

## THE SECOND CENTURY OF PSYCHODRAMA

O SEGUNDO SÉCULO DO PSICODRAMA

EL SEGUNDO SIGLO DEL PSICODRAMA

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The birth of psychodrama dates to the first day of April, in 1921, when Jacob Levy Moreno directed the first public psychodrama to replace the current government: he invited someone from the audience to sit on the armchair on the stage of the Komoedien Haus, a dramatic theater in Vienna, Austria, symbolizing the throne of a king (Guimarães, 2020). It turns 100 years old, a centenary for implementing a new methodology for working with groups and people, initially in the United States, and then disseminated around the world.

Getting to the end of this century, signs that psychodrama may be restricted to the communities of psychodramatists are emerging, making it difficult for new generations of professionals to benefit from this approach's knowledge.

In Brazil, psychodrama arrived in the 1940s at the *Teatro Experimental do Negro*, founded by Abdias Nascimento, and essential space for activism and studies on race relations by Guerreiro Ramos (Malaquias, 2007; Nascimento, 2020). Psychodrama has arrived to strengthen the proposal for inclusion in spaces of sharing and solidarity.

Since 1970, psychodrama has strengthened in psychotherapy, with influences from psychoanalysis (Motta, 2008). Later, with democratic openness, a wave of group practices emerged throughout the country, stimulated, among others, by Paulo Freire's pedagogy, centered on freedom and autonomy of being, by artistic projects as social intervention, aiming at social inclusion and strengthening citizenship, of the Theater of the Oppressed by Augusto Boal and many other experiences of local culture.

The writings of J. L. Moreno were interpreted from the perspective of society's demands and influenced by cultural diversity, which stimulated fertilization with other theories, such as systemic thinking, developing new methodologies and generating unique characteristics to the Brazilian psychodrama.

Despite the consistency of Brazilian psychodrama, it remains distant from other psychodramatic communities globally, with few references in international publications (Orkibi & Feniger-Schaal, 2019) and national journals indexed in important databases (Fleury, 2019). This finding may indicate new directions for the next century.

This editorial aims to present initiatives developed at the beginning of the second century of the existence of psychodrama that may stimulate a new development of this revolutionary methodology, an important tool for mobilization and social organization.

The idea of presenting psychodrama to young university students from developing countries came from the editors Jochen Becker-Ebel and Scott Giacomucci. They published by Springer, one of the most valued publishers today, a new series of books on psychodrama and sociometry (Becker-Ebel & Giacomucci, 2020) to promote psychotherapeutic and socio-educational psychodrama applied in different contexts. Although the original focus was on studies and research on psychodrama developed in Asia, it has expanded to present the global context. It will be available in the world's leading universities.

The first published book, *Fundamentals of Psychodrama* (von Ameln & Becker-Ebel, 2020), does not compose the series because it was initially published in German. However, due to its didactic characteristic, it will be the textbook for the series's target audience.

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In this book's preface, Jonathan Moreno recounts his memories from childhood visiting Germany with his parents, where J. L. Moreno was going to teach psychodrama. After six decades, these teachings, fertilized by local culture, are presented with an interesting detail of theory, practice, and many illustrative examples.

The book is divided into four parts. The first presents the methodological foundations of psychodrama. It begins with "What is psychodrama?", bringing an overview of the approach. When describing the possibilities of working with psychodrama, it captivates those interested in choosing an approach. It reflects the advances brought by new studies by presenting, for example, the systemic constellation to describe the psychodramatic constellation and the work with sculptures. Although it brings a known content, it differs by the didactic way of presentation, appropriate for psychodrama teaching. For example, when presenting the basic techniques, it describes 11 double modalities and concludes with the technique's theoretical basis, the objectives, and recommendations for use.

The second part addresses the psychodramatic processes, with clarifications about the contract, the planning of the objectives and the warming up, action, integration, and evaluation phases, defining objectives for each of them, and the director's functions. It then introduces the theoretical foundations, with the presentation of J. L. Moreno's life and the origins of psychodrama, the basic theoretical concepts and sociometry. It concludes with interdisciplinary topics, with the approach of emotional trauma, shame and taboo topics, resistance to change, group dynamics, the intercultural dimension, and therapeutic factors in psychodrama.

In addition to this book on psychodrama fundamentals, Springer released the first book in the series, focusing on experiential approaches to working with groups, communities, and individuals (Giacomucci, 2021). It presents the psychodrama updated by research, including those developed by other experiential approaches and neuroscience. It brings practical tools for the evaluation, intervention, and direction of psychodrama.

For its updated feature, this book addresses psychodrama's therapeutic factors, weaving parallels with the original proposal of Yalom and Leszcz (2006), an aspect valued by the new generation. It systematizes elements for the practice based on research and evidence, presenting the current research on group psychotherapy, experiential psychotherapy, psychodrama, and experiential teaching/learning. Giacomucci (2021) reflects on the barriers, limitations, and culture of research in psychodrama training institutions, an issue well known to him, who is in the role of chairman of the research committee of the American Society of Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama.

It is a book with 21 chapters, with a comprehensive and didactic presentation of theory and practice, illustrated with case vignettes. In the last chapter, the author takes the role of a psychotherapist of the year 2074, when we will celebrate 100 years of the death of J. L. Moreno, to reflect on the benefits that psychotherapies, in general, can achieve with the integration of sociometry and psychodrama into their arsenal of knowledge. In the role of this psychotherapist of the future, he writes a letter in which, in addition to other considerations, he mentions the strengthening of the class with the development of new ways of using sociometry and the techniques of psychodrama, always paying attention to the references of evidence-based practice.

This attention to contemporary developments of psychodramatic theory and practice is also present in the central Brazilian initiative, the *Revista Viva* project, which aims to present the publications of the *Revista Brasileira de Psicodrama* (*Brazilian Journal of Psychodrama*) (Fleury & Kim, 2020). From August to December 2020, the project-pilot took place with good results, expressed in the increase in the number of views of the articles on the *journal's* website<sup>1</sup>. Thirty-eight percent of visitors were from other countries, in order by the number of accesses: Portugal, Spain, Mexico, Turkey, Argentina, Croatia, Austria, Ecuador and others. In the *Revista Viva* project's events, there were authors and evaluators from South American countries and Portugal. The issue of language, represented by the impossibility of participation of those interested but no Portuguese or Spanish speaking, is an important limitation for sharing among psychodramatists and has hindered the international recognition of the peculiarities of Brazilian psychodrama.

For the second century of psychodrama, encouraging exchanges between different lineages of the same Morenian psychodrama, enriched by its local culture, may bring a new possibility of development.

1. <https://revbraspsicodrama.org.br/rbp/issue/archive>

Some articles published in English in the *Revista Brasileira de Psicodrama (Brazilian Journal of Psychodrama)* are starting this sharing process. We need everyone's commitment to creating lines of development for this new period.

These initiatives indicate the urgency of the conquest of a new generation of psychodramatists, which was forged in a reality of valorization of knowledge and research. That requires new ways of teaching. The *Revista Brasileira de Psicodrama (Brazilian Journal of Psychodrama)* is consolidating itself as the herald of presentation of Brazilian psychodrama and promoter of fertilization with other lines of psychodrama and experiential approaches.

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