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MORENO IN THE FRENCH SPEAKING AREAS OF EUROPE: A SHORT INVENTORY



The present article is born of a twofold intention by Norbert Apter: on one hand, to briefly establish an inventory on present day psychodrama and Moreno's influence in the French speaking regions of Europe and on the other hand, to build a bridge between French speaking psychoanalysts of the Moreno school.

The paper contains 3 presentations: one by Colette Esmenjaud (France), one by Anne-Françoise Dahin (Belgium) and one by Norbert Apter (Switzerland)

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FRANCE

Anne Ancelin Schützenberger, who introduced Morenian psychodrama to France after WWII and who founded the Ecole Française de Psychodrame (French School of Psychodrama), has trained a large number of students over a 50 year period. After completing their training as psychodramatists, they started working in many different directions: some of them have taken root in analytical psychodrama within an institution; others created their own group of followers and have started training professionals in psychodrama; it is hard to report what has become of them.

In 2010 in France, the prevalence of analytical psychodrama within well organized associations and institutions might contribute to rendering the visibility of Morenian psychodrama as such even more difficult. In Paris, in the western region of France and in the Rhône-Alpes region – the groups with which I am familiar operate separately from each other, in an autonomous fashion and have hardly any contact with each other. I recently spent 3 days with a training group for psychodramatists in western France where reference to Moreno was made clearly and explicitly. Reference to the significant influence of Anne Ancelin Schützenberger's psychodrama was also made very clearly.

Anne Ancelin Schützenberger's specific psychodrama, sometimes called triadic psychodrama, is based both on J. L. Moreno's psychodrama and on the psychoanalytic personality theory. Psychodramatists are encouraged to undergo in-depth psychoanalysis or psychotherapy themselves. Psychodrama unfolds around group work.

Some of its main elements have been retained:

- Auxiliary egos animate the characters; there are few material accessories, but strong acting: bodies twist, hug, collide, emotions are freely displayed, cried out, screamed...the human body is always present and displayed in psychodrama.
- The group, an indispensable element in psychodrama, is also present, active and interactive, it is the frame for an encounter in the here and now.
- Psychodramatists keep constant eye contact with the protagonist, the double and the group. Their eyes spot that jerking foot or talking hands, they notice shoulders moving, faces closing up. Be it during warm up, action, sharing, they verbalize body movement whenever necessary.
- The use of “surplus reality” with the required caution: selection of timing and monitoring of any avoidance line of the original lack and pain.



At the present time one might want to see these different Morenian psychodrama groups link together, integrated in a network and thus benefitting from mutual confrontation as well as learning from each others' practice and transmission system of psychodrama.

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BELGIUM

In Belgium, as in many other European countries, psychodrama ever since it was developed by Moreno has fared well throughout the years.

In the French speaking part it prevails as a therapeutic practice within the three major psychoanalytical currents: individual psychodrama, group psychodrama, psychodrama for group members.

Considering the strong development of “analytical psychodrama”, what about the reference to Moreno?

Two decades ago it was still possible to practice psychodrama without knowing about its founder nor having read any of his publications, today it appears that there is an increasing interest in Moreno among the new generation of practitioners, all be it relative.

This movement started in Belgium with the publication of B. Robinson in 1998: in “psychodrama and psychoanalysis” the author, a psychoanalyst himself, questions the very expression of analytical psychodrama, claiming that “psychodrama in itself is such an original therapeutic approach which is in no way rooted in psychoanalyses”; so no recognition of any annexation, rather an underlining of the strong and original character of psychodrama as designed by Moreno. The author however reflects on the theoretical and clinical base of psychodrama and its therapeutic results.

Another more recent feature of the increasing interest in psychodrama: a video recording dedicated to Moreno was made based on an interview with one of the last psychodramatists in Belgium who knew Moreno personally: Pierre Fontaine speaks about Moreno's life, his work as well as his way of being, his way of working, etc.

There are only two training programmes in psychodrama in Belgium (one in Liège: B. Robinson and CFIP-Verveine, and one in Brussels: C. Nève-Hanquet and V. Magos). Trainers, even though they use analytic references, leave room for spontaneity, creativity, movement, body, action, group... such as developed and put forward by Moreno.

Several initiatives were developed in analytical psychodrama referring to Anzieu and his group dimension or to Lebovici for his individual dimension, mostly in hospital settings, mental health centres and private practice.

French speaking psychodramatists are assembled in the "Psychodrama Association of Belgium" (ABP).

In the Flemish speaking part of the country, Léni Verhofstadt-Denève developed a psychodrama method based on Moreno as well as her own research and calls it "Experiential-Dialectical Psychodrama"

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FRENCH SPEAKING SWITZERLAND

Moreno's psychodrama is well developed in the German speaking part of Switzerland, however in the French speaking part it is psychoanalytical psychodrama which prevails.

In this region, psychoanalysts rarely refer to Moreno, to his work or to that of other psychodramatists of Morenian inspiration. They essentially gravitate around psychoanalytic reasoning. Below are three examples which illustrate the situation: 1. Role reversal is secondary in analytical psychodrama. 2. Sharing occurs minimally (when it does) and is often replaced by analytical interpretation. 3. For analytical psychodramatists monodrama, or psychodrama in pairs, requires a patient, a psychodramatist as well as 5-6 psychoanalysts to interpret auxiliary roles.

One must therefore conclude that in the French speaking part of Switzerland efficacy of analytical psychodrama hinges on the psychoanalytical theory rather than on Moreno's.

Whilst Moreno's psychodrama continued to develop in the German part of Switzerland, I introduced it to the French speaking part in the 80ties through a number of personal development workshops, later by continuous training seminars. Thanks to Marcia Karp's support and to a memorable encouragement by Anne Ancelin-Schützenberger in 1996 ("Go ahead!"), the first full training programme in humanistic psychodrama was launched in 2000 (joining both J. L. Moreno's and Carl Rogers' theories), organized by Institut ODeF in Geneva.

From an official point of view, psychodrama has progressed tremendously since. Thanks to excellent cooperation from the German speaking psychodramatists in Switzerland, psychodrama is finding its way into Switzerland's umbrella associations governing psychotherapy (2 out of 3 have recognized psychodrama). One issue remains however: new federal legislation is to be voted regarding psychology and psychotherapy. Its repercussions for psychodrama remain to be seen.

Definite progress has been made in the development of Action Methods and humanistic psychodrama in French speaking Switzerland. Institut ODeF has trained 2 groups of professionals and organized many recurrent training seminars, an increasing number of professional therapists more or less use psychodrama in therapy. Moreno's method has also been used in the course of many training sessions and interventions in corporations (banks, transportation companies, law offices, notary practices, telecommunications...), international or humanitarian organizations (UNO, ILO, CERN, ICRC), as well as training centres and universities, or in the medical world, social and educational field, etc. The efficacy of Action Methods is very much appreciated.

Even though a French speaking section of Psychodrama Helvetia is about to be set up, what is lacking is periodic encounters with other French speaking Morenian psychodramatists (other than those trained by Institut ODeF), for our territory represents only a very small part of Switzerland.

CONCLUSION

Reference to Moreno already exists in the French speaking areas and continues to grow. Getting together amongst French, Belgian and Swiss colleagues would certainly be beneficial. We hope that the present paper describing the situation in these 3 regions can become a bridge in that direction. Let's hope that it will generate lively traffic.

PSYCHODRAMA ON THE WORLD STAGE

MARCIA KARP

FINDING THE LIGHT – THIRD INTERNATIONAL SOCIODRAMA CONFERENCE, PATAGONIA, ARGENTINA, 2nd - 6th SEPTEMBER 2010

Yes, the subject of the conference was indeed sociodrama. But the 60 or so attendees from all over the world were excited, as was I, at the anticipation of see mama whales and their calves in a protected gulf of Mexico cove on the Valdes peninsula, home of the 'Right' whales, who give birth yearly around May and for 4-5 months protect their calves from the only natural predator, the killer whale. After, that time, they return to the ocean, having not eaten for 4 months, to a diet of a ton of krill per day. Quite a sacrifice for the protection and guidance of the young offspring. We were on the Pacific Ocean.

The first morning we boarded a plane from Buenos Aires, 1 hour 45 min. To Trelew airport and then by bus to Puerto Madryn where we all stayed in a wonderful hotel, the Peninsula Valdes. Immediately I met Rene Marineau and many of us went again by bus to the ocean beach nearby to see the massive tails, and bodies of the 'right' whales within touching distance near the beach. The water is deep close in so the whales swim safely with their calves, airing their tails so gracefully and blowing and breathing through two holes in their head. I wept at the sight. It was overwhelming to be so close to our ancestors who have

