

Reviewing Our Situation:

Critical Analysis of Objections to an IAAP Statement –

Professional, Political, Principled and Pragmatic Perspectives

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Aims and purposes of this paper

In the paper, I review, in what I hope is an appropriate, responsible and related manner, a few of the many objections of some Jungian analytical colleagues to IAAP issuing a public statement.

I am not, in this presentation, going over the reasons *in favour* of issuing a public statement. That is to say, I am not presenting arguments supporting issuing a statement. Nor am I forgetting that there needs to be *more – much more* - than a mere public statement.

Instead, I shall be reviewing *the objections to issuing such a statement*. In this way, I believe that a level playing field is restored. We need this balance in order to work better together to bring a good conclusion to the business.

The etymology of ‘objection’ is interesting. It comes from the Latin *obicere* which means, amongst other things, ‘to reproach’.

As I said, I will now proceed to examine and evaluate three prominent objections.

[If anyone wants to read the pdf of the whole paper on which this short talk is based (where I have delineated ten objections, including discussion of the perceived funding problem), here, again, is my e-mail: andrew@andrewsamuels.net]

The three objections are:

(1) Jung was just a man of his times.

(2) There is a wider general issue affecting the whole field of psychotherapy and analysis. Not a problem exclusively for Jungian analysis.

(3) The statement is too Eurocentric.

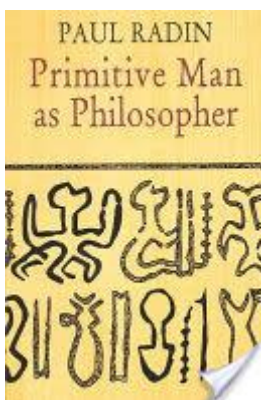
(1) *Jung was just a man of his times*

It was been objected that the first draft statement unreasonably and a-historically castigated Jung who was ‘just a man of his times’? What he wrote was typical for back then in the 1920s or before. Isn’t it stupidly ahistorical – people said - to try to claim that Jung was a ‘racist’? Hence, it was argued, it is important that Jungian analysts do not try to ‘apologise’ for Jung’s racism as if he were working and writing today.

This is a valid point.

Nevertheless, it is by no means *entirely* beyond scholarly debate that Jung was ‘just’ a man of his times. The racial hierarchy and the European cultural and civilizational superiority that appear in Jung’s writings on ‘Africans’ was widespread but not universal.

Just to give one example: the esteemed anthropologist Paul Radin was very critical of what Jung wrote about Africans. As we know, Radin was a colleague of Jung’s, taught at the Jung Institute, and invited Jung to write a response to his work on the Trickster. He was a ‘Jungian’.



In 1927, Radin published a remarkable book *Primitive Man as Philosopher*. Synchronistically, it was re-published earlier this year. Although the use of the word ‘primitive’ has been thoroughly dissected in many places, I find it interesting in this context – twinned with the rather different sounding word *philosopher*.

Radin zeroed in on the well-known passage Jung wrote in *Psychological Types* about a bushman hunter. For those who don't know, here is the passage:

An incident in the life of a bushman may illustrate what I mean. A bushman had a little son whom he loved with the tender monkey-love characteristic of primitives. Psychologically, this love is completely auto erotic that is to say the subject loves himself in the object. The object serves as a sort of erotic mirror. One day the bushman came home in a rage; he had been fishing as usual, and caught nothing. As usual the little fellow came to meet him, but his father seized hold of him and wrung his neck on the spot. Afterwards, of course, he mourned for the dead child with the same unthinking abandon that had brought about his death. (*CW6, para 403*)

This passage of Jung's was first published in 1921 and remained intact through many revised editions culminating in its final publications in the *Gesammelte Werke* in 1961 and in the *Collected Works* in 1971. I find myself wondering what nothing editorial was done about, as it was in several other equally problematic instances.

Radin writes (in 1927) of the passage concerning the Bushman hunter quoted above as follows:

No greater distortion of the facts could possibly be imagined. And yet Dr Jung obtained this example from what purported to be a first-hand account ... [It] illustrates the unconscious bias that lies at the bottom of our judgement of primitive mentality, the unconscious assumption of the lack of differentiation and integration to be found there. ... That an example like the one used by Jung should in all good faith be given as representative of the normal or even the abnormal reaction of a primitive man to a given emotional situation, shows the depth of ignorance that still exists on this subject.' (Radin, 1927/2017, pp. 39 and 63)

Back to Jung. Of course, he knew Radin and his work well and it is probable that Jung was aware of Radin's criticism of his writing.

In addition to Paul Radin, one should also consider Jung's exposure to the anthropologist Franz Boas, whose distinction between race and culture was already well-known before the First World War. Jung cites Boas in various writings.

In his paper at the Clark University conference of 1909, with both Jung and Freud in attendance, Boas made it clear that there was no 'justification for [racial]

hierarchies'. According to Sonu Shamdasani, Boas also spoke against the idea that European civilization represented the peak towards which other races and cultures were developing (Shamdasani, 2003, p. 277-278).

There is more in Shamdasani's book pointing in the same direction.

On balance, though, I agree that calling Jung 'racist' and leaving it there is, indeed, simplistic. It is not the way for us to go.

But, equally, merely calling him just a 'man of his times' may also be a bit too quick and easy.



What I take from this objection in a helpful and positive way is that the issue of 'Jung and Africans' is now planted firmly in our court, in the Jungian analysts' court. *Our problem, not Jung's problem.* What I think we have to do, and in public, and with respect and veneration – gently differentiate ourselves from Jung when it comes to matters of 'race'.

(2) There is a wider general issue affecting the whole field of psychotherapy and analysis. Not a problem exclusively for Jungian analysis

This is a very serious point – that the absence of persons of colour and minorities in the Jungian field is not due primarily to what Jung wrote or said. Rather, the argument goes, there are wider economic and cultural issues to consider. Why, it is argued, would we feel impelled to say anything at all about the lack of diversity in the Jungian field when this is the case with *all* the schools of psychotherapy?

What follows in relation to this interesting viewpoint is a summary of research that I have undertaken. My findings help us to think about the merits of the objection that this is a wider problem.

The research thus far is limited to the United States, Britain and Brazil. In all of these countries, in the broad psychotherapy field, persons of colour are under-

represented. True. But it seems they are *even more substantially* under-represented in the Jungian professional community.

For instance, in Britain, across the two major therapy regulation organisations, the average figure for therapists of colour is nearly 6%. In the Jungian professional community, whilst no statistics are kept, the figure is very much lower, well below 1%. There are no Africanist Jungian analysts in Britain. ('Africanist' is Dr Fanny Brewster's useful term.)

In the United States, there are, at present, only three African American Jungian analysts out of a total of over six hundred. This is a very low proportion. Though still below what would be representative of the population, the proportion is higher in the two American-based analytical organisations of which I am a member: the International Association for Relational Psychoanalysis, and the Psychoanalysis Division of the American Psychological Association.

In a nutshell, there may well be a problem here with regard to psychotherapy as a whole but, in the Jungian professional communities, *the problem is that much bigger.*

For these reasons, isn't it premature and not grounded to close down debate about the impact of Jung's writings on people of colour seeking analytical training and Jungian analysis? *Surely it is unlikely that what Jung wrote has had no impact whatsoever?*

I am grateful to Dr Alan Vaughan (personal communication, 2017), one of the three African American Jungian analysts, for informing me that it is common currency within the US national Organisation of Black Psychologists that *they should steer clear of things Jungian, including further training.*

I have heard something similar from a correspondent in the Jungian analytic field in Brazil who wishes to remain anonymous. This person told me that such views were widely held in the national and provincial Councils of Psychologists.

Another Brazilian colleague (a senior analyst) wrote this to me via e-mail in July 2017:

Racism is not a topic in the Jungian trainings. What Jung wrote about Blacks is not discussed. Normally, Jungians often pretend he didn't write such things. Maybe we are defensive against this historical wound. To sum up, we know Jungians don't want to talk about it in a deeper way.

(3) The statement is too Eurocentric

You will have read this passage in President Marianne Mueller's letter to all of us here participating in the Symposium:

When considering the statement in relation to all our Group Members worldwide, we realized also that the statement is written very much from a Western European/North American view-point and does not take into account the perspectives of some of our Asian, South American and African members who also experience difficulties in the area of discrimination and under- representation but in very different ways.

I imagine this is why the Executive Committee's second draft version of the statement has very solidly expanded the first to take into account the experiences and viewpoints of other non-Western groups. So this is indeed now not only about 'Africans'.

Let me expand on this topic, albeit anecdotally. I recall a visiting lecturer to London from a non-Western country who said that, as a non-Western person in Britain, he felt 'Black'. He added that, as a non- European, he could easily 'identify' with Africans.

So – maybe this is not and should not be just an Anglo American concern. The matter is relevant in Asia, Latin America, Australasia, and European countries like France. It goes without saying that the matter is pressing in South Africa.

The current title represents a genuine attempt by the Executive Committee to broaden the area of concern. It is very general, using the words 'Persons of African heritage, other persons of colour and Indigenous Populations'.

We need to find a way through this that responds to all expressed needs as far as possible. The wording of any possible statement must reflect these arguments. The current draft does not at the present time of writing in October 2017.

Indeed, we don't have a good-enough statement right now. We may need to start again!

Conclusions?

There are, quite deliberately, no conclusions here. My rather dry and limited stated goal was to stimulate and contribute to discussion. I attempted this by developing a *methodology* in which the principal objections to the statement are themselves subjected to critical analysis.

BUT - I do not want to end on a note where Africanists are only presented and discussed as victims. So here is a slide show that does need much verbal commentary from me to make the point:

Pele



Maya Angelou



Nelson Mandela



Josephine Baker (American singer and French Resistance fighter)



The Forgotten African American Mathematicians

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HIDDEN FIGURES
BASED ON THE UNTOLD TRUE STORY

Date: Wednesday 4th October 2017
Time: 11:00-12:30
Venue: Wildwood Cinema

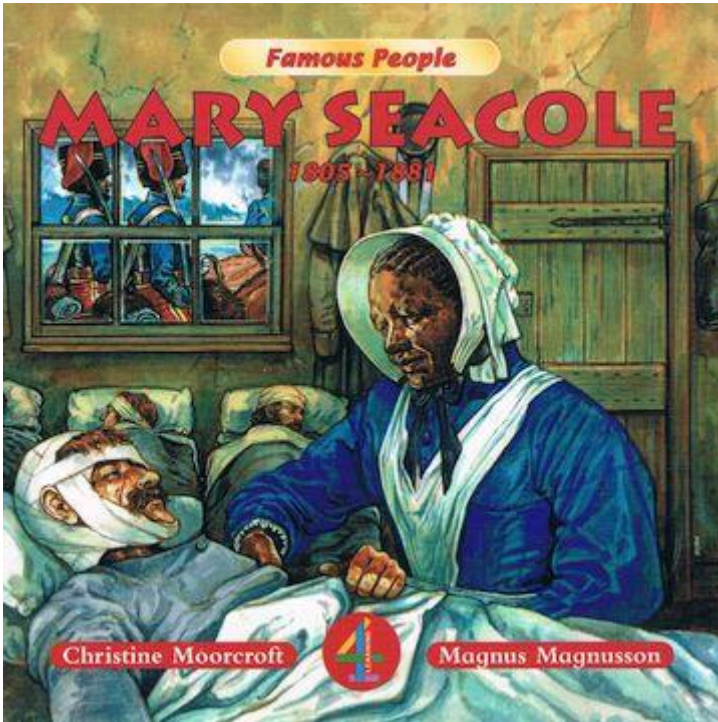
Introductions by Prof. Eoghan Butler,
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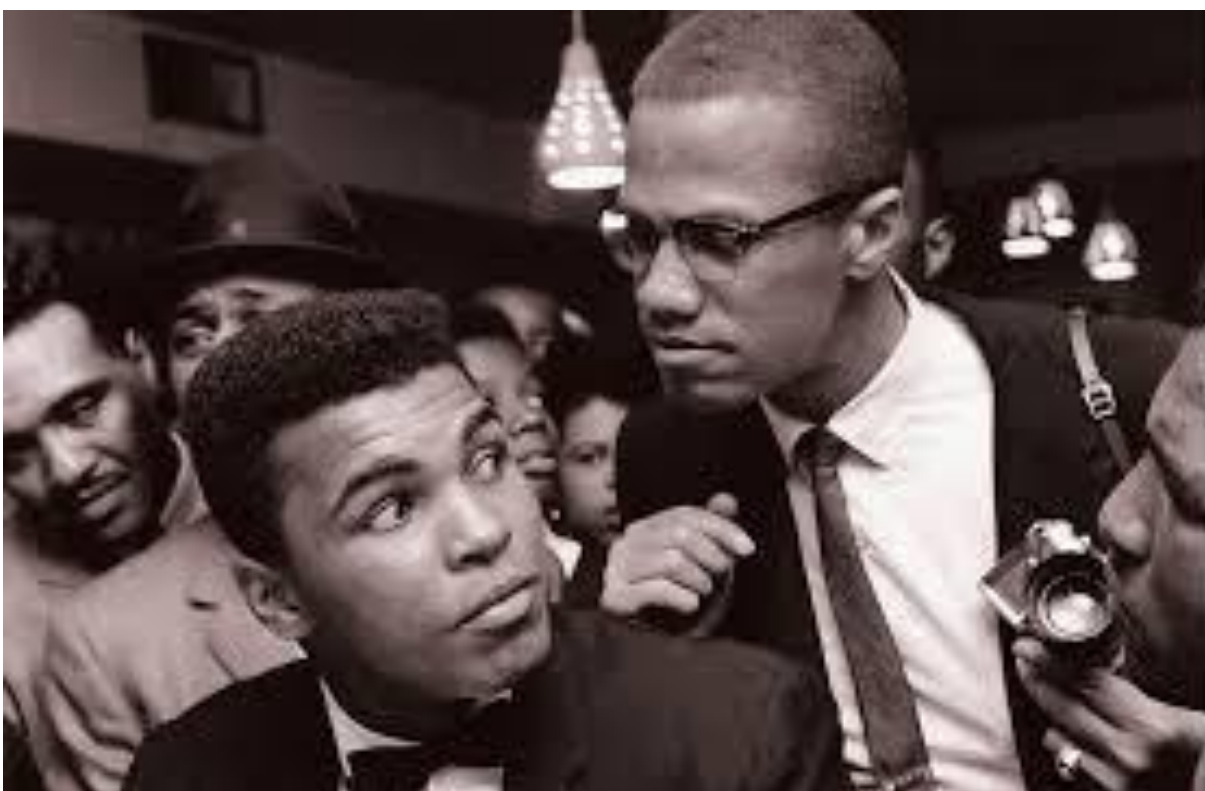


eleanor glanville centre

Mary Seacole (Jamaican-British Nurse)



Mohammed Ali with Malcolm X



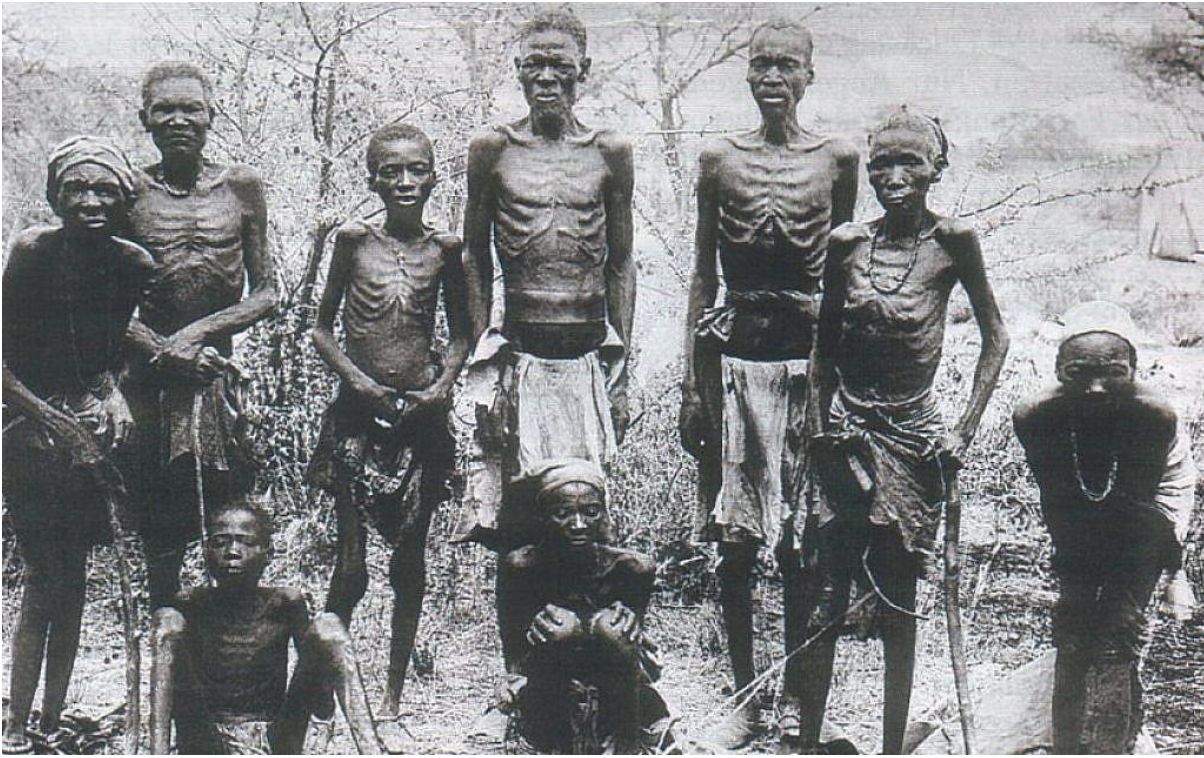
I doubt that other aspects of Africanist experience will be forgotten. Nevertheless, here are some images of slavery that took place in some of the countries from whom the speakers at the Prague Symposium came:



Swiss slave children in Canton Bern in 1954.



Malayan Tamils during the construction of Death railway between June 1942 to October 1943



Surviving Herero people after escaping from slavery in German South West Africa
c1907



A lady with two slaves, in Bahia, Brazil, 1860.

References

Radin, P. (1927). *Primitive Man as Philosopher*. Reprinted by New York Review of Books (2017).

Shamdasani, S. (2003) *Jung and the Making of Modern Psychology: The Dream of a Science*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.