



PSYCHOLOGY AND DRAMA

*"You can perform well, you can perform poorly.
But what really matters is to play honestly."
Stanislavski*

The art of drama offers us not only aesthetic pleasures but it also serves as a means of expression for the actor as well as the public. Through theatrical experience, the fears, the thoughts and the personalities of artists are expressed but at the same time their era and their reality are reflected, filtered by their experience.

The multifunctional character of art in general justifies its prominent position in numerous psycho-diagnostic tests. Through art, experiences, feelings, desires and needs come to light, either consciously or subconsciously. Inner soul activity can become visible.

The science of psychology has used versatile forms of art in order to analyse the psychic constitution of the individual. In the beginning of the 20th century, the eminent psychologist Vygotsky writes in his thesis titled: "Psychology of art" (1924-1925) and he adopts French Psychologist Politzer's opinion that "New psychology is the science for *"the drama of life."* According to Vygotsky *"the drama of life"* is not only a mere expression of the dominance of dark, subconscious powers of life. It is also that of an optimistic transformation of these powers and the creative renaissance of humans through their participation in collective activities. In essence, theatre is one of the most significant collective activities through which humans can be "reborn". Since ancient times, drama has served man as a vehicle for his psychological and mental expression but also as a means of entertainment and recreation. It is not by chance that in ancient Greece, there were theatres next to Asklepieia - healing places of Greek antiquity, named after Asklepeios, the "father of medicine". Attendance of theatrical performances was not only a right but also a duty of the free Athenian citizen, who took part in all other social activities as well.

A little time after Vygotsky, Moreno visualized a society whose members will express themselves through their personal, impulsive and creative way as they will be confronting "the other one", the family, the team, the world, the Universe. "Every man incorporates an immense creativity. Let him be led to action by expressing himself impulsively. Impulsion will retrieve from his innate world his whole creativity so that he becomes creator of his own self." (Karp, Holmes, Tauvon).

Founding the Theatre of Impulsion in 1922, a theatre in which actors would act improvising stories to narrate to the audience or on social issues of everyday life



- what is nowadays known as *playback theatre*-, he realized the therapeutic value of action. Thus, he invented the basic principles of this therapeutic method, which he later named “psychodrama”, that is, *action of the soul*. The main ideas which Moreno elaborated were *the role, impulsiveness, purification and the “here and now” notion*. It is a method of search into a person’s psyche, in which the participants dramatise present, past or even future events from their life. Theatre, music and dance are considered fundamental elements for the development of psychodrama as a form of psychotherapy.

“To escape from a millennium tradition and be brought back to life, psychology probably ought to imitate theatre.”

Politzer

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