

Who shall Survive 2.0

Lecture

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I am well aware that we gather here in Vienna to celebrate the memory and outstanding achievements of J. L. Moreno and the place that psychodrama occupies in different countries. I join gladly in the celebrations. However, in light of what we are experiencing now in the World, I choose to center my presentation on what I imagine Moreno would suggest us to do in order to contribute to peace and justice in all corners of the planet in a very difficult timeperiod.

Professionnally, Moreno chose to follow two distinct paths during his professional career : sociometry and psychodrama. In reality, his sensitivity for the behavior of real people in their true environment was what ment the most to him. We remember what he told Freud when meeting him at the university : «You meet people in your office while I encounter them in their house and place of work.» Also when creating the House of Encounter, the motto was : «People from all around the World, come here and you will find a safe shelter.»

When he moved to United States, his first real involvment was with sociometry : first at the Sing Sing Prison (E. Stagg Within and Helen H. Jennins), and then at the School for Delinquent girls (Fannie French Morse). In both cases, he actualized the basic principles of sociometry, insisting specially on taking care of the isolates. These two realizations gave birth to his most important book : *Who Shall Survive ?* (First edition in 1934, reprinted with major additions in 1953). Moreno's basic philosophy was clear : «*Who can create will*

survive». Also : «*A truly therapeutic procedure cannot have less an objective than the whole of mankind*». Following logically the path of sociometry, Moreno founded in 1937 *Sociometry : a Journal of interpersonal Relations*. This was a major achievement for two reasons : Moreno open a whole new field and was able to gather around his project the best minds in American social and psychological Sciences : Gardner Murphy, Eugene L. Horowitz, Gordon Allport, William H. Kilpatrick,... to name a few.

In *Who Shall Survived ?* Moreno put forwards and fomalized his concept of sociometry, insisted on the necessary mariage between Science and Religion, and the importance to see individual and social changes as a whole, the work being done with the real people involved and in the real setting (*locus nascendi* and *in vivo*). If Humanity was to survive, there was a need for a global therapeutic approach, and Moreno suggested that we all become part of an « army of sociometrists » in order to understand the planet, from Individuals to Nations to ultimately the whole Cosmos.

Therefore, it is imperative for everyone of us, dedicated to the well-being of individuals and communities to enroll in what Moreno called **an army of sociometrists**. He called sociometry the Science that heads all other Sciences and from which will emerge a new and secure epistemology adapted to the whole World. But, at one condition : that Science teams with Moreno own view of Religion, namely the Religion of encouters.

What he meant by Religion was well illustrated by an early quote :

*« When I am near you, I will tear your eyes out
And place them instead of mine,
And you will tear my eyes out
And will place them instead of yours.
Then I will look at you with your eyes
And you will look at me with mine.*

Then, and only then, there will a a real encounter.»

Moreno pursue his dream, what many called his utopia, by working with the best scientific minds of his time. Unfortunately, he was to almost leave the field of sociometry around 1956 when he transferred his Sociometry Journal to the American Sociological Society. He later recognized that he left the 20th century transformation territory to Freud and all those who centered their work uniquely on the individual process. But he predicted that the 21st century would belong to him and to a return to real group processes, from families to communities, from nations to the whole Cosmos. In reality, his quest to transform the World and his desire to create new and fertile interpersonal relationships between communities and the universe at large never materialize during his life time. On the contrary, he notices an appetite from people and countries to choose self-centering over cooperation, domination over collaboration. A choice that ultimately led to some kind of narcissism, political division, many kinds of segregation and widespread isolation.

Meanwhile, Moreno continued to follow his second professional path, psychodrama, and in a minor way, sociodrama. He had created his own Center dedicated to patients and students in 1936 (Beacon), got involved in St-Elisabeth Hospital (1941), published the first

extensive book on psychodrama (Psychodrama 1 in 1946) and created a new Journal (Sociatry : Journal of Group and Intergroup Therapy, 1947). Strangely this second path, psychodrama, was completely independant from the sociometry path and in psychodrama Moreno was the main and almost unique leader, while being assisted by his wife Zerka. Psychodrama was done in a parallel environment, the groups being form with the objective of therapy, and the focus being mainly protagonist-centered , while sociometric work was done in real communities, schools, industries, and so on.

This second path, psychodrama, survived well to Moreno as we can see here, and should have been the necessary complement to sociometry. In fact, rather than being kept separate, they should have been integrated. But it was not the case, and each path developed somewhat away from each other.

Today, Moreno psychodrama legacy remain somewhat healthy. However, in view of what happening in our planet, it also remains marginal. We are facing geopolitical situations that put everyone of us at risk of wars desroying innocent lives ; we are experiencing Integrist Religeous leaders and political autocrats that negate individual rights and freedom of thoughts and speeches ; we are still fighting to assure a real freedom when it comes to psychosexual identities and equality between sexes ; we are dealing with millions of refugies looking to a safe harbor ; we are confronting with technologies that are both great and dangerous ; our planet is deteriorating at a pace never seen before and being plague with disasters of all sorts ; in sociometric language, we never had so many peoples and nations being in conflicts and isolated because of religious, political or economic problems.

Here we are now. Even though Moreno suggested that the 21st century would be his, a crucial realignment is necessary. First there

is a need to bring back all the principles of sociometry, and to re-focus on interventions in the real settings. In other words, we need to recapture the spirit of an all-related world and to do so, bring back an army of sociometrists.

Let's be clear : a global sociometric approach was and still is a very complex and difficult task. However, the geopolitical situation and the state of our planet demand a bold and radical new epistemology in order to save the people and the planet. We have the tools, we have the map that Moreno left us with.

We need to create or re-create this army of sociometrists ; acknowledged that we live in an intersubjective world ; we also need to work with all scientists who share our basic values, the strive for peace, justice and above all a continued effort for meaningful individual and communities encounters. In order to recapture this spirit, three conditions need to be met : first, we all need to think in terms of global systems, even though we may work with individuals or small groups ; second, we need to include in our thinking and doing interdisciplinary minds, specially in the field of politics, religion and economy ; third, we need to integrate all Sciences within a concept of «religion» that allow for deep understanding of every individual, groups or nations .

In light of this, we need a new epistemology, or a renewed approach to deal with an unprecedented number of global problems.

So, from a sociometric point of view, there is no shortcuts to individual and collective survival. We need to be part of this of a large sociometry movement who helps to transform a sick and problematic system, being a couple, a family, a community or a nation, into a better functioning entity through a genuine and authentic intersubjective exploration. And this, in full respect of our differences.

This will need resolve, compromises, humility and patience. And from a scientific perspective, a deep knowledge of sociometry, including history of mankind. We all need to enroll as sociometrists, regardless of our way of thinking or intervening. We need to be engaged for the future and the survival of our planet. What may look as an utopia would then slowly change into a realistic way to survive.

Do we have this passion for survival, the courage to engage in the most challenging time in the History of our planet ?

It is up to every of us to find the answer.

Who Shall survive 2.0 ?

Sociometry

Psychodrama

Notion of encounter

Theatre of Spontaneity

Notion of Creativity
and Spontaneity

Notion of Creativity
and Spontaneity

Research at Sing Sing

Creation of Beacon

And School for Delinquent Sanatorium (1936)

Who shall survive ? (1934) *Psychodrama 1* (1946)

*Sociometry : a Journal
Inter-personal
Relations* (1937)

*Soiciatry : Journal of of
Group and Intergroup
Therapy* (1947)

Journal transfered to
American Sociological
Society (1956)

Journal now published
by ASGPP under the
name *Psychodrama,
Sociometry, and Group
Psychotherapy*

Workshop

Who Shall Survive 2.0

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The objective of the workshop is to integrate sociometry in all types of intervention that we direct, including psychodrama. *Time* and *space* the essence of our work.

A first path is to work with populations in real settings, like schools, communities, industries, families, etc. Also to focus on problems that touches the group, such as guns control, intimidations or proper use of technology.

When working with protagonist-centered psychodrama, be aware that the group is the real protagonist. This means paying attention to the behaviour of auxiliaries when taking a role, doubling (also in alternate roles) and sharing.

As sociometrists, we will review some techniques such as role reversal, doubling and *a parte*.

