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## JUNG, THE OTHER AND BEYOND

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Five years after Jung's death, 1966, I met the great Italian film director Federico Fellini, who himself had been in Jungian analysis. His very first question was: "Is there a monument of Jung in Zürich?" I was rather ashamed that I had to say the bitter truth: "No, there is no monument of Jung in Zürich." Today, frankly, I'm glad that there is no monument of Jung, because a monument smells death whereas Jung and his work, in my eyes, are surprisingly alive, perhaps even more than ever!

We have to face the crucial question: What is our position towards Jung and his work? Has he, in the meantime, nevertheless become a kind of monument and his work, so-to-say, the sacrosanct Bible of Analytical Psychology?

Once a great man has passed away, there lurks the danger of "sanctification" which can, and this is even more dangerous, easily turn into "petrification". There is the temptation to blindly accept what is written in what can be considered the Bible of Analytical Psychology. But what when we discover that it is not as perfect as we want it to be? Can we open up to the fact that in this monument of the so-called Collected Works, we might discover things which are questionable, which we do not like or must openly disapprove? This may lead to the painful question which now we are indeed confronted with: Should we, can we, must we, apologize for the slips or mistakes of the founder of Analytical Psychology?

In front of this dilemma, I argue that, first of all, we should remember: Jung was a living human being! But, alas, the number of people who have met Jung "alive" is drastically shrinking. Now that Tom Kirsch has left us not long ago, I may be the only Jungian analyst left – beside some members of his family – who can still say that he had met Jung. 1956 – thanks to an initiative of my analyst Jolande Jacoby – I could indeed pay a visit to Jung. He was 81, I a greenhorn of 25.

Jung, of course, made a great, even overwhelming impression on me. But at the same time he also touched me as very human, as a man who sometimes felt not recognized enough, or even

bitter because misunderstood in many regards. At the end of our conversation, he confessed that, for a long time already, he had lost the overview of all the countless different fields in psychiatry. His focus had been on certain specific domains. This I always took as a sign of modesty.

To sum up, Jung, for me, is not a monument and his work not hewn in stone. His work is a living body. During the many decades of his professional life he has said and written many things and, last but not least, has also changed and evolved. It is our task, the task of his successors, to keep this “living body” alive, to develop, to improve or even correct it.

There is certainly quite a number of Jung’s statements and writings about persons of African heritage which today we cannot and do not approve anymore. But at the same time, there are also many texts in Jung’s writings which are a testament to his great respect and even immense consideration for indigenous people. Think of the passage in MDR, where he describes his meeting with the Indian chief Mountain Lake. What an incredibly moving homage to an indigenous man and his culture in contrast to the appalling picture which Jung, at the same time, draws of the Western human beings...

I do not believe that Jung’s statements and writings about indigenous people are the main reason why African or indigenous people are deterred to enter Jungian analysis or train to become Jungian analysts. The issue is much more complex and goes far beyond the realm of a specific Western-minded psychology. It has to be considered in the context of the entire global history of our planet, and this not only during the last decades but innumerable centuries. If ever there is a necessity for apology, it is not due with regard to C.G. Jung only, but to the entire Western mankind and civilization for what they have done through colonization and exploitation of countless indigenous populations and countries. But this goes beyond our topic and possibilities.

My position: We cannot and must not apologize for Jung, and even for the Jungians before us. We must, if ever, apologize for what we, nowadays, have done or not done!

Let us return to our specific topic: Jung, Analytical Psychology and the encounter of the Other.... In doing so, allow me to draw on my own experiences, especially in South Africa.

Jung and the Other... The Other, or the Otherness, is also the topic of the science called Ethnology, in American terminology Social Anthropology. In fact, Ethnology or Social Anthropology is often called the science of the other. When Jung, in 1925 and 1926, undertook his expedition to Kenya and Uganda, he entered the field of ethnology, of Otherness, in a very concrete way.

Blake W. Bursleson, in his book *Jung in Africa*, writes that C.G. Jung, throughout his entire trip to Kenya and Uganda, was what in social anthropology is called a *participant observer*. I think he was even much more than just a participant observer. Interestingly, in modern social anthropology there is a tendency towards what is called *radical participation* or *radical empiricism* that breaks down the boundary between the observer and the observed (cf. modern quantum physics). According to this view, anthropologists should allow themselves to become *co-actors* in their informants' worlds, to actively participate and "join in" with their lives, enabling them to become transformed in the process. This approach implies that one gives in to an alien reality and allows oneself to change in the course of the *experience*.

This sounds very much like a Jungian approach. And it was indeed what Jung did when he went to Africa to meet the Elgoni tribe. He allowed himself to be deeply affected, influenced and changed by the entire African experience. There was transformation, there was *change*, but – and here we come to what in our present context I consider a crucial question - was there also mutual *ex-change*?

Let's make a leap of time and talk of the very first Jungian analyst in South Africa, Vera Bührmann who lived from 1910 to 1998. Her situation, of course, was totally different from Jung's in the 1920s. Vera Bührmann had grown up in South Africa. Being part of the white but dominant minority in South Africa, she nevertheless lived in the midst of the black population and the language barrier was much smaller. As we know, it was under her leadership that Analytical Psychology was introduced and established in South Africa. But at the same time - in the 1980s, still during Apartheid! – Vera Bührmann also did pioneering research work in a South African indigenous community. When her main black counterpart, the traditional healer Mongezi Tiso, said to her: "If my patients do not dream I cannot treat them", Vera Bührmann responded: "Then we are colleagues". Vera Bührmann's research culminated in the publication of her groundbreaking book *Living in Two Worlds - Communication between a white healer and her black counterparts*. Largely thanks to

circumstances very different from Jung's, Vera Bührmann succeeded in establishing a dialogue with her indigenous counterparts. Astrid Berg wrote of her mentor:

“...Dr Bührmann may have been one of the first researchers from the west to truly respect the people she was researching... She therefore did not try to impose her own terminologies on the indigenous language.”

Vera Bührmann and her African counterparts, the black traditional healers, entered into a real dialogue which affected and influenced both of them. This dialogue was, however, up to a certain degree also limited and one-sided. We can say that Bührmann, by her work, formed the foundation for understanding traditional healing from a Western perspective. But the counterpart did not happen, not yet.

It was Vera Bührmann who first invited me to go to Cape Town to give some lectures and seminars for what then was called *The Cape of Good Hope Centre for Jungian Studies*. This was in 1990. I always enjoyed my stays in South Africa tremendously, but – and there was indeed a “but” – I hardly ever saw a black person in the audience. I wondered: was Jungian psychology a matter for “whites only”? And this in spite of all the work and research Vera Bührmann had done! How could this be changed?

When the International IAAP Congress 2007 was held in Cape Town, I was given the possibility to organize workshops in the course of which Jungian psychotherapists and African Traditional Healers could meet, exchange ideas and at least initiate a process of dialogue. These workshops were a success insofar as an impressive number of Jungian analysts listened to the contributions of the traditional healers. But was it a real dialogue? One of the black healers called me after the Congress and said: You Jungians, you all are so interested in our work, but we black healers, we should also show some curiosity about your kind of work, shouldn't we?

But where to find a counterpart who was interested in a dialogue as equals? Through a series of happy encounters and coincidences I finally met the person whom I was looking for: Nomfundo Mlisa. She is perhaps the only South African clinical psychologist, trained according to Western standards who, at the same time, is a fully fledged African traditional healer and who has a deep interest in Jungian psychology. She worked at the University of

Fort Hare where, by the way, Nelson Mandela was a student. Nomfundo Mlisa advises that Western-trained psychotherapists should try to learn from the traditional healers. There is, according to her, a great opportunity for both practices to learn from each other.

Together with Nomfundo Mlisa and a few traditional healers on the one side, as well as a group of Jungian analysts from Cape Town on the other side, in October 2016 we succeeded in organizing a “small but beautiful” conference at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa about establishing an ongoing dialogue and exchange between these two worlds of healing. My hope and vision is that it will be the seed for a tree which will go on growing in the future, slowly but steadily!

All this, though being a small and modest beginning, might be of great significance for our topic of “Encountering the Other”. We live in a time when Jungian psychology is expanding and developing in many countries on the five continents of our planet. In spite of this relative success story, I think we should be cautious and try to be aware of the risks involved in what we are doing.

As an example, I would like to quote Freud - not to denigrate him but to heighten our awareness. In some of his enthusiastic letters to Jung, when he still saw him as his successor and crown-prince, Freud urged his disciple on with the following words: “We must conquer the whole field of mythology” and “I shall be very happy when you plant the flag of libido and repression in that field (of mythology)”. This is the kind of language, I think, which reveals the White Man’s mentality of conqueror and colonizer.

Should Analytical Psychology “conquer the world”? Should we plant the flag of our psychology – that of the White Man – on all the “battlefields” of our planet?

I think we should be more aware of the dangers inherent in this kind of “conquering” and “colonizing”. When we go to people from other cultures in order to pass on or teach Jungian psychology, we should do so with the greatest respect for them. Instead of teaching our psychology in a one-sided way, we should strive to engage our counterparts in a dialogue, a dialogue of mutual change and exchange, between equals!