

CHAPTER ELEVEN

XENOPHOBIA – CARL JUNG PERSPECTIVE

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Man is a social being, whose behaviour is influenced by nature (biological forces) and nurture (societal forces). The biological forces are the inherited traits from the parental genes that promote transmission of behavioural patterns from one generation to the other while the societal forces instill the social norms, values and belief system into individuals that enable him or her to live and behave in an acceptable and appropriate social pattern.

Human behaviour and interactions with others could either be positive and constructive (such as cooperative and helping behaviour) or negative and destructive (such as conflict behaviour). According to The American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV), any behaviour that is that is associated with present distress (a painful symptom) or disability (impairment in one or more areas of functioning) or with a significant increased risk of suffering, death, pain, disability or an important loss of freedom is classified as abnormal behaviour or mental disorder.

The DSM-IV, further identified Xenophobia as an example of specific phobic disorder under the subfield of anxiety disorder.

Defining Xenophobia

The term xenophobia is derived from two Greek words – *Xenos* meaning foreigner or strangers and *phobos* meaning fear. Thus, xenophobia literarily means the fear of foreigner(s) or stranger(s). An

individual or group is said to be xenophobic, if such an individual or group possesses an unusual fear or dislike for others, considered to be significantly different from them. The significant others is perceived as stranger or foreigner and are treated as a threat to their existence.

The word xenophobia is often used interchangeably with racism, nationalism and isolationism.

Xenophobia versus Racism

Although xenophobia and racism are used interchangeably, they differ one from another. While xenophobia could be termed as a generalized dislike/fear for strangers or foreigners; Racism is a specific dislike for people considered to be from a different race. Thus, racism is discrimination based on the racial groups to which people belong. In other words, people from other races are seen as enemies, threats and alien to their own group. According to United Nations International convention on the Elimination of all Racial Discrimination, Racial discrimination "shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of Nullifying or imparting the recognition, enjoyment or exercise on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life".

Xenophobia versus Nationalism

Unlike xenophobia as discussed above, nationalism is a political movement that holds a nation as an inclusive categorization of human being different from other nations. Thus, nationalism views other nations with different ideology cultural and identify as foreigner and strangers. The nationalist belief in the existence of other states but do not see them as a legitimate form of state, thus, they discriminate them as enemies and foreigners, types of nationalism include civic, ethnic cultural, religious or ideological nationalism.

Xenophobia versus Ethnicity

Ethnicity often connotes shared cultural, linguistic, behavioural or religious trait by a group of people. Such ethnic group perceives themselves as superior and other ethnic groups as inferior and they must be eliminated or discriminated at. Thus, ethnicity discriminates against others based on ethnic and cultural affiliation (ethnic origin).

Xenophobia in the world

The universe is made of billions of people who relate together either at the individual, group, ethnic or national level. Such interaction is characterized by conflicts of ideas, identity, beliefs and fear of unknown. Notable countries of the world that experiences xenophobia include Germany with long history of tension between Jews, Romance, Slavas and other coloured people; Japan, a country with policy that excludes foreign interactions with other nations; South Africa especially under apartheid rule in the 20th century where the white majority led government discriminate against the blacks and the present 21st century, where the black majority continually confronts and conflicts with the white minority; Middle East continuous conflicts between Israel, Palestine, Cyprus, Lebanon and Iraq to mention but a few are all example of xenophobic behaviour in the world.

Carl Jung perspective of Xenophobia

Carl Gustav Jung, (1875-1961) was born in Kesswil, Switzerland, a notable psychiatrist and one of the founding fathers of modern depth psychology, the school of Analytical Psychology. At initial stage of his career, Jung worked in collaboration with Sigmund Freud but latter separated in 1913 on the claim that Freud laid emphasis on sexuality as the dominant factor in unconscious motivation.

Jung did study Schizophrenia, 'The Psychology of Dementia Praecox', and he was noted the concepts of extroverted and introverted personality, archetypes and the collective unconscious. He was interested in analyzing the content of the unconscious in western man and primitive people and his focus was on psychological types, mythological and religious symbolism across the globe.

Jung proposed that the totality of personality is the psyche- a non physical space that has its own special reality. The psyche controls the flow of energy every direction from consciousness to unconsciousness. Thus the psyche is a life processing energy that is a product of conflicts between the opposite forces within the individual (love vs. hatred; friendship vs. enmity).

Jung discovered that every individual has some psychological elements in the unconscious; these include anima in male gender, animus in female as well as archetypes and other complexes.

Although, the unconscious or subconscious mind according to classical Freudian analysis is a part of the mind that store repressed memories; Jung views the unconscious mind to be reservoir of transcendent truths. He opined that unconscious mind is made up of different layers namely; the personal and collective unconscious. The personal unconscious contains the individuals experiences within his life-time but has been forgotten or repressed while the second layer, the collective unconscious contains the memory traces common to all man kind, they are innate predisposition to experience and symbolize certain situations in a distinct way. Thus to understand human behaviour, one should examine symbol as expressed in different culture, religion and nation.

In Jung's view, Xenophobia, like neurosis and psychosis is a result of one sided development in which the repressed forces create problems in functioning. He identified four functions or ways in which people relates to their world; Sensing, Thinking, Feeling, and Intuiting.

- Sensing is the preliminary stage of experiencing the world without the use of reasoning and feeling.
- Thinking involves the use of reasoning and logic to relate with the phenomena, giving meaning to what is sensed.
- Feeling allows individual to evaluate events by assessing them whether they are good or bad, favourable or unfavourable.
- Intuiting relies on the nudges and internal suggestions we make use of in situations that is strange with little or no facts available.(Progoff, 1993, Ryckman, 1996)

According to Jung, It is the interaction of these functions- sensing, thinking, feeling, and intuiting, at varying degree, superiority or inferiority, which controls human actions.

Jung further introduced the principle of synchronicity to behavioural occurrence as against the popular principle of cause and effect (causality). The principle of synchronicity is an acausal parallelism; a pattern of connection that cannot be explained by conventional, efficient causality. In other words, the principle of synchronicity is a belief that there is an acausal order in the world that has meaning and goes beyond causality. It was this principle of synchronicity that gave conclusive evidence of all the archetypes and collective unconsciousness proposed by Jung, in that it was a descriptive of a governing dynamics that underlay the whole of human experience and history-social emotional, psychological and spiritual.

Xenophobia, according to Jung principle of synchronicity can be explained as the conceptual relationship of minds, intricately in its own logical way and gives rise to relationships which was nothing to do with causal relationship in which a cause precedes an effect. In other word, fear of foreigner need not to be caused or preceded by a cause, rather it could be an innate (unconscious) way of life of the people or group or nationality.

Thus, Jung argued that human behaviour, Xenophobia inclusive is controlled by 'automatic forces' in the collective unconsciousness that is not predictable. For example, people of a particular nation, that has been living together harmoniously, may suddenly find themselves in bitter controversy about their status and relationship, perceiving the significant others as strangers and threat to their existence.

Jung accounted for this unexpected sudden shift in behaviour as a result of the negative aspect of the repressed anima-animus in the people that has suddenly found its way to the conscious world. It was believed that the point at which the negative repressed anima-animus occurs is unpredictable. Jung left unexplained the underlying mechanism and process that shows how archetypes are capable of transcending spaces and time boundaries, but was convinced of the reality of this mysterious processes.

Jung's conclusion about xenophobia and other related abnormal behaviour is compatible with contemporary religion that advocates the need for spiritual reawakening among the young and old in the society and world at large as the solution to abnormal behaviour.

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