

Journal of Group Psychotherapy Psychodrama & Sociometry

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**The Autobiography of J. L. Moreno, MD
(Abridged)**

Part 2

Jonathan D. Moreno, Guest Editor

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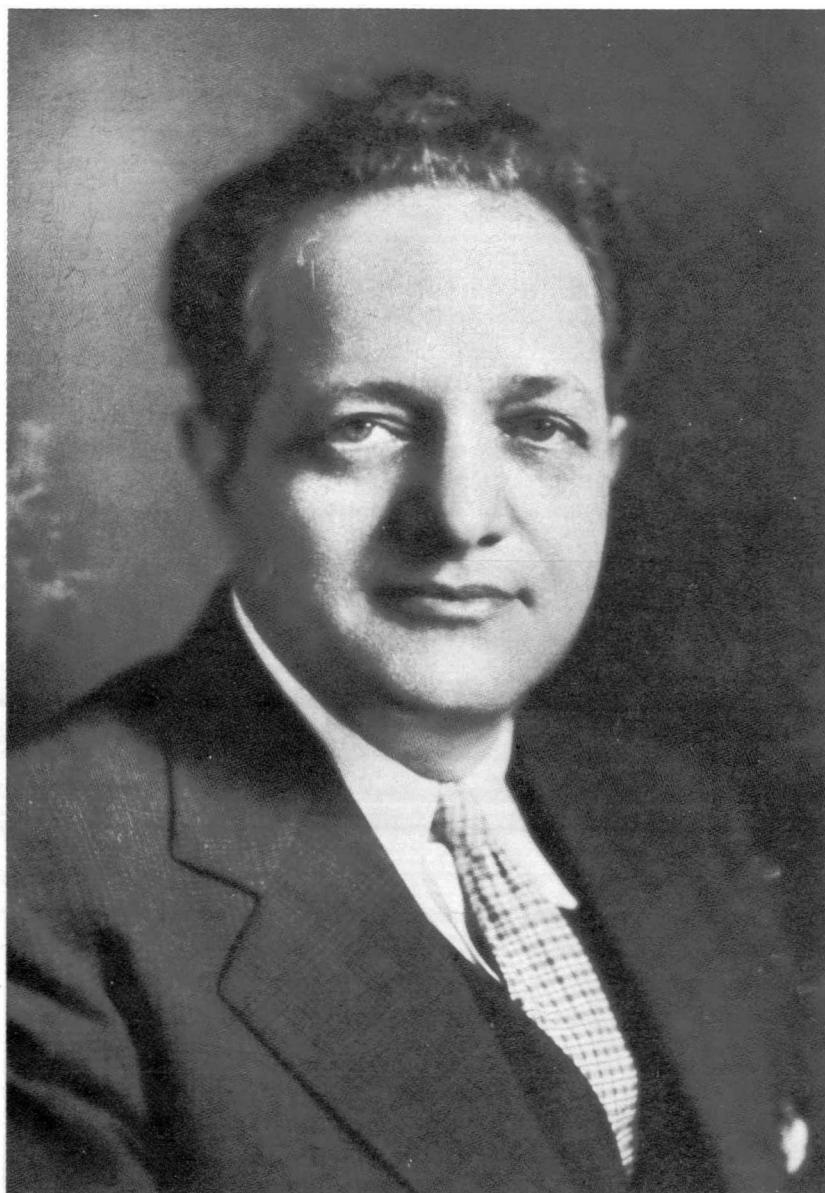
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J. L. Moreno, MD

(Abridged)

Part 2

Jonathan D. Moreno, Guest Editor



a mid-1930s photograph

J. L. Moreno, MD

1889-1974

Chapter 5

Medical School and World War I

UPON COMPLETING GYMNASIUM, I entered the University of Vienna. Medical training at that time took 8 to 9 years of study. The first 3 pre-medical years were a combination of science and arts courses. After passing a series of examinations, the *rigorosa*, I matriculated and was admitted to the school of medicine. Medical education revolved around lectures, demonstrations, and laboratory work. Freud, for instance, never treated a patient in medical school. Each specialty was covered by a series of examinations, again called *rigorosa*, which had to be passed before receiving the MD degree. One could postpone the *rigorosa* until the end of medical school, as Freud did, or take each examination as one completed a course of study, as I did.

My medical education was different from that of most of my fellow students in that I was permitted to spend about half of my time in practical clinical work. I did tours of duty on each of the clinical services. This enabled me to go into practice as soon as I received my degree, unlike the majority of students.

One of my first clinical tours was in the Wagner von Jauregg clinic in the Lazarettgasse, the psychiatric service. Wagner von Jauregg was a distinguished physician, a researcher. He won a Nobel prize for his malaria therapy of cerebral paresis. He was not really a psychiatrist, but a neurologist, interested only in the physical side of psychiatry. This was in line with most psychiatric thought in those days.

The Kraepelinian system of psychiatric classification was ascendent. Kraepelin had collected and edited thousands of case histories, which enabled him to develop an excellent general picture of the patterns of mental illness. Kraepelin was not interested in *what* a mentally ill patient thought, but only *how* he thought. He was uninterested in the patient's character, but only concerned with the clinical phenomena. It was not considered necessary to understand mental illness, just to be able to classify it. Certain disease entities were held to be curable, others incurable. Mental disease was a separate entity; mental health, a self-evident state, not worthy of study. The course and outcome of mental illness was predetermined. . . .

Von Jauregg was an independent soul who tended to go his own way, but his attitude was, essentially, Kraepelinian. He was an aristocrat whose aloof, superior manner placed him in a realm far removed from anyone who worked with him. Moreover, he was a boring lecturer who put his students to sleep. His patients were terrified of him. Big and strong, he grabbed patients by the arm in a wrestler's grip. He was, secretly, a wrestling champion. Once, wearing a mask, he went to a bout where the current Russian wrestling champion was fighting and challenged him to a match. Von Jauregg won the bout, chose to remain anonymous, and had Viennese wrestling fans mystified for years over the incident.

Von Jauregg's chief clinician, Dr. Otto Pötzl, told me the tale. Only Pötzl and I knew about it. Pötzl was almost Von Jauregg's opposite. Warm and outgoing, he was full of jokes. Students flocked to his lectures, almost as much for his great fund of Jewish jokes (he was a Gentile) as for his learning, which was great and profound, and for his thinking, which was systematic and sharp. His specialty was neuropathology, particularly brain pathology. His rise in the academic world was unusually rapid. He was only about 13 years older than myself and already second in command at the Von Jauregg clinic. He really ran the place. Von Jauregg, immersed in his research, was a figurehead administrator. Pötzl had been chief of a university clinic in Prague before coming to Vienna. He later succeeded Von Jauregg.

The son of a great newspaperman, the editor of Vienna's *Freie Presse*, Pötzl had a fine appreciation of poetry and literature, which may be the reason he was interested in me. We developed a wonderfully close relationship, and he was always helpful to me. He was interested in the *Daimon* circle and followed the development of the magazine, which began in 1918. However, he never fully understood its scope, and we were not so close that I was able to discuss my ideas about the Godhead and the cosmos. In those days, students did not have such relationships with their professors. The professor taught his students. A student or an assistant was not thought of as one who could "teach" anything to his professors. Pötzl had the ability, which only a great teacher has, to share his unusually keen and logical mind with us; Pötzl taught his students to think.

Pötzl was a great admirer of Freud and had a remarkable, profound insight into Freud's ideas. How he was able to hold on to his beliefs about Freud and still work with Von Jauregg was a mystery to me. Von Jauregg hated Freud so passionately that he forbade any known Freudians from even visiting the clinic. Alfred Adler, for instance, was not permitted entry. Von Jauregg never missed an opportunity to discredit and bedevil Freud or his followers, no matter how insignificant.

One of my early clinical experiences was with an extraordinarily beauti-

ful young woman patient at the Von Jauregg clinic who had come in for a diagnostic workup. It was not clear whether she was suffering from hysteria or multiple sclerosis. Her physician, Dr. Redlich, was one of the greatest diagnosticians I have ever met. He was able to differentiate between hysteria and multiple sclerosis by merely taking the patient's pulse, or so it seemed to me. The young lady was staying in a private room. Medication was prescribed for her, to be administered intramuscularly. I was to give her the injection. There I was, in her private room, all alone with her, the girl's beautiful white buttocks glistening in the sunlight. I was left to my own devices. No one realized that I had never given an injection before. I plunged the needle into her delightful flesh. I think it was the right buttock. Unfortunately, the needle broke and was embedded in her. I had to go and report that I had lost the needle. She was X-rayed, a surgeon operated on her to retrieve the needle, and we put it into our museum of curiosities at the clinic.

The next day I apologized profusely to the girl. Oddly enough, she developed very warm feelings towards me. She said that it had been rather a wonderful experience for her anyway. That was as far as we went in our relationship, although she had to be among the loveliest women I ever met. Eventually she made a good recovery, left the clinic, and got married.

I certainly wasn't a hero there, just an unskilled medical student.

In the second year of medical school, I was asked to become a research assistant at the clinic, responsible to Pötl. I helped him in his study of the dreams of alcoholics. Pötl thought that he could diagnose various neurological conditions common to alcoholics by studying the structure of their dreams. And so it was. When the results of the study were published, Pötl included my name as a coauthor. This was the first time my name appeared in connection with a piece of scientific research. He subsequently mentioned my name frequently in his other publications. This was very generous of Pötl, not common practice in scientific circles at all. Quite the contrary, it was not unusual for research chiefs to take credit for work done on their services, even though they might not have had a hand in it. . . .

In 1912, I attended one of Freud's lectures. He had just finished an analysis of a telepathic dream. As the students filed out, he singled me out from the crowd and asked me what I was doing. I responded, "Well, Dr. Freud, I start where you leave off. You meet people in the artificial setting of your office. I meet them on the street and in their homes, in their natural surroundings. You analyze their dreams. I give them the courage to dream again. You analyze and tear them apart. I let them act out their conflicting roles and help them to put the parts together again."

As I look back at this encounter, what strikes me first is the difference in our ages. I was little over 20, my productivity just beginning. Freud was

56, at the height of his productivity. We both had a beard. My beard was reddish blonde and grew spontaneously, never shaven or trimmed, a natural appendage, a natural organ of my body. It was rather like my tonsils or my appendix. I had not yet found any reason to dispose of them either. Freud was, on the other hand, carefully barbered. His beard was grayish and small, a "social" beard.

There was an amazing element in our meeting, although it was unspoken. It was natural for Freud, I guess, to be looking for new disciples. His singling me out was not so unusual since I had quite a reputation in the university community by that time and was an easily recognizable figure in my mantle. It was also characteristic for an impetuous youth to think that he could win an older man over to his views, even if the older man was famous, well established, with a highly organized mind, and a total investment in his own system. But, underneath it all, there was a factor of which both Freud and I were unconscious. Except for my biological "sonhood," I was never able to be a "son" to anyone. In my early life, I tried and succeeded in becoming a "father" very early. Although youthful, I was just as unyielding as Freud. We were both "fathers," rulers—in my case, in expectancy. It was as if the unknown chieftain of an African tribe met the king of England. Just the same, it was one father against another. At the time, Freud's kingdom was larger than mine, but we were both on the same planet.

My interest in psychiatry never ceased, but psychoanalysis and Kraepelinian psychiatry left me cold. I realized later that my quarrel was not so much with Wagner Von Jauregg's malaria therapy, nor with Freud's psychoanalytic system. My quarrel was with their behavior as therapeutic "actors." I did not think that a great healer or therapist would look and act the way Von Jauregg or Freud did. I visualized the healer as a spontaneous, creative protagonist in the midst of the group. My concept of the physician as a healer and the concepts that Freud and Von Jauregg put forth were very far apart. To my mind, persons like Jesus, Buddha, Socrates, and Ghandi were the real doctors and healers. Freud would probably have classified them as patients. It should be remembered that psychoanalysis grew out of the neuropsychiatric world of Charcot and Breuer, whereas the origins of my work go back to the primitive religions and my objective was the promulgation of a new cultural and social order. . . .

I had another significant encounter during my medical school career when Albert Einstein briefly visited Vienna to clear up his status with the Austro-Hungarian Ministry of Education so he could take up a position in Prague. While in Vienna, he gave a few lectures at the Physics Institute. I signed up for them. In 1911, Einstein was well known and respected in the

scientific community, but still an unknown in the world at large. He was about 32 years old then. I was 21.

I was particularly impressed by Einstein's capacity for envisioning the entire cosmos. Looking at the universe, he was intoxicated by the idea of God. He was not only a physicist, he was also a theologian. He said to us, "You know, God does not play dice with the universe." Einstein was convinced that by looking at the cosmos as an entity composed of active forces he could discover the general laws which direct them. By penetrating the cosmos with his mere intuition, he was able to make tremendous discoveries which no man before him had ever touched upon. I never forgot my brief encounter with him, or the statement he made to our class.

Before I finished medical school World War I broke out. The war brought many changes in my life. When the war started I was a prophet, a religious leader. When the war ended I was a published author (albeit anonymously), the author of religious poetry, the leader of a literary existentialist group. The first part of my *Invitation to an Encounter* was written in the spring of 1914. It was loosely based upon "Homo Juvenis," a speech I had made at a youth assembly in 1912. My immediate inspiration for writing it was, however, the war's advent in the spring of 1914. . . .

The war thinned out the movement that was the Religion of the Encounter. Feda returned to Prague, Andreas Petö to Budapest, where he began to work with handicapped, brain-injured children. In later years, he was called the "miracle doctor" because of the way he was able to rehabilitate so many patients, even some who were thought to be hopelessly crippled. There is a clinic in Budapest named after him and his work is being carried on by his students.

The war had a reductive effect on my religious ecstasies. Whether it was the disbanding of an intimate circle of enthusiasts or the death of my friend, Chaim, there was a gradual transformation towards more normal conduct on my part during the war years.

I volunteered for military service in 1914, but I was not permitted to serve because of my unclear citizenship status. However, as an advanced medical student with considerable clinical experience, I was hired by the government as a medical officer. The wages were high, nearly 1,000 gulden a month. For the first time in my life I had abundant cash. I took a leave of absence from school and placed myself at the disposal of the government.

My first assignment was at Mittendorf, a refugee camp about 15 minutes away from Vienna by train. The population of the camp consisted mostly of Italian-speaking Austrian subjects from a wine-growing area in the Southern Tyrol who had been moved there by the government. The rationale for the camp was twofold. First, the Tyroleans were in Mittendorf for their own protection against the Italian army, which was advancing

through the mountains. Second, the government did not completely trust the Italian-speaking subjects to withstand the invaders. The *Italia Irredenta* movement was active at that time, agitating for the annexation of Trento and Trieste to Italy. The most closely analogous situation I can think of was the internment of thousands of Japanese-Americans living on the Pacific Coast during World War II.

Thus, an entire population was interned near Vienna for the duration of the war. The people were not free to leave the camp; it was really a prison camp. When I arrived in 1915, more than 10,000 persons lived there, mostly old people, women, and children. Actually, I never met one individual in the early days of the war who was not a loyal subject of the emperor. They were, however, very proud of their Italian heritage. The community consisted of cottage dwellings, each holding several families. At the head of each cottage was a *capo di baracca*, a man responsible for the welfare of the group under him. Overall, the camp was governed by German police officers, strict men, sometimes rough or heavy-handed in their dealings with the gentler Tyroleans, who had a Latin temperament. The Germans were not shy about expressing their “Aryan” contempt for the Italians.

On the surface, the camp appeared well organized. It was really a topsyturvy community, but highly stratified. The government furnished cottages and other structures, a church, a school, a hospital, a commissary, to insure that the minimum needs of the community would be met. The camp was set up in 1914. Six months later, a shoe factory with 2,000 workers was moved into the camp to provide employment opportunities. This caused a revolution. The shoe factory people considered themselves on a higher plane than the peasant refugees, keeping themselves apart from the camp people. They had a separate commissary, separate housing facilities—everything separate. Later some peasant refugees were hired to work in the factory. But the coming of the factory created more crowded conditions in the camp and placed another stratum over the original refugees, who were on the bottom of the social heap and had the lowest priority when it came to getting scarce goods like food and clothing.

A whole community life developed. Step by step, community institutions came into being. The government spent a great deal of money to provide the camp with whatever was needed to make life possible. Luckily, the bishop of Trento came along with his people. He brought priests and nuns with him. The priests acted as parish priests, conducted church business; some taught school. The nuns also taught and nursed the sick. The bishop was a giant of a man who had the complete trust and faith of his flock. I was able to work closely with him in Mittendorf and even now, almost 60 years later, I am still impressed by his devotion, his unceasing efforts to make life better for his people. He was a true saint.

Another outstanding personality who influenced the development of the camp was Feruccio Bannizoni, a clinical psychologist. He was, so to speak, an incomplete student, a man who had finished only half of university. Due to conditions in Italy, he was able to set up as a psychologist with no more education than that. He was always studying on his own, an autodidact. . . . Feruccio was an employee of the camp administration, a member of a special circle. He had been there since the beginning in 1914 and functioned as a mediator between the administration and the refugees, between the factory personnel and the refugees, the factory workers and the directors. People came to him with their troubles and he did his best to straighten things out. Today we would call him an ombudsman. He was able to give me a good deal of information about the various factions in the camp, which was a real help when I started my first sociometric experiments there.

He had some connection with Pirandello through a friend and was interested in the *Daimon* circle, which was just beginning to form. He came with me to the Vienna cafés a few times. He made my work known to Pirandello, and in later years he was to credit me with having a strong influence on Pirandello's plays.

The government was concerned about three problems in setting up the camp, and these were reflected in the planning: safety from enemy attack, sanitation, and subsistence. Social or psychological planning was never considered, not even conceived of at the time, although there have always been great administrators who did "sociometric" planning intuitively. I was appointed to a committee which was to supervise the problem of sanitation in the camp. In this position, and later, as superintendent of the children's hospital, I had the opportunity to study the community from its early days to its dissolution at the end of the war. . . .

The structure of the camp gave rise to the most tremendous corruption I have ever witnessed. It was a regular Sodom and Gomorrah. There was an enormous black market, of course. The women were particularly abused—so many abortions and illicit pregnancies! The German police were the worst in this respect. They were harsh and vulgar men. Italian girls are very proud. They despised the gendarmerie who kept order in the camp in such a repressive fashion on one hand, abused them in the most debauched way on the other hand. It is amazing that I wasn't carried away by the wave of Italian nationalism that was provoked by the policemen's behavior for, as doctor to the refugees, I was privy to the sufferings of the women and I began to identify myself more and more with the Tyroleans, learning their language like a native and otherwise immersing myself in their lives. . . .

I studied the psychological currents that developed around various elements of community life: nationality, politics, sex, staff versus refugees,

and so on. I considered that the disjunction of these elements was the chief source of the most flagrant symptoms of maladjustment I witnessed in the camp. It was through this experience that the idea of a sociometrically planned community came to me. In February of 1916, I wrote the following letter to the Austro-Hungarian Minister of the Interior, Herr Regierungsrat Winter:

The positive and negative feelings that emerge from every house, between houses, from every factory, and from every national and political group in the community can be explored by means of sociometric analysis. A new order, by means of sociometric methods is herewith recommended.

(Translated from the German by the author from the frontispiece of *Who Shall Survive?*)

Herr Winter, who later became a good friend of mine, received the idea warmly and promised to allow me to put my theory into practice.

Using the methods of sociometry, albeit in a very primitive form, I moved families around on the basis of their mutual affinities for one another. Thus, the groundwork by which the community was organized was changed for the better. My theory was borne out by the fact that when people were able to live with those to whom they were positively attracted, the families tended to be helpful to one another and the signs of maladjustment diminished both in number and in intensity. We also rearranged work groups in the factories whenever possible to create greater harmony and productivity among the workers.

The German police continued to hinder our work. They relished their godlike power to run the camp. I always had a great number of complaints about police abuses. I wrote many letters to the Ministry of the Interior trying to get the government to discipline the police. Fortunately, the ministry removed or transferred some of the worst, which had a chastening effect on the others, at least for a while.

Although my efforts ameliorated some of the worst problems in the camp, Mittendorf never became a utopia. There was still hunger, illness, corruption, abuse of innocent people. There were so many fine, wonderful people there who had to suffer and who *had no alternative*. Maybe that was the worst part of all. At least, whenever things got too difficult for me, I could get into Vienna in the evening and relax at one of the cafés, but for them there was no way out. .'. .

At the end of the war, the Tyrolians went home, their loyalty to Austro-Hungary shattered. Much of the Tyrol was ceded to Italy at the end of the war. The bishop tried to get everyone to return to the Tyrol, but many of his people worked their way down into Italy. Feruccio, for instance, went to Rome and became director of the Psychological Institute. I continued to

receive letters from all over Italy where the refugees were then settled after the war.

I'll never forget the day they left for home, newly created Italian citizens. The women and children dressed in festive garb that had been lovingly preserved despite the shortages of the war years. They marched out of the camp, four abreast, full of joy, singing their beautiful Italian songs. Part of me wanted to go with them. . . .

After almost 2 years at Mittendorf, I was transferred to Sillein, Zsolna, a camp in Hungary. I assisted Dr. Wragasy, a "brain" surgeon from Budapest. Dr. Wragasy's designation of brain surgeon was self-styled and emerged because he had developed a standard treatment for many different ailments that consisted of trepanning the skull and tossing iodine on the exposed brain tissue. Dr. Wragasy really believed that this treatment was indicated, and he believed that it helped the patients. But of course the consequences of opening up the skull were to cause brain sepsis in many, if not most, cases. Thus, many men died in agony because of Dr. Wragasy. My immediate reaction to his technique was to consider it barbaric and sadistic.

The ways of Dr. Wragasy opened my eyes to the nature of power, for he was the chief medical officer of the camp and everyone had to defer to him. It was impossible for any of us to have the doctor removed or to have him modify his methods of treatment. . . .

Later, I discovered that the power Dr. Wragasy wielded was a typical feature of most institutions, not just hospitals or military installations. But since the hospital is a place where people either recover or die, the politics and the power structure of hospitals are a much more dramatic and urgent affair than in a school, church, or factory.

I could never really understand how Dr. Wragasy arrived at his peculiar panacea. He was, in most respects, a rational man. I could not see how he was able to cling to his poisonous technique in the face of such overwhelming mortality among his patients. His brother was a highly respected, skillful internist in Budapest, and that made it even more difficult for me to understand.

A few years later Dr. Baranyi, a Nobel laureate, stated unequivocally that trepanning the skull was a dangerous surgical procedure that should be used only when absolutely necessary, to remove a brain tumor, for instance. So the practice must have been fairly common if such a famous doctor turned his attention to it. . . .

Sillein had its share of refugees. It was the custom to put newly arrived refugees in rigid quarantine for several days after their arrival to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. One particular group I had to oversee was a whole village of Orthodox Jews who had fled the enemy. They ar-

rived at the camp full of dirt and vermin. I gave strict orders that their heads and beards be shaved. There was, in those days, no other safe and expedient way of getting rid of body lice. In World War I, more men died of typhus and other insect-borne diseases than died of wounds. It was urgent to get rid of the beards.

The supervisor of the detention area came to me shaking with anger. The people were being obstinate and would not follow my orders. I was irritated and told him to bring me some of these senseless people who were endangering the health of the whole camp. Finally there was a knock at the door. In came three old men who were the village elders, delegated to present their case to me.

“Why won’t you have your beards shaved?” I addressed them sharply.

The oldest of the three, the head rabbi, answered, “Our religion forbids it. But, sir, permit me the question, why do you still have a beard? Or is your beard more just before God than our beards are?”

“Well,” I said as I stroked the blonde growth on my chin, my prophet’s beard, “you are mistaken. I have no beard. There is no hair on my chin. Open your eyes.”

They did not know what to say to me and answered with embarrassment. “Yes sir, we only see it now. You have no beard.” Before they left my office, they promised to do what I had demanded of them.

The next morning, the supervisor came to me again, this time in a state of despair. “I can’t do anything with those people. None of them has been shaved.”

I called the three elders back to my office and spoke to them angrily. “What sense of honor do you have? Yesterday you promised to follow my orders, but you still have your beards.”

“Dear doctor,” said the eldest, “we don’t have beards anymore. You are mistaken. Open your eyes!”

And with great pleasure, their eyes shining with suppressed laughter, they stroked the beards that reached down their chests. I dismissed them without comment. The same day I called the barber. He took off my beard. The next morning I called the three elders in again. When they saw me they exclaimed with amazement. “Sir, you had your beard shorn! Why?”

“Quiet,” I told them sternly. “I told you I had no beard. Now you can convince yourselves.”

That night none of the men in the quarantine barracks still wore a beard.

Shortly after that incident, I returned to Vienna, clean-shaven, with money in my pocket. I had saved most of my earnings and I was really determined to finish school and get my MD degree in the shortest possible time. For the first time in my life I had plenty of money. Also, as the result

of having worked as a doctor in the war, my status in the world was much higher. Ironically, now that I was an exemplar of what my family most admired, I became more and more estranged from them, more than I had ever been. I did my work at school, went home, and stayed in my room, scarcely talking to anyone for days, even weeks at a time. . . .

In February of 1917, I received my Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Vienna. My mother came for the simple ceremony at which the degrees were awarded. My medical diploma was among the last to be signed by Emperor Franz Joseph.

The dean of the medical faculty, Professor Hans Horst Meyer, Nobel laureate in chemistry, greeted my mother warmly. He said to her, "*Ihr Sohn ist ein grosses Genie. Er hat eine grosse Zukunft*" (Your son is a great genius. He has a great future.). My mother was flustered and joyful. She went back to the apartment in Vienna feeling somewhat rewarded for all the years of work and sacrifice she had given me. . . .

Chapter 6

Post-war Vienna: *Daimon* and the Stegreiftheater

WHILE I WAS STILL STATIONED at Mittendorf, I spent much of my free time in Vienna at the Café Museum and the Café Herrenhof. The cafés were gathering places for intellectuals and artists of every description. Each café had a slightly different clientele. At first I knew few of the people at the Café Museum, but soon developed a circle of acquaintances. Acquaintance grew into friendship, and then some of us became co-workers. There was a table reserved for our circle at the Café Museum. This was the usual practice at most cafés; there were other coteries who met at the Museum. We usually met once a week, but spontaneous get-togethers were not uncommon between the weekly meetings. On the whole, the cafés catered to masculine society.

It was in the Café Museum that I met Martin Buber, Arthur Schnitzler, writer of comedies with a philosophical air and regular participant in the Stegreiftheater, Jakob Wasserman, novelist in the style of Dostoievski, Robert Musil, Franz Lehar, and many others who were to become important to me.

It was not long before I thought of publishing a monthly journal of existential philosophy. *Daimon*, named after the Socratic “daimon,” was first published in February 1918. I was editor-in-chief; E. A. Rheinhardt was managing editor. The first issue had articles, stories, and poetry by Otokar Brezina, the Czech poet; Max Brod, intimate friend of Kafka; Francis Jammes; Paul Kornfeld; E. A. Rheinhardt; Friedrich Schnack, a poet who lived in Istanbul; Jakob Wasserman; Ernst Weiss; Franz Werfel; Alfred Wolfenstein; A. P. Guttersloh, the painter and poet from Salzburg; and myself, under the name of Jakob Moreno Levy. We reprinted a brief essay by Blaise Pascal dating from the year 1654, “L’Ammulette Mystique.” Our first publisher was Brüder Suchitzky of Vienna.

In 1919, *Der Neue Daimon* was published by the Genossenschaftsverlag, which also published books by Alfred Adler, Albert Ehrenstein, and Fritz

Lampl. In 1920, we changed the name of the journal to *Die Gefährten*. There was no profound philosophical reason for the change in name. We expanded our circle, and, since *Die Gefährten* means "the associates," we did justice to the whole group. In addition to the authors mentioned above, we published work by Franz Blei; Ernst Bloch, composer and philosopher of music; Martin Buber; Paul Claudel; Nicholas Cusanus, the Italian poet; Otto Stoessl; and Georg Kaiser, a forerunner of Berthold Brecht. Kaiser wrote the famous play *Gas*, which had a profound influence on Brecht's later work.

Every large city has places like the Museum and the Herrenhof. But Vienna in the 1920s was one of the most alive spots on earth for intellectuals and artists. [The interested reader may wish to consult Alan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1973.] Many became world-famous in later life. Most of the *Daimon* circle were older than I, and some were already well known.

Although I had hundreds of contacts through the *Daimon* circle, I had few real intimates. Franz Werfel was one of my closest friends then. We shared common ground. His poetry leaned towards the same philosophy I had adopted. The poetry had a religious character which was not in my style, but its rhythm appealed to me. A natural sympathy existed between us. I was far more of an intellectual in my approach to life than he was. My heroic-messianic quality appealed to him. We met, first, in the coffee houses and later worked together in the Stegreiftheater.

Werfel was the son of wealthy parents. He had a good-natured approach to life and was rich in the social graces. He played the violin. I have always been interested in music, but Franz was a fanatic, a connoisseur, a patron of music. He married the widow of Gustave Mahler.

His marriage didn't affect our friendship. Mrs. Werfel was an interesting, brilliant woman who had been deeply involved in the women's rights movement. She had been very much in love with Mahler and was devoted to his memory, but since she was also devoted to Franz, everything was fine. Mrs. Werfel was a devout Catholic and Franz was Jewish.

The book Franz is best known for is *Song of Bernadette*, an odd subject for a Jewish writer, but he was always interested in esoteric themes and in mystical experiences. Franz and I renewed our friendship when he came to Hollywood to work on the screenplay for *Song of Bernadette*. . . .

Perhaps the most popular political philosophy among the intellectuals and artists was Marxism. Gustave Landauer wrote a well-known book about history and politics. The Nazis killed him. Hugo Sonnenschein, the poet, became a communist and went to Russia. Ernst Toller, a poet and playwright, was also a communist. He did not die as so many of the other prominent communists of that era did—purged by Stalin or killed by the

Nazis. Toller was a highly visible leader who ran the communist putsch in Munich which preceded Hitler's famous beer-hall putsch. Toller was about 30 when I met him. He was an emotional, handsome man. He finally came to New York in the late 1930s, where he fell in love with a girl of 16 and followed her around almost everywhere she went. He was literally crazy about her, although she wanted nothing to do with him. He talked about suicide sometimes, but no one believed that he had the courage to do away with himself. Mutual friends advised him to come to me in Beacon [New York] for treatment, but the day that I expected him at my sanitarium, I learned he had jumped out a window instead.

Max Brod was at the center of a large group of Czech literati which included Robert Musil and Otokar Brezina. The most famous of his friends was Franz Kafka, who was part of our larger circle through his friendship with Brod. . . .

We had a bit of a scandal with Franz Blei, a theological writer from Berlin. Blei manufactured a new gospel, supposedly written by a Greek Christian, Apollonius. When we published it, there was a sensation over it. I was quite angry at Blei for hoaxing us. By then he was angry at me because he thought I was in love with his sweetheart.

Peter Altenberg was much older than I. I looked up to him. His poems are still among my favorites. I keep his *Collected Works* close to me so that I can read them when I am in the mood. Altenberg was a famous figure in Vienna. He loved women and children—not sexually. Of all the people I knew then, he was among the most gifted. He died in an alcoholic stupor.

Martin Buber was another highly gifted member of our circle. His book about Chassidism, *Baal Shem*, won the Goethe Prize. Buber was an assistant editor of *Daimon* for a while. His most famous book, *I and Thou*, was published in 1923, 9 years after my *Invitation to an Encounter*. Buber has often been given credit for the concept of the encounter as a focal point for the study of interpersonal relations. Buber, however, clearly got the idea of the encounter from me and elaborated on it in his book. Since he was about 12 years older than myself and had a tremendous literary following, *I and Thou* pushed *Invitation to an Encounter* out of the limelight. But I do not want to imply that Buber and I had any conflicts over what happened. Buber was a great gentleman with a very warm and cordial manner. In 1938, he went to live in Jerusalem, where he died in 1965. . . .

At the same time as my books were being published, I was involved with the establishment of the Stegreiftheater, the Theater of Spontaneity, in Vienna. . . .

Back in 1911, we entered a theater in Vienna one evening just as a play was beginning. We made our way to the first row and sat down. The rest of the audience was already into the hypnotic spell of the play, *Also*

Sprach Zarathustra. It was our notion to awaken the actors and the spectators from their "histrionic sleep." We accused the actor who played Zarathustra of misrepresenting himself. We wanted to draw attention to the conflict between Zarathustra, the spectator, and Zarathustra, the actor. My companion posed as the real Zarathustra, sitting in the audience, aghast at the violence done to his character by the actor and the playwright. The "real" Zarathustra ordered the actor to play himself, not Zarathustra. After my friend confronted the actor and the playwright, I went up on the stage and presented my radical philosophy. I called for the tearing down of the institution of the theater in order to create a new theater which would not just "mirror the sufferings of foreign things . . . but play our own woe." I wanted to create a theater of genius, of total imagination, the theater of spontaneity, in line with the work I was doing with the children in the parks of Vienna.

A scandalous situation! The actors were upset; the audience angry. Fiction had given way to reality. We were evicted from the theater by police and taken to jail, where we spent the night. The following morning we went before a magistrate. Luckily we were dismissed after we submitted to a scolding and after we promised to refrain from [doing] anything like that again. We were a tough-looking pair, and public outcry was serious. Our actions were seen as a serious threat to the peace. It could have been much worse for us than spending the night in jail. . . .

The first official psychodramatic session took place at the Komödienhaus, a famous Vienna theater, in 1921. Anna Höllering, the actress, was a good friend of mine, and her father, who owned the Komödienhaus, let me use it for a night without paying him rent.

I stood alone on the stage that night. I had no cast of actors and no play. I was entirely unprepared before an audience of more than 1,000 people. When the curtain went up, the stage was bare except for a red plush armchair which had a gilded frame and a high back, like the throne of a king. There was a gilded crown on the seat of the chair. Most of the audience was composed of curiosity seekers, with a few scandal seekers as well. But there were a number of politicians, religious leaders, and cultural leaders. There was also a sprinkling of foreign dignitaries. As I look back on that night, I am amazed at my boldness. I was trying to cure or purge that audience of a disease, a pathological cultural syndrome which was shared by all who were in the theater that night. Postwar Vienna was seething with revolt. There was no stable government, no emperor, no king, no leader. The last Hapsburg monarch had fled to Italy. And, like the other nations of the earth, Austria was restless, in search of a new soul.

But, psychodramatically speaking, I had a cast and I had a play. The audience was my cast. The people in the audience were like a thousand un-

conscious playwrights. The play was the situation into which they were thrown by historical events in which each of them had a real part to play. It was my aim, as we would say today, to tap sociodrama in *statu nascendi* and to analyze the production which emerged. If I could only succeed in turning the audience into actors, actors in their own collective drama, the collective drama of social conflict in which they were actually involved every day of their lives, then my boldness would be redeemed, and the session would have accomplished something.

The natural theme was the search for a new order of things, the testing of anyone in the audience who aspired to leadership, and, perhaps, to find a savior. Each according to his role, politicians, ministers, writers, soldiers, physicians, and lawyers, all were invited by me to step onto the stage, to sit on the throne, and to act like a king. No one was prepared ahead of time. Unprepared characters acted in an unprepared play before an unprepared audience. The audience played the role of the jury. But the test must have been too difficult. No one passed it. When the show was over, no one was judged worthy of being a king and the world remained leaderless. The Viennese press was disturbed by the incident, we found out next morning. Our most "favorable" review was in the *Wiener Mittagszeitung* of April 2, 1921: "The dramatist introduces himself to the audience as the king's jester, who is in search of the king of the world, of that king who cannot be chosen, but who must be recognized because he exists as an idea and has his true habitat in the heart of mankind. The presentation was received by the public with ironic applause which, at times, hindered the production. But there were also some people who belong to the following of Werfel and who strongly took the part of the mysterious poet."

I lost many friends but registered calmly, "*Nemo profeta in sui patria*," and continued to give sessions before audiences in European countries and, later, in the United States.

Our Stegreiftheater group met at the Café Museum. After the Komödienhaus debut, we were confident that Stegreiftheater was a viable art form and could be sustained in Vienna. Our group at that time consisted of Anna Höllering, Elisabeth Bergner, whenever she could be with us in Vienna, Hans Rodenberg, and Robert Blum. Peter Lorre was also involved with the setting up of the Stegreiftheater.

I first met Peter Lorre around 1918 when he was about 17 years old. He was from Budapest, the son of a well-to-do family. . . . When I met him, his name was Ladislaus Lowenstein, and he was begging for money and food in the cafés. He was cross-eyed and had a dimple in his cheek. There was something very appealing about him, so I hired him to help us out with the setting up of the Stegreiftheater. I changed his name to Peter Lorre.

After more than a year of searching, we found a place for our theater at Maysedergasse, Number 2. It was the top floor of a commercial building not far from the Vienna Opera. The Kärntnerstrasse, which corresponds most closely to New York's Fifth Avenue, was the nearest intersection. We couldn't have had a more convenient or more central location for the theater. When, in 1959, Zerka and I were in Vienna, I wanted to show her the original Stegreiftheater. It was visible from the window of our room in the Hotel Sacher. The building was still there. It now houses a restaurant. . . .

Robert Müller, a young Czech journalist, wrote the following review of the Stegreiftheater for the *Prague Presse*:

Dr. Moreno, the well-known writer and psychiatrist, has founded an impromptu theater for the intellectuals of Vienna. Concerning its analytical basis, he has published a book with which the press has occupied itself sufficiently. One must say that the Impromptu Theater, which we really get to see, is the very opposite of the high intellectual tension apparent in the book. It starts from the very bottom, with primitive, and often, with the very simplest of techniques. . . .

With Moreno, we can see in Impromptu a fine therapeutic means for the curative process of civilization—and that is the chief point, the kernel idea in the revolutionary gospel of Moreno in his attempt to give continuity and to restore vitality to our culture. He is certainly a driving force. . . .

The theater was always crowded. Up to 40 people could fit in the room. The Stegreiftheater rapidly became a well-known gathering place for artists and intellectuals. Many people from out of town made sure to come to the Stegreiftheater whenever they were in Vienna.

Dramatic material was suggested by the audience or arose from the actors' own ideas. Sometimes there were themes that actors enjoyed working out. Peter Lorre had such a bit of business, "How to Catch a Louse." This was a favorite of the audiences, as well as his favorite, although he did many other things in the theater. I think this routine had some special significance to Peter because the German word for "louse" is "*Laus*," the same as the last syllable of Peter's real given name, *Ladislaus*. So I think the origins of this sketch were buried deep in Peter's personality. He used to go into the audience and look for lice infesting the heads of affluent Viennese intellectuals. He made all sorts of grabbing motions, to the delight of everyone. It was a big drama. Suddenly he would get his louse! . . .

The Stegreiftheater, with its goal of 100 percent spontaneity, faced enormous difficulties. The first difficulty came from the audiences. They had been brought up to use and rely on cultural conserves in every area of life and to mistrust their own spontaneity. The only spontaneity they had learned to appreciate was what came out of the "animated conserve." Therefore, when true spontaneity was presented to them in the Stegreiftheater, they either suspected it was well rehearsed and an attempt to fool

them, or, if a scene was poorly played, they considered it a sign that spontaneity would not work.

In order to get around the disbelief of the audiences, we turned to the technique of the "living newspaper." Since the performances were based on the day's current events, no one could doubt that they were spontaneous and unrehearsed. The "living newspaper" became a popular diversion for the people of Vienna. It was the first modern alternative to the written news.

We did more, however, than reenact scenes from the papers. The company tried to go into the conflicts that caused the events, feel out the motivations of the people involved, and try to project the final resolutions of the stories dramatized. My book, *The Theater of Spontaneity*, has a description of what took place when we dramatized a spectacular murder which took place in Vienna. . . .

The worst difficulty I had was that I saw my best pupils flirting with the cliché even when acting extemporaneously. Finally, they turned away from the theater of spontaneity and went to the legitimate stage or became movie actors. Peter Lorre was one of them, though he had a remarkable gift for spontaneous acting.

Faced with this dilemma, I turned "temporarily" to the therapeutic theater, a strategic decision which probably saved the movement of the Stegreiftheater from oblivion. It was easier to advocate 100 percent spontaneity in a therapeutic theater. The esthetic imperfections of an actor on the stage could not be forgiven by his audience, but the imperfections and incongruities a mental patient shows on the psychodrama stage are not only more easily tolerated, but expected, and, often, warmly welcomed. The actors become true "auxiliary egos" with the advent of the therapeutic theater. They, too, in their therapeutic function, were accepted in the nudity of their natural talent without the borrowed perfectionism of the theater. . . .

At times, my path crossed the paths of some of the psychoanalytic circle around Freud. Theodore Reik was a frequent visitor to the Stegreiftheater. He was then Freud's secretary and was in love with my friend Brauchbar's sister, who was staying in Vienna at the time. Since Reik was at the theater often, he was among the first to read my book *Das Stegreiftheater*. He showed the book to Freud. When I asked Reik what Freud's reaction to the book was, Reik said, "I don't remember."

"What do you mean, you don't remember?" I asked him.

"I am sure it was not favorable," Reik continued. "I just remember that Freud returned the book to me and I made a note in my mind that I should ask him directly what he thought of the book. Either I don't remember because I was jealous of Freud's reaction, or I was jealous be-

cause Freud never paid any attention to my book which was published at the same time as yours."

Alfred Adler moved freely in our circle of philosophers and artists at the Café Herrenhof and the Café Museum. He had just read *Das Stegreiftheater*. One day he brought that book to the café and opened it to page 70, where he pointed at the word "*Gottähnlichkeit*," which means Godlikeness. He read the following paragraph:

Flying like a bird is one of the oldest dreams of man—if not with his own wings, then through the use of technical wings. Also, man wants to live like a God, if not in reality, through the theater in fantasy. These are, perhaps, the two oldest dreams of man. They have a common origin. It is the desire to prove by magic that the striving after Godlikeness is well founded.

Then Adler said, with a twinkle in his eye, taking the habitual cigar out of his mouth, "We agree?"

"We disagree," I replied. "I am trying to *produce* the God. You are trying to *understand* Him. Actually, we are on the same track, but at two opposite ends." . . .

In 1924, an International Festival of New Theater Techniques was held in Vienna. One of my students, Friedrich (Fred) Kiesler, was the artistic director of the festival committee. Kiesler was an architect who had become interested in the Stegreiftheater and in its potential for a new kind of theatrical architecture. I am no architect, but I had a clear idea of the kind of theater which should be built to house the Stegreiftheater. I wanted to see the kind of building that would, in itself, foster the development of spontaneity in those who saw it and those who used it. Now we are all accustomed to this kind of theatrical architecture, but in 1924, my ideas had the potential to revolutionize the building of, not only theaters, but all architecture. Indeed, Xanti Schwawainski, a director of the Bauhaus in Munich, believed that I had considerable influence on the development of that school of architecture.

I shared my visions of a new kind of theater building freely. Since I did not have the technical skill to implement my ideal Stegreiftheater, I turned to my students. Rudolph Hönigsfelt made sketches according to my instructions and translated them into a model. Unknown to us, Kiesler built a model which was almost identical to ours and then took credit for the creation of a revolutionary new style of theatrical architecture. The model Kiesler built was made at the expense of the city of Vienna.

I was taken aback when, on October 3, 1924, I went to the opening of the International Theater Exhibition. I had received an invitation to the ceremony and had been asked to participate as an official delegate. Many internationally famous theatrical people had been invited to take part in the festival—Fernand Legere, Meierhold, Tairoff, etc. There, on the stage

of the Vienna Konzerthaus, all of the public dignitaries, the president of Austria, the Bürgermeister of Vienna, the participating artists, were assembled. One delegate after another passed the president and was introduced by Mayor Carl Seitz. When Fred was called upon and the mayor stretched out his hand to shake Fred's, I stopped the proceedings. I spoke out, calling him a thief. The mayor stopped the ceremony and everyone, delegates and spectators, rose to their feet, astounded at my action. The police entered and I left the auditorium.

The next morning, the papers were full of the scandal. Fred felt compelled to sue me for libel in order to clear his name. That is how it came about that my ideal of anonymity, the nature of the Stegreiftheater, and the "*Raumbühne*" were brought to trial before the Supreme Court of Austria on January 19, 1925.

At the end of the trial, I made a long speech before the court in order to state my position *vis-à-vis* anonymity and my contribution to the theater and to man's existential problems. Since all of my books had been published anonymously, and since my ideas had been given freely, without any patent or copyright protection, I had no legal claims on any of my work. This, however, was the core of my argument before the court:

I have given away my ideas to the community, to all its parts, for free perusal; with this I have given the privilege to all, and have given everyone the right to consider my ideas common property, to take them over to the letter, and to use and distribute them in any manner, in printed form, or by mouth, provided it is accomplished *without* reference to their names, or any other name. But it was not my idea to leave my contributions to a single individual for the purpose of bringing to that person a proprietary relationship towards my ideas, of linking my contributions to someone's family name for the purpose of enriching him. . . .

The subject of the dispute is a stage with emphasis upon all the dimensions of space; it has three properties: central position, vertical structure, and a circular auditorium. And because this stage is a symbol of the hidden whole, no one will be able to discover it, to visualize it, or to demand it unless he carries the whole within himself. Whoever demands such a stage will also know its true function, the new theater for it. And whoever demands for it the theater, the theater of spontaneity, will also know of the society that requires it. So it is that even the lowliest object, the most modest manipulation can appropriately be required only from the center. Only from there can the true position be obtained. The pretender who offers a part becomes a traitor even in that. Only out of the whole, do the parts come forth. Only out of the mother can the child come forth. . . .

I am before the judge. The public should be here instead. The public is accused. As it is not present I ask to be considered its witness. . . .

As a private person, I cannot reproach the plaintiff. He has not taken anything away from *me*. He has deprived the public of a good in a manner that violates the moral law. It is not in the nature of a law court to contest the right of all in favor of one individual. If the court approves his suit, then the public

is condemned. Then I must suffer the fine as its representative. In that event plagiarism is cleared, and anonymity a wish of the devil.

I was vindicated.

The German reaction to *The Words of the Father* was unsatisfactory to me. The Stegreiftheater movement, although it had begun to take root in Bavarian and Prussian cities, in addition to its popularity in Vienna, moved too slowly for my expectancy. I saw a long and difficult struggle ahead. The question was where I ought to go in order to secure a less difficult passage for my ideas. East or West? The East of Europe was dominated by Soviet communism which was, by 1924, firmly entrenched. It offered little hope for any new ideas unless I was willing to accept the given structure of Soviet society and bore from within. I decided against Soviet Russia in favor of the United States.

All my inspirations for my methods and techniques have come directly or indirectly from my idea of the Godhead and from the principle of His genesis. My God hypothesis has made me enormously productive. All the conclusions I drew from it and translated into scientific terms have been correct. *I had no reason to assume that the original hypothesis itself was false just because it was not popular with scientists* [Moreno's italics]. My God idea, out of which the idea of the sociometric system grew, was, therefore, the greatest barrier to my going to Russia, accepting the Soviet doctrine, and, so to speak, not [letting] my left hand know what my right hand [was doing]. I was aiming for a mankind modeled after the God of the first day of Creation. I preferred to be midwife to an incoherent, confused, democratic way of life [rather] than . . . commissar of a tightly organized world. My God book turned me to the United States. . . .

We are not really conscious that the role of the objective scientist was modeled after the idea of the impartial Godhead of Spinoza. As God's pronouncements are expected to have superpersonal validity, the scientist's pronouncements are expected to have superpersonal validity. He must not wish the sun to gravitate around the earth, nor the earth around the moon. He must not wish the universe to last forever or to perish by sundown. He must not wish that only kind and just people be born. He must not wish that only ugly and stupid people be born. He must not wish that some races will multiply themselves and live in comfort while others live in distress and perish. He is objective, neutral, uninvolved. He is the impartial recorder of events as they emerge.

This all-embracing and impartial Godhead, the God of Spinoza, has stood as a model for the physical scientist and stood well, but He has not been adequate for the needs of the social scientist, at least not entirely. As long as the social scientist was a pedantic actuary and demographer, a vital statistician, and naive economist, the model passed as appropriate. But as

soon as he became concerned with the “We,” the collectivities of actors, the model needed an extension. . . .

It was this new model of an “operational” Godhead announced in *The Words of the Father* which was my stairway to the sociometric system, developed for an apparently entirely different objective—the search for a model of scientific objectivity in the social sciences.

The greatest model of “objectivity” man has ever conceived was the idea of the Godhead, a being who knows and feels with the universe because He created it, a being unlimited in His ability to penetrate all facets of the universe and still be entirely free of bias [Moreno’s italics].

Only in New York, the melting pot of the nations, the vast metropolis, with all its freedom from all preconceived notions, could I be free to pursue sociometric group research in the grand style I had envisioned.

By 1925, I was ready to leave Europe. In the northern railway station of Vienna, in September of 1925, my mother came to say goodbye to me. She joked and laughed as if I were going to Salzburg and would be returning the next day. Someone said to her, “A few months ago it was a similar scene, but it was your son, William, who was to make the voyage. But then you cried and could not tear yourself away from him. Now, when your son, Jacques, leaves you don’t seem to care.”

“Well,” she said, in deep thought, “When William left I was worried. Willie is such a good boy. God knows what might happen to him there. People might hurt him. But with Jacques it is different. He can take care of himself. First, he knows why he goes, and then, if nothing else, his ideas will take care of him.”

And that is how it was.

Chapter 7

Vöslau

AFTER WORLD WAR I, I decided not to practice or live in a large city like Vienna. [The events described in this chapter were contemporaneous with those recounted in the previous chapter, but Moreno preferred to describe them separately.] I wanted to go into the countryside and practice among plain people. I got on a train one day. The first stop was Kottingbrunn, a small village near Vienna, but very much a country village, not a suburban town. I left the train and walked to the town hall. I introduced myself as Dr. Moreno and was informed that the town needed a health officer. I took the job. It was as simple as that.

I got to Vöslau because I went hiking. Only a few kilometers separated Kottingbrunn and Vöslau. I was out for a little fresh air and I wanted to get to know the countryside. There, on the main street of Vöslau, I met a middle-aged man who stopped me and spoke to me in a friendly way. I never found out why he approached me, although we were to become very good friends later. He introduced himself, "I am the mayor of Vöslau. I am Mayor Peksa."

I responded with astonishment, "My God, isn't that wonderful! I am very lucky to meet such an important person. It gives me great pleasure to become acquainted with you, Mayor Peksa."

He asked, "And who are you?"

I introduced myself, "I am a physician, the officer of health at Kottingbrunn. My name is Moreno."

Mayor Peksa became excited. He said, "I'll tell you, Dr. Moreno, why don't you come to us? We need a health officer very badly. Dr. Fuchs just died. We need a new man."

"I would be only too glad to come to Vöslau," I replied. "I could be health officer of both towns, Kottingbrunn and Vöslau. I have only been at Kottingbrunn for two months, you see."

"No," he said. "We want to have you just for us alone." Peksa was a simple working man. It was the first time in the history of Vöslau that a working man had become mayor. All the other mayors had been people of

means, bankers, businessmen, lawyers, and so on. Peksa wanted to do something for the working class, and he was proud to have found a doctor for the working people. He said, "Next week the town council meets and I will propose that we hire you as our public health officer, as our doctor."

"Oh, God," I said, "that is almost like a miracle. Let us drink a glass of wine to celebrate the occasion."

When my appointment was ratified the following week, I moved to Vöslau. The town gave me the use of a house in the Valley of May. The House of May was of stone, rather like a small castle, with a tower. A long veranda, overlooking the valley, ran across the whole back of the house. There was also an enormous wine cellar, the largest in town, which ran under the house and was carved out of the ground around the house as well. The house was surrounded by trees. Another house, across the road, was also given for my use, but I had no need of two houses.

It was the custom for the public health officer of the town to be appointed chief physician at the Kamgarn Spinnerei, a large textile factory in town. The town supplied housing, the factory, a salary. So I was well taken care of.

Many extraordinary things happened to me in Vöslau which explain how it happened that I became the People's Doctor. I went to the farthest extreme with the idea of anonymity. In Vöslau, I was just known as the Doctor. I had no shingle on my door, nor did I have prescription blanks, although this had some troublesome consequences for me later. I did not tell anyone my name. The mayor and the council knew my name, but they were appreciative of my desire for anonymity and went along with it.

I had a fixed idea that it was not fair to take money from patients, and so I never accepted any from those who came to see me privately. That, I believed, accounted for my popularity. I had more patients than I could treat. People came from all the villages around Vöslau, even from far away, peasants, men, women, children. When they came, they did not come empty-handed. They brought eggs and hens and geese, and once in a while, a pig. They brought all kinds of gifts.

I had a wonderful housekeeper then, Frau Frank, an elderly widow from Kottingbrunn. She argued with me, "Doctor, why don't you take money?"

"Why?" I answered. "I have a good salary. I have a house. I have no family to support."

"No, no. It isn't right. People expect to pay you for your work. You should accept fees." But I would not, and the gratitude of the people was limitless. So they kept on bringing all kinds of gifts, which they presented to Frau Frank. They brought clothing. They brought foodstuffs. I paid little attention to the gifts, but in the course of time, the house and the wine

cellar became crowded like a department store. Often it was embarrassing when important or well-to-do, even wealthy, patients came to see me with their maladies. The mayors of Wiener Neustadt and Sankt Pölten came to see me, but I would never accept money from anyone.

Once an old peasant came with a young girl. He said to me, "Dear Doctor, a number of years ago you cured me of cancer of the stomach. You saved my life. As a token of gratitude, I bring my little daughter to you as a gift. Here she is."

I looked at the girl. She was about 16 or 17 years old, and her father seemed to think that I might consider marrying his daughter. I replied to him, "I thank you, but I cannot accept your gift. I am deeply moved by your enormous gratitude, so great that you offer me your only daughter to be my wife. However, I believe the best thing you can do is to take your daughter home and wait until she is of age."

"I understand," the man said, and left me.

One night, I heard some strange noises coming from the upper floor of the house, where Frau Frank lived. I went upstairs and listened at the door of her room, wondering what the noise could be. I opened the door and saw huge piles of gulden, gulden, gulden.

"What is going on here?" I asked.

"Dear Doctor," she answered me, and I noticed that she was in tears. "When I saw how hard you work and that you would not accept any money, and when at the same time, I saw all these wonderful gifts coming in, I decided to barter some and sell the rest for money. In your old age, when you can't work any more, you will have a nest egg. All this money is yours."

I was astounded but could not do anything except appreciate her kindness and thoughtfulness. . . .

When I went to Vöslau, I became a celibate again. The Godplayer was again ascendent. The intense sexuality I had felt and experienced during the war was put behind me. All of the lovely, gentle young women I had relationships with had never entered into my real, my very complicated lovelife. They did not touch my life as a Godplayer. I had gone through periods of intense sexual activity followed by periods of celibacy before. But what I really wanted was a woman who would put up with my fantastic utopian ideas, one who would love me both physically and spiritually, a Muse. . . .

I saw Marian for the first time walking through the valley with a group of children. She was about 18 or 19, very blonde, blue-eyed, about 5 feet 5, rather slender, very self-possessed, but, at the same time, rather suggestible. She was a school teacher.

I didn't touch her. She didn't touch me. I loved her with my eyes, in my

dreams. And I imagined that she did the same in return. There was never a courtship between us. . . .

The day I heard of Frau Frank's death [while she was out of town visiting her sister], Marian walked into my office. She had seen me professionally several times for a minor throat condition. She, too, had just heard about Frau Frank's death and offered to come and help me out for a couple of hours every day. After a week, the 2 hours became 4. After another few weeks, she came early in the morning and stayed all day. One day she gave up teaching, left the home of her parents, and came to live with me in the House of May. She became my platonic lover and my spiritual partner.

Our relationship confused the townspeople. They did not know what to make of us. How could such a saintly man who was a gentle doer of good deeds suddenly turn into a sensuous lover? Our relationship was so genuinely innocent at that time that it was perfectly simple for us to go about as if there were nothing at all unusual in our being together. Marian's parents defended us to the utmost, saying that it was perfectly natural. The doctor needed a housekeeper and was happy to have one who was so young and beautiful, but there was nothing at all suspicious going on between us. My partisans said that only dirty minds would think otherwise, but there were plenty of dirty minds in town. . . .

One of the most significant aspects of my Godplaying was the way it reflected itself in my sexual life. I lived with Marian for months, even slept with her, without having any sexual contact with her. I had no desire for sex. The stronger my desire for Godplaying was, the weaker was my desire for sex. There was, therefore, in my case, a negative correlation between sex and God in that particular period. My case was probably more than personal. It seems to be a universal phenomenon. The Godplayers in the Bible, for instance, Jesus, who certainly was a great lover in the spiritual sense, was hardly interested in sex: the story of Mary Magdalene speaks for itself. When one begins to play God, one loses the desire for natural copulation. One becomes quasi-impotent; the mystery of celibacy is closely related to it. God (or those who aspire to become God) does not permit the flesh to dominate Him. . . .

I have tried to define my relationship with Marian. In the beginning, the effort resulted in spelling out what kind of relationship it was *not*. . . . Our relationship was not the ordinary kind, like two people who fall in love, have an affair, and break up after the period of infatuation is over. The relationship was not sexually enforced, although sex eventually played a part in it. We met and were immediately devoted to one another. Sexual devotion emerged after a long while; it was always secondary to the relationship.

Neither were we like two people who meet, fall in love, and marry in order to have children and establish a family. There was no legal enforce-

ment of our relationship. We made a free decision, she and I, although the decision was never expressed in so many words or dramatically formulated.

If it was neither infatuation or conventional love, nor religious, legal, or social force, what was the element which kept us together? I think it can be best expressed as a relationship which was based on mutual faith. People who are tied together by acts of faith are not tied together by any promise or hope that what they have built together will endure forever. Such is the embodiment of ultimate devotion; one knows intuitively that one can depend on the other, that life and death cannot hinder the existence of that devotion. It exists and will exist as long as the two people last, whether they remain together or not.

I believe that this kind of relationship is extremely modern, ultramodern. It has a global and even a cosmic meaning. It exists everywhere in varying forms. For all its modernity, it has existed as far back as human history goes, although it may never have been as independent from custom and social ties, religion, and moral codes as it is in our time. It is possible that this precious form of relation won't last and will be destroyed by man's terrific urge to put everything within frameworks which are easily controllable. . . .

I met Marian quite casually. She never introduced me to her parents, and I never introduced any of my relatives to her. Our bond was strictly between ourselves. There was no bondage between us, no minister or priest, no mother, father, or friend. We spoke the same language, and we were both young. There may have been some esthetic element in our attraction to one another. For months, I did not know where she came from, whether she was rich or poor, German, Czech, or Hungarian. She did not know whether I was Jew or Gentile, Italian, or Spanish. These factors did not seem relevant to our relationship. Later, when I found out that she was a Gentile of predominantly German origin, my imagination was flattered. In my early youth, I was more attracted to Gentile women than to Jewish women. But considerations of race or religion were tangential to us. . . .

A social revolution was raging in Austria in 1918. Vöslau was the only town in Austria which was, for a period of 3 days, a Soviet, having been taken over by the Workers' Council. Bela Kuhn's communist government in nearby Hungary had been sending out revolutionary shock waves all over *Mittel Europa* at the time. The majority of the city council were, when I arrived, manual laborers, working men with a leftist, socialistic bias.

Aside from our mutual good feelings, Mayor Peksa saw in me an opportunity to consolidate his political position, and my election as health officer was a clever piece of strategy on his part against bourgeois suppression. He was proud to have me as his friend, a doctor who treated him as

an equal. My election as health officer was revolutionary in another way. It was the first time that a Jew had been appointed to what had always been a post reserved for Gentiles. It had also been reserved for doctors who presented the picture of the complete bourgeois gentleman, a man set apart from the plain people. There were hardly any Jews living in the town, although many Jewish people came to the spa in the summertime. My detractors said that I had hypnotized the mayor into nominating me as health officer. . . .

My passion for anonymity reached its peak at this time. . . . I thought that the simplest way for a doctor to keep out of mischief was to be anonymous. By avoiding the possibility of fame, he could not draw patients from other doctors. A name is a form of capital that lends itself to advertising and exploitation.

But it didn't work out quite as I had planned. My anonymity provided me with a certain glamour. The more I tried to retreat, the more people followed me. I became the *Wunderdoktor*. Naturally, the other doctors around became jealous and restless. They spread the tale that I was not a real doctor. I was a quack. But the University of Vienna promptly acknowledged that I had received my degree in February 1917. If I had planned to become famous, I could not have devised a better scheme. So the episode ended in paradox: the more I clung to anonymity, the more widely known I became. And we have already seen how my effort to treat the poor and not take money was thwarted.

Late one night, the doorbell rang with a shrill sound, as it has often been told in the tales of witches. I heard my old housekeeper [Moreno is referring to an earlier event] tapping down the stairway and slowly opening the door with its heavy key. "There must be some very sick person coming to see the doctor," she said. Then she rushed into me with an unusual expression on her face.

"What is it?"

"Oh," she exclaimed, "a big carriage is downstairs, drawn by four white horses, or maybe six. The Bürgermeister of Mödling is very sick. He is dying. There are two ladies in the carriage, his wife and sister. They want you. All the other doctors have seen him. No one was able to help. You are their last hope. You must come right away."

I had never treated the Bürgermeister of such a large city. I looked out the window. Yes, there was a carriage outside. The snow was falling in heavy flakes. I walked through the door and saw the two ladies in heavy, dark furs. They looked straight at me. They were sitting in the carriage and made space for me. They looked at me with an air of disappointment. Then they looked at one another. Back to me again, then to each other. They whispered one to the other. I stroked my face and chin and suddenly

a flash of insight came to me. I realized how young I must look to them, barely out of medical school. They expected the Wunderdoktor to be an elderly man, experienced and wise. I knew I had to act fast. "Oh," I said, "I am sorry, but my father could not come tonight; he is very, very busy. But I am his son. He gave me all the prescriptions and told me what to do."

Their faces brightened. "Oh, yes," they whispered to each other, "the father is very busy; that is his son; he has been told what to do." They gave the coachman a signal to start the carriage. After a while we arrived in Mödling. The square before the Bürgermeister's house was crowded with mourners. Hundreds stood there. The Bürgermeister was well loved in the city. As the carriage passed through the crowd, the Bürgermeister's wife and sister passed remarks to the people waiting there and murmurs spread rapidly through the throng. "The father is very, very busy. He could not come. He has sent his son. The old man has told him what to do." Soon I stood before the bed in which the dying man lay, stricken with anguish, breathing heavily. The man's wife moved swiftly to the bedside. "The father is so busy. He could not come," she whispered to her husband. "But he has sent his son and told him what to do. He will help you." The Bürgermeister looked up and smiled. I examined him and gave him the medication he required. He was suffering from pneumonia and heart trouble.

The Bürgermeister recovered for the time being. It was like a miracle! The tale began to spread over the city and to the villages near and far. "There is, in Vöslau, a Wunderdoktor." But they added, "there are two, a father and a son. The father is very, very busy. When he cannot come, he sends his son." My fame had reached the hearts of the people and they began to come from far places to see me. I had more to do than one man could ever handle.

On another winter night, cold, and late, well after midnight, I was sitting at my desk when the doorbell shrilled. Frau Frank rushed in. "It is the Bürgermeister of Sankt Pölten. He is in great pain. He wants to see you." Sankt Pölten was two or three times larger than Mödling. It was a long way from Sankt Pölten to Vöslau, so the Bürgermeister had come in person for treatment. He was a big man. He had hardly described his troubles when he exclaimed, "But I am telling you, I did not come to see you. I need the best! I want to see the old man himself! Where is your father?"

"Oh," I responded. "He is very, very busy. You will have to wait a long time. He has so many patients scheduled before you."

"I must see him. I must. Where is his office?"

"Well," I said pensively, "he may be in one of the offices upstairs. Follow me." We went up to the first floor. We looked into all the rooms. He was not there. We went up to the second floor. We looked into all the rooms. He was not there. We went up to the third floor. We looked into all

the rooms. He was not there either. The Bürgermeister looked at me questioningly. "Well, this is the last floor. We may go up still higher, though. Follow me." There we were, standing on the roof. Above us was the clear, dark winter sky, filled with stars. He looked at me as if to say, "Where do we go from here?" I looked into his eyes, then pointed to the sky above. "Maybe he has his office there."

The Bürgermeister was deeply moved. He took my hand. "I understand," he said. "The Father is very busy."

There were many such episodes that helped me hold to my dream that I was, indeed, God. . . .

Marian had been very close to the German nationalist societies in town. At one time, she had been the secretary of one of the more radical groups. No one really knew my exact ancestry, but it began to be thought that I was Jewish. As the gossip spread, two opinions began to spread about me. One was that, even if I was a Jew, I did not look like one, that my name was not Jewish, and that I did not mingle with Jewish people. Thus I was absolved of having been born a Jew. The other opinion was that a Jew is a Jew no matter what, and that it was an outrage for a Jew to live openly with a young, beautiful German girl who had been held in the highest esteem of the townspeople before she had taken up with me. These people felt that I had mesmerized Marian or that I had exercised some kind of black magic upon her so as to make her leave her senses and live with me.

Both of these theories were underground and rarely came to the surface except for one incident. Marian and I were at the Baden railway station, coming home from a small excursion. Baden is a few miles north of Vöslau. We walked up and down the platform waiting for the train. A dozen men, mostly adolescent, all in the uniform of the German academic fraternities, extremely nationalistic proto-Nazi groups, were clustered on the platform.

Marian whispered to me, explaining who the men were. They all knew her, and she was anxious enough about their presence to caution me against them and try to move me away from a potentially tense situation.

But I would not avoid them. The men walked up and down, coming closer and closer to us, becoming more and more threatening in their looks and bearing. Suddenly one, apparently the leader, stopped in front of us. He snarled, "Jew," but before he could move away from me, I punched him. He fell on the ground. Marian trembled and held my arm tightly. The man got up. I looked into his eyes and then looked into the eyes of his comrades who had crowded around us. I looked at them with all the intensity I could muster. I measured them with my eyes. Under the charismatic spell I cast—that is the only way I can explain it—they moved on without saying a word. At that moment, the train came into the station.

This rather trivial incident became important for two reasons. On one hand, I pictured myself, for a moment, like Moses, who knocked down an Egyptian slave master because he insulted one of Moses's kinsmen. I felt that it was good to have stood up without fear against a crowd of men who could easily have slaughtered me. Whether the historical Moses was an Egyptian or a Jew is irrelevant. He became a Jew the moment he knocked down that Egyptian. In the same way, I became a Jew the moment I knocked down the Nazi. Obviously one is a Jew, a German, or a Frenchman only in moments of active identification with his heritage. No one is a Jew, a German, or a Frenchman *all the time*. Was it cowardice that held my enemy and his cohorts from retaliating against me? Was it a certain awe at the unexpectedness of my attack? Or fear? Was it the effect of my ethical power which made them halt before a superior man? Was it my status as the Wunderdoktor? Whatever it was, it was a strange incident with an unusual ending. . . .

The fact of my Jewishness may have been involved somewhat in my decision to be anonymous. It has been proverbial for Jews to hide their identity and change their names. The official character of my post in Vöslau and the political climate in which I had grown up and which continued to worsen for Jews gave me an excellent opportunity to live up to these Jewish attributes. I suppose I was reluctant to advertise the fact that I was a Jew. I wished to maintain a mysterious neutrality. I kept everyone guessing. The secrecy of my true identity became so intense in my mind that I myself began to wonder what my real identity and my real name were. I had been playing with my name for years, but the problem of my name *versus* my desire for anonymity arose in acute fashion when I started the existential journal, *Daimon*. I did not start with anonymity right away, but with something in between. First I changed my name around: from Jacques Levy to Jacob Levy, thus intensifying my Jewishness; then I added my father's middle name, Moreno, Jacob Moreno Levy; again later I turned it around and became J. L. Moreno. All of these subtle differences began to annoy me, and so I decided to drop my name altogether and became totally anonymous. . . .

At times it seemed to us that our lives were threatened. One could see and hear groups of nationalist students walking through the valley in the course of the night. They shouted at us and yelled slanderous insults. Often they stood before our door and sang nationalistic songs, looking up at the lighted windows, hoping to provoke us into acting against them. At times we heard shots in the valley and the air was filled with panic. It got to the point where Marian was afraid to walk through the valley, even in the daytime.

But our . . . tormentors did not remain quiet. They invaded public places

all over the district and engaged in all kinds of provocative behavior. Whenever I walked through the town alone, our enemies evaded me. There was no more eye-to-eye confrontation with them. Of course, I still had an enormous following in town. All the workers and their families were on my side, and they were, by far, the majority. Unknown to me, I was a symbol to the workingmen, their rallying point against the rich, the moneyed, the powerful people, the bankers and their cohorts. I was well protected against aggression. The little people in town knew better than I did the extent to which I was exposed to harm and [they] kept watch over me. But they did not feel protective towards Marian. She appeared to them to belong to the hated class and was reputed to have me in her clutches. To them, I was the innocent man of the people, and she was the witch. . . .

Had I not experienced the love of a Gentile woman for a Jewish man, the fight of a superior Jew against the prevailing mediocrity of German society at the time, that jealousy against me, and that desire for revenge, I might never have developed the intuition that I had to leave Europe in time to find a new haven in the United States. I was like a migratory bird who felt the cold winds of autumn long before they actually began to blow upon him.

From 1921 on, I urged my friends to leave Europe and prepare a new setting for our work in the United States, and in 1925, I followed them. As history proved, it was the right decision to make. Perhaps my motivation to emigrate was also on a higher plane than a purely personal concern for my physical safety and security. I had an enormous migratory urge in my very soul to engage in fantastic journeys into all the realms of the spirit, to find a new principle that was worthy for mankind to follow. . . .

Finally Marian and I did become lovers and consummated our relationship. Our physical relationship became a very intense one in which we were able to fuse the spiritual longings of the Godplayer and his muse with the purely physical sex that had been, for such a long time, irrelevant to my life. Our relationship deepened every time we were together. We expected to marry, although we talked about marriage very rarely. . . .

She followed me to Hamburg on the eve of my departure for the United States in February 1925. We had a night of love there that was unequalled in our entire previous relationship. I promised to send for her as soon as I was established in the United States. I fully intended to have her join me and we corresponded for a while. Some of her letters moved me deeply. "Whenever the new health officer drives by in his Mercedes, I cry." After several months, I stopped answering her letters. Somehow my feelings for her just died down as I became involved in an exciting new life. . . .

Chapter 8

A Prophet Dreams

I SAW MYSELF DRIVING in an automobile through the avenue of a large city. Years later, it seemed to me that the avenue in my dream looked very much like New York City's Fifth Avenue. There were skyscrapers on both sides of the street and huge loudspeakers plugged into every window. Many automobiles—I tried to count them, but I don't know how many—drove by in long chains. The traffic was closely knit; each car had a loudspeaker in place of a horn. When a driver touched his horn, a spoken advertisement came forth instead of the usual blare of the car horn. I heard, "The fastest passenger liner to the U.S.A. is the *Mauretania*." The queer thing was that these and similar sounds repeated themselves automatically, like recordings. Other advertisements, like "Buy Camel cigarettes" came from windows of the skyscrapers. The dream ended in a nightmare of noise and I woke up.

I dream rarely, and I remember my dreams still more rarely. But this dream was so suggestive that I dropped everything else and began to work day and night with a young engineer on the model of a machine that could reproduce sound as I heard it in my dream.

When I woke up from that dream, it was as if the dream had said to me, "You have expressed so many nasty thoughts about machines, but here is a machine which will help you get out of Europe and come to the U.S.A., where you will be able to attain the fulfillment of your ideas."

As I look back over the last 50 years, this insignificant dream was actually what precipitated my coming to America. It was the dream that pushed me out of Europe. . . .

I tried to visualize clearly what I had seen in the dream. Like a scientist who follows the clues of nature, I tried to duplicate what I had dreamt. I had seen large discs turning rapidly. The discs seemed to be made of steel. The sounds appeared to emanate from magnetic fields produced on the discs, recorded by a spiral consisting of a continuous line of points, more or less strongly magnetized according to the strength or quality of the sound. It also seemed as if the recordings had been broadcast from a distant place, perhaps a radio station.

Upon investigation, we learned that steel recording discs were a novel idea. The only thing that had been tried in the past of a similar nature was the recording system of a Danish engineer, Paulssen. I understood the physical principles involved—Faraday's laws—but Franz, the young Vöslauer engineer [with whom I worked] had the technical expertise to translate the physics and the dream into a working reality. As soon as we finished the first model, we gave a demonstration of it in Vienna. A report of the invention appeared in the Vienna newspapers, and the story was carried by the news services. A story appeared in the *New York Times* of Friday, July 3, 1925. We received an offer to come to America with our invention, which I called "Radio Film." . . .

I arrived in New York in October 1925. A newspaper reporter who came to the *Mauretania* looking for arriving celebrities to interview asked me what I knew of life in America. I told him about some of my ideas [on] sociometry and psychodrama and that they might find a home here, adding, "The foremost American sociologist and Godplayer I can think of is Walt Whitman."

Thus, I started my new life in America with all of its demands and requirements. I demonstrated the model of my invention as soon as I arrived in New York. I made a contract with the General Phonograph Corporation for the machine's manufacture and distribution. The company was assigned the patent; we agreed they should pay us royalties for 2½ years after the initial distribution of the device.

The corporation arranged for [my collaborator] and me to stay in Elyria, Ohio, for 6 months to help them develop and improve "Radio Film." And so we did. . . .

When I got back to New York in the spring of 1926, I wanted to concentrate on being a doctor, a psychiatrist—to be a psychodramatist, a group therapist, a sociometrist. But my immigration status had to be straightened out. My visa was good for 8 months only. Austrians or Rumanians had difficulty in getting into the United States under the regular immigration quotas. I was on the point of going back to Europe, of getting myself involved in some scheme to change my immigration status, when another opportunity offered itself. I did go to Canada for a few days to have my visa extended. I visited the American consul and money changed hands, but I was unable to have my status changed permanently. The Immigration Service was riddled with corruption in those days. All kinds of rackets and bribery took place, and there were many illegal immigrants in the United States. If I hadn't gone to Canada, I might have been deported.

Dr. Bela Schick, the originator of the Schick test for diphtheria immunity, was a pediatrician affiliated with Mt. Sinai Hospital. Bela and I were good friends, and he was interested in my work with children. Upon his in-

vation, I gave a demonstration in the application of impromptu techniques of psychotherapy to children's problems. This modest event may well be recorded as the first presentation of role playing or action therapy techniques at an American institution. The doctors and nurses of the pediatric department at Mt. Sinai accepted the impromptu techniques readily, and I began to work at the hospital's mental hygiene clinic in collaboration with Dr. Ira S. Wile. The spontaneity test and other sociometric tests were developed and refined at Mt. Sinai. I also worked with Bela on spectroanalysis for about a year. This was a new field, and I got very involved with the physics and technology of it, but that was a detour for me and did not last. It did, however, keep me going until the royalties from my invention started coming in, and I received my license to practice medicine in the United States. . . .

Beatrice Beecher was a lecturer at the hospital. She was an expert on the problems of families and the social relationships of children. After one of her lectures, we were introduced and we talked about the work I was doing with Drs. Schick and Wile.

My immigration status came into the conversation as by that time I was on the verge of returning to Europe, and it was uppermost in my mind. Beatrice, the granddaughter of Henry Ward Beecher, the famous preacher [and abolitionist], suggested that she marry me for the benefit of the Immigration Service and then divorce me. So we went down to [the] city hall and got married. I was saved by a saintly woman.

Beatrice led a rather ascetic life. She worked at the Plymouth Institute in Brooklyn, an institution related to the Plymouth Church of the Pilgrims where her grandfather was minister for so many years. When I met her, she was about 33, a lovely woman with blonde hair and blue eyes, very slender.

Beatrice and I lived together for a short while before the divorce, but we were not meant to stay together. The first night I spent at her house in Brooklyn, Beatrice prepared a magnificent turkey dinner. She said, "This is our Thanksgiving dinner." Although we parted soon after, we remained friends.

Beatrice introduced psychodrama to the children at the Plymouth Institute. She was a brilliant educator and successful at any enterprise she put her mind to. Psychodrama was quite a radical departure for a church-related settlement house, so much so that the *New York Times* wrote an article about it.

We worked together on various projects until her death, in the mid-1930s, of pneumonia. It was an unusual kind of friendship. We were intimates, but not lovers. When she died, she left me a letter confirming what I had always felt, that she cared for me very much.

Now that I was on the way to becoming an American citizen, thanks to Beatrice, I needed a license to practice medicine in New York state. This opened a new range of difficulties. Doctors from the universities abroad had to take an examination in English that covered all the subjects in the medical school curriculum. They then had to take a hospital residency for a stipulated period. The requirements for foreign-educated doctors were much more rigorous than for the American-trained. Meeting those requirements was hardly possible for my disposition at that time. But then I had some more good luck. The Board of Regents, miraculously, recognized my degree without further ado and granted the license on September 22, 1927. . . .

The National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor [NCPPL] was an organization which facilitated innovations in the field of penology and criminology. My work with the prostitutes in Vienna before the First World War and my work in Mittendorf with a disorganized community threatened with social disintegration during that war had given me an opportunity to study the field at firsthand and to make some contribution to it. By the time I came to the United States, my ideas of group psychotherapy and the structure of human relations in institutions were well developed and had attracted some attention in America. The National Committee on Prisons and Prison Labor was interested in my past work and helped me find ways to continue that work in American institutions. Dr. E. Stagg Whitin was a well-known criminologist, a professor of criminology at Columbia University. Dr. Whitin was also chairman of the executive council of the NCPPL. It was he who sponsored my work, first by giving me entrée into institutions, and then by raising the money we needed to fund our research. I was appointed Director of Social Research of the New York State Department of Welfare. My research at this point was in two areas: prison work, primarily at Sing Sing Prison, and work at the New York State Training School for Girls in Hudson, New York.

Warden Lewis E. Lawes was at Sing Sing when I went there. He ushered me into the room from which he could survey the prison through a large window. He said to me as we looked down at the men below us, "I'm not a scientist or a psychotherapist, but just by looking through that window, I can pick out a few men who can tell me everything I need to know about what is going on in the prison. I'm just a plain sergeant. I don't need any 'group psychotherapy' to run the prison." But after Lawes saw some of our work, particularly our sociograms, he was able to tell me, "You can help me." Warden Lawes became quite famous in the field of penology. A film was made of his life, *Twenty Thousand Years in Sing Sing*.

It was our goal to turn the prison into a therapeutic society where the men were organized into groups on the basis of the needs and strengths of

each of the men in the group. I knew, from previous experience, that the mere assignment of people to groups in which each one could function positively would go a long way towards improving their mental health and [would] have positive consequences for their social interactions.

I submitted my findings in a paper which was read at the meeting of the American Psychiatric Association [APA] in Toronto, Canada, on June 5, 1931. I had just been elected to membership in the APA, and I walked proudly through the aisles of the meeting room in the beautiful Royal York Hotel in Toronto. The late Dr. Walter M. English, who was then president of the APA, approached me and said, "Dr. Moreno, you may have heard that Dr. A. A. Brill is reading a paper on Abraham Lincoln as a humorist. He asked me to invite you to be its discussant."

I was taken aback and muttered, "I feel greatly honored to be asked by Dr. Brill, but I have never had the pleasure of meeting him and, besides, I wonder if I can meet his expectations. I am not a psychoanalyst."

After a slight pause, English nodded to me in a reassuring way. I walked on, my chest swelling with a narcissistic glow. I walked a few steps, questions rapidly flitting through my mind, "What is going on here? Is Brill short a discussant? Will I get myself into trouble? Why did he pick on me? I see many distinguished psychoanalysts here."

Just then, Brill walked by and that is how we became acquainted. Brill handed me a copy of his manuscript and said, "I have heard fine things about your work. I am glad that you are willing to discuss my paper." Shortly, Dr. English convened the meeting, a joint session with the American Psychoanalytic Association.

Dr. Brill's paper was the first to be read that day. The auditorium was packed to its farthest corners when Brill started to read. After the paper was finished, Dr. English said, "Ladies and gentlemen, this was such an interesting paper that I was loathe to hear it end. It is now before you for discussion. From its presentation I see nothing of which we can complain."

I stepped up on the platform and started my discussion. "Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: I have listened carefully, but I am not sure now whether Dr. Brill's paper was a paper on Lincoln or a paper on psychoanalysis. The title of his paper is 'Abraham Lincoln as a Humorist.' It might just as well have been called 'Dr. Brill as a Humorist.' It is not fair to psychoanalyze the personality of a man now dead, as you have to do it without his consent. One must have, therefore, a *special* reason. Dr. Brill's conclusions are based on the statements of friends and contemporaries who may have had all kinds of motives to relate all kinds of stories about Lincoln. Had a contemporary psychiatrist made a study of Lincoln, Dr. Brill would have been justified, to some extent, in accepting the findings. But as no scientific study of the great American Emancipator was made

during his lifetime, there was no justification for any attempt to analyze his personality from what is related about him by laymen."

The next day, the newspapers of New York, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles, Toronto, Montreal, London, and Paris carried the startling news that Abraham Lincoln was really a schizomaniac personality, as psychoanalyzed by Dr. A. Brill. The story ended with the following item: "An American by adoption rose to the defense of a dead president of the United States at today's session of the American Psychiatric Association's Convention. . . . Dr. Brill's critic was Dr. J. L. Moreno, New York psychiatrist, formerly of Vienna." Pathé news called me for an interview about the Lincoln controversy. First, I appeared and said a few words about Lincoln. Then Brill replied, talking about psychoanalysis. We had a confrontation. The newsreel showed for several weeks and aroused a good deal of comment.

My own paper was read the same day as Dr. Brill's. The reception of my ideas was mixed. Dr. William Alanson White, one of the giants of American psychiatry, warned me, "First you will get the sociologists, then the social psychologists, then the general practitioners, then the plain people, but you will never live to see the day when psychiatrists will accept group psychotherapy." . . .

Luckily for me, White's prediction about psychiatrists was wrong, although there were always obstacles to the acceptance of my ideas. The Freudians [in] the United States were not a monolithic bloc opposing any theories that differed from those of their master. Sandor Lorand, Olga Knopf, and Franz Alexander were analysts who always had an open mind for new ideas. Also, Paul Schilder, with whom I had frequent encounters from 1931 on, was a good friend. He appreciated sociometry but could not see the value of group psychotherapy, although he changed his mind later. But profound resistance from the psychiatric fraternity and academia has persisted up to this time. I have had to go my own way quite independently. . . .

Another important figure in my life was Fannie French Morse, to whom I dedicated the first edition of *Who Shall Survive?* Dr. Morse was the superintendent of the New York State Training School for Girls at Hudson, New York, from 1923 to 1937. I met her in 1931 when she invited me to come and work at the school for a while. Sociometry interested her and she had heard about the work I was doing at Sing Sing. Dr. Morse always eagerly welcomed social researchers and any advances they could bring to the field. From the time I first met this plump, strong woman with a resolute and powerful personality, I had to say that she was the most remarkable woman I had ever met. Dr. Morse was a masterful person, a fine educator and administrator. She had under her care approximately 10,000 girls be-

tween the ages of 12 and 18. The school itself admitted about 500 girls. The rest were in foster homes or on parole throughout the state. . . .

Dr. Morse was able to take these girls, many of them pregnant, many of them suffering from venereal disease (so many, in fact, that there was a special wing in the hospital for those with venereal diseases), and turn them into young ladies who were prepared to go back into the world and live decent lives. Her system was based on the ideals of humanistic education, that every individual has some area of ability, some potential that can be developed. She went to great lengths to insure that her girls learned whatever they, as individuals, needed to learn. Dr. Morse also made sure that the people who worked at Hudson would implement her ideals fully.

It was by no means an accident which led me to undertake the job of counting and measuring interpersonal relations. It was due to the task of running a theater of spontaneity. It was logical that I should look for some natural principles which are intrinsic to the spontaneous interaction between actors, since in a theater of full, uncensored spontaneity, the spatial and temporal affinities between actors promised to give the director clues as to the actors' adequacy or inadequacy of performance. I soon discovered that the less fictitious the interactions were for the actors, the more personally and privately they were involved in these roles and interactions, the more meaningful to me became the counting of seconds, inches, words, and choices. The more the theater of spontaneity became a group theater of the private worlds of actual people, the more rewarding it became for spontaneity research. Interaction researchers who do not start with an account of the spontaneous-creative matrices of their experimental designs are like architects who try to make one believe that a house can be built without a foundation. In my case, the foundation of my work, built upon the ground of my metaphysical speculations, was the theater of spontaneity.

I gave demonstrations of spontaneous theater techniques in schools and colleges throughout 1926 and 1927. At one such demonstration, I met Professor William H. Bridge of Hunter College. He taught speech and English literature but was on the point of being fired from Hunter because he had kissed one of his students. We teamed up. Bridge was a handsome, dashing English gentleman, a cavalier. We made a good pair. Later Bridge became director and manager of the Martha Graham Dance Troupe.

We decided that *Impromptu Theater* was a more immediate and memorable name than Theater of Spontaneity. Our sessions were held three times a week in a rented studio in Carnegie Hall, starting in 1927. It was in those early sessions that I met many wonderful people with whom I was to have lifelong associations. Helen H. Jennings was a young graduate student at Columbia University in those days. Always interested in new ideas,

she became my enthusiastic student. Sociometry, group therapy, and psychodrama were all of interest to her. Her work, over the years, went a long way towards forwarding the spread of my ideas throughout the world.

Helen was brilliant and ambitious. I gave her my state job as Director of Social Research, that is, she did the work and received the salary while I retained the title. I always thought the world of Helen. She is one of the most talented social scientists I have ever met. She is also one of the few women who ever really cared for me, although we were not lovers. Helen married an editor from Washington, D.C., but the marriage didn't work out. . . .

Helen introduced me to her mentor at Columbia University, Dr. Gardner Murphy. Gardner and I developed a friendship and professional association that lasted over the years. Gardner, his wife, Lois Barclay Murphy, and their two children were the first people to use the psychodrama stage at our theater in Beacon. Lois was a professor of child psychology at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York.

Through Gardner, I became acquainted with Kurt Lewin, who became my student, Gordon Allport, Hadley Cantril, William Kilpatrick, Nolan D. C. Lewis, Eduard C. Lindeman, Robert S. Lynd, author of *Middletown*, and Theodore M. Newcomb. Thus, Gardner made it possible for my ideas, particularly sociometry, to move into the mainstream of American academic life. Together we published the journal, *Sociometry*, beginning in 1936. . . . [When] Gardner came to visit me in Beacon to help map out our editorial strategy, I suggested that we call the journal *Sociometry*. He said, out of the blue, "I have a friend across the river. His name is Rhine. He is working in extrasensory perception or parapsychology. Rhine also wants to start a journal. Why don't we team up with him?"

I responded with a laugh. "Well, then, we can call our journal *Parasociometry*." Luckily, that was the end of that idea and we kept our tracks separate. *Sociometry* is still being published [as *Social Psychology*], but is now under the aegis of the American Sociological Association.

William Bridge and I had a "Living Newspaper" program that was broadcast over WOR radio. We hired the Guild Theater on Broadway to present the "Living Newspaper" to a wider audience. At that time, many actors were unemployed. Orson Welles was involved with the "Living Newspaper" in 1933. He went on to do one of the best motion pictures ever made, *Citizen Kane*. He also became notorious for the radio program his Mercury Theater group put on in 1937 about an invasion from Mars. The realism of the Martian invasion stemmed directly, I think, from his experience with the "Living Newspaper."

I met Howard Blakeslee, science editor for the Associated Press, at the New York State Medical convention in 1933. Someone showed him an exhibit on sociometry which included several sociograms. He was always

looking for something new to write about and became an eager student of sociometry and of psychodrama. Blakeslee was self-educated, having left school upon completion of the eighth grade. I was amazed at his ability to dash off a complex story at great speed, with commendable accuracy and magnificent brevity.

Blakeslee commissioned Lillian Genn to write an article about sociometry which appeared in newspapers all over the country in 1935. Later he wrote or commissioned stories about psychodrama which created a large popular audience for my techniques.

In the late summer of 1935, Blakeslee involved me in the sports scene in a way that brought me much unusual publicity. It was my notion that, by studying the psychological characteristics of boxers, it might be possible to predict the outcome of their bouts. He asked me to do the study. My idea had its first test with the Max Baer-Joe Louis fight that fall. I visited the boxers at their training camps, talked to them, watched their sparring contests, and talked to friends and relatives of the fighters.

Max Baer had recently married a waitress from the Windsor Hotel in Washington, D.C., and was combining training camp with his honeymoon. I told him, "Either you'll train for the fight or you'll make love to your wife!" Baer reported to me that he was having terrifying nightmares in which Joe Louis pounded, cut into his body with his fists, all night long.

I concluded, not just from the two above observations, that Joe Louis was most likely to win the fight and become champion. My prediction was reported in newspapers throughout the country, usually under my byline, sometimes under Blakeslee's.

I wasn't particularly interested in sports, although I did play some soccer as a boy in Vienna. But studying the boxers gave me an opportunity to meet a new and exciting breed of people and opened up another area of American life to me. Nineteen thirty-four was the height of Damon Runyon's career, and the colorful sports world was a refreshing change from what I knew at Columbia University, where I lectured, and even [from] the theater world in which I was involved.

Naturally, the [sports] venture was a highly unorthodox one for a doctor and a psychiatrist to undertake. Some might have considered all the publicity I garnered from it as a breach of medical ethics. Luckily, Howard was so well respected in the scientific community that my professional reputation was untouched by it. We continued to study boxers and predict fights until the Rocky Marciano-Ezzard Charles match in 1954. I never made a wrong prediction in those studies. I had a good time of it. . . .

In 1935, I found a beautiful place on the Hudson River [as a site for my own mental hospital]. In order to secure it, I was asked to make a down payment of \$2,000. At this point, Ina Truman lent me the \$2,000 I needed.

Ina and her sister, Rose, were unmarried and devoted to their mother, who was mentally ill. She became my patient and showed some improvement under my care, although her prognosis had been given earlier as very poor. The sisters were so grateful to me that they wanted to help me in any way they could. Rose Truman was an interior decorator associated with Lord & Taylor. She decorated all the rooms in my hospital in royal style.

In the big white house in Beacon [New York, that I had bought], I felt like a god again. At first, it was a hospital without patients. I was my only patient. But then a miracle happened which prepared the way for other miracles.

The property which Rose and Ina's \$2,000 secured was worth a good deal of money. I did not know where my next meal was coming from, but, as I was a very special case with God, I went ahead with my plans for the hospital. I hired plumbers, electricians, carpenters, painters, and all the other craftsmen one needs to furnish a sanitarium. I went to the Fishkill National Bank in Beacon to deposit the first \$2,000. The treasurer of the bank who opened my account was also the treasurer of another sanitarium in Beacon. He welcomed me to town. "Are you starting a business?"

"Yes," I replied. "You see, I am a special case with God."

He smiled skeptically.

The next day I had the feeling that I had to get lucky right away, or else I was through. That day I had a phone call. "I am calling for Mrs. Gertrude Franchot Tone. She invites you to come to dinner tomorrow night at the Waldorf Towers." I went to the Waldorf and met a lady who introduced herself, "I'm Gertrude Tone, Dr. Moreno, I'm glad you came."

I said, after kissing her hand, "I'm glad to meet you, but to what do I owe this honor?"

"Don't you know?" she asked, and picked up a book. "This book, *Who Shall Survive?*, excited me and I thought I should meet the author of it, you." Now I looked at her with deepening interest. She had beautiful white hair, blue eyes, and a distinguished bearing. I guessed she was about 60 years old, about 5 feet 5. She wore a long dress that almost swept the floor. She repeated the dinner invitation. As I came closer to her to escort her to the dining room, I smelled alcohol on her breath. I sensed immediately that she was a heavy drinker. "Let's drink to *Who Shall Survive?*" She raised a glass of champagne. I, too, was served. "You know, I was a Marxist and a Freudian. I was analyzed by Freud, but when I read *Who Shall Survive?*, I immediately felt that this was a book that would live forever, that transcended even Marx or Freud."

When she heard about my plans for a sanitarium, and when I told her that I was going to build a theater of psychodrama there, she said, immediately, in an outburst of joyful enthusiasm, "What a wonderful idea! I'd

love to be a part of that. Could I come? I feel that this is my destiny. I'm a heavy drinker and a heavy smoker. If I stay here, I'll die. My life is empty, my children are grown up. This dream is just what I need."

The next morning I received a call from Niagara Falls. It was from Frank J. Tone, Gertrude's husband. He discovered the carborundum process and was head of the U.S. Carborundum Corporation, a fabulously wealthy man. He asked me to take a plane to Niagara Falls right away, if possible. I did. We sat down in his studio. "My wife is very ill. She inherited twenty million dollars from her father, the late Senator Franchot. She goes from one bar to the next every night and writes checks to every damned Communist who asks her for help. At that rate, even twenty million dollars won't last forever. I understand she wants to be your guest in Beacon. Go ahead. How much?" I mentioned an exorbitant figure.

"I'll write you a check for six months in advance. Let me know how things work out." He also cautioned me not to tell Mrs. Tone that he had already paid me. He felt that his wife would leave Beacon immediately if she ever suspected the least association between Mr. Tone and me. He also told me that he was sure Mrs. Tone would want to pay me something for her stay. He told me to keep it all. He just wanted to be sure that her care was completely assured so we would have no difficulty with finances while she was with us.

I went to the Fishkill National Bank the next day and deposited his check. Now I could pay the carpenters, plumbers, electricians, decorators, tree surgeons, and all the other workmen.

The next day Gertrude came with twenty pieces of luggage. I said to her as I escorted her upstairs, "One condition I have, that you do not drink *any* alcohol during your stay here."

She replied, "I commit myself not to touch a drop of liquor as long as I am here." She kept her word. "I plan to stay here for a long time, perhaps for the rest of my life. I am a rich woman. You must have great expenses. I can't really stay here without paying. How much?"

"It's all up to you," I answered. It is interesting that she wrote me a check for the same amount her husband had given me.

Gertrude did not sleep nights but rested on the lawn watching the stars and trying to predict the future of the world by reading them. She was an intuitive astrologer. Mrs. Tone slept all day and ate only one meal at night which she called, "my brupper." She read profusely and helped me with my writing. She engaged a special secretary to take dictation and do the typing. We met every night for supper, sitting face-to-face at either end of a table which could accommodate 24. She never made phone calls but received many.

Since it was due to her largesse that we were able to build a theater of psychodrama in Beacon, it was dedicated to her. The theater was opened in 1937, and Gertrude spent a good deal of time there with guests she brought up from New York. Her son, Franchot Tone, and his wife, Joan Crawford, were frequent visitors to Beacon in those days. Stella and Luther Adler came with their friend, Elia Kazan.

I particularly recall Franchot Tone and Joan Crawford trying to work out a trivial marital problem on the psychodrama stage. She wanted to live in California, he in New York. They agreed, mockingly, to live one half of the year in Hollywood, one half of the year in New York. Anyway, their marriage lasted only a year longer.

My relationship with Gertrude was intensely intellectual. She was an intimate friend of Dorothy Thompson, the former wife of Sinclair Lewis. They had both been suffragettes, and their lives clearly foreshadowed the current women's liberationists.

Mrs. Tone was a real rebel. She was against all institutions, including marriage. I kissed her hand twice a day, before and after dinner. Our relationship was, otherwise, a distant one. I thought that she was a rather cold individual. But one day, after several months of living in the big white house, before going up to her rooms, she stopped, looked at me with a smile, and said, "Well, Dr. Moreno, let's get married. We can both get free very easily." Then she paused. Maybe she was thinking of the difference in our ages and what people might say. "You see, I have money idle in the bank. You have ideas. Imagine what my money can do to spread your ideas all over the world!"

"Well!" I replied, "I thank you for your honorable intentions, but I always thought I could do it myself." Apparently she had not known that I was a special case with God. So, after that incident, our relationship went back to what it had been, as formal as ever.

Mrs. Tone was a sort of muse, as in olden times. She was distinguished by family and by wealth. She was interested in my work and tried to sponsor it. She had a strong effect, perhaps beneficial, upon the way I lived. For about 2½ years, from 1936 to 1938, I led a very stable life. My relations with women were confined to my first wife [Beatrice] and the distant relationship with Mrs. Tone. While I was not celibate at that time, I was as close to being so as I had ever been. My withdrawal from sexuality reminded me of the early years in Vöslau. I didn't even have dreams about sex.

I was unusually productive while Gertrude was in Beacon. I felt the old passion of the Godplayer, although not in the specific sense that prevailed in 1909–1914 and again in Vöslau. I lived the life of a well-to-do man, a kind of grand seigneur. That lifestyle was a good antidote to all the storms

of the previous few years of adventuring. I might have continued with that life had Gertrude not recovered from her alcoholism and moved to Beverly Hills, where she spent the rest of her life.

There were no tears when she left. We separated like two sages who part, knowing that they will never meet again. When Gertrude died sometime during the war and her last will was read, she had bequeathed many gifts and mementoes to a number of people. I was not among them.

Chapter 9

My Search for a New Muse

I HAD THROWN MYSELF into feverish activity, trying to gain support for my ideas. I found many helpers who, unselfish and enthusiastic, set out to give my ideas a place in the sun. But I had made my lot extremely complicated by my paternity of three offspring—sociometry, group psychotherapy, and psychodrama. Again, I was acting the part of the confused Godplayer. . . .

In the midst of all my feverish work, I found myself without a muse. The most outstanding aspect of my search for a muse was to try to integrate the sexual part of myself with the Godplayer. My tragedy on the European scene was that there it was only either/or. In the war camps [in Italy, the Italian] women I met were just women and I was just a man to them, no pretenses, but a great deal of goodness of heart and sincerity. I did not think those days could ever be repeated. And then there was the other alternative in Vöslau, where I was a Godplayer *par excellence*. But I began to meditate: How does one become a natural man and a Godplayer without any conflict between the two tendencies? I wanted to find a woman who could be both a lover and a princess of the spirit. The biographies of superior people are mute and deaf on this. . . . I do not recall any overt case of “complete” integration of the two roles known or reported in the literature.

Can a man be a muse? No doubt, a man can. However, he is not the popular version of a muse. One might think of Aaron as a muse for Moses, or Plato as a muse for Socrates. In my life, it was my brother, William.

William left for America shortly before I did. He went into the textile business in New York City and made a great deal of money, finally owning a company of his own. William was my right hand in those days. He was always ready to hear what I had to say . . . willing to help me carry out my ideas in any way he could. [In 1942] William donated [the funds for] our theater of psychodrama in New York City. . . .

One day the bank . . . in Beacon notified me that \$10,000 had been deposited into my account by a donor who wished to remain anonymous. I

badgered the bank officials until they divulged that my brother had deposited the funds. William was also instrumental in starting our publishing company, Beacon House. *Sociometry*, the journal, was our first effort, followed by the American edition of *The Words of the Father* and [then] many other publications.

I think that having my own publishing company helped keep me independent. I have found that publishers, interested in commercial success, have sometimes taken books apart and rearranged them to such an extent that they were unrecognizable to their authors. Since I had a message that was radical in those days, I could not be sure that my books would not be emasculated by any publisher [with whom] I might sign a contract. . . . My brother shared my mistrust of publishers. He was also concerned that I have a suitable showcase for my work. And he wanted to be closely involved with whatever I was doing. He had no professional credentials, so he could not be my full partner. But he was a good business man. He felt that by running a publishing company he could share in my life, advance my ideas, and make a living at the same time. Had the publishing venture been a commercial success, William would have given up the textile business to work at the publishing company full time. But we never made enough money out of it. . . . After he made money in textiles, he went into the stock market and into real estate. He has always been most devoted to the family, like the wealthy uncles who helped us out when we were children. If any of us needed anything, we had only to ask William.

So William, my brother, was my muse. He was the only member of my family who ever gave me full support and encouragement.

But women have greater potential for the stimulation and inspiration of a Godplayer. One can think of the muse, Beatrice, to Dante. At the age of 14, Beatrice did more for Dante's fantasy than she did for the real man. Dante never touched her.

A woman has the advantage of being of a different sex and having a different physical appeal than a man. She can, in every sense, become a partner, a lover, a cocreator.

I also thought about the muse in Goethe's *Faust*. Gretchen was the muse to fulfill a happy Godplayer. An unhappy Godplayer like Hitler developed a negative muse, Eva Braun, and finally destroyed her, himself, and much of Western civilization. . . .

I found out early in my American career that the American world is not made for muses and for Godplayers. Godplayers of a low order like Billy Graham, Billy Sunday, or, from an earlier day, Henry Ward Beecher, frequently exploded on the American scene.

I had to do some thinking about the nature of myself as a Godplayer and about the Godplayer's response to his sexual self. This has been a re-

curring theme throughout the first 40 to 50 years of my life. In the mythology of the Godplayer, I could not find any clear-cut answers to my questions. Is God married? Many varieties of relationships to women abound in the mythology of the Godplayer. First we have the model of Jesus Christ. He did not marry, and those who remained celibate out of principle patterned their lives after his. But then, there were others like Socrates, who married Xanthippe. And I read about Prince Gautama who, according to the scriptures, got married and left his family to lead a solitary life. There is, too, the case of Sabbatai Zwi [a false messiah who appeared in the Turkish Jewish community during the 1600s] who lived with a woman, but in protest against custom, did not touch her.

I had gone through many forms of nonmarriage, without, however, settling down to any permanent form. It stands to reason that two people who find each other, one man and one woman, would complement one another and live in reasonable harmony with their strengths and weaknesses. There are more failures recorded, however, than successes. . . .

So I went through a period of wildness. I began to meditate on how rapidly life vanishes. Moments of great joy vanish just as rapidly as moments of profound disgust. . . . Actresses, chorus girls, writers, psychologists, rebels: many tried to seduce me. Many succeeded. . . .

I particularly remember an Armenian girl who looked like a boxer. She was beautiful, though. I appreciated her muscularity, her aggressiveness, her independence. She had heard about the book on God, and wanted to help me find a publisher for it. She had good connections with important people in New York's publishing houses. She came to see me. I was living on the East side, near Fifth Avenue.

She came in with a radiant smile. What was the first thing she did? She took my arm and said, "Let's get it over with." She undressed herself, threw herself on my bed, and practically undressed me. After it was over she said, "Now we can talk about serious matters." Apparently she believed that every man has a hangup about sex and that she had to liberate him first so he could function in a matter of social significance. She had practiced her beliefs on others as well, I could swear. Since she did not impress me as a potential muse, I stopped having anything to do with her.

Not much later, I met her at the Sheik Restaurant on Fifth Avenue in the company of Sir Julian Huxley, the famous British biologist and author. She had just taken a trip around the world with him. Then I understood her method of collecting famous and about-to-be-famous men.

A few months later, I became deeply involved with a lovely young professor of English literature at a local college. She typed out parts of *The Words of the Father* for me. Every night when I met her, she brought me some new transcriptions of the manuscript. She shared a deluxe apartment

with an aspiring writer who played the stock market. He occupied the apartment during the day, she at night. She did not last long with me because she bragged to me about her many conquests. It was not very inviting to me to have to share a woman who was promiscuous to the point of carelessness with so many other men. . . .

I met a beautiful, sensitive, and delicate girl who had recently graduated from Elmira College in upstate New York. Her name was Florence Bridge. [She was] the only daughter of a railway conductor, William Bridge, of Port Jervis, New York. Her mother had died when she was 5 years old. Her father had remarried, but [was] devoted to his daughter. Florence reciprocated his love. She was a student-counselor at the Hudson School for Girls, and was preparing for a career in social work. . . . For a period of 6 months to a year, we grew closer and closer. She finally came to live with me, and then we were married. . . . Florence was a pretty woman, small in stature, and dark. . . . I was particularly impressed with her teaching ability at Hudson. Florence's photographs never did her justice. Some people you just have to see in action to appreciate their beauty.

Our marriage took place just as I was starting my life in Beacon and . . . [had] opened the sanitarium. Florence lived in the small gatehouse, where I live now, and the patients lived in the big white house where the institute students [now] live and work. . . .

Florence was an excellent researcher and published several papers in our journals. She was particularly interested in the education of children and did research into the interactions among nursery school and kindergarten children.

Our daughter was born in 1939. Regina was a beautiful little girl and Florence was an exceptionally devoted mother . . . but our marriage deteriorated and we were divorced [in 1949]. . . . I never should have married Florence. And I was not a good husband to her. [Florence later remarried and had another child.]

Regina had a close relationship with a wonderful young woman who stayed in our house for [one] year in order to translate *Who Shall Survive?* into German. Gretel Leutz had come to the United States to try to collect her inheritance. . . . She had no luck in reclaiming the confiscated lands [and therefore decided to work her way through medical school].

In addition to being a warm and concerned person, Gretel is a brilliant woman [who in later years received] two doctorates, one from Germany, and one from the United States. Her inclination in medicine was somewhat offbeat and she was always studying some unusual theory or another. . . .

Gretel was like another daughter to me. In addition to translating my book, she was very helpful. . . . She accompanied us on trips, helping us

out with the children. She had a most positive influence on Regina, something like a cross between a teacher and a beloved older sister.

Gretel used to [reach out to] people easily. We had, at one point, a Chinese cook, one of the best cooks we ever had. Gretel [and Regina were] fascinated by him, and they became good friends. One day a parole officer came to check up on the cook. I found out that he had murdered his wife and had just finished a long term at Sing Sing. Since I was running a mental hospital, I could not afford to have a convicted murderer presiding over my kitchen. Gretel and Regina were upset when I discharged him, but I had no choice.

The cook opened a Chinese restaurant in Poughkeepsie, about 45 minutes' drive from Beacon. So loyal were Gretel and Regina to their friend, they [occasionally] made the trip to eat at his place. It took a long time before they forgave me the firing of the cook. . . .

Regina has a beautiful singing voice. She started voice lessons at an early age, and we all had visions of a brilliant career in music for her. In her teens, she spent a couple of summers at the National Music Camp in Interlaken, Michigan. After her second summer there, she came back and announced that she was giving up her ambition to be a singer. There were so many people at the camp who seemed to be more talented than she. . . . Regina would not be second-best in anything. We were all disappointed about her decision, but Regina still sings for her own pleasure. It may have been for the best. . . .

Chapter 10

Zerka

ONE OF THE DIFFICULTIES in our mythologies of God is that He is usually pictured as a single person, either as a god or a goddess. Loneliness is the price we have to pay for monotheism. In the mythology of the Greeks, in which the pantheon exists on a lower level of intensity, God married and produced offspring, like Zeus and Hera, for instance. The stories of these marriages are full of disappointments, but they are more real to mortal men than the personalities of the monotheistic gods. Anyway, I was searching for an integrated partnership, for the Muse of Integration, so as to bring the Godplayer down to earth.

On a sunny summer afternoon in 1941, the door opened and a young woman stepped into my office. She was accompanied by three others, but I noticed her first. Only later did the others emerge. She had a little boy in her arms, about 3 years old. I looked at her; she looked at me. That was it.

I say to myself—my double speaks, “Yes, yes, yes,” and I stretch out my arms in a broad, all-embracing manner. I feel that she is already mine, and that I am already hers. There she is. I don’t know anything about her, but that she is She. I can even feel what she is saying to herself: “I am very unhappy. My sister is ill. He might think that this is my child. I have no children. I am single. I came to find a doctor, a psychiatrist for my sister.” Then she makes a pause. I wait until I hear her again. “This man is not a simple psychiatrist. He looks and acts more like an artist, a creative man.” Now there is a silence between us, but it comes into my mind, “If her sister is sick and her sister’s husband is with her, why does she come along?”

As if she hears my query, I sense her reply, “He doesn’t understand. These people are refugees from the Nazis. He doesn’t know that they have just arrived here, in this country. I am with them, not only to help them but to protect the boy from further abuse. My sister is too confused to care for him. . . . I almost feel as if he were my child, not hers. I feel responsible. Besides, my brother-in-law speaks very little English. He needs an interpreter.” And then it comes to her in a flash, “I did not expect to find such an enchanting, warm man. He greets us so warmly, as if he is really

glad to meet us. I expected a purely formal event between a doctor and a patient meeting for the first time. And he is so human, so charming, not just a professional."

I see tears in her eyes. "I like his way. He is handsome too, so masculine, in that white suit and blue shirt. The color of his shirt emphasizes his great, extraordinarily luminous, penetrating, deeply expressive eyes. What color are they? Oh, blue. I adore blue eyes in a man; somehow they always strike my heart. But why is he so lonely? I heard the nurse who greeted us say that he has a baby girl about the same age as my nephew. So he is, or was, married. It really doesn't matter. Yet, he is lonely, deeply lonely, possibly even unhappy, as unhappy as I am."

Silence. Now I hear her again, or I imagine that I hear her. "I am lonely and unhappy, too. I have just broken off a love relationship with a man I planned to marry."

"So," I say to myself, "she was planning to get married. Then the child is not hers."

"We were well along the way to setting the date and preparing for the ceremony. Now I have no one." A long silence, then, "It hurt badly for a while, but somehow I am glad to be free again. I'm getting ready for a new relationship, a more mature one. But the doctor is old enough to be my father, although he doesn't look or act that old. But he couldn't be interested in me personally; he obviously loves people, young and old, especially children. See how he smiles at the child and asks questions about him."

At this point, the baby glides off her lap, walks towards the fireplace and starts playing with the brass fire irons. He drops one with a clatter and we all focus our attention upon him. [She] goes over to see if he is hurt and gently brings him back to the chair, taking him on her lap once again.

The scene changes; she is back at her depth. Now she looks at me again and we smile at each other, assessing and confirming. "This has all happened before, hasn't it? But when? Where? Oh no, it has never happened before. Not like this. It is the first time. It is happening now." A pregnant pause here. Then another flash breaks in on her. She seems full of electricity, which discharges itself in my direction, sparked off by my own. Now it seems to me that I hear her voice very clearly. "He is not a simple man. This man is a great genius, perhaps the only true genius I will ever meet. Many men make believe, or try to, but this man is the genuine article. Oh, what could we possibly have in common? I am a rather inexperienced person, just starting to learn about life and its darkest corners. Yet, he looks at me with as much interest as he shows in my sick sister, the patient here. What can he be thinking? Perhaps it is just that my sister and I are physically so different. People are always astounded that we are really sisters.

And now we are certainly also clearly very different emotionally. But I feel he can see that we sisters are deeply tied together somehow. I am very depressed at this new outbreak of emotional illness." Silence. "I fear he will get the wrong information or no information at all about her history. I will have to make sure that I see him alone so I can help him to get to know her. She can't cooperate. She is too confused and doesn't recognize the nature of her condition."

An aside, "My brother-in-law is a poor refugee. He has had to borrow heavily to pay the fares to this country. He has no job. He only came here 2 days ago. We have to make sure her treatment doesn't take too long, or he will not be able to carry the burden at all. Besides, we need money to place the baby in a foster home. All this is a terrible, crushing burden." More silence and searching out. Then, "But why is the doctor so interested in me? What does he want from me?"

And I am asking myself questions at the same time, "What do I want from her?"

It comes to her sharply, "Why am I so interested in him? What do I want from him, besides help for my sister?" Now there is another voice. It is from her childhood. It is her mother's voice. "Don't get in your sister's way! This is *her* friend now, *her* doctor. *She* is the one who needs all of his attention. Make yourself almost invisible, subservient to her needs. *Don't* inject yourself! Don't take his attention, his focusing, his love away from her. You know you've managed to do this since you were little. The whole family loved you as their toy. You were the baby. Your sister is the oldest. Your father and your brothers adored you. Now she needs all the love she can get, especially the love of a good father. Don't make trouble for her again."

There are other voices just as sharp. Public opinion speaks now, "What could a *married* man want from a young single girl? He is not supposed to be too interested in single girls unless they are his patients. Is he just showing a professional interest in you? Remember, he is the father of a child, a baby girl. Whatever else his child needs, she needs her life undisturbed. Don't make waves. Don't get involved. Stay out of any close or personal contact with him. Only a professional relationship will do." Silence.

Her eyes are downcast, as if she is looking inward. Then, "Oh, remember, they almost didn't make it to America. My family was stuck. First in France, later in North Africa. They might all have been caught by the Nazis. I've helped to *save* their lives. Am I now going to deliberately do something that will complicate life for them now, even more, or even to ruin it? No! They must have every possible consideration first. They need any kind of help. They are desperate. Their lives are a shambles. The boy needs his own mother and father. However much you love him, he is not

yours. You are only a temporary substitute. Stay out of a parent's way. It will pursue you until the end of time if you don't. Your conscience will not permit it. Just as it would not let you rest until you had snatched them away from the shores of dying, agonized Europe. Now you have to show what you are made of. Keep in the background. Don't think of yourself now."

They have all left the office to see the patient into her room. I am sitting, waiting to see [the young woman] and the others before they depart for the city. Will I see her alone at all? As if in reply, there she is [Celine Zerka Toeman], knocking at the door. She has come to ask me for an appointment at my office in the city. She wants to consult me about her sister privately.

We met several times. It was a growing acquaintance. But one day we had a peak encounter. It was in the same room, my Beacon office, where we had met for the first time, but this time we were alone. . . . [Zerka] talked about herself, "I just saw George for the last time. He asked me again to marry him. He felt he was ready for it now, but I refused. I am free now."

Her eyes sparkled. She had a glowing expression. She looked at me, and I felt that she was really saying, "I am now free to live my own life. What's the next step?" I looked back at her and returned the challenge, "I'm also free."

She continued, "I've burned all my bridges. To my parents. That was not too difficult. I found a way to be free and still not to be disloyal. I could not be disloyal to my sister or to her child, either. But I've built a wall. Now they will live in the world of yesterday, and I can start my life with you." She opened her briefcase and took out the proofs of *The Words of the Father*. "Yes. I read it. It is as if I wrote it. My words."

I moved towards her and embraced her. She began to cry. "I don't want to start that way. That is how the others started. It is nothing physical. I'm overwhelmed with the new meaning that has come into my life. I wonder what needs to be done between us. How do I fit into your world? How do we organize or coordinate our lives together? I know now that nothing matters but our relationship and that to make it productive, I have to live it your way. I have got myself ready for that. I just need to know that this is what you want, too, or am I just fooling myself? Only you can answer that."

I answered, "Yes, that is what I want and need, too. I have to make my own sacrifices. Let's start right now. Move away from New York City and come live in Beacon. The rest we will work out, step-by-step, as we go along." And so it went.

At that time, Zerka worked at the Moreno Institute in New York City. She and my brother William were overseeing the operation of the institute.

When Zerka moved to Beacon, she commuted 5 days a week, from Beacon to New York, a round trip of 120 miles daily.

It should be known that there were many blocks in our way. How would my brother feel about this? Also my wife? The patients? The students? The staff members? How would her parents react? Her friends, her sister, all of her other relatives in the city? What responsibilities did we have to all of these people and to the others who depended on us? We were not oblivious to these factors or to other details contingent upon so drastic a revolution in our lives. But they were not of the same essence as was our commitment and resolve towards one another. That commitment overrode all these considerations. We made a decision not to marry in a legal sense. It seemed that there was no need for us to ratify our relationship by standing before a judge and mumbling a few words.

Our decision to be together was not an act of desperation, nor was it an act of bravado. It was what we needed, both of us, to fulfill the deepest core of our beings. We found ourselves in one another, more completely than either of us had ever known before. That was the spark that made our creativity together into a fluid, workable partnership. It attached greater veracity to our common goal, and it made each of us feel more complete in the world. So we could never give it up, no matter what. . . .

In the late forties [after the divorce from Florence], I began to think about my advancing age and what the future might bring to us. It was partly my age, but Zerka was also getting older. We began to take stock of our relationship and asked ourselves whether any change in our position was advisable. Up to that time, our having a child together seemed unreasonable and unwise. Zerka did not feel that having a child was necessary for our relationship. She did not see how she could do a good job of being a mother in addition to all the other taxing roles she filled. She was concerned about my becoming a father again at my age, afraid that it would be too heavy a burden for me. I already had a daughter who [spent weekends] with us. Zerka felt we were both too old. She was also fearful that our travelling around the world, pilgrims of psychodramatic method and sociometry, would be impossible if we had a child.

But I began to muse. "I don't want you to be alone in the world if I should die," I told Zerka. "That means you should have a child." It was all rather logical and unemotional. "The first step might be that we get married." Thus, one evening, we legalized our relationship. We found a justice of the peace in Cold Spring, a village 10 miles away, who performed the ceremony.

Now the setting was prepared. Marriage had been the first step. Now we could seriously consider the possibility of pregnancy. If a child should be

conceived, it would be born under circumstances appropriate for his own safety and healthy development.

I've often been asked if my desire to have a child was really a dynastic notion. I give that impression in *The First Psychodramatic Family*. But it was the reality of having a son who would carry on my name which created my awareness of dynastic possibilities. Most of all, I believe in children. Therefore, I believe that women are very precious and especially chosen by the Lord. Children give meaning to life, to the universe. The universe is infinitely pregnant with children. Women who have had children are much more lovely than women who have not. They are just flesh.

When Zerka was pregnant, unfortunate things happened. In the third month, her right ear went bad. Some hormonal imbalance had caused her to go deaf there. And Jonathan's birth [in 1952] was 5 weeks late, which caused us a good deal of worry and caused Zerka a good deal of discomfort.

But once Jonathan was born, all the difficulties and discomforts were soon forgotten. We decided to break new ground and bring Jonathan up according to the principles of sociometry and psychodrama. . . .

When Jonathan was two-and-a-half, Zerka developed a persistent soreness in her right shoulder. We assumed that it was from carrying Jonathan up the steep staircase in our house. Zerka had suffered from bouts of rheumatism most of her life, and carrying a large-for-his-age child would certainly aggravate that. Jonathan was taught to go upstairs himself, and Zerka had a series of diathermy treatments which we supposed would get rid of the pain. . . .

Our doctor and his wife accompanied us to the American Psychiatric Association's convention in Chicago in May of 1956. Zerka startled us in the plane on the way back by blurting out, "Doctor, I'm going out of my mind with the pain." The doctor was most reassuring. "Come and see me," he told Zerka, "I have something new that might help you." That summer, for the first time, X rays were ordered for Zerka. Nothing out of the ordinary showed up. The new treatment was ultrasonic therapy. But nothing was helpful in relieving her pain. . . .

[In the summer of 1956] we stayed at the Stockton Hotel in Sea Girt, New Jersey. I slept for the two weeks we were there. Zerka stayed out on the beach with Jonathan and relaxed in the sun and the surf. The second day we were there she noticed a lump on the back of her shoulder as she put on her bathing suit. It was about the size of a robin's egg. It frightened her, but she was also relieved to see physical evidence that there was something really wrong with her. My attitude towards pain and illness in the ones I love is either to shut it all out—deny it—or to become overly concerned. I had been impatient with Zerka for over two years when she

complained about the pain she was in. I had made her feel like a real hypochondriac.

When we went home, Zerka was really feeling good. Two weeks in the sea air had refreshed her. The pain had gone away for the first time in over 2 years.

However, the pain soon returned. Zerka continued with the ultrasonic treatments, and our doctor arrived at a diagnosis of "demineralization of the bone due to arthritis." Nothing was able to relieve the pain, though. Another series of X rays that November showed changes in the bone. The radiologist recommended that we study her condition further so as to rule out the possibility of a bone tumor. Our doctor, who had made his diagnosis, felt that the rarity of tumors in the bone made further investigation unnecessary. We would have had to go to an orthopedic surgeon for a biopsy. I have the traditional psychiatrist's disdain for surgery and surgeons. I did not want to believe that there was any chance that Zerka might have something as serious as a tumor. So I went along with our doctor's superficial approach to her case. I thought his diagnosis was probably correct. It seemed to be the most reasonable explanation of her condition.

The pain grew worse and worse. It radiated from her shoulder, down her arm. She felt a tingling sensation in her fingers. By May of 1957, the lump had grown much larger. Zerka continued treatment for arthritis. One day the doctor told her, "What cannot be cured must be endured."

That was an ironic statement. The doctor had some kind of hunch about himself. He had an X ray taken of his right lung. There was a large malignancy, and he died a few months later in great pain.

When I saw that Zerka was getting worse and worse, I suggested that we combine our usual trip to Switzerland in the summer of 1957 with a month at one of the famous spas of Germany or Austria. We chose Badenweiler, which was convenient to Zurich, where our International Congress was to meet in late August. I could come and go as the pressure of my work dictated. Zerka was also seen by some doctors in Europe. She took the full course of treatments at the spa: mud packs, Turkish baths, medicinal waters, dietary adjustments, and massages. By this time, she had been examined by five doctors, all of whom agreed that her condition was, indeed, arthritis.

A masseuse at the spa stated emphatically that the lump on Zerka's shoulder could not possibly be arthritic. The masseuse had treated many arthritics with demineralization of the bone, but she had never seen a condition like Zerka's. The muscles of her upper arm were thinning out. And, although there was a great deal of pain and swelling, the joint still had motion. The masseuse said that she had never seen muscular deterioration of that sort to arise from arthritis. Also, she had never seen such a swollen,

painful joint retain motion. The usual pattern in arthritis is for such severely affected joints to freeze into immobility. When Zerka told me what the masseuse said, I dismissed the whole thing. What was the opinion of a masseuse against the combined expertise of five doctors? . . .

Luckily, we found Dr. Wahl. He was the first practitioner to recognize the seriousness of Zerka's condition. Dr. Wahl felt that a local operation to excise the growth, supplemented with radiation therapy, was the necessary course of action. . . . Searching for a second opinion, we were referred to Dr. Bradley Coley of Memorial Hospital in New York City. Dr. Mendel, the radiologist, took a series of X rays which showed the precise location of the growth. Dr. Mendel had Zerka wait while the X rays were developed. He was so shaken by what he saw that he said to her, in violation of medical protocol, "You have a tumor there. Did you know that?" Zerka had already been informed by Dr. Wahl but was relieved to hear it. At least she now knew that she was not just a nervous, hypochondriacal female. She assumed that the growth would be cut out, like most tumors. She would have a scar, perhaps some stiffness in the joint. But that was not too high a price to pay for health. . . .

The biopsy was performed in Memorial Hospital on a Monday morning. The pathologist promised that his report would be ready by Wednesday. I had to go out of town and promised Zerka to be back in time for the report. Zerka knew that the findings were ready on Tuesday, though. All the nurses and staff who had been so attentive to her before now made a wide circuit to avoid her. She saw only the housekeeping personnel and the people who brought her meals.

I called Zerka from Grand Central Station at noon on Wednesday and told her that I was on the way to Dr. Coley's associate, Dr. Higginbottom's office to hear the diagnosis and that I would come to see her as soon as I had conferred with the doctor. Dr. Higginbottom was a kindly, tall man. He explained the diagnosis as "chondrosarcoma of the acromion process." In plain language, a malignancy of the cartilage in her shoulder joint. It was impossible to just remove the tumor. Amputation of the right arm *and* shoulder was the only treatment. "We have no alternative: Amputation or death." I just listened to him. He was the authority. "Sarcoma of the cartilage in such a pure form is very rare. Chondrosarcoma is very resistant to radiation therapy or any other therapy. Every day we wait is a day too late. Every day it grows. It grows—in the direction of the lungs. If we don't work fast enough, we may have a sarcoma of the lung, which is inoperable."

Then he excused himself and went next door, where his students had assembled for a class. He used Zerka's case as an illustration.

I had to accept the doctor's dictum. Psychiatry was out of the question there. You cannot talk to bones. . . .

It was five o'clock before I went in to Zerka. I entered her room with face averted and went directly to her bathroom, where I washed my hands, slowly, deliberately. She had been waiting for me since noon, but I was still unprepared to face her.

Finally, I was able to tell Zerka what the doctor said. After talking a while, we tried to digest the information. Amputation seemed . . . much too radical a cure. We wanted to see if there were any other way of dealing with the tumor.

I got Zerka out of the hospital the next day. Nothing had been decided yet. I had a list of six doctors to consult in the hopes that one of them might give us a less-ominous diagnosis.

The first two doctors on the list were a father-son team. They were refugees from Hitler and practiced on Madison Avenue. Zerka found them to be kindly men, but so stooped and wizened that she has, forever after, called them "the gnomes of Madison Avenue."

After a careful examination, they looked at us searchingly. "Why are you here?" the father asked. Then he said, "Dr. Coley knows his business. If that is what was found, that is what you have." We left the office. . . .

When I look back on Zerka's illness, I am confronted by the irony of it, over and over again. There I was, a doctor, but so naive about the matter of her illness. Why was I so smart for other people, but not smart enough to appreciate my wife's suffering?

I certainly wasn't a hero in that terrible time. The only thing that can be said in my favor is that, all along, I did everything I could, everything that seemed reasonable, to assist her. I was very devoted to her and willing to undergo any travail or expense to help her, but I was not a hero.

I really did not accept the hopelessness of her condition until shortly before the amputation of her arm. One night she was alone in her bedroom. I heard crying. When I went in, Zerka was wringing her hands—"like Lady Macbeth," she said later. "How will I manage all the things that must be done?" she was asking herself. "Will I be dependent on others for everything from now on? How will I dress myself, comb my hair, do housework, type, drive, write? Can anyone as independent as I am live happily when dependent on others? Will I feel inferior, less attractive, shut out, unwanted? Will life be empty, a bleak, hopeless procession of days and nights? Will I ever get out of the tunnel, back into the light of day?"

She cried to me, "Will I ever be well again?" I tried to reassure her, to help her regain her calm. I reminded Zerka that we owed it to Jonathan to maintain our equilibrium. I assured her that I would love her as much as ever. I felt she would be the same person. An arm was, after all, not the

essence of her. Finally I said, "You do not have to undergo amputation unless you really want to. It is your body. You must decide. But you must consider all the possible consequences." Zerka put all of her agonized indecision behind her. She was ready.

I brought her down to Memorial Hospital on January 17, 1958. The amputation was done on the 20th.

I was driven from Beacon to Memorial Hospital every day to see Zerka. I spent most of my time at the hospital. When I was not with Zerka, I prayed and meditated on what had happened. At one point, I tried to imagine what prayer Zerka might have made. "You have given me a right arm, and now you take it away. You gave me an ear, and then you took my hearing away." For myself, I felt like Job.

Zerka's illness showed me the hopelessness and vanity of medicine. I had seen her in the hands of doctors who didn't know what was wrong with her and who had no idea how to proceed with her case. In the end, all that could be done was to remove the offending part. I had such a feeling of helplessness and despair that it was close to self-hatred. My medical knowledge and my Godplaying helped her not at all. Of course, we wondered sometimes if Zerka's arm might have been saved if the sarcoma had been diagnosed early in the illness. Dr. Coley set us right immediately. The only way to treat chondrosarcoma at any stage is by radical surgery, but we wonder just the same.

During the years of Zerka's illness, I was increasingly afflicted by arthritis. I suffered my first bout of arthritis in Vöslau as a young man, but it had never been a severe enough condition to limit my life in any way. In the 15 years since Zerka's operation, she has gradually taken over more and more of my duties as my arthritis [has] increased in severity. She has become a very able administrator, in addition to all the other skills and personal qualities which have made her a talented psychodramatist, able sociometric researcher, writer, editor, and teacher. She does just about everything she did before the operation. She drives, sews, dances, types, everything but swim. . . .

With Zerka's illness we had the reverse of the Godplayer—humility.

Chapter 11

Two Partners in Travel

ON LABOR DAY WEEKEND of 1941, Zerka and I made the first of many trips together. I was invited to Washington, D.C., to take part in the annual meeting of the American Association for Occupational Therapy. I was to make a speech and give several demonstrations upon the joint invitation of the association and of Dr. Winfred Overholser, Superintendent of St. Elizabeths Hospital. Dr. William Alanson White had been superintendent of St. Elizabeths Hospital before Dr. Overholser. Just before White's death, he asked that a theater of psychodrama be built at St. Elizabeths. Margaret Hagan, Director of Social Services with the Red Cross, supervised the building of the theater. Frances Herriott was the first director of psychodrama there. She and Miss Hagan began to use the theater at the beginning of the Second World War to train Red Cross workers, using psychodramatic methods, so that their service in military hospitals would be more sensitive and helpful to the patients.

That Labor Day weekend was the first time that Zerka had seen me lecture anywhere other than the hospital in Beacon and the institute in New York. She came up to me afterwards glowing with intense excitement. She told me that she had been electrified by my dynamic presentation and overwhelmed by it. She felt, though, that the rest of the audience had been swept by my intensity and—as they say today—charisma, but she did not feel that they had any genuine understanding of *what* I had said. My listeners had a nonplused, disbelieving air because just about everything I said ran counter to their own professional views and indoctrination. The live demonstration of psychodrama that followed the lecture made them see, with their own eyes, the effectiveness of my methods, but the air of disbelief still persisted. Zerka and I were to expect this sort of response for at least another decade.

We founded the Sociometric Institute at 101 Park Avenue late in 1941. The official opening of the institute took place in March of 1942. It was our purpose to become a Mecca for social scientists from all over, particu-

larly Europeans, who could come and be exposed to the newest developments in the social sciences so that their own nations could benefit from the lessons sociometry had to teach. The institute organized a meeting in connection with the American Sociological Society's Annual Meeting at the Hotel Roosevelt in December of 1941.

The Society's newly formed section on sociometry sponsored the meeting, chaired by Dr. William H. Sewell of Oklahoma A & M College. Dr. Paul Lazarsfeld of Columbia University, Helen Jennings, Teachers College, Columbia University, Dr. F. Stuart Chapin, University of Minnesota, presented papers. Other program participants were equally distinguished sociologists. . . .

When the Institute opened its doors in March of 1942 our aim was to train about 50,000 men and women as sociometrists to be sent into every area of life in the United States and abroad to help bring about a new form of democracy, one in which, to quote from our introductory statement, "Every member of these groups would be educated by sociometry to the understanding that a truly living democracy cannot be attained unless it is based upon the science of the actually operating interpersonal and intergroup relations which exist and function below the surface of official institutions, laws, courts, and the various cultural agencies within them. The true, full meaning of sociometry will be unrealized unless it considers a worldwide scope. Its task cannot be accomplished in an isolated laboratory, remote from the living web of the social present. If a whole nation is involved in a conflict, one must not, in a scientific social program, focus upon one group and leave out all the others. The total fabric of human relations represented by the nation at large must be faced as one single objective." Alas, we have not been able to accomplish this aim, even today, more than thirty years later!

The May 1942 issue of *Sociometry* carried the first of many articles co-authored by Zerka Toeman and myself. It was a contribution to the still scantily represented area of psychodramatic literature. It was called "The Group Approach in Psychodrama." After this, Zerka Toeman's name appeared more and more often among contributors to the literature.

In June of 1942, we held a conference on national and postwar problems at the Sociometric Institute. I opened the conference with a brief survey of the nationwide response to the establishment of the institute from scientific, educational, industrial, and federal organizations. The meeting had two panel discussions. Among the distinguished participants were Helen Jennings, Paul Lazarsfeld, Margaret Mead, and Robert M. Yerkes. . . .

By 1943, the Second World War was at its height. The fighting of it was the top priority for all of us. While this war was one of the most horrifying in history because of the technical perfection of its weaponry, it was also

the first war in history in which psychiatry became an important and useful tool in dealing with the emotional casualties of the war. We have already spoken of the sociometric and psychodramatic training given to Red Cross workers at St. Elizabeths Hospital. Major Fitzpatrick of the British army came to the Sociometric Institute for a month of intensive study in 1943. He participated in psychodramatic and sociodramatic demonstrations, lectures, seminars, and discussions of the various possible applications of sociometric methods to small and large groups. When Fitzpatrick returned to England, he collaborated with Colonel J. Sutherland, Senior Psychiatrist of the War Office Selection Boards. Sociometry, sociodrama, and psychodrama thus assumed an important role in the British war effort. Our methods were used in the selection and training of soldiers of all ranks in order to reduce the appalling psychological casualty rates of the British army. It was found that many psychiatric breakdowns occurred because men were poorly assigned, so the whole process of induction and basic training in the British army was restructured along the lines laid down by sociometric theory. The process of officer selection and training was also restructured. Group psychotherapy became the preferred mode of treatment in army hospitals and was also used in the repatriation of prisoners of war.

This thorough-going British program sponsored the development of what Dr. J. R. Rees, first president of the World Federation for Mental Health, called the Moreno Brigade, a small band of social scientists of every variety who had been gathered to work on problems of morale and group cohesion in the British military services and were responsible for both the research and the clinical applications to military personnel. As an outgrowth of their work, the Tavistock Clinic (later the Tavistock Institute) was set up. I was invited to London in 1946 to direct their enormously expanding facilities. The Tavistock people were particularly concerned with developing effective action methods for helping their people cope with the aftereffects of the war. Unfortunately, I was not able to accept their splendid invitation because I was already overwhelmed with my other responsibilities. But I have always made appearances there when I was in London, and I have made it a point to work with and to share ideas with the staff of the institute whenever possible.

In 1944, the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association was again held in Philadelphia. Twelve years before, I had introduced the idea of group therapy at a meeting chaired by William Alanson White. But in 1944, there were still people at the meeting who were unaware of the importance of group therapy. A symposium on group psychotherapy was scheduled for the convention and assigned to a small room holding only 70 people. So many people signed up for the symposium, though, that it had to be transferred to the largest meeting room at the hotel.

This is how it came to pass that group therapy became so popular all of a sudden. The military brass were concerned with the high cost of psychotherapy and with the shortage of trained therapists. Therefore, they sent down an order that group therapy was to be used in preference to any other type of treatment. The meeting was crowded with military psychiatrists who had to learn something about group therapy, and quickly. It was made clear to the audience from the outset that, while group therapy might be expedient and more "efficient" from the point of view of the cost accountant, it was also good therapy, not just a poor relation to the individual therapeutic modalities. Now it is a truism, but then it seemed a new revelation to many. "People get sick in a group; they recover better in a group." . . .

Although travel was difficult during the war, we were able to make some trips. My involvement with Harvard University began during World War II, when I was invited to conduct a psychodrama session in the psychology laboratory at the university. Henry A. Murray was head of the laboratory then. He succeeded Morton Prince, the founder of the psychological laboratory, the first American psychologist to point out the split of the psyche in cases of multiple personality.

Henry Murray's associate was Mrs. Christine Morgan. She invented the Thematic Apperception Test [TAT]. Mrs. Morgan and Murray then collaborated on the TAT, developing it into a major diagnostic tool. I have always felt that there is a strong kinship between projective tests like the TAT and psychodrama. Murray and I developed a mutually close and sympathetic relationship.

When Dr. Murray introduced me at that first session at Harvard, he said, "Not even Freud has made such a great contribution to psychology." His remarks were quoted in the *Harvard Crimson* the next day and gave me much pleasure. I stayed in Cambridge the whole day and gave a couple of lectures and psychodrama demonstrations. Shortly after my visit, Murray told me he was building a theater of psychodrama in the laboratory. Because of space limitations, the theater did not have a balcony. It had three levels and had entrances on two sides which, somehow, gave the effect of a balcony. . . .

I had another good friend at Harvard, Pitirim A. Sorokin, perhaps one of the greatest social scientists of our time. We met at a large academic meeting. A tall, slender man—I remember that he had a lot of hair and bushy eyebrows—came up to me and said, in heavily accented speech, "I am Sorokin. You are Moreno." We shook hands and spoke a few words.

Sorokin was in the audience the night we inaugurated the psychodrama theater at Harvard. We gradually became friends after that, although our relationship was full of conflicts.

Sorokin, with his belief that societies evolve according to certain principles that are capable of discovery, made the Harvard sociology department preeminent in its field. It could even be said that he created the department. I know he had tremendous battles within his department with people who wanted to displace him or to reduce his power. Talcott Parsons was one of these.

But Sorokin was too great a scholar and too strong an individual to be bearded by his fellows. His books were always beautifully written and reflected the breadth of his knowledge. He was an omnivorous reader, not just in his own field. And he was one of the most cultivated individuals I ever met.

Born an aristocrat in tsarist Russia, he was Kerensky's secretary and had to flee for his life when the Bolsheviks took over. He came to the United States and became an American citizen as soon as he could do so. Whenever I was in Cambridge, I visited his home. I still remember the wonderful Russian cooking Mrs. Sorokin treated us to. I met Sorokin's sons and found them an interesting pair. Neither of them had any use for sociology. One became a physicist, and the other a medical doctor.

Sorokin had a stimulating effect on me. He was so tall—6 feet 3 inches at least—and dramatic looking. He never spoke softly, never whispered. His presence in the classroom was legendary. But he often became excited during a class and salivated to such an extent that one student stated he could only remember Sorokin's saliva, nothing else. His name, Pitirim Alexandrovich Sorokin, was imposing of itself. There was something about the way it rolled off the tongue.

In 1948 a large group of social scientists went up to Harvard to make nominations for the chairmanship of a newly developed department of social relations at Harvard. Many of my students were there. Several names were mentioned as suitable candidates. Finally Sorokin stood up and declared, "I recommend Dr. Jacob L. Moreno. He is the most original, most capable man in the field of sociology. There is none better!"

My good friend and associate, George Lundberg, responded, "That is true, but Dr. Moreno would never be able to get up early enough in the morning to give lectures and seminars and to run a decent department. Also, he is making too much money as a psychiatrist. He would never be able to manage on the meager salary Harvard would give him."

Sorokin had to agree with that estimate, and so did I when I heard the story. Professor Sam Stouffer was chosen in the end. . . .

[The following words are taken from J. L. Moreno's last published work.]

I am profoundly aware of having hardly touched on the Father-God concretely. I have remained amorphous as a living God. I do not want to diminish and to belittle the efforts which I made during the plastic years of my adolescence when I almost lost my life, almost evaporated into the beyond, not through sickness but through health. But I have failed so utterly in turning the moment in the world's needs. The hope is gone from the faces of men. Our youth is bewildered. Many children are stopped from being born because of the worthlessness of birth and life. It is in the last calamities that my failure comes through. I must admit humbly that my megalomania is shattered. Nothing is left but the crown and the throne. The body is dead.

My failure to become concrete has not been without awards and limited success. All my scientific attempts in the field of psychotherapy had strong religious undercurrents. In order to make the news of my discoveries known and to demonstrate the benefits which people could derive from them, I made trips around the world. On these trips I found in my wife, Zerka, a partner difficult to surpass. Every group and psychodrama session was a living encounter. People came with their problems to meet us. It would be difficult to enumerate all the places we visited, from Arkansas to California, from San Francisco to Montreal, from Paris to London, Munich, Vienna, Frankfurt, Bonn, Heidelberg, Cologne, Prague, Warsaw, Budapest, Oslo, Moscow, Belgrade, Rome, Athens, Constantinople, Barcelona, Jerusalem, finally the Pavlov and Bechterev Institutes in Leningrad—to mention but a few. They heralded the dawn of a new therapeutic religion which is gradually spreading the news of the new cosmic man and fighting the anti-man. However, all these accomplishments and advances did not deceive me as to the failure of the concreteness of establishing the Father-God for all people as a uniting bond between them. Mainly, therefore, the world is divided, fragmented, hopelessly wandering into the darkness of an uncertain future.

How to Concretize the Image of the God-Father is the final question. One way of spreading yourself out if you have just a little body like a man is to be the entire universe, to expand, having more brains, more eyes, more ears, more arms, more legs, more lungs, more heart. Another way is to take in everything which is already in the universe, all the people, and to bring them together, unifying what is apart, man and man, man and animal, man and plant, man and planets and stars, integration of the world. Another way is to hold the future of the universe within the bonds of your power, before the things separate themselves from you and develop apart from you. The robot, for instance, is developing apart from man, building a future world for himself. Is it still possible to hold back the ramifications of his growth, to bring him back under man's

control, or is it too late? The God-Father is irresistible, he has an irresistible drive to include everything into one. It is, therefore, difficult to mold the God-Father unless he arouses the cooperation of every other part of existence, to help him, developing the capacity to hear everything which happens all over the world, to see everything, to feel everything, to share with everybody pain and joy, hope and the excitement of living, to become more and more all-sharing, all-creating, all-involving. Then they will see you everywhere and recognize you, that you are not only one man or another man, but the God-Father himself. In our time God should not be only in one church or another, but in every medium which connects people with one another, on every TV screen, on every ship, in every plane, in every dream. If he is not, he should be. He should be made to be. The end of the world may come, but not the end of the God-Father as long as there are things to create.

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Obituary

J. L. MORENO, MD

Pioneer of the Psychodrama Technique Is Dead

BEACON, N. Y., May 15 (AP)—Dr. Jacob L. Moreno, the psychiatrist who pioneered psychodrama as a method for treating mental illness, died at his home here Tuesday.

It was in Vienna shortly after World War I that Dr. Jacob Levy Moreno embarked upon an experiment that was to prove itself a major advance in psychiatry. There he organized something called the Theater of Spontaneity, which employed actors and actresses to participate in a new form of entertainment that grew out of improvisations based on cues from the audience.

The experiment evolved into psychodrama, a technique that hundreds of hospitals in the United States and around the world subsequently adopted to help their patients discover themselves and to aid in the treatment of a variety of conditions, from alcoholism to schizophrenia.

For Dr. Moreno, psychodrama offered not so much a "cure" to mental problems as a device for self-discovery that would help lead to a person's well-being. It was also something that caught the public's fancy,

over the years, as he opened up “therapeutic theaters” in New York City and elsewhere, the best known of which was the Moreno Sanitorium in Beacon.

The publicity showered upon these theaters, in newspaper and magazine articles that focused on the entertainment aspect of psychodrama, put off some members of the psychiatric community.

But Dr. Moreno gained stature for himself, organizing conferences and frequently commenting on events of the day from a psychiatric standpoint.

He maintained that psychodrama was not so much an invention of his as a resurrection of the ancient technique of acting out, which goes back at least to Aristotle’s conception of Greek tragedy as “catharsis.”

A bulky man with long sandy hair and an expressive face, Dr. Moreno was a flamboyant advocate of his method. He took an active role in the staging of psychodramas, coaching patients and bringing them into confrontations that could reveal their problems.

He was the author of several books and articles on psychodrama and sociometry, in which members of a group are encouraged to express feelings about one another.

In 1921, he founded Das Stegreiftheater, his Spontaneity Theater, and proceeded to experiment with psychodrama, discovering that the roles he selected for his actors and actresses helped them deal better with their personal problems.

Dr. Moreno moved to the United States in 1925 and settled first in New York. He found that acceptance of his theories was slow, particularly because some colleagues deplored his showmanship.

He began his work with children at Plymouth Institute in Brooklyn and introduced some experiments at Mount Sinai Hospital here. In 1929, he founded an Impromptu Theater at Carnegie Hall and later did work at the Guild Theater.

Dr. Moreno also made studies of sociometry at Sing Sing Prison in 1931 and set up conferences on the subject. In 1936, he founded the Beacon Hill Sanitorium in Beacon, where he also set up his Therapeutic Theater the same year. The sanitorium was later named after him. He served as an adviser to many other institutions and received many professional awards.

Among his books were “Sociometry, Experimental Method and the Science of Society,” published in 1951; “Who Shall Survive?” revised in 1953, and several volumes he edited on psychodrama.

Steven R. Weisman, *New York Times*, May 17, 1974

The excerpt from the *New York Times*’ obituary was supplied by the Rare Books Section of the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine in Boston.

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