

## **The Healing of Society**

### **Tools of Sociatry**

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<http://omegatheater.org/book/moreno/body.html>

#### ***This is how a human being can change:***

*There is a worm addicted to eating grape leaves.*

*Suddenly, he wakes up, call it grace, whatever,*

*something wakes him.*

*and he's no longer a worm.*

*He's the entire vineyard,*

*and the orchard too, the fruit, the trunks,*

*a growing wisdom and*

*joy that doesn't need to devour.*

#### ***Rumi***

Some years ago while studying a pithy book by J.L. Moreno called *The Future of Man's World*, it became clear that J.L. Moreno was not only a visionary social activist, he was also a true mystic. The methods we know of as psychodrama, sociodrama and sociometry are rooted in sacred mystic practices, even though they have been consumed for some time by the ego and ego psychology. Moreno's wife and his collaborator Zerka T. Moreno, has spoken to me of Moreno as a mystic, but in the end one has to see and know this for oneself.

The focus of my work, the work of the Zerka T. Moreno Foundation (ZTMF) is to reclaim the mystic practices as they were intended, as a path to a an experience of the godhead. These are practices Moreno called *sociatry*, the healing of human society. The ZTMF is named to honour Zerka T. Moreno, my teacher, and a teacher for many around the world. She brought J.L. Moreno's mystic practices to this reality, as a form of psychotherapy, and as a sacred mystic path. This path and these mystic practices are tools; they can lead to a direct experience of the primordial nature, the inherent presence of life, at its essence. This is an initiation, a design for experiencing this essence very directly, as an individual and as a

group. Sociatry recognizes and utilizes psychodrama as a mystic practice for the individual, sociodrama and sociometry as mystic practices for a group.

In his book *Radical Passion - Sacred Love and Wisdom in Action*, Andrew Harvey writes the following about the role of the mystic:

*What is a mystic?* The most beautiful definition I have ever heard was given me by an old woman friend in Paris: "A mystic is someone who has a direct and naked perception of godhead, beyond dogma, beyond ideas, beyond any possible formulation in words of any kind" Throughout history, men and woman of all sexualities and cultures have had this direct and naked perception of godhead; and have been transformed by its rapture and challenge. Almost always they have chosen to interpret this perception in terms of the existing religious and cultural symbols of their time; the perception itself, however, remains timeless and essentially beyond all expression, born as it is from a wordless conversation between the human God and heart, life and its source, that is more intense and intimate than any other relationship.

In *The Future of Man's World*, written long before Andrew Harvey's description, Moreno answers this for himself:

Why I chose the course of the theatre instead of founding a religious sect, joining a monastery or developing a system of theology (although they do not exclude one another), can be understood by taking a view into the setting from which my ideas sprang. I suffered from an *idee fixe*, from what might have been called then an affectation, but of which might be said today, as the harvest is coming in, that it was by "the grace of God." The *idee fixe* became my constant source of productivity; it proclaimed that there is a sort of primordial nature, which is immortal, and returns afresh with every generation, a first universe which contains all beings and in which all events are sacred. I liked that enchanting realm and did not plan to leave it, ever.

Zerka Moreno describes the godhead as the *autonomous healing center*. This is at the core of Moreno's teachings: psychodrama, sociodrama and sociometry are methods to encounter the autonomous healing center. For sociatry, the instruments direct an individual and a group to the autonomous healing center, rather than our experience of separation from it. The instruments are without any religious affiliation, although they emerged from Moreno's study and practice of many great religious and mystic traditions. Sociatry is a process to train oneself, and groups, toward integration with the autonomous healing center; which is what Moreno wanted available for all humanity. He created visual formulas as instructions, and practices, for an embodied knowing of our primordial nature, the organic unity, from which all life is made. These mystic practices are the inner workings of the method, and a central focus for sociatry.

The Mystic experiences the autonomous healing center directly; and this direct experience can be found in many traditions, often discovered behind and within systems for healing and transcendence. D.T. Suzuki (1869-1966), a leading pioneer for bringing Zen to the West, described the mystic experience this way: "To see directly into one's Original Nature, this is Zen. It is like picking a hidden lock. The mind seems to have something of this mechanism:

When a certain moment is reached, a closed screen is lifted, an entirely new vista opens up, and the tone of one's whole life thereafter changes."

In his Foreword to *Hidden Journey - 2011 Edition*, Andrew Harvey writes: "When I was beginning to write *Hidden Journey*, I had an extraordinary and life-transforming conversation with my great friend and Rumi translator, Eva de Vitray-Meyerovitch in Paris. I described to her what I wanted to write and what had happened to me in my mystical initiation into the Divine Feminine, and she listened, attentive and beady eyed. When I finished she said, with the bluntness and panache with which she said everything, 'The Sufis say there are essentially two journeys on the real path. The first journey is the hidden journey to God, the journey to an awakening to divine light consciousness. This journey is finite and ends with an awakening experience in which you know that the divine light that is appearing in and as everything is also your essential self. The second journey then begins. This journey is infinite and keeps on expanding in all lives and all real.'"

With real and sustained effort over time, this experience matures, and one matures with it. One's personal experience, one's very identity, dramatically shifts, as a primordial organic unity continues to impact us, and this becomes fundamental to one's experience and identity. This is curative even in homeopathic doses for the self, for groups and organizations, and for society. This experience is a portal, an opening to the *source of spontaneity and creativity* and healing. Moreno's directive for sociatry is that this unique set of practices for the direct experience be simply made available. In *The Future of Man's World* Moreno writes:

I had a double task, to create, to produce the element within myself first, to bring so to speak, the subjective-creative subject matter to realization, then to isolate and investigate it. I thought of the prophets and saints of the past who appeared as the most shining examples of spontaneous creativity, and said to myself: "This is what you have to produce first and you yourself have to give flesh to it." Thus I began to "warm up" to prophetic moods and heroic feelings, putting them into my thoughts, my emotions, gestures and actions; it was a sort of *spontaneity research on the reality level*.

Moreno's begins his magnum opus, his book *Who Shall Survive?* with these central ideas: "A truly therapeutic procedure cannot have less and objective than the whole of mankind. But no adequate therapy can be prescribed as long as mankind is not a unity in some fashion and as long as its organization remains unknown."

J.L. Moreno created an instrument he called *social microscopy*, designed to reveal to a group and to individuals, how, in concrete experience, it is that "mankind is not a unity in some fashion" and in doing so, no longer does "its organization remain unknown". Social microscopy shows the hard to see organization of humanity, as reflected from the whole of society, taking place in operation within a group, and within all of our lives. This "hidden organization" which he named the "sociodynamic effect" creates a concentration to, and a limiting from, the *source of creativity and cohesion*, and one another. With social microscopy, the group looks at itself using this instrument, a social microscope, and is able to see the previously unseen, but felt structures, impacting the group. To see, gives potential for new

insights and growth, positive change, increased cohesion, better communication and real healing.

The structures that appear and become visible are the reflection of a larger central organizing structure impacting all humanity, and now much the earth's biosphere and the natural world. At the very same time the group sees this, the group is able to see another organizing structure within the group, the structure of its unity. This is moving, when this organic unity shows itself. We see: "No adequate therapy can be prescribed as long as mankind is not a unity in some fashion and as long as its organization remains unknown."

Social microscopy is an applied three-step process to access an organic primordial intelligence, an essence of humanity's unity. Social microscopy opens the group to this primordial intelligence, and this intelligence shows itself to the group. As the primordial intelligence becomes known through direct experience, it appears magic, but is in fact a science. The group sees the autonomous healing center in action. The results are remarkable, for countless times. The ZTM Foundation is dedicated to making this instrument, and all the other instruments and practices to access this intelligence, available as education and training.

This along with all of the method's instruments and practices, reveal this primordial intelligence and its unity, as an evolutionary force that infuses life. It captures the attention of the group and individuals, as it moves them to show itself. This has long lasting positive impact of increased cohesion, intimacy of humanity, and connection.

#### Foundation Insights on Sociatry

#### Moreno's Mystic Path for a Direct Encounter

#### With the Godhead for Individuals, Groups, Organizations, for Society .

From Zerka T. Moreno:

Our instruments are basically spiritual and existential, pointing to and supporting the value of the human Spirit.

Zerka T. Moreno *To Dream Again - a Memoir*

Moreno's notion is that we are more than biological, economical, sociological or psychological creatures, that we are first of all cosmic beings.

Zerka T. Moreno *To Dream Again - a Memoir*

Instead of looking at mankind as a fallen being, everyone is a potential genius and like the Supreme Being, co-responsible for all of mankind. It is the genius we should emphasize, not the failings.

Zerka T. Moreno *To Dream Again - a Memoir*

Moreno attributed healing to what is going on silently, mostly invisibly, in the body and deep inside the self, not touched by words but through action, often continuing well after treatment. He termed it due to the 'autonomous healing center' within.

Zerka T. Moreno *To Dream Again - a Memoir*

Awakening the autonomous healing center, the power to heal oneself, is how I see the value of psychodrama and all forms of therapy.

Zerka T. Moreno *To Dream Again - a Memoir*

My task is to find and touch that autonomous healing center within, to assist and direct the protagonist to do the same. I am merely a guide in the wilderness, clearing away obstacles so protagonists can find their very own path.

Zerka T. Moreno *To Dream Again - a Memoir*

These are these particular directives: the instruments are to point to the human spirit. The tools are used best to discover the genius within all people. The tools are for waking us to this presence, the autonomous center, within us and within a group. To find this is to trigger an awakening of consciousness. It is deep inside the self, touched most directly by sacred action. Once touched, it can rise, as an evolutionary impulse pushing us with it, to be present in the world. Throughout history many names have been given to account for this, and this is found in many traditions. We hear of its power, of our co-creative role particularly now, as the systems and organization of humanity, and the health of the biosphere transform.

From JL Moreno:

I suffered from an idee fixe, which became my constant source of productivity. It proclaimed that there is a sort of primordial nature, which is immortal, a first universe which contains all beings and in which all events are sacred.

JL Moreno *The Future of Man's World*

Man created a world of things; cultural conserves, in order to produce for himself a semblance of God. When he found himself failing in his struggle for maximum creativity, he divided from his will-to-create, his will-to-power, using the latter as a devious means by which al one to achieve the aims of God.

JL Moreno *Who Shall Survive?*

The problem: Human society has an actual, dynamic, central structure underlying and determining all its peripheral and formal groupings. It exerts a determining influence upon every sphere in which the factor of human interrelations is an active agent - in economics, biology, social pathology, politics, government and similar spheres of social action (activism).

JL Moreno *Sociometry and the Science of Society*

Human society has an atomic structure, which corresponds to the atomic structure of matter. Its existence can be brought into an empirical test by means of social microscopy. The present human society is a preference system produced, to a considerable extent, by the sociodynamic effect.

JL Moreno *Who Shall Survive?*

Mankind needs to be educated; education means more than intellectual enlightenment, it isn't emotional enlightenment; it isn't insight only, it is a matter of the deficiency of spontaneity to use the available intelligence and to mobilize his enlightened emotions.

JL Moreno *The Future of Man's World*

The expansion of the self from the plane of the individual to the cosmic plane will be a realization process of, by and through the self, a movement from the lower plane to the superior plane, the time for each movement equalling that of a historical epoch.

JL Moreno *The Future of Man's World*

Sociatry and the practices point us to the source of unity to life. This source proclaims itself to us - as a primordial nature - a first universe - that contains all beings - expressing itself within the human experience - and in nature as a source of productivity. In this there is no division from one another, or from any life, all are the emergent sacred. Some believe mostly in a separated identity, however the practices have the capacity to impact our perception of separation, by opening us to the experience of life, beyond our personal boundary, to *life that knows itself as living without form*. This change of perception requires of us all a dedication to an often long and arduous process. Yet dedication as a primacy for living can lead to a first-hand-knowing of the autonomous healing center in and around us. This changes our lives; once had there is no denying this larger reality. Moreno described a necessary fixation with this, so that the source of productivity can be sustained by one's living.

The direct path is available; it offers access to the autonomous healing center, head on, through a series of meetings of discovery and investigation, and for a collaborative creative expression. This method, these tools are an educational process. It is more than intellectual education. It is not merely emotional enlightenment; it is not just insight. This is a set of tools for a more fully realized openness to the force that animates life, a force discernible and visible. In doing so this organic unity, this intelligence, mobilizes enlightened emotional and cognitive states. These tools and practices, distilled into formulas and visual instructions, are their own kind of meditation-of-action practices, a movement to something very real and concrete.

I am grateful to have found this path - or it found me - and to have learned Moreno's work as a mystic tradition, to experience the primordial nature within this life. I can account that this has impacted the events of my life, and that my life has become centered on the continued deepening and sharing of this path and these helpful tools. This process is demanding and for me has required a director, someone to help direct me to the awakened life within myself, in others, in groups, in nature.

It is humbling and mystical itself to find others: Zerka Moreno, Christian de la Huerta, my Lakota friends, Frederick and Claske Franck, MayLi Lao Shin, and others, who have and who continue to guide this discovery. Zerka is an extraordinary example of this direct path. Her life story as written in her book *A Memoir-To Dream Again* is the story of this lived process. We are honoured by Moreno's path for realization of the nature of the godhead *to be found in this life*. This is a path to the foundation to our organic unity with one another and with all life. It takes effort and time, but well worth one's full endeavour, and it is for the benefit of beings of all life.

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2013

***The Zerka T. Moreno Foundation - a not-for-profit foundation*** offers sociatry training and education, the mystic formulas and practices to the autonomous healing center, for individuals, couples, groups and organizations.

The ZTM Foundation is based in the Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts, in the lovely areas of Northampton and Amherst. We provide training throughout the United States and the world. We have provided education and training at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in psychiatric treatment programs, in programs for HIV positive women and men, some homeless, to addiction treatment programs, and programs for professionals from the helping fields. We have offered sociatry, the mystic practices and formulas, in China, Canada, Portugal, Germany, Romania, and the International Association of Group Psychotherapy and Group Process Academy in Spain.

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