

## FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIATRY

### AN INTRODUCTION

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#### *What Is Sociatry?*

Sociatry derives from two Greek roots, the one is *socius*, the "other fellow," a social group, the other *iatreia*, healing. The old sociological term *socius*, a term metaphorically and vaguely used in pre-sociometric literature, has gained in the discovery of the social atom as the earliest and smallest social unit of significant consistency, a precise classification.

The earliest definitions of sociatry, sociosism and sociotic in contrast to psychiatry, psychosis and psychotic seem to have been given currency by me in "Who Shall Survive?"<sup>1</sup> "The imbalances within the social atom and their reflection upon the development of psychological currents and networks give social psychiatry a nosological basis and differentiate it as a discipline from psychiatry proper. Psychiatric concepts as neurosis and psychosis are not applicable to socioatomic processes. A group of individuals may become sociotic and the syndrome producing this condition can be called a sociosism."<sup>2</sup>

Sociatrist is then one skilled in sociatry. A doctorate, or diplomate of sociatry is a degree to be given in the future not exclusively to doctors of medicine, as it is now with psychiatry, but to doctors of education, psychology and sociology as well. The art and skill of the sociatrist will depend upon a synthesis of knowledge towards which all social and psychiatric sciences will have made their contribution.

#### *Sociatry and Sociometry*

Sociatry must be defined as to its position within a system of both, social and medical sciences. Sociology should be given a central and broader definition than usual because of the probability that the "tele" phenomenon operates in subhuman<sup>3</sup> just as well as in human societies. Sociology is a synthesis of two processes, a) relation of human organisms (or animal) to each other, b) relation of human organisms (or animal) to their environments. It has two branches, human sociology and animal sociology, each of which

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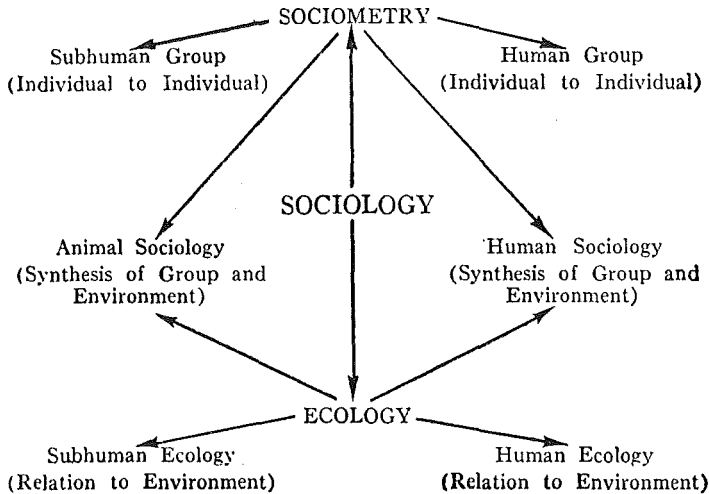
<sup>1</sup>See page 75.

<sup>2</sup>See, J. L. Moreno, "Sociometry and the Cultural Order," and Stuart C. Dodd, "Sociometry Delimited," *Sociometry*, Vol. VI, No. 3, 1943.

<sup>3</sup>See "Sociometry of Subhuman Groups," *Sociometry*, Vol. 8, No. 1, February 1945.

has two main divisions, sociometry and ecology. Sociometry is the science of human and subhuman groups (excluding their relation to environments as climate, geographical conditions, etc.). Within a system of social sciences, from the point of view of the dimension explored, Sociology can be also classified as "macro" sociology, sociometry as "micro" sociology.

Sociatry<sup>4</sup> is remedial sociometry. It is just as much a pure science as is sociometry. They differ in method and emphasis rather than in purity. A research science is not purer than a therapeutic science. The adjective "remedial" should not connote a lower degree of accuracy. Sociometry may be just as often applied sociatry as sociatry applied sociometry. One is a function of the other. They are differentiated as notions but not in concrete functioning. The value of psychodramatic audience therapy or sociometric regrouping, or other forms of social therapy, is determined by the demonstrable evidence of effects.



*Relation of Sociatry to Psychiatry*

Psychiatry is the branch in medicine that relates to mental disease and its treatment; it treats the individual psyche and soma. Sociatry treats the diseases of inter-related individuals and of inter-related groups. It is based upon two hypotheses: 1) "The whole of human society develops in accord with definite laws"; 2) "A truly therapeutic procedure cannot have less an objective than the whole of mankind."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>See "Who Shall Survive?" pp. 3 and 4.

## OPERATIONAL METHODS IN SOCIOMETRY AND SOCIATRY

The introduction of operational methods to sociology is often "charged" to sociometry. This cannot be accepted without some clarification. Operational methods in physics and in sociology<sup>1</sup> have little in common besides the name and the mutual desire of moving from a metaphysics of words into a word-free reality, a metaphysics of action or, as I called it, a "meta-praxie",<sup>2</sup> but this is as far as the similarity goes. Otherwise the two movements, physics and sociology in their essential problems are far apart and have a different historical origin. *Operational methods in the social sciences are closely linked with the development of action methods.* Physics is a far advanced science, it has its central subject matter well established in contrast with social science which is still struggling to find the very substance matter of its discipline. It is this which sociometry has attempted to produce, to expose at last the beating heart of all sociological subject matter. This is the reason it started a new epoch in social methodology. Although many of the problems have been pioneered by pre-Comptian sociologists as St. Simon, and Charles Fourier, by the German sociologists Karl Marx and Georg Simmel, and by two contemporary Americans, Charles Cooley and George H. Mead, the synthetic demonstration of their visions has been first given actuality by sociometric experiment. "The objective was to test a community as a whole and to reconstruct it purely on the basis of findings yielded by the test. Our guiding principle in the research has been from the start, after we had decided working in an unexplored territory, *to let the direction and the expansion of the research flow out of the situation.* Therefore our procedure was not fixed in advance."<sup>3</sup> Because of the fact that the individuals forming the group know in advance the meaning of the procedure and accept it, they can make it their plan of action, they are identical with it. They are in full consciousness operators in their own behalf. Such methods fall under the general category of *operational sociometry.*"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The uninhibited regard of some social scientists for mathematics and physics often takes the form of a considerable "mathematical neurosis", as mathematical methods are often advocated by social scientists who are neither mathematicians nor statisticians.

<sup>2</sup>The Stegreif Theatre, page 17-21, by J. L. Moreno, 1923.

<sup>3</sup>Page 91, Who Shall Survive?

<sup>4</sup>*Sociometry*, Vol. I, page 344, 1937-38, J. L. Moreno and Helen Jennings, Statistics of Social Configurations.

As in Sociometry, also in Sociatry, careful theoretical and practical planning of controls and statistical treatment have to be the guideposts. *Test the group before and after you have applied some procedure to it, and find out the change which has taken place.* It makes no difference whether the measure producing change is re-grouping and role-training (as in the Hudson study), or whether it is a medium to which the group is exposed, for instance, a lecture or a drama. A classic illustration is the analysis of an audience with two control audiences before and after they have been exposed to the same medium, a psychodramatic production.<sup>5</sup>

#### BASIC CATEGORIES OF GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY<sup>6</sup>

The following categories are the result of operational experimentation. They may serve as a guide to the fundamental directions group psychotherapy can take.

#### SUBJECT of Therapy

##### 1. As to the *Constitution* of the Group

Structured (Organized) Group	vs.	Amorphous
Determining the dynamic organization of the group and prescribing therapy upon diagnosis.		Without considering the organization of the group in the prescription of therapy.

##### 2. As to *Locus* of Treatment

Treatment of Group in Loco Nascendi, in Situ	vs.	Treatment Deferred to Secondary Situations
Situational, for instance within the home itself, the workshop itself, etc.		Derivative, for instance in especially arranged situations, in clinics, etc.

##### 3. As to *Aim* of Treatment

Causal	vs.	Symptomatic
Going back to the situations and individuals associated with the syndrome and including them <i>in vivo</i> in the treatment situation.		Treating each individual as a separate unit. Treatment may be deep, in the psychoanalytic sense, individually, but it may not be deep groupally.

<sup>5</sup>This is first reported in literature by Zerka Toeman, Role Analysis and Audience Structure, *Sociometry*, Vol. VII, 1944, page 205-221. See also Psychodrama Monograph No. 12, Beacon House, New York, N. Y.

<sup>6</sup>See J. L. Moreno, Scientific Foundations of Group Psychotherapy, p. 318-19, *Sociometry*, Vol. 8.

## AGENT of Therapy

1. As to *Source* or *Transfer* of Influence

## Group Centered Methods

vs.

## Therapist Centered

Every member of the group is a therapeutic agent to one or another member, one patient helping the other. The group is treated as an interactional whole.

Either chief therapist alone or chief therapist aided by a few auxiliary therapists. Therapist treating every member of the group individually or together, but the patients themselves are not used systematically to help one another.

2. As to *Form* of Influence

## Spontaneous and Free

vs.

## Rehearsed and Prepared Form

Freedom of experience and expression. Therapist or speaker (from inside the group) is extemporaneous, the audience unrestrained.

Suppressed experience and expression. Therapist memorizes lecture or rehearses production. The audience is prepared and governed by fixed rules.

## MEDIUM of Therapy

1. As to *Mode* of Influence

## Dramatic or Action Methods

vs.

## Lecture or Verbal

Dance, music, drama, motion pictures.

Lectures, interviews, discussions, reading, reciting.

2. As to *Type* of Medium

## Creative Media

vs.

Conserved, Mechanical or  
Unspontaneous

Therapeutic motion pictures as preparatory steps for an actual group session, extemporaneous doll drama with the aid of auxiliary egos behind each doll, psychomusic, psychodrama and sociodrama.

Motion pictures, rehearsed doll drama, rehearsed dance step, conserved music, rehearsed drama.

3. As to *Origin* of Medium

Face to Face	vs.	From-a-Distance Presentations
Any drama, lecture, discussion, etc.		Radio and television.

The categories listed in the left column are in principle superior to the ones listed in the right column. Structured is superior to amorphous diagnosis, *in situ* to deferred situations, causal to symptomatic treatment, group centered to therapist centered, spontaneous to rehearsed, action methods to verbal, creative media to mechanical, face-to-face to distance. Most of the current methods of group psychotherapy are concerned with the choice of *medium*, lecture, interview, discussion, motion picture, doll, music, drama, etc., but are unconscious of the equally fundamental consideration of the constitution of the group, locus and aim of treatment, source and form of influence. However, masterly as the medium used may be, the medium in itself does not qualify as therapy of a group.