The Archetypal Roots of Culture and Religion

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ABSTRACT

Universally, people are rooted in their culture, religion, and language. This literature-based article focuses on the underlying similarities between people from African and Western cultures and life philosophies. The underlying similarities in the two worldviews are discussed from a Jungian perspective. It is argued that on an archetypal level, all human beings and their cultural and religious expressions share common patterns. These similarities are demonstrated by analysing four Jungian constructs – the persona, shadow, anima/animus, and individuation. These constructs provide insight into the deep structural similarities in worldviews, cultures, and religions that may bridge personal, cultural, and religious divisions.

Keywords: *Archetypes, consciousness/unconsciousness, constructs, worldviews*

INTRODUCTION

THE ARCHETYPAL ROOTS OF CULTURE AND RELIGION

Increasing globalisation necessitates that people from different cultures and religions understand each other and build relationships. According to Barmeyer and Franklin (2016, p. 15), "understanding the otherness is necessary but not sufficient towards generating complementarily and synergy from cultural diversity". On a personal level, cultural patterns of emotionally nuanced ideas can cause interpersonal misunderstanding and mistrust due to dissimilar culturally embedded values and norms. However, openness to such differences can enrich and contribute to personal and professional growth (Barmeyer& Franklin, 2016).

The purpose of this article is to explore whether or not and how selected Jungian constructs might be utilised to enhance intercultural understanding in the Roman Catholic Church. It is argued that Jung's constructs provide insight into the deep structural similarities in worldviews, cultures, and religions. Finally, the application of Jungian theory in the religious sphere will be highlighted. This is a literature-based study.

Rationale

Jung, a proponent of depth psychology, emphasises both unconsciousness and consciousness, or awareness. It will be argued that on a deeper or archetypal level, all human beings and their cultural and religious expressions share common patterns. If these underlying similarities are more conscious and acknowledged, it should lead to a better understanding and tolerance of cultural differences.

Many of the bloody wars between cultural groups are based on cultural and/or religious differences; the worst conflicts often occur when both of these differences are present. In the recent past, xenophobic trends in South Africa, Europe, and the USA are examples of how the unconscious, unexamined collective judgement is projected on to the 'other'. In the religious domain, some priests' hidden paedophilia can be viewed as an expression of the same phenomenon of unawareness. Although this article focuses on the underlying similarities that are expressed differently in the African and Western worldviews, the discussion will initially centre on the individual, because only individuals can be conscious, and the individual's level of consciousness impacts the group's level of consciousness. An individual at war with the 'self', will breed conflicts in the community. Hollis (2001, p. 48) asserts that "by each person becoming more conscious, the tribe, community gains consciousness". He further states "…what is denied in the individual, breeds monsters in the tribe" (Hollis, 2001, p. 14). The importance of this principle is magnified in a religious order. Should the

religious leader not be conscious, the congregation (tribe) is at risk. The depth psychology approach emphasises the individual's awareness (Jung, 1971), and in this approach, "learning and training becomes self-experience" (Link, 2016, p. 19). Only through becoming more self-aware can greater understanding and tolerance of the 'other' become possible. The more the 'other' is not understood and rejected, the greater the possibility of hating and fearing that which is foreign. Most of the current literature emphasises the need to understand other cultures (Barmeyer& Franklin, 2016), but few start with the need to understand the self. The 'other' can only be truly understood if one first understands oneself. An ancient Greek aphorism states: 'Know thyself'. If a person does not know him/herself well, it is close to impossible to know and understand another person beyond a superficial level, especially someone from a different culture. The group as a whole cannot be more conscious than its individual members. The opposite is true: a group as a whole has been shown to be less conscious than its individual members.

RELIGION AND CULTURE AS EXPRESSIONS OF DEEP HUMAN STRUCTURES

In this article, the *apriori* assumption is that human beings by nature are spiritual beings. A culture's religious beliefs and practices are manifestations of its members' spiritual understandings and expressions. Deep-seated religious beliefs are often at the heart of cultural beliefs. Thus, religious beliefs feed and shape cultural practices and rituals. If these religious beliefs are unquestioned, unexamined, and inflexible, it is likely to lead to religious and cultural intolerance.

Othering – An Expression of Unconscious Life

From a Jungian perspective, intercultural understanding and tolerance starts with individuals becoming more conscious and more self-accepting. An inscription in a church in Rwanda where hundreds of people were killed during the genocide, loosely translated, reads: "If you knew yourself and you knew me, you would not have killed me" (Du Toit, 2016, p. 201). Xenophobia can be seen as a consequence of cultural intolerance that stems from not truly knowing oneself and not knowing the 'other'.

The 'other' has been mentioned a few times in this article. In Jungian psychology, it is a very important concept, which has implications for inter-cultural and inter-religious understanding and tolerance. If a person is not self-aware, his/her own unresolved issues are projected onto others, and "unconscious contents are invariably projected at first to concrete persons and situations" (Jung, 1969, p. 6). 'Others', particularly when significantly different–such as persons from a different cultural group–are then seen as embodying the unwanted characteristics of the unaware person. If groups are unaware, group members will agree on the unwanted traits of the 'other' group, thus creating a negative–even dehumanising–narrative of such a group. The 'other' can then quite easily become the enemy. It then can be deemed acceptable to do anything to the 'others', even kill them. Jung (1956, p. 355) states: "a person... imagines his worst enemy is in front of him, yet he carries the enemy within himself". If a person is unconscious of his/her own suppressed aspects, some parts of the person is not fully accepted and integrated. A conscious person, who is at peace with him/herself and his/her beliefs, has no need (or compulsion) to react to or judge another who is merely different. Differences are then just that - differences. In contrast, a person who is not conscious and thus not aware of his/her unconscious unresolved issues and prejudices, is likely to project these un-owned parts of the self onto the disliked, disrespected, or even vilified 'other' (Battista, 1980). Differences are then not merely differences, but value-laden judgements of the 'other', which frequently legitimises persecution of a group but also on an individual level. Religious people who are not conscious frequently project their own limitations and difficulties (their sins which are ascribed to the Devil) on to the other, thus demonising them.

If members of a culture share the same prejudices and are unconscious of their own projections, the shared misconceptions and projections are strengthened. When these preconceived ideas are not tested against reality, the prejudices and misconceptions about the 'other' becomes the culture's uncontested truth. Self-knowledge, contact with the 'other', and a culture that encourages critical questioning and tolerance, are the antidotes for inter-cultural conflict.

Jung's theory provides some profound insights to guide individuals to self-awareness. Jung's main constructs will be explained and applied to culture and religion in the following paragraphs. Jung refers to the whole person as the self,

which includes both conscious and unconscious aspects. In the next section, the conscious and unconscious aspects of the human psyche are described. 'Consciousness' refers to what one is aware of, whilst 'unconscious' refers to that which is hidden.

Consciousness

Jung differentiated between personal and collective consciousness. The personal conscious refers to individual conscious aspects, whereas the collective conscious refers to aspects people agree on (Jung, 1960b). These aspects of the psyche are openly acknowledged and are used to describe the self (own characteristics and preferences) and the collective, including inter alia culture and religious affiliations and group self-descriptions (Jung, 1960). Collective consciousness is socially constructed and is thus a product of cultural experiences and as such, can be a powerful regulator of human functioning (Jung, 1968), and therefore differs between Africans and Westerners. Consequentially Africans and Westerners may have significantly different cultural behaviour patterns. The centre of the consciousness is the ego.

However, Jung saw conscious aspects as the proverbial "tip of the iceberg". These aspects are influenced by unconscious aspects that a person is largely unaware of.

Unconsciousness

Jung describes the individual and collective unconscious as distinct structures. For Jung, the personal conscious mind consists mainly of the ego, which is also linked to the unconscious. The **personal unconscious** relates to repressed material not in the conscious awareness, including impulses, fears, traumas, and forgotten and suppressed memories. The personal unconscious holds the sheltered personal experiences of an individual that consciousness deems a threat (Jung, 1968). The personal unconscious is influenced by the person's cultural experiences (Jung, 1960b). Thus, different cultural environments impact on the content of an individual's personal unconscious.

In contrast to the personal unconscious, the **collective unconscious** refers to universal experiences. The content of the collective unconscious is similar for all human beings (Jung, 1968). It represents the inherited potential that has been passed on from generation to generation. According to Jung (1960, p. 112),

"the collective unconscious comprises in itself the psychic life of the ancestors, right back to the earliest beginnings. It is the matrix of all conscious psychic occurrences, and hence exerts an influence that compromises the freedom of consciousness …" However, the manner in which the collective unconsciousness is expressed is influenced by a person's cultural background. The notion of the mind having many unconscious aspects was important to Jung (1968). Many of his other constructs are built on this notion. The universality of the collective unconscious can be seen in the themes of myths; myths in various cultures often have similar themes, indicating the shared origin of human kind. The collective unconscious has considerable but hidden influences on a person's psyche. The insidious influence of the collective unconscious is experienced by all human beings in instances where they do not understand their own behaviour, needs, and emotions. This collective unconscious content is often ascribed to 'spirits'. Instincts and archetypes are also part of the collective unconscious, and will be discussed separately.

The collective unconscious consists mostly of archetypes; these are universal representations that all human beings share. Although universal, archetypes are expressed in ways that are unique to each individual. These expressions may also have unique cultural and religious characteristics.

The ego and self

The unconscious and the conscious minds are constituents of the self. The ego is mostly about conscious awareness, about a person's being in the world. For Jung, the ego is "a complex of ideas constituting the centre of the field of consciousness, possessing a high degree of continuity and identity" (Jung, 1921, p. 125). The ego refers to the conscious part of the self, whereas the self refers to the total psyche, which comprises both conscious and unconscious aspects, including perceptions and feelings (Jung, 1959). The ego links "the external and internal worlds" (Jung, 1960, p. 328). In this sense, the ego represents the unconscious' connection to the outer world. The ego is about the individual's adaptation to the external world, enabling the individual to understand the physical world.

The self signifies a coherent whole, unifying both the conscious and unconscious minds of a person. Although the self is *a priori*, in other words, exists whether acknowledged or not, the

self is realised as the product of the process of integrating one's personality (Jung, 1960), a process of moving towards wholeness, or individuation. Jung calls the self the "total personality", and explains that ego is only part of the self. In this sense, "the self, embraces the ego" (Jung 1921, p. 125). The self is there from the start, and a person can evolve to become more conscious of it, which would indicate growth in awareness and consciousness.

If the ego dominates the self, ego inflation occurs. The person thinks ego is the whole self. Such a person focuses only on external realities and loses touch with internal realities. The ego plays an important role in keeping a person grounded in his/her external environment. If the ego is very weak and is dominated by the person's self, the person loses touch with external realities. For such a person, only the internal reality exists; in this instance the person loses contact with external realities. In a Western cultural context, such a person may be viewed as psychotic, in an African cultural context; such loss of reality contact may be ascribed to being called by the spirits, in an African phenomenon known as *ukutwasa* (Beuster, 1997). However, the self "embraces both conscious and unconscious; it is the centre of this totality, just as the ego is the centre of consciousness" (Jung, 1953b, p. 41). In this totality of the self, Jung included faith and worship of God and asserted that "the individual who is not anchored in God can offer no resistance on his own resources to the physical and moral blandishments of the world" (Jung, 1958a, p. 24). Jung's acknowledgement of religion as an aspect of human functioning is discussed hereunder within the context of his concept of the image of God (Imago Dei).

Imago Dei (image of God)

Most humans have some concept or image of God, thus the prominence of Jung's construct Imago Dei**.** Jung (1968) explains that the Imago Dei is a strong image in a person's mind that leaves an indelible mark on the soul. Imago Dei originates in the collective unconscious and mainly manifests in expressions or creations of the personal unconscious. Imago Dei is an ever-present internal image that exists, even in the worst of times, in all humans.

Imago Dei as a universal construct could possibly form a bridge between the African and Western worldviews, because it originates in the collective unconscious. Conceptually, there are many similarities between traditional African religious views and Christianity. Both attribute creation to a Creator God, and both believe in intermediaries; Africans in the form of forefathers, and for Christians, Christ and the Holy Spirit (Magesa, 2013). As a product of Western-Christian upbringing, Jung considers the Christ figure the true image of God, as the most complete self-symbol after whose likeness our inner being is made. Christ is the perfection that Christians strive to achieve (Jung, 1963).

Thus, Jung's construct Imago Dei gives rise to different religious beliefs that have clear similar structures. Highlighted similarities can provide the vocabulary for discussions on religious beliefs between Africans and Westerners.

The God Image in both the African and Western worldviews exclude imperfection. God is seen as pure and good only. In African Traditional Religion (ATR), as in many expressions of Christianity for example, although God is essentially good, calamities, misfortunes, and suffering are attributed to God as his punishment of humans. The punishment does not in any way reduce the purity and goodness of God, who is understood to be simply punishing human beings' disobedience out of his love for them. However, in Jung's view, such religious endeavours of striving to be like God, but not accepting one's own imperfection, may imply rejection of parts of the self. This denial of unwanted aspects of the self might lead to one's own imperfections being externalised and projected onto 'imperfect' others (Jung, 1959). The unwanted aspects may be attitudes, ideologies, and beliefs that are projected onto others and lead to acts of exclusion, stigmatisation, and discrimination. In its extreme, this projection of the unwanted aspects of self becomes a devil representing all those forces within and outside the person. Unfortunately, this externalising and projection of imperfection distract from the possibility of personal happiness and transformation. Similar to the Imago Dei, other significant patterns known as archetypes are part of the collective unconscious.

Archetypes

Archetypes are part of the collective unconscious. Etymologically, archetype derives from two ancient Greek words: *arche* (original) and *typos* (type), thus original type (Dominici, Tullio, Siino, &Tani, 2016). Archetypes "are instinctive trends, as marked as the impulse of birds to build nests, or ants to form organised colonies" (Jung, 1964, p. 58). An archetype is a

universal form or predisposition that influences our thoughts and feelings. Archetypes are inherited and represent remnants of memories passed on from ancestors (Jung, 1964a).

Thus, archetypes are innate, universal, psychic dispositions that form the substrate from which the basic symbols or representations of the unconscious experience emerge (Jung, 1960). These ancestral psychic patterns, shared across cultures, are buried deep in the collective unconscious. They shape and influence people's worldviews, experiences, and behaviours (Jung, 1960). Worldviews over the ages have given birth to shared and unique myths that can be understood as a cultural group's collective struggle with their own archetypes. Myths populated by monsters, dragons, heroes (Greek demi-gods), and other forms are expressions of these archetypes or internal ancestral psychic patterns that are subsumed in the collective unconscious (Jung, 1960). Although archetypes have universal content, their manifestations are influenced by cultural differences.

A person could get trapped in an archetypal pattern. But, because the archetypal pattern is unconscious, the person could remain unaware of it. A manifestation in a religious order may be of a priest caught in the grip of a 'priest archetype'. He is then likely to get so caught up in the rituals and external symbols that he might lose his individuality and humanness. He reduces himself to the archetypical pattern. Even when praying for a sick person or performing sacred rituals, he may be absent as a person. The priestly cloth (Roman Catholic collar), an ancient impersonal symbol of a way of life, may then dominate. The role of the archetype (in this instance the priest archetype) should add meaning and depth to life – not become life.

The archetypes often influence and direct human thoughts and behaviour, and because the archetype is unconscious the person is not aware of its influence. An example could be the activation of the ancient "warrior" archetype. Although no one in a sophisticated world would draw a sword and kill people who oppose his/her viewpoint, or hinder the achievement of a goal, warrior-type behaviour is evident in both genders, surfacing in Africans as the drive to defend and to at all costs care for the extended family and community. However, in the West, this same archetype may manifest in a more individualistic need to over-achieve, even at the expense of others. Both expressions of the unconscious archetype may be adaptive, but might also be less helpful in a blind endeavour that comes at great cost.

Archetypes are elusive; they are expressed through symbols that are their external manifestations. A person cannot encounter his/her archetypes directly, only in symbolic form (Jung, 1964). Because of their instinctual and unconscious nature, archetypes can be activated by external events and cause a person to behave in a primitive manner, driven by unconscious patterns. An activated archetype can cause one to express him/her inappropriately in terms of the requirements of the actual situation.

In summary, archetypes can be described as unconscious patterns linked to inherited ancestral psychic forces that all human beings have in common. Archetypes can be activated by external events. The main archetypes, as identified by Jung, will be discussed next. These are: persona, shadow, and anima-animus.

Persona

According to Jung (1966), the persona archetype represents all the different social masks that people wear in different groups and situations. The word 'persona' comes from the Latin word for mask (Jung, 1964). It refers to the way a person presents him/herself to society. "It is a 'mask' designed to fit the expectations of collective consciousness. It is a compromise between the individual and the society as to what a person should appear to be" (Jung, 1953a, p. 158). Thus, the persona masks other aspects of the unconscious, such as the shadow and anima/animus, which will be discussed in following sections. The persona is the mask that all people wear and that changes throughout the duration of their lives. A person can be aware of their mask, such as knowing that certain behaviours and attitudes are prescribed by a certain environment, however he/she may be unaware of deeper elements of the mask when this, for example, 'work me' becomes generalised and becomes the 'total me'. Persona may also be multiple in the sense that a person may have inter alia a work identity, a family identity or role e.g. mother, and a stage of life identity e.g. adolescent or old age.

The persona has individual and collective components (Jung, 1971). Like a real mask, the persona hides parts of the person, but also reveals parts in a way he/she chooses to show him/herself. If a person does not feel comfortable with him/herself, very little of the

true self will be shown. For instance, they would not allow others to see their vulnerabilities; instead they would shield themselves behind a mask. Instead of spontaneously and authentically expressing who they are, their tendency would be to present an artificial image to the world. Collective cultural expectations could pressurise people into acting according to prescribed roles, or even delude them into believing they to be the mask they wear. According to Jung (1971), the persona functionally serves adaptation to the social context, and thus has a survival function. It helps a person get along with liked and disliked others. Therefore, the persona assists the person to co-operate with others and achieve his/her goals. The persona is also employed by the ego to hide a person's vulnerable aspects, such as pain and uncertainty from others.

Shadow

Another archetypal aspect of the self is the shadow, an archetype that is the dark side of the self, the impulsive urges and emotions not acknowledged or accepted and thus hidden.

According to Jung (1959, p. 20), the shadow comprises "the denied aspects of the self". The shadow is part of the unconscious; the unacknowledged aspects suppressed by the conscious ego into the shadow (Jung, 1967). The shadow is the most accessible part of the unconscious. Jung referred to it as the first layer of the unconscious (Jung, 1968).

The shadow is part of the personality and seeks expression. The shadow expressions are often experienced as out-of-character behaviour. Such behaviour is typically not owned, and the person does not take responsibility for the action. The tendency is then to blame these behaviours or reactions on something or someone else. If a person does something he/she cannot accept in him/herself, it is seen as 'evil' and the person does not see it as part of him/her, and tends to externalise it. In its extreme, 'the devil' is often accused of causing this irrational, out of character behaviour. Because the shadow is in the unconscious, a person is unaware of his/her own shadow, though others might see its manifestation.

Dealing with the shadow often poses "a moral problem that challenges the whole personality" (Jung, 1959, p. 20). A moral problem could arise, because to become conscious of the shadow, one has to recognise and acknowledge the dark aspects of one's own personality.

Paradoxically, the more a person is conscious of shadow aspects, the less power the shadow has over the person's reactions.

A traditional African person could ascribe unwanted personal aspects to malignant forces outside him/herself. He/she projects the unwanted aspects. In an African context, the personal dark side is mostly carried by the collective. Thus, the individual's shadow is not a personal responsibility. Therefore, African individuals do not necessarily own their dark sides because unacceptable characteristics and actions are believed to be prompted by forces beyond their control. Mbiti (1992, p. 197) states that African village life is filled with beliefs in mystical powers. These mystical powers enable people to "send curses or harm, including death, from a distance". Mbiti (1969, p. 199) further asserts that "evil magic involves the belief in and practice of tapping and using this power to do harm to human beings or their property". Thus, for Africans, shadow aspects are openly acknowledged, but are not individually owned. In both African and Western individuals, the shadow is unconscious.

In the West there is an illusion of openness and rationality. Thus, Western people might mislead themselves into believing that they have no shadow issues. As a result, individuals and collective shadow issues remain unconscious. An example could be the denial of the ecological crisis that the world faces. The comfort of affluence makes it difficult for the individual–and therefore the collective–to acknowledge the greater responsibility for the wellbeing of the whole. The rational mind is applied to issues, but there is a Cartesian split between the physical and the spiritual worlds. The more spiritual aspects such as caring and accepting responsibility for the greater good are often not sufficiently emphasised. Westerners might appear to face shadow issues, but often deny these issues by rationalising them. Thus, the Western shadow may be deepened by the split between the person's rational and spiritual lives.

Anima/Animus

Jung (1954b, p. 198) proposed that "every man carries within him the eternal image of woman, not the image of this or that particular woman, but a definite feminine image", which is called the anima. This feminine image is an imprint of the ancestral experiences of the female, an archetypal deposit, as it were, of all the impressions ever made by women. The same is

true of all women - they too have an inborn image of man (animus). In the unconsciousness of every man, there is a hidden feminine aspect, and in that of every woman, a masculine aspect. Since these images (anima and animus) are unconscious, the un-individuated may unconsciously project the anima/animus upon a person of the opposite gender; for example, an adult behaving towards another adult as a father or mother figure. Neo Jungians went a little further and consider both anima and animus as being embedded in men and women (Tresan, 2007) implying complementarily of male and female qualities. The anima and animus are close to the true inner core of the self, much closer than for instance shadow aspects.

Anima and animus are neither "good" nor "bad", but if repressed, might be expressed in negative ways (Jung, 1968). Repressed painful or distressing life experiences may leave behind psychic wounds (Jung, 1928). When these psychic wounds affect anima/animus aspects of the person, such as a woman abused by her father as child, they may impact in a powerful, uncontrolled way on a person's life, and cause seemingly irrational and inappropriate reactions (Kalsched, 1996). Such reactions are often projections, and are not appropriate to the situation/person. While shadow projections are usually onto members of the same gender, anima/animus projections are usually onto members of the opposite gender.

Jung (1954a) postulates anima as the female archetype, present in men at the unconscious level, and represents feelings and emotionality, whereas animus is present in women and represents logic and rationality. Anima/animus are more or less unconscious elements in the psyche that are close to core of personality, and deal with opposite forces in the self and the world. On conscious levels, anima/animus manifest in the external world in the way in which a person experiences actual men/women.

Different cultures and religions have different, often strongly held views on the differences between men and women. The strength of emotions surrounding women's rights in many cultures and religions, even in those which ostensibly agree on gender equality, can be seen as indicative of unresolved anima/animus issues. Gender beliefs are usually strongly steeped in religious beliefs. For instance, many religions describe the subordinate position of women as ordained by God. These beliefs then manifest as patriarchal patterns in cultures. These patterns are consequently viewed as being above criticism or even contemplation. In the Biblical tradition, it is believed that sin was brought into world by a woman; the man was/is seen as superior and is destined to be the head of the household and leader in religious and other life domains. Women are often reduced to one of two archetypes: mother or prostitute. The New Testament of the Bible is mainly written by Paul and Peter; both men would nowadays be called chauvinists. They downplayed the role of women as part of the inner circle around Jesus. There was an outcry from the church when fiction writer Dan Brown, in his novel The Da Vinci Code (Brown, 2003), suggested that Jesus might have been married. The question arises: why would it be a sin to be married if women are not by design sinful?

Women in many cultures have not been given their rightful status. The feminine principle, the inner woman in men who enables caring and is concerned about the wellbeing of creation and health, is not adequately acknowledged. Similarly, the 'inner man' or animus in women who takes the lead and is rational and analytical is also frequently unacknowledged. Greater consciousness of these is required, even though they are deeply embedded in the unconscious and are therefore difficult to become acquainted with.

Because the anima/animus is at the core of the self, it can be expected that anima/animus projections will be fairly similar for Africans and Westerners. Myths describe the dominant anima/animus archetypes of a culture. Similar figures come to the fore in Greek, Celtic, and African myths. Anima figures, such as the virgin, witch, and crone, and animus figures such as the hero, the saviour, and the villain are found universally in most mythologies (Lima, 2005). These similarities in myths can be attributed to the similarity of human archetypes. The challenge for individuals is to integrate both the masculine and feminine components of their personalities, allowing a balanced expression to both aspects of the psyche.

The fact that deep-seated unconscious anima/animus patterns play themselves out similarly in all cultures can thus aide with the understanding of culturally diverse expressions of the masculine and the feminine. The fourth Jungian construct used to enhance intercultural understanding, namely individuation, is discussed next.

Individuation

Jung referred to the process of an individual's personal growth as individuation. In the broadest sense, individuation can be seen as the integration of all of the psyche's aspects. Individuation is the process of transforming one's psyche by bringing the personal unconscious and consciousness and the collective unconscious and consciousness into dialogue with each other (Jung, 1953b), aiming at moving towards personal wholeness, which Jung described as becoming "a separate, indivisible unity or whole" (Jung, 1953a, p. 173). Individuation cannot be fully attained, instead it is the on-going objective of the developmental process. Individuation is marked by an individual's differentiation from the collective, and becoming a unique person in his/her own right. It is the coming to selfhood or self-realisation (Jung, 1971). Individuation is not to be confused with individualism, which emphasises the individual's rights and independence (Cross & Markus, 1999). Individuation, on the other hand, entails differentiation and meaningful connectedness to the collective (Jung, 1969). Individuation is not in opposition to the collective. Jung asserts that individuation "leads to a natural esteem for the collective norm..." (Jung, 1971, p. 449). The individual by his/her very existence presupposes a relationship with the collective; it follows that the process of individuation is towards "more intense and broader collective relationships and not to isolation" (Jung, 1971, p. 448). Individuation's aim is to peel off the wrappings of the false persona that people wear and in recognising and owning one's shadow and anima/animus aspects.

Through the process of individuation, the individual (ego) becomes more conscious of the various parts of the psyche that had previously been unconscious, and becoming a more integrated 'whole' being. Individuation implies the development of consciousness out of the original state of unconsciousness (Jung, 1969). Thus, individuation inevitably leads to greater awareness. Jung asserts that the inner dialogue between conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche creates both conflict and collaboration. This inner conflict and collaboration increasingly results in an indestructible whole–an individual (Jung, 1969).Because individuation is such a complex, difficult, and lengthy process, most people remain un-individuated, and thus unaware.

In African collectivist worldviews, the pressure of collective expectations on the individual to conform, might work contra individuation. Bujo (1998, p. 73) asserts that given that "the individual lives through the life-force of the whole and vice versa, no member of any African society can develop outside the community". Thus, the individual whose voice is suppressed in a community might be destined to never find their own voice.

In the West, the more individualistic worldviews might hamper individuation, in that the responsibility towards the collective is less emphasised. However, the more individuated person is more aware, and thus has a keener developed discernment in evaluating and appreciating the importance of the collective. Thus, the more individuated person is more likely to acknowledge his/her responsibility towards the collective without blindly following its prescriptions. The different challenges in terms of individuation is that individualistic Westerners need to develop their sense of responsibility towards the collective, whereas Africans need to develop their sense of separateness, to find their own voices in the choir of the collective. Individuation is a critical process for both Africans and Westerners. Although the challenges are different, individuation is a universal developmental imperative, that is, to become an integrated, mature human being.

It has been described how all people have similar developmental challenges – to integrate unconscious aspects of the self and become increasingly aware. This process of individuation is the same for all people, however, due to their cultural and religious contexts, the process may differ. Generalised differences are highlighted in the table hereunder.

Table1. *Manifestations of Individuation for Africans and Westerners*

Constructs	African culture and religion		Western culture and religion	
	Un-individuated	Individuated	Un-individuated	Individuated
Self	Collective, intuitive, and driven by collective	A differentiated individual, and meaningfully connected to and integrated into the	Individualistic, over-rational, driven by personal conscious, and	Connected and integrated, healthy interaction between

	unconscious	collective	less intuitive	conscious and unconscious
Persona	Blindly follows customs, lacks own identity	Authentic, assertive, shows respect, and follows customs on own terms and with integrity	Success-driven, in-charge/in control, and collects symbols of external success	Authentic, assertive with humility, and concerned about shared human issues
Shadow	Jealous and practices and believes in witchcraft: the dark side of Ubuntu	Accepts dark side of self, avoids ascribing occurrences to witchcraft that creates a cycle of enmity	Focused on scapegoats and blaming. External locus of control, assuming the victim role	Accepts self and others, and is honest and open
Anima / animus	Ascribes to the superiority of man, rigid roles, and avoids attributes of the opposite gender in the self	Ascribes to equality, flexible roles, and integrates opposite gender attributes in self	Masculine superiority, undifferentiated, ascribes to rigid role prescriptions	Ascribes to equality, integration, flexible roles, and is complementary and caring
Imago Dei	Impersonal, ascribes to ancestors as gods	Personal, God of relationships, healer, and one not many	Ascribes to a blind following 'Father', collectivist nature, part of socialisation, blindly follows prescriptions	Ascribes to personal and collective God of all creation, meaningful relationships

CONCLUSION

It has been argued that Jung's theory may shed light on the over-emphasis of differences between cultures, religion, genders, and people in general. Jung's theory provides a deep perspective on the shared ancestral patterns that are part of a common humanity. The need for more individual consciousness in order to individuate cultures and improve inter-cultural relations was illustrated. Religions were discussed as the roots of cultural beliefs. It may appear that 'following Jung' is suggested as replacement for religion, far from that, Jung (1969) stated that no psychological healing is possible without spiritual healing.

The plea is made not only for religious institutions to encourage individual members to individuate, but for these institutions themselves to individuate. It should be possible for religious institutions to integrate new knowledge and change outdated doctrines without sacrificing their core beliefs and values. Even with good intentions, as long as religious institutions as collectives do not become more conscious, and do not encourage their members to be more conscious, they will contribute towards inter-cultural intolerance and conflict.

Jung's four constructs discussed in this article provide insight into the deep structural similarities in worldviews, cultures, and religions. The constructs also encourage critical, integrative thinking. In both African and Western people, the shadow is unconscious and helps a person get along with liked and disliked others in the cultural divide, and the persona assists an individual to co-operate with others and achieve their goals. The fact that deep-seated unconscious anima/animus patterns play themselves out similarly in all cultures can thus aide with the understanding of culturally diverse expressions of the masculine and the feminine.

This process of individuation is the same for all people, however, due to their cultural and religious contexts; the content of the process may differ.

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