

INDIVIDUATION:

EXPERIENCE IN SEARCH OF THEORY

by

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I declare that ***INDIVIDUATION: EXPERIENCE IN SEARCH OF THEORY*** is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

MISS S A THOO

DATE

DEDICATION

To my parents

with love and appreciation

AMENDED ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following people without whom this work, both in practice and in theory, would not have taken shape.

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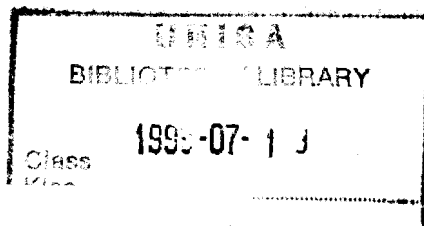
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155.2 THOO



“For in Him we live and move and have our being”

Acts 17:28

SUMMARY

This study arose from the experience of difficulties in individuating incorporating tensions in the self-group, self-other, and self-self relational dimensions. This situation initiated the questions: What does individuation mean in collectivist cultures? Can self-expression occur in a different way to opposing public opinion? Can one conceptualise experiential dialectics to facilitate their resolution in practice? The literature initiated the questions: How do Western theories on individuation incorporate 'culture'? Does a relationship between the socio-cultural context and the process of self-expression exist? Conclusions were:

- that the socio-cultural context influences this experience directly by influencing the process of self-expression via defining what is experienced as narcissistic, altruistic, or individualistic behaviour, and indirectly by the theories which reflect its norms;
- that the relationship between experience, and theory and personal epistemologies potentially initiate tensions, and facilitate their resolution;
- that a theory of individuation in collectivist cultures is lacking.

A way of interpreting 'individuation' was discussed.

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Individuation; Experience; Theory; Self; Relationship; Socio-Cultural Context; Separateness-Togetherness; Individualist; Collectivist; Identity.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study was initiated by the *a priori* situation of difficulties in the experience of individuating. In this situation, the experience of difficulties in individuating was intimately tied up with Western, psychodynamic concepts of what individuation means, namely: becoming the separate, self-contained, independent individual, and being self-expressive (or self-assertive). Such concepts were also experienced as societal prescriptions and thus as having normative value.

This *a priori* situation gave rise to three points of enquiry. The first point of enquiry involved a question: would one experience difficulties in individuation if societal prescriptions of what individuation entails was not that of becoming the separate, self-contained, independent individual? This gave rise to a related question: what could individuation be seen to entail in a collectivist culture? To address such a question, a discussion of various writers' descriptions of individuation in collectivist cultures would be required. It was thought that such an exploration would aid in resolving difficulties in the experience of individuating by deconstructing conceptualisations of individuation given normative value by Western discourse practices. This focus of enquiry pointed to a presumed link between **experience and the socio-cultural context**.

From the **literature search**, two points of enquiry related to the idea of a presumed link between experience and the socio-cultural context arose.

Theorising about individuation has already been undertaken from a vast number of sources reflecting a wide range of theoretical perspectives. To use Mazor and Enright's (1988) and Rice, Cole, and Lapsley's (1990) categorisation, these theoretical perspectives include: psychoanalytic (e.g., Blos, 1967; Josselson, 1980; Jung, 1959; Mahler, 1972a), ego developmental (Erikson, 1950 in Rice et al., 1990), interpersonal (e.g., Cooper, Grotevant, & Condon, 1983), systemic (e.g., Bowen, 1985; Gavazzi &

Sabatelli, 1990; Haley, 1980; Karpel, 1976; Sabatelli & Mazor, 1985; Stierlin, 1994), and social cognitive (Mazor & Enright, 1988). In addition to these, there have also been a couple of original theories (Kegan, 1982; Stern, 1985). Furthermore, feminist writers have also theorised about individuation (e.g., Jordan, 1991; Miller, 1991; Surrey, 1991). In addition to these modern theoretical perspectives, there have also been postmodern theories. In traditional thought, the individuation construct incorporates the ideas of lineal developmental process towards some static end-point, namely: the 'self', person, or individual. In contrast, postmodern thought takes this static endpoint and conceptualises the 'self' construct not in terms of an entity - the self-contained individual, but in terms of a process, the construction of self in the socio-linguistic domain of relating, or the empty self in the everchanging world of experience. Hence, theories of individuation in postmodern thought have been in terms of the 'self' construct (e.g., Gergen, 1991; Harré, 1991; Hermans, Kempen, & Van Loon, 1992; Varela, Thompson, & Rosch 1991). Furthermore, there have also been attempts at integrating two or more theories on individuation. For example, Karpel (1976) undertook to combine psychodynamic and systemic perspectives and Mazor, Alfa, and Gampel (1993) undertook to combine social cognitive and object-relations perspectives. Mitchell's (1991) article also focuses on an integration. Furthermore, Blustein and Noumair (1996, p. 437) put forward a particular approach when theorising about individuation which they call an "embeddedness perspective". Blustein and Noumair (1996, p. 437) urge the reader to take into account the relational and cultural influences when theorising about any psychological construct, which in their case is the "interpersonal experience" of "self or identity".

It is clear that all these theorists theorise about individuation as it occurs in a Western cultural context. Thus, the first point of enquiry to arise from the literature involved addressing how, or if, Western theories on individuation take into account the notion of culture. It was concluded that these theorists describe a relationship between the notion of culture (variously defined) and a **static** sub-construct of the individuation construct, for example, 'self' or 'self-concept'. Other studies on the presumed relationship between the notions of individuation and culture have largely been in terms of conceptualising how the 'self' construct is viewed differently by individualist and collectivist cultural discourse practices (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Hence, the second

point of enquiry which arose from the literature was: can a relationship be seen to exist between the notion of culture and a **dynamic** sub-construct of the individuation construct? In other words, can a relationship be seen to exist between the socio-cultural context and the **process** of self-expression?

Before outlining the second and third points of enquiry to arise from the *a priori* situation of difficulties in individuating, an outline of what this situation entailed needs to be given.

This situation involved difficulties in the experience of being and becoming an individual. Difficulties in the experience of being and becoming an individual involved tensions in the self-other (Allison & Sabatelli, 1988) dialectic. In this study, the term 'self-other' will be used to indicate the following relational dimensions:

- (1) self in relation to group (or socio-cultural context)
- (2) self in relation to other (another person)
- (3) self in relation to self (intrapsychic experience).

Difficulties in the experience of **being** an individual incorporated mainly the relational dimensions of self-group and self-self. This involved difficulties in being self-assertive or self-expressive in relation to group, and difficulties in being self-acceptant in relation to self.

Difficulties in being self-expressive in relation to group involved the tension between individuality versus group acceptance. Self-expressiveness or self-assertiveness was experienced to be detrimental to relational harmony and group interest. It was felt that by being self-expressive one would risk losing group acceptance. It was thought that if one could find another way by which self-expression can be seen to occur, not by opposing group interest, a way of resolving the opposite poles of this tension would be found.

Examples of theories which address this tension between individuality and group acceptance is Winnicott's theory about the "true" and "false" self (in Mitchell, 1991, p.

133). It may be interpreted that the 'true self' symbolises the expression of individuality, and the 'false self', conformity and compliance to group norms and group interest to ensure group acceptance. Jung's (1959) theory also addresses this tension between individuality and group acceptance. However, Jung's (1959) theory was chosen as a basis for finding a way of resolving this tension because the individuality versus group acceptance tension may be interpreted to be at the heart of his theory on individuation.

Individuality, self-expression or self-assertiveness can be said to be incorporated in Jung's (1959, p. 174) theory on individuation by the phrase: "divesting the self of the false wrappings of the persona". This may be interpreted as involving self-expression in the face of contrasting public opinion¹ or that the person is prepared to go against public opinion if it opposes his/her wishes, goals, convictions. The resolution of this tension to be drawn from Jung's (1959) writing involved ensuring individuality even at the expense of losing group acceptance. Hence, the second point of enquiry to arise from the *a priori* situation was: can self-expression (individuality) be seen to occur in a way other than by opposing public opinion, if public opinion contrasts with one's wishes, goals, pursuits? In other words, it was intended to find a way of self-expression which would preserve both poles of the individuality versus group acceptance tension.

Difficulties in the experience of **becoming** an individual incorporated mainly the self-other relational dimension. This involved becoming separate, self-contained and independent in relation to the 'other'. The third point of enquiry to arise from the *a priori* situation involved the self-other and self-self relational dimensions. The third point of enquiry involved the intention to gain a conceptual understanding of what individuation could be said to entail. This would involve interpretations from theory. It was also intended to gain a conceptual understanding of what was experienced as difficulties in individuating. What was experienced as difficulties in individuating took on expression in the form of various dialectics or themes. It was thought that one could try and resolve tensions in practice by integrating them in theory or by simply conceptualising them. This enquiry pointed to a presumed link between **experience and theory**.

¹ Please note, the term 'public opinion' is intended to mean, for example, conventions, role expectations, **not** macro-societal discourse practices.

The first chapter will address two of the three points of enquiry which arose from the *a priori* situation. These are: can self-expression be seen to occur in any way, other than by opposing public opinion if public opinion goes contrary to one's wishes, goals, pursuits?, and: what can individuation be seen to entail in a collectivist cultural context? The first chapter will also address both the two points of enquiry which arose from the literature search. These are: do Western theories on individuation take into account the notion of culture, and if so, how? And, can a relationship be seen to exist between the socio-cultural context and the process of self-expression? These questions relate to, or address tensions in what can be called the self-group relational dimension.

Both the second and the third chapters will address the remaining point of enquiry which arose from the *a priori* situation. This involved attempting to find out whether the resolution of experiential tensions would be facilitated by integrating these dialectics in theory, simply conceptualising them, or by gaining theoretical understandings or interpretations of what individuation can be said to entail. The second chapter will address this point of enquiry in terms of experiential tensions in the self-other relational dimension, and the third chapter, in terms of the self-self relational dimension.

The final chapter will contain an illustration and discussion of conclusions drawn from the **process** of the search to facilitate individuation by conceptualising or integrating experiential themes or dialectics in theory. In the final chapter a particular conceptualisation of individuation in terms of the notion of freedom, and on the basis of various theories will be discussed. This can be said to be a way of facilitating individuation in practice by conceptualising it in theory.

Please note the following:

(1) That the phrases, "it can be said" or "it can be seen", are used to indicate that the idea or comment being expressed is not regarded as having objective reality but linguistic reality, that is, it exists only as an idea or thought. Hence, the word **is** is used in the phrases "what is meant" or "a comment is" to similarly reflect that it is the **comment** or the **idea** that is regarded as real. These phrases are used to reflect a

postmodern stance in the author's thinking.

(2) That the phrases: "may be interpreted as", "may be regarded as", "may mean", "may be described as", "may be concluded", "may be drawn from", "may be explained" reflect the author's usage of other writers' ideas.

(3) That in general, the language of paragraphs where writers are referred to by various means, for example, "according to", "for", or by stating the name of the writer, in most cases, reflects the writing of that writer unless otherwise indicated. Hence, some paragraphs may reflect an objectivist epistemology.

CHAPTER 2

SELF IN RELATION TO GROUP

Introduction

In this chapter, the following questions will be addressed: Firstly, do Western theories on individuation take into account the notion of culture, and if so, how? Secondly, can self-expression be seen to occur in any way, other than by opposing public opinion if public opinion goes contrary to one's wishes, goals, pursuits? Thirdly, can a relationship be seen to exist between the notion of culture and a **dynamic** sub-construct of the individuation construct? (Fourie, Personal communication, 1996) In other words, can a relationship be seen to exist between the socio-cultural context and the **process** of self-expression? Fourthly, what can individuation be seen to entail in a collectivist cultural context?

The Notion of Culture in Western Theories on Individuation

In this section, how or if modern and postmodern theories on individuation take into account the notion of culture will be addressed. In order to do so, a description of how 'self' is conceptualised in modern and postmodern theories on individuation needs to be given. The description of the 'self' construct is thought to be necessary in order to describe more fully the presumed role that 'culture' is theorised to play in theories on individuation. The terms 'self-concept' and 'sense-of-self' will be used to aid in describing the notion of 'self'.

'Self-concept' can be said to be narrowly defined as how one sees oneself, for example, as serious, hardworking. 'Self-concept' is a term from Rogers's theory of personality (Pervin, 1970, p. 177) referring to an "organised and consistent pattern of perceptions". However, here it will be used not in terms of its original definition, but as a metaphor to emphasise the cognitive, verbally mediated processes involved in 'self-construction'. Sense-of-self is not a theoretical term *per se* but it can be seen as an ordinary descriptive term to capture what Stern (1985) best describes as

non-self-reflexive, nonverbal awareness. Hence, an artificial distinction, namely: a verbal, self-reflexive extraction from experience (self-concept) and nonverbal, experiential awareness (sense-of-self) will be used. The term 'self-knowledge' can also be seen to involve a verbal, self-reflective stance. These three terms: self-concept, sense-of-self, and self-knowledge will be used in the next discussion.

The Notion of Culture in Modern, Western Theories on Individuation

In this section three theoretical perspectives from a modern perspective will be used to address the question of how, or if the notion of culture is used in their conceptualisations of 'self'. First the systemic perspective will be addressed, followed by the psychodynamic and feminist perspectives.

Bowen's (1985) and Kerr's (1988) theorising will be used as an example of the systemic conceptualisation of 'self'. The 'self' here can be said to be the ability to have convictions, opinions, ideas independent of emotional pressure to be the same as the group. It can also be said to be the ability to respond flexibly with communicational responses involving closeness (e.g., agreeing, compromising), or distance (e.g., disagreeing, uncompromising). This presupposes emotional neutrality or the ability to reflect on one's emotional reactions and not automatically react so as to achieve emotional equilibrium. Hence, the self in this conceptualisation can be said to involve **emotional, cognitive, and communicational** capacities.

This paragraph will address what role the notion of culture is theorised to have on this systemic conceptualisation of self. Bowen's (1985), and Kerr's (1988) theory can be said to be acultural if culture is seen in terms of society's prescriptions of what the self should be. Kerr (1988) does not theorise about how culture can be seen to affect the development of these emotional, cognitive, and communicational capacities. However, he does focus on the effect of the emotional-relational milieu of the family on this development. However, this very milieu can be said to be a cultural artefact of or as being influenced by the cultural context of, for example, collectivist or individualist societies.

Kerr (1988) places a normative value on a relational milieu where there is flexibility in styles of relating permitting various degrees of closeness and distance between its members. However, this normative stance can be said to be an outcome of an individualist (Western) culture from which this theory arises. The nonnormative value (as considered from within a Western cultural context), namely, a restrictive unidimensional style of relating where only one pattern of distance regulation is maintained, for example, closeness, may be considered to be the norm in collective cultures such as Japanese and Indian societies. Hence, culture can be theorised to influence the development of self (or cognitive, emotional, and communicational capacities) indirectly via its influence on the family relational milieu. If one focuses on the communicational capacities of this self-conceptualisation, then culture can also be said to reciprocally influence the patterns of communicating/relating indirectly via the notion of 'boundary' formation. 'Boundary' may be considered as that which regulates the type of communicational exchanges occurring in stereotypical relational dyads of, for example, gender, age, and hierarchical dimensions. What regulates these communicational exchanges can be said to be culturally defined expectations or common knowledges of what is acceptable behaviour within these stereotypical relational dyads. Hence, in collectivist cultures age differences may be a more determining factor of the type of communicational exchanges occurring in a relational dyad, as compared to, for example, a Western culture.

However, Kerr (1988) does not include the role of culture in his conceptualisation of 'self'.

The conceptualisation of 'self', from a psychodynamic perspective, will be addressed in this paragraph. The self-construct in psychodynamic theory may be interpreted as 'autonomous ego functions' or intrapsychic ways of regaining emotional equanimity, for example, to self-soothe or self-calm (Kohut, 1971, 1977). According to this theory, a value is placed on achieving emotional equanimity independently as referred to by the expression of the 'self-contained' individual. This involves not seeing others as extensions of oneself to magically know and fulfill needs, not to use others in a nonverbal, indirect way to get these met and not to use others for the vicarious expression of 'wants' or opinions. It involves taking responsibility for getting emotional

needs met (Haase, 1993) and taking responsibility for the convictions, beliefs, opinions, and wants that one has. The 'self' construct that one is theorised to become in psychodynamic theory is the 'aware self', or the self that knows about, and accepts *a priori* unconscious motivations, undesirable or undeveloped tendencies (Jung, 1959). The 'self' construct in psychodynamic theory may also be interpreted as the agentic 'self' or the 'self' that initiates responses or actions and does not simply react to the processes of the relational domain or conform to the dictates of the group.

This paragraph will address what role the notion of culture is theorised to have on this psychodynamic conceptualisation of 'self'. From the above description, the 'self' conceptualised in psychodynamic theory (Kohut, 1971, 1977) can be said to fall into the category of 'sense-of-self' outlined earlier. By this, what is meant is that psychodynamic theory theorises largely in terms of nonverbal awarenesses and states. Hence, the role of culture can be said not to feature in psychodynamic theory, as these fundamental, preverbal awarenesses are regarded by psychodynamic theory as being universal.

However, as discussed in the previous section on the systemic conceptualisation of 'self', culture (meaning collective or individualist cultures) can be said to influence the very nonverbal emotional-relational milieu in which these ego functions are seen to develop in psychodynamic theory. Hence, one notes the very sharp contrast between the interdependent we-self of collectivist culture, which captures all the features deemed to be maladaptive in psychodynamic theory, and the self-contained, independent 'self' of individualist culture. In terms of psychodynamic normative criteria the 'we-self' can be said to be the 'fused-self' vicariously using others as extensions of oneself. Hence, although not included in psychodynamic theory, 'culture' can be said to influence the conceptualisation of 'self'.

The conceptualisation of 'self', from a feminist perspective, will be addressed in this paragraph. Feminist theorising about the 'self' has largely been in reaction to what they call a Western conceptualisation of 'self' as independent, assertive, masterful, which they contend reflects masculine values (Jordan, 1991; Josselson, 1988). Surrey (1991, p. 152) puts forward a "self-in-relation-model" which involves the recognition that for

women, the primary experience of the 'self' is relational, that is, the 'self' is organised and developed within the context of important relationships. This may mean that, for example, such individualist notions of sense-of-self, self-esteem, and individuality are embedded in the relationship. In other words, this may mean that these notions arise out of, and depend upon the interactions that occur between people. Miller (1991, p. 13) uses the term "being-in-relation" to describe the **sense-of-self**. It is an internal representation of the 'self' inseparable from dynamic interaction. At the heart of this dynamic interaction is the attending to each other's mental states and emotions. Thus, this sense of 'self' is of someone who attends to, and responds to what is going on in the relationship between two or more people. In feminist theory, **self-esteem** is dependent on the felt ability to make and then to maintain affiliations and relationships (Surrey, 1991). This idea of "taking care of relationships" (Miller, 1991, p. 16) involves good-enough understanding of the other in a sense of mutual concern for the well-being of each other. For Josselson (1987), in feminist theory, nurturing connectedness is in itself a form of self-expression, self-assertion and **individuality**. Hence, it can be said that the self-construct in feminist theory is described in terms of the notion of self-concept in that it involves reflecting on experiences in relating, and forming mental representations of those.

This paragraph will address what role the notion of culture is theorised to have on the feminist conceptualisation of self. Of relevance here, is the idea that culture influences one's self-concept. Various authors have explored the nature of this influence (Goldschmidt, 1995; Kashima, Kim, Gelfand, Yamaguchi, Choi, & Yuki, 1995; Lo Verso, 1995). For example, Kashima et al. (1995) showed how culture influences how one sees oneself along the dimensions of independent versus interdependent, agentic versus communal and separate versus relational. Feminist theory proposes that culture (as prescribing an agentic, autonomous, independent self), has a devaluing impact on one's personal self-concept of "self-in-relation" (Surrey, 1991, p. 152). Feminist writers, for example, Miller (1976), Nelson (1996), Gilligan (1982), have expressed some vocalisation in relation to this. This vocalisation can be seen to be an influence of the individual on the culture via social discourse practices. This can be said to illustrate Goldschmidt's (1995) comment that the influence of culture on how one sees oneself is not simply a unidirectional process. Tang (1992) makes a comment

that in collectivist societies where the socio-cultural self-construct is an interdependent, relational we-self, the individual's personal self-concept may be notably individualistic. This may be interpreted as illustrating Goldschmidt's (1995) comment.

The Notion of Culture in Postmodern, Western Theories on Individuation

Three conceptualisations will be addressed, namely: self as empty, self as narrative and self as saturated.

Postmodern thought [Cerullo (1992); Fogel (1993); Gergen (1984, 1985, 1991a, 1994); Gergen and Gergen (1988); Greenberg (1995); Harré (1983, 1991); Hermans, Kempen, & Van Loon (1992); Hermans, Rijks & Kempen (1993); Miller, Potts, Fung, Hoogstra, & Mintz (1990); O'Hara & Anderson (1991); Penn & Frankfurt (1994); Rappaport (1993); Rosenbaum & Dyckman (1995); Sarup (1993); Singer (1995); Varela, Thompson, & Rosch (1991)] distinguishes between experience and reflection. According to Varela et al. (1991), we experience a sense of self that is continuous, stable, in a sense, the essence of our psychic survival. It is this sense of self that we want to defend or enhance and is linked to the losses and pains we experience. Yet, when self-reflecting on immediate experience, Varela et al. (1991), state that meditators find a flux of transitory experiential states, for example, bodily sensations, perceptions, feelings, impulses, thoughts.

Yet, meditators experience no separate self independent of this flux of experiential states. Varela et al. (1991, p. 63) put forward this central dilemma: "if there is no experienced self, then how is it that we think there is? ... What is it in experience that we take for a self?" As a basis for logical analysis, Varela et al. (1991) use the Abhidharma (one of the divisions of the Buddhist canon) to put forward five aggregates of experience. According to this canon these are: forms, feelings/sensations, perceptions (discernments), impulses, dispositional formations, consciousness. Varela et al. (1991) elaborate on each area to discern in which category of experience can one equate this experience of a continuous self. Varela et al. (1991) conclude that one cannot equate self with one's body, feelings, perceptions, personality traits (habits, motives, emotions) or consciousness, either because one experiences a separate I

who, for example, has a body or has feelings, or, because of the disunity of any particular experiential category.

Varela et al. (1991) conclude then that although one can discern many components of experience, for example, motivations, dispositions, volitions and awareness of various forms, one cannot discern anything that may be identified as this fundamental, continuous, coherent self. They conclude that this flux of experience cannot "be pinned down" and thus it is "empty of a self" (p. 80). The self that we believe to exist as some permanent, stable, continuous entity is an expression of an "habitual clinging" (p. 80) to any one or combination of these aggregates of experience, and as such the self is just another transitory component in the flux of experience. According to Wilber's (1985) thinking, this transitory component in experience that we cling to as 'self' is simply a collection of memories that is felt to be separate from present experience, hence existing as an observing I. According to Varela et al. (1991), following Buddhist thought, the tendency to imbue this experience of self as, for example, permanent and fundamental is thus illusionary.

Epstein (1992) provides further ideas on the 'empty self' concept. Epstein's (1992, p. 52) "egolessness" or "selflessness" is used instead of the term 'empty self'. For Epstein (1992), selflessness does not refer to regressive states (in traditional thought) in which there are no constraints on primitive impulses and where unrestrained expression occurs; nor does it refer to (in traditional thought) fusion or merger experiences where a sense of separateness from one's surroundings (social or physical) is lost. Instead the ego, or (in Epstein's understanding) the ongoing flux of experiential states - feelings, thoughts, bodily sensations, is retained. Selflessness, for Epstein (1992, p. 52), is the negation of "the actual internal experience of one's self" as "inherently existing". This involves identifying and negating the ways in which we believe we inherently exist. For Epstein (1992), selflessness does not involve negating something which actually exists but recognising its nonexistence in the way we imagined it to be. This involves, for example, appreciating that thoughts exist without a thinker, feelings without a feeler and so on (Epstein, 1992).

An implication of this empty-self conceptualisation is that we no longer come to know

self through reified, linguistic categories derived from reflections on past experience, but we come to know self in the immediacy of ongoing experience (Rosenbaum & Dyckman, 1995). Thus, one's self is not, for example, our beliefs, feelings, etcetera, but the potentialities inherent in dispositions or capacities to perceive, think, feel or believe (Rosenbaum & Dyckman, 1995). According to the empty-self conceptualisation, the very self one believes that one has grasped is constantly changing, hence the idea of 'empty self'. Thus it can be said that there is no *a priori* conceptualisation of self. The idea of self-knowledge may thus be interpreted as simple awareness of the ongoing flux of changing perceptions, thoughts, feelings. This conceptualisation of self may be described by the term 'sense-of-self' since a nonverbal, non-self-reflective stance is proposed. Hence, the notion of culture as social discourse is not seen to feature much because the intermediary process of verbal self-reflection through which culture may be seen to impact, is not incorporated in the notion of sense-of-self.

In the following discussion, the postmodern conceptualisation of self as narrative will be addressed as well as the role of culture in this conceptualisation.

Harré (1991) discusses the traditional and postmodern conceptualisations of 'self' or personhood. He puts forward two terms which he subsequently uses in this discussion: Self-1 refers to the common understanding of personal identity, and Self-2 refers to our various roles in social interactions. Harré's (1991) distinction between Self-1 and Self-2 can be said to be parallel to Hermans, Rijks, and Kempen's (1993, p. 211) distinction between "I as author and me as actor". In other words, according to Hermans et al. (1995), 'I' refers to that 'part' of ourselves that makes sense of our interactions. It may be interpreted as the self-reflective or 'observing I', whereas 'me' may be interpreted as our momentary experience in social interaction. Harré (1991) discusses 'self' from two perspectives: ontology or the existence or nature/essence of 'self' and epistemology or how we come to know this 'self'.

According to Harré (1991) for traditionalists, Self-1 exists as some unknowable, spiritual essence. In traditional thought, there is no Self-2 because we are what we are whether we are self-reflecting about experience or interacting with others.

In terms of postmodern thinking, Self-2 refers to various social selves that arise out of various interactional experiences and are contextually contingent. According to Harré (1991), Self-1 in postmodern thought is not an a priori given but is an emergent property. Self-1 arises when we organise experience.

A question to be posed is: What may be meant by organising experience and what kind of relationship can be seen to exist between culture and organising experience or culture and the 'components' of 'self'?

To summarise the following discussion, three ways by which experience may be interpreted to be organised will be described: Firstly, by building up "expectancies" (Beebe & Lachmann, 1988, p. 20) of what occurs in a relational pattern; secondly, by one's "epistemology" (Bateson, 1979, p. 12) and thirdly, by constructing a narrative of one's life's events (Gergen & Gergen, 1988). The focus of this discussion will be: how does, or to what extent, is culture theorised to influence the organising of experience which involves the building up of expectancies, one's epistemology, and the construction of a narrative? Or, in other words, what role is the notion of culture theorised to have on this postmodern conceptualisation of self?

One way of describing how experience may be interpreted to be organised will be addressed in the following paragraphs.

Beebe and Lachmann (1988) attempt to answer the question of how the infant organises experience. They say that this is done via patterns of interaction where there is mutual influence between mother and infant. The infant organises experience by learning that certain actions give rise to certain responses. Thus, the idea of organising experience involves making sense, or forming some order out of one's experiential world.

According to Beebe and Lachmann (1988), the infant forms mental images of interactional patterns - hence the emphasis is on the relationship and the behaviours that happen. When the infant forms a mental image of an interactional pattern, he/she also forms a mental image of what response to **expect** from his/her mother when a

certain action is performed. In this way, the infant develops expectancies as well as a sense of initiative (Beebe & Lachmann, 1988) thus bringing organisation to his/her experience.

These interactional patterns are also theorised to organise the infant's experience on an emotional level. According to Beebe and Lachmann (1988), the infant forms an expectation of being matched and being able to match the caregiver. By matching, Beebe and Lachmann (1988) refer to the timely copying of behavioural responses. By copying the behavioural response, the corresponding psychophysiological experience is also copied. Thus, the infant develops the expectancy that he/she can copy the other's gestures and so participate in the other's experience. He/she also develops the expectancy that the others can copy his/her gestures and so share in his/her experience.

Bateson's (1979, p. 12) notion of "epistemology" may be interpreted as another way by which the organisation of experience takes place.

This paragraph will address how the notion of epistemology may be interpreted as being involved in the organisation of experience. For Bateson (1991), the concept of self may be described as the reciprocal relationship between how one perceives or interprets the world and the interactional behaviour that follows. Bateson (1979, p. 147) calls this process "learning II". Bateson (1991, p. 206) placed much emphasis on what he calls "unconscious presuppositions" ... or the how of using one's senses, or one's epistemology. For Bateson (1991), it is these unconscious presuppositions that undergird how one interprets the world and by reciprocal relation, how one interacts with it.

Thus, to summarise, 'expectancies', and 'epistemology' may be interpreted as ways of organising experience. Thus 'expectancies' and 'epistemology' can be said to constitute the 'self' or components of the 'self'.

However, in terms of Bateson's (1979) thinking, to describe epistemology as a component of 'self' is a misnomer since 'self' is not seen as a structure but a process

between one's epistemology and the interactional behaviour that reciprocally follows.

Nonetheless, for the purposes of easy description, expectancies, and epistemology will be discussed as ways of organising experience and thus as components of the 'self'.

The next question to be addressed is: how are ways of organising experience theorised to be influenced by culture? Learning expectancies is theorised to be one way of organising experience (Beebe & Lachmann, 1988). Learning expectancies occurs via interactional patterns (Beebe & Lachmann, 1988). Thus, the above question may be rephrased as: how is culture theorised to influence interactional patterns?

Fogel's (1993) theorising will be used to address how culture is theorised to influence interactional patterns.

However, first an interpretation of what Fogel (1993) may mean by the term culture needs to be given. According to Fogel (1993), culture defines the type of discourse possible between individuals, for example, who talks to whom, and what is discussed. Culture also defines the nature of the communicational exchange itself because culture provides the tools for communication, for example, language, symbols, gestures. The expansive variety of personal pronouns in the Japanese language, allowing for a multitude of different social relations to be represented, may be seen as an illustration of the idea that culture provides the tools for communication. The existence of particular emotional states typical in some cultures and not others because of the emotional state's symbolic representations in some language systems and not others, for example "liget" (Wetherell & Maybin, 1996, p. 236), in Ilongot culture, may be seen as another illustration. The system of naming infants in Balinese culture according to group membership rather than individual identity (Gergen, 1991b) may be seen as a third illustration. Hence, it may be concluded that culture, according to the above description, refers to norms and the symbolic communicational system.

The following paragraphs will address the question of how 'culture' is theorised to influence interactional patterns.

Fogel (1993) proposes a tight interdependence between the concepts of self, communication, and culture. According to Fogel (1993, p. 16), each is a facet of the developing individual, "each facet defines the other and each facet creates the other".

For Fogel (1993), self emerges out of coordinated communicational exchanges - the communicational exchange itself occurring via the use of a cultural symbolic system. For Fogel (1993, p. 146) 'self' only exists in **comparison** and the basis for this comparison are "co-regulated relationships". Fogel (1993) describes the phrase 'self only exists in comparison' by discussing a preverbal communicational exchange involving mother pulling infant from a laying to a sitting position. According to Fogel (1993), the infant becomes aware of a physical sense-of-self when there is **difference** in the muscular exertion between him/her and his/her mother. Because there is difference, he/she becomes aware of those parts of the physical exertion under his control and those that are not. Hence, he/she becomes aware of a physical sense of self (Fogel, 1993). Hence, the sense of self emerges out of (by comparison), but is also embedded in the relationship. And the process of 'emerging out of' and 'being imbedded in' happens via the use of cultural symbols. Hence, culture may be interpreted to influence interactional patterns by providing the very means by which this communication takes place, and it is through communication that one organises experience or constructs 'self' via the 'building up' of expectancies or epistemology.

The third way by which experiences may be interpreted to be organised and the 'self' constructed, is through the construction of a narrative (Gergen & Gergen, 1988; Greenberg, 1995; Harré, 1991; Hermans, Kempen, & Van Loon, 1992; Hermans, Rijks, & Kempen, 1993; Miller, Potts, Fung, Hoogstra, & Mintz, 1990; Singer, 1995).

What will follow will be a discussion of the postmodern conceptualisation of self as narrative and how culture is theorised to be involved in this conceptualisation. (In the following few paragraphs, the term social constructionism will be used interchangeably with the term postmodern.)

In terms of social constructionist thinking (Gergen & Gergen, 1988) and commentaries on constructionist thinking (Greenberg 1995, Hoskins & Leseho 1996),

"we make ourselves by telling stories about ourselves" (Greenberg, 1995, p. 271). Telling stories about ourselves involves linking the events in our lives in some meaningful way. In other words, it involves finding answers to questions such as 'why did this happen in relation to that?' Culture, or societal norms, evaluative standards, ideologies, prevailing practices, cultural myths, may be interpreted as influencing this process on two levels.

First, culture is said to influence the choices we make and thus the actual events that happen in our lives (Greenberg, 1995). Secondly, culture is said to influence how we find reasons for what happens in our lives (Gergen & Gergen, 1988), or link events together in such a way so as to give rise to self-concepts commonly understood as personal qualities or traits. According to Gergen and Gergen (1988), we are not alone in this drama since the events that happen in our lives happen in relation to other people. Thus, it may be interpreted that our relationships with others also influence the reasons we give to these events as well as how we link these in some meaningful way.

To address the statement that culture provides reasons for events that happen in our lives (Gergen & Gergen, 1988), a definition of culture in social constructionist thought needs to be given.

According to Wetherell and Maybin (1996, p. 248), culture is defined as "the negotiation and provisional realisation of beliefs and values through ongoing interactions and practices". In short, culture may be interpreted as social interaction and discourse practices, for example: moral, legal, traditional. Thus culture may be regarded as providing the medium by which we find links for events in our lives. When links are found for isolated events, stories are constructed and reconstructed. By the term 'medium', what is meant is that traditional understandings or cultural myths help one to make sense of isolated events. Sometimes stories can be said to have religious significance and sometimes they can be said to be more personal. Examples of stories can be said to be: that good emerges or can be found in suffering or pain, and that everything has a purpose and place in the mystery of life. However, in social constructionist thought, the influence of culture is not unidimensional by which some rigid processing of fitting experiences into culturally determined, meaning-giving

frameworks takes place.

These, what can be called culturally-determined frameworks or stories, are the products of discourse (the talk and texts of social life - Wetherell & Maybin, 1996, p. 240), hence are open to modification in communicational exchange. Thus totally new and idiosyncratic stories may be constructed from the events that happen in one's life. In other words, totally new and idiosyncratic frameworks may be formed from the events **themselves**, rather than the frameworks simply being a structure into which the events of one's life are fitted.

Hence the importance of relationships in social constructionist thought. Relationships allow for different forms of communicational exchanges which perturb and modify existing ideas thus giving rise to new ideas, new stories and thus new ways of making sense of significant life events.

In this conceptualisation of self as narrative, 'culture' is theorised to have an influence on the formation of one's self-concept or how one constructs a story about oneself. A comment is that in postmodern thought, there is no a priori 'self' that one tries to become, one is always becoming in the cultural domain of social discourse, in the continual process of constructing and deconstructing how one thinks about oneself in the various relational domains one experiences.

The third postmodern conceptualisation of self, namely, the "saturated self" (Gergen, 1991b, p. 7) will be discussed subsequently. The "saturated self" concept refers to the notion of "self as relatedness" (Gergen, 1991b, p. 139). According to Gergen (1991b) the notion of self as a separate, authentic, single, and knowable essence gives way to the notion of self as embodied in the many social roles one comes to assume. Hence, "one's identity is continuously emergent, reformed and redirected as one moves through the sea of everchanging relationships" (p. 139), one's identity is thus only "permitted by the social rituals of which one is part" (p. 157). In other words, the self one constructs or the impression one gives is defined as real by the social processes which issue in, and determine the fate of this self-construction (Gergen, 1991b).

The following will address the role of culture in this conceptualisation of self as saturated. Gergen (1991b) gives a broad description of the role of culture in the shifting conceptualisations of self. He uses the term 'culture' to refer to, for example, lifestyles, communicational networks, cultural artefacts. Gergen (1991b) uses the terms romantic, modern, and postmodern to refer to different cultural periods and gives a broad description of how culture influences one's experience of oneself in daily living and reciprocally how this experience is conceptualised in the social discourse practices of that period. This is outlined as follows: Gergen (1991b, p. 27) describes the romantic cultural period as one in which love was placed "in the forefront of human endeavours" and a belief in the "deep dynamics of personality" was held. In conceptualising the self, emphasis was placed on the unseen, inner depths of the person. It was held that the person embodied a kind of sacredness, which gave value to the individual and to the relationships he/she, became involved in. Coupled to this was a sense of the unknown, the mysterious, where intuition, mysticism, inspiration, creativity, passion, depth, and purpose characterised the world of persons.

According to Gergen (1991b), with the rise of the modern period came an emphasis on empirical observation and functional utility. People were seen as self-contained, autonomous, and knowable, having machine-like essences that could be fathomed through techniques of rational inquiry.

Gergen (1991b, p. 48) describes the postmodern period by the term "social saturation" which he refers to as the chaotic and multitudinous bombardment of social stimuli - communicational obligations, relational commitment, activities, interests beckoning attention. Gergen (1991b) describes this cultural influence as having two effects on the experience of oneself in daily living. The first effect Gergen (1991b, p. 69) calls "populating of the self" or the acquisition of different and multiple potentials for being. This involves the situation that while one may know and feel secure with a sense of coherent identity or self-sameness, one may suddenly have the experience of being someone different-contradicting this sense of coherence. The second effect Gergen (1991b, p. 72) calls "multiphrenia" or the process of getting drawn into, and becoming invested in so many different directions and pursuits (all of which have equal validity or reality).

Gergen (1991b) describes in more detail the effects of "populating of the self" (p. 69) and "multiphrenia" (p. 72) on one's experience in daily living as follows: First what is involved is a playing of varied and sometimes contradictory social roles so as to meet the varied demands of the many relationships one finds oneself involved in. As one searches for appropriate forms of action, one's identity is likely to be questioned rather than confirmed, thus giving rise to a heightened sense of "playing a role" or "managing impressions" (p. 145), and an erosion of a sense of security that an essential, unified self brings. In terms of the relational domain, actions seem less sincere and more instrumental. Slowly it becomes increasingly difficult to recall to what core essence one must remain true, and instead one simply acts to full potential in the moment at hand (Gergen, 1991b). This sense of superficiality gives way to an optimistic sense of enormous possibility until the distinction between image or presentation and real, true self diminishes in accord with the emergence of a culture of multiple, equally valid realities.

According to Gergen (1991b), these processes of "populating of the self" (p. 69) and "multiphrenia" (p. 72) have the following effect on the social discourse practices of the self, namely: that the single knowable, authentic self becomes deconstructed giving rise to the construction of self as existing in social role.

To conclude: when the notion of self is conceptualised in terms of sense-of-self, for example, from the psychodynamic perspective, and by the empty self theorists, the notion of culture can be said to feature minimally in such theorising. In contrast, it can be said that the theoretical perspectives conceptualising self as self-concept, for example, the feminist perspective and the narrative, post-modern theories include the notion of culture, variously defined. Self-concept, as involving a self-reflexive verbal stance, can be said to require the idea of a linguistic system, hence the inclusion of culture (as linguistic system) in these conceptualisations of self.

A more general conclusion, is that these theorists describe a relationship between the notion of culture (variously defined) and a **static** sub-construct, for example, 'self' or 'self-concept', of the individuation construct.

These sub-constructs can be said to be 'static' because 'self' can be said to be variously conceptualised as, for example, emotional, cognitive and communicational **capacities, perceptions, awarenences, expectancies, epistemologies, cognitions (stories)**. It can be said that none of these theories use a **dynamic** sub-construct (e.g. behaviour) of the individuation construct when theorising about the role of 'culture' in theories on individuation. Hence, the following sections will attempt to address the question: can a relationship be seen to exist between the socio-cultural context² and the **process** of self-expression (or individualist behaviour)? The following sections will also attempt to address the following: can self-expression be seen to occur in a way, other than by opposing public opinion if public opinion goes contrary to one's wishes, goals, pursuits?

A Discussion of Jung's Theory of Individuation

One of the primary foci of this section is to address the question: can self-expression be seen to occur in a way other than by opposing public opinion? This question was arrived at in order to find a way of resolving the experiential tension between individuality and group acceptance. A discussion of Jung's (1959) theory on individuation was deemed necessary because the individuality versus group acceptance tension may be interpreted to be at the heart of his theory on individuation. It was thought that by exploring Jung's (1959) theory on individuation, a way of resolving the individuality versus group acceptance tension would be found, as well as gaining an understanding of what individuation can be said to entail according to Jung's (1959) theory.

A Brief Definition of Jung's (1959) Construct of Individuation

For Jung (1959, p.174) "individuation involves divest(ing) the self of the false wrappings of the persona on the one hand, and of the suggestive power of primordial

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In this discussion, the following terms will be used interchangeably: societal prescriptions, socio-cultural context, cultural discourse practices, cultural dictates, societal norms, culture. Unless otherwise defined, these terms will be used to refer to authoritatively defined, circumscribed shared understandings, typical expectations or common knowledge. The socio-cultural self-construct will be used interchangeably with Jacobi's (1976, p. 42) "collective ideal" to refer to a narrow subset of cultural discourse practice, namely: what society prescribes to be the ideal 'self'.

images on the other". Elsewhere, Jung (1959, p. 275) says "individuation (is used) to denote the process by which a person becomes a psychological individual, that is, a separate, indivisible unity or whole". Jung (1959, p. 273) defines "individuality" as "embracing our innermost, last, incomparable uniqueness, (which) implies becoming one's own self".

A Brief Discussion of the Terms "Ego", "Persona", "Self"

Jung (1959) defines the **ego** as follows: "a complex of ideas which constitutes the centre of my field of consciousness and appears to possess a high degree of continuity and identity" (p. 425). Elsewhere, Jung (1959, p. 5) uses ego to describe "conscious personality". According to Hopche (1989) by ego, Jung meant our self-concept - what one would refer to by the expression: "Gee, I wasn't myself last night" (p.77). The ego can be understood to refer to individual needs, wants, wishes, opinions which would be referred to by the terms: 'self-expression' or 'self-assertion'. This is in contrast to narcissism or what is commonly regarded as selfish in layman's terms. Jung (1959) calls narcissism **individualism** - the uncompromising and exaggerated fulfilment of selfish desires and wishes. Jung (1959, p. 557) uses the term "ego-personality" to refer to a sense of I-ness. Thus, in this section, the term '**self**' will be used interchangeably with 'ego', and will refer to ideas of individuality, I-ness, or self-expression. This is in contrast to Jung's (1959, p. 460) term: **Self** which will be explained subsequently.

Jung (1959, p. 464) defines the **persona** as the "mask" that is, "the ad hoc adopted attitude" by which the individual adjusts his/her "social aims and aspirations" to the "social conditions and requirements". Jung (1959, p. 465) says that "the persona is exclusively concerned with the relation to objects". By this Jung may mean that the "persona" is outwardly directed - a form of relating that comes from an adaptation to the outside world rather than towards an adaptation to one's inner psychic life. Jacobi (1976) talks about the persona as a necessary outcome of good upbringing or societal adjustment.

In contrast to the term **self**, Jung (1959) used the term **Self** to refer to an archetype of wholeness, meaning an inherent, primordial, universal tendency to bring into

consciousness certain instinctual patterns of behaviour which the individual formerly found difficult to understand or control. These "inherent tendencies" (Jung, 1959, p. 228) "patterns of instinctual behaviour" or "universal images", Jung (1959, p. 44) called "archetypes". Thus the **Self** archetype may be regarded as the overriding tendency to bring other archetypes (tendencies), (which have an unknown yet controlling influence on the individual) into awareness.

For Jung (1959) greater consciousness or becoming whole is an intrapsychic process which affects the collective (group or society) because when we become aware of unconscious impulses or images, we do not need others to be repositories of that which is difficult to accept about ourselves, be it, for example, negative attributions and/or feelings. Thus when we become more aware of universal archetypes (which can be called individual development) we have greater freedom to act in relation to these tendencies in response to others (collective development). Hence Jung (1959, p. 147) describes the individual as "not merely a unique and separate being but is also a social being". However, elsewhere Jung (1959, p. 174) describes the individual as "composed of purely universal factors, he is wholly collective". One could interpret this to mean that when one becomes aware of unconscious, undesirable or underdeveloped tendencies, one ceases to see only others as possessing them. This promotes greater solidarity with others because we see in ourselves what we formerly only saw in others. Also, it can be said that this expanding of consciousness brings the individual into communion with the world at large to such an extent that egotistic wishes, fears, hopes and ambitions are subordinated to difficulties that concern humanity as a whole.

According to Jacobi (1965), Jung uses the concept of 'Self' to refer to the motive goal and means of achieving individuation. By motive, Jung (1959) uses 'Self' to refer to a universal, fundamental teleology. The goal is often referred to by Jung (1959) as a state of dialectical relation between one's self-concept (ego) and one's unconscious. According to Jung (1959), the ego is the only aspect of the Self which we know, therefore, the more we come to know about ourselves, the more individuated we become. However, Jung (1959) postulates that the Self will never be completely knowable, hence according to Jungian theory, it is the ongoing, dialectical relationship between the known and the unknown of ourselves that is at the heart of the

individuation process.

Qualities that are unacknowledged are regarded as 'opposites' to that which we are consciously aware of, therefore this state of dynamic tension is also often referred to as the union of opposites or the integration of the shadow. Thus 'Self' as metaphor of the **means** of individuation can be said to refer to this dynamic tension between the known and unknown or the process of uniting the opposites.

Sometimes Jung (1959) uses 'Self' as a static/structural metaphor to refer to this goal of uniting the opposites. According to Jung (1959, p. 460) "the Self designates the whole range of psychic phenomena in man. It expresses the unity of the personality as a whole". Elsewhere, Jung (1959, p. 236) says the Self is used as a metaphor for an "unknowable essence" or "God within us". Jacobi (1965) refers to the Self as "the unconscious substrate" (p. 49), "the structural element of the psyche" (p. 50), or "the primal, unfathomable ground of the psyche" (p. 132).

A Broader Description of Jung's (1959) Theory of Individuation

From some of Jung's writings, he appears to be setting the individual in opposition to the collective by his concept of individuation (e.g., Jung, 1940, 1959). Jung (1959, p. 451) says that "individuation cuts one off from personal conformity and hence from collectivity". This may mean that detachment from any external collective ties is necessary for the sake of focussing on one's inner psychic life of expanding consciousness. However, Jung (1959, p. 451) elaborates by stating that the individual "must bring forth values to compensate for his absence in the collective personal sphere". Jung (1940) appears to be saying that it is through the individual's vocation that these values are brought forth, from which flows collective development, and that one finds one's vocation as an outcome of coming to know oneself.

Thus Jung's concept of individuation can be seen to comprise two major ideas:

- Firstly: adaptation of the individual to society by the development of the persona.
- Secondly: becoming whole, which embraces the two aspects of Jung's definition of

individuation namely: "Divesting the Self of the false wrappings of the persona" (Jung, 1959, p. 174) and "Becoming one's own Self" (p. 173).

Divesting the Self of the false wrappings of the persona involves coming to realise and move away from the unquestioning fulfilment of public opinion, conventions, role expectations, to avoid being "carried by society" (Jung, 1959, p. 240). It can be said that this involves the development of those qualities not prescribed or lauded by the group or society.

For Jung (1959, p. 173), **becoming one's own Self**, does not imply the unlimited or most authentic expression or development of selfish needs or wishes, what Jung (1959) calls **individualism**, but expanding consciousness or fulfilling the archetype of the Self.

Becoming one's own 'self' can be seen to embrace two facets namely: becoming more aware of unconscious tendencies and seeing in ourselves what we would rather not see. Jung (1959), describes an analytical process by which one is proposed to become more aware of unconscious tendencies, impulses, attitudes. This involves the process by which symbols or images from, for example, dreams become personified or attain rational meaning and so are integrated into consciousness when their meaning is experienced on an emotional level. Seeing in ourselves what we would rather not see involves a process called withdrawing projections. When projections are withdrawn, interactions with the environment can occur in a less automatic way and with greater solidarity to others.

Thus, in short, Jung's definition of individuation may be interpreted as involving coming to know oneself and express oneself even in the face of opposing public opinion.

The resolution of the individuality (self-expression) versus group acceptance tension to be drawn from Jung's (1959) writing may be interpreted to involve ensuring individuality even at the expense of losing group acceptance. Hence, a point of enquiry arose: can self-expression (individuality) be seen to occur in another way, other than by opposing public opinion, if public opinion contrasts with one's wishes, goals, pursuits. In other words, it was intended to find a way of self-expression which would

preserve both poles of the individuality versus group acceptance tension. This will be taken up further in the section: can self-expression be seen to occur in a way other than by opposing public opinion?

'Self' as a Socio-Cultural Construct

In order to address the question: can a relationship be seen to exist between self-expression and the socio-cultural context, the following needs to be done. The presumed relationship between self-expression and an individualist culture³, needs to be compared with the presumed relationship between self-expression and a collectivist culture. What is relevant here, is what kind of 'self' society prescribes or constructs, or what is regarded as the "collective ideal" (Jacobi, 1965, p. 42) in individualist and collectivist cultures. Hence, a discussion of the socio-cultural self-construct of individualist and collectivist cultures needs to be given.

There have been various motivations for theorists to think differently about the traditional notion of self as universal, separate, singular entity. For example, on a practical level, for Hsu (1985), such a conceptualisation of self is irrelevant because it reflects, in theory, the Western ideal of individuality but does not reflect how the individual lives in a Western culture, far less any individual in any culture. In a similar vein, numerous authors have suggested that an adequate understanding of the individual requires that one understand him/her in his/her particular socio-cultural and cosmological context (Murphy, 1981; Pari, Morgenthaler & Pari-Matthey, 1980; Sow, 1977, 1980; in Alt, 1988). From another angle Shweder and Bourne (1984) discuss a number of anthropological studies of various cultures in which the person is not considered an individual in his/her own right. A comment they make is that in some cultures the individual has no intrinsic moral value apart from the social status and

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The term Western culture will be used interchangeably with the term 'individualist culture', and the term 'collectivist culture' will be used interchangeably with the term Eastern (Japanese or Indian), or African cultures. The term 'individualist culture' will be used to refer to a social grouping in which the discourse practices prescribe autonomy, independence, agency. Ryan's (1991, p. 225) definition of autonomy and independence will be used. For Ryan (1991, p. 225) "autonomy represents a subjective sense of endorsement, volition and self-direction in one's action. In contrast, the issue of independence is most adequately defined as self-reliance - not depending on resources from another". Agency can be said to refer to the ability to be proactive, to take initiative. The term 'collectivist culture' will be used to refer to a social grouping in which the discourse practices prescribe interdependence, connectivity, mutuality and reciprocity.

situation in which he finds himself. They contrast this with the western cultural context in which the person's moral responsibility transcends his/her social context. They use Geerty's (1975 in Shweder & Bourne, 1984, p. 167) quote to put forward an opinion. Geerty asserts that "the Western conception of the person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgement and action organised into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other such wholes and against a social and natural background is, however, incorrigible it may seem to us, a rather peculiar idea within the context of the world's cultures". In a similar vein, for Markus and Kitayama (1991) various proverbial anecdotes or ritual practices in collectivist and individualist cultures suggested to them that people in these different cultures hold different ideas about the nature of self, others and the interdependence between the two. They suggest that these varying construals which they define broadly as the "independent" and "interdependent" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 230) construals influence certain features such as cognition, emotion and motivation. Hence, the idea of 'self' as being a socio-cultural construct rather than an acultural, separate and singular entity has been reflected in the literature (Carrithers, Collins, & Lukes, 1985; De Craemer, 1983; Florsheim, 1990; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Marsella, De Vos, & Hsu, 1985; Shweder & Bourne, 1984).

What will follow will be a discussion of how the self is constructed in Collectivist (Eastern and African) and Individualist cultures.

Self-Construct in Collectivist Cultures

Self-Construct in Eastern Cultures

In Eastern cultures, theorists talk about an "interdependent construal of self" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 227) or a "we-self" (Collins & Dasai in Roland, 1988, p. 8). This construct is used to describe a 'self-in-relation-to-other', in which the role of the other is more important in defining the "self" than in cultures which have an independent construal of self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In this way, relationships become the primary self-representations rather than acontextual, static attributes.

Another aspect of the "we-self" is the idea of "**loose ego-boundaries**" (Roland, 1988). In this situation the person's sense of self is in terms of a we-ness in that the person always has another in mind when thinking of him/herself. The 'other' is represented internally as being connected to the person in varying degrees of intimacy or in varying degrees of subordination or superiority. The we-ness may also be experienced as the "self enmeshed and allied with the extended family, jati (caste⁴) or other groups as a whole" (Roland, 1988, p. 225). According to Roland (1988, p. 224), "This conveys both the intense dependency and the reciprocity of adult mutuality." In other words, the other person is often more related to one in terms of one's self and needs and conversely, one's self is often closely related to fulfilling other's needs. (Roland, 1988). Hence, according to Roland (1988), there is a heightened sensitivity and mutual reciprocity around empathic awareness of, and responsivity to the other's moods or needs for closeness, affection, dependency or esteem.

Others are expected to sense and meet one's needs without one taking responsibility for overtly expressing these and actively getting these met (Roland, 1988). Also, any internal distress, for example, frustration, anger, hurt is dealt with by relying on the other's responsivity (which is subtly or indirectly provoked) to regain equanimity (Roland, 1988).

This relying on the other's goodwill is what Doi (1963, p. 64) has labelled "ameuru". Ameuru refers to the behaviour exhibited to get a particular need met. This need is what Doi (1971) points out as being at the centre of the interdependency typical of Japanese culture. Doi (1971, p. 7) calls this need "amae". Amae refers to the need to be loved in a nurturant protective sense. It refers to a desire for dependence. Doi (1963, p. 75) says that "the amae mentality (may) be defined as the attempt to deny the fact of separation that is such an inseparable part of human existence and to obliterate the pain of separation".

According to Doi (1963) the individual has no sense of self other than amae, or the desire to be affirmed, or to belong. Doi (1971, p.19) calls this state being "at the mercy

⁴ Caste refers to a religio-mythical delineation of a social group.

of *amae*" in that any threat of isolation or rejection from the group is akin to a threat of a loss of self. As a result, the individual is submersed completely in the group (Doi, 1971, p.134), in that any individual opinion, preference or intention that differs from the group norm is unexpressed or moulded to fit accordingly.

According to Doi (1971), this is associated with a tendency to preserve the harmony of the relationship at the expense of individualistic assertion or autonomy. Hence there is heightened sensitivity to mutual regard, affirmation, approval, as well as vulnerability to rejection and disapproval as manifested by concern for the evaluative impact of one's behaviours.

Another description of the self in Eastern cultures includes the following: that **"self-definition resides in others"** (Slote, 1992, p. 436). One sees oneself as, for example, a family member, member of a corporate organisation - hence the importance placed on belonging to a larger whole (De Vos, 1985). Thus there exists strong identification with the reputation and honour of the family or corporate organisation (Roland, 1988). Linked to this is a concomitant loyalty to upholding *jati* (caste) customs, culture, and traditions (Roland, 1988) in which the prosperity of the organisation as a whole is a source of self-regard rather than recognition for one's individual contribution.

Related to this concept of identity is the notion of the **self as being "realised in role behaviour"** (De Vos, 1985, p. 158) which refers to a sense of pride or self-regard in fulfilling one's occupational function (De Vos, 1985). Role behaviour also refers to one's social role or position in the hierarchical network of interpersonal relationships. "Self as realised in role behaviour manifests in the careful sensitivity to, and observance of traditionally defined contextual norms involving reciprocal responsibilities and obligations and observance to the social etiquette of diverse hierarchical relationships" (Roland, 1988, p. 8). Another example of 'self' as being realised in role behaviour is the strict adherence, in Hindu mysticism to one's 'dharma' or correct conduct as expected from one's stage in the life cycle.

Self-Construct in African Cultures

According to Bastide (1973 in Alt, 1988) the 'self' is seen to be composed of forces, as well as being in dynamic connection with forces of social and cosmic nature. The term "open force field" (Frankel in Beattie, 1980, p. 316) gives a clear description of this idea. Furthermore, 'force' is what makes communication possible. Hence the view exists of a universe where self, other, and offspring are interrelated as a system of dynamic forces.

A relational concept of person exists in African culture. Each person is seen as a process of dynamic interaction. Sow (1977, in Alt, 1988) describes three levels of interaction:

- (1) Vertically (or the phylogenetic dimension). This involves relationships to ancestral beings. The type of interaction that this affords is one of idealised meaning-giving in that the ancestor constitutes the foundation of the person's culture, being, law.
- (2) Horizontally. This involves interactions with others of the larger community.
- (3) Ontogenetically. This involves the relationships to his/her lineage and nuclear family.

The boundaries between the individual, society, and belief system in African culture are seen as diffuse (Alt, 1988). The various dimensions of interactions afford the experiential reality of different aspects of 'self'. These 'aspects' include being, identity and individuality (Alt, 1988).

According to Alt (1988), the person experiences his/her being, or one could say, essence via the phylogenetic dimension. This may be interpreted as: the individual's 'essence' is experienced as spiritual through hereditary connections to his/her ancestors.

According to Alt (1988), he/she experiences identity via the relationships with the larger community. Here the concept of "micro-societies" (Sow, 1980, p. 159) is relevant. These function like peer groups, which are relatively autonomous - having

their own traditions, and which are based on the principles of mutual education, seniority and modelling. It is via these micro-societies that integration into society is facilitated and hence role identity is assumed. In these micro-societies, people learn how to maintain the structural/hierarchical nature of the bigger society by assuming their age and task related positions. Thus identity here can be said to refer to the idea of social role, with social role being intimately connected to a person's age class.

Various rituals herald and publicise a change in identity. An example is the initiation rites ceremonies which highlight the movement from child to adult identity. According to Sow (1980, p. 160), "the initiation process generally includes three major phases separated in space and time: separation (death), reclusion (marginality), reintegration (rebirth)". Sow (1980, p. 161) describes the initiation process as follows "its harshness, along with the painful experience of personal loneliness during the initiation process, revives and extends the crisis of weaning". The initiation process is thought to facilitate the transition to adult social role status. Thus, it would involve a mastering of fear and the development of competencies for dealing with life and problems in order to assume the social responsibilities of the adult role.

According to Alt (1988), the experience of individuality occurs within the nuclear family. To elaborate, because of the person's lineage, he/she is assigned a precise place in relation to the family and to the group as a whole (Sow, 1980). His/her individuality is born out in the following parameters: order of birth, sexual category, possible resemblance to a living relative or forefather, status as related to age class, to level of initiation, to caste at birth (Sow, 1980).

Of note here, is the practice of naming. The name given to the individual expresses the power of certain ancestors and situations on him/her (Alt, 1988). The name confers on the individual his/her own essence or force without which he/she is vulnerable to the negative external forces both cosmological and social. If the person has force, he/she has agency and thus freedom to create him-/herself (Alt, 1988). He/she thus has an avenue for expressing his/her individuality by living out what the name means to him or her.

Thus, it can be said that the 'self' is not contained within the intrapsychic world. The 'self' is 'spread out' in the levels of interactions which exist along the three major dimensions discussed (namely, with ancestral spirits, with community and with the nuclear family).

Another feature of the African concept of 'self' is the notion of identification with the group's traditions, ideals and values as a source of self-esteem (Alt, 1988). Standards are not internalised but are 'held' in the group. Moral authority, although always present, remains outside the individual (Sow in Alt, 1988) and experienced threats of persecution are largely in response to a break in cohesion and homogeneity of the group rather than due to an individual transgression.

Self-Construct in Individualist Cultures

In contrast, in general, the Western construct of self can be said to be that of an autonomous, self-contained, acontextual individual. Markus and Kitayama (1971, p. 226) refer to this as the "independent construal". This construal comes from a belief in the wholeness and uniqueness of each person's configuration of internal attributes. According to this view, the social context is only necessary to affirm the "inner core of the self" and not for constructing this "inner core". In other words self-representations have as their referent some individual desire, preference, or attribute rather than another person as referent (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Johnson (1985) talks about the western "self" as reflecting the culture of individuality which emphasises self-expression, self-reliance, personal freedom, and enhancement.

Can Self-Expression be seen to Occur in a Way Other Than by Opposing Public Opinion?

It can be said that Jung (1959) theorises from a Western culture. Hence, the form of self-expression Jung (1959) describes can be said to reflect what occurs in a Western culture. Thus, it was thought that an exploration of, what may be interpreted as, self-expression in other cultures would aid in addressing the above question.

The question: can self-expression be seen to occur in a way other than by opposing public opinion arose primarily from the experiential tension involving individuality versus group acceptance. This tension involved the experience of mutual exclusivity of the opposite poles of the dialectic. This meant a difficulty in integrating the opposite poles in such a way that neither pole would be lost. The only resolution which presented itself involved the tension that by ensuring group acceptance, individuality would be lost, and that by ensuring individuality, group acceptance would be lost. This tension found expression in pushing aside 'wanting to' by complying with 'having to' in order to prioritise group interest thus ensuring relational harmony and group acceptance.

Doi's (1971) comment (to be discussed in the next paragraph) can be said to illustrate the above discussed expression of this tension albeit in broader terms. He discusses a **group** of people in relation to the **macro**-socio-cultural context in contrast to discussing an individual's experience in relation to the group.

Doi (1971) makes a comment with regards self-expression in Collectivist cultures. Doi (1971) refers to the Japanese culture stating that the desire to belong takes the place of an individual sense of self to such an extent that individuality or self-expression disappears in group conformity and the preservation of relational harmony. This links with Jacobi's (1976, p. 35) comment that the "persona (may) degenerate into total mimicry". Since 'persona' may be interpreted as the way a person adapts to society, "degeneration of the persona" can be said to refer to a form of adaptation in which there is no self-expression but mere copying or complying with societal norms and cultural dictates. Doi (1971) seems to be suggesting that this possibly happens in Japanese cultures, namely that the tension of individuality versus group acceptance is resolved in Japanese cultures by losing individuality for the sake of preserving group acceptance. Hence, it was thought that if one could find out how self-expression can be seen to occur in Japanese cultures, a way of retaining individuality while at the same time preserving group acceptance would be found.

Self-Expression in Collectivist Cultures

Roland (1980) describes that in spite of the strict adherence to hierarchical group norms and social etiquette, the person's manoeuvrability in getting his/her needs or wants met is a form of self-expression since this form of adaptability is unique to the individual in his/her context. Markus and Kitayama (1991) suggest that self-assertion while simultaneously preserving interpersonal harmony and cooperation is a more developed form of self-expression. Roland (1988) discusses how the practice of using another as an extension of oneself in order to express a particular desire occurs as well as a form of manipulation of superiors to get a request fulfilled while overtly remaining within the boundaries of one's hierarchical position.

Secondly, Roland (1980) discusses how, what can be called a superficial adherence to social etiquette and role obligations, takes place while the person's true feelings or intentions are conveyed in nonverbal or other subtle ways. This is especially so when these feelings would threaten intergroup harmony or would spark conflict. Thus Roland (1980) suggests the often dual/incongruent nature of communication in which what is said is not always what is meant.

Roland (1980, 1988) marks the development of the spiritual, transcendent self as a primary form of self-expression in Indian (Hindu) culture. According to Roland (1980, 1988) the individual develops the spiritual self by imbuing daily practices with special meaning, thus allowing for inner transformations for the purpose of eventually becoming "one with the godhead" (p. 289). Thus the exercise of one's dharma (or expected) behaviour is regarded as a spiritually significant form of self-expression.

As an example, De Vos (1993) says that complete devotion to a social role may seem like a form of self-sacrifice in which the persona is subsumed in the social role leaving no space for self-expression. However, as De Vos (1993) describes, the person gains meaning by sacrificing him-/herself to a larger cause or by exercising a moral duty for the sake of a highly valued ethic. In this way, self-expression takes the form of the wish to uphold this ethic even at the expense of forsaking any other self-fulfilment.

Roland (1988) describes another way in which individuality can be said to be facilitated. This involves spiritual pursuits which allow for a degree of detachment from familial emotional bonds. By detachment, Roland (1988) implies that the individual is less dependent on the other for the fulfilment of ego needs and thus relates in a less intensely inter-connected way. These practices in themselves allow for a greater degree of personal choice, privacy, differentiation, and freedom of expression.

Now to return to the comment made earlier that in Japanese cultures self-expression may possibly be discarded for the sake of group conformity (Doi, 1971).

From the previous discussion it can be said that some form of self-expression, be it subtle, indirect or non-verbal is retained in collectivist cultures. This is in accord with Roland's (1980, p. 82) emphasis that despite the collective ideal of the we-self there is the development and maintenance of a "private self" which consists of the individual's opinions and tendencies and which when revealed is done in a veiled way. Doi (1985, p. 36, 37), writing later about "tatemae" (social conventions) and "honne" (personal views), and motivations also implies a compromise between self-expression and the collective ideal by his statement that "tatemae conceals and reveals honne".

In the Eastern cultures discussed above, it can be said that the overt and direct expression of individual wants, opinions, pursuits is not strictly incorporated into the collective ideal. In African cultures, the collective ideal, or that which society prescribes, is the 'self' that functions according to its age-class, level of initiation and caste positions in accord with the ancestral influences. However, in African culture self-expression can be said to be formally instituted and sanctioned by the social structures and practices themselves, for example: in the lineage structure and naming practice. Hence, the overt and direct expression of individuality can be said to be incorporated into the African culture's collective ideal.

Self-Expression in Individualist Cultures

Self-expression in a culture prescribing individuality may be described by using Maslow's (1971) image of the self-actualising person.

From his writing, Maslow (1971) seems to be urging for a curbing against complete espousal of public opinion, or the adoption of role definitions. Maslow (1971) implies, and Muller (1987) states that it is easy for the person in modern Western culture to live through occupational status categories or other role definitions, for example, successful yuppie. Maslow (1971) seems to be suggesting that the individual move away from adopting role definitions towards self-actualisation.

The process of self-actualisation according to Maslow (1971) incorporates three aspects. Firstly, coming to know oneself - one's likes, dislikes, purpose or vocation, being true to these and committed to their development and expression. Secondly, this involves taking responsibility for, and making what Maslow (1971, p. 47) calls "growth choices", the choice which demands courage to go beyond defences, repressions or popular opinion. Thirdly, it involves attempting to fulfil what Maslow (1991, p. 133-135) calls "B-values" or metaneeds. These include self-sufficiency: autonomy, independence, self-determination, separateness, environmental transcendence, and uniqueness, idiosyncrasy, individuality.

A comment is that Maslow's (1971) notion of the self-actualising person does not incorporate how the expression of dependency and belonging needs occur in a culture prescribing autonomy and independency. Johnson (1985) suggests that any existence of interdependent relationships is disguised in an inflated sense of individuality such that these dependency needs are not given overt acknowledgement and expression.

Can a Relationship be seen to Exist Between the Socio-Cultural Context and the Process of Self-Expression?

From the above section it may be concluded that self-expression can be seen to occur in a variety of other ways not just by opposing public opinion; even the opposite

of opposing public opinion, namely, preserving relational harmony or sacrificing individual opinions, pursuits for group priorities may be regarded as a form of self-expression in collectivist cultures. Various forms or modifications of self-assertive (typical of self-expression in Western cultures, namely, expressing one's individualist needs, wants, opinions, and following one's pursuits even if these oppose public opinion) are also regarded as a form of self-expression in collectivist cultures (Roland, 1980).

However, it can be said that in Western culture, anything other than self-expression in the typical (Western) sense of the term (self-assertive behaviour), is regarded as a form of compliance. Furthermore, even though it was concluded that in Japanese cultures, ways of self-expression occur that allow for the expression of individuality while simultaneously preserving group acceptance, it was thought that the adoption of such solutions would not be experienced as self-expression but either as conformity or false self-expression in a Western culture.

Thus, it can be said that these conclusions point to a relationship between the socio-cultural context and the process of self-expression or individualist behaviour. The following section will be an attempt to address the question: can a relationship be seen to exist between the socio-cultural context and the process of self-expression or individualist behaviour?

The metaneeds proposed by Maslow (1971) can be said to be very much in line with the Western construct of self (Johnson, 1985). Thus it may be concluded that the description of self-expression extracted from Maslow's (1971) writing is very much congruent with the collective ideal of Western society.

This is in contrast with Eastern societies in which the compromise between self-expression and the collective ideal ranges from congruence to complex interrelationships (Roland, 1980). However, in African **collectivist** culture, self-expression can also be said to be congruent with the collective ideal (which is the same as what can be said to be the case in an **individualistic** culture). In other words, the collective ideal of African culture can be said to incorporate prescriptions or norms

(in the form of role behaviour or traditional practices) of what self-expression entails. Thus, it can be said that one may not conclude that in individualist cultures self-expression is congruent with the collective ideal, but in collective cultures self-expression varies from congruency to complex interrelationships (Roland, 1980) with the collective ideal.

Thus, further exploration of what the presumed relationship between self-expression and the socio-cultural context can be said to entail needs to take place.

It is on the basis of theorising about the relationship between self-expression and the collective ideal that notions such as narcissism, altruism, and individuality arise. These terms can be said to describe various forms of the self-group dialectic. In this discussion, self-group refers to the individual and the collective ideal (or the 'self' that society prescribes). Hence narcissism, altruism and individuality are used as descriptive terms for any relationship thought to exist between the individual and the socio-cultural context. These terms will be used in the following discussion.

From the discussion of the various forms of self-expression in a collectivist culture, one interpretation is that pseudo self-expression occurs. To elaborate - expression of individual wishes, needs or feelings are either hidden or expressed indirectly when these are seen to conflict with the cultural ethic.

Masterson (1985) regards this hidden, indirect self-expression of collective societies as a form of narcissistic (selfish in layman's terms) behaviour under the guise of group conformity or self-sacrificial behaviour. According to Masterson (1985) the person does not take responsibility for directly asserting and fulfilling individual needs or wants but does so vicariously through the other.

Tang (1992) calls the person's social role or form of self-expression within cultural constraints a false self. Similarly Fromm (1941, p. 257) uses the term "bondage" to imply being trapped into "sacrificing the integrity of one's individual self" for the sake of security found in group conformity and group identity.

Fromm's (1941, p. 258) concept of self-realisation as the "active expression of his emotional and intellectual potentialities" can be said to describe self-expression in societies prescribing individuality. Fromm (1941, p. 265) elaborates on this concept saying that it "is an end that can never be subordinated to purposes which are supposed to have greater dignity". According to Fromm (1941, pp. 267-268) "a genuine ideal is not some veiled force superior to the individual but is the articulate expression of utmost affirmation of the self". Thus Fromm (1941) seems to be elevating self-expression beyond any higher cause or spiritual reality. This could be regarded as an extreme form of narcissism because 'self' is raised not only above the 'other' or group but also above any Transcendental Reality.

A comment to be made is that while Masterson (1985) can be said to use the concept of self-expression of Western society, as highlighted by Maslow (1971) and Fromm (1941), as a basis to evaluate the form of self-expression in collective societies as veiled narcissism, Masterson (1985) implies that the self-expression of Western society is genuine, whereas when looked at from another perspective, it (self-expression in Western society) may appear extremely narcissistic. Similarly, conformity in Japanese culture may be regarded from one individualistic cultural perspective as "bondage" (Fromm, 1941, p. 257) yet from another individualistic perspective as altruistic. However, Tataru, (1982, p. 232) states "In Japan conformity does not necessarily mean self-denial, but rather is considered as a way to achieve self-actualisation (as) a means of preserving individuality". "The word 'conformity' does not carry the connotation of loss-of-self as it does in English" (Murase & Johnson, 1974 in Tataru, 1982, p. 232).

Thus, it may be concluded that what is regarded as pseudo self-expression, altruistic expression or even narcissistic expression from one cultural perspective, may be regarded as an expression of individuality from another.

A comment is that not only is the 'self' or collective ideal socio-culturally constructed, but so too is the **process** of adaptation of the individual to society. In other words, the **way** in which the individual expresses him-/herself in relation to the prevailing collective ideal is itself socio-culturally constructed.

Hence, it may be concluded that a relationship between the socio-cultural context and the process of self-expression or individualist behaviour can be seen to exist. This relationship can be said to involve the following: that the socio-cultural context influences the process of self-expression by defining what is regarded as narcissistic, altruistic or individualist behaviour. Hence, what is regarded by one culture as conformative behaviour, may be experienced or regarded by an individual in another culture as individualist behaviour.

Individuation in Collectivist Cultural Contexts

In this section an attempt is made to address the question of what individuation can be seen to entail in a collectivist culture. It was thought that a theory of individuation as it occurs in a collectivist culture would aid in resolving difficulties in the experience of individuation by deconstructing pre-existing conceptualisations of individuation given normative value by Western discourse practices. Hence, this section discusses various writers' descriptions of individuation as it is seen to occur in collectivist cultural contexts.

A Description of Individuation in African Cultures

Erny (1972) and Sow (1980) (in Alt, 1988) put forward three phases in the development of the child in African cultures.

The **first phase** is called a "fusion relationship" (Alt, 1988, p. 253) in which there exists close physical proximity between mother and infant as well as the undisturbed gratification of needs. After a rather extended symbiosis, the infant is weaned and the mother no longer eases all the tensions of the infant.

According to Alt (1988), this abrupt weaning marks the beginning of the **second phase**. The abrupt weaning is regarded as a "violent crisis" (Alt, 1988, p. 254) accompanied by an intense experience of abandonment. In this second phase, the child begins socially to move away from the mother. However, there is always a mother substitute to make the violent separation less traumatic. According to Alt (1988), the

effect that this has on later relating, is that while deep and sincere relationships can be formed, the loss of these is easily overcome by the forming of other relationships. For Alt (1988), this weaning crisis predisposes the individual to an intuitive recognition of the vulnerability of human relationships. ••

The **third** phase marks the second major crisis according to Alt (1988). This happens at about five to six years of age when the child is placed within its peer group. Hence, Alt (1988) remarks that there is a style of communal upbringing where children are brought up in groups with other children. Thus there is less of an individualised, focused and consistent style of parenting. The child experiences many mother substitutes rather than one single reliable mother. Furthermore, there is less of a sharing of personalised, individualised meaning systems between mother and infant and more of a sharing of what Alt (1988, p. 255) calls a "common unconscious ... a shared universe of meanings and experience". This may be interpreted as dependence on group acceptance and idealisation of traditional customs and beliefs as integral to self-esteem. This may also be interpreted as involving a retaining of relational ties (as the child is brought up communally), which fosters a sub-ordination of individualistic, competitive strivings but at the same time offers a sense of assurance in group belongingness.

A Description of Individuation in Indian Culture

According to Roland (1980), the style of early-infant mothering involves a symbiotic relationship whereby there is an indulgent gratification of physical and emotional needs which gives rise to a heightened sense of narcissistic well-being. Physical proximity between mother and infant is encouraged and if the mother is not at hand, an aunt or other relative takes her place. Disciplining is achieved by the toddler being bribed out of doing a reprehensible deed and by the mother conveying unverballed disapproving moods.

However, around the age of three to five years, to early teens begins what Bassa (in Roland, 1980, p. 79) calls "the cardinal crisis of Indian childhood". According to Roland (1980), this refers to an imposition of strict demands for respect, obedience and

conformity to well-defined hierarchical role expectations and a strict curbing of self-assertive responses, for example, aggressive or demanding behaviour. This gives rise to anxiety over meeting familial expectations because the individual realises he/she has to earn acceptance and approval in sharp contrast to immediate experiences of assurance of well-being. He/she earns this approval by the adherence to the jati (caste) customs and family traditions. Hence the development of the 'we-self' strongly connected to the role obligations and mutual need fulfilling functions. Thus the primary disciplinary style is one of shaming because by shaming, the child is made aware of the negative experience of disapproval or rejection, or the threat of that, and thus is motivated to avoid it.

A Description of Individuation in Japanese Culture

The development of the we-self in Japanese culture may be interpreted as being facilitated by the following ways: According to De Vos (1985) awareness of the potentially negative consequences of behaviour such as the potential for hurting one's family and not only oneself is inculcated. Obedience in and for itself is secondary to cultivating this awareness. Hence, De Vos (1985, p. 155) talks about mothers tending to "suffer their children" rather than using verbal chastisement by expressing exhaustion or some other potentially 'self-injurious' affect. The child then responds to the fear of; having potentially hurt the loved one on whom he/she is dependent.

Also, there exists a socialisation of achievement motives not individualistically but collectively defined (De Vos, 1993). Positive self-regard is gained largely by meeting external expectations of successful performance (Roland, 1988). Hence, it may be interpreted that what Westerners would call the internal superego functions of approval or disapproval come largely from external responses from significant others.

Furthermore, according to Roland (1988), Japanese children are discouraged from making their wishes known and instead develop the tendency to rely on seniors to sense and meet their needs accordingly. This may be regarded as being in line with a form of intuitive, empathic, nonverbal communication seen to exist in Japanese cultures. A form of disciplining in which conforming behaviour is induced by actively

moving with the child (De Vos, 1993), can be said to foster this style of communication. Lebra (in DeCraemer, 1983, p. 28) calls the relationship between mother and child facilitating this, "skinship".

Thus, it may be interpreted that intrapsychic functions, for example, need expression and fulfilment, self-regard or disregard becomes intrinsically interwoven with the feedback from others.

Conclusion

It can be said that the discussions of individuation in collectivist cultures involve primarily a discussion of child-rearing practices and how this affects individual development as conceptualised from a Western frame of reference using psychodynamic terminology and hence a psychodynamic theoretical perspective on self development. Thus, it can be said that the conceptualisation of the development of the self per se or a conceptualisation of individuation, is no different than when theorised about as it occurs in a Western cultural context. This will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 3

SELF IN RELATION TO OTHER

Introduction

The focus of this chapter involves addressing the experiential tension in the self-in-relation-to-other dimension. This tension encompasses difficulties in becoming the separate, self-contained, independent individual according to psychodynamic theory. Since this tension involves intrapsychic experience and the interpersonal relationship, both psychodynamic and systemic theory were consulted to gain a conceptual understanding of this tension in order to facilitate its resolution in practice.

Central themes of the experiential tension took on expression in the form of the separateness versus togetherness dialectic, and individuation as lineal progression or recursive process dialectic. It was thought that by integrating these dialectics in theory, or by conceptualising them differently, a way of resolving them in practice would be facilitated.

Individuation in terms of Psychodynamic Theory

Psychodynamic writers have theorised how the individual encounters separation in order to relate in a "mature", "need-free" or "self-less" way. It is this process of becoming separate that is the essence of individuation in psychodynamic theory.

Individuation as Becoming Separate and Emotionally Autonomous

The idea of becoming separate is rooted in Margaret Mahler's (1972a) theory of separation-individuation. Although Mahler and her colleagues (Mahler, Pine, & Bergman, 1994) have emphasised that their theory describes a process which is circumscribed to the first three years of life, other authors have theorised about related themes as they occur at later chronological stages (e.g., Blos, 1967; Colarusso, 1990).

It is intended to find a common thread in these authors' writings which would afford an interpretation of individuation.

Mahoney's (1991, p. 223) outline of Mahler's phases of the separation-individuation process will be used. The first phase is called the **autistic phase** (0 - 1 month). Primitive, undifferentiated, and poorly organised efforts to self-regulate and satisfy biological needs occurs in this phase. The next phase is called the **symbiotic phase** (1 - 5 months). Here the infant experiences his/her mother's inner states as if they were his/her own. The term for this is fusion or merger. The infant is hypothesised to experience a state of omnipotence or being all powerful, as any state of dis-ease is magically relieved. The next phase is called the **differentiation phase** (5 - 9 months). Mahler (1972a, p. 334) describes this phase as involving a "hatching from the mother-infant symbiotic common orbit" whereby the infant's attention is gradually directed beyond the mother-infant bond. This phase marks the start of the evolution of the experience of being separate from the mother. The next phase is called the **practising phase** (9 - 15 months). In this phase it is hypothesised that the infant still has the perception of his/her mother always being available to magically relieve any dis-ease. Coupled to this is his/her newly developed motoric abilities. These two factors together give rise to the ideas of grandiosity and narcissism thought to characterise this phase. Mahler (1972a, p. 336) describes this phase as the infant's "love affair with the world".

The next phase is called the **rapprochement phase** (15 - 24 months). Mahler (1972b) placed emphasis on this phase since the preferred outcome of this phase was hypothesised to be separation or the awareness by the infant of being alone and largely helpless in a big world. In this phase it was hypothesised that the polarities of: fusion versus separateness and fear-of-mother-loss versus object constancy are negotiated. The dilemma inherent in the fusion versus separateness polarity involved wanting to guard a newfound autonomy, yet not wanting to lose a sense of grandeur and omnipotence characteristic of the previous phase. According to Mahoney (1991, p. 223), in this phase "pronounced feelings of anxiety and vulnerability are negotiated to the extent that child and mother remain attuned and responsive despite their separateness". The last phase is called the **consolidation phase** (24 - 36 months). Here the negotiation of fear-of-mother-loss versus object constancy is thought to be

completed. The desired outcome is that of object constancy which Pine (1994) describes as the awareness that even though mother is not part of the self, she is nonetheless potentially available even if not physically present. Hence, it may be concluded that the desired outcomes of this process are separation (a sense of being different from the mother), object constancy, and what Mahler, Pine and Bergman (1994, p. 423) call "an awareness of a sense of being ... not a sense of who I am, but that I am". They see this as the first step in the development of identity.

Blos (1967) discusses the adolescent developmental phase as a recapitulation (albeit with different outcomes) of the separation-individuation of toddlerhood.

The crux of Blos's (1967, p. 163) conceptualisation of adolescent individuation is the notion of independence from "internalized objects". By this he means that the adolescent becomes less dependent on known (parental) ways of assuring affirmation, security or relief from discomforting internal states, for example, confusion or anxiety. Blos (1967, p. 177) talks about "emancipation from childhood dependencies, prohibitions and loyalties". Because internal states are less regulated by past experiences, the onus is on the individual to regulate internal states that ensure, for example, a sense of self-esteem, security, fulfilment. Blos (1967, p. 163) uses the term "cathectic shifts" to describe the release of energy available when the adolescent becomes less invested in parental injunctions as being all-powerful absolutes. This independence from "internalised objects", (p. 163) has the dual effect of allowing more freedom for the finding of one's own interests, values and goals, but also the less comforting effect of realising that the parent is not the all-powerful other who always and absolutely ensures the fulfilment of his/her needs and the appeasement of uncomfortable internal states. Blos (1967, p. 181) talks about "secondary object constancy" to refer to this process by which the parent is divested of his/her magical, all-powerful status and becomes "humanised".

Blos (1967) sees adolescent rebellion as one way of attempting this separation "from internalised objects". Blos (1967) talks about the peer group as having the function of testing out ways of developing one's individuality, but at the same time as potentially having the regressive function of substitute "internalised objects" (p. 163), whereby the

individual depends on the group for the regulation of internal states and meeting needs.

Blos (1967) talks about adolescent preoccupation as following from the disengagement from "internalised objects" (p. 163). By this he means that the energy invested in automatically obeying parental norms or injunctions is sometimes redirected towards preoccupation with the self, instead of being redirected to new forms of relating with others.

Blos (1967) says that the inability to disengage from internalised objects is experienced as a sense of alienation but that disengagement from internalised objects is akin to the experience of loss and thus accompanied by the effect of a mourning process. By loss of the "internal object", Blos (1967, p. 182) refers to the awareness that the omnipotent parent is no longer available in the way that he/she used to be.

Josselson (1980) also gives a psychoanalytic account of individuation in adolescence.

Before continuing, the following is noted: separation in infancy according to Mahler's (1972a) theory involves seeing oneself as **different** from the mother. This happens when the 'psychic life-sustaining' functions (e.g., comforting, soothing, safeguarding) are felt to take place **independently** from the mother's physical presence. This happens when the child introjects the mother in such a way that when he/she needs to be soothed, he/she replays a memory trace of the mother doing this. In this way the mother as mother introject is experienced as constantly present - hence the notion of object-constancy.

In adolescence, the central task is separating not from the real/physical mother as happens in infancy, but separating from the parental introjects. Separating from the parental introjects may be interpreted as involving the following: one regulates internal states not on the basis of asking oneself, for example, "What would mom or dad say?" or by recalling what behavioural response led to pride or approval as secondary to a similar reaction from the parents. Josselson (1980) calls this process **individuation** from introjected parental objects. The new ways one makes decisions or regulates

internal states she calls **autonomous** ego functions. Josselson (1980) points out that 'autonomous' does not necessarily mean opposite to parental norms and values but that the making of decisions and regulation of internal states is not automatically dictated by memories of past parental involvement. Josselson (1980, p. 196) makes a significant comment in relation to this, namely: that the struggle for autonomy is "not against the parents but against the adolescent's own wishes to deny his/her aloneness".

These ego functions are then consolidated into a new **identity**. Hence Josselson (1980) saw the individuating process of adolescence as involving the interdependent sequence of: individuation, autonomy, and identity formation. According to Josselson (1980, p. 191), the experience of individuation is "a feeling of selfhood and will" - that one's choices are one's own and so too is the responsibility therefore.

Mahler (1972a) did not go into much depth in describing the individuation side of the separation - individuation process of infancy. Mahler, Pine, and Bergman's (1994) comment was that there is an assumption of individual characteristics. According to Blos's (1967) and Josselson's (1980) theorising, individuation takes on greater expression in adolescence. According to Josselson (1980), the assumption of individual characteristics occurs when ego functions are consolidated into a new identity.

According to Josselson (1980), identity formation is the result of minute, seemingly inconsequential steps. In this way, one builds up a perception of oneself and others that matches the world's perception of oneself, so that there exists a congruence between one's sense of inner sameness and continuity and the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others. In this way, one gains a sense of belonging to a group reality outside of oneself. In addition to this, one's way of relating is less governed by needs for emotional equanimity and narcissistic well-being.

Josselson (1980) goes into some depth in discussing the processes of separating from parental introjects of infancy/childhood and its implications for identity formation. For example, Josselson (1980) states that due to the gradual separating from the

automatic adherence to “shoulds” and “oughts” simply to avoid internal dis-ease, an increased vulnerability is experienced as self-esteem becomes dependent on the teenager’s current activities and types of relational feedback he/she receives in response to these. Josselson (1980, p. 198) talks about “loss of an internal protective function” when “introjects are deidealised” and “the ego striv(ing) to reconstitute the superego-ego-ideal system with more realistic content and thus mourn(ing) the loss of narcissistic omnipotence, replacing it with self-esteem”. Also, Josselson (1980) talks about a threat to the continuity of the experience of a stable sense of self. Due to gradual separating from automatic ways of doing things, making decisions, regulating states of ease or dis-ease, there is a feeling of having moved past previous perceptions of self without yet having established new perceptions to replace these.

According to Josselson (1980) the intrapsychic process of separating from parental introjects may get played out in reality. For example, a teenager may fly into a rage when his/her mother simply asks: “Where are you going?” According to Josselson (1980), for a moment, the reality mother is experienced as the controlling, all-powerful parental introject of childhood.

Josselson (1980) postulates that psychoanalytic theory concludes that adolescence is a time of tumultuous rebellion and breaking of emotional/parental ties. She notes that this conclusion is contradicted by research which states that most adolescents retain fundamentally positive, valuing, close, and warm relationships with parents.

Colarusso (1990) builds on Mahler’s (1972a) and Blos’s (1967) theorising to discuss how the issues of fusion, separation, object loss get played out in the typical relational patterns of adulthood (i.e. as spouse, parent, and child of aging parent). According to Colarusso (1990), the more one is dependent on mental representations of parental influence, or the more one is bound to internalised parental introjects, the greater is the experienced threat of losing the supportive, emotional ties of the parent. Colarusso (1990) thus alludes to the presence of an ongoing tension in adulthood between independence of self and loss of emotional ties.

According to the above conceptual framework - Mahler (1972a), Blos (1967),

Josselson (1980) - becoming separate (seeing oneself as different from the significant other and the world, and independently regulating one's own emotional states) and individuated (developing individual ideals, beliefs, goals, interests) is a necessary condition for mature relating. The notion of "mature relating" will be elaborated on by using the writings of psychodynamic theorists (e.g., Haase, 1993) and existential theorists (e.g., Yalom, 1980).

In short, mature relating involves relating to another in such a way that one can be alone in the relationship. One does not need the other to fulfill an emotional function by way of unconscious or unsaid expectations or obligatory binds. The emotional function (be it self-affirmation, self-comforting), is fulfilled directly or indirectly by the individual alone. In other words, one can self-validate or self-soothe **oneself**, or that one takes responsibility for requiring this from the other and so consciously and overtly takes on the needy, requesting position rather than expecting the other to magically know and fulfill this need.

Another aspect of mature relating is that one responds to the other as completely other and not as part of one's own experience. This involves not responding to the other as if one would respond to one's own needs. In other words, it involves recognizing that the other is different from oneself and may not be needing what one imagines the other to be needing based on knowledge of one's own needs. For example, one may find it difficult to be loyal to oneself. In a relational situation one may encourage or advise the other to be loyal to him-/herself when the other is fully able to be, and is easily loyal to him-/herself. Responding to the other as completely other can also be said to involve 'not doing for the other what one can't do for oneself'. In other words, it involves not engaging in false altruism. For example, one may have a difficulty in accepting praise. Thus, by praising others one vicariously fulfills this need in oneself.

Accepting one's 'selfish' needs (Haase, 1993) following Jung (1959) can be said to be a necessary condition for mature relating. It is when one accepts what one deems as one's undesirable qualities that prevents one from seeing the other as having these qualities. This facilitates the stance of relating to the other as completely other and not

as part of one's own experience. Melanie Klein has coined the terms "projective identification" and "introjective identification" (in Scharff & Scharff, 1991, pp. 73-74) to describe the reciprocal steps of: placing undesirable qualities on the other and the other unconsciously accepting these, thus allowing for the first person to respond to the other as part of his/her own experience.

Yalom (1980, p. 372) describes "mature relating" by the term "need-free relationship" characterised by "need-less love". According to this description, one relates in a selfless way, in the moment, with one's whole being and not with the considerations of what the evaluative impact of the relating will have on oneself, or some real or imagined other. Descriptive terms for this relationship include: freedom, fullness, mutuality, and selfless giving. Yalom (1980, p. 373) states "mature caring flows out of one's richness, not out of one's poverty - out of growth, not out of need. One does not love because one needs the other to exist to be whole, to escape overwhelming loneliness ... Past loving, then, is the source of strength, current loving is the result of strength".

In summarising: individuation following Mahler's (1972a), Blos's (1967), and Josselson's (1980) theories, involves **separation**: differentiating me (psycho-physiological states) from not me and the awareness of the availability of the mother even without her physical presence (object constancy). This leads to separation from internalised objects and **independence** in regulating internal states. Alongside this is the development of **individual** characteristics. This can be said to give rise to emotional autonomy and mature relating. It can be said that the essence of the concept of individuation according to this discussion would be the ideas of **difference** and **independence**.

Exploring the Concept of Emotional Autonomy in terms of Kohut's Theory

Alt's (1988) discussion of Kohut's (1971, 1977) work will be used to address this. As an introduction, Kohut's work on the development of the self can be seen as an in-depth discussion on the development of emotional autonomy. By extension, individuation in terms of Kohut's theory, may be reinterpreted as the development and maintenance of emotional autonomy.

For Kohut (1977, p. xv), the self is the way a person experiences him-/herself as him-/herself, "a permanent mental structure consisting of feelings, memories and behaviours that are subjectively experienced as continuous in time and as being 'me'". The self is also a "felt center of independent initiative" and an "independent recipient of impressions" - the center of the individual's psychological universe. An interesting distinction is given by Ewing (1990) between the content and functions of the "self" construct (Kohut, 1977, p. xv). According to Ewing (1990), Kohut (1977) defined 'self' both in terms of content (namely: self as memory) and function (namely: self as centre of experience and initiative and main motivating agency).

In Kohutian theory, the development of the self involves building up "psychological structures" (Kohut, 1971, p. 51), which in his 1966 paper he calls "introjects" (p. 247). "Introject" refers to a metaphorical "structure" within the psyche which takes over the functions of the "self-object" (Kohut, 1977, p. 84). A self-object is someone (usually the mother) who is experienced as part of the self, that is, the self-object is felt to regulate one's internal psychic-physiological states as if it were oneself that were regulating these states. The "self-object" thus refers to an intrapsychic process or function. The "self-object" concept arises from theorising about the psychological state of the infant. Kohut (1966, p. 245) calls this primary state "primary narcissism". He uses this term to refer to a state in which the infant experiences his/her distress as responded to and relieved in an almost all-powerful way thus ensuring (optimally) a state of bliss. Kohut (1977, p. 86) uses the term "merger" to describe how calmness is restored after mounting tension or distress. By "merger", Kohut (1977, p. 86) means that "the child **experiences** (emphasis mine) the feeling states of the self-object". These feeling states are "transmitted to the child via touch and tone of voice and perhaps by still other means".

By building up psychic structure Kohut (1971) describes how functions, once performed by the self-object, become modified into similar functions performed by the individual. Kohut (1971, 1984) notes three primary functions performed originally by the self-object and which correspond to three basic needs. These are: (1) validated and approved of; (2) protected and supported; (3) acknowledged by one's kin (in Basch, 1989, p. 14). He calls the interactional pattern or relationship by which

validation, protection and acknowledgement is given: mirroring, idealising and twinship transferences respectively. From the experience of being (1) approved of; (2) protected; and (3) acknowledged, the individual develops: (1) a sense of self-worth or vitality; (2) the ability to self-soothe; (3) values and ideals; and (4) certain talents and skills (Alt, 1988). Thus it is through particular relational experiences that certain psychological structures/functions get built up, or the development of the self takes place.

The process by which this "transfer" and modification of relational experiences into psychological structures takes place, is called by Kohut (1977, p. 49) "transmuting internalisations". Kohut (1977, pp. 50-57) gives a very esoteric, intricate description of how this takes place. Initially the self-object is experienced as an all-powerful person who magically and perfectly takes away any slightest distress. With appropriate disappointments, that is, humanly expected less than perfect administrations to the infant's needs, the "archaic self-object" becomes "decathected" that is, is not idealised and overvalued in an absolute, all-dependent fashion, so that only the functions of, for example, validation become part of the psychological structure in the form of, for example, self-worth.

Other psychoanalytic terms used to describe this process of "transmuting internalisations" (Kohut, 1977, p. 49) are "introjection" followed by "identification" (Josselson, 1980, p. 190). Josselson (1980) gives a clear deciphering of this esoteric language. At first the mother (self-object) is **introjected** by the child, that is, she is 'swallowed whole', so that the child comforts him-/herself (or validates/affirms) him-/herself by replaying the memory trace of the mother comforting (validating/affirming) him/her. Later he/she may **identify** with this introject and experience the comfort as coming from part of his/her 'self'.

A comment here is the importance of the emotional-relational milieu out of which the development of the 'self' arises in terms of Kohutian theory. According to Kohut (1984, p. 238) "You need other people in order to become yourself".

This emotional-relational imbeddedness in the form of 'mature' mirroring and

idealising transferences is regarded as essential even after the psychological structures have been built up (Alt, 1988). The significance of this emotional-relational imbeddedness is also brought home by Alt's (1988) comment that current, what Kohut (1977) calls self-self-object relating (relating whereby the other is experienced as having emotional impact on one), reflects (in some degrees and in some circumstances) previous self-self-object relating. In other words, current relating according to Alt (1988) is, in some ways, emotionally-tinged by our early interactions with our parents.

Interpreting Individuation in terms of Systemic Theory

Development of the self in terms of systemic thinking involves the dual notion of how one attains different states of individuality within a context of interpersonal relating. Thus, the focus is on the individual as well as on the interactional/communicational patterns which connect him/her to the others in his/her world. In line with this is how the development of states of individuality is either impeded or enhanced by the different interactional/communicational patterns between members of the system.

States of Individuality

Bowen's (1985, p. 472) concept of the "differentiation of self scale" assesses "the basic level of self in a person" (p. 473). By "basic self", Bowen (1985, p. 473) refers to the degree to which one has, for example, convictions, beliefs, opinions independent of the relationship system in which one finds oneself, or in other words, independent of the approval, recognition, support, or lack thereof from others. "Basic self" implies, if necessary, the ability to withstand the emotional pressure of being different from the group.

According to Bowen (1985), the more differentiated one's self is, the less likely is one to make decisions and act on the basis of what feels right, thus letting feelings govern one's behavioural responses in a more or less automatic fashion. By extension, the more differentiated one's self is, the more one is capable of independent regulation of internal states. This would be coupled with a greater ability to regain emotional

equanimity independently without having to act in such a way in order for others to fulfill this function.

According to Kerr (1988), the greater the degree of self-differentiation, the more energy the individual has for self-determined, goal-directed activity. In other words, less emotional energy is bound up in the relational system. Kerr (1988, p. 69) elaborates on the notion of "energy being bound up in a relational system" as follows: "An individual's functioning becomes totally governed by what transpires between him and the other person. He/she is so responsive to cues from the other and his internal reactions so intense that he/she is a complete 'emotional prisoner' of the relationship. These automatic emotional responses totally dictate his/her actions".

Bowen (1985, p. 495) refers to the differentiated self as the "responsible I" who assumes responsibility for his/her own happiness, failures or successes and who doesn't place demands on others with the attitudes of, for example, 'I deserve' or 'it is my right'.

Kerr (1988, p. 101) has divided the scale of differentiation into four ranges of functioning: people at the low end of the scale are described as "emotionally needy and highly reactive to others". Much energy goes into reactivity to having failed to get love, or in trying to achieve comfort. People at this level cannot distinguish between thought and feeling - their functioning is almost totally governed by their emotional reactions to the environment. Responses range from automatic compliance to extreme oppositional behaviour. Such individuals are likely to relate to others in such a way as to mimic early familial dependent attachments.

Kerr (1988, p. 102) calls people in the next level "ideological chameleons". They lack convictions of their own and thus are highly suggestible in order to gain acceptance. They adopt viewpoints that best complement their emotional make-up.

According to Kerr (1988), people in the next level are still highly influenced by feelings. They are sensitised to emotional disharmony, to the opinions of others, and to creating a good impression. Their emotional equanimity is largely dependent on the

approval of others. According to Kerr (1988) such people are mostly in lifelong pursuit of the ideal close relationship. Such people function with a "pseudo-self" (p. 103). 'Pseudo-self' refers to knowledge and beliefs that are acquired from others and which are fused with the emotionality of the relationship system. Thus connection between an individual or group is facilitated by automatically adopting the shared beliefs of the group. In an intimate relationship there is "borrowing and trading of self" (p. 104). This means that both partners' pseudo-selves are enhanced by one gaining emotional well-being by having his/her opinions or values automatically supported and the other also gaining emotional well-being by supporting or sharing the opinions and values of the other. Kerr (1988, p. 104) describes the pseudo-self as a "pretend" self in that people pretend to be, for example, weaker or stronger than they really are - the pretence occurring in emotional reactivity to the relationship system. Such pretence may also include compromising an opinion because it is contrary to what the group feels or believes.

People high up the scale have what Kerr (1988, p. 105) calls a "solid self" of firmly held convictions and beliefs that can only be changed from "within self" and not from persuasions from others. "Having a way of thinking that is consistent within itself and reasonably consistent with available factual knowledge ..., is the principal element that allows someone to be an individual while in emotional contact with a group" (p. 105). These people are freer to have a choice between being governed by the intellectual or feeling world. Hence they have more freedom to move back and forth between intimate emotional closeness and goal-directed activity. Such people can extricate themselves from highly emotional situations with logical reasoning when need arises. Kerr (1988) describes such an individual as inner directed, sure of his/her beliefs but not dogmatic, able to assume full responsibility for him-/herself, realistically aware of his/her dependence on his/her fellow man and free to enjoy relationships. He/she does not have a 'need' for others that may impair functioning, and others do not feel 'used'. He/she is realistic in his/her assessment of self and others. Intense feelings are well tolerated and so he/she does not act automatically to alleviate them.

Communicational Patterns

Concept of Differentiation in Systemic Terms

Differentiation has been defined as the “family system patterns of distance regulation” (Anderson & Sabatelli, 1990, p. 34). The system’s way of regulating interpersonal distance can be said to arise out of the microcosmic communication/relational interchanges that occur between various dyads and triads within the family. The system’s patterns of distance regulation is linked to the quality of emotional connectedness prevailing (Gavazzi & Sabatelli, 1990). The emotional connectedness may be restrictive and unidimensional, which may either impede or facilitate the trying out of various disengaging or engaging relational styles. In simple terms, differentiation can be said to reflect the ease with which members of a system can play with closeness and distance when relating to another member of that system.

According to Allison and Sabatelli (1988), a system described as well differentiated reflects a high tolerance for flexibility, for states of closeness and distance between its members. A system that is poorly differentiated reflects a low tolerance for this flexibility. In other words, one pattern of interpersonal distance, be it closeness or distance, is rigidly maintained (Allison & Sabatelli, 1988).

Differentiation of Self or the Capacity to be an Individual Within a Group

According to Kerr (1988, p. 95), family systems theory assumes the existence of instinctually rooted life forces: individuality and togetherness. Individuality “propels the developing child to grow to be an emotionally separate person, an individual with the ability to think, feel and act for himself”. In contrast, the togetherness force “propels child and family to remain emotionally connected and to operate in reaction to one another ... to think, feel and act as one”. Differentiation describes the process by which individuality and togetherness are managed by a person and within a relationship system.

Differentiation involves the process of managing tendencies towards cooperation,

cohesion and mutuality in such a way that not every action is in emotional reaction to others or in response to the directives of others (Kerr, 1988).

A move towards individuality involves "giving up some togetherness" (Kerr, 1988, p. 96), which does not mean giving up emotional closeness but that one's functioning becomes less dependent on the support, acceptance or reassurance of others. A move towards individuality involves a threat to a relationship balance - a risk of rejection or disapproval from the other.

According to Kerr (1988), an effort towards individuality does not insist that others change and it is not contingent on anyone's cooperation. It is not yielded by, for example, anger or hurt but involves a thoughtfully determined direction for oneself. Kerr (1988) reiterates that such self-determination does not mean selfishly following one's own directives but an increased capacity for choice to be guided by the interests of the group or oneself.

According to Kerr (1988) differentiation, or how one manages individuality within a relational system, is a product of a way of thinking because it is the latter that influences the degree to which one can remain emotionally detached so as to contain emotionally driven urges. The implication is that if one is aware of the influence of anxiety and emotional reactivity on one's actions, one can think oneself out of an automatic response. One can think to oneself, for example, 'I am doing this to allay anxiety or to meet an unmet need but I can choose not to and I shall handle the emotional discomfort'. People who manage to maintain individuality within a relationship system poorly are likely to replicate early relationships in order to maintain the emotional status quo in ways with which they are familiar.

According to Kerr (1988), emotional neutrality is a condition for attaining emotional equanimity without replicating early relationships to do this. For Kerr (1988) emotional neutrality means an ability to be aware of all the emotionally determined sides of an issue and to be aware of the influence of subjectivity on one's notions about what "should" be. In this way one's ability to maintain individuality within an emotional-relational system improves.

Dialectical Relationship Between States of Individuality and Communicational Patterns

In terms of systemic thinking, entities are not conceptualised in isolation - divorced from their contextual connections. Thus the phrase: becoming an individual is antithetical to the systemic conceptualisation of individuation as involving the development of the individual within his/her relational context (Allison & Sabatelli, 1988; Karpel, 1976; Stierlin, Wirsching, & Knauss, 1977).

Influence of 'Self' on Interpersonal Distance

For this section an intrapsychic conceptualisation is referred to by the term 'self' and psychoanalytic terminology will be used when referring to this term.

Karpel's (1976) paper will be used to outline four types of interpersonal distances. Three of these four types will be used to discuss the influence of self on interpersonal distance. The four modes of relationship put forward by Karpel (1976, p. 70) are: "unrelatedness, pure fusion, ambivalent fusion and dialogue". For Karpel (1976, p. 70), "the relational mode of unrelatedness corresponds to the schizoid position", in that there is a rejection and denial of relationship. Laing's (1960) work will be used to discuss the influence of 'self' on this type of interpersonal distance, namely unrelatedness. The relational mode of pure fusion will be discussed next, followed by a discussion of the dialogue relational mode. Lastly the unrelatedness relational mode will be discussed in terms of Laing's (1960) theory.

According to Karpel (1976, p. 70), involved in the style of relating called "pure fusion" is the process of one partner projecting onto the other unacceptable qualities of the self and responding to the other in terms of these qualities and not as a separate person. In other words, one responds to the other as part of one's own experience.

According to Karpel (1976), there exists mutual obligation and expectation to respond to each other in ways that automatically perpetuate the illusion of their

sameness or oneness. Cycles of guilt and blame may occur as each holds the fantasy of absolute responsibility for the other in order to deny their separateness and the sole responsibility for oneself that this brings. Hence loss of the relationship is akin to loss of the self.

According to Karpel (1976, p. 77) the central feature of "the relational mode, dialogue" is that people relate not in accordance with an unsaid obligatory bind. This bind compels each partner to respond in a way expected of him/her in order to fulfill the demands of this bind. In contrast, in dialogic relating each partner is allowed the freedom to respond in any way he/she chooses - ways that are not necessarily predictable. Hence there is greater spontaneity, unpredictability, and freedom in the patterns of interaction. According to Kerr (1988, p. 111) this reflects an individual with a greater degree of "emotional neutrality" in that one is not dependent on the other in a rigidly binding way to meet various needs for emotional equanimity. However, this does not mean to say that each partner is fully self-sufficient in the meeting of his/her particular needs. In this type of relationship there is also the mutual satisfaction of needs.

According to Karpel (1976, p. 7), the difference between the "dialogue" and the "fusion" relationships in terms of mutual need fulfilment is that in the "dialogue" mode, the partner takes responsibility for being transiently 'needy' or vulnerable and thus risks asking, and so too potential rejection. In the fusion mode there exists an unsaid guarantee that the other is expected to know one's need and to automatically fulfill it, without one taking responsibility for assuming the requesting position.

Karpel (1976) mentions that the central feature undergirding the dialogue relationship that allows for mutual need fulfilment is trust. This means that any partner, at any given time and for any duration can 'request' a need to be fulfilled. This happens without there being any binding condition that he/she will have to do the same for the other to compensate for 'taking' from the other.

Also, because each person does not respond to the other as part of his/her own experience, difference is enhanced which permits greater flexibility for an individual to

assume various role positions in the relationship, for example, as caregiver, receiver, initiator. In this way, growth and change in each individual is allowed for, and affirmed. However, even such a 'desired' form of relating also involves imperfections of times of symbiotic relatedness (Searles in Karpel, 1976).

Although Laing (1960) writes from an existential-phenomenological perspective, his theorising will be used in this section on systemic theory to illustrate the influence of 'self' on the interpersonal distance called "unrelatedness" (Karpel, 1976, p. 70). Laing (1960) writes in reaction to the psychiatric vocabulary of that time which for him is a language of isolated categories paralleling for him, the split conceptualisation of mind, body, self, other, man, world. He focuses on the existential notion of "being-in-the-world" (p. 18).

A central organising principle of Laing's (1960) theory is the idea of two states of ontological being or how one experiences one's existence. One can experience one's existence as "primary ontological security" or "primary ontological insecurity" (p. 40). By primary ontological insecurity, Laing (1960) may mean that one lacks a sense of particular self-validating certainties such as belief in the permanence, reliability and substantiality of natural processes - of the world and oneself.

For Laing (1960, p. 40), in this existential position, one is preoccupied with "preserving rather than gratifying" oneself. Thus from the ontological secured, relatedness with others is potentially gratifying. From the ontological insecure position relatedness (meaning the rejection thereof) is used in order to preserve the 'self'. According to Laing (1960, p. 55), this position involves a "failure to be oneself, a failure to exist alone", but, paradoxically, one ends up being alone (or isolated) because other people are rejected in order to "sustain a sense of one's own being" (p. 55).

Thus the theme: the influence of self on the relational mode of unrelatedness will be addressed by discussing: how one preserves oneself by rejecting others.

Laing's (1960) articulation of the ontologically insecure person's experience of self may be artificially divided into three areas.

The first area describes the experience of lacking a stable, clear, or definite sense of autonomy, identity - of being different from the other. Relating to another brings with it the threat of engulfment and loss of oneself. Any hint of being known, loved or even seen brings with it the terror of not being able to exist without the other (Laing, 1960). Thus, in order to guard against this terror and so preserve the self one distances oneself from others, and from relatedness.

The second area describes the experience of feeling "insubstantial" of being "unable to assume that the stuff he is made of is genuine, good, valuable" (Laing, 1960, p. 43). The threat of relating is one of being "petrified or depersonalised, of being treated as a robot or thing, of being ignored, disregarded or treated in an impersonal way" (Laing, 1960, p. 43). One may interpret this as a threat of being profoundly humiliated. In order to guard against this threat one relates to others in a depersonalising way thus not allowing the other to have an emotional impact on one. This gives rise to the effect of rejection of others and of relatedness.

The third area describes the experience of not having a "sense of personal consistency or cohesiveness" (Laing, 1960, p. 43). Laing (1960, p. 71) talks about the "unembodied self" to describe a state of inner incohesiveness. The individual experiences him-/herself as divided between a false-self system (mental) and that part of him-/herself considered to be his real self or core which he/she attempts to preserve (Laing, 1960). By operating with the false-self system he/she keeps his/her inner feelings, intentions, views guarded. In this way, he/she can protect him-/herself from the threat of being humiliated or the threat of nonexistence - of being engulfed (taken over or controlled by the other). Thus he/she does not commit himself to his/her actions as revealing anything of his/her inner life. Thus he/she never says what he/she feels, thinks or wants. Hence all his/her interactions attain a kind of alien, mechanical-like quality devoid of any personal satisfaction or meaning. The price to be paid for this kind of self-preservation is an increasing sense of emptiness, despair, futility as he/she becomes forever prevented from attaining emotional reciprocity and enriching feedback from the world. His/her awareness of this isolating entrapment leads him/her to respond with disdain, indifference or contempt for that which he/she so desperately longs for, that is, relationship. These attitudes further reject others from him/her.

Regulating Interpersonal Distance

Interpersonal distance can be thought of as the extent to which, for example, feelings, thoughts, wishes, attitudes, motivations, are made known to the other. Simply described, regulating interpersonal distance can be said to involve regulating the quality and quantity of communication. The broader cultural context and microscopic relational context can be said to influence the type of communication that takes place. The terms "boundary" (Ryder & Bartle, 1991, p. 394) in psychodynamic terms and definition of a relationship (Bateson, Jackson, Haley, & Weakland, 1956) in systemic terms can be said to be metaphors for this "invisible fence" (Ryder & Bartle, 1991, p. 394) which permits certain communicational acts from occurring and not others. Thus, regulating interpersonal distance can be said to involve **factors that influence how the definition of a relationship takes place.**

Cooper, Grotevant and Condon (1983) have put forward a model of family communication. They highlight four main categories of communicational responses: separateness which involves the ability to disagree with or challenge another's view; self-assertion which involves the ability to hold and clearly express a personal viewpoint; mutuality which involves sensitivity to and respect for others viewpoints and permeability which involves openness and responsiveness to the views of others.

The communicational responses falling under the categories of separateness and self-assertion express individuality. The communicational responses falling under the categories of mutuality and permeability express connectedness.

Thus, according to this model, interpersonal distance may be described as the extent to which communicational responses express sameness (connectedness) or difference (individuality). Thus, regulating interpersonal distance can be said to involve **factors which influence the extent to which communicational responses express sameness or difference.**

Kerr's (1988, p. 64) concept of "emotional significance" will be used in this

discussion. According to Kerr (1988) something has emotional significance if the individual is affected on an emotional level by what another person thinks, feels, says, and does, or by what is imagined to be what another person thinks, feels, says, and does.

Interpersonal distance, according to this conceptualisation, may be regarded as the extent to which an individual can form emotionally significant relationships without being completely dependent on them for his/her emotional well-being. The ability to form emotionally significant relationships while still being able to regulate one's emotional state autonomously may be regarded as the capacity for intimacy. The capacity for distance may be regarded as the extent to which one can limit one's emotional involvement in a relationship.

Thus, regulating interpersonal distance can be said to involve **factors which influence the extent to which one can regulate one's emotional involvement in a relationship while simultaneously retaining the capacity to achieve emotional equanimity autonomously.**

■ Factors which Influence the Nature of Boundary

From Hartmann's (1964) psychodynamic theorising, one of these factors may be regarded as an idiosyncratic, generalised tendency according to traditional conceptualisations of temperament or personality. In other words, Hartmann (1964) discusses two types of tendencies - people with thin and people with thick boundaries. People with thin boundaries are likely to be self-disclosing, trusting, involved, spontaneous, and to be less concerned about expectations and societal norms.

Another factor which can be said to influence the nature of boundary includes societal or cultural norms which prescribe expected forms of relating in relationships involving, for example, generational, gender, or occupational role differences. However, the extent to which these affect the nature of a boundary in any microscopic relational context can be said to depend on the individual's acceptance and adherence to these norms. For example, some people may regard such norms as having

absolute, prescriptive power on what is acceptable behaviour in a given relationship, while others may regard such norms with less intensity.

According to Ryder and Bartle (1991), another factor influencing the nature of boundary is the attribution of who is responsible for defining what is accepted in a given relationship. Sometimes one individual may hold the belief that the other is not willing for particular behaviours to occur. In this case, the responsibility for boundary definition is held to be in the other's domain. Also, such a responsibility may be held to be in the domain of some external party - be it family, tradition or societal norms.

■ Factors which Influence the Definition of a Relationship

Bateson, Jackson, Haley, and Weakland (1956) used the concept of logical typing to show how communication is divided into different classes or levels. Bateson et al. (1956) discuss the verbal and nonverbal levels of communication, in other words, what is being said (content) and the way it is said (process). According to Bateson et al. (1956) the verbal or content part of communication is regarded as the message. The nonverbal or process part indicates what is meant by this message or classifies the message. The message is classified in terms of what kind of a relationship it invites. Thus at a nonverbal level the person may be saying, for example, 'parent me', thus inviting parental responses from the other and defining the relationship as complementary.

According to Bateson et al. (1956), one factor to influence the definition of a relationship is the tendency with which one invites a particular class of response. For example, a person may tend to classify his/her communication in such a way that parental responses are usually invoked. To use narrative terminology, such a person may tend to rather inflexibly use one particular voice, for example, the child's voice. Thus one factor to influence the definition of a relationship is the flexibility with which one classifies one's communicational responses and thus invites various kinds of relationships (Bateson et al., 1956).

Another factor, according to Bateson et al. (1956) to influence the definition of a

relationship, involves the ability to metacommunicate or communicate about communication. This may be regarded as the ability to say, for example, 'When I talk to you, I tend to invoke parental responses from you in a rather consistent fashion so that I end up being the one to ask for assurance or support and you end up being the one to give it. In this way, a complementary needy-supportive relationship occurs between us'. The ability to metacommunicate also involves the ability to use metacommunicative responses such as: 'is that what you meant?' (Bateson et al., 1956).

According to Bateson et al. (1956), another factor which influences how a relationship is defined is the extent to which one's verbal and nonverbal responses are congruent. Incongruency occurs when a person defines a relationship in a particular way but fails to take responsibility for defining it thus. This is likely to manifest in an incongruency between the content (or what is said), and the process (or what is meant) aspects of the communication. For example, someone may give an instruction but fail to take responsibility for defining the relationship as a complementary one in which he/she is in the domineering position. Thus, what is meant may not be matched by what is said. That is, the instruction may be verbalised in the form of a suggestion. Thus the extent to which verbal and nonverbal responses are congruent influences how clearly and openly a relationship is defined which in turn can be said to influence the degree of risk taken in a relationship or the degree of self-disclosure made possible.

■ Factors which Influence the Extent to which Responses Express Sameness or Difference

Cooper et al.'s (1983, p. 37) communicational model may be used to classify responses as expressing sameness or difference. According to Cooper et al. (1983), the categories of permeability or mutuality include, for example, the following responses: validating, acknowledging, agreeing with others, initiating compromises, and stating other's feelings. These may be interpreted as responses expressing sameness. According to Cooper et al. (1983), the categories of self-assertion or separateness include, for example, stating a point of view, or disagreeing with, or challenging another's point of view. These may be interpreted as responses

expressing difference.

Factors which can be said to influence whether sameness or difference responses are expressed can be said to be the person one is relating to - a close friend, someone just being met, a respected senior, the topic of conversation (serious, heartfelt conversation, casual matters) or the purpose of the conversation (to establish an acquaintance or to state an important viewpoint).

A comment from a traditional perspective is that some people may show a general tendency to express mutuality and permeability. However, this perspective sees individuation as an intrapsychic property or tendency which is not what is suggested by systemic theory. According to Cooper et al. (1983), individuation is conceptualised as a quality of a relationship where some relationships are seen to be more individuated than others. Cooper et al. (1983) describe a relationship to be individuated when there is a balance of individuality and connectedness in communicational responses.

■ Factors Influencing the Extent to which the 'Emotionally Autonomous' Person can be seen to Regulate His/Her Emotional Involvement in a Relationship

It can be said that an interplay exists between the capacity to regulate one's emotionality autonomously and the capacity to regulate one's emotional involvement in a relationship. According to Kerr (1988) the greater one's capacity for autonomous emotional regulation, the greater capacity one has to regulate one's emotional involvement in a relationship. Thus, factors proposed to influence the one capacity can be said to indirectly influence the other. According to Kerr (1988) one factor to influence the capacity for autonomous emotional regulation, is the emotional milieu in which the person is brought up. According to Kerr (1988), if a person grows up under strong pressure to adjust to the anxiety and emotional reactivity of others, his/her life becomes strongly governed by feeling processes. However, if he/she grows up with the freedom not to have his/her thinking and emotional functioning contingent on others, then his/her life will be less governed by feeling processes.

Developing the Ability to Regulate Interpersonal Distance

■ What would such an Ability Entail?

This question will be addressed from a systemic perspective. To summarise the above section, it can be said that personality (in traditional thought): thin or thick boundaries, cultural factors, the attribution of responsibility, speaking with different voices, metacommunicating, how clearly a relationship is defined, expressing compromising or agreeing versus self-assertive or contradictory responses (sameness or difference) and family milieu all are involved in regulating interpersonal distance. To narrow the above down even further to fit with a systemic perspective it can be said that the ability to regulate interpersonal distance involves sophistication and flexibility of communication. By sophistication, what is meant is the ability to metacommunicate. This can be said to involve, for example, the ability to communicate about one's beliefs, that is, one's ideas about what the other may be expecting or what family tradition may be saying. It can be said to involve also the ability to talk about communication thus opening up possibilities for the type of relationship to change and so too the type of information shared to change - for example - information that is more or less self-disclosing or information suggesting more or less emotional involvement. What is also meant by sophistication of communication is the degree to which one's nonverbal and verbal responses are congruent. This can be said to involve the ability to openly express one's true intentions, feelings, motivations. By flexibility, what is meant is the ability to take on various positions within a relational domain, that is, being able to communicate flexibly, for example, confidence, neediness, protectiveness or vulnerability in relation to the other. It can also be said to involve the degree to which one expresses difference or sameness in various relational contexts.

■ Constraining or Limiting Factors

A question to be posed is: what can be said to hamper the ability to communicate sophisticatedly or flexibly?

By communicating sophisticatedly or flexibly it can be said that one opens up the

possibility for defining the relationship differently, as one, for example, where the participants can now say what formerly was nonverbally agreed upon to remain unsaid. This involves the possibility for difference, newness or change and with it, potential for loss of familiarity or safety. Hence, one can think of this as involving risk. When one risks talking about how one responds in relation to the other, or about nonverbalised expectations or assumptions of the other, one risks the possibility of the other responding in a way that may be threatening to the person's investments in the relationship. It can be said that the extent to which these factors: identity, self-worth, purpose depend solely on relationships will strongly influence the ease with which one can regulate interpersonal distance.

Integrating the Separateness versus Togetherness Resolution

The experiential situation involved trying to attain the ability to be separate and together, or independent and interdependent simultaneously. Thus, a point of enquiry arose namely, to conceptualise the separateness-togetherness tension in such a way that would aid its resolution in practice.

Early writings have conceptualised these ideas as fundamental, basic needs or life forces (e.g., Bakan, 1966; Jung, 1959). Much theorising has been done on finding ways to conceptualise the resolution of the inherent tension or conflict seen to exist between them (Allison & Sabatelli, 1988; Field, 1994; Gavazzi & Sabatelli, 1990; Josselson, 1988; Olthuis, 1983; Sabatelli & Mazor, 1985).

From Bowen's (1985) and Kerr's (1988) writings, it can be said that this distinction between the need for togetherness and the need for separateness is largely contained in the distinction between emotional reactivity and independent thinking. The tension can be said to involve the ability to think independently (separateness) even when this conflicts with the emotional threat of loss of group acceptance or approval (loss of togetherness). It can be said that Bowen (1985) resolves this dialectic by implying that greater separateness or ability to think independently allows for greater flexibility for emotional togetherness or not. In order to become 'more separate' one must first risk losing the acceptance of the group.

In Jungian theory this separateness may be interpreted as seeing the negative-underdeveloped or undesirable in oneself and so not needing others to maintain a desirable image of oneself. It can be said that the resolution here also involves a choice - but if made in the 'growth' direction will promote a newfound resolution of the separateness-togetherness tension. Using Jung's theorising, the togetherness one gives up, namely, the cessation of seeing one's own negative qualities in others promotes a newfound togetherness, namely, the cessation of relating to others as if they were extensions of oneself. The newfound togetherness also includes the awareness of solidarity.

An interpretation is that the condition of separation is the core of the individuation process in psychodynamic theory. This involves the toddler becoming aware that the mother is different to him/her, that is, is not part of his/her psychophysiological experience. The awareness that the mother is different issues in the threat of loss of mother ('love-object') or loss of the other on whom one is dependent and whom one needs. Thus, this awareness of difference can be said to herald the introduction of various conflicts or experiences of the separateness-togetherness tension. In psychodynamic theory, one of the major tensions may be interpreted as involving risking the threat of isolation versus holding on to the belief that the other will always magically and powerfully fulfil one's every need. The tension is resolved by choosing one or other stance. It is theorised that for individuation, one must choose the former since only by risking isolation or inability to cope on one's own, can one become aware that the other, even though different, can still be available but through another relationship - not needy dependence but mutual relating. In this way, the proposed resolution may be interpreted as being able to be separate and together simultaneously or alone in a relationship but that one must first risk isolation or loss.

Another expression of the separateness-togetherness tension in psychodynamic theory can be said to involve what typically is called the adolescent identity crisis. The tension may be interpreted as existing between dependence on known (parental) ways of doing things, making decisions, having opinions, values, goals and ensuring emotional equanimity, versus finding new ways of achieving this. It can be said that in psychodynamic theory, the tension is resolved through choosing the unknown and

hence unsafe option versus staying the same. However, it may be interpreted that integration of the opposite poles (separateness and togetherness) only comes after risking the unknown because only then can one choose between parental norms and newfound norms.

Thus, it can be said that in psychodynamic theory, a value is placed on the separateness side of the tension as a precondition for resolution of the opposite poles to occur. In other words, one must first choose what can be said to be the uncomfortable or unsafe option before both poles can be integrated.

This contrasts sharply with what can be said to be the manifestation of this tension in collective societies. Here the tension can be said to take on the dimension of how self-expression occurs in societies emphasising interdependency. This was dealt with in the chapter on the self-group relational dimension. A comment here is that in collectivist cultures, a strong emphasis is placed on the togetherness side of the tension. In other words, in individualistic cultures there is a value placed on separation whereas in collectivist cultures (e.g., Indian culture), the emphasis is on what can be called integration into a group consciousness involving 'we-self' identity and intuitive mutual need obligatory and fulfilling relationships. Hence, the value is how to become more 'together' as opposed to separate.

If one uses psychodynamic terms, the characteristic norm of relating in Indian cultures can be said to be fused, where there exists unsaid expectations for mutual need fulfilment, where others are used as extensions of oneself (e.g., to ensure emotional equanimity or to express an individual desire that one cannot do for oneself), and where the group can be said to be a potential source for gaining positive self-regard. The very form of relating that is regarded as immature in psychodynamic theory can be said to be encouraged in Indian culture both by its child-rearing practices and by the normative value placed on such relating. In this cultural context, these needs are not conceptualised as being in conflict. One finds ways of being separate or expressing oneself within a context which safeguards and encourages togetherness.

In African culture, the separateness-togetherness dialectic can be said to manifest

manifest minimally. It is almost as if the separateness-togetherness tension is resolved by way of the cultural belief system and associated practices. In other words, the risk of isolation or loss conceptualised as inherent in the separation side of the tension, as described in psychodynamic terms, is confronted as a necessity by way of the wearing and initiation rites practices. Hence, there is no clinging to togetherness in terms of fused (in psychodynamic terms) relating as a way of protecting oneself from the threat of isolation or loss, one has already encountered loss. As a result, there is no emphasis on encountering separation, in its psychodynamically theorised manifestations, in order to 'develop' or 'relate maturely'.

Berman (1995, p. 7), writing from a psychodynamic perspective, raises the separateness-togetherness tension to existential status. In other words, the togetherness "force" he calls the "fear of life", of being overwhelmed by the world from which we seek security and protection by being attached to a larger entity, and following its dictates so as to ensure a sense of belonging, hence protection.

It can be said that an almost universal normative value is placed on the psychodynamic emphasis on separation, or embracing "fear of death" (Berman, 1995, p. 7), as is evident even in writings of theorists who attempt alternative conceptualisations for the psychodynamic notion of fused relationships. Of note is Doi's (1963) writing. He negatively evaluates the "amae" concept on the basis of psychodynamic, and hence Western normative criteria, when he states that amae is an attempt to escape from the "pain of separation" (p. 75). However, the normative status placed on the Western cultural emphasis on separation is not without criticism. Cushman (1980) says that Western cultural discourse practices create a bounded, masterful, individuated self. This gives rise to an experience of alienation which Cushman (1980, p. 600) calls the "empty self" to illustrate the experience of loss of family, community, and tradition.

It can be said that the separateness-togetherness dialectic has minimal existence in postmodern thinking. It can be said that the reason for this is that in postmodern thought, language is raised to ontological status, and of necessity, so is the relationship. Hence, 'self' exists because of the relationship. What is meant is that

how one sees oneself, experiences oneself, and feels, depends upon the responses of others. Hence, the notion of the 'separate self' becomes deconstructed.

Feminist theory, following Josselson (1987), while stating a proposed resolution of the separateness-togetherness dilemma, namely, that one can be different and at the same time also attached, does so in, what can be said to be, a somewhat superficial way. Sameness and difference are conceptualised in terms of opinions. Hence Josselson (1987) seems to be saying that difference is an automatic constituent of being part of different relational networks, for example, family, work, and friends. This may be regarded as similar to the systemic conceptualisation (after Cooper, Grotevant, & Condor, 1985) of sameness and difference being types of communicational responses in various types of relationships. Thus, sameness and difference are theorised to co-exist in as much as communication is said to be varied. Hence the separateness-togetherness dilemma in terms of the above description, can be said to not feature much in feminist theory.

Kegan's (1982) entire theory of individuation can be said to rest on how he conceptualises the resolution of ever-increasing degrees of differentiation between: what is considered to be self and not self or what is considered to be 'me' and 'not me'. Differentiation occurs when different intrapsychic states originally held to be fundamental to one's identity become inconsequential to one's identity.

It can be concluded that the many varied ways in which this dialectic is conceptualised almost dismisses the ontological validity of the experienced tension but does nothing to aid its resolution. It can also be concluded that psychodynamic theory closely mirrors both the experiential situation and the way its resolution was sought.

It can be said that difficulties with the separateness-togetherness tension arose from the experience that the psychodynamic constructs of the separate, self-contained, independent individual held a normative value. It can also be said that the normative value is not embodied in the theory *per se*, since the existence of other theoretical perspectives on the separateness-togetherness dialectic, where separateness is not valued, does not lessen the normative impact of the psychodynamic constructs. Thus,

it can be concluded that it is not the theory itself but the socio-cultural context whose dictates that theory mirrors, which gives normative value to the theory's theoretical constructs, hence influencing experience.

Individuation as Lineal Progression or Recursive Process

The experience of this dialectic involved the question of whether the evaluative influence of being at lower versus higher stages of the psychodynamic lineal model would be deconstructed if individuation was experienced as recursive process. Hence, various interpretations of individuation as lineal progression or recursive process were sought.

In psychodynamic theory, individuation is regarded as a chronological lineal process. The 'self' that is theorised to be the desired end point is the separate 'self' which involves experiencing other's as different to oneself and not as part of one's own experience, or as repositories for negative attributions, or as extensions of oneself magically knowing one's needs, wants or requests. This 'self' is also regarded as the independent or emotionally autonomous 'self' and the individual, agentic self who can make decisions, has personal goals and convictions, can behave in relation to them and take responsibility for that. The process by which one arrives at this point is highlighted in Mahler's (1972a) separation-individuation process of toddlerhood and its recapitulation in adolescence (Josselson, 1980) by which one becomes less dependent on mother, or mother substitute for various ego and superego functions. A similar lineal progression is proposed in Bowen's (1985) states of individuality scale in which the desired end point is ever-increasing levels of emotional neutrality, and the process by which one progresses in that direction involves curbing emotionally reactive responses that would automatically ensure agreement and emotional harmony.

Various theorists have highlighted certain circumscribed areas of self or relational experience as domains in which an ongoing process of 'becoming' may be interpreted to occur. The emphasis here is not on any end point, but on the process itself. This process is conceptualised differently, depending on the theoretical perspective one uses.

In systemic theory the process can be said to be the ongoing experience of regulating interpersonal distance. There is no chronological progression here since more sophisticated and flexible forms of relating may co-exist with less sophisticated and flexible forms. Furthermore, some relationships may be characterised with one particular way of regulating interpersonal distance while others may involve different and varied ways of regulating interpersonal distance.

In existential theory this process of becoming can be said to involve the ongoing negotiation between opposite poles of various dialectics be it, for example, risk-safety, aloneness-togetherness, self-other, complexity-simplicity, stillness-movement, acceptance-change, chaos-order.

Stern's (1985) model can be said to incorporate both ideas of lineal progression and recursive process. Stern (1985) emphasises the nonchronological nature of his model, in that he puts forward various senses-of-self as potentially co-existing in various combinations. However, the emergence of these "senses-of-self" (Stern, 1985, p. 11) are described as occurring in a chronological fashion. Hence, Stern (1985, p. 11) puts forward a "core-sense-of-self" to describe primitive affective and sensational awarenesses, which describes the sense-of-self in the infant. The "subjective-sense-of-self" (Stern, 1985, p. 11) arises next. This involves the awareness of one's feeling intentional, attentional, and vitality effects as well as the awareness that these may be potentially shared by a distinct other. However, the "verbal-sense-of-self" (Stern, 1985, p. 11) only arises at a later chronological stage, hence this 'verbal-sense-of-self' can be said to follow developmentally the initial senses-of-self. Yet, once all these senses-of-self have emerged, each may dominate one's experiential state, and thus way of relating, in varying degrees. Thus, even though one may be generating and sharing new and richer interpretations and experiences by communicating in language, which the verbal sense-of-self makes possible, the nonverbal communication of affective states, as occurs with the core-sense-of-self, may still occur but in a new way, since one now has more possibilities for self-experience and relating.

The idea of individuation as developmental process reflects modern epistemological assumptions of acontextuality, linearity, and stasis. In postmodern thought, one

interprets reality in terms of dynamic, interconnectivity such that one can only grasp facets of an everchanging whole. Thus, there is no 'self' as an isolated, entity and thus no process of developing or becoming this 'self'. 'Self' is everchanging as it emerges and re-emerges out of different relational domains by the social discourses and ritual practices that issue in its construction and deconstruction.

It can be said that one can easily conceptualise individuation as lineal progression or recursive process by simply swapping the theoretical perspective one uses, but that these theoretical perspectives do nothing to change the evaluative experience of stage comparisons. It can be concluded that the evaluative impact of the psychodynamic lineal stage model arose because of the normative value afforded the theory by the theory's reflecting Western culture's dictates.

Conclusion

Two overall conclusions can be drawn from the discussion in this chapter. The first conclusion is that experience (speaking narrowly in terms of the idiosyncratic experience of difficulties in individuating) influences how one interprets or makes sense of theory. This is especially so with regard to the interpretation of individuation involving the dialectical relationship between states of individuality and communicational patterns. The second conclusion, is that the extent to which theory impacts on experience depends upon that theory being 'endorsed' by the cultural context. The theory can be said to be endorsed by the socio-cultural context by the extent to which the theory reflects existing socio-cultural dictates.

CHAPTER 4

SELF IN RELATION TO SELF

Introduction

The focus of this chapter involves addressing the experiential tension in the self-in-relation-to-self relational dimension. This tension encompasses difficulties in the experience of self-acceptance which involves four aspects, namely: finding out who one is, being who one is, revealing who one is and being true to who one is. Theory was consulted to gain a conceptual understanding of this tension in order to facilitate its resolution in practice.

Finding Out Who One Is

This involves the question of **how** does one find out who one is? Defining oneself or arriving at one's identity was thought to be a verbal process alone, thus excluding any other intuitive or nonverbal knowing. In other words, the question posed was: can the answer to who one is be seen to be simply one's identity or can it be said that there is more involved in coming to know oneself than simply a cognitive verbal process?

Theory was searched in order to address this question. Various writers (e.g., Alt, 1988 & Weigert, 1988) suggest a distinction between self-experience and one's identity. According to Alt (1988) and Weigert (1988), one's identity involves some form of linguistic modification of 'pure' experience into one's self-concept or how one sees oneself, or one's identity or how one defines oneself. It may be interpreted that these writers are implying that one can only come to know oneself, or rather symbolise or express that knowledge to oneself or others through a cognitive or linguistically mediated process. These writings confirmed the idea of identity involving a cognitive verbal process alone. However, this theoretically substantiated idea contradicted experience which suggested a nonverbal, intuitive way of knowing who one is. This experience involved the following. Sometimes a commitment to some area of life, be

it spiritually, materialism, a relationship, a vocation comes to be more than a pursuit or activity but seems to be imbued with passion or purpose as reflected by expressions such as 'it's her life' or 'that's all that matters to him'. It was thought that in these situations, the experience of who one is becomes embodied in these commitments. Hence, the suggestion of a nonverbal, intuitive way of knowing who one is. However, this nonverbal, intuitive way of knowing seemed to lack validity against the wealth of theories endorsing the identity construct as involving knowing who one is via a cognitive, verbal process.

Glodis and Blasi's (1993) theorising pointed out a way of conceptualising this experience thus giving theoretical validity to it. Glodis and Blasi (1993) seem to be saying that there is more involved in coming to know oneself than simply arriving at a linguistically mediated self-concept. Glodis and Blasi (1993, p. 357) may be suggesting that one also comes to know oneself through "the immediate experience of the self in the very process of acting and being acted upon" which "comprises distinct facets or ways of apprehending one's own subjectivity".

This process (initiated by the question: how does one find out who one is?) suggested that the use of theoretical terms to conceptualise experience facilitates the resolution of a tension in practice.

Being Who One Is

This discussion involves four foci:

- (1) Experience of being who one is.
- (2) Experience and postmodern conceptualisations of identity.
- (3) Experience and postmodern conceptualisations of aloneness.
- (4) Emotionality and being oneself.

Experience of Being Who One Is

Writers such as Jung (1940) and Storr (1988) have written about the value of

vocation in giving meaning to an individual. This reflected the experiential situation of one's self being closely tied up with one's vocational commitment. However, it was thought that such 'life or death commitments', while being valuable in their potential for creativity or purpose, prevent the full and free experience of 'living in the moment'. In this case, one's 'essential essence' becomes too dependent on oneself alone. Thus, a point of enquiry arose namely, how to retain one's purposeful commitment yet, at the same time, not have one's 'essential essence' depend solely on it. Kierkegaard's (1980) theory can be said to facilitate the resolution of this dialectic.

Kierkegaard (1980) describes a process which may be interpreted to symbolise the experience of self-acceptance or of trusting. The process that Kierkegaard (1980, p. 13) discusses involves finding a "synthesis" or "relation" of dialectical pairs: infinite and finite, temporal and eternal, freedom and necessity. According to Kierkegaard (1980, p. 30), despair is the condition of trying to escape the ongoing dialectic into either of the two absolute poles. However, it is only after having despaired that one can acknowledge the transiency inherent in "the process of becoming" (p. 30). This can be said to involve the process of not knowing, of constant moving, balancing, finding the constant, not grasping. In other words, Kierkegaard's (1980) writing may be used to describe the experience of trying to escape uncertainty by holding onto 'manmade selves', for example, various forms of 'havings', such as: my vocation, or my achievements, only to encounter their unreliability thus finding simple acceptance in the uncertainty, by trusting. It is Kierkegaard's (1980, p. 30) belief that we are not utterly alone and that it is by faith in that which is transcendent that enables one to "rest" in the transiency or uncertainty inherent in the existential polarities. This may be interpreted that one's 'essential essence' does not depend solely on oneself and that by faith in that which is transcendent, one is freed from absolute clings into self-acceptance.

Experience and Postmodern Conceptualisations of Identity

This section on 'experience and postmodern conceptualisations of identity' and the next section on 'experience and postmodern conceptualisations of aloneness' arose from the experiential tension between modern conceptualisations which best captured

the **experience** of identity and aloneness and postmodern conceptualisations of these notions. These postmodern conceptualisations were felt to be the new emerging socio-cultural discourse practices. Hence, the possibility of a tension between experience and these newly established norms. It was thought that the resolution of this tension in practice (namely between experience and postmodern conceptualisations) would be facilitated by attempting to gain an experiential appreciation of current (postmodern) conceptualisations of identity and aloneness.

Identity as intrapsychic experience can be said to reflect a modern conceptualisation, namely Erikson's (in Alt, 1988). Erikson (in Alt, 1988) emphasises two features with regards the concept of identity which can be said to be fundamental to the intrapsychic experience of identity. According to Erikson (in Alt, 1988), one feature is **congruency** between one's internalised standards, commitments, views, and one's outward behaviour, and congruency between how one sees oneself and how others see one. The other feature mentioned is **continuity** between past ideas about oneself, present ideas, and possible expressions of these in the future.

Generally speaking, it was held that postmodern conceptualisations of identity involved the notion of social identities. It was thought that equating the social roles one comes to assume with one's identity would give rise to an experience of superficiality whereby one's 'true identity' would be lost in a maze of social impressions. Nonetheless, a search of theory was deemed necessary to further the attempt to gain an experiential appreciation of postmodern conceptualisations of identity. The following will be a discussion of various postmodern theoretical perspectives on identity.

It can be said that in **constructivist** theory, "identity is conceptualised as a process that does something, and a product that is something" (Berzonsky, 1993, p. 169). Berzonsky (1993) uses the term "self-theory" (p. 169) for identity to emphasise the creative trial and error process involved in interpreting reality, making assumptions, storing knowledge in a reciprocal, modificatory way. Thus for Berzonsky (1993) the 'process' aspect of identity refers to the way we interpret 'reality' and thus think about ourselves. For Berzonsky (1993) the 'content' aspect of identity is the "conceptual

structure" of "constructs, hypotheses and expectations" (p. 172) by which the individual interprets 'reality'. However, Berzonsky (1993) emphasises that these constructs, assumptions or expectations are potentially modifiable depending on the type of feedback obtained from the social world. •

Berzonsky's (1993) theory can be said to incorporate both intrapsychic experience and social features in his concept of identity. What is meant is that even though the 'content' aspect of identity, for example, epistemological assumptions, can be said to be largely personal, its construction, and reconstruction is influenced by, and takes place in the social domain.

It can be said that the **social-constructionist** perspectives put forward a social view of identity in that there is no 'reality' separate from the relational domain. Hence the ontological status of identity can be seen to exist only in social interaction and discourse. This is in contrast to the constructivist perspective which accepts the existence of a reality independent of the relational context but that there are multiple interpretations thereof.

Whether identity exists as personal identity or social role, has been addressed by theorists in the field (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Hollis, 1995; Lesser, 1996). For example, for Lesser (1996), ontological status exists in the social role. Hollis (1995), however, implies the existence of personal identity in spite of ontological status given to various social roles.

Brewer and Gardner (1996) put forward a triple distinction of identity, dividing the term 'personne' into "interpersonal" and "collective identities" (p. 83). The difference between interpersonal and collective identities refers to the nature of connective ties which they propose exist between the individual and others. It is these 'ties' which for Brewer and Gardner (1996) give ontological status to the interpersonal and collective identities.

These ties are not simply affiliative, solidarity - affording connections to a self-contained identity of goals, values, convictions, commitments. These ties are proposed

to be intrinsic or essential to such intrapsychic features as, following Brewer and Gardner (1996, p. 84) "self-concept, the frame of reference for evaluations of self-worth and the nature of social motivation".

According to Brewer and Gardner (1996), the interpersonal identity derives from interpersonal relationships, and refers to one's social role. In this case self-worth is derived from appropriate role behaviour, and social motivation is directed toward the benefit of the other.

The collective identity derives from membership in larger, more impersonal collectives or social categories (p. 83), and refers to one's social identity. In this case self-worth is derived from the status of the in-group in intergroup comparisons (p. 85), and social motivation is towards group welfare.

In contrast to these social identities, the personal identity in Brewer and Gardner's (1996) article refers to the common understanding of identity in Western culture. In other words, self-concept refers to one's individual traits, self-worth is derived from comparing these in relation to others and social motives are derived from personal self-interest (Brewer & Gardner, 1996) and not, as with social identities, for others well-being in and of itself.

For Brewer and Gardner (1996), 'identity' exists as both personal identity and social role. They describe this as "self-categorisations at different levels of inclusiveness" (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p. 91).

A similar discussion (of whether identity is conceptualised as existing as personal identity or social role) can be said to take place in the form of a debate on the ontological status of self (Fisher, 1995a; Fisher 1995b; Freeman, 1995; Gergen, 1995; Harré, 1995; Hermans, 1995). For Harré (1995, p. 58) it is the way we talk, for example, in terms of agency or possession (I will change, or **my** feelings) that "tempt us into accepting as metaphysical the thesis about personhood". In contrast, Fisher (1995a) argues that the postmodern construction of self takes away moral agency and reduces choice and responsibility to social discourses implying situational determinism.

As an attempt to resolve the debate, Freeman (1995) and Robinson (1991) respond that the postmodern conceptualisation is simply another way of naming the essentially unnameable qualities of selfhood and moral agency.

This debate can be said to reflect in process the previous discussion on various conceptualisations of the identity construct. It can be said that reading the vast array of theoretical perspectives on the identity construct which give rise to various linguistic realities, is akin to undergoing epistemological gymnastics whereby experience is almost dismissed in the array of alternative perspectives each given equal ontological validity. The understanding of each perspective having equal ontological validity seems to diminish the unique experiential validity of any one perspective. Hence, an attempt to gain an experiential appreciation of current conceptualisations of identity was not facilitated. The implication of this will be discussed in the conclusion section.

Experience and Postmodern Conceptualisations of Aloneness

The experience of aloneness as being a 'real' state can be said to reflect modern conceptualisations (e.g., Winnicott, 1953, 1965). Modern thought (in accord with psychodynamic theory) places much emphasis on the independent regulation of emotional states - social interaction is seen to be important primarily in terms of the early mother-child relationship which is seen to be a necessary and vital prerequisite to eventual independent regulation of emotions (Winnicott, 1965).

In an attempt to gain an experiential appreciation of postmodern conceptualisations of aloneness, a discussion of how postmodern thought conceptualises aloneness was deemed necessary. Postmodern thinking in emphasising the socio-linguistic construction of self and the domain of shared meanings theorises less about 'aloneness' and emotional regulation. Postmodern writers place more emphasis on the social intelligibility of actions and the raising of language to ontological status. Thus, questions are of the nature of what certain actions, emotions, thoughts, may mean in any given cultural context, and the reciprocal interplay between this ('meaning' in context) and the ensuing communication. According to this thinking, emotions are not only regulated in the social domain but their very construction (essence) and

deconstruction happens through communication (Gergen & Gergen, 1988; Gergen, 1991a).

Thus, it can be said that postmodern thought deconstructs the experiential state of aloneness by stating that the individual is never alone. He/she is always part of a shared symbolic system. Hence, it may be concluded that postmodern thought does not conceptualise the experience of aloneness.

Thus, the resolution of a tension in practice (namely, between experience and postmodern conceptualisations of aloneness) was not facilitated by theory.

Emotionality and Being Oneself

This section addresses the question: how to conceptualise the 'emotional structure' of self. It was thought that such a conceptualisation would further an understanding of oneself, hence aiding the ability for emotional regulation and the capacity to be.

Postmodern theorising, and Kerr's (1988) theorising, while including emotionality in their theories on self, do so by subordinating emotions to cognitions. This will be explained as follows.

The postmodern view emphasises that 'psychic structure' is 'built up' by learning rules (or expectancies) of the relationship (Beebe & Lachmann, 1988) and a way of construing events. 'Psychic structure' may also be interpreted as being 'built up' in postmodern thought when the individual constructs a narrative of his/her life's experiences (see for example, Harré, 1991). In terms of postmodern thought, it may be interpreted that one develops, not so much an ego function, for example, how to self-soothe, but a cognition, that is, an expectancy, that an effect (like the altering of an emotional state from panic to calm) can happen 'of I do something in relation to the other'. Thus, it can be said that postmodern thought conceptualises not so much an emotional structure, but a cognitive structure of self where emotions are subsumed in cognitive expectations of mirroring or where emotions are constructed in dialogical exchange.

A similar process may be interpreted to take place in Kerr's (1988) theorising in terms of emotions being subordinated to cognition. It can be said that Kerr (1988) conceptualises a cognitive structure of self that is nonetheless intimately tied up with emotions in that 'self' development involves, inter alia, the development of cognitive control over emotional reactivity to ensure emotional equanimity.

It can be said that Kerr's (1988) entire theory of differentiation of self rests on the premise that the more one can thoughtfully contemplate or reflect on one's emotional responses, the less one's actions become automatically dictated by emotional responses in reaction to another, and the more flexibility one has to choose to act, for example, on the basis of thought versus feeling, or self versus group.

It can be said that Kohut's (1971, 1977) and Stern's (1985) theorising best described the structural and functional dimensions of emotionality. It may be interpreted that 'emotional structure', in terms of Kohut's (1971, 1977) theory, is comprised of 'ego functions' or capacities for regulating emotional states-capacities such as self-comforting or self-affirming. Stern's (1985) conceptualisation of the functional dimension of emotions may be interpreted as how one communicates by emotional means. Stern (1985, p. 140) proposes a form of "affective communication" where there is mutual communication of feelings, and acknowledgement that such a communication has taken place, all without the use of words. Stern (1985, p. 140) uses the term "affect attunement" for this.

It can be said that Stern (1985, p. 71) conceptualises the 'emotional structure' of self by his concept "experiential integration" which captures the nonverbal, affective, experiential dimensions of interaction. This "experiential integration" is symbolised by the term "representations of interactions that have been generalised - RIG" (Stern, 1985, p. 97). RIG's are memories which (in a preverbal fashion) store the affective and sensational dimension common to a group of interactional sequences. These RIG's are regarded as the 'building blocks' of the self, as are 'ego functions' in Kohut's (1971, 1977) theory.

It can be said that the conclusion that was drawn in the section on 'Finding out who

one is' can also be drawn here, namely that the use of theory to conceptualise experience facilitates the potential resolution of a tension in practice (in this case, the capacity to be).

Revealing Who One Is

How to reveal who one is, was initiated by the following experiential tension. Difficulties in saying what one truly thought or felt gave rise to a tendency to hide one's true intentions, opinions, feelings. It was thought that an understanding of what this hiding entailed would aid in facilitating 'true' expression. It was thought that this process of hiding was closely captured by the term alienation, since when one hides one's true, for example, intentions, feelings from others, one identifies with that which is revealed thus hiding oneself from oneself as well. 'Alienation' may then be used to describe an estrangement (in different degrees and in different situations) from oneself and from others. Various writer's theorising may be interpreted as giving various conceptual understandings to the experience of hiding.

From a psychodynamic perspective is Haase's (1993, p. 30) phrase "the inner child masquerading as adult". This describes one's alienation from various childhood grievances or unmet needs. Haase (1993) describes that one alienates oneself from these by denying them or trying to get these superficially met by various addictions. A move towards authenticity involves taking responsibility for what Haase (1993, p. 32) calls "healing the inner child" and thus not taking on a victim stance. Taking responsibility involves accepting one's childish needs and taking individual responsibility for getting them met.

From a systemic perspective is Kerr's (1988, p. 103) notion of the "pseudo self". This describes a more cognitive alienation, meaning one compromises, or changes one's own, or directly adopts other opinions or ideas for the sake of group affiliation and acceptance.

From Stern's (1985) theory is the notion of how language may be used to distort or deny certain experiences when one fails to name them, or names them in another way.

One may use language to hide one's intent, message or motivation when these are not communicated verbally. In this way, language may be used to shield one from accountability to oneself or to others, which can be said to give rise to alienation and inauthentic relating.

It can be said that these various conceptualisations of the experience of hiding provided an understanding of this situation but did not facilitate true expression. It was thought that revealing one's true, for example, intentions, feelings involves the risk of vulnerability. This gave rise to a question: how can one experience vulnerability without needing to hide? Literature was sought in an attempt to integrate this dialectic in theory to facilitate its resolution in practice.

According to Wilber (1985) we need not even experience vulnerability. For Wilber (1985) vulnerability comes from the belief that we have a 'self' that we need to protect. The manifestation of the belief that we have a self that needs to be protected involves the identification of any experiential state as being one's essential existence. Wilber (1985) exhorts one to disidentify from any intrapsychic state as being one's whole existence because this frees one from the gravity of impact which any loss, failure, humiliation or hurt may have. In contrast, it can be said that modern, psychodynamic theorists attest to the validity of the experience of vulnerability and the need to hide by the many theories on self-protection, hence Freud's notion of defences, and Rogers's notion of the true and false self. It can also be said that modern theorists theorise about the experience of vulnerability in its various manifestations (e.g., Freud's theorising about losses and Kohut's theorising about humiliations), as well as how to facilitate 'true' self-expression (e.g., various works on 'healing the inner child', in Abrams, 1990).

Thus it can be said that these various modern theories provided a way of integrating the dialectic of experiencing vulnerability without needing to hide, thus potentially facilitating its resolution in practice.

Being True to Who One Is

The expression of being true to who one is involved being true to a singular, continuous spiritual essence. This conflicted sharply with postmodern notions of the multiple, everchanging self. A point of enquiry which arose was how to reconcile postmodern conceptualisations of multiplicity and discontinuity with the experience of singularity and continuity. The reason was not so much to resolve difficulties related to this experience of a spiritual essence of selfhood to which one remains true, but to try and gain an experiential appreciation of what was felt to be the new emerging socio-cultural norm, namely, the 'self' of the postmodern world. A subtle realisation was the immanence of a possible tension when firmly held convictions of the essential, continuous self conflicted with the new socio-cultural norm of an everchanging multiple self. Hence, the intent to attempt an integration.

Essential, Authentic Self

An idea which was part of the initiation to attempt an integration between modern, experiential notions of selfhood and postmodern conceptualisations of selfhood was that postmodern conceptualisations of self do not give sufficient expression to what can be called the fundamental notions of being a person. These can be said to refer to the traditional intrapsychic features of, for example, motivations, intentions, drives, emotions, consciousness, phenomenological experience, belief or will.

From a closer look at postmodern writings, the following interpretations may be drawn. It can be said that the notion of coherency inherent in the idea of the essential, authentic self is put forward by such concepts as "autobiographical narrative memory" (Singer, 1995, p. 429) and "polyphonic novel" (Hermans et al., 1993, p. 208) by postmodern thinkers.

The following interpretation may be made from Harré's (1983) postmodern theorising about how an inner sense of unity or being is derived from the domain of social interchange. It may be interpreted that what is languaged about externally becomes internal, private languaging of selfhood, giving rise to consciousness, agency, and

identity. These can be said to be the central features of modern conceptualisations of selfhood.

It can be said that postmodern writers do conceptualise about modern experiential notions of selfhood but that these writers do so by raising language to ontological status in the construction of self in the domain of relating. It can be concluded that these postmodern conceptualisations still do not give full expression to the experience of self as spiritual essence, or to the depth of intrapsychic experience as involving unconscious motivations, intentions, wishes, fears, since too much emphasis is placed on language, hence cognition. Thus, it can be concluded that an integration of modern, experiential notions of selfhood and postmodern conceptualisations of selfhood could not be found. This will be discussed further in the conclusion section.

Singularity versus Multiplicity/Continuity versus Discontinuity

In this section the attempt will be made to reconcile modern, experiential notions of self as singular and continuous with postmodern conceptualisations of self as multiple and discontinuous.

An interpretation of postmodern thinking is that it emphasises change, hence multiplicity - the assuming of multiple identities and roles. It emphasises the flux of experience and concern for awareness into present states of being, rather than knowledge of a stable, psychic structure derived from past experience. A search of theory presented a postmodern conceptualisation of 'self' as polyphonic novel (Hermans, Kempen, & Van Loon, 1992; Hermans, Rijks, & Kempen, 1993). This conceptualisation was different to an idiosyncratic conceptualisation of postmodern thought as proposing an array of entirely disconnected selves. The literature derived conceptualisation emphasised the necessity for a unifying or integrating construct or 'meta-author' of the various stories, or selves in social roles. It can be said that this literature-derived postmodern conceptualisation of 'pseudo-multiplicity' reflects modern conceptualisations of pseudo-multiplicity, for example, Berne's (in McAdams, 1985, p. 12) theory of the "parent", "child", and "adult" ego states and their associated interpersonal interactional styles, and Fairbairn's (in Lester, 1993, p. 317), concept of

"internalised objects". This concept suggests that one relates to people in the present according to rigid patterns of how one has related to significant others (e.g., mom, dad) in the past. This conclusion that postmodern conceptualisation of 'pseudo-multiplicity' reflects modern conceptualisations of 'pseudo-multiplicity' sparked off the realisation that the experience of self was not entirely unitary or singular as initially thought, but that the intrapsychic experience of multiplicity does occur as indicated by such statements as 'part of me' and 'in two minds'. Thus, it can be said that an integration between experience and conceptualisations was found by the process of theory informing and highlighting experience.

Such an integration, however, did not seem to apply to the experience of incongruence or discontinuity captured by such phrases as 'How could I have said that?' or 'I wasn't myself in there!', and postmodern conceptualisations of discontinuity. For Ewing (1990), the postmodern conceptualisation of discontinuity is between 'self' and the micro-context rather than between 'self' and an *a priori* existing continuous self. Hence, it can be said that an integration between the experience of discontinuity with postmodern conceptualisations of the discontinuous self could not be found. This will be discussed further in the conclusion section.

Conclusion

A first conclusion that can be drawn is that the resolution of an experiential tension or dialectic can be said to be potentially facilitated by its conceptualisation or integration in theory.

A second conclusion that can be drawn from the inability, most times, to reconcile modern experiential notions with postmodern conceptualisations suggested a lack of integration between the author's thinking (which was identified with a postmodern epistemology) and experience (which was identified with modern theoretical understandings). This suggests that potential difficulties in individuation may arise not only because of a tension between experience and culturally 'endorsed' theory. Potential difficulties in individuation may arise because of the intrapsychic tension between idiosyncratic epistemologies, or ways of thinking, and experience.

A third conclusion that can be drawn is that theory informed and highlighted experience in showing that the experience of singularity was not as uniform as initially thought.

A fourth conclusion that can be drawn is that theory allows one to conceptualise experience, this conceptualisation itself moulding subsequent experience, and that the talk and texts of social life (to use Wetherell & Maybin's, 1996 terminology) convey theory into the everyday world of living.

A fifth conclusion that can be drawn is the following. From the experientially based comment that postmodern conceptualisations were heralding the new emerging socio-cultural norms, the implicit assumption was of a tight link existing between theory and socio-cultural norms. However, the conclusion from Chapter 3 suggests that only some theories can be said to embody and reflect socio-cultural discourse practices, and it is only these theories that can be said to have a notable influence on experience.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions Drawn from the Process of the Search

On the basis of the *a priori* situation of difficulties in the experience of individuating being intimately tied up with Western, psychodynamic concepts of what individuation means, namely: becoming the separate, self-contained, independent individual and being self-expressive (self-assertive), and that these concepts were experienced as societal prescriptions having normative value, the following can be concluded.

Firstly, it can be concluded that the tension in relation to the normative value of these concepts was not so much due to these concepts being instituted in theory but because these concepts reflected socio-cultural discourse practices. Thus, it can be concluded that the **socio-cultural context influences the experience of difficulties in individuating indirectly** via the theories which reflect its norms.

Secondly, it can be concluded that the socio-cultural context influences the process of self-expression by defining what is experienced or regarded as narcissistic, altruistic or individualised behaviour. This can be seen as the **direct influence of the socio-cultural context on the experience of difficulties in individuating** when idiosyncratic ways of self-expression contrasts with societal prescriptions of what self-expression 'should' entail.

In relation to the *a priori* situation was the question of what individuation means in a collectivist culture. It was thought that a theory of individuation as it occurs in a collectivist culture would aid in resolving difficulties in the experience of individuation by deconstructing pre-existing conceptualisations of individuation given normative value by Western discourse practices. Thirdly, it can be said that when cross-cultural theorists (e.g., Parin, et al., 1980; Roland, 1980, 1988) theorise about individuation as it occurs in another cultural context, they start with an *a priori* Western (usually

psychodynamic) preconceptualisation of what individuation is said to mean, then describe how cultural practices (e.g., child-rearing practices) influence individuation as conceptualised by Western theory's constructs. The literature is scarce with regards formulating a culturally applicable 'a priori given' of what the experience of individuation can be said to entail within a collectivist culture. Doi's (1963) 'amae' concept can be seen as a move in this regard.

Fourthly, it can be concluded that the resolution of an experiential tension or dialectic is potentially facilitated by its conceptualisation or integration in theory.

Fifthly, it can be concluded that potential difficulties in individuation may arise not only because of a tension between experience and culturally 'endorsed' theory. Potential difficulties may arise because of the intrapsychic tension between idiosyncratic epistemologies and experience.

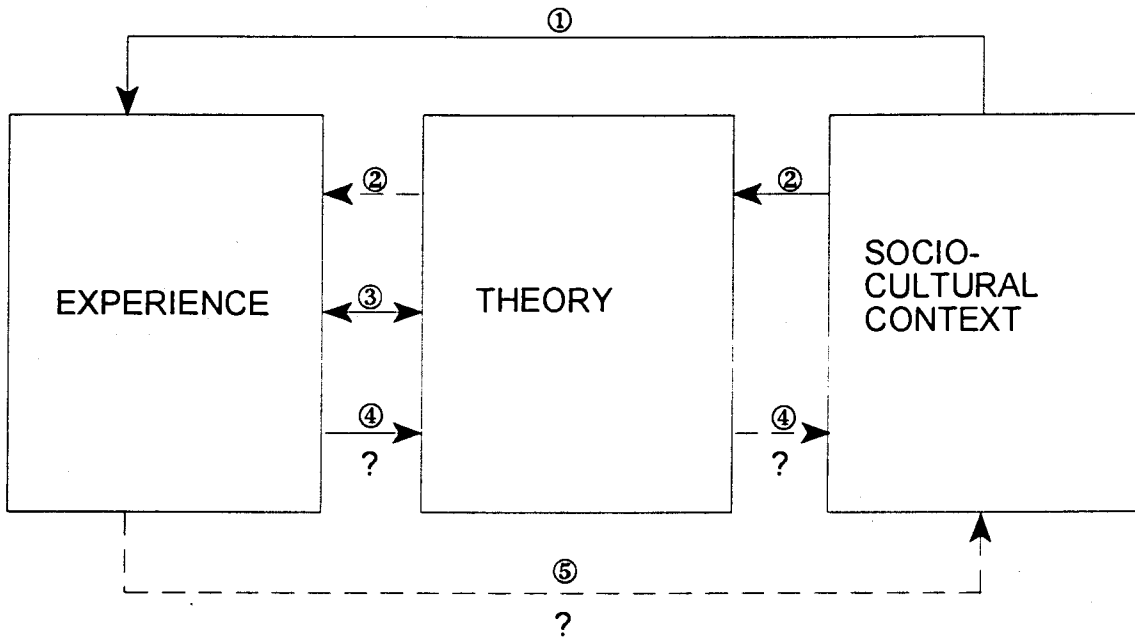
Sixthly, it can be concluded that the idiosyncratic experience of difficulties in individuating influences how one interprets theory.

Lastly, it can be concluded that theory informs and highlights experience.

The above conclusions will be illustrated by the following figure:

Figure 5.1:

Individuation: Experience, theory and socio-cultural context: an emerging connectedness



From the process of trying to facilitate the experience of individuation by searching theory, various conclusions can be drawn. These conclusions suggest various ways by which experience theory and socio-cultural context can be said to be interrelated in the experience of difficulties in individuating.

① shows the direct influence the socio-cultural context can be said to have on the experience of self-expression by defining what is regarded as narcissistic, altruistic and individualistic behaviour.

② shows the indirect influence the socio-cultural context can be said to have on experience by giving normative value to theoretically embodied notions of the individuated person.

③ shows what can be said to be a close relationship between the individual's experience, and theory, as well as his/her personal epistemologies. This relationship can be said to give rise to tensions, as well as to the facilitation of potentially resolving tensions.

④ and ⑤ ask the question of how idiosyncratic experience can be seen to influence socio-cultural norms. ④ suggests, after feminist writers, that this occurs via academic discourse practices and ⑤ asks how else can the individual's experience be seen to influence socio-cultural norms?

Gergen (1991a) discusses how 'culture' (lifestyles and communicational networks) influences experience which influences the type of conceptualisations which 'self' comes to embody, which influences experience which is influenced by culture once again. This figure shows how 'culture' (socio-cultural discourse practices) influences experience directly and indirectly via theory.

The above conclusions were drawn from the **process** of the search to facilitate individuation in practice by conceptualising or integrating themes or dialectics in theory.

Facilitating Experience by Conceptualising it in Theory

The following will be a particular conceptualisation of individuation in terms of the notion of freedom, and on the basis of various theories. This can be said to be a way of facilitating individuation in practice by conceptualising it in theory. The process of individuation can be said to involve the experience of being and becoming an individual. Being an individual involves the sense-of-self as relational and the experience of self as spiritual essence. The idea of becoming an individual involves resolving tensions that being an individual (as sense-of-self) in relation to group (socio-cultural discourse practices), and in relation to the other involves. The idea of becoming an individual also involves resolving tensions that being an individual (as spiritual essence) in relation to self (vocational commitment) involves. The ideas of freedom in relation to group, other and self can be seen as a way by which the potential resolution of these dialectics is facilitated.

Freedom in Relation to Group

Freedom here can be said to involve finding a way of expressing one's individuality in relation to the socio-cultural dictates in such a way that one does not give up individuality for the sake of false security found in having to safeguard group acceptance. Freedom here can be said to involve the risk of loss which, if experienced, may give rise to a new way of preserving both individuality and connectivity.

Freedom in Relation to Other

This can be said to involve, in accord with psychodynamic theory, the ability to choose, to act in relation to that choice, and to take responsibility for that choice. This can be said to be in contrast to responding rigidly and automatically. The capacity for emotional neutrality (Bowen, 1985) can be said to be intrinsic to the capacity for choice. According to Bowen (1985), emotional neutrality involves the flexibility to respond according to either one's thought or one's emotions, group or self interest, as well as freedom from having one's actions completely dictated by emotional responses from the other.

Freedom in Relation to Self

This can be said to involve, in accord with psychodynamic theory, the freedom from unconscious motivations or tendencies which involves self-awareness or accepting more than what we already know to be part of ourselves (Jung, 1959). This self-awareness can be said to be linked with knowing what is essential to one, or in other words, what one identifies with. Freedom in relation to this can be said to involve knowing the unconscious motivations, controlling influences, impediments or fears linked to that which one identifies with. Hence, the implication is that there is greater choice in relation to that which one identifies with and commits oneself to. But one may also become overly controlled by, and dependent upon that which one identifies with. Hence, freedom here can be said to involve a process of "disidentifying with all particular objects, mental, emotional or physical, thereby transcending them" (Wilber,

1985, p. 130). According to Wilber (1985) this involves realising that one is not, for example, one's wishes, feelings, possessions. In this way, disappointments, hurts, humiliations, failures, losses are not of life or death significance. However, it can be said that one can only "disidentify" (p. 130), or in Kierkegaard's (1980, p. 30) theory "rest in the transiency" of not holding onto any one pole of dialectic as a source of certainty, hence security for one's existence if one has faith in a Higher Being. This could be the same as saying that there is far more (a greater plan, of which we do not know) to what we hold to be of life or death significance, and it is only by having faith in a Higher Being that we can live.

Recommendations

This study focussed on the experience of a single individual within a Western cultural context rather than on the reports of a member of people in various cultural contexts. Hence, to further the idea of constructing a theory of individuation in a collectivist cultural context, the following is recommended.

Reports from a number of people living in various collectivist cultural contexts could be obtained. The intention of these reports would be to enquire about the individuals' idiosyncratic conceptualisations of what the experience of individuation entails. An idea of the social discourse practices of these contexts could be obtained from literature or by asking individuals about traditional practices or societal norms which they see as characteristics of their cultural context. In this way various views of societal prescriptions of individuation could be obtained. Thus, one would obtain reports of idiosyncratic experiences of individuation, as well as interpretations of socio-cultural norms of individuation.

An attempt to construct another theory of individuation in this way could further the deconstruction of the normative value which any one theory holds or conveys since the emphasis would not be on the theory alone, but on the **relationship** between experience and socio-cultural context in the creation of theory.

This could have implications for therapy in terms of highlighting an approach (after

Bateson's (1979) thinking) towards understanding an individual's idiosyncratic experience. An alternative to comparing an individual's experience of difficulties in individuating to normative criteria, held in any one theory, could be the following. One could explore how socio-cultural discourse practices of what individuation should entail relate to the individual's experience. This could involve exploring how these socio-cultural discourse practices are mediated or become accepted as real or personally applicable, either by the individual's personal epistemologies (how they make sense of their world), or by the talk and texts of social life (Wetherell & Maybin, 1996), for example, family, work, school milieus. In this way, one could appreciate a broader view of an individual's experience.

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