

Extended Abstract

Title:

**Do we need an Emotion theory for Psychodrama?
Scenic-creative therapy and supervision in discourse with current
emotional psychology and embodiment research.**

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Emotion theory – Embodiment – Psychodrama theory and praxeology – basic emotions – primary and secondary emotions – core affect – mood – neuroscience – humanistic psychotherapy – emotional field – level of arousal – mentalization – inter- corporeality – musictherapy – social interaction – social atom – emotional expansiveness – tele – warming up – role reversal – psychodramatic stage – catharsis

In this thesis for the advanced training as a psychodrama therapist at the Hamburg Institute for Social Interaction (ISI), the research question is whether and how an emotion-theoretical location can be helpful for psychodramatic theory formation and praxeology.

The starting point is to think and to develop hypotheses out of a humanistic attitude and perspective. Therefore, the psychodynamic explanatory models to emotion theories are not taken fully into account in this work.

People who are working in therapy, supervision and counselling have learned to pay special attention to feelings and emotions, to their own and to those of the client. The feeling is usually the signpost and the starting point for the upcoming psychodramatic scene. It therefore makes sense to examine the current state of research, to explore to which extent psychodrama needs its own emotional theory or if it can otherwise draw on other research results.

Even though psychodrama has not yet had its own theory of emotions, it is not yet clear whether it is needed or not.

In the first chapter of the paper, fundamental aspects of emotion-theoretical terms and concepts are clarified: What is a basic emotion, what are primary and secondary emotions, what are feelings, affects, core affects and moods, as well as adaptive and maladaptive emotions?

Reference is made to important works by (researchers such as) Glasenapp, Panksepp, Fogel, Greenberg, Ekman, Feldman, Barrett and Russell, Hauke & Dall, Occhio and Fuchs amongst others.

In the following, it is in particular referred to a fundamental body therapy work by Ulfried Geuter, who includes current emotion theory and embodiment research. In addition, the connection to the humanistic-psychotherapeutic model is established, which is also fundamental for psychodrama in Germany within the framework of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Humanistischer Psychotherapie (AGHPT).

A phenomenological excursion deals with the question of how feeling and body are connected. The neuroscientific research will be summarized with a view of the body as a stage for emotions, and its synchronisation with social interaction will be

discussed. Finally, the regulation of emotional processes and their disturbances will be examined.

All these considerations lead to the following question: "Can emotion theory and embodiment be an enrichment for psychodrama? The reason why there has been no emotion theory in psychodrama so far is the hypothesis that emotions presuppose the view of the individual bodily level. Therefore, emotions have not been differentiated on the basis of the assumption that humans in psychodrama are socially constructed.

Additionally, questions about the level of arousal in psychodramatic work are asked. Relevant here are the perspectives on core affects and categorical emotions. This is followed by questions that relate to Fuchs' approach regarding inter-corporeality and the concept of mentalization and emotional awareness. These questions lead over to the psychodramatic practice.

The psychodramatic practice is described with the help of three case studies in different formats and is connected to the previous explanations. On the basis of a team supervision, a trial supervision and a case study from individual psychotherapy, the concept of the emotional field, developed through psychodrama practice, is explored more precisely. In an additional excursion the enhancing integration of music-therapeutic interventions in the psychodramatic process is described.

In the process of encounter between human beings, emotional fields emerge that overlap and mutually influence each other and thereby influence both the individual as well as the social thinking, feeling and action.

The concept of the emotional field is used differently here in contrast to the systemic theory and is introduced into the scientific discussion. This distinct meaning of the emotional field could become ground-breaking as well as action and process guiding for psychodramatists.

The fourth chapter deals with the links between psychodrama theory and emotional psychology. Reference is made to central psychodramatic concepts and Moreno's works, e.g. on the social atom, emotional expansiveness, tele and the process of warming up. Here, it becomes clear that individual aspects are of minor importance compared to the social references in psychodramatic theory building. This core problem of psychodramatic anthropology remains a continuum until today.

In the following, four psychodramatic approaches in regard to emotion theory and embodiment will be discussed.

Already Otto Kruse (1996) made first attempts to develop an emotion theory. In the protagonist-centered work, the emotion-changing aspects of the individual are accounted for. Whether through intervention with role reversal or biographical reconstructions, empathy and self-control are promoted. Only through this interplay of self-efficacy and social situation, the therapeutic process can be understood.

Friedrich Krotz emphasizes the inner and outer side of emotions and feelings. Here many theses and thoughts can be found, that have been substantiated by research of body and neurosciences. The collective point of view needs the individual feeling, just as this has to remain fed back into the social process.

Christoph Hutter states that in principle emotional psychology and Moreno's therapeutic philosophy are compatible. Based on Moreno's "appropriateness of the scene" it can be assumed that therapeutic work is not possible without a focus on emotional integration. It is therefore necessary to include basic moods, secondary

feelings and possibly resisted feelings in order to achieve an appropriate handling of emotionality. Thereby, catharsis should not be understood primarily as an emotional abreaction, nor should the concept of the role be shortened. Encounter is understood as a social and emotional event.

Michael Schacht deals explicitly with embodiment and psychodrama. He pleads for the unity of body, mind and scene. Not least on the background of developmental psychology works but also on the neuroscientifically founded mentalization theory; mimetic, simulative aspects and scenic-creative work must be integrated.

Subsequently, the question of how psychodrama as a humanistic procedure can be connected with current findings from emotion theory and embodiment research will be discussed. As a result, the double perspective will be worked out:

How can psychodrama be linked to current research and what can psychodrama contribute to it? What are the criteria in the psychodramatic process for deciding when emotional arousal should be activated and generated, when it should be slowed down and when just be respected?

A final discussion takes place in the last chapter. Psychodrama is identified as a highly topical procedure, particularly on the basis of embodiment and emotion theory. Based on the body-related perspective, which is initially shaped by the core affects, the moods of the emotional field can be made visible and experienced in scenic-creative work. Then the perspective of change comes into the focus. By working on categorical feelings, the circular causality of organism and environment with its complex situations can be given its place on the psychodramatic stage. Impulses for change can be implemented.

"Do we need an emotion theory for psychodrama?"

The answer to the question is positive in this work. However, there is no need to reinvent an emotion theory, but the humanistic model of an emotion theory by Ulfried Geuter can be used.

The original research question leads into the view of the reflection of the individual in sociality, but also, conversely, the view of the reflection of sociality in the individual. This thesis therefore concludes with the opening of a new question: The question of whether in psychodramatic theory formation a structural theoretical anchoring of the individual and his inner worlds is missing and should be added. This would also make it possible to implement an emotion theory in psychodrama.