

# Theatre performance inspired by Drama Therapy and the Greek Shadow Theatre in the Efthimio Rehabilitation and Recovery Day Centre for children, adolescents and young adults, Corinth, Greece

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## Background

Drama therapy is a psychotherapeutic method that originates from the Greek tragedy.

The Greek Shadow Theatre (GST) is a still popular theatre, that presents many common issues with the ancient drama.

*The Shadow* as a symbol has always preoccupied human thought, and psychological science as well. *The Shadow* was called the dark side of Carl G Jung's archetypes, while *Dark* and *Light* were called the synonyms of conscious and unconscious.

## Aim

To introduce and evaluate GST as a drama-therapeutic tool for inpatient treatment of children and adolescents.

## Methods

### The text

Built on GST's characters and designed according to the group's potentiality.

Written by the undersigned, following GST's basic dramaturgical principles:

- Storytelling with start and end
- Double performances time
- A deficiency's statement
- Deficiency's transfer and removal = catharsis

### The group

6 males and 3 females, 13-31 years old, with neurological syndromes, restrictions on their movement, mental retardation, autism and concomitant mental disorders hospitalised at the Day Centre.

Most of the group's members had already participated in the theatrical project Aristophanes, "Peace", 2001.

### The coordinators roll

To find the participants

- To encourage the group
- To coordinate the sessions
- To ensure the necessary conditions that concerns the therapy sessions and the performance

### The sessions

Ten structured 60 minutes sessions with:

- Introduction (feedback, heating, voice and movement exercises)
- Rehearsal (in-role-out)
- Closing (discussion, relaxation)
- Freudian defense mechanisms were used as tools during the rehearsals

### The setting

- No scenography
- Masks and theatrical costumes were used
- Playback music was used

### The performance

- A part of an event (on the occasion of the international day for people with handicap)

### The public

- Other patients at the Day Care Centre, working personal, parents and other guests

## Discussion

Besides the Greek Shadow Theatre's transference on the scene, it would be interesting to see if Drama Therapy in the context of the traditional shadow puppet theatre can reveal new therapeutically dimensions.

The meeting between the GST and Drama Therapy could be a useful therapeutic tool for children, adolescents and young adults familiar to the Greek culture.

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## Results

### The participants

- acted collectively
- left their isolation
- enriched their interpersonal relations
- trained their voices and bodies
- trained their cognitive skills and imagination
- explored the plenty of symbols in GST's semiology
- expressed themselves creatively
- researched the catharsis

During a discussion after the performance the patients, their parents and the day-care centre personnel were contended with the intervention.

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