

Book Review

***Psychodrama in Brazil.* Edited by Heloisa Junqueira Fleury, Marlene Magnabosco Marra, and Oriana Hadler, 2022.**

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The director speaks of “Ubuntu”
(a Yoruba term that means “I am because we are”).

After Moreno gave birth to the Psychodrama Group Psychotherapy, Sociodrama, and Sociometry system, Zerka Moreno and J. L. Moreno’s early students developed, transformed, and spread the system all around the world. Today, we witness quite different practices and approaches in Europe, Australia, Continental America, and my country, Turkey. *Psychodrama in Brazil* beautifully illustrates how this psychodramatic richness can be in a very different geography.

The content of the book is limited to contributions from Brazilian psychodramatists, which is also what makes the book unique.

This richness is possible due to the comprehensiveness and richness of Moreno’s theories, philosophy, and method. Whereas sociometric theory, role theory, spontaneity theory, and tele theory stand out as psychodramatic theories, psychodrama group psychotherapy (Moreno, 2020), sociodrama (Leutz, 1974), ethnodrama (Wiener, 2011, 1997), and axiodrama (Kallerman, 2007), the theater of spontaneity manifests itself in the books of various authors as social methods.

The book is a rich and very profound book full of different applications of all these methods. The book consists of 23 chapters placed in four sections and is relevant for all psychodramatists in the world. This book is a product of a South American country’s cultural, geographical, ethnic, economic, and social diversity, which creates a unique mix. This book is also living proof that a psychodrama, group psychotherapy, and sociometry system can change its shape according to the needs of each geography. The reader will witness original and different conceptualizations, starting from the first chapter. Sociometry is just one of them. The book covers psychodramatic understanding in Brazil and interpretation of Moreno’s philosophy, theories, methods and techniques from the concept of God to politics.

As understood from the book, psychodrama in Brazil has been researched and dealt with in a very comprehensive way. In this sense, the book contains an important breadth and depth, which can be easily understood from the

descriptions and applications that take place in the book. I also would like to share a definition from the book as a proof of its profound structure: "Psychodrama, also called socionomy, consists of sociodynamics, sociometry, and sociatry are present and interacting in the group process as dimensions of the same phenomenon."

In the first part, "Historic Acts: Foundation of Brazilian Psychodrama," the reader can examine the basic concepts, the foundations of socionomy, the adventure of spontaneity theater in Brazil, replay theater, and Augusto Boal's theater of the oppressed. Public psychodrama stands out as one of the most characteristic practices in Brazil and is described in this section. This was also one of Moreno's dreams. The section on psychodrama education in Brazil and examples of supervision practice in the first chapter reveal that Moreno's point of view is felt most deeply in this country. It is presented to the reader that important efforts have been made during the development of educational processes. Moreno emphasized that it is possible to fight for goals without being destructive but being creative. This is what is missing even in the world of psychotherapy today.

In the second main part of the book, "Clinical Acts: Psychodrama, Psychotherapy, Human Development," the child psychodrama system in Brazil and practices with children who develop differently are included. In particular, psychodrama in chromosomal syndromes, neuropsychological disorders, and other forms of disabilities are interesting. The processes of psychodramatic discovery of the self with adolescents and the examples of individual psychodrama with adolescents and its different applications in Brazil come to the fore. In addition to psychodrama practices with the elderly, the features and needs of this group are discussed, and the section reveals how important Moreno's philosophy can be in understanding, healing, and guiding this age group. Relationship psychotherapy as a minimalist psychodrama application is also included in this chapter. In this chapter you can also find "using symbolic images in individual psychodrama" over intermediate objects. In the following chapter, psychodrama group psychotherapy processes in Brazil are mentioned and an interesting definition is made: "We defend a psychodrama in the Brazilian scenario in which processes of liberation from oppressive relations are the protagonists of our history." This chapter continues with an explanation of the use of psychodrama in family therapy, focusing especially on losses in the family. This chapter of the book ends with the description of the psychodramatic group psychotherapy model structured against sexual problems. This rich section, which describes a wide range of psychodramatic practices in Brazil, has an inspiring structure for the reader.

The third section of the book, "Sociotherapeutic Acts: Psychodrama, Psychosocial Practices and Vulnerable Populations," is filled with some very surprising psychodrama group psychotherapy practices in Brazil. In this sense, it has the quality to inspire other countries of the world. Studies on victims of sexual violence and perpetrators of sexual violence offer psychodramatic application models to the reader. The chapter about the projects that were developed to help a large group of people exposed to inequalities in the Brazilian justice system and the

psychodramatic practices described therein is remarkable, and it also reveals how different methods of action can be used in different applications. The book goes even further and guides experts on what kind of psychodramatic interventions can be made for those living on the street (homeless) and who can participate in these studies. At the end of this section, there are suggestions for psychodramatic encounters for understanding different indigenous groups in Brazil. Considering that these groups use more than 150 languages, I think the importance of making these encounters with action methods and psychodrama is even more understandable.

In the fourth section of the book, “Socionomic Acts: Psychodrama, Politics and Society,” you can find the political-sociodramatic practices of about 700 psychodramatists on the streets of the city. These political sociodrama studies show the reader how meaningfully this discipline can be used in contemporary social issues. This part of the book draws attention to the ethnodramatic studies for the Black population living in Brazil. These studies aiming to correct the consequences of long-term slavery and oppression and to heal the wounds caused by it are exemplary for experts in the field. Public psychodrama works, on the other hand, include works made to alleviate the pain of communities stuck in the prison of sexual differences and make it easier for them to accept themselves and the public. In the next section, we see sociodramatic practices related to public policies, with emphasis on policies made with those working in the field of public health. The book continues with a section on the work done by companies in Brazil and conveys the contribution and ideas of psychodramatists in the production of new business cultures. Finally, there is a short section at the end of the book that includes thoughts on the future of psychodrama.

Psychodrama in Brazil was published by Springer Nature, a prominent academic publisher. The book is accessible through Springer’s online academic database, which makes it freely accessible to most university students, professors, and researchers. Though easily accessible to those belonging to the academic community, one of the biggest limitations of this book is its cost, which ranges from €106.99–€129.99 for the different versions offered.

The book is eye-opening for the reader and is full of images of how the psychodrama group psychotherapy and sociometry system took shape and even changed shape according to the needs of an important geography in the world. This valuable and hopeful door opened by Moreno seems to have met with a great response in Brazil. The reader is promised a deep journey with this well-considered book. I wish you good reading.

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