SOCIETY, NATIONALISM AND MOBS: JUNG'S SOCIOLOGICAL CLUMSINESSES

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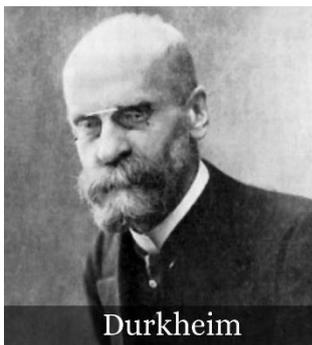
Introduction

My concern in this article is to further the process of constructing a Jungian sociology. I shall argue that Jung both is, and is not, helpful here. On the one hand, he crucially points us to the numinous energy of archetypes in social situations. But on the other hand, he commits some basic sociological errors and sets a bad example for later Jungian writers. And I want to go one step further, somewhat provocatively, to suggest that Jung himself might have become an archetypal symbol which, at a social level, constitutes something like a Jungian movement.

This presentation goes through five steps. In the first, following Emile Durkheim, one of the founding fathers of Sociology, I define two baseline elements of what sociology entails, how it differentiates itself from psychology; and, leading on from this, what a viable Jungian sociology looks like. In the following three steps I examine three key areas of sociology which Jung addresses, the nature of the link between individual and society; the nature of nationalism, and especially German nationalism; and finally, the nature of crowds. In the final section, I examine a case of 'necklacing', the gruesome method of executing police informants, in South Africa during the political turmoil of 1985, as an example of crowd action that can teach us some intriguing lessons on Jungian sociology.

Defining Sociology

So, what is it that distinguishes sociology from psychology? Durkheim's principle of emergence, well known today in systems or gestalt theory, is that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts (Giddens, 1971). There is 'something else' that appears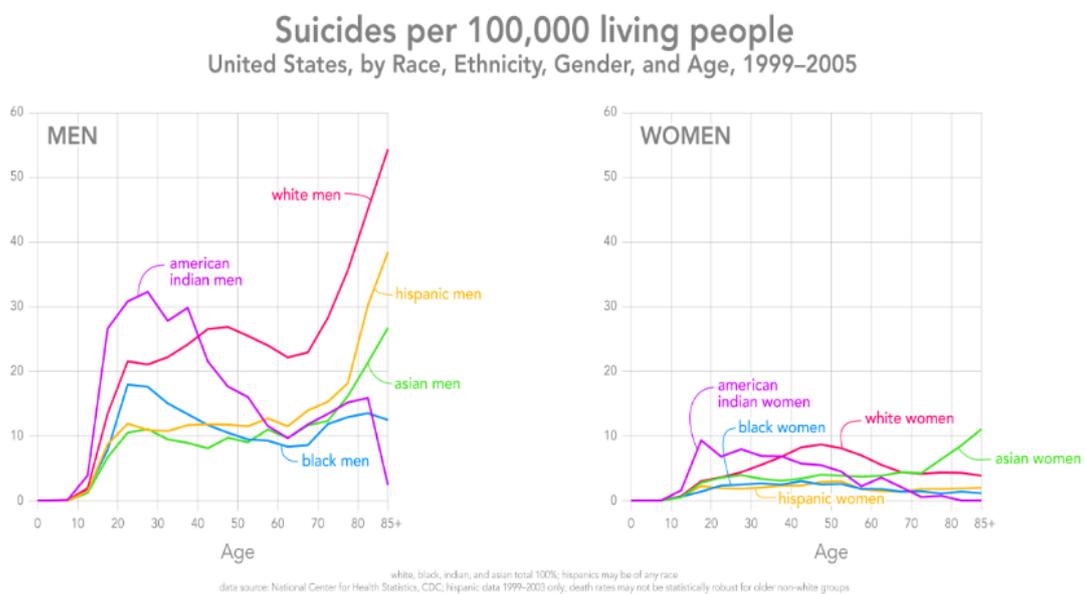 when a number of people milling around in the town square now join together into a sports crowd or a political rally, or, more pertinent to the present situation, when individuals, travel some distance to join a Mantis Weekend audience.

Notice what happens here in this Jung Centre Library space. Immediately people enter, they feel themselves bound by the rules and the conventions of what a 'presentation' requires. They have already dressed a certain way, neither too formal (no bow ties, hats or long dresses here), nor too informal (no short pants, and sandals). There are rules of engagement and interaction. Individuals do not talk, they do not get out of their chairs, while the presenter is talking, their participation in the discussion follows particular lines of etiquette and politeness. Remember that one of the first things children learn at school is to sit still in a chair while the teacher is talking. This is a practice which is deeply embedded in our society. And then depending on the nature of the presentation, people will be absorbed, excited, irritated, bored, there is something unconscious they will feel in their bodies.

Now consider how very different individual behaviour becomes when the gathering of people is different, say in a protest march, or a rock concert or Lady Di's wedding in St Paul's cathedral, how 'dress codes' change, how individual behaviour and the interaction between people shifts, from loud and expansive in a protest march in a public place, to excited, stimulated, sensual in a rock concert, and then sedate, dignified, respectful in a church service. In these social situations we might say that reactions are infectious, a ripple of laughter can induce more people to laugh without their being aware of it, a roar of excitement from a sports crowd is itself exciting. The key principle to emphasize here is that both, consciously and unconsciously, individuals are transformed by the social entity that they are part of. This is the 'something else' which 'emerges' and which signals the impact of society.

The second principle which Durkheim indicates is that social phenomena must be explained by social factors (Giddens, 1971)(Giddens, 1971)(Giddens, 1971)(Giddens, 1971). You cannot use psychological factors to explain social phenomena. His example of suicide is a very helpful one. If one wants to understand the behaviour of a particular suicidal individual, one asks questions about her/his emotional experience, grief, loss, depression, bleakness, the meaning of life. But these questions do not help us at all in understanding the rate of suicide in a country, i.e. how many people commit suicide each year, or the way this rate changes from one population group to another.

The graphs below illustrate this principle very clearly for the rates of suicide in the USA. Notice the very different rates of suicide first among men (left hand graph) and women (right hand graph), and then among white men, American Indian men, etc within the left hand graph, and the same

Suicides per 100,000 living people
United States, by Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Age, 1999–2005

groupings among women in the right hand graph, and finally how they all change with age.

The graphs are summarized as follows:

> 'Higher levels of social and national cohesion reduce suicide rates. Suicide levels are highest among the retired, unemployed, impoverished, divorced, the childless, urbanites, empty nesters, and other people who live alone. Suicide rates also rise during times of economic uncertainty.'

In short, the sociological factors which explain different suicide rates are the levels of bonding and integration in society. Those are the sociological factors which explain what the broad social impact of individual levels of depression, bleakness and grief are going to be, and they tell us a whole lot that psychological factors cannot.

Defining Jungian Sociology

So what, then, is the key principle, in addition to the two mentioned above, which makes sociology Jungian? It is to show how archetypal factors give certain aspects of social reality a particular potency and energy, when social entities seem to act in irrational and 'mad' ways. It is, to cite some examples, what lies behind the quite extraordinary worldwide respect and love bestowed on Nelson Mandela, a man who in many countries was earlier referred to as a terrorist; it is what drives Indian cricketing crowds to chant, 'ABD!, ABD!', when AB de Villiers walks out to bat, and to have these same initials painted on their cheeks; it is how we understand what brought millions of Americans to vote for a man who lies, boasts about grabbing women's genitals, and mocks a wheelchair-bound newspaper reporter. How mad is that!

Jung as Archetype?

Over the lintel of the front door of Jung's house in Zurich is a Latin inscription which reads, *vocatus atque non vocatus, deus aderit* – 'whether called or not called, God will be present'. This is also the inscription over Jung's grave. When I attended the Jungian training course at the CG Jung Institute in

Zurich starting in 2006, I met a Mexican woman who, before enrolling for the course, had had a dream. In the dream she was visiting Jung's house in Zurich, and she went through all of the rooms in the house.

When she arrived in Zurich to attend the course, she went on a tour, arranged by the Institute, of Jung's house, not far from the Institute. During the tour she went through all the rooms, and they were exactly as she had dreamed them, except there was one room that had been in her dream, which she had not seen on the tour. When she enquired, she was told, oh yes, there is another room you have not seen, but this is a private room not open to the public. The extraordinary thing is, without having ever been in Europe before, she had dreamed the full architecture of Jung's house in comprehensive detail. It had been this dream which had decided her to enrol for the Institute training course. But she was not the only person who had had dreams like this 'calling' people to the Institute in various ways. There were quite a few others.

That raises the interesting question, has Jung and the Jung Institute become something of a social archetype which exercises unconscious influence on people round the world? I am tempted (but only tempted) to say there is something of the occult in this, as if Jung could be seen as a wizard[1]. Remember that Jung's PhD was about the work his cousin, Helene Preiswerk, did with her seances. Remember also that he had a waking vision which he describes in *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*, that predicted the out-break of the First World War (Jung, 1989).

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[1] I use the word, wizard, here in a benevolent sense, as a practitioner of 'white' magic, in contrast to the term, witch, used in association with 'black' or malevolent magic.

So, we have, to start with, three examples of how the collective unconscious might work, through charismatic leaders and sportsmen, and more intriguingly through the numinous effect of Jungian psychology. We now go on to examine how Jung himself worked with these social archetypes.

Jung's sociology

Notice here that this sub-heading talks not about Jungian sociology, but rather about Jung's mode of working with sociology? I think there is a very valuable place for Jungian sociology, but Jung makes mistakes in the beginning.

So, as a first example, and in contrast to Durkheim's basic principles, in Jung's writing he insists that all social change is nothing more than individuals changing. So, for example, he will say, 'the psychopathology of the masses is rooted in the psychology of the individual' (Jung, 1946 para 445); and

> 'The psychologist believes firmly in the individual as the sole carrier of mind and life. Society and the state derive their quality from the individual's mental condition, for they are made up of individuals and the way they are organized.' (Jung, 1946 para 457).

Of course, Jung is correct. Nothing in society can happen without it happening to, or through, individuals. But this should not mean that one ignores the deeply influential ways in which society, this 'something else', in its regularized routines, rituals, habits, customs or institutions resists and shapes individual choice and freedom.

There are a number of significant consequences which flow from Jung's position. First, it allows him to indulge in a curious mathematical individualism to determine levels of morality in different countries. This is individualist in the sense that society is seen simply as a multiplication of individuals rather than a bonded entity. So, in comparing the morality of Switzerland and Germany he says,

> 'We have only to multiply the population of Switzerland by twenty to become a nation of eighty millions, and our public intelligence and morality would then be automatically divided by twenty in consequence of the devastating moral and psychic effects of living together in huge masses' (Jung, 1946/1970a, p. 200).

Does this mean that small countries, like Luxembourg, Singapore, Swaziland, are by this measure automatically highly moral places? Surely not. In the same vein, he will say, 'A nation consists of the sum of its individuals, and its character corresponds to the moral average.' (Jung, 1948/1976 para 1400). We have already seen that it is one of the fundamentals of sociology that society is indeed much more than the sum of its individuals.

Another offshoot of this individualism is apparent in Jung's use of terms like 'mass psychosis' or 'psychic epidemic'. An epidemic is a medical term indicating, again, a multiplication of individual cases. It would be quite different saying there is a 'culture of psychosis'[2].

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[2] The point is well made by comparing the difference between a Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD), and a culture of Narcissism. The first is an individual who has gone through a very difficult childhood and becomes an arrogant and difficult individual. By contrast, people who grow up in a culture of narcissism might not have

Jung on German nationalism

In writing about modern nationalism, in general, and German nationalism in particular, Jung very insightfully, lays great emphasis on the hidden influence of powerful archetypes, as we have indicated in defining Jungian sociology. Here I am drawing on his various chapters in the volume, *Civilization in Transition*, but particularly the well-known chapter entitled, *Wotan*[3]. In this chapter he focuses on the archetype of the Norse god, Wotan, as the fundamental anchor of German nationalism. Jung says, Wotan is 'a Germanic datum of first importance, the truest expression and unsurpassed personification of a fundamental quality of the Germans' (Jung, 1936/1970 para 389). Jung continues, 'He is the god of storm and frenzy, the unleasher of passions and the lust of battle; more over he is a superlative magician and artist who is versed in all secrets of an occult nature.' (Jung, 1936/1970 para 375) The image alongside is of Wotan as the warrior king.

The second aspect of the archetype that Jung underlines is how old it is.

> '(Wotan) … remained invisible for more than a thousand years, working anonymously and indirectly … An archetype is like an old watercourse along which the water has flowed for centuries, digging a deep channel for itself. The longer it has flowed in this channel the more likely it is that sooner or later the water will return to its bed.' (Jung, 1936/1970 para 395)

Now it is true that there are archaeological artefacts from the third century CE, depicting Wotan in Roman Germania. In his Wotan chapter, Jung also has quotes from Nostradamus (from the mid 16th century) and the old Norse poem, the Edda (dating from the 13th century) which refer to Wotan.

It is a characteristic of archetypes that they operate from a hidden place. And it is therefore impossible to predict which aspect of the archetype will appear next. Jung points out that there are already in 1936 signs of the wandering aspect of Wotan with people walking long distances through Germany, and also of the rushing wind associated with Wotan. He tells the story of Nietzsche who was overcome by the sound of this mighty wind in a forest and collapsed into a coma. Jung adds enigmatically, 'Things must be concealed in the background which cannot imagine at present, but we may expect them to appear in the course of the next few years or decades.' Note that Jung published this chapter in 1946 again, perhaps to indicate that he had been right in talking about 'the frenzy of war'. What is intriguing about this chapter is how enthused Jung himself is by the story that he is telling about Wotan. There is a palpable energy in his writing.

The irrational energy of nationalism is something that very recent many writers have also remarked on. This is Pierre van den Berghe, a Belgian sociologist, who remarks on 'the blind ferocity of the conflicts to which these (nationalist) sentiments can lead, the imperviousness of such sentiments to rational arguments' (quoted in Smith, 1998). And here is anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, who say something very similar about nationalism, as 'the result not merely of personal affection, practical

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gone through a difficult childhood, i.e. they will not be NPD's, but they will follow the rules and values of the culture simply by the pressures of conformism.

[3] This particular chapter is well known for a whole lot of unfortunate reasons since it is one which many critics used to wrongly accuse him of Nazi sympathies. But this is not the focus of our discussion here.

necessity, common interest, or incurred obligation, but … by virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to the very tie itself.' (quoted in Smith, 1998)

In short, there is no doubt that Jung is here pointing to a key attribute about social entities, in general, and nationalism, in particular. This 'something else' which emerges when individuals gather together has both a very potent effect, and also an irrational side.

What is wrong with Jung's view of nationalism?

Up to this point in our discussion of Jung's views on nationalism I have looked at those aspects which one can appreciate and work with. But there is another side of his writing here which is problematic.

The first of these is that the archetype, Wotan, is made to do too much work. It is now clear to what degree Jung here contradicts his own principle of individualism as discussed above. In Jung's view, the nation mediated by the archetype exerts overwhelming influence on the individual. 'We who stand outside judge the Germans far too much as if they were responsible agents, but perhaps it would be nearer the truth to regard them also as victims' (Jung, 1936/1970 para 398). It is worth emphasizing that, contrary to his previously quoted mathematical calculations of morality, this has very little to do with the numerical size of the population. By his own telling of it, it is the level to which religious belief has risen or sunk, the degree to which society holds or abandons its central archetypal symbols which is the key, not the numbers.

We should note that there is a long history of debate in sociology between these two theoretical extremes, individualism, which gives too much weight to the impact of individuals on society; and on the other hand, structuralism, which gives too much weight to social entities in erasing the impact of individuals. While Jung flips from one extreme to the other without seeming to notice the inconsistency, sociology has spent great effort in theoretically balancing the influence of individual and society, or, in sociological language, between agent and structure (Giddens, 1984).

 Jung's view on nationalism is that in 'modernity' the processes of secularization have deprived individuals of access to the old religious archetypes through which they could express their souls. The resulting abyss of existential meaninglessness has been filled with the various '-isms' of modernity, like capitalism, communism, and then nationalism. In this view, then, nationalism, in general, and German fascism, in particular, is a phenomenon of modernity, not just of Germany. Within this modern condition of mass alienation there is, for Jung, a significantly greater likelihood of possession by various archetypes. It is within this more recent fertile ground that the very ancient archetype can grow with such vigour.

But it is, for Jung, this archetype which overrides contemporary forces like economic depression, the humiliation of defeat in WW1, and the Allies demand for reparations through the Treaty of Versailles. And for a range of modern writers that is deeply problematic (Smith, 1998)(Smith, 1998). We shall see further on how Jung repeats this error with regard to crowds.

It is in this context that one can appreciate the second critique that Jung sees only one archetype operating, rather than a variety of gods. The German nation was, already in 1936, hardly a single seamless cultural entity. There were class and (immigrant) ethnic divisions throughout, each operating from different unconscious premises and hence from different archetypes. Furthermore, there is the important statistic that in the 1929 federal election, only 33% of the votes were for the

NSDAP, while in the 1933 election they again failed to get a majority, with 43% of the votes. Remember also that the 1933 election was accompanied by an extended Nazi campaign of violent intimidation of other parties (Evans, 2004).

The third puzzling aspect of Jung's discussion of German nationalism is that, despite his energized discussion of the frenzy of war (after all, he uses 17 different synonyms for this term in the course of this short chapter of 14 pages), he provides no evidence at all of how this frenzy, this *furor teutonicus*, can actually be seen, for example, in crowd action or battlefield mania. And, from other writers, we get a very different assessment. To take just one example, Hannah Arendt speaks famously of the 'banality of evil', servants of the Nazi movement acting in cold, calculated bureaucratic, rather than frenzied, ways (Arendt, 1963).

A last critical aspect on Jung concerns the surrounding context of the deeply popular and widespread *Völkisch* cultural movement of the early 20th century in Germany. This was a powerfully anti-modern current of opinion which rejected such aspects of society as technology, industrialism, capitalism, Christianity and communism. It was a move back to rural and communitarian life, close to nature. It was strongly supported by musicians like Wagner and Schubert, by philosophers like Herder and Fichte, by writers and poets, and it spawned a range of secret societies, like the Thule society. Along with this came a celebration of German culture and its ancient origins in the Aryan master race, and of the god, Wotan (Noll, 1994; Pietikainen, 2000; Shamdasani, 2003).

In short, Jung's Wotan writing was a direct reflection of this social and political movement, but with very little acknowledgement of his own ideological support of it. In addition, Wotan was not totally hidden in the unconscious of German people. There was a great deal of quite explicit worship.

Le Bon and Jung on crowds and mob

The mob is famous significantly because in 1896 Gustave le Bon wrote a book entitled, *The Crowd: a Study of the Popular Mind*, which became at the time a publishing phenomenon, and more than a 100 years later was still fascinating readers (Le Bon, 1896/2001; Stephen Reicher, 1996).

Le Bon's main theme can be expressed quite briefly, it is that when individuals join a crowd their consciousness gets taken over by, they regress to, an atavistic and primitive racial unconscious which is extremely emotional and volatile. They lose their conscious personality and their control over themselves, they are submerged into a group mind which is irrational, destructive and fickle. In short, the crowd very soon becomes a mob. In more recent sociology, this process became known, not surprisingly, as de-individuation, i.e. a loss of individual identity (Chabani Manganyi, 1990).

For le Bon, modernity feeds this outcome by its creation of rootless and alienated masses shorn of their religious and community anchors. Le Bon was much influenced by Darwinism, on the one hand, and hypnotism, on the other; Darwinism in the sense that human beings are seen to be descended from primitive animals and this historic past is still lodged not far below the surface in their unconscious; and hypnotism because this therapeutic practice was very much in use at this time in

European psychology, and thinking about the unconscious was understood by analogy with the semi-comatose state of hypnotism (Ellenberger, 1970, p. 110ff).

In crowd situations, said le Bon, crowd leaders, themselves already hypnotized, could have a profound impact by the use of quite elementary strategies like the simplification of complex issues, the repetition of stock themes, and the affirmation of identity. It is not surprising that both Hitler and Mussolini had read le Bon (Le Bon, 1896/2001; McClelland, 1989; Stephen Reicher, 1996).

 Le Bon summarizes his view: '…by the mere fact that he forms part of an organized crowd, a man descends several rungs of the ladder of civilization. Isolated he may be a civilized individual: in a crowd, he is a barbarian – that is, a creature' (Le Bon, 1896/2001, p. 32)

Reading Jung following this, it is difficult to find any clear daylight between him and le Bon, either on the outcome of the crowd situation or on the dynamics of what makes individuals vulnerable. In fact, Jung had read le Bon with very evident approval, and he followed le Bon's ideas very carefully. Here is Jung's summary statement on crowds. 'But if people crowd together and form a mob, then the dynamisms of the collective man are let loose - beasts or demons that lie dormant in every person until he is part of a mob.' (Jung, 1946/1970b, p. para 463)[4]

Problems with le Bon and Jung

A first key shortcoming of le Bon's (and Jung's) framework is that it removes crowds from their social and ideological context, it casts crowds as having a dynamic quite independent of where individuals come from. So, for example, le Bon seldom asks how crowds get formed in the first place, why people gather at a particular point of time and place, what they bring with them into the gathering, what their concerns, angers, anxieties are which bring them to constitute a crowd – this is even before any leader makes her appearance (McClelland, 1989; Scott, 1977).

This de-contextualizing move is the result often of the distance that early 20th century writers maintained from the actual experience of crowd action. Very few writers of the time, coming as they did from the wealthier classes, would have participated in the flow of crowd action. Consequently they often projected their own fears on to crowds, and crowds very easily become stigmatized as 'mobs' and all the insinuations that go with that label (Chabani Manganyi, 1990; McClelland, 1989).

But recent research on crowds has indicated not a total loss of control as indicated by le Bon, but rather a taking up of alternative sets of values and beliefs. Reicher argues that in modern urban riots participants do not lose control, but rather shift the guiding values of their behaviour from a personal to a social identity, like class or race. From here it is possible to understand crowd behaviour as quite consciously targeted and shaped. In the 1980 St Paul's riot in Bristol, England, which Reicher analyses in some detail, the quite specific target of crowd displeasure was the police and their vehicles. Other people, vehicles and property were not touched (Reicher, 1984).

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[4] It is worth noting that Jung did not echo le Bon exactly. Jung would not have used the impact of previous evolutionary racial forms like le Bon did.

I have indicated earlier how Jung, in relation to his views on the individual and society, shifts, paradoxically from an individualist to a structuralist position, both problematic positions. It is clear that, with regard to crowds and mobs, Jung is repeating the same mistake.

More problems with le Bon: the Case of 'Necklacing'

On the 20th of July 1985 a South African woman named Maki Skosana attended the funeral of some young black political activists who had been assassinated by the Security Police. The activists had obtained hand grenades from an undercover police agent, called Joe Mamasela, except the grenades were booby-trapped to explode the instant the pins were removed. At the funeral for the fallen activists some of those present believed that Maki was friendly with the police involved in the deaths of the young men. An altercation broke out between her and them, which escalated into an assault on her. In the end a car tyre filled with petrol was put around her neck and set alight. It was one of the first cases of 'necklacing' in a very turbulent period in South African politics. Over the next 5 years it became a very common method of killing what were believed to be police informers. Almost a decade later this incident became the subject of investigation by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). From the evidence provided to the TRC, it became clear that in fact Maki Skosana had had no part in the police operation (Chabani Manganyi, 1990).

Now, over time there have been several attempts to explain how these young people could have descended to such viciousness and cruelty. At the ensuing trial of members of the crowd, an expert on crowd psychology, Edward Diener, echoing le Bon, testified that this was a clear case of 'de-individuation'. In fact, the accused were all regular churchgoers, and one planned to become a nurse. "Because of the forces existing in crowds, they often commit actions which are often against their moral beliefs" he said. (Badela, 1987; Chabani Manganyi, 1990). He thought that, in the circumstances, these were grounds for mitigation of sentence, and in a number of judgements South African courts agreed with him (Colman, 1991).

Not long after, a number of these youth who had participated in this and another case of necklacing, took part in in-depth interviews about their experiences. What emerged here was a quite startling insight into exactly 'what happens when the individual joins society', or, in this case, 'joins a crowd'. And yet, at the end, with all of this information, we shall see that we are still unable to answer the sociological question about the practice of necklacing, why is it that 'over the next 5 years it became a very common method of killing what were believed to be police informers'? (Chabani Manganyi, 1990) Durkheim would have smiled. He asked the same question of psychological studies of suicide in the 19th century, as discussed earlier on.

Let us now return to consider the interviews of these young individuals who participated in the necklacing. What is remarkable about these interviews is how dramatically they undermine the theory of de-individuation. There are a number of critical threads which undercut the theory's basic premises.

The first thing to note is the frequency of a feeling of absorption into the self and a distancing from the group, quite the opposite of what de-individuation proposes. One of the interviewees, 'Benedict', felt himself 'alienated from the group', 'his overriding feeling was one of isolation', 'he experienced himself subjectively as a spectator' (Straker, 1992, p. 129). Another, 'Clare', felt herself

'separate from the group', 'violated', and 'the core of her humanness … contaminated and infected' (Straker, 1992, p. 127).

Second, and, following from this alienation from the group, is an experience of traumatization. Members of this group often suffered classical symptoms of PTSD subsequently, like intrusive thoughts, nightmares, and psychosomatic ailments. If the impact of the crowd is powerful, it is clearly not sufficient to suppress an individual sense of morality or the conflict between the pull of the crowd and what was felt to be wrong. For one participant the moral conflict at being trapped unwillingly was appalling: 'She felt repelled, but at the same time transfixed, almost hypnotized by horror. Waves of nausea swept over her. Yet she could not remove herself. She described a sense of compulsion to remain and observe, like a snake before a mongoose.' (Straker, 1992, p. 127).

Thirdly, it is clear that there are extremely powerful ways in which the crowd does indeed exercise influence the individual, but not in ways indicated by de-individuation theory. There was, for example, the sense of guilt at not being a model freedom fighter and at not being free of revulsion. So, one participant, 'Stanley', was jolted out of his self-absorption at the event by the smell of the victim's hair burning. But his first response was to look around guiltily to see whether anyone had observed his lack of 'true' commitment. Other interviewees were similarly wary, cognisant of the dangerous aggression which could be turned on them as non-conformists, aware of their exposure to watching eyes (Straker, 1992).

Finally, there was one participant, 'Mdani', who appeared to do just what de-individuation theory predicts. He 'identified with the group mood and felt at one with the anger and hatred directed toward Skosana' (Straker, 1992, p. 124). But 'Mdani' was a deeply wounded individual. He had grown up subjected to savage physical beatings at home and at school. He actively sought out situations of conflict in order to further act out his aggression. For Straker, 'Mdani is the epitome of the "brutalized youth" depicted in the media' but 'he is not representative of black youth' (Straker, 1992, p. 126). In short, this individual could follow the predictions of de-individuation theory but only by being deep damaged.

With this detailed and individual psychological information at our disposal, we also now have to put serious question marks around Jung's notion of 'mass psychosis', or le Bon's notion of a regression to a racial unconscious. There is just too much variation between indivduals to come anywhere close to 'mass' possession.

But if there is such a level of variation among individuals, and such traumatic ambivalence within individuals, how shall we understand the ongoing recurrence of necklacing in the following years? And how shall we answer Durkheim's kind of question about the varying frequency of such acts of cruelty? Why did necklacing arise then (1985) and not earlier, or perhaps later? It is clear that we cannot jettison all sociological crowd theory on this basis.

Joanna Ball on Necklacing
We turn then to an explanation which examines the crowd as behaving as an 'autonomous' entity, and we can see this in factors like community trauma, and scapegoating as a group ritual of exorcising and self-purification. I refer here to Joanna Ball's examination of the symbolic meaning of fire, burning and necklacing (Ball, 1993). This symbolic approach provides a welcome corrective to the decontextualized theories of innate mob behaviour.

We should however be aware that we are examining a very specific example of crowd behaviour, one characterized by spontaneous extreme violence, a funeral which was transformed into a ritual of murderous execution. This narrows down our focus very considerably and excludes wide swathes of other crowd behaviour, positive and creative, planned and political, or routinized and customary (Foster, 1991).

So, as a first step, there is much evidence to show that outbreaks of scapegoating very often flow from pre-existing traumatic socio-economic and political circumstances in a society or community (Ball, 1993; Bednarski, 1970; Huxley, 1971) Straker writes of an atmosphere of 'death-taintedness' in which communities desperately perform rituals of self-purification in an attempt to stem the flow of disaster. The unconscious aim is to annihilate 'the threatened, damaged and humiliated parts of themselves which have been projected on to another' (Niehaus, 2001; Straker, 1992, p. 114) The scapegoat is then often an individual who is seen as marginal, weaker, as non-conformist and outspoken. (Niehaus, 2001; Straker, 1992, p. 116).

As a second step, Ball makes the interesting move of seeing (rural) witch-burning and (urban) necklacing as equivalent activities in South Africa. They are both attempts to punish treasonous behaviour which has betrayed the community. Witches are, in Hammond-Tooke's words, 'the quintessence of immorality'. Police spies and apartheid stooges were also traitors. Witch-burning is an established traditional ritual which could then be refitted for an urban environment (Niehaus, 2001).

But why fire and burning? In several African traditions, says Ball, burning was the act which destroyed the soul of evil, broke the connection with the ancestors. 'When snakes have been killed they must be burnt with fire on the garbage-heap outside the homestead because fire destroys them totally.' (Ball, 1993 quoting Berglund). Fire is the instrument used to extinguish evil and to purify a state of defilement.

And so we are back to symbols again, very close to what Jungian researchers would do, but these are social symbols, those which operate at the supra-individual level. Burnings are communal events, both in rural and urban areas, and they indicate a different level of meaning of acts from those indicated at the individual psychological levels.

There are two caveats relevant to Ball's analysis. The first is the danger of making fire and burning too generally a property of 'the African occult'. This move runs the danger of depicting Africa with just one overall culture instead of a patchwork of variety (Ranger, 2007). The second danger is of too much interpretation and too little concrete evidence. Ball has no reference of how this crowd at this event behaved, the songs that they sang, how they went about the fire and burning, how ultimately they gave meaning to the symbols (Ritchken, 1989).

We have seen in this section then that the social psychological theory of de-individuation, paradoxically, says a whole lot more about individuals than about crowds. De-individuation is a process of individual change, not of societal change – which is, as we have seen, why it is so vulnerable to counter-evidence of a psychological kind. Straker's interviews with young black activists is devastating to this theory. This has pushed us to an alternative and sociological theory indicating that the necklacing was a social process performed by a deeply distressed community

striving to put a stop to the flow of disaster. This ritual has a semi-religious meaning indicating a cleansing and exorcism of evil.

Conclusion

The central theme of this article has been to elucidate Jung's views on sociology via his written pieces in 1936 and 1946 on the topics of society, German nationalism and the crowd, and to examine some ways for going forward to a viable Jungian sociology. Jung is good in showing us the power of the archetype in social situations, but he needs pruning in his basic understandings of sociology. Elsewhere I have indicated other Jungian writers who have fallen into similar traps following Jung (Bernstein, 1992; Singer, 2002; Thibaudier, 2007).

The case of the necklacing of Maki Skosana brings together all three perspectives indicated above. We see young black activists as *individuals* in a dialectical interaction with society, as participants in an African *nationalist* movement against a white oppressor, and as role players in *crowd* action against a supposed traitor. It shows some deeply problematic flaws in le Bon and Jung's views on mobs, and we see how Joanna Ball constructs a very feasible Jungian explanation, quite superior to those by le Bon and Jung.

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