South Africa in 1947, Fritz Pearls, later the creator of ‘gestalt therapy’, attended many of Moreno’s public sessions. He managed to enrich his approach by including Moreno’s techniques of role taking, especially the technique called ‘an empty chair’, in his existential and psychodynamic ideas. Psychodrama and gestalt therapy are compatible and open to the possibility of an exchange of techniques.

The transactional analysis of Eric Berne, who publicly praised Moreno, uses different ‘ego states’, including also the division of the self into its components. The role play technique as a type of psychodramatic performance can lead to finding the most effective strategy of behaviour in response to a given situation.

Techniques like enactment, modelling with other group members and practicing new roles are very close, almost identical indeed, to the behavioural approach. A technique called ‘psychodramatic shock’ has the performance and the effect that resemble the method of ‘overwhelming’.

Cognitive therapeutic models also employ an action-oriented approach which includes role-playing.
Hypnotherapy in its early development was combined with psychodrama. In fact, psychodramatic enactment often induces a light-to-moderate degree of trance in the protagonist and other participants. The technique of guided fantasy, which is often used in psychodrama, is also very close to hypnotherapeutic approaches. Some of the latest hypnotherapeutic approaches and other closely related approaches, for example neuro-linguistic programming, involve the division of the self into different parts and subsequently performing encounters and interactions among these parts.

The psychodramatic relation to body language has numerous connecting points with certain interventions in the bio-energetic approach: ‘body therapies’, including the achievements of Frederick Matthias Alexander, Ida Rolf, Moshe Feldenkrais, Milton Trager, and especially the bio-energetic analysis of Alexander Lowen, as approaches towards the mobilization of feelings and memories captured in body blocks. Lowen’s work is closely connected with Wilhelm Reich’s theory of ‘body armour’, which manifests itself as an unconscious defence against psychological injury and pain through various kinds of chronic muscle tension. The cognitive dimension of this therapy is upgraded with the psychodrama application.

Play-therapy consists of numerous action approaches, including non-verbal modalities for the complete expression of feelings. It is usually conducted with children, but in a modified form can also be applied to
adults. The psychodramatic approach has the potential to create various scenarios and methods for scene research.

The imaginative therapies of Hanscarl Leuner, Akhter Ahsen, Sharr and others use elements that are complementary with psychodrama. They also create a bridge between cognitive, expressive and hypnotherapeutic approaches.

Several pioneers of ‘group encounters’ published their first experiments in Moreno’s ‘Sociometry’. They later used many of Moreno’s methods as well as sensitive training, family therapy, education, business, theatre, art-therapy. Over time, creative and expressive therapies have been drawn together, including psychodrama, drama, music, dance, painting, pantomime, poetry, etc. For example, drama-therapy uses scene-staging and role-playing. A dramatic play can often be used as a warm-up in a psychodramatic session.

Eclectic therapies such as Philips’ conflict resolution therapy, Redderson’s triple counselling, Kelly’s personal constructive therapy, Rosen’s direct analysis, Lazarus’ multimodal therapy, Janov’s primal therapy, Urban’s integrative therapy, Shutz’s holistic therapy and others, all contain in themselves the action elements of role-playing.

The field of psychodrama has expanded beyond clinical application and classical therapy to embrace various artistic, recreational and educational applications such as the ‘Playback Theater’ of Jonathan Fox in
The Power of Psychodrama

Poughkeepsie, New York, and Rosalie Minkin’s educational program, a theatre for teenagers and adults in Philadelphia. All these applications reflect the dynamic potential and perspective of psychodrama and sociodrama.

In the mid-1950s in France, ‘scene-expressive psychotherapy’, or analytical psychodrama, was created. This represented a supplement and transformation of classic psychodrama based on psychoanalytical theory through the introduction of basic psychoanalytical techniques into scene action. The first impulse towards analytical psychodrama was given by Mireille Monod following Moreno’s first conference on psychodrama held in Paris in the Hospital of Saint Anna.

Mireille Monod’s approach was further developed by Serge Lebovici, the founder of analytical psychodrama, together with Rene Diatkin and Evelyne Kestenberg, a child psychoanalyst. This kind of development and standpoint was also given support by Moreno, who once said: ‘Analytical psychodrama is the synthesis of psychodrama and psychoanalysis. I inaugurated it in January 1944 by connecting psychodrama and psychoanalytical theory and by calling this association analytical psychodrama.’ In his reply to Professor Lebovici in 1955, he wrote: ‘Today we have psychodramatists, analysts, psychotherapists for group analysis, as well as psychodramatists who apply individual approaches...’ A second approach is represented by the work of Anne Ancelin Schutzenberger. After gain-
Zvonko Dzokic was obtaining her PhD in psychology at the Sorbonne, and after individual analysis, she went to the USA, where she undertook comprehensive training in group dynamics, didactic group work and psychodrama under Moreno between 1950-1952, becoming ‘Psychodrama Director’ at Moreno’s Institute in New York in 1951. She introduced Moreno’s classic educational and therapeutic psychodrama for adults in Paris in 1953. In 1955, she created ‘triple psychodrama’, which consisted of group dynamics, group analysis and psychodrama. A very similar method was developed in the USA by James Enneis and Robert Hass, and in Japan by Matsumura. A third approach in France was established by Pierre Bour with the introduction of ‘indirect objects’. He was Moreno’s associate during his staying in Paris. A fourth approach under the name of ‘quadric psychodrama’, as a combination of the previous approaches, was applied in France by Michel Lemay.

In recent decades there has been a growing need for an eclectic approach in psychotherapeutic procedure. Psychodrama techniques are increasingly integrated in other clinical, psychotherapeutic, socio-therapeutic and pedagogical approaches, as well as in recreational and informative-political program models.
CLASSIC PSYCHODRAMA

A. Basic elements

The basic elements of classic psychodrama are the following:

1. A *protagonist* – the member of a group who shows and explores his or her own contents in a certain psychodrama session and is the central figure of the psychodrama.

2. A *director* – a therapist who leads the psychodrama session through co-operation with the protagonist and the group.

3. *Assistants (auxiliary egos)* - members of the group or trained co-therapists who play the roles of the important figures in the life of the protagonist and thus enable the development of the scenes and the events in a current session.

4. *Audience* – other members of the group that are not directly involved in the enactment. Although it seems that they are in a passive situation, they become urged by the events in the drama towards their own experiences.
that are developed by the group process which brings benefits to all individuals in the group. In addition, their presence represents the reality to which a protagonist returns after the enactment of his/her psychodrama.

5. A scene – the space where psychodrama takes place. Most often it is a part of the room where the group meets and which has to be spacious enough to enable physical movement. In his Beacon Institute, Moreno created a scene that consisted of three levels which geometrically represented three concentric circles around a joint imaginary axis. In this way it was possible to define the different levels of the scene contents to be enacted.

B. Basic rules

Classic psychodrama, as an action method of group psychotherapy, is based on certain rules, some of which represent general rules that are identical to those which apply in other concepts of group psychotherapy, while most of them are specifically determined by the psychodramatic approach and its techniques.

The basic rules of psychodrama insist on:

a) A rule of discretion – everything that goes on during a psychodrama session remains ‘a group secret’, which means that nobody from the group should allow themselves to bring out or relate any kind of contents
relating to the group and its members as a result of the session. This enables the strengthening of trust amongst the group members, which further opens up possibilities and space for expressing and working on deep intimate contents of every member of the group, simultaneously providing for the continuous development of the group process.

b) A rule of no transgression - Every member of a group should take part in an agreement of joint good intentions, of not hurting themselves or others. Aggression, which represents an important content that must be expressed at a certain phase of exploration of the inner contents, should be expressed through psychodrama and its techniques so as to enable a safe resolution.

Specific rules of psychodrama are directly established in its approach, its structure and its techniques:

‘A protagonist enacts his/her conflicts instead of talking about them’. Enactment takes place with the help of a director, group members and improvised props (chairs, pillows, blankets, newspapers, etc.) on a psychodrama stage. The basic director’s message to a protagonist, in accordance with this rule, is: ‘Show instead of tell.’

‘A protagonist acts here and now, regardless of the fact that the current event has already happened or could happen, regardless of whether the past, the present or the future is enacted or whether it is a real
or imaginary event.’ An individual acts and communicates ‘in the present’, thus corroborating the immediacy of the experience at the moment of the enactment, at the same time avoiding the possibility of remaining in the role of ‘a story teller’ or ‘passive observer’ of the events and objects in his/her own experiences.

‘A protagonist is encouraged rather to maximize all expressions, actions and verbalizations than to diminish them.’ This rule does not neglect or forget the limitations of reality, which cannot be neglected but should be observed upon their appearance and in the completion of the expression previously aroused.

‘The warm-up process should progress from the periphery towards the centre.’ A director does not start with the most traumatic events for a protagonist. The first scenes should deal with emotionally more superficial situations in order to gradually reach deeper, more intense emotional experiences.

‘Whenever possible, a protagonist will set the time, the space, the scene, auxiliary egos and other elements necessary in building his/her psychodrama.’ The protagonist is the central figure in the psychodramatic session and has the right to stop the enactment or to make a decision as to the choice of the new scene.

‘Psychodrama is as much a method of limitation as it is a method of expression.’ This rule is reserved for situations when the control of a protagonist’s behaviour is broken, which is common in cases of delinquency
or psychopathy. It can occasionally be present in a lesser form in other states during the impulsive discharge of emotional tension. This rule is usually conducted through the technique of role-reversal, which should be carefully and precisely carried out.

'It is allowed for a protagonist to be as non-spontaneous and expressionless as s/he is in present time.' At first sight this is contrary to the rule of spontaneity, but in fact it represents 'maximization of expressions' and in this case it refers to a current inhibition.

'A protagonist has to learn to take the role of all that s/he is in an important relation with, to undergo and experience persons in his/her social nucleus, their relation to him/her and among themselves.' In psychodrama, the protagonist has to learn 'to be' and 'to become', temporarily, what s/he sees, feels, hears, smells, loves, hates, what s/he is afraid of, what s/he rejects, what s/he is rejected by, what s/he wants to avoid, what s/he wants to become... The basis of the psychodrama technique that leads to the fulfilment of this rule is role reversal with important objects taking over their role and role-playing.

'A director has to believe in a psychodramatic method as an ultimate arbitrator and a leader in the therapeutic process.' In order to create this position in which a director is fully capable of taking on and justifying responsibility for leading a session, it is necessary for the director to be well prepared and warmed-up for their part, thus reducing their anxiety in order to be
flexible and capable of following the process of the protagonist.

‘The psychodramatic session consists of three parts: warm-up, enactment and sharing in a group.’

‘Warm-ups are carried out differently in different cultures; that is why suitable changes should be applied.’

The last three rules of psychodrama refer to the basic parts of psychodrama and their contents and are described in a separate chapter on account of their importance and substantiality.

C. Basic parts

A classic psychodrama consists of three parts: warm-up, enactment and sharing. In educational groups it is usual to add to these basic parts a fourth part called process.

1. Warm-up – Psychodrama begins with the joint preparation of all group members for the enactment of important experiences and events from their personal lives, led by a director. Moreno pointed out that all of us, whether we are aware of it or not, are constantly preparing for events to come, whether this refers to simple or complex actions: for example, getting up after waking, going to bed, preparing for a meal, doing our professional tasks, or prior to various types of encounters with other people, creating, etc. When coming to a psychodrama session, the members of a group
carry with them different experiences, events, plans, expectations, life and professional roles. The warm-up process enables liberation from the previous fixations in certain roles in order to provide direct contact with important inner contents and then to display these through enactments in a group. Naturally, this contributes to the strengthening of group cohesion and trust through warm-up, the creation of a feeling of closeness and togetherness. Imagination and fantasies are freed after the warm-up and the members of the group are in direct contact with them. There are countless ways to perform a warm-up; the choice depends on the spontaneity and creativity of the director as well as their assessment and sense of the group process. Basically, warm-ups can be grouped into structural, informal, group and directed warm-ups, warm-ups directed towards the choice of a certain protagonist from a group, verbal, nonverbal, interactive, introspective, warm-ups with imaginary or real scenes or themes, etc.

The director, with his/her skill in the procedure, leads the members through identification with the contents of the warm-up towards touch and communication with their own contents. After reaching this level of readiness and warm-up amongst the members of the group, the director comes to the last phase of the warm-up, which is called the choice of the protagonist. This is a very important moment, the crucial aim of which is to choose the group member who is in the strongest contact with his/her own contents, the most prepared to explore his/hers experience and to try to resolve it
through the enactment of the scene. It frequently happens that several group members at the same time are strongly absorbed with their own contents and the need to enact them in the current session. A situation like this demands that the director be very careful with the choice in order not to hurt the feelings of any of the members who will have to return to the group after the choice has been made; it is vital that members of the group do not perceive an underestimation of their own experiences or rejection by the director and the group. In such cases, the director tends to preserve through his/her manner and procedure the value of the awoken experiences in order to build trust that the same contents will be enacted in some other session or the next session and to keep their meaning in the group process. Finally, the choice of the protagonist is made either by the director, according to their clinical assessment, or by the group, and in some cases by agreement among the potential protagonists. The choice of the protagonist can be achieved at the very beginning of the session, even before the process of the warm-up has been developed, which is commonly the case in groups that have spent a long time together in psychodrama training or in therapeutic groups that consist of members with higher levels of psychological suffering.

Once the choice of the protagonist has been made, the psychodrama continues to the next phase, which is called enactment.
2. **Enactment** – This is the most typical psychodramatic part. It begins with the entrance of the protagonist and the director on the stage. Through conducting a short conversation on the contents that absorb the protagonist at the moment, they *are formulating an agreement about the topic* the protagonist would like to elaborate in the current session. The agreement always presents a good indication for the director in his/her assessment of the focus of the events that will follow on the scene, as well as the main experiences that need be explored. Sometimes, in cases when the protagonist and the director are highly warmed-up, the action even begins without a previously set agreement, with a spontaneous beginning of the enactment. This usually happens when it is important for the protagonist to remain in touch with the contents, which would otherwise be interrupted by insisting on the precise formulation of the agreement. The enactment should always begin with *the present problem*. The beginning of the psychodramatic enactment in this way is necessary in order to obtain better insight as to what extent and what situations in the present the protagonist experiences as problematic. These could include a certain situation, a scene from a social nucleus, an aspect of space and time, a certain feeling, a bodily experience, a supposition, a phantasm, a dream, etc. The present problem is set on the stage by first defining it in space, time and reality, and then follows the enactment. After the enactment of the first scene, the director, who carefully
follows the protagonist’s reactions and experiences, directs the action to extract the essential experience from that scene, which later becomes the basis for the setting and enactment of the next scene.

The scenes follow one another, bringing out the material for the psychodramatic enactment of deeper contents, indicating the positions that created the present problem. Reaching the source of the problem, which is usually a past experience, the resolution of the problem is enabled by the enactment of the event ‘here and now’ with the help of adequate psychodramatic techniques. This provides direct and authentic correction of the emotional experience in the protagonist and replacement of the old one with a new one. At moments like this the enactment is followed by mental catharsis whereby blocked energy is freed and the resolution of hitherto unconscious and inappropriate mechanisms which had inhibited the protagonist in his/her past and in the present in certain situations is achieved. After this, a spontaneous choice of new, more adequate and authentic actions and moves in the attempt to resolve conflict situations from the present is enabled. Thus spontaneity and creativity come to life in the actions of the protagonist, which in the following scenes of return to reality enable him/her to try out and establish new actions and answers ‘here and now’ in the protected therapeutic situation. This usual and desired direction of the enactment can be shown through the construction of the psychodramatic spiral:
• the present problem
• a scene – oriented towards the present
• a scene – recent past
• a scene – distant past
• childhood
• catharsis
• concretization
• insight, integration
• role training

It must be taken into account that spontaneous digressions from the above-mentioned scheme occur in a great deal of psychodramas. The enactment can begin with a scene from the past, with a memory or a recollection of an event from a distant past, with an event which is supposed to happen in the near or distant future. With this kind of development it is necessary to connect the contents that derive from those scenes with the current problems of the protagonist in present reality. This is necessary in order to end the psychodramatic enactment with the closure of the contents of the protagonist in a systematic—and, for him/her, understandable—connection. Only with such an approach is it possible to reach the insight and integration of all the presented elements from his/her inner and outer reality. At the end of the enactment, the protagonist should become aware of the feelings, strivings and actions that set in motion the events in the scene in order to correct his/her inappropriate actions in reality. It is necessary to reach the level of affective and cogni-
tive merger, freeing the blocked energy and its spontaneous directing towards optimal actions in real life situations. In accordance with this goal, ‘role training’ usually takes place in the final scene. This is a spontaneous and therapeutically safe checking of the newly made choices in resolving the conflict situations that caused ‘the present problem’ which the psychodramatic enactment began with.

In short, the optimal enactment should go through the following phases:

- beginning with the present problem;
- finding similarities with the recent past;
- discovering the connection with the distant past;
- helping the protagonist to realize his/her actions and reactions in his/her life;
- reaching catharsis if necessary;
- concretization of the topics, choices and actions that keep the protagonist in the present dysfunctional state;
- help in realizing the possibilities in life;
- help in integration of the affective and the cognitive;
- achieving closure and healing and so that the protagonist can enact in his/her life what s/he has perceived in the therapy.

Immediately upon ending the enactment of the scene, the protagonist and the director return to the group. Thus begins the third part of the psychodrama.
3. Sharing – This is a part of psychodrama in which time is dedicated to other members of the group. Moreno in his unique way also called this part ‘love back’. The members of the group who in previous scene enactments have touched upon their own contents, shared their experiences, feelings, fears, and recognitions, etc., with the protagonist now express their personal contents: speaking of themselves, avoiding any attempt at analyzing the protagonist, interpreting his/her contents, giving advice or asking exploratory questions. It is necessary to provide this stage during the sharing in order to protect the protagonist from possible emotional distress. After the enactment, the protagonist is in a very vulnerable state as a result of continuing openness to the influences of the surroundings—an openness which inevitably emerges in the process of the enactment. While sharing the group members’ experiences, the protagonist realizes that his problems are universal and that s/he is not only not being judged on them but s/he is completely accepted by the group and receiving the support of the others. Through their experiences s/he realizes and comprehends more clearly his/her own conflicts and possibilities of their resolution. Fulfilled with such positive experiences, s/he is encouraged to continue the path of his/her own healing and further enactment and resolving his/her own problems. At the same time, by recognizing and sharing, the group members themselves are approaching the essences of their own inner conflicts and problems.
and warming up for their scene enactment in the following psychodramatic sessions.

It is especially essential to mention the importance of sharing the experiences of the group members that have been auxiliary egos in certain scenes of the psychodrama in which they have played the roles of important figures from the protagonist’s life. During sharing, these members are separating the experiences they recognize and accept as their own from those that are not close to them and which are part of the role they have played. This enables liberation from the role or, to be more precise, from that part of the role which, if not brought out during the sharing, can remain after the session in a member who was an auxiliary ego and could be accepted and taken in as his/her own part further in his/her life. Thus unconsciously brought in, it can become a source of unauthentic inner conflicts, inaccessible for an insight in its origin.

If properly conducted, sharing brings back cohesion in the group and thus becomes a sound reservoir for the healing of its members through mutual exchange of experiences and joint progress through the group process. It is worth mentioning that sharing does not have to be done only verbally, it can also be spontaneously expressed non-verbally in the form of a touch, an embrace, etc.

After the sharing, the group members are ready to return to real life and their everyday roles, enriched by new experiences, ready for a more spontaneous and more creative approach.
4. Process – This is a part of the psychodrama that exclusively pertains to educational groups. The basic rule is that the protagonist should not be present during the process, except and solely when the protagonist insists on their being present in the belief that it might be a good opportunity for him/her to make progress in getting acquainted with psychodrama techniques when the assessment is that s/he is no longer emotionally vulnerable.

In this part, the technique that the director has applied in the psychodrama, which is the object of the process, is analyzed with the aim of improving the present members’ knowledge of the psychodrama technique and actions in the course of guiding the protagonist. It is usual for the process to be held several hours or days after the session, which is analyzed in order to avoid an emotionally overburdened approach and provide correct, objective and expert relation.

If the process is attended by the protagonist from the session, the procedure begins with his/her presentation of their experiences with the director and in connection with the director’s guidance and the interventions that s/he has applied during the whole period of their contact. Then the process continues with the director’s explanation of the ideas which s/he has conducted during the session and their experiences in relation to the protagonist and the group. It is also quite usual for the director to have a previously prepared protocol as a guideline of their presentation, which is always time-limited with the previous agreement of the
group. When s/he has finished, every member of the group who has certain remarks or suggestions relating to the director’s work in the respective session expresses these comments, giving concrete suggestions for a possible different performance. This must always be an argued presentation of ideas with the concretization of the moments which are being analyzed and for which the changes are being suggested. A special place in the process definitely belongs to the supervisor, if present, who with analysis facilitates attention towards the most important elements of the director’s work and the education of the other members of the group as well.

It is important to mention that during the process it is allowed for members to be analytical, to give interpretations, to express psychologically-based hypotheses. Analyses and assessments that are based on other psychological theoretical approaches are also possible, such as psychoanalytical, humanist, behavioural ones, etc. It is even recommendable and respected to have such an enriched and wide knowledge of at least one psychological diagnostic approach. This kind of method reflects the eclecticism and openness of the psychodramatic system in understanding the psychological essences.

**D. The Technique**

The psychodramatic technique is very rich, versatile and always opens to new, creative solutions in scene enactment.
A director should be well acquainted with the basic techniques in order to guide a protagonist and a group in a psychodramatic session, which very often can bring forth intense emotional experiences. It is common knowledge that a director should be directed towards the understanding of four primary techniques: the warm-up, the setting up of the scene, auxiliary ego and role reversal.

The warm-up is a primary technique that is interwoven in all parts and phases of the psychodrama and not only its first part, which is completely dedicated to this technique. The warm-up is a constantly present process for the protagonist during the setting up and coming to life of the scene, during the role presentation and the enactment. It is also necessary for a warm-up process to develop in the director so that s/he can get into their role and follow all the events in the protagonist or in other members of the group.

The setting up the scene follows upon formulating the present problem and agreement on the topic that is being processed. In as short a time as possible, the time, space and reality which characterize the content the protagonist shows and expresses should become alive on the scene. This is a necessary condition in order for the enactment of the events on the scene to be done ‘here and now’, thereby producing authentic feelings and reactions in the protagonist, equivalent to those from reality. The rule is that the scene is to be set by the protagonist him/herself, by bringing impor-
tant persons and objects that represent significant emotional relations, presenting also the time in which the scene is being enacted. Thus the protagonist reaches the necessary warm-up level that is needed later on to enact the scene as if it were happening ‘here and now’.

First, the protagonist presents the roles of important objects from his/her life, taking their part so that, later on, with the director’s help, the protagonist can choose group members that will take those parts. Here it should be mentioned that this choice is most often made spontaneously, by the tele experience. This choice is usually asserted through the further duration of the drama and the sharing, when fascinating similarities with certain features of important people from the protagonist’s reality are discovered amongst the chosen members who play these parts in the drama; these similarities are found even though they do not usually know the people whose characters they are playing and even though the protagonist has not been aware of the identity of their particular inner essences.

By coming out on the scene and by taking the roles that the protagonist has presented, these group members, who can be also trained co-therapists, became auxiliary egos or auxiliaries. They are very important for the enactment that follows because with their spontaneous getting into the roles they rouse authentic reactions in the protagonist that are present in his/her real life situations. Apart from taking on the roles of the important persons and objects from the protagonist’s
The Power of Psychodrama

life, auxiliary egos can, with the director’s instruction or on their own initiative but with the director’s blessing, take the role of the double. This is a very sensitive and, from the clinical point of view, very serious role of the auxiliary that is created when the auxiliary enters the scene and stands next to the protagonist, takes his/her bodily position and by getting into the role carefully and gradually begins to express feelings, thoughts and reactions that s/he experiences in that role. During this stage, the director has to be permanently careful and ready to check the authenticity of the double’s expressions through contact with the protagonist and assessment of his/her reactions. In case the double’s expressions are not accepted as authentic or as his/her own by the protagonist, the director stops further action on the part of the auxiliary. The technique of the auxiliary is usually very successful when it is used in states of verbal or non-verbal block, social inhibition, and with introvert protagonists. Sometimes it is possible for two or more doubles to come to life in some scenes. These usually refer to expression of inner polarities, parts of the self, or distinct inner drives of the protagonist.

The fourth and also the main primary technique of psychodrama is that of role reversal. This is used upon the director’s instruction to a protagonist to switch his/her role with the role of an important person whom s/he is interacting with on the scene. At the same time, the role of the protagonist is taken by one of the auxiliaries, chosen by the protagonist him/herself. In the
role of another person, the protagonist takes his/her bodily posture, identifies with his/her reactions and expresses the messages of that person as his/her own. The role reversal is the main axis of the enactment in a psychodrama through all its phases, from the beginning of the action till the integration in a protagonist at the end of the enactment. A director should carefully choose the moment to apply this technique in order not to hinder the realization of the basic goal during the enactment, that goal being the completion of the action by the protagonist’s playing his/her own role.

Role reversal is used for specific purposes:

a) The most fundamental purpose is to obtain information that only the protagonist has. This refers to giving the information to an auxiliary for the part s/he should take, the presentation of ‘the other’;

b) The application of role reversal is necessary to achieve understanding and feeling for the other in the protagonist;

c) When the protagonist is enabled to see him/herself ‘with the eyes of the other’, to see his/her behaviour and reactions;

d) Role reversal with the goal of achieving spontaneity in overcoming inappropriate defence mechanisms;

e) In cases when the protagonist is the only one who can give to him/herself an answer, comfort or advice.
Besides the primary techniques mentioned, psychodrama uses an immense number of techniques, depending on the director’s education and creativity. Some of the more important ones are:

*Soliloquy* – a technique of opening subtle levels of experiences. A director performs this by stopping an action at a certain moment, then sets the protagonist aside and gives him/her instructions to express feelings deriving from the enactment.

*Mirror* – the director stops an action, sets the protagonist out of the scene, while at the same time one of the auxiliaries takes the part of the protagonist and repeats the scene. Like looking in the mirror, the protagonist notices his/her own reaction and his/her behaviour and relations with others.

*Future projection* – the situation that the protagonist presumes to happen in the future is enacted on the scene ‘here and now’.

For other techniques, please see the separate chapter of the book that refers to the register of psychodrama’s techniques and expressions.

**E. The Director**

The director’s role in psychodrama is very complex. On the one hand, it offers infinite possibilities for creative procedure, while on the other hand it is burdened by great responsibility for the protagonist and the group.
A director has to be well trained in performing psychodrama techniques, to have theoretical knowledge of one or more psychological approaches, to possess solid clinical experience which enables safe clinical procedure and to have a developed sense for group process and group dynamics. These preconditions derive from the power of the technical interventions of psychodrama, which are basically very expressive and which characterize psychodrama as an intensive and potentially deep psychotherapeutic method. With regard to such potential, a director should always bear in mind the rule not to start opening a problem unless s/he is sure that in the further course s/he will be able to safely close it.

Through enriching his/her own experience in psychodrama, a director acquires the ability to differentiate between two psychological forms in the enactment: content and process. These are two fundamental concepts of the therapeutic guidance in psychodrama, which are also essential for other psychotherapeutic approaches.

The content represents the individual history of the protagonist. It is the story in the psychodrama, within which the scene enactment takes place. The process represents the way in which an individual reacts inwardly to details from the content and also the way one will act in life later on.

Basically, a director should direct a psychodrama specifically towards the process, while the enactment will make events from the process alive and noticeable.
at their origin. The process reflects an inner collision or conflict. It contains hidden obstacles to the release of spontaneity and manifests inadequate defence mechanisms. If the attention, contrary to this, is focused on the content, the psychodrama then becomes a history repeating without resolution. The process remains hidden inside the protagonist and continues its action in everyday life. It is often very difficult to get to the essence of the process, so the commenced work has to continue in the following psychodrama sessions.

During his/her work on the scene, a director very often uses so-called focusing techniques.

One such technique is insisting on getting a more specific answer. For example, if in a scene a protagonist says that the feeling that s/he carries inside him/her shows with all or more persons, the director then guides the protagonist with a question as to whom that feeling refers to most.

A second type of focusing technique is limiting description. This is usually used in a scene with a lot of roles, when a protagonist is guided to present the roles through symbols, several key words, or in one sentence.

A third type is telling the main message of the important other person on the stage. Instead of the enactment of another scene, a direction is made towards the action and feelings which the main message of ‘the other’ provokes.

With the aim of achieving the optimal warm-up for a specific age, time and place, provoking focusing techniques are used by asking questions that insist on specific
answers. For example, in a scene from childhood, the director asks, ‘What does a child want at that age?’

A technique of separating feeling is applied with the aim of focussing on one feeling. For example, a protagonist feels anger but s/he is only capable of crying. With the psychodrama technique of surplus reality the tears are temporarily ‘removed’ so that the protagonist can be in contact with the feeling that precedes them.

A direction towards a body and bodily experiences also belongs to the focusing techniques. This procedure is based on psychodrama’s holistic approach. This approach enables recognition of bodily messages from hidden experiences, which is especially characteristic of psychosomatic illnesses. It is also used when a protagonist is blocked in verbalization. In that case, s/he is asked to put their body in a position that can show the feeling and then to focus to the part of the body where that feeling is experienced/felt the most. With the further concretization of scenes, the feeling is rendered into interaction.

Besides these general ideas on the director’s work, it should be mentioned that directorial interventions can be complex in the extreme, depending on specific qualities that certain categories of clinical entities contain in themselves. Since the purpose of this work is to present the basics of psychodrama to the reader, further elaboration would exceed the scope of the book.
NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION AND PSYCHODRAMA

Communication generally represents giving or receiving a message through a certain conveyed or hidden expression, during which an attempt for connection, for contact with another unity or system is made. The goal is completely realized only when such an attempt ends in an exchange of contents to mutual benefit, or is partly successful with one-sided communication of a content – message.

Psychotherapy is a skill and a field of research into the phenomenon of human communication, which occurs in relations between two individuals, in a group, or in the relation among the parts of the person’s structure within an individual, in relation to living and non-living objects from the outer world.

The basic means of communication between two human beings involves conveying messages through words, through vocal expression, intended for a person or a group that the contact is being made with. This is preceded by a so-called ‘inner speech’, which is at the same time a foundation for the recognition and cogni-
tion of inner experiences. During that process, the words try to achieve as true as possible a description of the feelings, thoughts, intentions, memories, actions, fears and all that would mean living the space and the time of an individual or the events from the surrounding that influence him/her.

However, much more frequently than verbally communicating, a person will spontaneously switch to communication without words. The greatest part of this type of expression is known as ‘body language’, which can be recognised in a change of bodily posture, movements, walk, a change in the relation of some parts of the body, play, dance, drawing, graphic expression, etc. These changes can happen in disguise and then reach the level of bodily experiences, such as a feeling of oppression in the chest, even a reaction of the inner organs with a change in their function (heart throbbing, vomiting, dizziness, etc.). This ‘non-verbal’ type of communication can be realised through complex states in the field of mental functioning, such as sudden changes at the level of clarity and cognition (confusion, blocked thoughts, disorientation, loss of memory, split personality, etc.), without the influence of the organic factor, which in this case asks for a serious approach in a supposed therapeutic situation. A very common phenomenon of non-verbal communication is also silence, a stillness, which in the distance that it creates typically comprises a great number of messages. Non-verbal moments are interwoven even in verbal commu-
The Power of Psychodrama

Communication and can be noticed in the pitch, loudness and colour of the voice, in the speed and rhythm of speech, the way sentences are finished or unfinished, through the connections among them, as well as through the rhythmic relation of the words in them, which always contain emotional resonance.

Psychotherapy is a field in which a great number of the most diverse scientific and non-scientific approaches have sprung up. By following, first of all, the scientific approaches which apply previously well checked methods in a controlled manner in order to prevent the possibility of hurting or causing damage to an individual that enters the psychotherapeutic process, the conclusion can be drawn that in their diversity they also carry a different approach and treatment of non-verbal communication elements created in the therapeutic relationship.

At one end of the spectrum, there are purely cognitive methods which, strictly rationally and verbally, seek to cause changes in the cognitive sphere of an individual which also result in changes in behaviour. At the other end, there is the behavioural approach in which the centre of interest concerns the reactions and behaviour of an individual with the aim of acting in order to change ‘inadequate’ forms of behaviour with ‘adequate’ ones. These mentioned approaches are very often criticized for not allowing enough space to the emotional in a person besides the cognitive and the motor functions.
Existential psychotherapeutic approaches which have also claimed for themselves the epithet ‘humanistic’ take into consideration the human as a whole, with all one’s given particularities ‘here and now’, regarding as unjust and inhumane any other approach that would observe a human through one’s single essences. Their goal is to reach the authentic human potentials and values through insisting on the enrichment of ‘consciousness’ about oneself ‘here and now’. Non-verbal aspects are considered part of the whole.

In contrast with these approaches, non-verbal communication is always at the centre of the psychoanalyst’s attention when it appears at certain moments in the analytical treatment. Here it is understood as a state that hinders the analytical process, blocks its progress by expressing unconscious and preconscious contents, derivations of drives in an indirect secondary way called ‘acting out’ (‘agieren’ – Freud) and ‘acting in’. The basic method for rendering these contents into conscious ones, understandable for a person submitted to analytical treatment, is verbal interpretation by which the analyst strives to realize the main therapeutic aim, i.e. ‘...reclaiming the notions from the derivates of the drives from the unconscious with the representations of the words in the domain of pre-conscious...’ (‘Ego and Id’, Freud, 1923). Thus the unconscious becomes conscious, the power of the Id is neutralized and overtaken by the Ego, with which it becomes stronger in control over previously unconscious contents, while non-verbal communication automatically
The Power of Psychodrama

‘grows’ into verbal communication. Tension is replaced with relief; insecurity and fear of the unknown is replaced with security in clear estimates and decisions that follow.

Bio-energetic approaches take into consideration ‘bodily blocks’ and try to enable the free flow of energy in the body through cathartic techniques.

Through the structural method of relaxation, autogene training raises the threshold of vegetative excitement of the internal, visceral organs and provides a possibility for conscious, wilful relaxation of the body muscles and better control of the body scheme.

In the development of the psychodrama process, non-verbal communication is one of the starting points. In psychodrama, it is understood as an element that can represent captured energy in the development of spontaneity and a continued obstacle to liberating the flow that has the potential to appear in creative action. In accordance with the diversity of its techniques, psychodrama initiates this energy with the aim of exploring and finding the obstacles that are placed in front of it, thus entering the roots and sources of its stopping and inefficient closing. During this process, insights are achieved into both reality and objective possibilities for more adequate and more efficient usage of this energy in the authentic life of an individual, which manifests these phenomena.

It is important to mention that this strives to realize not only the ‘pleasure principle’, catharsis and the satisfaction of repressed needs, but also to obtain a
better assessment of life situations—those that represent the ‘reality principle’. The blocked energy grows into the energy of free exchange between the inner and outer world, the energy of creation, change and sustainable adaptability. Thus an authentic but also positive and creative attitude to reality is preserved.

Practically, in a therapeutic situation this is realized through the creative interventions of the director and the group in the psychodramatic ambiance. If we presume that a non-verbal expression is enacted through a certain movement of the arm, which a director notices during a session, s/he can, estimating that that expression is important for the given situation, start that moment with the therapeutic aim of exploring the gesture. This is done by ‘entering the role’ of the arm and through taking the role of the arm the protagonist ‘becomes’ the arm and starts experiencing the needs and blocks of that arm. The director receives from ‘the speaking arm’ the information important to understand and rightfully assess the hidden needs and messages which take him closer to further intervention. His basic instruction to the protagonist is ‘to be’ the arm, ‘to show’ and express states in it. Thus the protagonist is directly faced with the hidden strivings, experiencing hitherto unnoticed messages and their strength. After the director’s intervention, which is in accordance with his clinical assessment and therapeutic responsibility, the energetically fulfilled protagonist can launch into the real situations in which the obstacles were created and
from which time they have remained to hinder the realization of needs. Since then, they have remained hidden in the non-verbal expression as an inefficient and inadequate outcome which is a starting point in the psychodramatic process and through which the original situation is reached with the resolution into the more efficient outcome. The other possibility is for this energetic charge to be more developed, with the director’s permission and instruction, up to the improvised satisfaction of the unrealized needs. This is done with the instruction that allows the arm to develop and show its strivings to the very end, to realize them in a protected psychodramatic situation. Thus, the need for catharsis is satisfied. This discharge is sometimes extremely necessary as an experience for the protagonist in order for him/her to return immediately afterwards to a realistic assessment of the possibility for such an outcome in reality with an appropriate correction in his/her assessment to find the true possibilities for satisfying the same inner needs. This is the way to restart the creative procedure in authentic everyday life.

Sometimes, however, due to the seriousness of the problem and the therapeutic assessment of the director, it is allowed to develop the protagonist’s non-verbal communication up to the level of diagnostic research in order to gain an insight into his/her inability of further control of the energetic tension that is hidden in that expression. Then, such an insight and the other usual states are the basis and the reason to change
the technique, which is now directed towards building the ability to control the potential of a dangerous blaz- ing up of the inner forces which, if uncontrollably re- leased, are capable of destroying the personality’s unity.

There are situations in which the protagonist’s spontaneity is extremely inhibited and that is the rea- son why the protagonist cannot ‘enter the role’ of non- verbal expression. This can be the result of not having the basic experiences, which are usually acquired in child’s play, or due to the domination of other inner forces or fears. Then it is common to use other tech- niques, such as ‘doubling’, i.e. ‘playing a double’. In that case, a co-therapist, or any other member of the group that comprehends the situation, stands next to the pro- tagonist and by entering his/her role reveals the mean- ings of the expression, conveying the messages by words or movements which at the same time prompt the pro- tagonist to get closer to the authentic experiences. If by using this or some other similar technique it is not possible to achieve a desired outcome, the protagonist can be placed in the position of ‘a mirror’ to watch the situation from aside, experiencing it and giving comments on it in order to face the state that previously s/he could not realize with the existence in his/her own role.

After these simplified descriptions of the ap- proaches and methods applied in resolving elements of non-verbal communication in the psychodrama ambi- ence, it is necessary to emphasise that, during the de- velopment and resolution of those elements, the pro-
The Power of Psychodrama

tagionist is always urged—in contact with the director, the auxiliaries and the group—to express his/her experiences and insights. Thus is fulfilled in the psychodramatic rule: ‘... that the notions from the derivates of the drives from the unconscious are being reclaimed with the representations of the words in the domain of the pre-conscious...’ until ‘conscious insight’ is achieved. All this is done through action, in the enactment of life situations created on the psychodrama scene.
APPLICATION AND EDUCATION

Psychodrama is a psychological method which, with certain modification, can be applied to almost the entire field of human communication. This refers especially to group communication, both in the sense of therapeutic interventions and in exploring and improving all group phenomena. It is also a very powerful method for exploring and resolving individual emotional sufferings and reconstructions of a disturbed intra-psychological balance of the individuals. Its techniques enable the most varied of approaches, from structural and practical ones to the extremely creative relation. Thus the application of psychodrama can be considered from two conceptual aspects: the clinical and the general, non-clinical.

The clinical application of psychodrama obeys all the principles and laws that a serious, deep psychotherapeutic approach should respect. First of all, this refers to the necessary level of education and capacity for taking clinical responsibility of the therapist/psychodramatist. Psychodrama is an intensive, emotionally corrective and expressively powerful approach that
strongly awakens intra-psychological contents, which should always be therapeutically well controlled with the help of accurate technique interventions on the part of the director.

In accordance with the abundance of its techniques, psychodrama can be used in the treatment of a wide spectrum of psychopathologic states. This means that it can find its place in the therapy of psychosis, neurosis, personality disorders, psychosomatic illnesses, psycho-immunological disturbed states, emotionally reactive states, addictions, and psychopathological states in early age, adolescence and adulthood. It is naturally understood that the real possibility of its application depends first of all on the therapist’s—psychodramatist’s capability, technique knowledge and clinical experience, which are the basis for the correct assessment of the therapeutic goal that is set before the beginning of a treatment. Depending on the problem which is the subject of the psychodramatic resolution, the approach is adjusted in the sense of adequate psychodramatic techniques and the desired therapeutic goal to be achieved.

This means that the approach and the goal in the treatment of psychosis are in every sense different from those which are set and achieved in treatments of neurotic sufferings, psychosomatic illnesses, etc. The psychodrama can be directed towards exploration, diagnostics, gaining insight into inner conflicts, complexes, towards changing behaviour patterns, exploring and comprehending bodily and vegetative functional disorders,
delving into the personality structure, interaction of the parts of the self, correction of emotional experience, improving interpersonal communication in a group, etc.

However, it should be mentioned that psychodrama can also be a dangerous tool in the hands of an inexperienced and careless therapist. This is why the main rule in psychodramatic enactment is: ‘Do not open anything if you are not sure you can close it.’ Thus, besides the wide scope of possibilities for clinical application, it is necessary to have a sound knowledge of the methods in order to avoid the dangers of uncontrolled application. Apart from clinical experience, it is advisable for a therapist to have a good knowledge of other deep psychological approaches, all of which enable a good assessment during guidance and in achieving the therapeutic result.

There are certain psychopathological states where the application of psychodrama is not advisable and have so-called ‘contraindications’. These are the states of extreme suicidal tendencies, homicidal tendencies, acute states in which contact with reality is completely lost, states of altered consciousness in the clinical sense. Finally, when faced with these states, other more serious psychotherapeutic approaches are helpless if they are applied as the sole therapeutic means.

Psychodrama can be combined and simultaneously clinically applied with medication, as well as with other therapeutic approaches, both in clinics, hospitals or private practice. Although it is above all a group psychotherapeutic approach, it can be used in individual
treatments, couples’ therapy treatments and in family pathology. Besides, all the approaches mentioned, except the individual one, have their roots in psychodrama to a certain extent.

*The non-clinical approach* in psychodrama, often defined very narrowly with the term ‘sociodrama’, has the possibility of much wider application and offers potential for simpler and very creative interventions which can be performed in different fields of human communication. This approach refers to mastering almost all group, social and professional roles. Psychodrama, with the help of the chosen modified approaches, can contribute to the improvement of pedagogy, social research, the functioning of the social services, management, businesses, organization and management, creative actions, negotiating and arranging, studying, etc.

In school pedagogy, for example, the emphasis with teachers would be directed to understanding and managing the group phenomena, in the sense of leading the group, the motivation of its members, role playing, role reversal, development of spontaneity in communication and learning through the usage of creative kinds of warm-up, etc. On the other hand, when working with younger age-groups, role playing would be a priority and it would be performed in creative games through role reversal with chosen objects, enactment of puppet scenes in a psychodramatic way, etc.

For some time, the field of social research has been using sociometric methods, which always leave
room and possibility for further creative improvement. In the functioning of social services, psychodrama can help in improving communication within different groups, like family, classes, ethnic groups, etc.

Business, management and marketing are fields that inherently involve the ability to enter into a role completely, the enactment of a professional role, the exiting of a tiring role after a job has been done (which at the same time should be understood as a prevention from chronic stress), the practicing of new roles, etc. For a professional of such a profile, it is necessary to be familiar with group phenomena, especially of cohesive groups, the creation of a team-work atmosphere in a group, the correct assignment and taking up of roles within a team. Of equal importance also is knowledge of the encounter phenomenon, an understanding of the messages expressed in it, an understanding of the needs and impulses of the interlocutor, checking the suppositions through the techniques of surplus reality and future projection.

A similar training program could contribute to the field of organization, managing, negotiating and arranging, where a great benefit could be the introduction of role reversal—with all the possibilities that this technique offers—aimed at the better understanding of the other.

With the help of specific techniques of warm-up and enactment of roles, it is possible to improve in many ways the memory-technique and the learning process.
In the world of creative work, or art as it is most often called, psychodrama could provide swifter access and entry into the creative process with the use of certain warm-up and preparation techniques in order to deepen and prolong the same by maintaining the process of playing the adopted role. Psychodrama could make a special contribution in the phase of liberation from a role after the completion of a creative act, which represents a very common problem amongst the majority of creators, especially after intensive entrance into the creative process. In certain types of creativity, in theatre, for example, the group sharing of the actors and other participants of a performance after the end of a play would hasten the process of separation from roles and safe return to reality.

The basic difference between the non-clinical and the clinical approach in psychodrama lies in the goals set to be achieved during its performing. While the clinical approach has as its goal the resolution of inner conflicts and correction of emotional experiences, the non-clinical approach is aimed at the better defining of roles, enabling their adequate playing, liberation from old roles and the practicing of new roles. The goal is directed towards more spontaneous and more creative enactment of social and professional roles with enhanced understanding of the reality of the needs of the roles that others take.

In accordance with what has been said so far, education in psychodrama can also be considered and
understood in two ways, depending on whether its scope and goals are intended for clinical or non-clinical application.

Education in the clinical application of psychodrama sets serious terms before a candidate who begins or is in the process of learning the skills of classic psychodrama and its modifications. Since the goal to be reached is that of taking the role of a responsible psychotherapist/psychodramatist, the candidate must go through several phases of acquiring necessary experiences. The basic experience which needs to be acquired is that of getting to know your own conflicts and their resolution through psychodrama. At the same time it is an introduction to the basic knowledge of the psychodrama technique, skills of enactment and guidance, as well as getting acquainted with group phenomena through participation. In the more advanced phases of such an acquired experience, it is obligatory for the candidate to improve his/her theoretical knowledge, as in the psychodrama field so in other conceptually serious psychological and psychotherapeutic approaches, especially in the psychodynamic, if it is possible. According to my own long-time experience, the necessity of previous clinical experience in the treatment of persons that suffer from psychic disorders is an important pre-condition for the candidate. In this way the candidate would truly be prepared to accept responsibility for clinical application in resolving more complex psychopathologic phenomena. In some coun-
tries, the education program is not based on previous clinical experience, since their aim is the clinical application of psychodrama to be performed by persons whose basic education is not mainly from the field of medicine or psychology.

Education in non-clinical application does not set such strict criteria. First of all, it demands a candidate’s personal experience in psychodrama and success in mastering techniques like role playing, role reversal, mirror, etc, without any pretensions to resolve inner conflict states and acquire insights into them, having as its aim more spontaneous and more creative playing of the given roles. Candidates trained in this field of application, which is usually called sociodrama, can be from any kind of occupation, but at the same time they should be persons who have in themselves a potential for recognizing group phenomena, as well as a creative potential for role building.
Thinking about a topic that can connect the concept of such a magazine¹ and the interest of its readers with the psychotherapeutic concept, which with its very name evokes associations about the similarity between the art scene and the Moreno’s therapeutic approach, the author of this text, to whom the therapeutic vocation is much closer than that of acting, has felt the need to launch into the adventure of trying to explain rationally the similarities and differences between these two processes that always carry in themselves a greater part of the irrational.

At the very mention of psychodrama, the first associations for people with no experience of the psychodrama process are connected to the theatre, actors and audiences, while the acting element is imagined to be the basic therapeutic technique. Next in this line of suppositions is the notion that a person progresses in the process of self-healing to final recov-

¹ This text was published in the magazine ‘SCENA’ (‘STAGE’), No. 6, pp. 65-67, Novi Sad, 1991.
ery by acting a certain part. It would be interesting to linger on this position and analyze a deeper flow of the association chain and the origin of the spontaneous faith in the healing power of theatre dynamics.

However, at this point it is much more important to first make a clear distinction that in the psychodramatic as opposed to the dramatic process, the person (the protagonist) who enters that process with their own problems and the drive to overcome them, stays in it and emerges from it in their own life role. With sometimes long-lasting changes to their identity (when such changes are necessary) the protagonist enters through the technique of role reversal into the roles of other important persons and objects in their life and, as the burden of their own identity and notions of themselves are temporarily removed, starts to feel the space, time and importance of emotional relations and messages in a completely different way from usual, gaining newly awakened feelings, notions and a qualitative change in estimating him/herself, others and reality.

It is important to mention here that this opens the door to spontaneity in learning to accept new roles more feely, which allow expression through more adequate actions and creativity, enriching what had been stereotyped patterns of behaviour and actions. The protagonist begins to replace rigidity with life-play, to replace stereotypical behaviour with the joyfulness of free action. However, as distinct from the actor, the protagonist on the stage during the psychodramatic process must soon return to their role, to take up again the
The Power of Psychodrama

burden of his/her own identity and decision-making responsibilities of life importance, to face the power of his/her own problems in the scenes that follow one after another, derived from the experiential, as well as the world of fears and unsatisfied drives. S/he is deprived of the defence mechanism of illusion that the events on the stage are happening to someone else and that s/he is only temporarily in that other role. Thus s/he is faced with a fateful importance of human identity and a burden of responsibility before him/herself and in front of others.

The roles of the director in the theatre and in psychodrama are fundamentally different. The psychodrama director is an active person on the stage who, first of all, has the role of a therapist, but also of a director, a critic and the audience at the same time. His/her intimate needs are peripheral—disregarded if possible—while his/her capacity and ability for experiencing the drives and frustrations of the protagonist and tuning these to reality determines the extent to which s/he succeeds in assessing the potential of the protagonist’s personality.

It is important to note that certain temporary changes in the identity of the director’s personality are necessary in order to adopt such a role during the psychodramatic process. These occur in a mobile play of entering and exiting the protagonist’s identity with the aim of understanding the protagonist’s intra-psychological happenings and then also in returning and shifting in various positions of his/her own personality.
and acceptance of the role on the stage. Nevertheless, at every moment of the psychodramatic process the director is obliged to exist with his/her manifoldness in the time and space of the inner world of the protagonist, as well as to participate both in the world on the scene and external reality.

It seems that acting in psychodrama is mostly represented in parts of its manifestation and action in the form of what is called the auxiliary ego. Important characters from the life of the protagonist and imaginary situations in which the protagonist has invested strong feelings and needs and in which they have experienced strong frustrations, are brought to life during the psychodramatic process with the participation of certain group members who are chosen by the protagonist and who frequently justify this unconscious choice by possessing some features that are very close to the features of the persons from the protagonist’s life. Taking part in such roles, they are trying with their acting to provoke as credibly as possible the semblance of enactment of the authentic situation and thus challenge the feelings and reactions of the protagonist that have remained unresolved till that moment which, with the power of its tension and the potential of creating fear and restlessness, forced the protagonist’s personality to run to the unsafe shelter of the role of an ill and suffering person.

In interpreting the role of the auxiliary ego, acting in psychodrama is aimed primarily at meeting the
The Power of Psychodrama

needs of the protagonist and at the same time it is subjected to continuous assessment of its authenticity. However, it is very important to highlight here that, after getting out of this role, the member of the group carries with them awoken identifications, already known to him/her or experienced and noticed for the first time, which are brought out to the group and shared with the protagonist in the next part of the psychodrama—called *sharing*—after the completion of the staged part. Thus s/he shows acceptance of these contents as his/her own and not as experiences that are only in connection with the other person.

The role and place of the audience in the theatre also differs greatly from that of the group members/observers in psychodrama. In the theatre the audience is in the auditorium, consisting of more or less interested individuals that in the scene dynamics find certain identifications with their own inner dynamics and experiences and at the same time give an emotional tone to the play with their reactions and thus reflect to the actors the degree of acceptance and estimation of the authenticity of the roles and the content that is taking place on the scene. The applause after the play is again a nonverbal, final *sharing* of the audience with the actors, and the edge of the stage, as well as the playing of other people’s roles and not their own, remains there after the play to separate them.

The audience in psychodrama represents more an organism than a group of individuals. Persons and
objects are brought to life out of it, time and spaces are built, and conflicts are made and resolved on the stage.

At the same time it represents a booster of emotions and drives—a surrounding that is ready to accept unconditionally all aspects of the protagonist’s personality as well as the reality with irrefutable laws of survival.

Although we can find similarities in certain phases and phenomena of the psychodramatic process with the art scene (theatre), it would be difficult to identify any kind of similarity between psychodrama’s sharing and theatre events. Thus the conclusion can be drawn that sharing is a purely therapeutic, group phenomenon in which the greater or lesser openings of the intimate worlds of the group members occur, aroused by the events on the psychodramatic stage. There is also an unusually powerful and in many ways unexplainable healing flow of verbal and nonverbal contents directed to all members of the group, but first of all to the protagonist in gratitude for everything s/he has given.

Closing this small, comparative concept, the author of this text becomes aware that he is being overwhelmed by strong feelings at the refreshed spectacle of the stage in his performances. It is a space which can hold the fateful importance of a life choice, a place where successes and failure are experienced and the time is being brought to life in your own roles as well as in the roles of others. It is also a space where it is possible to end an old life and start a new one...
GLOSSARY OF PSYCHODRAMATIC TERMS AND TECHNIQUES

Psychodrama is a method which in the course of its development has created an abundance of defined expressions and techniques, specific in determining some of its contents. A true understanding and learning of these enables not only the achievement of a feeling for their conceptual unity but also offers freedom and incentive for further creative improvement.

Following the concept of this book, which endeavours to offer basic knowledge from the field of psychodrama, I have decided to present to the reader a basic compendium of psychodramatic expressions and techniques.

**Act Completion**
A protagonist ends the scene having succeeded in expressing and satisfying their inner needs in accordance with reality. Psychodrama offers the possibility for a so-called ‘corrective emotional experience’: to live an experience that is necessary in the protagonist’s
present but which has not been experienced in his/her past due to inadequate surroundings.

**Action Sociogram, Action Sociometry**
This is a technique of portraying a protagonist’s experiences, derived from the protagonist’s relations with their immediate surroundings (family, work, present group, etc.). This is expressed in a kind of concrete, physical and spatial presentation of distances, emotional experiences and other elements of the relationships in a social atom. Virginia Satir uses this technique under the name of ‘family sculpture’ and it can also be recognized by the term ‘building a sculpture’.

**Advice Giving**
A protagonist receives and gives advice on a scene that reflects relations with important persons from his/her life.

**Amplification**
This is an intervention that is performed by a director or a double with the purpose of prompting greater expression of a certain verbal or nonverbal psychodramatic expression.

**Audience**
These are the members of a therapeutic or any other group where the psychodrama is taking place.
**Autodrama**
One member of the group is at the same time the protagonist and the director in his/her drama. This does not exclude the use of an ‘auxiliary ego’.

**Auxiliary Ego**
Those are the members of a group or trained co-therapists chosen by the protagonist who play the roles of important persons and objects from his/her life (a father, a mother, a boss, etc.). Recently, this term has more often come to be replaced by a simpler one: ‘auxiliary’.

**Breaking In**
A protagonist tries to break into the circle that the group members have formed—intertwined with their faces turned to the inside of the circle. This technique confronts the protagonist with certain feelings (usually states of isolation).

**Breaking Out**
The members of a group, who have formed a circle, hinder the protagonist in his/her intention to get out of the circle (this is usually connected with feelings of confinement). A short-term use of power by the protagonist is allowed, without any violence or hurting, but with the purpose of gaining a perspective on the strength of the inner need and readiness to resolve the symbolic position.
**Chessboard**
This is a variation on an action sociogram with symbolic presentation through the help of chess-pieces.

**Chorus**
At the director’s instruction, the audience or the group of auxiliaries repeat aloud certain phrases previously said by the protagonist.

**Closure**
This denotes the process that goes on after the enactment, when the participants from the previous scenes are enabled ‘to de-role’ with the purpose of regaining distance from the events they have taken part in. This process usually unfolds during the sharing, when any kind of analysis of the problem which the protagonist has presented is avoided. Thus is also avoided the danger, apart from that of not distancing from the role, of creating a position for the insertion of newly acquired wounds as well as the obstruction of the process of returning to one’s own identity. It is always necessary to allow enough time for the development of the process of closure.

**Concretization**
This refers to the conveying of abstract formulations in concrete situations and forms on the psychodrama stage. For this purpose, all members of the group, inanimate objects from the surroundings, as
The Power of Psychodrama

well as numerous combinations with improvised props can be used.

**Cutting the Action**
A director stops the action that is in progress on the stage with the purpose of clearing up certain situations or re-establishing control over enactment if it is has been lost. This must be done in a way that is understandable for the protagonist and the group.

**Director**
The person who leads and who is responsible for the psychodrama in progress. It is necessary for the director to be a highly-trained psychotherapist/psychodramatist.

**Double**
This is a member of the group who, at a certain moment when it is necessary, steps out of the group onto the stage and stands next to the protagonist, adopts their bodily position and then verbally expresses inner states. Thus s/he prompts the protagonist to express his/her contents and gain insight into his/her own inner state. This basic psychodrama technique must be continuously checked, corrected and adjusted by the protagonist with regard to objectivity and authenticity. On the psychodrama stage, there is a possibility for more doubles to appear (multiple double), who in such cases enable the expression of different parts of ‘the self’.
Double Protagonist Session
This is an expression that refers to simultaneous psychodramatic performance with two protagonists (a married couple, a parent and a child, etc.)

Dream Presentation
A dream is presented on the stage, usually as if it were happening at the present moment. Psychodrama enables exploration of the contents of the dream, gaining greater insight into inner needs and ending in action.

An Empty Chair ('Auxiliary Chair')
Instead of an auxiliary, an empty chair may represent the place where it is imagined that a certain person is sitting—or may stand for any other inner position or content with which the protagonist is in an important relation.

Enactment
This is a basic psychodramatic expression which denotes active presentation, i.e. enactment, on the psychodramatic stage. Members of the group are prompted to portray their life situations in dramatic form, to physically recreate and enact an encounter that exists only in their memories and fantasies. A member who has become a protagonist in a certain session is helped to experience the process in the form of action. This can also refer to contents that relate to the past, the present or the future. The expression contains the essential psychodramatic messages to the group mem-
bers and the protagonist: ‘Show instead of tell...’ and ‘Everything can be expressed in a psychodramatic way...’

**Family Psychodrama**
Psychodrama in which the group consists of family members who get into interaction with the help of the director and psychodramatic techniques.

**Future Projection**
A situation which the protagonist expects to happen or wishes to happen in the future is created and enacted on stage.

**Gibberish**
When repeating the scene, the nonverbal expression is kept and can be intensified while the verbal elements are substituted by repeating gibberish syllables (e.g. ‘...bla, bla..’, etc.).

**Guided Fantasy**
A director, through verbal suggestions, first induces relaxation and then evokes notions with which he or she will challenge the members of the group or the protagonist. This is used as a warm-up technique.

**Hallucinatory Psychodrama**
Hallucinatory and delusive contents are portrayed on the stage, as in dream presentation. Voices are then personalized. The application of this technique assumes great clinical experience and accurate assessment.
Hypnodrama
Performing action after a previously induced state of mild trance. This requires adequate experience in the field of hypnotherapy on the part of the director.

Idealization
This is a technique that is directed towards the creation of the ideal self, parts of the self, as well as of important persons from the surroundings (a father, a mother, etc.).

‘In situ’
This is the application of a psychodrama in a true, real ambient (at home, at work, at school ...), in other words, where the conflict has been created.

Judgment Scene
A judgment scene usually takes place when the protagonist experiences self-accusation or accusation of someone else.

Lighting
This is the use of intensity, rhythm and colour of light on the stage for the purpose of prompting certain experiences in the protagonist and the group.

Magic Shop
This is usually a warm-up technique. The members of the group go into a shop that can fulfil all their wishes i.e. where they can get what they most want.
However, they must ‘negotiate’ and ‘bargain’ with the ‘salesperson’ in order to realize their wishes.

**Masks**
Choosing masks and entering their roles. This is usually used as a warm-up technique in a psychodrama. It is frequently used in drama-therapy.

**Mirror**
This is one of the basic and most important techniques in psychodrama. A protagonist stands at the side and observes repeated enactments of the previous scene that s/he took part in and which is now performed by auxiliaries. This is a technique aimed at strengthening the powers of observation and confrontation.

**Monodrama**
A protagonist plays all the roles by him/herself. This is usually used in individual therapy where ‘the empty chair’ technique is common. It is also a basic technique in Fritz Perls’ *gestalt therapy*, which actually contains an adaptation of a monodrama technique in combination with his existential and dynamic concepts.

**Nonverbal Techniques**
The use of bodily positions, mime, movements, pantomime, play, dance, music, touch and other non-verbal means of expression in psychodrama with a therapeutic purpose.
**Personification**
Taking on the roles of inanimate objects which are important to the protagonist and which are present on the stage; also refers to the animation of these objects through auxiliaries.

**The Protagonist**
This is the main character in a psychodrama that explores and resolves his/her contents in one or more sessions with the help of a director, auxiliaries, the group, and psychodramatic techniques.

**Psychodramatic Shock**
This refers to the sudden and unannounced introduction of the protagonist into a traumatic scene for him/her. This technique demands special preconditions such as a complete warm-up of the protagonist, but also great therapeutic experience with a precise clinical assessment on the part of the director. It can be considered a kind of ‘implosive therapy’—or, in other words, a technique of de-conditioning.

**Replay**
This is the repeated enactment of a situation on the stage with certain changes aimed at further promoting the achievement of the aimed therapeutic effect.

**Role Playing**
This is a basic psychodramatic technique which is different from the other psychotherapeutic methods. In-
stead of retelling, a protagonist plays the roles that define and reflect different positions from inner and outer reality.

**Role Presentation**
A protagonist presents the roles of living and inanimate objects, important for the situation that is happening on stage.

**Role Reversal**
At a certain moment, the action is interrupted and the protagonist, at the director’s instruction, takes the role of an important person or object that s/he is interacting with, and at the same time an auxiliary from the group takes the protagonist’s role.

**Role Taking**
Taking on a new role after exiting the old one. The ability for such a change reflects a potential for spontaneity and creativity.

**Role Training**
This involves practising old roles with the purpose of improving them or replacing them with new roles that are expected in the future. Usually, the behaviour patterns in certain situations are practiced (at home, at work, in an encounter, etc.).

**Slow Motion**
At the director’s instruction, the moves on the stage are slowed down.
Sociodrama
This is an exploration of important relations between certain social roles (teacher – students, doctors – patients, superiors – subordinates, etc.). It can be used in exploring and creating techniques for resolving conflicts between ethnic groups, class groups, etc. (It is often used in a similar form under different names.)

Sociometry
This is Moreno’s method of exploring interpersonal relations in human groups. One type of this is known as an action sociogram.

Soliloquy
A protagonist expresses aloud the experiences which flow out during the enactment and which normally stay hidden or suppressed.

Spectrogram
This is a spatial ranking of the intensity and quality of an experience in relation to an invisible line set in one part of the room.

The Stage
This is the space where the psychodrama takes place. In his centre for psychodrama, Moreno created a stage with three levels, shaped in concentric circles around a central axis. Usually the stage is one part of the room where the group meets and is adapted for such a purpose.
**Surplus Reality**

Psychodrama enables the ‘...enactment of what has never happened... what will never happen... or what can never happen’ (Zerka Moreno). On the stage, positions are created from the inner reality which reflect strong inner needs, fears and unsolved contents—not from everyday and previously experienced reality.

**Touching**

The performance of psychodrama allows touching when it has the function of a positively controlled bodily action. It uses this type of communication as one of the primal experiences, especially important in the developmental period of a personality. It is most often used with the purpose of achieving corrective emotional experience.

**Warm-up**

This is the use of countless creative actions for the purpose of releasing spontaneity, developing group cohesion, facing a certain problem, creating a specific atmosphere, discovering topics, and more easily entering in some roles, etc.
PERSPECTIVES

We live in times when a ‘robopathic culture’ is predominant (Yablonsky, 1979). This is a culture produced by minds which are controlled by the compulsion of maintaining strict individual and social roles under the pressure of existential, moral, political and physical compulsions.

It seems that this culture is being increasingly rooted, approaching absurdity in the meaning of life and existence, by building a man’s identity through identification with role models that are put forward and dictated by the centres of rule and power over the masses through the serving and continuous controlling of information. Their manipulative power very efficiently and precisely captures the imaginative potential of the human mind, reducing it to the acceptance of imposed roles and their stereotypical preservation. Spontaneity is decreasingly represented in the everyday life of individuals, while creativity and freedom of expression and creation disappear. With such a statement we are directly faced with the truth of the possibility of the realization of Moreno’s predictions on states in ‘the cultural
tin’ and its future. This is clearly seen in the increasing destruction, in other words, in the more powerful tendencies of civilization to destroy life and conditions for survival on Earth. This will be the final result of the authoritarian-hierarchy models of unconditional preservation of authority and economic power over the masses, regardless of whether those systems call themselves ‘democratic’, ‘market-oriented’, ‘socialist’, ‘communist’, etc.

This supposition brings us closer again to Freud’s shattering visions as to the outcome of the struggle between two basic drives, Eros and Thanatos. It seems that social energy is negatively possessed, realizing itself through constant struggle between the rigid roles of physically and psychologically uniform human beings, unauthentic creators of their own performances of personal identity, driven more by the principle of envy and hatred than the need for understanding and love. Confinement in rigid roles at the same time also closes the boundaries of such ‘cut out’ individuals towards others; it makes one feel more isolated, less understood and accepted by the surroundings; it prevents one’s free communication and spontaneity in encounters; as well as preventing creative action in everyday life. The need for belonging to a group and protection of possible rejections by a social atom are realized by joining and supporting formal groups created by impersonal or mechanized roles.

And if we try to look or understand from this standpoint the true responsibility that a man carries for
himself and for the other, for his children and life in general, we shall face the impossibility of finding it in such a cultural-civilization model of joint living, not even in so-called ‘humanitarian institutions’ which function within the previous model, except partially in some roles. At this moment, we can only find it in scattered oases of isolated groups and individuals who are sincerely dedicated to creative living of time, space and reality—those individuals who are most often misunderstood and, as a rule, rejected by the stereotypes of the environment in which they strive to create.

The logical question arises: where might be the place of psychodrama in view of such a social structure? We shall try to find the answer to this question in its philosophical foundations and in the technical possibilities that it offers.

The basic goal of psychodrama is to develop spontaneity which will enable the release of creativity in real life. The space in which these mechanisms are activated is that of an encounter: a person with another person, a person with a group, of one person with another; of an individual with a group; of an individual with themselves; of an individual with elements from their surroundings; of an individual with their images, fantasies, suppositions, wishes, assessments, misperceptions; with their past, present and future; with their dream and their reality... Having achieved spontaneity through the psychodramatic techniques of liberating the imagination of previously rigid and repeated roles, the participant in these encounters is ready to
take on the responsibility to make creative changes at the moment of action, to face the conflict between their inner needs and the forces of reality—finding in that moment, as a ‘revolutionary category’, an adequate creative solution. Thus they will become an active agent and initiator of changes and no longer a passive recipient.

What the psychodramatic approach can offer to everyday life is the adoption of freedom in one’s own imagination and faith in its power, as well as the ability to check the possibilities for its realization in reality. Changes in the states of imaginative power of the human mind finally result in changes of cultural laws. After all, in his imagination man has created God and the moral and all other laws of social life, as well as the order that has to be respected by the individuals that create that society. A person should allow themselves the freedom to check these constantly through the spontaneous play of their imagination, with a responsibility to life and survival, making new possibilities for the present and the future and finally with creativity.

How feasible this will be in the existing ‘robopathic culture’ only time will tell...
PRACTICE
Introduction

Work performed on the contents developed within one scene enacted on stage is called a psychodramatic vignette. These are usually used for several purposes: as a warm up for the protagonist for further and deeper opening of the topic; as initial work in the psychodrama; as the segment in the group treatment of a topic; as a model for research into the dynamics of the roles in a certain constellation; as an initial confrontation with internal resistance; with the aim of closure of previous work on oneself; as a model for release from a role; when there is not enough time, etc. It can last from a few seconds up to several minutes. In the text that follows, I offer more complex forms of vignettes in order to acquaint the reader with their potential power when working on different topics.

VIGNETTE No. 1: ‘ME AND MY NEGATIVE ROLES’

Protagonist: A thirty-year-old female member of the group who has been doing psychodrama for two years in a row.
Zvonko Dzokic

Topic: A meeting with her negative roles (discovered in the warm-up ‘Write down what is good and what is bad within yourself…’)

Director: - What are those negative roles? Position them on the stage...

Protagonist: (deliberates for a moment, then climbs on stage and places a chair in the middle of the stage) This is me... (Instructed by the Director, she selects a member of the group to assume the role of ‘I’ and then places a large cushion at the left side of the stage). This is the first role. This is a group of adults who always impose themselves and never change their opinion...

Director: - Assume their role and present it to the group.

The Protagonist assumes the role and enacts a group of adult people with unchangeable principles which they use to influence others.

Director: - What is your main message for the role of I?

Adults: - You must work and behave properly! Just as we did, and those before us... One should stick to the rules, not change them! The rest is unimportant...
After this, the Director asks the protagonist to abandon the role and select someone else from the group to assume it. The Protagonist chooses one member of the group (who previously in the sociodrama spontaneously selected the role of the parent!) and then the Director asks her to reveal her next role. The Protagonist places a cushion at the opposite end of the stage, to the right of the chair where her ‘I’ sits. This is the role of self-assured children—teenagers who do not obey anyone. The Director instructs her to assume this role, to experience it and address its main message to the role of I.

Children: (addressing the message to the chair where the member of the group in the role of I sits): We will do only what we want. We know what we want and we don’t change our attitudes. I listen to no one; I know everything (she puts her hand under her head in a theatrical manner and with a challenging gaze).

The Director instructs the Protagonist to abandon that role and select a member of the group who should assume the role instead. The Protagonist reveals her third role by placing a chair for that role to the right and very close to the chair where the role of I sits.

Protagonist: - This is the role of people who cannot manage in life, who always ask for help and attention. I is always focused on them to help them.
Director: - Assume this role and address the role of I. See what the main message is that this role sends out to it.

Role: - I am helpless... I need help, I can’t manage. Come on! Help me, please, I can’t make it on my own. Listen to my misfortunes, see how hard it is for me... It is always so hard for me, I don’t know what to do... I am the role of HELPLESSNESS.

The Director asks the Protagonist to abandon this role and select someone from the group to play this role. When the chosen member sits on the chair of the role of helplessness, the Director asks the Protagonist to reveal her last role. The Protagonist places yet another chair to the right, near the place where she positioned her previous role, in the direction of the role of the CHILDREN. Instructed by the Director, she assumes her last role and enacts it. Soon it becomes clear that this is a role of negative people; that is, people who always find bleak meanings in everything and interpret all events in their environment with a negative connotation. The Director instructs this role to address its ‘main message’ to the role of I.

Negative Person: - Everything is negative. I can’t see anything good in anything that happens. This is no good, that is no good... Think about it, it is no good... You should be trying to dissuade me, but you should know that I don’t give up my negative conclusions easily.
When this last role has been introduced, the Director pulls the Protagonist out of it, helps her select an assistant from the group who would take up this role and asks her to leave the stage. At this moment, only those in the roles of I, ADULTS, CHILDREN, HELPLESS AND NEGATIVE PERSON are left on stage. The assistants to whom these roles have been allocated wait for a signal from the Director to bring their roles to life. The Director sends the Protagonist to find a place in the psychodrama theatre from whence she could easily follow the events on stage. Next, he instructs the assistants to start bringing to life their roles one at a time, following the same order in which they were staged and by using the body language and words demonstrated during the introduction of the roles. The role of ADULTS is the first to speak, followed by the others with their main and closing messages for the role of I. Throughout all this, the Protagonist observes the stage actions with utmost interest, reacting occasionally with strong facial expressions, changes in the position of her body and in the rhythm of her breathing, as well as with pressing her right hand against her face. When it is over, the Director instructs the assistants to re-enact the same scene but without following the exact order, developing spontaneous communication on the stage. This leads to greater dynamics: the stage is astir and the tension is up both on the stage and in the audience.

Director (to the Protagonist): - What is happening on the stage? How do you experience this and do you have any comments?
Zvonko Dzokic

Protagonist: - I must somehow sort out this pressure on me which I can see on the stage. It can’t go on like this anymore... It’s been too long.

Director: - Assume the role of I when you feel ready and try to change something, the way you feel that you should.

Soon after, the Director restarts the scene on the stage with the Protagonist assuming her role. She chooses the option to elaborate her relations with each role separately, starting with ADULTS. By reversing the roles several times and through focused psychodramatic techniques, the Protagonist first discovers the origins of this role in her relationship with her parents. Then she faces her own resistance to change and the various forms of its internal and external manifestations. Having done this, she is ready to resolve her previous relationship with this role, gaining an insight into the possibility of an integrative solution. The Protagonist addresses her last message to the role of the ADULTS with a visible relief:

Protagonist: - You are free to keep your principles, I am sure that mine are OK.

This is followed by a similar psychodramatic act with the role of CHILDREN. At one point during the psychodramatic enactment of the scene, the Director
instructs the Protagonist to recognize the relationship created on stage: that is, to think of the person who could be on the other side in real life, playing the role of CHILDREN. The Protagonist quickly recognizes herself in this role when she was a child and a young person—that is, her stubborn and rebellious patterns of thought and behaviour whose negative effect on her present self she has not been aware. Then she addresses her last message to this role:

Protagonist: - It is good that you have survived intact, alive and kicking. But from now on, I will follow a different path, the path of wisdom.

This is followed by a confrontation of the Protagonist with the role of HELPLESS. This encounter is initially dominated by a pattern of persistent unsuccessful attempts to help someone else, whose state of helplessness no assistance could change. By role reversal and through focusing techniques and psychodramatic amplification techniques suggested by the Director, the Protagonist reaches the conclusion that she has been unnecessarily and unsuccessfully playing the role of a ‘saviour’. Eventually, she discovers that this role depletes her energy unnecessarily and that HELPLESS should be referred to professionals for help. This resolution of the unnecessary and unconscious feeling of guilt leads to a great release of tension in her and to a feeling of personal liberation. The closing message is:
Zvonko Dzokic

Protagonist: - I really cannot help you. You need professional help. And if you do not seek it, that will be your own choice.

The last encounter is with the role of NEGATIVE PEOPLE. The development of the psychodramatic encounter with this role leads to an insight that there are many negative roles around whose messages bring down the Protagonist’s mood and motivation with great power. The Director’s interventions enable the Protagonist to recognize persons from real life who play this role in her life. Subsequently, the Protagonist chooses to resolve this relationship through a change of her attitude toward these persons. Her final message is:

Protagonist: - I don’t want to share your negative attitude towards life. Life for me is beautiful and I want to live it in a positive way. You can remain negative if you want, but without me.

Following this resolution, the last assistant leaves stage and the Protagonist is left alone. Her face is illuminated, her body is visibly liberated and moves spontaneously. The Director invites her to use the following few minutes for a spontaneous action. The Protagonist expresses a wish to stay on stage a bit longer. She moves and gazes at the empty chairs on the stage with pleasure, she sits for a moment on her chair, she looks around for a couple of seconds checking other details
on the stage, then she stands up and with a smile on her face she leaves the stage and joins the group.

Commentary:
The vignette in this example was used for the discovery of roles which participate in the formation of the protagonist’s internal conflict constellation: that is, for an initial insight into the psychodynamics of her needs and resistances. In this vignette, through the techniques of role reversal and addressing main messages, I allowed a certain degree of satiation of the ‘hunger for enactment’ while simultaneously testing the status of certain Ego-capacities.

VIGNETTE No. 2 ‘STOMACH-ACHE’

Protagonist: A thirty-five-year-old female participant in the seminar; a beginner in psychodrama.

Topic: While attempting to formulate the topic, after a long period of deliberation, the protagonist announces that she is unable to do so, that she doesn’t know what she could work on... She is evidently tense, becomes more and more restless, falls silent and stares at the floor. She covers her stomach with both hands and presses it with them unconsciously. The director notices the importance of this nonverbal communication and follows the signs of her body language. He
Zvonko Dzokic

focuses the protagonist on defining the dominant internal experience and subsequently the Protagonist announces that she is overcome by severe stomach-ache.

Director: - Let’s set this on the stage... Place something on the stage which will represent you.

Protagonist: (after a little consideration and searching with her gaze, finally picks up a chair and places it in the middle of the stage) - This is me.

Director: - What could represent the ‘stomach-ache’ in this sculpture? Try to find something in this space which could be used to represent it and place it on the stage in a way in which you feel that, at this very moment, the pain is related to the chair which represents you in this psychodrama.

The Protagonist reacts quickly; she is evidently eager now to work on stage and chooses a large cushion that she puts over the chair. The Protagonist responds to the Director’s comments that, within the sculpture, the size of the cushion dominates over the size of the chair, with the following words:

Protagonist: - It’s that way because this is a case of severe pressure on the stomach.

The Director invites her to assume the role of the pressure and to demonstrate her role to the group
The Power of Psychodrama

in a nonverbal manner. The Protagonist puts her hands on top of each other and, with her arms straight, presses the cushion on the chair directly and strongly. The Director then guides her into a state in which she will be able to recognize the message of this role and verbalize it in the form of a ‘main message’.

Pressure: - I am your pain... I am your pain...
(the Protagonist’s eyes are soon brimming with tears)

This is followed by the Director’s instruction to abandon the role and select someone from the group to be the ‘pressure’ and then to assume the role of herself. The Protagonist chooses one member of the group and sits on the chair putting the cushion over herself and hugging it across the middle. The assistant previously selected for the role of the pressure assumes his role and starts simultaneously applying pressure on the Protagonist’s stomach and repeating the main message, addressing it directly to the Protagonist. The Protagonist’s face screws as the pain in the stomach increases. She starts crying...

Director: - What is going on?

Protagonist: - I feel a severe pain in my stomach. I feel a great turmoil within...

The Director instructs the Protagonist to try and recognize the duration of this pain and its impact on her psychological behaviour. This leads the Protagonist
to the realization that this pain has been present within her for a long time—since her childhood. This pain makes her insecure, with a low level of self-confidence, confused and indecisive...

Protagonist: - I am unable to make the right choice. It makes me feel furious...

Director: - Be in touch with the feeling you are experiencing at this moment... Try to surrender to it and sense where it is taking you, to what time, what space and situations...

The Director gives a signal to the assistant to reassume the role of the ‘pressure’. After a short enactment of the stage action, the Protagonist announces with excitement that she can remember the period when it all started, and that is the time when she was supposed to choose in which high school to enrol.

Protagonist: - Along with elementary school, I attended a ballet school. The only thing I really wanted was to continue my education in the secondary ballet school... But my father would not hear of it. He said only, ‘Your salary would be low. Choose something else,’ and that was the end of it. I stayed silent, I repressed everything, but severe pain has persisted since... (cries). I regret not having chosen the secondary ballet school.
I regret not having said anything... *(cries again)*. Nothing has worked for me since. I can’t finish anything I’ve started. I feel helpless and unsuccessful.

Director: - Would you like to meet your father now, on stage, and tell him about the feelings and realizations you are experiencing at this moment?

*The Protagonist immediately accepts this idea and, instructed by the Director, she selects a member of the group who, as an assistant, would take up the role of the father. The Director instructs the Protagonist to assume the role of her father briefly so that he can be portrayed and warms up the participants for the ensuing encounter. The portrayal of the role of the father discloses a person with the usual opinions about life and with the single goal of preparing his child for safer professional roles in her future life. After she has portrayed her father, the Protagonist returns to her own role and the assistant adopts the role of the father. The Director signals that the stage action should begin. The Director focuses the Protagonist on the importance of expressing the feelings which she reached in the previous scene concerning her choice of secondary school.*

Protagonist: *(thoughtfully)* - We haven’t actually talked since then. I never tell him anything when I see him.
Zvonko Dzokic

Director: - It seems the right time to try and tell him all you have suppressed that concerns him and his influence on you and your decisions since then.

The Protagonist is silent for a while and avoids looking her father in the eyes. With support from the Director and the rest of the group, she starts telling her father about the consequences she has suffered in her internal world since her decision. She pronounces her sentences with difficulties; she is tense and avoids looking at her father directly. At one point, she asks him why he decided what he decided then and why he didn’t accept her wishes. The Director then interrupts the enactment and asks the Protagonist and the assistant to reverse their roles. In the role of her father, the Protagonist discovers that, at the time, he was not aware of the emotional importance of his decision for her and of the impact it would have on her future psychological balance.

Father: - If I knew then how important it was to you and that it would significantly affect your life and efficiency, I would certainly have supported you to enrol in the secondary ballet school.

The Director gives another signal for a reversal of roles between the Protagonist and the assistant. Now, in the role of herself, the Protagonist concludes that she might have contributed to the development of such a situation by remaining silent and suppressing her own
feelings, as well as by automatically expecting that her father must have been aware and understanding of her feelings and intentions at the time. This insight further leads to evident release of tension and to closer communication with the father. This is followed by a closing message addressed to the father:

Protagonist: - We should talk more often, the two of us... I feel we can talk about many things.

_During the final messages, the Protagonist spontaneously thrusts aside the cushion which was on her stomach and, after a consultation with the Director, she sends the assistant playing the role of the pressure back in the audience. Finally, she takes leave of her father._

Director: - How do you feel now? Do you still suffer from stomach-ache?

Protagonist: - I feel completely unburdened and free, with no pain in my stomach and no pressure upon my body. I feel sure and confident after so many years...

_The Director suggests that the Protagonist remain on stage and in touch with herself as long as she feels it necessary to reach stabilization of the achieved internal equilibrium. After a while, the Protagonist leaves the stage and returns to the group and the members of the group immediately start sharing their impressions._
Commentary:
This vignette serves as an example of how to externalize, concretize physical sensation with focused psychodramatic techniques and how to transform repressed content into the interpersonal relationship from which it was derived. Within the same scene, the main prohibition, previously ‘somatized’ in her relationship with the father, is then worked upon. The vignette also served as an initial experience and introduction into psychodramatic techniques and a warm-up for future, more profound work on herself.

VIGNETTE No. 3: ‘I DON’T KNOW…’

Protagonist: A fifty-five-year-old female member of the group, involved in psychodrama for several years with occasional interruptions.

Topic: Having completed the warm-up, this member of the group puts herself forward as a potential protagonist. In the process of further selection, she confirms her readiness to be one of the four protagonists who will each enact a vignette on stage. However, when the topics which are to be treated are discussed, the protagonist falls into a state of confusion and when repeatedly asked about the topic on which she wants to work, she repeats her answer ‘I don’t know…’ and
stares absently either at the director and the group or downwards at the floor.

Director: - Let us stage this ‘I don’t know’. I would like to ask you to assume this role and present it to us.

At first, the Protagonist directs her surprised gaze at the Director and the group and then, with a sly smile on her face, takes the central space at the back of the stage. The Director then instructs this role to present herself loudly to the audience. The Protagonist still glances slyly either at the Director or at the others, remains silent, intermittently sways the upper part of her body and repeats several times: ‘I don’t know’. This is followed by the Director’s instruction to select someone from the group who would take up the role of the Protagonist. This selection is then followed by an instruction to address a message, from the role of I DON’T KNOW to the Protagonist, that is, to the assistant playing the role of the Protagonist.

DON’T KNOW: - I don’t know... (She gazes enigmatically into the Protagonist’s eyes)

The Director issues an instruction to reverse roles.

Protagonist: - What do you mean you don’t know? You repeat that all the time... do you know what you do to me with that I DON’T KNOW...?
The Director issues an instruction for another role reversal.

DON’T KNOW: Remains silent, nods with her head and shrugs her shoulders.

After several role reversals, the Protagonist manages to gain insight into all areas where this internal role obstructs her everyday life, and especially the inhibition of any spontaneous expression of emotions that this role triggers. Since the agreement with the Director is to work within the framework of one vignette, the Protagonist ends her stage action with a message for the future, that she will soon meet this role again and then she will explore it and resolve it completely. After this concluding message, the Protagonist and the Director return to the group and start the group sharing.

Commentary:
This is an example of a vignette in which a defence mechanism is selected as the main content for psychodramatic treatment because it operates as a component of the protagonist’s ‘character armour’. The choice of this defence mechanism is owed to its taking the role of the protagonist’s central unconscious resistance to her psychotherapeutic progress. I used the vignette for ‘first confrontation’ and ‘mild clarifi-
cation’—that is, as basic preparation for further work on the protagonist’s resistances.

**VIGNETTE No. 4: ‘POSITIVE ME’**

*Protagonist:* A thirty-five-year-old member of the group who has been attending the psychodrama group for more than a year.

**Topic:** This member of the group explained his decision to put himself forward as a potential protagonist of one of the vignettes with the sentence: ‘I’ve had enough of working only on negative things... For once I would like to see positive things on stage!’ When asked by the Director what the positive topic at that moment might be, after short deliberation, the Protagonist responds: ‘I would like to see my positive characteristics staged, those on which I could rely now and in future.’

The Director then instructs the Protagonist to demonstrate on stage the positive characteristics he would like to meet. He suggests that he should select someone from the group/audience for each of them and position them on the stage in the same manner as he feels that they are positioned in his ‘internal space’. The Protagonist starts pacing the stage and, every now and then, chooses someone from the audience and assigns them with a role. The first role he stages is ‘my creativity’ and
positions it to the right of the centre stage. Immediately after, he selects a member of the group for the role of ‘relaxation’ and positions them to the left of the centre stage. He positions ‘intuition’ behind the central space of the stage and ‘entrepreneurialism’ in the front. The Director instructs him to assume each role separately and present them to the audience; then he instructs him to exit the roles and asks the selected members of the group to ‘take up their roles’ and enact them. The Protagonist stands aside and observes each presentation of the roles with great attention. Occasionally, a smile appears on his face, which he hides with his hand over his mouth. When asked by the Director about his experience of these positive roles observed from a distance, the Protagonist responds with pleasure:

Protagonist: - They appear very good, seen like this, from a distance. Can this continue, I would like it to last longer...

The Director gives a positive answer and instructs the Protagonist to be in touch with himself and stop the action when he feels a need to do so. Having observed stage action for a few minutes while the roles develop spontaneous communication, the Protagonists gives a signal to the Director that he wants to interrupt it, announcing his need to join them and take up central position. When asked by the Director what is going on, the Protagonist responds:
Protagonist: - I would like to see how I would feel inside, running such a ‘machine’...!?

With the Director’s approval, the Protagonist takes up the central role and takes a seat in a comfortable chair he has chosen himself. The Director then instructs the other roles to continue with the enactment. After a short while, the Protagonist starts instructing each role himself and helps the enactment. Having come under the impression that the ‘machine’ is coordinated, he sits back in his central position and directs his gaze ahead of him in the distance with a pleased and visionary expression on his face. At one point, he turns towards the Director with a request to share his current feelings with the group. When asked by the Director, the group gives a positive answer.

Protagonist: - I feel brilliant with free intuition behind me, making good observations and steering direction. The entrepreneur in the front deals greatly with the resolution of tasks in a precise and successful manner. The wings on the sides, relaxation and creativity, make the flight of this machine beautiful and peaceful. That’s it...

Having taken his time, he gives the Director a signal that he has finished with his enactment. He remains alone on stage for a short while in central position, ‘breathing in’ this new internal constellation and
then slowly raises and goes to his place in the group. The group starts the sharing.

**Commentary:**

This vignette was used for construction and testing of a new assumed internal reality, achieved through the technique of ‘surplus reality’ and ‘future projection’. Psychodrama is one of the rare psychotherapeutic techniques which successfully allows for such manoeuvres, as well as for an attainment of concrete trial experience through stage enactment.
SHORT PSYCHODRAMA

Introduction

Short psychodrama is a stage action which occurs in several scenes. It lasts longer than a vignette, usually over a time span of half an hour to an hour. It is most commonly used when there are two or more potential protagonists with a high degree of enthusiasm which convinces the director that psychodramatic work must be performed with them without any delay. Short psychodrama is also recommended when the protagonist is not yet prepared for more concise insights and emotional catharsis of a higher level. It is also used for more profound exploration of roles than that of a vignette.

Example

A twenty-six-year-old member of the group announces after the warm-up that she is prepared to work on herself, ‘but not too much’. The group agrees to her being the protagonist in the period which follows the warm-up, planned for the enactment of a ‘short drama’. The Director invites the Protagonist to go on stage and
Zvonko Dzokic

present the topic on which she would like to work. The Protagonist slowly climbs on the stage, moves slowly across it and stands next to the Director, staring at the floor.

**Topic formulation**

Director: - How could we formulate the topic on which you would like to work now?

Protagonist: *(deliberates while staring at the floor and swaying her body, and then raises her eyes towards the Director with a curious expression on her face)* - Where am I here?

**Scene 1**

Director: - Let us assume that this space around you on the stage is your ‘here’... Be in touch with this space, move across it and see what that contact brings about.

*The Protagonist remains immobile for a while and then starts moving across the stage.*

Protagonist: - I am afraid...

Director: - Continue moving and try to feel what you are actually walking on.
Protagonist: *(moving somewhat stiffly)* I would like to live here and now, not in the past!

Director: - Be here and now and see everything which belongs to it. Move in this space... Communicate through movements. Roll over. Crawl on the floor. Sample all possible movements. Touch the ground, what you feel here and now...

*The Protagonist is more and more spontaneous, starts moving freely, then walks in circles, rolls over on the floor, performs cartwheels. Soon after, her laughter can be heard, released as she moves.*

Director: - Choose the positions you would like to explore.

**Scene 2**

After short deliberation, the Protagonist chooses five positions/poses and guided by the Director she presents them and reveals their messages. She starts with a position in which the Protagonist is lying stretched on her stomach on the floor with her head resting on her arms ahead of her body and the message is: ‘This is how I usually think and send myself to sleep.’ The next position is when she is lying on her back: ‘Daydreaming. This is when I feel the best.’ This is then followed by a position where she is lying on her side with her legs folded:
‘This is how I cry.’ The following position is a yoga position with the message: ‘Safety’. The fifth position is one in which she is sitting on the floor with her legs crossed before her and her body reclining on her arms stretched backwards: ‘I feel good and I communicate freely.’

Director: - Explore each role separately.

The Protagonist chooses to start with the position on her side. Having selected an assistant, the Director brings the scene to life with an instruction to the assistant to take up the role and say the main message ‘This is how I cry’ addressed to the Protagonist. This is followed by a reversal of roles.

Protagonist: (having heard the message addressed to her by the role) - You are a part of me. You appear when I am supposed not to ‘freak out’. But sometimes you shouldn’t, I am not that strong...

Position on its side: - You should be controlling me. You should learn how to control me.

Protagonist: - When did you appear? Why did you appear? I am bothered when you’re here. You’re like a leech... You bother me!

Position on its side: - You can’t remain a child all your life. You should be responsible. You relieve your-
self through me, you feel alive. What am I supposed to do when you identify yourself with me?

Protagonist: - I sometimes feel you are a need. But you appear irrationally, very often. I don’t like you!

Position on its side: - I don’t understand what you want of me. When and why should I appear? Tell me how I should control myself?

Protagonist: - When there is a real need, real pain, that’s when you should appear. But when I don’t need you, do not come uninvited. When I move ahead, don’t come to me. You’re not letting me live a normal life.

Position on its side: - All right. However you define me, that’s what is going to be.

Protagonist: (concluding message) You are a part of me; do not push it. I will control you. You should be assisting me. To think... Well.

The Protagonist abandons this role and turns towards the other roles on the stage. She selects the position ‘I feel good and I communicate freely’ with legs crossed in the front and the arms stretched back.

Protagonist: (final message) - I need you seventy percent of the time. Many people like you. Stay as you are.
In the role reversal which follows, this position confirms her readiness for cooperation. This is followed by an encounter with the daydreaming part.

Protagonist: - I need you too, but not as much. Appear when I ask you to, when I have concrete aims, related to health, when I’m working on something...

Role: - I will appear when I really need to help you. But you need to control yourself when you really need creative aims, motivation in that sense... Don’t push it.

Having integrated with these messages, the Protagonist meets the rest of the roles/positions in the same manner. After her exchange of messages with the role of safety and the yoga position, the Protagonist integrates the possibility of calm and peacefulness. With the role of thinking and sending herself to sleep - the position of lying on her stomach with her head resting on her arms stretched forward, she agrees upon a useful dosage of its necessary presence in the future.

Director: - It seems that the pleasant emotions set themselves on one side and the negative on the other. Where are you most often?

Protagonist: - With the negative emotions or in-between...
Director: How often do you find yourself in-between?

Protagonist: - Very often. Always...

Director: - Let us see what it would look like when enacted on stage!? Would you like us to set those two sides and you in between them on stage and then to explore what is actually going on?

**Scene 3**

The Protagonist gives a positive answer and, assisted by the Director, sets the roles on both sides and herself in the middle with her arms stretched. At the Director’s signal, both groups start pulling the Protagonist to their side.

Director: - Surrender yourself to what is happening. Be in touch with your feelings and see where it would lead you.

A scene follows in which the Protagonist is torn between the two sides which pull her each towards themselves. The Director observes that the event taking place on stage is very similar to the image/collage which the Protagonist brought in prior to this psychodrama. This image consisted of butterflies and a tree in the right bottom corner, a river running diagonally across
the picture, and human figures in various positions in the top left corner. The river divides these two sides, just as the Protagonist does in the sculpture occurring on stage at the present moment. Faced with this observation of similarity of both compositions, the Protagonist suddenly adopts a firm physical stance on the stage, making attempts to control her being pulled away in two opposite directions.

Protagonist: - I can’t continue like this anymore! I don’t feel well, as if I have butterflies in my stomach...

Director: - Try to do something about what is going on with you at the moment. You can build a sculpture which would include all roles and feelings important to you at the moment and construct a figure which would have the right composition with a meaningful message for the future.

**Scene 4**

The Protagonist leaves her previous role and distances herself briefly from the stage, observing the entire situation progressing on it. She returns on stage with quick steps and with spontaneous movements places her assistants in certain positions which represent parts of the final sculpture. While doing so, she provides them with the messages which they are supposed to contain within themselves, so that later they can address them
to her. Eventually, a sculpture appears on the stage made out of the group of assistants who, each from their own role, send messages for the future to the Protagonist. The Protagonist is instructed by the Director to remain in contact with them as long as she needs to integrate these messages and, if she feels she needs to, to respond to them with her own messages or questions. Soon after, the Protagonist expresses her gratitude to the messages and addresses her final message to them that she will try to achieve continual cooperation with them in the future.

After the conclusion of this scene, both the Director and the Protagonist return within the psychodrama group and start the third stage, group sharing.

**Commentary:**

This example was selected for its use of non-verbal expression—that is, body language—as well as for its spontaneously expressed question for the formulation of a topic which previously the Protagonist could not formulate and which turned out to be very important to her at that moment. I continued using the Protagonist’s non-verbal expressions in the course of this short psychodrama, which were usually rendered through body language and psychosomatic reactions, in order to start the exploration of the internal roles which ‘spoke’ through them, as
well as the emotional complexes related to these types of unconscious manoeuvres and resistances. By applying the techniques of voicing, concretization, sculpture and role playing, I enabled the Protagonist’s encounter with them on stage, as well as her first attempt at experiencing integration.
PSYCHODRAMA AND ANXIETY DISORDERS

Introduction

Psychodrama is potentially a powerful tool when working with anxiety disorders. The main requirement being that the Director who conducts the psychodramatic treatment is knowledgeable in the area of the psychodynamics of the unconscious as well as experienced in practical work with stress disorders. One of the characteristics of these disorders is that mental contents are always blocked with phantasms of the type described as ‘bad thoughts’. They can exercise pressure from the unconscious, thus provoking anxiety, or can emerge in the consciousness through forced repetition, causing experiences of panicking fear. I cite the following example in order to demonstrate the specific psychodramatic approach to the treatment of these contents.

Example

A thirty-four-year-old member of the group has attended the psychodrama group for more than a year. Prior to this, he underwent individual analytic therapy
for almost a year. After his initial scepticism regarding the efficiency of psychodrama and group work, he accepts the method of psychodramatic treatment with enthusiasm and becomes a regular member of the group and often acts as a protagonist, being prepared to share his internal reality with the other members of the group. At one point, during the second day of the seminar, he begins sharing with the group his experience of ‘enthusiasm’. He announces to the group his need to be the protagonist in the current session, but also the absence of any ‘clear topic’ in his head...

**Formulating the topic**

Director: - Focus on your internal feelings and the emotions you are experiencing at the moment.

Protagonist: - I experience a strong feeling of imprisonment (*his face becomes more and more tense*), tautness... (*starts breathing heavily*). I feel it most strongly as a powerful pressure in my chest and neck... (*turns his head right and left, touches his neck with one hand and covers his chest with the other*).

**Scene 1**

Director: - Can you present your chest and neck on stage the way you experience them. Build a sculpture out of the objects you can see here in your sur-
roundings. Choose and act spontaneously, as you feel at the moment...

The Protagonist picks up two large cushions and places them next to each other and identifies them as his ‘chest’. He places a smaller object above them in the role of his own ‘neck’ tightened with a belt. Above the ‘neck’ he places a plastic bag which represents his ‘head’.

Director: - Now, look at this figure from a distance. Is anything missing?

After short observation, the Protagonist announces that the chest should be pressed from the side and places two chairs on both sides to press the ‘chest’ - cushions.

Director: - Take up the role of the part of the sculpture which presses the chest and try to discover the main message of this role.

The Protagonist sits on one of the chairs and takes up the role of the ‘side pressure on the chest’. In this role, he discovers the main message addressed to the interior of the chest (represented by cushions in the sculpture) and expresses it as: ‘I won’t let you breathe freely’. He accompanies this with a non-verbal expression of this role by pressing the cushions— the ‘chest’—with both arms and legs. The Director instructs
the Protagonist to abandon this role and select members of the group who would play the roles of the ‘side pressure on the chest’. Having selected the assistants to play the role, the Protagonist is further instructed by the Director to take up the role of the ‘neck’ and discover the main message of that role.

Protagonist (in the role of the neck): - I can’t breathe, I’ll suffocate...!! (a message to the Protagonist’s ‘interior’, physically expressed by clenching his hands around the ‘neck’ of the sculpture).

The Director ‘pulls him out’ of this role and instructs the Protagonist to select a new assistant for the role of the neck. Having selected the assistant who takes up the role of the neck, the Protagonist is instructed by the Director to assume the role of the head in order to discover its ‘main message’ in this sculpture and to ‘voice it by announcing it aloud.

Protagonist (in the role of the head): - Many thoughts... too many thoughts which cause chaos! (This is physically represented by lying on the side with his back to the neck and the chest and facing the wall).

Having instructed the Protagonist to abandon the role and select an assistant from the group to play this role, the Director also instructs the assistants to assume their roles and occupy their positions, and then
directs the Protagonist to the position of the ‘interior’, asks him to assume the role of the chest. He then gives a signal to the assistants to bring to life and enact their roles, both verbally and non-verbally, and in a spontaneous interaction with the Protagonist. Having assumed their roles, assistants start expressing the messages addressed to the Protagonist and acting with their body in the manner presented before. The roles of the pressure on the chest press the Protagonist’s body with their hands and legs, the role of the neck starts strangling the neck with controlled pressure (‘to be enacted without any harm’) and the head addresses her message to the Protagonist from her lying position with her back to the audience. Before long, the Director observes that the Protagonist suffers from increasing unrest, paralysis and suffocation. This induces him to stop the action by signalling to the assistants to stop and release the Protagonist.

Director: - What is going on? How do you feel now?

Protagonist: - Extremely pressed..., with no room for breathing...

Director: - What does this sensation remind you of?

Protagonist: (after short deliberation, with one hand holding his neck and the other pressed on his
Of a scene in a film that I saw as a boy. A man was trapped in a coffin... buried in the ground, unable to get out! I felt as if it was me in that coffin now.

Director: - Are you familiar with this sensation? Have you experienced it before in your life?

Protagonist: - Yes, certainly! Many times... This is one of the things which constantly restricts me and I am frightened that it will re-emerge in important situations. It makes me insecure... And recently more than ever.

Director: - Would you like us to explore this scene and resolve it?

The Protagonist nods with his head turning his gaze towards the stage where he expects continuation of the enactment.

Scene 2

The Director instructs the Protagonist to ‘build’ the coffin buried in the ground on stage. Following this instruction the Protagonist searches for props/auxiliary objects in the space around him. He chooses the large cushions again—moved aside in the meantime—which he places one over another, thus building a ‘coffin’. Following the Director’s next instruction, he selects an as-
assistant—asking the person for a permission and obtaining it—who will assume the role of the man trapped in the coffin buried in the ground. He instructs the assistant himself and finally places him in the ‘coffin’, covering him with cushions. Than he observes the image on the stage.

Director: - What does this scene look like now when you observe it from a distance?

Protagonist: - Horrifying...

Director: - Do you feel ready to resolve this scene you have had in your head for a long time and which at times can have such a great impact on you?

Protagonist: - Yes.

Director: - Reverse roles then with this man in the coffin and enact what you have in your head in relation to this scene. Enact the dying you experience in your thoughts and your death, if you are ready to do so now...

Scene 3

The Protagonist stares at the ‘coffin’ on the stage with a fixed gaze for a while. Then he approaches it, pulls the assistant from under the cushions and takes
his place covering himself with cushions entirely. The Director allows for some time to lapse in silence, he turns off the lights in the room and noiselessly, with gestures, instructs the two assistants from the previous scene to re-assume their roles of ‘pressure on the chest’. Assistants assume their roles and start applying pressure from the side on the Protagonist’s chest covered with cushions. The pressure increases and moaning can be heard from under the cushions. The Director gives the assistants a signal to increase the pressure. Moaning turns into screaming and pushing of the cushions in an unsuccessful attempt to escape from the ‘coffin’. The Protagonist’s catharsis ends with powerful blows with his fists on the floor accompanied with an intensive and long scream. This is followed by the Protagonist’s sudden silence and immobility and he remains buried in the ‘coffin under ground’. The Director instructs the assistants to end their pressure and lets the silence last for a while. The Protagonist remains calm throughout all this time under the cushions piled over him. After a while, the Director lifts a cushion from the Protagonist’s face and switches back the lights on the stage. The Protagonist continues lying on the floor with his eyes closed, completely silent and peaceful.

Director: - How do you feel now?

Protagonist: (with eyes still closed and in a silent voice) Peaceful... carefree...
Director: - It seems that it agrees with you, this role that you are in now. A passive role...

Protagonist: - My glasses have broken and my attention was directed at that...

Director: - Does it happen often that small things divert your attention from the big and important things...?

Protagonist: (opens his eyes and removes the spectacles from his face) - Yes. It has happened to me before to be distracted by trifles and unimportant things from what was important at that moment. Now, too, this story of mine about the glasses... I say that even though they are not important. I always carelessly break them, anyway, and money is not a problem if I need to buy new ones.

Director: - It seems that something had to go with your ‘dying’ on stage. Something that has to go, so that something new can come... But, would you like to finish this scene or would you like to stay like this in the coffin?

*After having thought about it for a while, the Protagonist starts pushing the cushions away from himself in such a manner as if he is getting out of a coffin, closes it, and stands up on the stage.*
Director: - How do you feel now?

Protagonist: - I still feel a sense of responsibility and guilt as a transferred message from my parents that I’m doing something which is not good... There, I feel that strongly now, and I don’t know where it has come from!

Director: - Would you like to meet your parents on stage in relation to this feeling?

Protagonist: - No. I don’t want to meet them now. It would be useless... (After this, he continues staring at the floor lost in thoughts)

Director: - Would you perhaps like to meet the feeling which transfers the messages from your parents? Would you like us to explore this relation which you have inside you at the moment?

Protagonist: - Yes. That would be all right.

**Scene 4**

The Director instructs the Protagonist to build a character on stage—the role of the feeling—by asking him to assume the role first and present it. Assuming the role, the Protagonist announces that those are his parents’ prohibitions and instructions. The main mes-
sage of the mother in this role is ‘...always have self-control on your mind...’; while the father’s main message is ‘...you’ll see, you’ll eat stones in future, because the way you are, you’ll never succeed...’ The Director then guides the Protagonist to select an assistant who will take up the role. After the selection of the assistant and him ascending to the stage, the Director gives a signal for the scene to begin with the main messages addressed to the role of the Protagonist’s I. The scene continues with a series of role reversals reaching the final message which the Protagonist addresses to himself (his I) from the role of the feeling:

Feeling: - I am your need for freedom. You should finally accept me!

Protagonist: - I would like to. I have desired that for a long time anyway... How can I liberate myself? How can I become free?

Feeling: - Open up and accept me...

Protagonist: - All right, I’ll try. As much as I can...

The Protagonist remains alone at centre stage. He turns toward the Director with a questioning look.

Director: - Try to open up your body. From your head downwards, the chest especially. Let it flow through
you freely... This is your time. You have your own time in this world...

**Scene 5**

The Protagonist considers this for a while and then a smile appears on his face. He crouches on the stage with his knees apart facing the group directly, with his head and arms raised upwards. His breathing becomes deeper and freer, reaching a full catharsis with a release. After this, he continues breathing freely and laughing aloud, looking intermittently upwards and at the group. This lasts until it slowly settles and ends. The Protagonist then stands up, drops his arms down and gives a signal to the Director that he has finished. The Director asks him to come back to the group and asks the group to start the sharing.

**Commentary:**

What makes this psychodrama special is, first of all, the enactment of the phantasms of death, that is, one’s own ‘dying’ in the third scene of this psychodrama. The reader of this book must be aware of the fact the enactment of such scenes is not recommended for ‘newcomers’ to psychodrama because of the potential risk when approaching deeper topics and the possible psychosomatic reactions which this might cause and which only an experienced and well-trained
therapists can translate into a useful therapeutic action. The next interesting moment is the confrontation with the defence mechanism of 'deadening': that is, the passive surrender to regression as a component of the adopted armour. I used this confrontation and the ensuing recognition to guide the protagonist to his deeper source of conflicts and fears, to an encounter with his parents on stage. Finally, through psychosomatic and mental catharsis, psychodrama helped the protagonist in the process of partial resolution of his old fears and the achievement of a new internal equilibrium. This psychodrama can also be understood as a model of the eternal struggle between Eros and Thanatos which occurs in every modern personality.
WORKING ON SUPPRESSED ANGER IN PSYCHODRAMA

Introduction

One of the major contents to be resolved in all types of psychotherapy is suppressed anger. If not resolved and removed, it threatens to continue with persistent ‘destruction’ of the interior of the person who suppresses it or is unaware of its existence. It is demonstrated in practice that occasional provocation of catharsis is necessary as a part of the therapeutic procedure. I have selected an example which demonstrates the power of psychodrama in working with such contents.

Example

This psychodrama was preceded by the processing of a previous psychodrama enacted at an international seminar which had ended several days before. The Director’s work was analyzed, as well as the group process which developed particularly intensely among the members of the group in the course of the seminar. Observing that its consequences had transferred onto
the current work of the group, I used this as an opportunity for a warm-up and selection of topics on which the members would work in the course of the session that followed. Three potential protagonists emerged, amongst whom one female member of the group was particularly enthusiastic to start working on stage as soon as possible. The group accepted this choice of protagonist. She was a twenty-three-year-old student who had attended this psychodrama group once a week for almost a year and all local and international seminars organized in this period.

**Topic**

Protagonist: - I want to work on my anger.

**Scene 1**

*The Protagonist and the Director come up on stage. The Protagonist is thoughtful, her head is down and she moves from one end of the stage to the other without a word.*

Director: - Continue moving. Assume the role of your legs. Be legs in movement, here and now... And voice what they are saying while moving.

Protagonist: *(assuming the role of her legs)* - I have to walk... I have to continue... I have to fight...
The Power of Psychodrama

Director: *(addresses his question to the legs that move and whose opinions can be voiced)* - Who are you? What are you? What is your role in her life?

Protagonist: *(in the role of her legs)* - I am her strength. I keep her from falling down. I make her continue... Otherwise, she becomes powerless. *(The Protagonist suddenly assumes the position of powerlessness; her body becomes limp as if she is 'hanging from a coat hanger').*

Director: *(asks her to abandon the previous role and issues further instructions)* - Abandon this role... Be the 'strength' and show us what that role looks like and how it works. Select someone who is going to assume your role of 'powerlessness' and show us how 'strength' affects you.

The Protagonist abandons the role, selects a member of the group for the role of 'powerlessness', stands behind him and assumes the role of 'strength'. In her new role, with both her arms she holds 'powerlessness' from behind, who rests himself against her completely, in order not to fall on the floor. The Director signals to the role of 'powerlessness' to start voicing her message.

Powerlessness: - I am powerlessness. I need this strength so that I can endure... From one struggle to another... From one injury to another...
Zvonko Dzokic

The Director stimulates the ensuing stage action through the techniques of focusing and role reversal to reach the ‘essential experience’ which this scene conveys for the Protagonist. This experience leads the Protagonist to a certain insight.

Protagonist: - I need to resolve my attitude towards men.

**Scene 2**

The psychodramatic action is transferred to a scene which was enacted two months before. In this scene the Protagonist sits together with a young man with whom she was in a non-committal relationship. At one point, assisted by the Director, the Protagonist discovers the main internal experience which this scene conveys for her.

Protagonist: (speaking to the Director and the group, sharing her insight into the concealed needs which she experiences in this scene) I feel a need to hurt him... I can see (blinks with her eyes) that something is wrong with him... (Instructed by the Director, she delves deeper into the role of the internal voice) Good God! He is going to fall apart! Doesn’t matter, I will push it to the end. I’ll reveal myself to him!

The Director continues helping the Protagonist to focus on her prevalent feelings and to associate them with other similar feelings in her life. The Protagonist
soon goes back to an event which happened when she was fifteen years old.

**Scene 3**

This scene takes place in a café at night, where the Protagonist is having an evening out with her friends. It is important that, at that time, she has her first boyfriend with whom she has been together for only a short period of time prior to the event. The main event of the evening, psychodramatically enacted in this scene, occurs when her close friend announces publicly and loudly an unpleasant piece of news with regards to her boyfriend.

Friend: - I have to tell you that your boyfriend has ‘dumped’ you!

Everybody falls silent and stares at the fifteen-year-old girl who is utterly confused at that moment and whose dumbfounded gaze switches from her friend to the others. After a while she speaks out in anger.

Protagonist: - Why are you gaping at me? I can do just fine on my own!!

The Protagonist finishes this message with tears in her eyes. The Director instructs her to concentrate on the prevailing feeling which overcomes her at that moment, and that is anger. He suggests that she fo-
Zvonko Dzokic

cuses on further resolution of that anger which has continued to permeate her life and influence her relationships with men. The Protagonist first chooses to meet her boyfriend at the time so that she can sort out her ‘unfinished business’ with him.

**Scene 4**

This scene takes place in a corridor where the Protagonist at the age of fifteen meets her first boyfriend. The Director instructs the Protagonist to be simultaneously in touch with her anger and to establish communication with her boyfriend in such a manner that she can ‘recall’ and resolve her internal anger through psychodrama. The Protagonist moves directly towards her boyfriend, looking sternly straight into his eyes. Suddenly she hits him on his shoulder and states her main message.

Protagonist: *(staring directly and provocatively in his eyes)* - You piece of shit!

A short series of role reversals ensues which discloses that there is not much suppressed material left. Anger has ‘melted’ and the Protagonist’s energy levels have increased and her spontaneity has returned. When asked by the Director who she would like to meet next, the Protagonist replies that she would like to talk to herself about her future plans.
Scene 5

The Protagonist builds on the stage two parts of ‘herself’, one of them representing her ‘present I’ and the other her ‘warm I’. In her encounter with both parts, which in the meantime are enacted by assistants selected from the group in a psychodramatic manner, the Protagonist receives instructions and main messages concerning her future plans, especially concerning her relationship with men. At the end of this scene, the Protagonist manages to integrate her ‘warm’ and her ‘present’ self with an evident development of positive emotions. At the end of this scene, the Director is permitted by the Protagonist to check her new emotional state. By applying the technique of ‘surplus reality’ he guides the Protagonist into the following closing scene.

Scene 6

Director: - A man will appear on the stage now, a psychodramatic prototype of someone who you might expect in future and who is completely all right. Do something here and now in this encounter, something which you consider a spontaneous expression of your present emotional state.

At the Director’s signal, an assistant appears on stage playing the role of the ‘man’ for this occasion. On the stage, he moves in front of the Protagonist, walks
around freely and spontaneously. The Protagonist watches him for a very short while and then approaches him, takes him by the hand and, with a light step and a smile on her face, she takes him for a walk. This action lasts as long as it is necessary for the Protagonist to feel completely fulfilled with her new role. Then she contently rejoins the group and the Director issues instruction for the sharing stage to start.

Commentary:
At the onset of this psychodrama I used focused psychodramatic techniques aimed at the Protagonist’s body language, expressed as psychomotor tension, unrest and strained body posture. This helped to release anger from these depots and to substitute mental contents which were first recognized and then transferred back to the interpersonal sphere where they were conceived before they were suppressed. This was followed by work on the process of resolution through the application of ‘regular’ psychodramatic techniques of communication. Through the correction of certain emotional experiences, this psychodrama enabled a degree of development of the previously suspended process of emotional maturation.
PSYCHODRAMA AND TRAUMA

Introduction
Working on traumatic experiences is one of the most risky undertakings in any type of therapy. For all new and inexperienced directors and all interested participants in psychodrama, I would like to stress the importance of several rules which are to be followed in the psychodramatic treatment of traumatic experiences. Firstly, the trauma should be ‘re-enacted’ on stage by assistants who are truly prepared to assume the roles, because this kind of game can either trigger or reproduce their own traumas from the past. Secondly, the protagonist must never enact his own role from the past in the key image of the scene which has traumatized them because of the danger of re-traumatization. Thirdly, the protagonist should be guided towards final resolution of the scene only when the previous re-processing and treatment of the cluster of contents related to the event has been completed. Fourthly, one must be careful with the process of sharing within the group after the enactment, paying special attention to the process of ‘abandonment of the role’ on the part of
the assistants who played the roles of the violent perpetrator or the victim.

**Example**

A psychodrama group consisting of students who have continually undergone experience and training in psychodrama once a week for two years. During this time, a group process has been developed which allows for safely delving deeper into the members’ more intimate contents. At the start of the session, the group shares the remaining experiences from the previous psychodrama session. This treated a scene of violence perpetrated on one member of the group as a traumatic experience from their past which then, and in the meantime, opened a process within the other members of the group with similar experiences. One female member of the group states that the previous session reminded her of her first sexual intercourse which she experienced as a sort of rape. When the group sharing has finished, this member of the group announces that she feels very ready and that she would like to be the protagonist for that day. The group accepts her need and immediately afterwards the Director and the Protagonist go on stage.

**Scene 1**

Director: - Let us set the scene. Let us first determine where this scene is taking place, in what kind of space.
The Power of Psychodrama

Protagonist: - In his room...

Director: Position in space everything that is important, the people and auxiliary objects important for the enactment of this scene. Set and present the events on stage as a figure, as sculptures...

_The Protagonist sets the scene. She and her boyfriend are in a room. There is a bed at the back of the stage and this bed is the setting of the main action that has left traumatic marks in the Protagonist’s memory as well as caused problems in her future emotional functioning. She selects assistants from the group to be the figures, representing her and her boyfriend standing in a certain position. In this position, she tries to push her boyfriend away with her arms stretched in front of her while his are over hers, holding her tight and pulling her towards him. The Director freezes the psychodramatic action at this level and asks the Protagonist to reveal the main messages which these figures express non-verbally in such position. As her own figure, the Protagonist voices the hidden message ‘It hurts me, stop it!’ while the message of the figure of the boyfriend is ‘There is no chance that I’m going to stop now...’ The Director then issues instructions to enact the scene in that segment. After the completion of the scene, the Director asks the Protagonist how she feels at that moment._
Protagonist: - Powerless... As if I can’t do anything about it.

Director: What does this remind you of?

**Scene 2**

The Protagonist is suddenly flooded with memories from her childhood; she goes back to the age of five or six. She used to play often with a boy from the neighbourhood and whom she says she used to ‘love a lot...’ and told others that she ‘...would marry him...’ Then she focuses on the main event in that relationship, which is essentially related to the previous scene. This is a scene in which he invites her to join him in the basement to play there. There are other children in the basement who stay and watch their game. He suggests that she take off her underpants and he takes off his own, too. He starts touching her and showing his actions to his friends. This becomes a problem only later when her mother learns about their game. The scene ends with her furious mother beating her up for taking part in the event, sending her messages such as: ‘Why did you do that? What will the others say about you now?’

Director: - How do you feel now, at this moment?

Protagonist: - Dejected... *(There occurs a change in her body language; it expresses the spoken content entirely)*
The Power of Psychodrama

Director: - This is your present experience. Let us go back to the age of five or six and let us see how you experienced this same scene then and compare...

The Protagonist accepts the Director’s suggestion and they move to the next psychodramatic scene.

Scene 3

Director: - Be a child of five or six! Assume the role and release your spontaneity...!

The Protagonist assumes the role and very soon becomes spontaneous, behaving like a child at that age. The Director follows the stage act dominated by games typical of little girls of that age. At one point, he interrupts the action in order to discover the Protagonist’s internal positions.

Director: - What are you interested in at this age?

Protagonist: - Dolls... Ballet...

Director: - Be in touch with those things and see what you experience in this role.

The Protagonist becomes completely involved in her games with her dolls which she has selected from the psychodramatic kit of auxiliary objects. Then she performs ballet figures across the stage with shrieks of
pleasure. Having assumed the role completely, the Protagonist is then interrupted by the Director who asks the Protagonist to stay in the role she has developed.

    Director: - As a child at this age, are you still embarrassed by what happened?

    Protagonist: (with a bewildered expression and a smile on her face) - No, of course not!

    Director: - Certainly, that was only a child’s game. It is normal for children at that age to play such games and to explore...

    The Director then instructs the Protagonist to think about the associations that the scene of her mother’s punishment incites. After brief reflection, the Protagonist announces, with an expression of having experienced revelation on her face, her association: a memory which then takes the psychodrama into its following scene.

**Scene 4**

    Protagonist: - This reminds me of a situation with my mother while I was still a student at university, when I informed her that I was not going to take the exam. The exam session was the last for that year. And when my mother started beating me...
The Power of Psychodrama

Director: - Can you enact that event on stage.

The Protagonist sets the scene in her room at the time on the stage. In it, there is a bed on which she is lying with her mother standing above her. Her mother tries to hit her with her fists and occasionally pulls the Protagonist’s arms which cover her body in defence from the blows.

Mother: You are going to take that exam!!

Protagonist: I won’t!!

The Director allows this scene to develop, which mainly consists of the mother’s persistent and unsuccessful attempts to realize her idea in practice through physical compulsion. The non-verbal action is realized in the pulling of the Protagonist’s arms which is very similar to the main action in the first and the second scene. At a certain point, the Director interrupts the scene and confronts the Protagonist with this repetition which has become a common denominator of all three scenes.

Director: (continuing his clarification) - In all three scenes you are in a passive role. What do you think about that?

Protagonist: - It is true... but what about it?
Director: This is a psychodrama. Everything is possible in it... Try to do something which would help you resolve this situation. You can try out an idea which you believe might work in reality...

Protagonist: (after short deliberation) - I would like to talk to my mother about this scene.

The Director issues instructions to repeat a part of the last scene. At a certain moment, the Protagonist stops being passive, with a firm stance she fights back her mother’s insistence on forceful resolution and addresses her with a resolute voice.

Protagonist: - I am not a small child anymore to be beaten like that! I know that you are fed up with my protracted studies... But I am the one who is going to decide when to take an exam and when not. I need you only as a support and let me push along on my own.

In the following role reversal and exchange of messages, her active stance and spontaneous communication win the Protagonist her mother’s support and understanding. Thus she resolves her traumatic experience and at the same time integrates a new stance and communication form. The Director initiates a new scene for resolution of the observed mechanism of traumatic repetition.
The Power of Psychodrama

**Scene 5**

Director: - Now let us return to the childhood scene and let us try and resolve that situation in a psychodramatic manner. How would you resolve it now, after you have resolved the previous scene?

Protagonist: - I would like to speak to my mother again...

*They go back to the scene from childhood and her mother’s reaction. The Protagonist is evidently freer in her communication; she looks straight in her mother’s eyes and states her messages peacefully and resolutely, with a firm voice.*

Protagonist: (after several role reversals, she addresses her final message to her mother) - It is just a game. Nothing else!

*The scene ends with a resolution and acceptance of a realistic interpretation of the situation. This enables the integration of this experience with its new, healthy meaning. The Director initiates the resolution of the remaining traumatic situation and a psychodramatic ‘closure’ of the conflict material, which was derived from this psychodrama.*
Scene 6

Director: - Let us go back to the first scene again. Let us try and resolve that as well...?

\textit{In obvious good spirits, the Protagonist immediately accepts this offer. Under the Director’s instructions, the first scene in which the Protagonist is with her boyfriend in his flat is brought back to life. A new attempt to overpower and drag the Protagonist to bed against her will is enacted, to which the Protagonist responds with static resistance which does not allow the other to realize his idea. This is followed by new attempts which also end with static resistance.}

Director: - What are you going to do now? Will you let it remain as it is?

Protagonist: - No. I want to express what I feel now and what I didn’t tell him then.

\textit{In the following attempt in which her arms are pulled, at one moment, the Protagonist stops in place very firmly not allowing her boyfriend to drag her into his bed and looks piercingly into his eyes.}

Protagonist: - Stop! I don’t want this to continue. Can’t you see that you’re hurting me! You don’t care about my feelings at all...
Director: - End this scene the way you feel you need to. Feel free to use physical power, in a psychodramatic manner, of course...

The Protagonist spontaneously takes initiative and with strong movements of liberated energy she drags her opponent from the stage. Then she removes the rest of the objects from the stage and on the empty stage she remains alone for a short period of time breathing freely and looking around herself with pleasure. When the Director signals that it is enough, the Director and the Protagonist return to the group. The stage of sharing experiences of this psychodrama is next.

Commentary:
One of the basic mechanisms that trigger ‘compulsory repetition’ of traumatic experience is the feeling of powerlessness, as well as the lack of mechanisms for ‘overpowering’ the event that caused the psychic trauma. I selected an example of sexual trauma in which the key unconscious defence mechanism which allowed full development of a traumatic situation is related to previous experiences and relationships with the parents. Having assessed the protagonist’s capacities at that moment, and on the basis of my extensive experience, I decided to reach it through the technique of sculpturing and by adoption of the non-verbal role of the combina-
tion of factors occurring within the protagonist, without further introduction into the key image of traumatization. Non-verbal communication is very often a direct route towards the discovery of unconscious defence mechanisms and the contents related to them. When the Protagonist managed to recognize and overcome the mechanism of ‘paralysis’ which kept her in the state of powerlessness, I allowed her re-enactment of the first scene to reach resolution of the traumatic content.
TRANSFERENCE IN PSYCHODRAMA

Introduction

Psychodrama is an action method of group psychotherapy. It can strongly induce and develop various phenomena of what is called a ‘group process’ among the members of the group. Transference relationships are a part of it. On the psychodrama stage, the protagonist’s ‘introjected objects’ and ‘representations of the self’ tend towards externalization, concretization and transference onto the other participants in the scene: the assistants, doubles, and the director, as well as onto the psychodramatic auxiliaries, using them as ‘transitional objects’. When working on transference, specific techniques should be used in the psychodrama, mostly based on selected role reversals which serve as therapeutic means for the director in his efforts to achieve ‘reparation’ of the internal objects and representations of the self, as well as improvement in the functioning of ‘reality testing’.

Example 1 (1993)

After the completion of a process from the previous psychodrama and the usual break, at the begin-
ning of the session one female member of the group announces that she has ‘...an idea which has resulted from the previous process...’ and that this idea emerged ‘...when the Director [me] said something concerning the protagonist...’ I check whether this could formulate a topic on which this member of the group would like to work and the group and I receive a positive answer. This is followed by an inspection of the level of readiness of the other potential protagonists to work on themselves, which results with this member of the group becoming a protagonist in the current session.

**Scene 1**

Director: *(addressing the Protagonist)* - I propose we set the scene in an identical manner to the one that occurred during the process. So, all that were present in the process should come on stage again and position themselves on their chairs in the same places in the circle as they did then. With only one exception: my place in the circle will be occupied by someone else—that is, someone you will select to ‘play’ me.

*The Protagonist selects an assistant to assume my role, that is, the role of the Director and leader of the process which took place half an hour earlier. I stand to the side of the group sitting in a circle and instruct them to re-enact the key scene from the process, the one which provoked the Protagonist so powerfully to want to work*
on it in this session. All who took an active part with their commentaries during the process reassume the same roles. The Protagonist sits in her chair and observes the action. It is evident that the communication taking place in the group has a strong impact on her in the sense that she becomes more and more tense.

Director: What do you feel at this moment?

Protagonist: I feel anger, revolt...

Director: Aimed at whom?

Protagonist: - At the Director (pronounces my name).

After this, I instruct the Protagonist to abandon her role and select someone in the group to take up the role (her). When the assistant assumes the role, I instruct the Protagonist to assume the role of her ‘anger’ and to present it to us. Having assumed the role of the anger resulting from this unconscious reaction, the Protagonist stands behind the assistant who took up her role. I give the assistant in the role of the Protagonist a signal to repeat loudly the messages of the role, and instruct the ‘anger’ to demonstrate its effects.

Anger: (addressing the message to the seated Protagonist) Don’t! Don’t react...!!
This is then followed by several role reversals which lead the Protagonist to the recognition that several months ago, she experienced a similar emotional reaction in a situation at her university. This transformed the transference relationship which started as aimed at the Director (me) into a suppressed content which is translatable into regular stage action!

**Scene 2**

In the setting of the space on the psychodrama stage in which the situation is to be enacted, a remarkable similarity, almost identicalness, with the setting of the previous scene can be observed. This was the first discovery of repetition as an indicator of transference repetition. Namely, at one end of the stage is the group of students sitting in a circle, the Protagonist among them, while at the other is the lonely professor. At one moment, of key importance for this scene and the repetition, the professor announces resolutely that students should come back again in a few days time, which students experience as an unpleasant provocation. The Director freezes the scene and asks the Protagonist to focus on her internal experience.

Protagonist: - I feel tension, anger...

The story continues with the professor’s departure leaving the students alone. The Protagonist suddenly stands up and starts organizing the group. Then
she goes to another professor, a forty-year-old female whom she experiences as ‘good’, unlike the previous ‘bad’ professor. She recounts the entire incident to her ‘good’ professor, experiencing this situation as beneficial and positive. Having detected an opportunity for deeper psychodynamics through further exploration of this ‘triangle’, the Director instructs the Protagonist to build the following scene.

**Scene 3**

Following the Director’s instructions, the Protagonist sets the scene by adding the ‘bad’ professor and ‘good’ professor to the group on two opposite sides and then joins the group. At the Director’s signal, assistants playing the professors address the group with their different messages and opinions about the same event, while the Protagonist simultaneously focuses on her internal experience of that communication. At one moment, guided by the Director, the Protagonist recognizes that behind this play of roles ‘between the one who protects and the one who rejects’ lies the basic relationship between herself and her mother and father. An association emerges concerning a recent situation which occurred in her home, similar to the one just enacted.

**Scene 4**

This situation occurs in a domestic environment where the whole family is gathered in the living room.
Father watches television, the Protagonist sits next to her mother on a nearby sofa and her sister sits on a chair far away in the space. Stage action mostly revolves around the Protagonist’s need to convince her father to let her get a job in an antique-shop while she is still studying. The father is against it, the mother is silent and, as if not there, the sister is completely neglected in the space. The main messages of this scene are:

Protagonist: (a message for her father) - I would like to talk to you about this private antique-shop!?

Father: (states his message still watching TV) - There is nothing to talk about. You won’t do that! I will give you money.

Mother: (message for the Protagonist) - Don’t oppose him. You know that he will start yelling. You should resign yourself...

Sister: (internal speech) - As if I don’t exist for them at this moment. They talk to each other and I just keep staying out of it. It is a common course of events...

During the events that follow, the Director guides the interactions on stage through the main messages so that they can fully develop, which provokes ever-stronger reactions of powerlessness and anger in the Protagonist. Scene ends with the Protagonist intently
The Power of Psychodrama

staring at her mother demanding help from her in support of her plea with her father. Mother remains silent. Following the discovery of the Protagonist’s ‘essential experience’ in relation to this scene, the psychodrama continues into the next scene which conveys the same ‘triangle’ relationship, as well as the unconscious fixations which transfer onto particular situations in her life involving her relationship with authority and her emotional reactions to those relationships.

Scene 5

This is a childhood scene. The Protagonist is in the back of the car with her sister, her mother and father are in the front. The Protagonist persistently demands something from her father and expects support from her mother, who remains silent. Sister is also silent in this scene, as she was in the previous. The scene ends with her mother’s message addressed to the Protagonist.

Mother: - Why are you getting angry when you know that you will have to obey your father. Don’t oppose him!

The essential experience of this scene is similar to the previous, amplified to utmost proportions. This puts the Protagonist in touch with an old memory from her early childhood, at the start of her schooling.
Scene 6

This is a scene in which the Protagonist strongly opposes the teacher and his instructions. The scene ends with the teacher slapping the little girl on the face and provoking a state of anger in her which she suppresses at that moment and later adds onto it a state of powerlessness to fight back. This reinforces the ‘fixation’, previously produced by the ‘Oedipal triangle’ in the family, which later in life ‘transfers’ unconsciously onto all relationships with authority. The Director also detects defence mechanisms of suppression, evasion and projection, which he introduces in the following scene in a psychodramatic manner in order to eliminate them and release the ‘conserved’ energy and transmit it into a more spontaneous flow.

In the scenes that follow, the Director first allows satisfaction of the Protagonist’s internal ‘act hunger’; that is, the release of a flow of suppressed anger and elimination of the mechanisms of evasion. Psychodrama is always powerful in such situations and allows for realization of such aims through creative and safe stage actions.

Scene 7

After the recognition and insight into the unconscious dynamics of this transference, the Director instructs the Protagonist to encounter her mother and resolve the mechanism of ‘anaclisis’ which has also trans-
ferred throughout the Protagonist’s life onto female authorities with demands for understanding, support and permission from them.

**Scene 8**

In this final scene, the Director creates for the Protagonist a situation of ‘surplus reality’ for an encounter with her father and an attempt for resolution of the relationship of ‘repetition’. The Protagonist manages to reach a certain level of spontaneity to start establishing a different relationship through reversal of roles with her father during which she gets his support.

As a result, this psychodrama, which started with a transference relationship with the Director, was successfully translated through specific psychodramatic techniques into stage contents, accessible for further deeper treatment through the usual techniques of role-playing.

**Commentary:**

I would like to stress for the reader that, at the beginning of the first scene, a very specific technique was applied, in which the transference onto the Director is translated into regular psychodramatic action. This technique I am proud to refer to as my own innovation, which I introduced into psychodrama in the early 1990s at a certain moment of spontaneity, working as a director on the treatment of a transference re-
relationship which at that point was strongly directed at me. By doing so, I have confirmed in this psychodrama the power of psychodrama techniques in the process of detecting and treatment of transference contents which are usually the most difficult for working through in all other psychotherapeutic techniques except for psychoanalysis. This deep psychological work requires good theoretical and practical knowledge of psychoanalytic psychotherapy on the part of the director.

Example 2 (1997)
This example originates from the demonstrative workshop I held at the Balkan Psychodrama Conference in Ohrid, Macedonia, in 1997, which I attended in the capacity of the President of the Organizational Committee. Its title was “Working on Transference in Psychodrama”.

Warm-up
This warm-up was a continuation of the group process which had developed in the previous TA workshop at the conference. In it, the group underwent a ‘discounting interaction’ in which the members of the group assumed the roles of ‘discounters’ and addressed messages of this type to each other.

At the onset of the psychodrama session, the director focuses the members of the group on sharing
experiences incited by the previous workshop. After a short sharing, the director instructs the members of the group to assume the same roles which they had in the previous workshop and play them by stating their message to their neighbour on one side after they have heard the message from their neighbour on the other side in the circle. After the end of the first round, the director instructs them to re-enact the same messages in the second round, but this time with ‘amplification’ through body language and intonation when stating their messages. In addition to this, he also instructs the members of the group to use their real-life experience of people who remind them of the roles which they have chosen when stating their messages. In the following ten minutes, the group undergoes a lively play of roles with released spontaneity in their enactment. In the short sharing which followed, members of the group share their predominant feelings provoked by this warm up. Several potential protagonists emerge and the group selects those most ready for a short work on stage.

**Enactment**

The first scene begins with a physical sensation overcoming the protagonist, which is basically a pressure she feels in her chest. Applying focusing psychodrama techniques, the director amplifies her internal experience, which results in the release of a great emotional charge. The director then instructs the protago-
nist to place these emotions in an adequate space and time and in their adequate balance.

In the second scene, the protagonist’s sister appears on stage which translates the previous unconscious transference onto the intonation and behaviour of the member of the group during the group experiment into a real relationship wherefrom the transference originates. A ‘prototype’ relationship between two sisters is constructed and explored on the stage.

The psychodrama is then enacted in several scenes, in which the protagonist struggles with powerful, physically ‘incorporated’ feelings in order to establish a new stance and style of communication with her sister. She also goes through ‘corrective emotional experiences’. Throughout the entire process, the protagonist, guided by the director, confronts the recognition of her own ‘transference’ of such contents onto others in her life.

In the last scene of ‘surplus reality’ the protagonist manages to ‘repair’ the prototype relationship with her sister. This incites a release of the physical block and suppressed aggressive feelings and establishment of more spontaneous communication and more creative behaviour.

**Sharing**

In this stage, the other members of the group, inspired by the protagonist’s work on stage, share similar experiences with important persons in their lives.
PSYCHODRAMA AND CHARACTER ARMOUR

Introduction
Directors in psychodrama, as well as other psychotherapists, often overlook the resistance hidden in the person’s ‘armour’, created by a combination of defence mechanisms, psychosomatic blocks and characterised patterns of behaviour. This resistance is, of course, always unconscious and productive in its creation of roles which are then repeated by reflex, and the person gets used to them and gradually accepts them as a constitutive part of their identity. Wilhelm Reich was the first to undertake more profound research and the creation of various techniques for ‘melting’ this resistance, which often obstructs efforts towards insightful resolutions and changes in the individuals subjected to psychotherapeutic treatments. I present an example of my work on this armour, in which I employed psychodramatic techniques, having previously made psychoanalytical assessments of the contents for work.

Example
At the beginning of the second day of the seminar, the subject of which is ‘What would I change?’, the Direc-
tor invites the group to share the experiences from the first day of the seminar. He also reminds the members of the group that they can now finish their unfinished processes with the topic that they started a day earlier. After a short while, a thirty-five-year-old female member of the group announces that she hasn’t encountered anything in her life that she would need to encounter in the manner of psychodrama. When asked by the Director whether she feels ready enough to do that immediately, she gives a positive answer. The other potential protagonists accept that she should be the first to work on her content.

**Formulation of the topic**

Director: - How could we formulate a topic which you would like to explore now?

Protagonist: *(she reflects for a while with an expression of sadness on her face and speaks with a weak voice)* - Something exhausts me...

The Director checks whether this could be the topic for the Protagonist’s psychodrama and, having received a positive answer, he issues instructions for the first scene to be set.

**Scene 1**

Director: - Try to present on stage something that exhausts you.
The Power of Psychodrama

Protagonist: - As if I have five minds...?!

Director: - Build a sculpture which would help you present these ‘five minds’.

The Protagonist is thoughtful for a moment and then, with a smile on her face, leaves the stage looking for something. She soon finds what she is looking for, takes it and returns on stage with it. The Director and the members of the group realize that it is one of the sculptures/assemblages which the members of the group had the task of building in advance and bringing in for the seminar so that they could use them for warm-ups. This sculpture resembles an ikebana, consisting of various kinds of leaves and a stand to which these leaves are attached. The Protagonist first places this sculpture on her head as a crown and then starts moving, with a smile on her face, among the members of the group, occasionally bowing to certain individuals showing them her crown of ‘5 MINDS’. This sculpture was entitled by its creator ‘Horus Kupus’ (cabbage) the previous day.

Director: Could we now try to bring all those minds to life here on the stage? It is to be done by you trying to assume each of those five roles and presenting them to us by stating their main messages...

Protagonist: I’ll try...

Director: Choose which one you are going to present first.
The Protagonist assumes the role of the ‘first MIND’ and addresses the assistant who she has chosen previously to represent herself. The main message of this role is ‘Relax.’ Then, in turn, she presents all other roles in the same manner, stating their main messages in the end. The message of the second role is ‘Do not relax.’ The message of the third role is ‘You think too much.’ The message of the fourth is ‘You should do something’, and the message of the fifth role to the Protagonist is ‘Where am I?’

Director: - Select members of the group, one by one, who will assume these roles which you have just presented.

**Scene 2**

The Protagonist selects assistants from the group, one after another. The Director checks whether they have remembered their roles and main messages. He arranges with them to give them a signal at a certain moment to join in the scene speaking aloud. He then arranges them in a circle around the Protagonist, whom in the meantime he has instructed to close her eyes and stay in her place. Soon after, the Director gives a signal to the assistants to start articulating their messages aloud, addressing them to the Protagonist and increasing their loudness as they move closer and closer to her. The Protagonist very soon after covers her ears with her hands look-
ing down at the floor. After a while she raises her arms in the air demonstratively and turns towards the Director with a powerless expression on her face.

Protagonist: - Enough!! I can’t listen to you anymore!

*She wants to escape. She breaks through the ring around her and for a short while hides behind the message ‘Where am I?’. However, at the Director’s signal, the other roles quickly surround the Protagonist again and continue addressing her loudly and directly. The Protagonist spontaneously turns to the role ‘You think too much’ and starts a conversation.*

Director: - Reverse roles!

*The Protagonist reverses roles with the assistant and continues developing that role in communication with the role of the protagonist which was previously assumed by the assistant.*

Director: - What does this role remind you of?

Protagonist: - Of my parents...

Director: I have an idea... Would you like to meet your parents now, here on stage? At this age, as old as you are now?
Zvonko Dzokic

Protagonist: *(after short deliberation)* Yes.

Director: - Then abandon first this role. Next, set the scene with your parents in a way in which it will impart a typical, prototypical relationship between you in the present.

**Scene 3**

*The Protagonist positions the sofa at one end of the stage. She places her father on it in a horizontal position, watching television. At the other end of the stage she positions her mother standing, working over the cooker in the kitchen.*

Director: - Now assume the role of your father and present him to us.

*The Protagonist assumes the role of the father, presents him and makes comments about the scene that follows from the role of her father. The Director then instructs the father to announce his main messages aloud, which messages are covertly addressed to the protagonist in this scene.*

Father: *(stating three main messages of that role)* Why have you moved so far away, over there, so that I can’t see you!? You never listen to me. You’re stubborn... You should have graduated from Law School
and kept music as your hobby (*The Protagonist actively plays a woodwind instrument alongside her office job*)...

*After this, the Director instructs the Protagonist to abandon the role of the father and assume the role of the mother, to present it and then ‘extract’ from that role the main messages she brings to this scene.*

Mother: - You’re stubborn... Relax! You just keep rushing around... Come on, have a baby!

*The Director now pulls the Protagonist out of the role of her mother and brings her back into her own role. He instructs her to select assistants from the group who would be suitable for the roles of the father and mother. Agreeing to play the roles, assistants come up on stage and assume their roles. The Director then instructs the Protagonist to take her position in the space and the physical stance which reflects the relations established on stage. This done, the Director gives a signal to the assistants to voice their messages on stage and to address them to the Protagonist. He also indicates to Horus Kupus to start sending his messages to the Protagonist aloud in the same manner as in the previous scene. The Protagonist, listening to the messages on stage, starts swaying her body and pacing the stage, evidently upset.*

Director: - Who would you like to talk to first?
Zvonko Dzokic

Protagonist: - To my father... *(she turns to the father)* You don’t understand me! None of my boyfriends was ever good enough for you, to become my husband...

Father: - What am I to understand when you’re stubborn?! You never listen to me and then you make mistakes.

Protagonist: - I want your blessing for my music playing and for my choice of husband.

Father: - I am just afraid that you will repeat my mistakes in your choice. Because I am not sure that I made the best choice moving all the time.

Protagonist: - You talk to me about this for the first time? I feel connected to you through unrest. I will continue playing music...

Father: - I wasn’t aware that I was questioning myself, and I wasn’t sure about my decisions. My insecurity derives from there, but that’s my problem. It is because I liked music that I enrolled you in the music school. As far as your choice of a partner is concerned, if he makes you happy, I will be content. Don’t suffer...

Protagonist: - Thank you.

*The Protagonist approaches her father and hugs him. This embrace lasts long enough, as long as it is*
necessary for the Protagonist to ‘inhale’ this new relationship with her father. Then she retreats and turns towards the Director expectantly. The Director instructs her to continue with her encounter with her mother, to tell her what she feels she needs to tell her at that moment. Immediately after, he issues instructions to the assistant to repeat the main messages of the role of the mother.

Protagonist: *(stands before her mother looking straight in her eyes and listening to her messages)* How can I relax? Look at yourself?!

Mother: - Don’t make the same mistakes as I did. You should relax...

Protagonist: - How can I relax when all my life I watch what you’ve been doing? Thinking that I have to do the same...

Mother: - Don’t say that. I have two children. When are you going to have children of your own? What are you waiting for?

Protagonist: *(with her arms crossed across her chest)* - I am afraid that when I have a baby I will be trapped in the house and that I will do what you are doing. You two are trapped in this space all the time. That’s why I left home...

Mother: - Looking after children is a responsible thing and I had to do it that way. It is not easy to raise
a child; it involves denying yourself many things in life. All my life I was tied to you, trapped. But, it was to be so! Now, the times are different. Much more liberated... I will help you. At least I could leave the house... Relax!

Protagonist: (approaches her mother) I am sorry you’ve had such a life. (She hugs her)

*The Protagonist stays in her mother’s embrace long enough, exchanging physical messages with her until they reach a new equilibrium. Then she slowly detaches herself and turns towards the Director.*

Director: - If you have finished with your parents, clear up the stage and let us meet Horus Kupus again!?

*The Protagonist leads the assistants who played the roles of her parents off the stage and back into the group. She then clears up the auxiliary objects off the stage leaving it empty with only the Protagonist and the Director on it.*

**Scene 4**

*The Director instructs the assistants, previously selected for the roles in the second scene, to come up on stage and assume their positions. He instructs the Protagonist to decide with which role she would like to*
continue her conversation and resolve her relationship. The Protagonist selects the role ‘You should do something’ as the first she will meet on stage. The Director then issues instructions to the assistant to start with the messages of his role. Then he issues instructions for a reversal of roles.

Role Y. S. D. S.: - It all depends on you (this is followed by a multiple reversal of roles)

Protagonist: - It does not depend on me...

Role Y. S. D. S.: Do something, finally. But don’t avoid conflict situations. Do what you should in your own way, without conflicts. Be more resolute and get more involved with things, especially with decision-making and concrete activities in your music ensemble.

After this ‘final message’ received from this role (one of her own MINDS from the first scene), the Director instructs the Protagonist to continue with encounters with the other roles in order to receive their final messages. The encounter with the role ‘Relax.’ is next.

Role R.: - Enjoy yourself!

Protagonist: - Remind me nicely to do so when I forget how to relax.
Role R.: - I will.

Having completed her integration with this role, the Protagonist chooses the role - MIND ‘You think too much’ for her next encounter and announces her final message to this role.

Protagonist: - I need you only for some things, not all.

This is followed by an encounter with the role ‘Don’t relax’.

Role D.R.: - Don’t mix me up with your father. Use me when you need to be focused on important business.

After this final message, the Protagonist turns to her last role ‘Where am I?’.

Protagonist: - We have resolved many things so far.

Role W. A. I.: - From now on it would be easier for us to solve the problems you’ve got. I am with you.

Protagonist: - Thank you! (She hugs the role)

The Director checks the Protagonist’s present needs for further work. The Protagonist announces that
she has satisfied the needs she had at the beginning of her psychodrama, and that she has worked enough for the day. The Director leaves the Protagonist some time to complete her integration of the new experiences and then he leads her off the stage and directs her together with him towards the group. When all have sat down in a circle, the group starts sharing their separate experiences instigated by this psychodrama.

**Commentary:**

*Firstly, I detected that the state of exhaustion was a result of the impact of the character armour on the protagonist’s person. Then I helped her discover and concretize the roles which are involved in this constellation of unconscious forces. Through the techniques of role playing and role reversal, the protagonist started revealing the background of certain segments of the armour and establishing different relationships with important persons as a result of these revelations, achieving new internal integration. The release of a certain level of spontaneity and creativity eventually determined the point of conclusion of this psychodrama.*
Introduction

The treatment of psychosomatic disorders is always very specific. Therapists who take upon themselves the responsibility of treating such disorders must be aware that they are undertaking the resolution of such constellations of forces which assist psychosomatic disorders and originate from several dimensions and depots hidden in the human organism. Therefore they should expect conflicting contents to be intertwined with a multitude of defence and control mechanisms as well as resistances which human mental and physiological systems simultaneously create within the person. Any incautious and inept therapeutic action can trigger an avalanche of unbalanced psychosomatic reactions which carry the risk of further psychological, functional and tissue damage. Experiences in psychiatry to date clearly demonstrate that at one end of the psychopathological spectrum are these psychosomatic disorders, while at the other are psychotic derangements, with the latent possibility of unexpected transformations of the one into
the other. Experiences from psychotherapeutic practice, on the other hand, demonstrate that an unprepared ‘revelation’ of hidden emotions can lead to a sudden aggravation of the psychosomatic disorder.

In general, psychosomatic disorders should be observed as one of the outcomes of a deeper suppression of emotions which the person experiences as ‘forbidden’ and which then grasp their organs, together with the resistances which accompany them. Thus they concurrently exist as a suppressed ‘conflicting memory’ of traumatic experiences and relationships with others, concomitant with the character armour. On the other hand, if this ‘physical block’, with trapped and unresolved negative energies endures for a long time it can carry the risk of damage to the organs which are in the zone of the block or are functionally related to it.

The role of psychodrama is useful in ‘unblocking’ and ‘externalizing’ the grasp over the body by these suppressed conflicting contents through the application of certain psychodramatic techniques, always combined with other methods of psychotherapy. Psychodrama helps translate the contents which exist as ‘organ tension’ into stage interactions with ‘important others’ and situations from the protagonist’s life with whom and in which the conflicting contents were created in the first place. Through this, the ‘speech of the organs’ is concretized and externalized in psychodramatic enactment, releasing the organism from the grasp that blocks it.
Example

I presented this example as a specialist paper at the Second World Congress of Psychodrama in Jerusalem, Israel, in 1996. It was the result of years of research and practical psychotherapeutic experience in treating psychosomatic disorders. This was my seventh case of treating thyrotoxicosis among other psychosomatic disorders in my practice.

A twenty-three year old girl joins the psychodrama group following a proposal by her friend who has attended group sessions for a while. She immediately presents her problems in various areas. She says that in the last four years she has been withdrawn in her social life and unmotivated in relationships, that she has stopped her studies and that she has been completely inhibited in her professional work, with no plans for the future. She has also been suffering from thyrotoxicosis which is very difficult to control.

She spends the first year in the psychodrama group lacking motivation, with frequent absences and a minimum of sharing with the others of the group. Verbal inhibition, emotional restraint and rigid, tense non-verbal expression are prevalent in her communication. Constant ‘lack of energy’ is evident in the will-power area. After several vignettes and shorter psychodramas in which the contents were explored mostly
through non-verbal communication, some conflict relationships in the social nucleus—her immediate family—have become discernible. This is followed by an unannounced absence of several months from the psychodrama group, which was a sign that the first major unconscious resistances have emerged.

She reappears one day in my office for private practice, asking to work on herself through individual psychotherapy. After the first interview, some trial interpretations and the necessary information about certain specificities of the therapeutic program, for the following several months she undergoes a procedure of psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapy, with a frequency of one visit a week.

In the first stage, her individual psychoanalytical psychotherapy consists mainly of analysis of her defence ‘armour’ which manifests its exterior through non-verbal expressions in her bearing and behaviour. This often results in ‘acting out’: that is, enactments off the tangent of the analytical course, followed by returns to the main course and continuation of analysis. In the second stage, her unconscious resistance, apart from through her bodily armour, starts manifesting itself through transference reactions. After a focused analysis of these contents and the defence-mechanisms related to them, we manage to open the doors towards recognition of her unresolved relationship with her father, accompanied with a profound fear of her own uncontrolled aggression and destructive phantasms. Sup-
pressed aggression in combination with a feeling of guilt and the bodily armour are, as we have stated before, always in the heart of psychosomatic disorders. In such combinations, aggression always turns to the host’s organism—that is, becomes auto-destructive.

I realize that the time has come to suggest that we should analyze these contents employing the powerful techniques of psychodrama. I suggest that she rejoin the psychodrama group where, through the techniques of role playing, surplus reality, auxiliary egos and role reversal, we could safely ‘bring to life’ and enact until resolution her suppressed conflict situations. She accepts and we agree that she will work on herself in psychodrama only when she is ready for it and feels secure that her psychodrama will progress gradually and with no pressures.

In the first several sessions she does not put herself forward as a potential protagonist but becomes increasingly active in the warm-ups, as an assistant in other people’s psychodramas and in the sharing after the enactments.

Eventually, she appears one day informing the group that she would like to work on herself but that she ‘doesn’t know on what exactly’. Her unrest is experienced by the other members of the group as readiness to work and she, all tense, goes on stage. To my question, in the capacity of the director of the psychodrama, as to how she feels at the moment, she responds that she feels extremely tense and ‘as if in a
Zvonko Dzokic

cage’. This is followed by my instructions to explore that content. In a very short while, her father appears on stage in a domestic environment, while the protagonist manifests very intensely all previously observed phenomena of armour, inhibition in communication and rising unpleasant tenseness. I let this internal tension develop to extreme but still controllable proportions and then I guide the protagonist to assume this role and explore it better. Thus we reach her suppressed anger, which on the stage, with my permission, becomes more and more ‘animated’. I guide this role to the point of catharsis which is necessary for the protagonist’s temporary release from its overpowering influence which, for many years previously, has ended with physical and verbal blockage. This also resolves the illusion about her great internal destructiveness, which has to be controlled at all times, in reality based on her unconscious fear of the phantasms of destruction.

Now, applying the technique of surplus reality, she can enact the encounter with her father on stage, during which the protagonist, released from her fear of destructiveness, is prepared to state her feelings and attitudes directly, which she wasn’t able to express before. This also involves an encounter with her unconscious feeling of guilt, suppressed and related to various elements of her armour and her network of internal inhibitions. She also comes to an important recognition that her physical block is most intense on her neck, which has had an evident swelling in the region
of the thyroid gland for years, as an obstacle to speech and free verbal expression. Namely, that this also is a kind of symbolic concretization of the ‘cage’ imposed on her own body. After role reversals and further enactments on stage, psychodrama leads very safely towards resolution of this—for the protagonist, most important—relationship, in the origins of her current conflict. Some trans-generational contents are also exchanged as secondary triggers of powerful internal blockages. The final messages in this scene, in addition to improving her present relationship with her father and opening opportunities for further encounters and analysis, simultaneously lead the protagonist to resolution of other important relationships in the family.

At the end of the psychodrama, the protagonist is spontaneously manifesting freedom in her speech and verbal action. For the first time in several years, she starts planning her future and manifests signs of having freed up her creative energy. Thus, this psychodrama achieves its planned aim.

The following day, after this session, the girl calls to inform me with excitement that the swelling on her neck has disappeared overnight. It does not return in the following months, during which the clinical history of thyrotoxicosis indicates normalization of all medical parameters. The results of her regular check ups in the next two years are the same. Emotionally and behaviourally she recovers and stabilizes quickly, both in her private and professional relationships. In the lat-
ter, this former protagonist proves very successful. Her psychotherapeutic process continues after the psychodrama described before with further analysis of contents, ending with several individual analytical sessions.

Now, more than ten years later, we can be assured that psychodrama, in combination with other psychotherapeutic techniques, has proved exceptionally successful and powerful in a specific stage of the treatment of this complicated psychosomatic disorder.
THE USE OF PSYCHODRAMA WITH CHILDREN

Introduction
Psychodrama can be used as an exceptionally powerful psychotherapeutic method in the psychotherapy of children, especially in treating neurotic disorders. Indeed, psychodrama was born out of Moreno’s fascination with children’s play and his realisation of the spontaneity and creativity released in such play. The ability of children to ‘get into’ their roles so completely when playing them in their fantasies or in their behaviour can serve simultaneously as a possible basis for either creating or resolving neurotic disorders.

In the course of my long experience of psychotherapeutic practice I have encountered numerous neurotic and other disorders in children and the need to combine different psychiatric approaches in their treatment. I have very often combined, besides classic psychiatric and psychoanalytic therapeutic models, an art-therapy approach with the use of psychodramatic ‘interventions’. This combined model has yielded successful results in resolving certain neurotic behaviors caused
by unconscious conflicts or traumatic experiences. In other situations, when performing individual treatment, I have combined psychodrama with techniques of ‘guided fantasies’, while in certain cases I have thought it necessary to apply a co-therapeutic approach involving ‘two therapists with one patient’. In the latter approach I have often created scenarios which, after the first interview and several sessions at the beginning of the therapy, were put into practice by my psychotherapist colleagues and assistants under constant supervision at our Centre for Human Relations. This has proved highly successful in cases previously selected as appropriate for such an approach.

For the purpose of this book, which is designed to be a sound basic textbook combined with certain practical experiences, I have chosen two comparatively simple cases to present.

**Example 1 (1997)**

Having previously made an appointment by phone, a mother and her seven-year-old son came for their first interview. From the facts the mother told me, the child’s disorders were characterized primarily by inexplicable inner restlessness, attacks of fear and panic, changes in behaviour such as withdrawal and avoidance, nightmares and stuttering followed by muscle-spasms in the chest. These symptoms had appeared several months before without any obvious reason or possible explanation, either for the parents or the boy. The mother said
that she could not recall any traumatic situations that her boy might have previously experienced.

The facts the boy related were bleak and unspecific. The greatest discomforts for him were the feeling of fear that lingered over him and his stuttering, especially in front of teachers and friends and in situations when he had to perform a task. At nights he would wake suddenly from the deepest sleep, overwhelmed with fear, and get up to check if everything was all right in the apartment. He did not have any idea why the symptoms had begun, saying that everything was fine at home and in school.

**First Session**

Having noticed the child’s modest capacities of verbal expression and free association, and on the basis of my former experiences in work with children, I concentrated all my attention on his nonverbal expression and possible expression and externalization of ‘bodily’ (somatic) memories. Focus was directed on the constant sensation of ‘chest tension’ and ‘loss of breath’, which had appeared suddenly and had lasted for some time together with a feeling of strong fear. Additional focus was placed on the throat tension and stuttering which had emerged suddenly and had often been repeated over the previous several months.

I gave the boy several sheets of paper and told him to draw the ‘images’ he had in his head as they
Zvonko Dzokic

came and caused tension in his throat and chest and difficulty in breathing. After a little consideration, the boy started drawing fast and, to his mother surprise, handed me a drawing in which a child was standing in a child’s hospital bed with railings, gazing at a smear on the floor near the bed.

In the following part of the session we discussed the drawing and worked out the contents that emerged from the process. Firstly, it turned out that the drawing depicted an experience that he had had when he was four years old. Following a tonsil operation, he was moved to a room with the little bed in the picture. The boy explained that in one moment he felt his mouth full of blood, which forced him to spit, and that spit was shown in his drawing as a bloody smear near the bed. At that moment a nurse came in and rebuked him...

I decided to start the processing of this traumatic event from the gaze in the drawing, which seemed to me the strongest nonverbal expression. I asked the boy ‘to get into the role of the eyes’ and to gaze again at that smear and, after identifying with the role, to tell me ‘what the eyes were seeing’. Having identified with the role, the boy said that the smear was getting bigger and bigger in his view, soon filling it completely. I asked him to draw what was appearing in his eyes at that moment. He made another drawing rapidly: this time of a huge irregular smear covering the whole sheet of paper, followed by the boy’s expression of disgust. I gave him the instruction ‘to get into the role of the eyes’
again and observe the smear. The expression on the boy’s face started changing spasmodically into the frightened expression followed by difficulties in breathing and throat tension. At an crucial moment, I gave him the instruction to say what he was experiencing through one of the psychodramatic techniques called ‘soliloquy’. Under the impression of reliving the traumatic situation, the boy said that he felt indescribable fear. With my help he connected the fear with the idea of ‘draining something enormous out of him... and that he would disappear...!?’ and that, after it had drained out of his throat, ‘...he would suffocate...!’.

Thus the traumatic experience, combined with the art-therapeutic approach and psychodramatic techniques, was ‘decoded’ and translated from bodily memory into contents available for further psychotherapeutic treatment. It was then followed by treatment and working through the mental contents connected to the traumatic experience with a new creative combination of psychodrama and art-therapy. This resulted in huge emotional relief and the disappearance of the throat tension.

At the end of the session the boy was asked to bring new drawings to the next session, drawings depicting everything that came to his mind connected with fear and chest tension whenever these happened, whether during the day or in his sleep. His mother was an astonished and mute observer of the whole therapeutic process. I asked her to leave the boy alone with
me in my office and wait for him in the waiting-room during the subsequent session, provided that the boy would place his trust in me.

**Second Session**

After several days, the mother and the boy came on time for the session. They were both content and in a good mood. The boy carried under his arm a drawing block and gave me a significant look when he came into my office. His mother stayed in the waiting-room...

When the session began, the boy took a drawing out of the block and put it down proudly on my desk. I took the drawing and asked him to come and sit next to me and comment on what he had drawn. I glanced at the main details in the drawing: a bed on one side of the drawing, a red-hot fire in the middle, and a child and a door on the other side. I noticed that he had drawn the child with his face turned towards the fire...

The boy started explaining that it was a scene that had happened in his room a few months earlier (!?). He had not been able to sleep peacefully since then because he was haunted by fear and nightmares. I asked him to comment on his drawing and on anything that came to his mind, slowly and in detail. I explained to him that it would lead us to the possibility of finding a way to free him from his fears, chest tension and stuttering as much as the situation depicted in this drawing had contributed to it. I also asked him to iden-
tify, as he was explaining and commenting on the drawing, any parts of the story that affected him at that moment with a strong feeling of anxiety.

The boy started to describe fluently and in detail the event that had happened in reality a few months ago. Namely, he had been left alone in a room and had started playing with matches. Suddenly, several matches lit up at once and he dropped them on the carpet in fear. He went towards the door of the room in panic, opened the door and then turned around and saw the fire bursting out in big flames. He stopped, completely numb and breathless (!!), unable to move either forward or backward... He thus remained ‘frozen’ at the door until suddenly his parents burst into the room and put out the fire. His parents did not scold him after that and soon, as it seemed, everybody forgot what had happened. The only thing that remained was a traumatic experience ‘somatised’ in my little patient, followed by occasional unexpected panic fears and nightmares that disturbed his balanced mental functioning.

After we had revealed ‘the content’, we started revealing and working out ‘the process’ that remained as a consequence of having experienced that scene. I asked him to get into the role of ‘the frozen look’ in the drawing again and tell me what went on inside him in that role. The boy began to feel enormous fear very soon: his body stiffened, he stopped breathing... At that moment I asked him what was going on in his head and he replied that he had stopped at the door and felt
completely unable to move (!!), to get out, and that he would stay paralysed in the room and would suffocate (!?). I took him out of his role of ‘the eyes’ and in the next few minutes I talked to him in order to connect the experiences caused by this event with the inexplicable symptoms that he had developed over the preceding few months.

After a short break, the final working out of the situation followed until it was resolved with the application of psychodramatic interventions. Firstly, I explained to my little protagonist what we were going to do in the next twenty minutes, which was his ‘warm-up’ for the enactment of the scene, and the purpose of that the whole process. The boy gladly accepted the offer to ‘play’ the scene at the door again. We had agreed that the room in my office would be rearranged in order to represent his room in the drawing so that the door would be in the same position as it had been ‘then’, while the fire from the drawing would come to life by the moves of my hands and its burning would be accompanied with certain sounds that my voice would produce. We had agreed that he would be in contact with me during the enactment and that we would, if necessary, ‘change the play’ at my suggestion. At the end of the warm-up we agreed that I would give a signal for the beginning and end of the enactment.

I placed him at the door in the position he had previously shown me and gave him a signal for the scene action to begin. After a moment, the boy was frozen
with fear as he had been in reality, a possibility we had foreseen before beginning. I thus ‘took him out of the role’ and gave him the instruction to find something in my room that could ‘be him’ and to repeat the same situation—only this time he would be watching it from the side. The boy chose a coffee-table with his coat to be him and started observing the repeated situation from the side. At a certain moment I gave him the instruction to do what he thought appropriate and to help the little boy who was in trouble, completely helpless in the situation that was going on in front of him. Very shortly after the re-enactment of the situation, the boy determinedly stepped into the scene and started explaining to ‘him’ that he needn’t be frightened and that he could freely get out of the room and call his parents to put out the fire. Then the boy took ‘him’ and led him out of the room, showing him how to do that. Having finished this scene, the little protagonist shared with me his feeling of happiness and joy for what he had done, as well as his feeling of freedom.

Having noticed the release of such spontaneity, I led him towards the final working out of the traumatic situation. I gave him the instruction to repeat the situation once again and to get into the role of ‘himself’ and to do what in the previous scene he had shown should be done. The boy took his position at the door, I gave him a signal and the scene was repeated. At a certain moment, instead of being frozen with fear and without breath, the boy turned around quickly and went
out of the room freely. After that I offered to repeat the situation as many times as he needed, until he felt completely free. The boy repeated the situation once again and at the beginning of the second repetition he stopped the scene action saying confidently that he was ‘cured’. He agreed with my remark that we should observe the symptoms for the following few days and that the main sign of success would be if they decreased or disappeared.

At the end of this second session, I gave the boy a task to draw his room in his drawing block the way it should look now according to the feeling he had had at that moment after the enactment. He sat down and quickly made a drawing in which he was lying in his bed. His comment was: ‘Now I can sleep peacefully.’ I suggested he take the drawing home and put it under his pillow for the next several days until our next session as a reminder before he went to sleep.

**Third Session**

The mother and her son came with smiles on their faces as if in a film with a happy ending. Each of them told me that the boy was ‘great’ and did not have any problems. There were no panic attacks, nightmares or stuttering, while his bodily posture had changed in the sense that he was now breathing freely with a relaxed chest and no longer suffering moments in which he was left ‘without breath’, especially in front of authority-figures. I used this session to ‘support the con-
firmation of the new state,’ agreeing at the end that they should call me if the symptoms ever returned.

The mother called after a month to say that her son was great and was making progress in school and sports, and to express her gratitude. Thanks to psychodrama as the greatest part of the psychotherapeutic treatment, the boy has been successfully cured and is without any symptoms to this day (10 years later).

Example 2 (2004)

A mother brought an eight-year-old boy to my office for his first interview. She said that she could not remember how many years it had been since her child had had a fear of buttons. She explained that if a button was somewhere close to him, he would go red in the face and start suffocating, developing explosive tension, panic, and an impulsive need to run from that place, no matter how or where to. He would refuse to let his parents wear shirts or other clothing with buttons at home or in front of him, especially at the table when he was eating. In the latter case, immediately after the beginning of the meal, he would vomit his food on the table and refuse to eat until a button was removed from his view.

At the beginning, the boy did not give detailed or specific answers to my questions. He repeated several times that whenever he saw a button his neck would automatically stiffen, he would lose breath and soon his stomach would send the food right back through
his mouth. My further questions were focused on his body language and more specific areas. I asked him to try to remember anything that reminded him of the tension in his throat and suffocation or whatever came to his mind connected with that and to tell me freely about it or to draw it on the sheet of paper in front of him. The boy started thinking and we spent the next few minutes in silence while he was thinking over the sheet of paper. During that time, his mother began showing signs of nervousness and whispered to me that they all lived ‘in special conditions’, with the immediate and extended family all together in one house. Then she remembered what her mother-in-law had said six years ago about something that had happened when the grandmother tried to comb her two-year-old grandson as they were preparing for the family wedding.

Upset by this, the boy stirred and gave me a significant look. To my question as to whether he remembered what exactly had happened, he nodded in confirmation and immediately began retelling the event as he remembered it. His story was that when his grandmother was trying to put a bow-tie around his neck, she had pressed him so hard that it frightened him and he had run out of the room screaming. Since then he has been afraid of buttons and does not let anyone close to him wear clothes with buttons.

The first interview was brought to an end with an additional request to the mother that she try to recall whether the boy had experienced any other traumas,
which she denied. She gave only vague and evasive replies in response to my attempts to learn more about the atmosphere at home and any impaired relations there might be in the family. This response helped determine my final plan for the therapeutic action which was to follow in the next two weeks. I explained to the mother that the child’s work on his fear would take the form of a creative workshop which would be conducted with the help of my two co-therapist assistants in psychodrama. I introduced them to each other and immediately afterwards we arranged the time for our first session.

**First Session**

Before the boy came to his first session, I had prepared a scenario that I explained to my assistants. The main goal was to ‘get into the role of buttons’ with the help of psychodramatic techniques and through exploring any potential inner contents of the child that were being ‘projected’ onto these objects. Having previously noticed the real possibility that the child might block this therapeutic plan through unconscious inner defences, I prepared my colleagues for the situation by giving them concrete instructions to recognize and to overcome the expected defence mechanisms in practice during their work. The scenario assumed a gradual course of guidance ‘from the periphery towards the centre’ with obligatory ‘warm-ups’ for every scene, role and action that would be enacted. We also arranged time for supervision after the session.
When the boy arrived, my assistants first did a short warm-up with him in the form of a simple nonverbal game and interesting role reversals. The boy liked it: he relaxed and they gained his trust. He got used to the room and he released the first dose of spontaneity for role playing. They talked freely about his fear of buttons. They agreed that he would draw several buttons on sheets of paper, one for each sheet. Soon the boy stopped drawing and showed two drawings. The first one showed one big button which the boy described as ‘... bad button... frightens children...’, while on the second was drawn a small button which he defined as ‘... good button, cannot even frighten a baby...’.

The drawings were placed on two empty chairs and then the instruction was given to reverse roles with each of them. From the role of ‘the big and bad button’ the boy gave ‘himself’ a message that he was a big boy and should not be afraid because it was only a button. For the role of himself he chose one of the assistants, while the other took the role of a director. From the role of ‘the good’ button he gave ‘himself’ a message that it could not frighten a baby and he was not a baby anymore. Role reversals resulted in the boy’s acceptance of these messages, after which he spontaneously and at his own initiative started talking about a real-life situation connected with a button which had frightened him. Namely, after he had come home from school one day, he had sat down at the table to eat a pie. Then his father had come home and the boy stopped eating (!?),
left to wash his hands and went straight up to his room. The father called him to come back to the table to finish the food, but he refused. The boy accepted the suggestion that he show us what had happened with his father in the room, i.e. to reenact the scene where he was at the present moment with the help of my assistants.

The co-therapeutic pair helped the child to set the scene and enact it together with them. This was followed by role reversals, the most important of which was a role reversal with his father in which messages were exchanged that eventually brought about complete mutual understanding and reconciliation. The last message of the father to the boy was 'I am very happy'. The first session ended with a brief sharing aimed at connecting all the findings and changes derived from the enactment during the session.

**Second Session**

The second session began with a conversation about the things that had happened in the period since the last session. The boy announced that he felt much better, that he had even tried to put on a shirt with buttons. After this, one of the assistants asked the boy if he was ready to deal with the situation from the wedding. Upon agreeing, the boy was asked whether this was a situation which he remembered or one that had stuck with him as a result of its being retold by those close to him. The boy said that he did not remember it,
but he had the situation in his head through the stories told to him by the members of his household.

It was agreed to enact together the situation from the wedding according to the ‘picture’ in the boy’s head. The situation was set up and enacted in accordance with the rules of psychodrama required for the enactment of traumatic situations. The boy was placed to one side to observe and give instructions on setting the scene, deciding on the messages and interactions between his grandmother and himself—the roles that the co-therapists played on the scene. The main action reenacted his grandmother’s putting a bow-tie on the boy and his starting to suffocate. After the enactment, as the boy had it in his head, the co-therapists stepped out of their roles and asked him how he felt and the boy said that he felt bad. ‘Now you are eight and you can help the two-year-old boy to overcome his fear if you want to’ was the next instruction he got from the co-therapeutic pair. Soon afterwards, the boy approached the role of the two-year-old boy, removed the bow-tie from his neck and placed it in an improvised drawer, telling him: ‘You shouldn’t be afraid any more, I’ll help you to overcome this.’

From that moment on, the resolving of the fear was well underway with the boy remaining in the role of ‘a grown-up boy’ for as long as he needed to, instructing the frightened two-year-old boy towards a correct understanding of and relation to his fears. Having received confirmation from the little boy through
the role reversal that he was freed from the fear of a bow-tie and suffocation, our protagonist, in the role of the grown-up boy, continued resolving other situations which frightened the little boy. Thus he returned to the situation with his father where he had run off to his room frightened without finishing his pie. The scene was enacted under his guidance and was successfully resolved with his returning from the room to the kitchen and his father without any fear and finishing the situation that had previously been interrupted due to fear. ‘I am not frightened any more!’ was the final message of the two-year-old boy to his leader and trainer, the eight-year-old boy.

In the next few minutes the two-year-old boy underwent the psychodramatic ‘rapid growth’ without fear up to his present age of eight. Thus was performed another psychodramatic operation to correct threatening emotional experiences interwoven with the past that exercise immense influence on a person’s development.

**Third Session**

Following the previous supervision and assessment of the achieved therapeutic effect, the third and final session in resolving the eight-year-old boy’s fear of buttons involved another two planned phases. The first phase of this session was to verify the real accomplishments achieved in the previous sessions.

On arriving for this session, before the child went into the office, his mother informed us that her child
was unbelievably better: he ate without any problems and did not show any signs of panic or fear when seeing buttons or people dressed in normal clothes. In the meantime, the boy had become noticeably more good-humored and spontaneous in communication with everybody in the house, including his father, and not once had he manifested any sign of unrest or tension in situations which usually provoked these symptoms.

Through drawings and other art-therapeutic interventions combined with psychodrama, the first part of the session was dedicated to checking and once again working out the reactions in scenes and situations which had previously been the cause of neurotic maneuvers in the boy. Since the direct psychodramatatic evaluation ‘in vivo’ provided successful results, the co-therapists took the boy to the next phase planned for this session, which was also the end of the focal therapy of this disorder.

The boy was introduced into scene actions through ‘rehearsals of roles’ from reality which occurred daily in his household, according to a draft-plan which had been made previously and in whose preparation the boy had also taken part. Thus, scenes of joint meals and communications with every member of his household and his family, i.e. with every ‘important person’ from his close surroundings with whom his neurotic disorder was connected, were explored, rehearsed and verified. After the successful working out of all important situations and relations in the form of ‘surplus real-
In the course of the following months, the boy’s mother telephoned us to say that everything was all right with her son and that everybody in the family was very happy with the outcome of the treatment.
**SOCIODRAMA**

**Introduction**

Sociodrama offers limitless possibilities for experienced, skilled and creative psychodramatists in their work with groups of people. For many years I have claimed publicly, as well as shared with my collaborators, clients and students, that the range of applications of sociodrama is much greater than that of a classic psychodrama. I believe that its power to improve individuals and groups is at present more needed in the human community than ever before. The example I cite belongs to the area of trans-cultural relations.

**Example**

The goal of the seminar during which this sociodrama was to be enacted was to research and apply the methods of psychodrama and sociodrama in the area of trans-cultural relations in the contemporary world. The seminar was international, attended by almost sixty participants from several countries, most of them from Serbia, England, Israel, the USA, Macedonia, Croatia and Montenegro. It took place in Belgrade at a
time when the host country and the region had just emerged from a period of mass war traumas, and at a time of their political, social and economic transition. Internationally, this was the time when the notion and the influence of the newly created construction called the ‘international community’ became increasingly important. This international community had played a significant role for the past decade in the region and had had a great impact on the events in the host country.

During this three-day long seminar, three ‘major’ morning sessions were planned with the attendance of the entire group. Afternoon sessions were anticipated for work in smaller groups with the active participation of younger trainers and subsequent supervision of their work.

I had the honour and the responsibility to be the leader of a large group on the second day of the seminar and was given freedom of choice in the method of work with the group. After long reflection, guided by assessments of the needs of such a mixed group and the possibilities of psychodrama, I decided to create a model of sociodrama which would contribute towards the elucidation of certain aspects of trans-cultural relations on the one hand, and fit in the group process of such specific group on the other.

**Warm-up**

After a short introduction, time arrangements, and arrangements concerning our joint work and cooperation, I instructed the group to start with the warm-up. It proceeded in two short sections.
In the first, participants were supposed to perform physical exercises individually, in pairs, and in small groups. These exercises included: spontaneous movement in space; movement accompanied with deep breathing; directed movement (in a straight line, zigzag, backwards, etc.); work in pairs with mutual controlled pushing, stretching, etc. The aim of these exercises was to release physical spontaneity from previously created psychomotor blocks, as well as to help the ‘abandonment’ of regular, everyday uniform roles.

In the second section of the warm-up, the group was divided into pairs. The participants were given free choice in selecting partners among themselves. They were then involved in a small workshop of ‘guiding’ in which the partners alternately reversed their roles. First, one member of the pair guided the other, whose eyes were closed, and then there was a reversal of roles, the aim of which was guidance and experiencing the role of ‘being loved’ in reverse.

At the end of the warm-up, the members of the group were given a short period of time to share some experiences, important both for the individuals and the group. After the completion of this part, I led the group into the previously announced main stage of the session, the sociodrama.

**Sociodrama**

I told the members of the group that the space they were in was divided into several sections. In those spaces they were supposed to ‘bring to life’ certain roles...
which would represent selected target groups in the contemporary world. Then I pointed at one end of the space, which was elevated and was used as a psychodrama stage in other sessions, as the position for the group which would assume the role of ‘the world media’. At the other end was the position of the group in the role of ‘children’. In between these two, in the central space, was the position of the group in the role of ‘ordinary, normal people’. The leftover space on the sides, where the chairs were, was to be occupied by the group in the role of ‘the cultural heritage’. Having checked whether the group understood my previous instructions, I continued with the scenario, instructing the members of the group to choose spontaneously and freely in which space and which group they would participate.

I waited for the members of this large group to take up their positions in their new groups so that I could issue instructions to research, for some twenty minutes within their groups, the main characteristics and importance of their role in the human community. At the same time, they were to explore and, through open communication in their groups (sharing, feedback, analysis and confirmation), come to shared conclusions about the significance of the role they were discovering, including the important parameters of the group they represented, as well as the internal rules upon which the group was based.

Within the allotted time a lively discussion developed among the members of all groups with active
participation of all present. After a couple of minutes, it was obvious that the level of readiness to ‘enter’ the sociodrama and the interest in the role playing was rising fast. When the allotted time elapsed, I checked whether the process of ‘building the group and the group role’ was complete and whether the optimum degree of group cohesion had been achieved in each group. I required that each group end this stage of preparations with an address of their main message to their environment, the target groups in this sociodrama.

This was followed by my instruction to the groups to position themselves in the space in a manner which would express their non-verbal attitude toward the other groups. It was noticeable that the members of the ‘world media’ group had adopted strict and ‘important’ expressions on their faces, accompanied with ‘snooty’ looks directed at the others in the space. The members of the ‘cultural heritage’ group spontaneously climbed on chairs in order to amplify their importance. The group of ‘ordinary normal people’ sat themselves on the chairs in the middle with a humbled physical bearing and gazing downwards at the floor, spontaneously building a group which appeared to the observer as a bunch of overburdened, confused and worried people. Almost all members of the ‘children’ group turned their bodies and looks in the direction of the group of ‘normal’ people in a position of readiness to establish contact with them. All these signs indicated the readiness of all participants in the seminar to enact the key sociodramatic action.
My announcement of the next action followed. I asked all participants and groups to prepare, at my signal, to start playing the roles they had assumed. In their enactment they were supposed to pay attention to the main messages, i.e., which messages to address to whom, and to do so spontaneously and creatively. When we had established that all participants were ready, I gave the signal to start action. Soon after, it was plainly obvious that the groups representing ‘world media’, ‘cultural heritage’ and ‘children’ turned towards the remaining group of ‘ordinary, normal people’, addressing their messages mainly to them. As time passed, these three groups addressed their messages more and more ardently to the ordinary people, who were more and more noticeably withdrawn, their stance indicative of avoidance of communication with any of the groups, their verbal expressions non-existent. This led to even more ardent attempts by the other three groups to attract their attention, and when their messages were ignored and there was no response coming from the ‘ordinary, normal people’, a majority of the members of the three groups started moving closer and closer to them, addressing their messages vociferously. Soon after, the members of the ‘children’ group took the liberty of beginning to pull the ordinary people towards themselves by their arms, legs and other parts of their bodies—sending them messages that they were indispensable for their development, that they needed their love, attention and understanding, as well as their con-
The Power of Psychodrama

stant presence. The members of the ‘cultural heritage’ group, with extremely serious voices, tried to make the ordinary people accept the fact that constant union with tradition was a necessity and that it was of utmost importance to preserve it with regular observance of important dates, events and rituals. The members of the ‘world media’ group, with a superior and monotonous voice, informed of various catastrophes, wars, murders, accidents which happened in continuity throughout the world, sending the message that people were constantly threatened by something.

At that moment, observed from a distance, it was obvious that an extremely tense atmosphere had been created among the groups, completely ‘engrossed’ in their roles. Relations were created, rife with aggressive, almost violent behaviour and with panicking attempts by the three groups to attract the attention of ordinary people, who defended themselves with utter passivity, confusion, stubbornly staying put in their places with glassy looks in their eyes which avoided contact with the surroundings. There were individual attempts at even ‘dragging’ some of their members, or at persuasion by demanding their consent with regards to certain attitudes. At that moment, my idea about the importance of such enactments of sociodrama was realized, my aim was fulfilled in the sense that the desired group-dynamics were achieved and a process was constructed which was to be further analyzed in order to gain an ultimate and significant insight into the im-
portance of the idea. I allowed the dynamics to intensify even further in the next ten minutes, intermittently reminding the members of the group to be in touch with what they experienced when playing their roles. In this last period, there occurred exceptionally spontaneous actions in the role playing, with complete identification, observable in some of the members of the groups. This indicated that we should move to the next stage of this sociodrama.

Sharing

I interrupted the stage action and asked all members of the group to abandon their roles and to return to the ‘circle’ of the bigger group. I also asked them to remember the impressions and experiences which resulted from the sociodramatic enactment so that they could share them with the other members of the bigger group. After I had them seated in a circle, I asked them to concentrate on the important aspects of their experiences and to try and recognize them in a social, group and personal context. I suggested that they start from their personal experience in the process of building their respective groups, to continue with their experiences in the enactment of their roles and to finish with their opinion about the significance of their role in relation to the other enacted roles in the previous scenes.

Since most of the participants were more than animated after the sociodramatic action, the sharing started immediately and several participants readily shared their experience. It was evident that the shar-
ing quickly resulted in some essential recognition of the relations within and between the groups in the sociodrama and their correspondence to the existing relations in the world. There ensued a quick recognition of the considerable influence which the world media, cultural heritage and the responsibility of bringing up children commanded over the group of ‘ordinary, normal people’. The group also established that an invisible game of ‘aggressors/harassers and victims’ had been at play as well as that some concealed interests of the group roles had been involved in the sociodramatic enactment. Sociodrama led to a better insight into the essence, that is, to a revelation of the real positions, interests and powers of certain target groups in the human community of today, as well as into their interconnection and interdependence. This was the main aim of this workshop: to recognize the value of psychodrama at this level.

This was followed by a more profound insight into their personal experiences as members of the groups; that is, into the way in which these experiences were related to the roles they had in their own lives and to other roles in their environment, as well as into the impact of these experiences and the interdependences they create. The group found the experience of the group of ordinary people most significant. Their common impression, which they shared with the others, was the feeling of being threatened, burdened, and subjected. They recognized the responsibility, powerlessness and the limits of absurdity which they had to
face in that role. When observed from a distance, the impact of sociodrama on the further development of the process in this ethnically and culturally diverse group became evident. It resulted mostly in tacit avoidance of the recognition of the role of one’s own ethnicity in the international community and the process of analysis of the experiences assumed a more general direction towards common human imprisonment in certain life roles, similar to those enacted in the psychodrama.

**Group process**

The division of the group which preceded the sharing also led to more concentrated attention on intra-psychological contents and to increased tension of some in certain members of the group. All this caused the process to change direction towards instigation and projection of transference contents which, in actual fact, bore the essence of the relations instigated in the sociodrama. Having observed this development of the group process, I directed its work towards selection of the potential protagonists and a final choice of the protagonist for the psychodramatic session which was to follow after a short break. In this session, as was to be expected, the group worked on relationships with authorities, starting with personal powerlessness in the realization of important life roles. Sociodrama ended its work by becoming an integral part in the personal development of all members of this international trans-cultural workshop.
THE APPLICATION OF PSYCHODRAMA AND SOCIO DRAMA IN THE TRAINING OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Introduction
Psychodrama can be a potentially very powerful tool in the area of human resources training if applied adequately and in accordance with the standards which such programs require. Having been seriously involved in trainings in this area for more than twelve years, I have often come across various different institutions, companies, teams and individuals in need of training of this type. In the same period, this region has had to endure wars, suffering, mass psychosis and transitional social processes which have demanded the creation and application of both standard and specific programs for the training of a professional and voluntary workforce.

I have acquired interesting experiences in encounters with fellow trainers who have come from various parts of the world to perform certain types of training, paid most often by international foundations interested in the breakthrough and acceptance of this approach on the territory of former Yugoslavia. In the last
few years, this has become a common practice in the development of human resources. What made us different as trainers were generally two things. The first difference was in our educational background, since was most commonly in the areas of social and technical sciences, while mine was based upon a more profound understanding of individuals and groups owing to my previous education and professional practice in the areas of medicine, general and therapeutic psychology and psychopathology, clinical neuropsychiatry, psychoanalysis, psychoanalytical psychotherapy, group dynamics, psychodrama, stress management, etc. The second and more crucial difference lay in the fact that, in the training of professionals and volunteers, I introduced the techniques of ‘role playing’ and several other important elements of psychodramatic guidance. This proved exceptionally successful, owing to the opportunities it gave for faster learning and acquiring skills in comparison to the other approaches applied in the realization of the training programs.

It would help the reader gain an initial orientation in this vast area to know that the training of human resources is divided into three general directions: training for the non-governmental sector, training for the governmental sector, and training for the business sector. All these sectors have their own specific characteristics to which the training programs are adapted. This presumes a detailed knowledge in these areas on the part of the trainers, as well as a wide range of highly
The Power of Psychodrama

developed communication skills in work with such specific groups. In accordance with the aim of this book, I have decided to offer the reader a basic insight into the possibilities of psychodrama in this area through brief examples from my own practice.

TRAINING IN THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTOR

Example 1

I chose this example both for the specific characteristics of the target group and for the uniqueness of the program which I created for it. I hope that it might be of help to a certain group of professionals in their future work and make interesting reading for the lay reader.

In the mid-1990s, while wars still raged on the territory of former Yugoslavia, I was invited by the International Red Cross, as a neuro-psychiatrist and expert in the area of stress and crisis disorders, to conceive and organize a training program for their teams. In my preliminary conversations with the head of the mission, I found out that the training was needed for two teams of doctors who worked with refugees from Bosnia, one of the teams consisting of Bosnian doctors and the other of Médecins Sans Frontières. The most important problems, as stressed by the head of the mission, were ‘...helplessness, detachment and loss of
interest...’ from which the members of this team habitually suffered after spending a certain period of time doing fieldwork. The doctors simply became non-responsive to the emotional needs of the traumatized refugees and thus unable to complete the mission to which they were committed, despite their conscious efforts. My task was to assess the problems of these teams, to create a path to their resolution and to improve these doctors’ knowledge in the areas of trauma and stress disorders and their skills in working with people suffering from such disorders.

Having conducted several additional interviews and gathered the necessary data, I reached the conclusion that their problems and needs could be grouped into three focus points. First was the insufficient knowledge of the problem area which the doctors had to treat in this case and which required additional specialist knowledge in the areas of stress and crisis and post-traumatic disorders. The second was insufficient familiarity with psychotherapeutic techniques and skills in approaches to the resolution of the needs of the target groups. The third and, at the same time, the foremost in the presumed realization of the training programs, was related to ‘burn-out’ syndrome, that is, to the insight that the doctors suffer from this burn-out syndrome in their work with severe pathology in practice. In the language of psychoanalysis, due to their insufficient knowledge and training, the members of both groups were ‘over-contained’ with contents which they
The Power of Psychodrama

had ‘introjected’ during their work with traumatized persons and which rendered them ineffectual for further work. On the basis of these conclusions, I suggested two simultaneous workshops for both groups. The first was labelled ‘healing the healers’ and was aimed at emotionally unburdening the doctors, while the second was a combination of theoretical lectures and practical work on the improvement of basic psychotherapeutic skills for helping people in crisis.

My suggestion was promptly accepted and we started with the training. Psychodrama was employed at important practical stages of the first workshop immediately after its commencement, while the second workshop started with a series of my selected lectures in the area of psychiatry and stress management. After the guided warm-ups, the doctors were steered towards acceptance of the technique of ‘sharing’, that is, communicating their main emotional experiences related to their field work. This initiated a constructive development of the group process through reciprocated openness, recognition of shared professional and emotional problems and a definition of the prototypical problematic situations from their field work. This enabled us to work on their process of ‘burning-out’ with a combination of various techniques through group work in an atmosphere of complete mutual trust.

This soon became doubly beneficial for the group. On the one hand, optimal cohesion was achieved within the group; on the other, we managed to gain
insight into the situation common to all of them which required further exploration. At that point, I improved the group work by introducing the techniques of role-playing, with situations from reality enacted on an improvised ‘stage’ on which, from scene to scene, the doctors discovered with enthusiasm the power of psychodrama as well as their personal spontaneity and creativity when building and enacting these situations. Thus enthused, they could proceed by employing the techniques of role reversal in order to explore more profoundly the more important elements of the traumatic processes suffered by the refugees they interviewed, as well as the needs they projected onto the doctors who worked with them. Simultaneously, they also explored to a greater depth their own roles in certain crucial moments in their communication, allowing them insight into their personal unconscious processes of traumatization by ‘containment’ of such contents, which were to be released in this group.

The same situations were then used for assessment of their therapeutic techniques and the need for improvement, as well as simulation models for acquiring and testing new psychotherapeutic skills, previously analyzed in theory. The doctors were fascinated to discover how quickly they had acquired new knowledge through these techniques, experiencing the process of learning as a wonderful and creative game. After several weeks of observing and improving their actual fieldwork with constant supervision and new psychodramatic
enactments, results became apparent both in their practical work and in their personal psychological balance—results which were to everyone’s satisfaction. In the space of three months, the head of the mission and I agreed that our goal had been achieved and that this project should end with a period of observation and gradual separation. It transpired that others within the international network of this organization had become aware of the success of this project. I was informed soon after the conclusion of my workshops that experts from other countries visited the participants in the workshops to gather important information and experiences that they could then apply in other environments.

**Example 2**

I hope that the following case will arouse the interest of readers with affinities towards social work, as well as that of psychodramatists who find work in this field appealing.

In the late 1990s I began a temporary but fruitful period of cooperation with the team of Caritas International through my Centre for Human Relations. One of the training projects we were supposed to conduct for this organisation was aimed at the specialization of their teams for work with elderly people. In my first interviews with their management and operative staff, the aim of which was the assessment of their needs and problems, I noticed that the common denominator to which all interviews could be reduced was ‘... old
people are dissatisfied...’ and, furthermore, that their dissatisfaction was demonstrated freely before the members of the team without any explanations as to the reason for their dissatisfaction. My further analysis found that they were more dissatisfied with the manner in which they were treated than with the quality of the material support they were getting. For this reason, I created a specific program which I called ‘How to understand the other?’ My proposal was immediately accepted by the leader of the team.

This program was centred on two main focuses. The first was to provide the volunteers with a better understanding of their target group, while the second focus was on the adoption of the basic techniques of counselling of the Rogers type. During the preparations before the start of the training program it became clear that by employing psychodramatic and sociodramatic techniques I could provide the participants in the seminar with both the most expedient and most interesting model of learning. This soon proved to be the right choice to the great satisfaction of all interested in the success of this training program.

At the start of the seminar, its participants were divided into two groups, one representing the volunteers, the other assuming the role of the elderly people. The aim of the first group was to try and understand the needs of the other group, while the aim of the second group was to discover ‘from inside’ and define their needs and expectations which were to be met by the
first group. This sociodramatic enactment allowed for their confrontation, where the disagreements in the initial perceptions of the first group became obvious. This was followed by a role reversal whereby the first group assumed the role of the second, and the second group assumed the role of the first. This manoeuvre allowed for a more complete understanding of both the general needs and a range of specific needs of the target group, which were to be recognized by the volunteers and the professionals working with them. When the enactment was complete and the attendants of the workshop abandoned their set roles, they were invited to share their experiences, which eventually resulted in clear conclusions and the adoption of practical directions for further work. This sociodrama workshop also helped the participants in the training to release their spontaneity and creativity and enabled them to continue with their work in the next stage which involved techniques of role playing.

The participants started the second part of the workshop with a warm-up in which they were given the task to consider and write down, each for themselves, a list of prototypical situations which they encountered on a regular basis in their everyday practical work with elderly people. When they had completed their lists, I asked them to show and explain their lists to the groups, one at a time. Having heard each other, they were instructed by me to work out the priority and the prototypes of the situations they had cited from their practice. To achieve
this, we applied one of the contemporary leadership techniques of group facilitation and this soon resulted in a joint list of the most common and most difficult problems in their communication with their target group. Then I instructed them to work in pairs and select a situation which, with my assistance, they would analyze before the group. At the completion of this stage, we agreed to ‘start with the action’ after a short break.

This stage started with pair work, whereby, through the use of the techniques of role playing and targeted role reversals, the unique power of psychodrama and its advantage over other approaches in the practical training of the participants in the seminar became evident. Roles were divided between the pairs in such a way that one represented the volunteer and the other the elderly person whom the volunteer met in their fieldwork. Under my instructions, they first enacted the situation from their practice as it had happened or as they expected it to happen. The next step was a joint analysis of the technique of communication, as presented by the volunteers, accompanied with attempts at assessment of the elderly person’s needs in every case and suggestions by the participants as to its optimal resolution.

This was followed by verification of the participants’ understanding: that is, whether the main goal of the seminar named ‘How to understand the other?’ had been achieved. In this case also, the choice of psychodrama as the foremost technique of the seminar was
fully justified. At the moment when I issued instructions for role reversals with the 'others', meaning the elderly persons with whom they were involved in communication, the principal dilemmas in the understanding of the problems, previously discussed at expert meetings for months in a row, were quickly resolved. In the role of the other, guided by precise questions, they managed to give their interlocutors, i.e. the partner who assumed their role, clear and direct instructions and explanations of their main needs and problems. This was followed by a group discussion in which the participants expressed their appreciation of the stage action which released their spontaneity and creativity, as well as their amazement at the ease with which they achieved the aim of this stage of the workshop.

The next and final stage was marked for 'role training', for practicing the new techniques of counselling. On the whiteboard I noted down the steps which they had to go through and the main messages for each of them which were to be used in the key moments of their work with the others. Then I asked the group to work in pairs again and allowed each pair to practice their new knowledge, applying the psychodramatic techniques of assuming roles, role playing and role reversal. While doing so, they had to follow the specific steps on the board and 'build them into the role', going through counselling on the spot, in situ, as if they were doing field work with the characters and persons which we had got to know better on the psy-
chodrama stage. At the end of the workshop, they were all under the impression that they had attained more knowledge that they had expected before it began.

This seminar proved its worth very soon as the volunteers became much more successful in their fieldwork than they had been before it. The magic of psychodrama, which the participants experienced in the course of this seminar, remained in their memory as something beautiful to share in all our future encounters.

**Example 3**

In 1999 I was invited to carry out training sessions in the Council of Europe. The subject of the training was ‘Intercultural Learning’ intended for the education of thirty-six Directors of youth centres from various European countries. In my preceding conversations with those in charge of this project within the European Youth Centre, I was informed that the target group consisted mainly of young people in whom substantial investments had been made in order to improve their knowledge and create a basis for future high quality ‘networking’. I was also advised that the majority of them attended each seminar with great expectations, actively communicating during group work, as well as that some individuals frequently asked ‘awkward questions’.

During my preparations, I decided that the core of the seminar would be aimed at the acquisition of direct experiences in this area through a combination of dramatic and psychodramatic techniques with addi-
tional brief theoretical explanations. I simply wanted to ‘thrust’ them into a practical workshop and detach them from the theorizing and philosophizing to which they had become accustomed in their previous classic and experimental workshops and to which people of their age are usually prone. In addition, people at that age and of that status are most commonly hindered by ‘narcissistic barriers’ in their understanding of the other side. And this understanding was precisely the main constituent of the ‘process’ of intercultural relations, i.e., the subject of the seminar itself.

The seminar started with several short warm-ups, both individually and in pairs, in order to release psychomotor action and achieve spontaneous interpersonal communication. Then the large group was divided into two smaller ones which were each presented with the task to ‘build an internal culture’ in the following half an hour, using the group tools I had given them. After the completion of this stage, I issued them with instructions to select a representative who would speak for them in the face-off with the other group which was to follow immediately. In a short period of time, through the application of sociodramatic and psychodramatic techniques, both groups obtained the visible features of their newly composed identity, ready to interact with the ‘environment’.

‘Negotiations’ ensued between the two groups, carried out through their representatives, concerning their values and the possibility of finding a way of ex-
changing these values with the aim of their improvement. All members of the groups quickly understood the aim of the workshop. They assumed their roles and enjoyed the enactment and the creativity arising on stage. In the discussion that followed this stage, they began ‘associating’ the sociodrama and the significance of the enacted roles with the aim of the seminar. They recognized that the ‘culture of the group’, which they had created spontaneously and concretely, represented a kind of a prototype formation of a culture of a human group, regardless of the place where it had been created or by whom.

The second part of this workshop was dedicated to the ‘play of masks’. Every member of the workshop was first given the task to make a drawing which would contain the key attributes of the culture of their own country which they usually put on view for the others. This drawing was to be coupled with another drawing on the back of the sheet of paper which would contain the major traits hidden in the ‘flipside’ of their culture. They were then invited, one at a time, on the small improvised stage, to present through role-play the mask and the flipside of the culture of their country to the other participants of the seminar. With modest assistance on my part through facilitation, all members of the seminar demonstrated exceptional spontaneity and creativity in this game, which in a very short time led the participants in the workshop to important insights into the essence of the subject of the seminar. This
practical part ended with ‘rejection of the masks’ and the members of the group achieved spontaneous communication by establishing a ‘bridge of understanding’ based upon general human values.

The seminar was concluded with a short theoretical lecture in which I used telops as visual matrices which united the experience acquired in the practical workshops into a cognitive unit. In the closing discussions, all participants expressed their unreserved enthusiasm for the techniques of role playing—the psychodramatic approach to group work.

**TRAINING IN THE BUSINESS SECTOR**

**Introduction**

The area of training in the business world is of limitless proportions and with ever-increasing demands. The part that is concerned with advancement of the workforce can be divided into two areas: professional ‘communication skills’ and ‘management of human resources’. These two fields usually overlap and when drafting a training plan for companies, interest groups and individuals, one is usually guided by assessments of their needs and consequently creates standard or non-standard (‘tailor-made’) training programs.

In my experience in this area, of twenty years to the moment of writing of this book, I have had to ad-
dress the needs of a world which operates in a totally different manner to that of psychotherapy from whence I had stepped into this world. In the world of business there is only one goal: success! And this goal is achieved ruthlessly, through battles in which the opponent is defeated, unlike psychotherapy where the ‘other’ is generally spared. This was a challenge to me as a trainer to acquire knowledge from the areas of economy and management so that I could meet the demands of the target groups and individuals successfully.

I have managed so far to complete successfully about a hundred projects in various sub-areas in this field of expert work. I have worked mostly on the design and realization of training programs in the area of psychology of communication skills, conflict management, negotiation skills, presentation skills, public performance, staff selection, team-building and team leadership, training for top managers, assessment and preparation of individuals and teams for special presentations, specific mental training, as well as engaging in combined consultative work. Whenever I have considered it necessary I have employed psychodramatic techniques in combination with other approaches, which has proved exceptionally interesting and successful in this highly responsible area of work. I feel free to claim that this is the quality that distinguished me from other trainers, as my clients and I, as well as my team on certain occasions, were able to make prompt and correct assessments followed by the efficient acquisition

272
of new knowledge by the target groups and individuals through employment of the techniques of role playing.

Contemplating my choice of examples in this area, I soon realized that my experiences to date, offering an abundance of material, open up a realistic possibility for writing a separate book on this subject. For the purpose of this book, which is dedicated to experiences which demonstrate the power of psychodrama, I will cite only certain elements of psychodramatic techniques in the corpus of human resources training.

**Example 1**

I was invited several years ago by a leading telecommunications company to offer a training program for one of their sectors, i.e., for the people working in their information centre. The company requested the design and realization of an adequate training program for their twenty call centre operators. In my interviews with the company people in charge of this task, whose aim was the ‘assessment of the needs’, I found that the main problems and needs of these professionals demand focusing on several issues. The first was their problem in communication with ‘difficult clients’, which often resulted in long and pointless conversations rife with conflict and which, instead of achieving their goal, only drained and dispirited the employees. The second issue concerned the enhancement of their basic skills in business communication. The third issue was their chronic fatigue, lack of motivation, and marginal beha-
viour in their relations with the staff working in the other sectors of the company.

A functional analysis of the gathered data led to my decision to create a training plan which involved a combination of various approaches and techniques. Its first part was anticipated to improve aspects in the sphere of modern business telephone communication. The second was aimed at learning and perfecting voice and speech techniques that would facilitate the mechanical part of their communication, generally conducted over the telephone and, due to the operators’ inadequate training, soon led to physical tiredness. The third part was dedicated to the resolution of conflict situations in their every day work with a focus on ‘conversations with difficult clients’. The fourth was anticipated for stress management and was adjusted to the target group. Within this series of training programs, I selected on expert team of five consultants/trainers, with myself as their leader. For the realization of the first and second stage of the training, I selected excellent professionals in these areas, who worked as associate consultants for my firm, while the third and the fourth stage were conducted by me in cooperation with two assistants. I proposed and explained my plan to those in charge in the client company and after we had agreed on specific concrete details, we began the realization of the training plan.

Psychodramatic techniques were employed in the third stage of this training, the part related to ‘conflict
management’. Before we started with the practical part of the training which involved psychodrama, I had familiarized the group with the general theoretical directives in this area. Actual psychodrama began with a creative warm-up in which the participants were guided through psychophysical exercises to release their spontaneity and creativity. This was followed by a spontaneous group discussion of the conflict situations in their everyday work and a selection of ‘prototype encounters’. A specific characteristic of these ‘encounters’ was that they happened exclusively over the telephone, which focused the analysis of those situation on their intonation and choice of words as a means of communication.

Having determined the prototype models of the conflict situations and analyzed them in group discussions, I issued instructions for each of them individually to select a situation from their practice which they would like to explore and to resolve by employing the new model of ‘conflict management’. I had previously explained this model in theory and written on the whiteboard the practical steps which they needed to follow in a conflict situation. I asked the group to split into pairs and each pair to enact the selected situations on the improvised stage before the entire group, with my assistance, naturally. At this point, the group was enthusiastic and curious, which indicated that we could begin with the game of role playing. I set the ‘scene’ by placing two chairs on the improvised stage with their
backs to each other to avoid any perception of body language and thus make the role playing as close as possible to the real situation.

Situations were enacted by each pair, one after another, in the following manner. First, one member of the pair would present the selected communication with a ‘difficult client’ to the group. Second, they would sit in the chair of the client, ‘assume the role’ and present it to the group. I guided the participants to enact the exact tone of voice and the exact words addressed to the call operator, i.e., themselves on the other side, the role which at that moment was enacted by their partner. After these presentations of the roles and the protagonists’ warm up, I instructed them to reverse roles and begin with the action: the repetition of the scene as it had happened in reality. With intermittent reversals of roles, they re-enacted the scene, i.e., the conflict communication with a difficult client in reality. It became obvious that the protagonist, his partner - assistant, and the entire group watching the enactments, were completely involved in the situation as if it were happening there and then. This level of enthusiasm enabled me to undertake the key step in this training, which was a complete psychodramatic ‘standing in the shoes’ of the interlocutor and understanding the invisible reason for their hostile attitude towards the operator in the call centre. To everybody’s great astonishment and amazement, we managed to understand the hidden conflict contents, prejudices and needs on the
part of the caller, which were disclosed in the real situation in a comprehensible form. This meant that we could start with the formal part of the training. I instructed the operators first to abandon their roles, to remind themselves of the ‘practical steps in conflict management’ written down on the whiteboard, and then to sit back on their chairs on the stage and try and apply this new tactic in their communication.

The situation from real life was re-enacted yet again, but this time with much more care and with more frequent guidance and facilitation on my part through reminding, instructing and assisting the protagonists to their eventual overcoming and final resolution of the conflict material. All this was realized with constant application of the technique of role playing, frequent role reversals, as well as with intermittent application of the techniques of doubling, voicing internal speech, amplification of hidden reactions, focusing on non-verbal contents in the intonation and mirroring of the enacted sequences. By doing so, they eventually enacted the new attitudes they had been learning and the techniques of resolving a conflict situation which, after the enactment, were additionally analyzed in a group discussion in which the other members of the group could consolidate what they had learned from the stage action performed by one of the members.

The procedure was completed with the enactment of the situations experienced by the other members of the group, starting with the pairs that had taken
part in the previous enactment on the stage. With each enactment and subsequent discussion, the participants became more skilled in their application of the new knowledge in their enactments of the real conflict situations with ‘difficult clients’. Afterwards, we could even enact ‘surplus reality’ situations: that is, imagined ‘unsolvable’ situations created in the participants’ fantasies as possible situations anticipated in the future. The participants were amazed at the powers of psychodrama which, with its simplicity and creativity, could quickly reveal and understand the roles in the background and thus lead to the desired resolution.

This training received the highest rating among the participants in the seminar. Their superiors were pleased with their reaction, especially so because this group soon demonstrated a departure from their hitherto marginal role at company meetings and assumed a role of group spontaneity and freshness which was captivating for the environment. But the ultimate positive evaluation, the reason why my clients ordered and paid for this training, was the fact that, after a certain period of time, the time of the average communication with the clients (all communication with the clients was recorded and analyzed by the company) was reduced by sixty percent. Evaluation also disclosed that there were no unresolved situations, that the clients were satisfied and operators relaxed in their work, leaving their workplace at the end of the working hours invigorated and in a good mood. Let us just remind the reader
that business is successful only when all parties are satisfied and the company makes a profit!

**Example 2**

Most of the training programs I have realized to date have been dedicated to coaching negotiation skills. There is a growing need for such training in the business world as entrepreneurial activities are on the increase. I believe that negotiation is the greatest communication skill, practiced at all levels of communication today, whether in the field of professional or other kinds of social communication. I believe that the study of negotiation skills, as the cheapest way of resolving conflicts and most effective path to the realization of one’s interests, even if fairly difficult to develop, should be introduced in the regular programs of contemporary education.

I have had opportunities to train various target groups and individuals in this area, ranging from company owners, top managers and middle managers to fieldworkers. Most frequently, this training has been related to sales. This type of training has been employed either alone or in combination with other programs related to psychology of communication skills and conflict management or as part of a certain kind of selling skills. What is important for this book and its readers is that the introduction of psychodramatic techniques in some segments of the program called the *Harvard Model of Principled Negotiation* led to outstanding results. It is of
particular importance that the employment of the method of role playing created a unique opportunity for attaining practical experiences identical to those in reality, as well as for practicing and testing the newly acquired skills in a shortest possible period. For the purpose of this book, I selected several interesting positions in some prototypical sections of the realized trainings.

The first level is the employment of specific warm-ups at the beginning and throughout the course of the seminar, including psychophysical exercises designed especially for this purpose. What proved very successful at the start of the seminars, in the sense that it simultaneously released spontaneity and reinforced the focus on the main subject, was to introduce the participants into various physical warm-ups with a clear aim as to the experience which was to be their result. This was usually achieved through several kinds of defined movements in space, whereby they assumed the roles of a ‘body without a brain’ thus causing ‘encounters with others’ which then resulted in different experiences later compared in the subsequent group discussion to personal and shared experiences from real life and—what is especially important for this kind of training—to experiences related to negotiation moments in their business communication. The warm-ups I employed in the course of the seminar could also be used as a creative pause and preparation for the next stage of the training, most commonly organized as ‘play - test’; that is, as a riddle specially created for the topic
of the seminar in the shape of an ‘action sociogram’ in space. I often used games such as ‘walking on a rope’ with various enigmatic situations positioned on it which the participants had to resolve if they did not want to ‘drop out of the game’, i.e., lose against their ‘opponent’ on the rope. In addition, they were given tasks for their work in pairs in which, having acted as opponents at the start, they had to try at a certain moment to induce their partner through verbal or non-verbal communication to reach the targeted point, with them as winners and their opponents as losers. Participants had to find a single solution, which was always related to the key position—that is, the attitude they needed to assume at a certain stage of the negotiation—so that they could achieve a winning communicational combination.

However, the principal power of psychodrama is definitely related to the application of its techniques in the participants’ practicing the practical steps, in their analysis of the situations ‘in practice’. This was mostly conducted through pair work or work in smaller groups with my guidance and assistance on the part of my associates in the training. Having selected prototypical and specific situations from their business communication and familiarized themselves with the theoretical aspect of the ‘negotiation skills’ programme, participants would then go on stage and, with my instructions, practice negotiation employing the techniques of role playing, role reversal, etc. In this type of training, one of the most specific moments is ‘recognizing the
interlocutor’s interests’, interests which are always hidden, accompanied by numerous variations and alternatives in the attempted process of their successful realization through negotiation. This is where psychodrama can be, if applied correctly, a masterful ‘tool’ in recognizing these materials and detecting manipulations, unethical models of negotiation and other important positions in the negotiation process. This is the true starting-point in the model of principled negotiation and in the process of ‘separating the person from the problem’, that is, in the further process of the verification of the ‘values’ to be targeted and used correctly in the course of the negotiation through the tactics of ‘climbing the ladder’.

It is intriguing that, as my experience to date demonstrates, there is always some subjective, specific and always different factor interfering with the negotiations, concealed within every person as an ‘unconscious resistance’ regardless of the conscious intentions with which they start the process of negotiation. Psychodrama helps in this area, too. In addition to the basic knowledge which can be acquired about the psychodynamics of people and groups, this resistance can also be detected, concretized and ‘voiced’ in the role-playing on stage. This can also be added to the list of values cultivated by the tactics of negotiation skills.

Finally, psychodrama is unavoidable in the practicing of the new ‘roles of negotiators’ where, unlike other methods, it leads to a speedy acquisition of expe-
The Power of Psychodrama

rience and a straightforward testing of the newly acquired knowledge. In addition to all this, psychodrama is always attractive for its participants, keeping the level of their attention and interest at the highest level throughout the training process.

Example 3
Psychodrama is a method of choice in ‘team building’ training. It is ideal for this area since in almost all its elements it satisfies the needs of a group, which in the case of team-building training are of a much smaller scope than those in classic psychodrama. I would like to remind the reader that psychodrama is defined as an ‘action method in group psychotherapy’ which, with measured creativity, an experienced psychodramatist can transform into an easy-to-govern ‘action method of creative group dynamics’. The basic techniques of psychodrama, such as the creative warm-ups and sharing after group actions, can also serve as a basis for the creation of healthy group cohesion—a key factor which builds and reinforces the group until it acquires the functional form of a team.

I have completed about twenty training programs in this area, always different in some of their characteristics, depending on my assessment of the target group, the stage of the group process in which this target group might have been, and the needs of the company within which this group operated. The fundamental factor which I felt I needed to make clear to the participants
in these training programs was the difference in the structure and the functioning of a ‘group’ and that of the ‘team’ and then to activate development of certain levels of successful team communication in the group through creative games and discussions.

I will only briefly demonstrate the possibilities for the application of psychodrama in the section related to ‘recognition of group roles’, which I often used in my training programs of this type. Within a group or a team, there exist most often unrecognized roles which the employees assume spontaneously, in dependence on the structure of their personality, their previous work habits and intentions, and which they then ‘play’, thus becoming a part of the ‘group process’. Problems usually arise when this group process starts veering off the expected direction, that is, when it becomes an obstacle to the achievement of the expected business results and cannot be managed purposefully. Since it is usually ‘unconscious’, with strong resistance to change, and at the same time maintaining a powerful ‘matrix’ which preserves the existing constellation, any attempt at changing this kind of system of group functioning and transformation of the group into an efficient team requires great knowledge and skills from the people in charge. For this reason, they often hire external expert consultants to provide assistance in the process of the transformation of dysfunctional professional groups.

The sociodrama workshop which I employ in this part as my own ‘brand’ usually transpires in the follow-
The Power of Psychodrama

ing order. At a certain stage of the seminar, I introduce the participants to a workshop which I call the ‘magic hat’, not unlike the ‘magic shop’ which is often used as a warm-up in classic psychodrama. In the hat there are small pieces of paper on which the names of the leading roles in the group are written, as well as a short script describing how to enact them. In order to help the reader gain better insight into the importance of all this, I should say that group roles are usually divided into three clusters: the first includes the roles directed ‘towards the task’, the second includes the roles concerned with ‘preservation of the group’, and the third includes the ‘individual roles’: that is, the roles which oppose positive team organization and its focus on successful fulfilment of the projected goals. Every participant in the workshop then pulls their ‘role’ out of the hat and follows the script when enacting it in the group. These roles remain secret until the end of the game. Every participant is then handed out a map of all roles which helps the participants in this game to guess the roles of the other members of the group.

An important part of this workshop is that of sharing. Each participant shares with the group the experiences generated by the role that they pulled out of the hat and enacted. In the discussions that follow, slowly but surely the group starts recognizing the roles they ‘play’ in the everyday reality of their team, both their own and those of the others. This is then followed by recognition of the roles which their team actually
needs and the allocation of these roles to each member of the team in a manner which will enable the team to function successfully. I usually conclude this part with a new workshop for ‘team building’, this time applying the experience attained in the previous workshop.

This is where I would bring this part of the book to a close, although the reader might have easily guessed that this is only a minor part of my experiences in the application of psychodrama in the training of working teams and individuals.
The practical magic of psychodrama achieves its most creative effects in one promising area, above all, an area which I have been referring to as the ‘healing art’ for a long time. In this past decade, the development of collective consciousness in the world has shown evidence of an increased use of this term and its gradual acceptance within various lexical concepts. Still, I have to alert the reader that this term is most commonly ‘misused’ or used incorrectly. Moreover, this term is often ruthlessly abused by global totalitarianism—as are all other inventions from the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries—into a trend of ‘abuse’: more often than not, the methods hiding under its wing have intentions which are actually in complete opposition to those that serve the wellbeing of humanity. Sadly, such is the civilization of today, and we are compelled to assemble our own tools to assess the reality and truth about the struggle between good and evil, between health and illness.

To deserve the name ‘healing art’, a system has to meet certain requirements. The first requirement it
needs to meet is to have a clear scenario, i.e. a concept which includes artistic treatment. The second requires it to be achievable, able to be realized in its entirety and to have dynamics which can take place in a certain space and time. The third requirement is that it produce a certain and real healing effect which has been defined, anticipated in advance and controlled by the author and the participants during its performance. The fourth requirement demands that the system is managed by true experts, with excellent education and extremely precise training for this kind of activity.

Creating a healing art will soon be one of the leading activities in the attempts of selected individuals and groups to have a positive effect on today’s extremely sick human civilization with the aim of ‘transforming’ it and reversing it back to its natural, healthy modes of existence. Simultaneously, it will serve as a principal tool for the ‘decontamination’ of the mass media and the education of young people which have currently reached a frightful and definitely pathological level of influence on their ‘consumers’. This might help explain, from a clinical point of view, the new form of psychological disorders, especially among children and young people, bordering on qualities similar to those of a mutant or monster.

The role of the leading political, financial, defence and religious communities throughout the world in the creation of this psychopathological model of influence on normal people becomes increasingly obvi-
ous. They suffer from a disease which they seem to have contracted long ago: the disease of insane ideas of unlimited power, wealth and persecution of opponents. Being sick themselves, they encourage the creation of a ‘folie a deux’ situation, a shared madness, wherein they play the role of the inductor for normal people. Even though long hidden behind various systems of ‘brainwashing’ and forceful initiation of changes in the world, the symptoms of their ‘inflated’ egos have become more obvious then ever, as have the symptoms of their madness; but so too has the opportunity for their clearer identification and the groups to which they belong.

The very same media which they use to ‘poison’ young and normal people should be transformed into a media of healing. Hence the concept of a ‘healing art’ becomes more and more prominent. Psychodrama is ideal for achieving such an influence and it should be given enough space for application in this area. Let us remind ourselves that Moreno himself foresaw the need for its application in the healing of society through a model which he called ‘sociatry’.

For the purpose of this book, I have chosen two examples of psychodrama being used as a healing art in direct work with groups: the first being a specific scenario applied in a smaller group in a closed space, while in the other example, a specific scenario was applied with an exceptionally large number of people in an open space.
Example 1

Ten years ago, my Centre for Human Relations was visited by a Japanese non-governmental organization which had a proposal for me and my team of experts to carry out a specific program for a certain target group which should employ primarily artistic means. This idea seemed very unusual for the type of people usually engaged in such organizations and this attracted my attention. However, soon after our first meeting I noticed that the leader of the small delegation was a fervent supporter of the idea of artistic means to be applied in the work with traumatized youth. He arrived with a hoard of materials he had collected from the internet and with which he tried to warm me towards his idea that he did not know how to realize in practice.

To my question as to why he addressed us, he promptly answered that he had long analyzed the programs of the local expert organizations and the decisive factor was that, at the time, some of the activities in my centre were carried out in our ‘Small Artistic Centre’. Within this project, we had already completed several successfully worked out programs for certain target groups in the shape of theatre schools, photography schools, fashion design schools and jazz schools run by prominent masters in those areas. In addition, these schools operated within interdisciplinary and integrative projects, together with the psychodrama groups regularly attending the educative and experi-
ence programs in our centre. It seemed realistic that he should have presumed that all this might be an exceptionally rare ‘resource’ capable of creating and implementing a scenario which would successfully realize the initial idea.

In the stage of assessment of the problems and needs important for the development of this project, I learned the important information that our target group was a group of about thirty children refugees at the ages of between eight and sixteen who had lived for ten years with their parents in isolation in an abandoned chalet at a lakeside in a remote region near the crossing of three state borders. This was accompanied with the information that institutions of the state were not providing any care for their social needs and that the major problem with these children was their feeling of real ‘exclusion’ from their environment with a tendency of non-attendance of the existing schools in the nearby settlements and almost non-existent interpersonal communication with the other children in the area. This resulted in a manifest passivity in their choice of games and rare outings from the camp. In addition, the team of this Japanese organization, which provided them with basic supplies, was often approached by the mothers of these children with appeals to organize some sort of event which would motivate, engage and cheer up their children.

Considering the concept of this project, after my interviews with the people in charge, I directed the plan-
ning of the scenario towards the state of emotional isolation which I had diagnosed as a group disorder which tended to become an inbuilt segment of those children’s personalities and which emerged as a result of the experience of unjustified rejection and disaffection both in their previous and their present environment. This scenario was also to pay special attention to the lack of motivation to communicate with the environment, which led to a block in these children’s spontaneity and creativity. All this resulted in the conception of a scenario in which psychodramatic play was methodologically connected with the use of artistic means, with different teams running separate sections of this ‘performance’. I also realized that I should anticipate the moment of ‘first contact’ with these children, who had already developed a high degree of mistrust and reactive defence mechanisms of rejection of everything that ‘entered’ their territory from the hostile outside world...

In practice, the scenario adopted the following course. We set out on our journey in two large jeeps which were big enough to fit the guide, the members of my team—that is, the performers of this ‘travelling show’—and the equipment necessary for its performance. My team consisted of several musicians, renowned international jazz artists given to art therapy and several psychodramatists trained in play therapy with children, with me as their leader. Our equipment comprised two tam-tams, percussion instruments, tambourines, guitars, numerous toys, a large number of
The Power of Psychodrama

sheets of paper with crayons and felt tips in all colours, several balls of wool and rope, various masks, decorations, etc.

The performance started while we were still driving, half an hour before our arrival, when, to the surprise of my team, I produced a bag which contained several hundreds of deflated balloons. I handed out the balloons to all performers and asked them to blow them up, tie them and throw them in the boot of the jeep. The same thing happened in the other jeep in arrangement with my assistant. All members of the team accepted the game enthusiastically, warming up for the awaiting performance and gradually releasing, through laughter and banter in the group, their spontaneity and creativity. As I anticipated, through this game they had also ‘blown in’ a part of themselves into those balloons, whose aim was to establish a non-verbal ‘bridge’ in communication with the children and the youths who were expecting us at the camp.

Our arrival and the first moment of establishing communication happened as predicted in the scenario. The two jeeps drove through the gate of the camp and stopped in the parking space surrounded by children who, with their bearing and distance, demonstrated nonverbally their mistrust and ready resistance to establishing communication with us. Only the drivers got out of the jeeps and opened their boots. Suddenly, to the children’s astonishment, balloons in different sizes and colours started pouring out of the boots of the jeeps—
hundreds of them! In less than a few seconds, the children started chasing them with exclamations of excitement. They were all running around the car park trying to catch them. This was a signal for all teams to get out of the jeeps inconspicuously and bring all their instruments and other props into the large room where we were to enact our specific performance.

The stage was constructed with great speed with the art section at one end, with large sheets of paper and colouring pens strewn around them, while at the other end, a small stage was created for the younger children, scattered with toys. In the middle, between these two stage spaces, we placed both tam-tams and the rest of the instruments, including a large number of toy instruments. The teams of performers took their respective positions on the stage and we all stopped to wait for the children’s spontaneous arrival in the room.

We did not have to wait long for the children to start coming in, one after another, hugging balloons in their arms, losing them on the way and running back to fetch them again. When they saw the stage overflowing with new toys, instruments, decorations and interestingly dressed people, they started, one after another, dropping their balloons and running towards their new targets. It was then that we moved towards the beginning of the main performance.

This performance ran in the following order. The children first made a circle with help from my assistants, standing with their backs to the centre where the
musicians were standing among the tam-tams and other musical instruments. They were tightly tied to each other with their elbows intertwined and their upper arms touching. My assistants ‘fastened’ them to each other additionally, with woollen thread which ran across their chests and around their shoulders. This was a symbolic representation of the ‘wall’ of their defence mechanism of isolation, which hid their emotions, spontaneity, motivations and instinctive reactions. I placed the rest of the adults present around this circle to represent symbolically the surroundings which they needed to ‘conquer’. The task was to achieve this through spontaneous and creative performance.

At my signal, the musicians started building up a rhythm with their instruments, quietly at first and then louder and louder. The children stood immobile for a while, holding each other very tight. As time passed, it became evident that the rhythm of the music, charged with a high dosage of instinctive energy, caused a spontaneous movement of their bodies backwards and forwards. This movement was asynchronous at first, but then became more and more synchronized and rhythmical until they started directing their gazes with more freedom and motivation towards the ‘environment’, eventually focusing them on the playing objects which awaited them in the space around them.

At a certain point, when all participants had reached the stage of high enthusiasm and spontaneity, with a small facilitation by my assistants the children
Zvonko Dzokic

resolutely moved ‘forward’, freeing themselves from the state of entrapment within their defence mechanism and simultaneous group fixation at that level. The tearing of the woollen thread signified the fall of their ‘wall’ and coming out through the ‘environment’ to the desired objects in the room. The younger children moved towards the toys and the older ones towards the painting and musical part of the scene, picking up the colouring pens, instruments and other objects strewn around that space.

The goal of following part of the performance was the creation of artistic work with aid from my teams of assistants. The children first enjoyed these activities and were then fascinated by the works they created themselves, whether compositions, paintings or short dramatic pieces. In the meantime, the younger children were invited to enact their stories with toys and dolls on the small stage, devised and prepared for this purpose.

In the following part of this performance, all ‘creators’ had an opportunity to exhibit their works to the ‘audience’ in a manner which, through application of psychodramatic practical magic, exposed the participants to experiences identical to those from outside reality. The performance was concluded with a stage of ‘correction of emotional experiences’ and acquisition of new ones in the place of the old.

The end of the performance was indicated with a new joint circle with the participation of all present. In this circle we all danced to the rhythms of our travel-
ling band of musicians to a full physical and vocal release. Our released energy filled the enormous space and an emotion of utmost personal freedom and happiness was evident on the faces of all present, who had let their expression reach a level of maximum spontaneity. This lasted as long as it was necessary for all present and then the atmosphere in the room began to defuse to a level of satisfied tiredness. With the announcement of our departure, we enacted the ‘tropical rain’ with the participation of all present in the production of the sound of rain by knocking on the floor with our fingers and hands. After this, the group was ready to separate from us and, at the same time, to retain the energy level achieved previously, together with the newly acquired experiences.

We parted, of course, with emotions related to an experience of closeness, but also with an un concealed joy shared by all. Our two jeeps left the car park of the camp with empty boots, but leaving happy people behind. Psychodrama demonstrated yet again its power to create a role play in a performance in which people simultaneously feel freer and more connected with each other. In the service of good, of course!

**Example 2**

Psychodrama can also be employed as a healing art for large groups, that is, for masses of people. Let us not forget, though, that it must be based on previous careful diagnosis of the problems and needs of the
target group and that its realization must meet the four rules which apply to all ‘healing performances’. And, finally, it must serve the common good against evil.

The following example is a performance which was realized twice in an open space in the city park of Skopje, the capital of the Republic of Macedonia. It was performed in both 2000 and 2001 with the participation of several thousand citizens who spontaneously joined this mass workshop created for special purposes. The aim of these workshops’ was to ‘decontaminate the population’ of their ‘negative psychological contents’ accumulated in the previous decade and especially in the two years preceding the workshops.

This ‘toxic internal psychic material’ had built up for years as a mass of unprocessed stress reactions caused by strong stressors from the environment, such as the dissolution of their former state, the change of the social system, wars in the former Yugoslav republics, a continuous embargo by the southern neighbouring state, denial of the national and state identity by two neighbouring states, bombardment of the northern neighbouring state by a foreign army representing the ‘international community’ which they experienced as long months of military planes flying over and producing threatening noise as well as endless military convoys on the local roads—all this accompanied by unbearably aggressive media propaganda and unbelievably persistent campaigning on the part of the so called non-governmental organizations (religious and others).
This enormous pressure on the local population culminated in a strange ‘war’ in this small country in the first half of 2001, which resulted in a sense of powerlessness among its citizens—a typical reaction to a strong stressor, in this case in the shape of a violent aggressor. This tipped the balance of the toxic psychic material which the population had already been ‘swallowing’ and unsuccessfully ‘digesting’ for quite some time and, at this particular moment, my interdisciplinary team and I started considering a project which would have a positive effect on these people.

This state of affairs was further aggravated by a corresponding increase in drug addiction, prostitution and violence in the local community and these were totally unnatural models of behaviour, not characteristic of the local population prior to that. Our assessment was that, in the near future, the typical defence mechanism of ‘identification with the aggressor’ would take firm roots within the population. This was supported by a clear insight into the evident changes, not only in people’s internal experiences, but also in their behaviour, caused by the influence of the aforementioned environmental factors. People had become grim, utterly distrustful, more aggressive and prone to manipulation and hostile attitudes rather than being friendly in their approach to others in the way that used to characterize their traditional model of behaviour.

An agreement was reached between myself and the team that the aim of this project would be the
‘awakening and return to the beautiful within oneself and the others’. The team consisted of experts from our ‘Small Artistic Centre’ in the areas of psychodrama, theatre, photography, jazz music, literature, visual arts, plus technical assistants. This produced the slogan of this public campaign: ‘Beauty from Within’. We prepared the scenario and the slogan, printed several hundred T-shirts, posters, and flyers, provided cardboard boxes for the children’s workshop, billboards and spray paints for the visual arts section and numerous other props. We informed the press and the police, gave some introductory interviews and chose the space and the necessary set in cooperation with the local authorities and other institutions which had openly supported this idea.

On the day of the performance, which was supposed to last for two hours, the spring weather was at its best. In the designated space, in the grass area among the trees, we positioned the workshops, whose scenarios and dynamics of action were interconnected. According to the scenario, the participating citizens were supposed to enter through the symbolic ‘gate’ of this mass workshop and go through every single workshop within it, participating in their work assisted by our groups of experts and helpers. Our aim was that, when leaving this ‘magical camp’, the participants should experience a clear change from within, as suggested by the slogan of this public campaign.

The first workshop at the very gate was the psychodrama workshop with the scenario in which ‘magic messages’ were pulled out of a ‘magic box’. This magic
box contained messages which every participant had to pull out ‘blindly’ after a short warm-up within a group and then enact them ‘on the spot’ assisted by the present psychodramatists. These messages are dubbed ‘magic’ because, through synchronicity, they always maintain their magnetism of supplementing the lack of one’s own spontaneity with the counterpoint imprinted on them. For example, when the mayor eventually pulled out a message for himself after long vacillation, it read ‘Sing something from your heart’. This immediately triggered his spontaneous reaction that he could never sing. With assistance from the practiced psychodramatists, he managed to sing in public in front of the rest of the group, which eventually released his spontaneous loud laughter and led to a very positive atmosphere in the workshop. This principle of release of spontaneity led each of the two thousand or more people who participated in this interactive happening to an encounter with their own creativity and further work on ‘beauty from within’.

The following workshop was dedicated to photography, where theatre costumes and decorated sets awaited the participants. They could choose partners with whom they instantly created their own scripts for certain scenes with assistance from our experts. They would then put on costumes and assume their roles, taking photos of each other in the moments which they considered most beautiful in the enacted scene. These photographs were then exhibited on an enormous billboard.

Participants would then enter the literary workshop with a well-known writer who sat at a table with
boxes and sheets of paper in different colours. Every colour signified a different emotional state: love, hate, joy, sadness, jealousy, etc. Guided by the writer’s openness and creative communication, the participants would spontaneously select a sheet of paper in a certain colour and write on it their life experiences and opinions related to the ‘discovered’ emotions.

The theatre workshop was next and in it the members of our theatre group, led by an expert on stage action, ‘sucked in’ the approaching people with their irresistible scenario. Participants could take part in and enjoy the enactment of various ‘games’, carefully selected in advance and practiced in detail in order to achieve the desired effect.

This was followed by the art workshop, run by trained artists who helped people express the beautiful part of themselves with spray paint and other kinds of paint on the billboards positioned in the space for this purpose.

The music workshop was the last. It was preceded by a performance of various short compositions by the twenty or so musicians who wanted to give their own contribution to this event. Then this performance transformed into a real workshop where, by playing the numerous instruments positioned in the space on and around the improvised stage, people could express their emotions on an instrument of their choice and with assistance provided by the experts and students from our ‘Small Artistic Centre’.
In the space around, on the beautiful lawn, we positioned small cardboard boxes made especially for this purpose and containing plenty of toys, sheets of papers and colour pencils. This was the separate, magical camp for young children. Without much of a problem, they released their spontaneity and creativity, guided by our team of trained psychodramatists and art therapists.

In conclusion, I can assure the reader of this book that this project was exceptionally successful. As proof of this, we were asked to repeat it next year by many agencies while the citizens spontaneously sent us letters of gratitude and support for months to come. They would often come to express their enthusiasm and insight into the significance of this idea in person. The media covered the event at length and broadcast their coverage repeatedly for several days, often not knowing why. They used it mostly for comparisons.

Bearing in mind the ‘changes of direction’ which have taken place around the world in the meantime, I believe that this project can serve as an example to future practitioners in the field of exerting a positive influence on people as to how to create their own contributions. I look forward to the day when similar projects will be executed through the media.

The road is long and the number of games is limitless...
CHOOSE A ROLE AND PLAY!!
CONTENTS

• Foreword .......................................................... 7
• THEORY .................................................................. 11

• Historical Foundations ................................. 13
• Philosophical Foundations ....................... 27
• Psychological Foundations ......................... 41
• Relations with Other Theories in Psychotherapy 51
• Classic Psychodrama ................................... 59
• Nonverbal Communication and Psychodrama ... 83
• Application and Education ......................... 93
• Psychodrama and Theatre ............................ 101
• Glossary of Psychodramatic Terms and Techniques ........................................ 107
• Perspectives ................................................... 121

• PRACTICE .................................................... 125

• Vignettes .......................................................... 127
• Short Psychodrama ......................................... 149
• Psychodrama and Anxiety Disorders .......... 159
• Working on Suppressed Anger in Psychodrama ........................................ 173
• Psychodrama and Trauma .......................... 181
• Transference in Psychodrama ....................... 193
• Psychodrama and Character Armour ............ 205
• Psychodrama and Psychosomatic Disorders .... 219
• The Use of Psychodrama with Children........... 227
• Sociodrama .................................................. 247
• The Application of Psychodrama and Sociodrama in the Training of Human Resources ......................................................... 257
• Psychodrama as a Healing Art ...................... 287
“The basic goal of psychodrama is to develop spontaneity that will enable the release of creativity in real life. The space in which these mechanisms are activated is that of an encounter: of one person with another; of an individual with a group; of an individual with themselves; of an individual with elements from their surroundings; of an individual with their images, fantasies, suppositions, wishes, assessments and misperceptions; with their past, present and future; with their dream and their reality...”

Having achieved spontaneity... the participant in these encounters is ready to take on the responsibility to make creative changes at the moment of action, to face the conflict between their inner needs and the forces of reality, finding in that moment, as a “revolutionary category”, an adequate creative solution. Thus the individual becomes an active agent and initiator of changes and no longer a passive recipient...”

This book is the result of the author’s twenty years of authentic experience in applying psychodrama and sociodrama in different fields of human communication.