

Constellation Work and Zulu Culture: Theoretical Reflections on Therapeutic and Cultural Concepts

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this paper is to reflect on constellation work (CW) as a therapeutic intervention method and its commonalities and differences with Zulu cultural concepts. It has been stated that Bert Hellinger, a pioneer in CW developed this intervention method whilst being inspired by the Zulu culture in South Africa where he worked for 16 years as a missionary. The connections, commonalities and differences have never been explored in-depth. The paper endeavours to fill the gap in understanding the connection of Zulu cultural concepts and CW. The analysis shows similarities and differences in terms of values, cultural concepts, the acknowledgement of life, relationships with ancestors and family members and healing rituals within CW and Zulu culture. CW seems to be an adequate transcultural intervention method to contribute to healing, therapeutic work and understanding of systemic family constructs across cultures, not only in South Africa, but also abroad.

INTRODUCTION

Constellation work (CW) is a psychotherapeutic approach that is highly experimental and has been subjected to controversial discussions in international therapeutic contexts (Mayer and Viviers 2015a; Stiefel et al. 2002). CW is based on and strongly associated with Bert Hellinger's "Familien-Stellen" ("family constellation"), a specific form of CW (Hellinger et al. 1998). Bert Hellinger, a German psychotherapist, developed his concepts of CW during his sixteen years of life in Kwa-Zulu-Natal, South Africa where he worked as a missionary (Cohen 2008). CW deals with the unconscious image of a person's view on his/her family, the impact of traumatic experiences within families and its consequences on family members in previous, present and future generations (Mayer and Viviers 2015b).

Since the first introduction of CW by Hellinger, various approaches in systemic CW have developed which differ from each other in certain respects (Cohen 2006; Lynch and Tucker 2005; Petersen 2007; Schneider 2007). Recent developments in CW include approaches in the organisational contexts (Birkenkrahe 2008), structural family therapy (Lynch and Lynch 2000),

practical approaches of the new generation family practitioners (Lynch and Tucker 2005), Mahr's (2004) approach to family constellation, Franke's (2009) CW in individual therapeutic sessions, Varga von Kibéd and Sparrer's (2005) work in systemic structural CW, and Mason Boring and Sloan's (2013) systemic constellations with nature and indigenous fields (Mason Boring 2009).

CW has been internationally recognised across Europe (Green 2009; Hunger et al. 2014; Liebermeister 2007; Lier and Lier, 2015; Mayer and Hausner, 2015), in the US (Georgiadou 2012), in Australia (Rogers 2010), in Asia (Weng 1997) and South Africa (Mayer and Viviers 2015a, 2015b). However, it remains an under-represented topic in psychology in African contexts (Meyburgh 2009, 2010). This is interesting, particularly as it has been emphasised that Hellinger's 'Familien-Stellen' has been strongly influenced by drawing on Zulu cultural concepts¹ (Cohen 2006, 2009; Franke 2003; Hellinger 2001; Meyburgh 2009). However, the connections between CW and Zulu cultural concepts have hardly been described, explored or discussed scientifically, as have been African concepts in psychological contexts in the past and present (Mayer 2012). The indigenization of Western therapeutic con-

cepts has been discussed in general (Mpofu 2002), however the commonalities and differences of CW and Zulu cultural concepts as psychological constructs have hardly been reflected upon previously.

Objectives

The purpose of this paper is to reflect on CW and Zulu cultural concepts, their commonalities and differences; to explore not only inter-linkages, but also the transcultural potential of this experimental therapeutic intervention method. It thus endeavours to fill the gap in understanding the inter-linkages of CW and Zulu cultural concepts which has been emphasised without having been explored in-depth. By this interlinkage, the article contributes to the understanding of CW as a transcultural therapeutic method and opens the discussion of international transcultural potential of CW.

The following research questions will be addressed in this paper:

1. How is CW conceptualised and what does it entail?
2. How are cultural concepts viewed in the Zulu culture?
3. What are the commonalities and differences between CW and Zulu culture?
4. What is the international transcultural potential of CW?

In the following section, CW and Zulu cultural concepts will be explored and research questions will be responded to.

HOW IS CONSTELLATION WORK CONCEPTUALISED?

CW was first introduced in Germany by Bert Hellinger in the 1970s (Cohen 2006). In Germany, it was originally a method to address the traumatic effects of World War II (Ulsamer 2005). Since the 1980s, CW has grown into an internationally recognised movement (Anderson and Carnabucci 2009) and has been defined as an intergenerational healing (Payne 2005), peace building (Cohen 2009) and reconciliation process (Hellinger 2003).

Cohen (2008: 23) describes a representative and typical format of a constellation process which includes a group of ten to 30 participants. One voluntary participant is selected as a client dealing with a personal issue, while other partic-

ipants serve as representatives or observers. The client talks about an issue that he/she would like to resolve. The facilitator enquires about specific events within the family, such as a sudden death, murder, abortion, suicide, casualties of war or family members who were denied their right to belong. Group members are used as representative members of the family system, or structural elements which might represent an illness, a feeling or another materialised phenomenon. The representatives are given a physical place/location by the client within the allocated CW space. Representatives are able to access the feelings and dynamic relationships of the family member (client) in question (Ulsamer 2005), by accessing the unconscious architecture of automatic thought and behaviour patterns (Schneider 2007). The representatives are asked to express their feelings or move into their preferred positions within the physical constellation space. The healing solution is often introduced by a healing movement, by healing sentences and/or the inclusion of family members who were previously excluded. Finally, the problem is “released” from the “unconscious mind and reprogrammed with an image of the system at peace” (Cohen 2008: 1-12).

The foundation of CW is based on a systemic attitude (Lier and Lier 2015; Mayer and Hausner 2015) of four essential assumptions (Peterson 2007) which include: the existence of trans-generational patterns in family systems; the possibility of representing members of the system with others who do not know the client or the people in the system; the fact that common kinds of patterns or orders emerge as “hidden symmetries in families”; and that the body knows conscious family relationships.

According to Hellinger’s et al. (1998) multi-generational model, family members are connected through a deep bond of love and should adhere to the basic truths that have been developed as fundamental principles of CW. They are bound through a family conscience that influences the order of a family in terms of the right to belong; the balancing of a loss of a family member; and between the give and take, win and lose; and the respect of the family order.

Philosophically, CW derives from the integration of existential phenomenology (Heidegger 1962; Husserl 1972; Merleau-Ponty 2002) and family systems theory (Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark 1973; Moreno 1945; Satir, 1987). Recently,

elements of indigenous spiritual mysticism have been recognised (Mason Boring 2004; Van Kampenhout 2003, 2008). The interlinkages of Zulu culture and CW has been emphasised by Hellinger (2001, 2013) and others (Cohen 2004, 2006), but have not been analysed in-depth.

HEALING IN AFRICAN CONTEXTS

In African contexts, healing concepts refer to a spiritual act of fundamental belief in a higher power and ancestors (Mpofu et al. 2011). According to Levers (2006), indigenous South African healing systems are locally developed and recognised by the majority of the historical Zulu community. They are socio-culturally highly interwoven and aim at increasing health and well-being in body, mind, emotions and spirit (Kirsten et al. 2009), using various interventions. Traditional healers are seen as diviners and are chosen by ancestors to interpret God's will on earth (Holland 2003) and are the caretakers of healing processes (Peltzer 1995). Healing is connected to healing rituals, such as body, nature or trance rituals (Somé 1998) which in essence are symbolic family group activities that facilitate healing in individuals or social groups (Ochoa de Eguileor 1997). These rituals are often based on phenomenological principles of healing (Spinelli 1994) and social contexts (Bojuwoye 2005).

Healing has been researched with regard to mental disorders (Corin and Bibeau 1980), psychosomatic, psychosocial and family collective issues in traditional contexts (Sabuni 2007). While family relationships play a significant role in the well-being of individuals and families (Jithoo and Bakker 2011), the spiritual world, shamans and shamanic healing practices impact on healing processes in CW (Van Kampenhout 2008). Shamans are traditional healers with different names in various cultural settings (Moodley 2005). Shamanic CW is practised and regarded as an active part of culture (Kremser 2002). The principles of CW are in harmony with indigenous cultures in terms of shamanic practices, healing, bonding, balancing and order (Mason Boring 2004; Van Kampenhout 2003). Kreszmeier (2002) highlights that intuition, invocation and incorporation in spiritual traditions in Brazil are interlinked with the magic of CW, whilst Weule (2002) emphasises that ancestors play a crucial role in healing in African Dagara traditions.

Commonalities in indigenous ancestral beliefs and CW have been highlighted and practi-

cal models (known as systemic rituals) have been developed, combining CW and shamanic rituals (Van Kampenhout 2003). In these systemic rituals, Van Kampenhout (2003) observes various souls and layers of the soul being represented. However, the original work of Bert Hellinger seems to be closer to shamanic ritual work than his later developments. In the later developments, such as the "movement of the soul" and the "movement of the spirit-mind", less family representatives are involved and the extended ancestors do not play such an important role as in Hellinger's earlier work (Van Kampenhout 2003). The development of Hellinger's CW moved from a rather ancestral-based approach to a more individual-based approach, whilst overlapping with traditional shamanic work (Van Kampenhout 2003).

Healing in the Zulu Culture

The Zulus live in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa and is the largest African ethnic group in the country (Mayer and Boness 2003). Healing in the Zulu culture centres around traditional healers (Campbell and Amin 2014), *uMvelinqangi* (God), the *amadlozi* (ancestors), nature, a person's connection to spiritual forces (Washington 2010) and the concept of *Ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* is defined as a universal life and healing force (Washington 2010:32): "*Ubu* refers to being while *ntu* alludes to a universal life force, found in all things, including *muntu* (human beingness), *hantu* (spirit in time and place), *kintu* (spirit in things) and *kuntu* (spirit in modality/expressiveness). If one's behaviour is deemed to benefit the community, then one is deemed to be human because human activity naturally operates in a manner that perpetuates life and does not destroy it." The foundational assumption of *Ubuntu* is that all aspects of the universe are interrelated and that divine energy is transmitted from generation to generation through ancestors, prayer, meditation, concentration and incantations. Edwards (2013) even found some common universal themes in healing between traditional Zulu and classical Greek culture.

Ancestors in the Zulu Culture

In the traditional Zulu culture, the spiritual world is of major importance. The spiritual realm includes the communication and living with an-

cestors as a central point of belief and daily interaction (Cohen 2006). Ancestors who are called “shades” are defined as “elders, living and dead of the family, clan and tribe with whom there is a significant emotional attachment” (Nel 2009: 12). Ancestors are thought of as a “collectivity” (Hammond-Tooke 1981: 24), as positive, constructive and creative presences, but can also bring misfortune to the individual or the family, if family duties are neglected or the proper respect not been applied (Cohen 2006). The death of a family member does not bring an end to a family relationship (Nxumalo 1981: 67). Moreover, the continuity of a family crosses generations (Calhoun 1980: 370), including past as well as future generations (Berglund 1973: 11).

Ancestors are also seen as a source of triangulation in times of crisis and often asked for help and support through rituals (Hammond-Tooke 1994). They are assumed to live similar lives as they did while alive and are viewed as having powerful influences on the behaviour of the living (Gumede 1990). The ancestors remain ‘living’ as invisible, spirit-beings in the household of the family (Ngubane 1977).

Ancestors have various (healing-related) functions in the Zulu culture, such as unifying families and people through caring, blessing, empowering, rewarding, inspiring, protecting, serving as mediators between people and the divine, and facilitating holistic healing (Lutheran World 2004: 3). They are also responsible for family harmony and peace and are guardians for social order (Setiloane 1992). The strong ancestral bond in Zulu tradition supports the family adhering to family obligations and responsibilities, not only in daily life, but also in situations of family transitions, such as birth, marriage or death (Olupona 2000). They further more help to promote spirituality amongst family members (Edwards et al. 2011).

Family and Respect Towards Parents

The concept of family in Zulu tradition is understood as an “emotional unit that includes all generations, including the ancestors” (Nel 2009: iii-iv). The interrelationship with the ancestors is defined as a multi-generational transmission process that triangulates (Nel 2009: iv). Regarding South Africa, Hellinger (2001: 443) emphasises: “I never heard anyone speak disrespectfully about their parents.” That would have

been inconceivable. Respect for one’s parents while they are alive and dead is of paramount importance among Zulu traditionalists and Zulu Christians (Nel 2009). Ancestors are usually regarded as a “source of power” (Lawson 1985).

It has been emphasised (Mbele et al. 2015) that respect (*ukuhlonipha*) in the Zulu culture is a specific phenomenon that is not only related to the parents and the family, but also to the concept of African humanity (*Ubuntu*), ancestors, marriage, children, special language, narrative, story and textual reality, harmony, order and discipline and gratitude and appreciation. Respect is viewed as a concept, as well as an experience and practice. It is strongly related to health and well-being.

Family and Ancestors in the Zulu Culture

The relationship of the Zulu with the land of the homestead is highly significant because the land is associated with the ancestors, for whom the homestead is the burial place. Therefore, rituals honouring the ancestors are usually performed at the homestead. The rituals of transcendence are important, such as birth, marriage, puberty and death. In these rituals, the ancestors are addressed and viewed as “methods of communication” (Abraham 1962: 64). Many rituals in the Zulu culture are organised around male ancestors, although female ancestors also form an integral part of the kinship system (Hammond-Tooke 1981: 28). The impact of ancestors on the living can be positive, healing and protective on the one hand, and on the other hand, negative and destructive (Cole and Middleton 2001).

The rituals are “occasions when the lineage, including the living and the departed, get together to experience togetherness, communion” (Berglund 1973: 41), thereby reinstalling family harmony. During the ritual, the “cause of the trouble is mentioned” (Berglund 1973: 40) and ancestors are viewed as reliable resources for dealing constructively with crises (Hammond-Tooke 1994).

BERT HELLINGER ON THE INFLUENCE OF ZULU CULTURE ON ‘FAMILIEN-STELLEN’

Hellinger emphasises that his experiences in KwaZulu-Natal impacted on the development of CW (Hellinger 2001, 2013; Hellinger et al. 1999).

“The way the Zulus do it, is to bury the dead, and then after a year has passed, the deceased are welcomed back into the house through a ritual. The family members take a branch and imagine that the dead ancestor is sitting on the branch which is dragged into the house. A certain section of the hut is reserved for ancestors and that’s where the deceased have their place.” (Hellinger et al. 1999: 58)

This quotation shows the ritual character of the Zulus connecting with the deceased ancestor, who is given a defined place in the homestead and included in family rituals. Deceased ancestors are regarded as living members of family life, and their influence on the present is respected and honoured.

In a personal e-mail communication with Bert Hellinger (2013), he commented on the influence of Zulu culture on CW:²

“Very often I have been asked how my sixteen year stay in South Africa, working as a missionary and teacher amongst Zulus, influenced the ‘Familien-Stellen’. In essence, it has only been the observation that I never experienced or heard a Zulu person say something about his/her parents without being respectful. For them, parents stay the big ones. This is based on the fact that life comes first. It is the highest of any good.

Whenever I saw someone sitting at a road waiting for a bus and I asked this person: ‘Doesn’t it take too long waiting here for a bus for you?’ he/she replied: ‘I am alive.’ This priority of ‘being alive’ is also shown in the way they greet each other: ‘Sakubona, usaphila?’ (I see you, are you still alive?) The other person replies: ‘Ngisekhona. (I am still here.) What an attitude! I transfer this attitude into my work with grateful thoughts on my time with the Zulu, in South Africa.

Additionally, I acknowledge their lively relationship with their ancestors. They live together with their ancestors in their homestead. The ancestors get their own place and they are the ones that get the first drops of Utschwala (Zulu beer). In ‘Familien-Stellen’ we realise that we are in many ways in a deep relationship connecting with our ancestors in a healing way, but also in the way in which they service us, leading us to death rather than into life. For the Zulu this dynamic of inter-generational loyalty was self-understood.”

According to Hellinger’s observation, the five main aspects of the Zulu culture are respect towards and honouring of the parents; the fact that life is a priority – it is the highest good; the importance of a life-serving attitude; a lively relationship with ancestors that heals or that might lead to death instead of life; and the place of the ancestors in the homestead.

DISCUSSION

What are the Commonalities and Differences in Constellation Work and Zulu Culture

Meyburgh (2009), who interviewed Zulu students in family constellation training in South Africa, confirms that working with ancestors is obviously connected to CW. However, the questions of what (sacred) customs Hellinger learnt from the Zulus, into which knowledge he was initiated during his time in KwaZulu-Natal, and if he was honoured to learn the secrets of African traditions, are open to question (Meyburgh 2009). To Meyburgh (2010), CW in its core is influenced by African spiritual traditions, such as the inclusion of a wide circle of ancestors. Ngororo (cited in Meyburgh 2010) assumes that in CW there is “an element of intellectual property that is ignored or not taken into account, thus shielding the role African spiritualism might have impacted on this development”.

CW and Zulu concepts show certain commonalities and differences which are discussed in the following section. The Zulus use a systemic approach to understand and interpret the world, as CW is based on a systemic approach to understand and interpret the world. The commonality lies in a systemic approach, focusing on integrating various aspects and aiming at a holistic approach towards issues and/or (family) relationships, life fulfilment and communities.

With regard to the ritual realm, *Ubuntu*, in the Zulu culture, is defined as an overall life source that connects all things and forms the spiritual essence of all beings (Washington 2010). It is defined as the base of all communication. In CW, spirituality might be part of the CW processes (Mason Boring 2004; Mayer and Viviers 2014a, 2015b; Van Kampenhout 2003, 2008). The move from the unconscious towards the conscious being and the aspect of trans-generational healing (Cohen 2008; Payne 2005; Schneider 2007; Ulsamer 2005) is important in

CW processes. Accessing the unconscious, the process of becoming conscious does not seem to be particularly important with regard to Zulu family concepts in ritual work.

In the Zulu culture, family rituals are usually conducted within a family with family members and near the homestead (Abraham 1962). In CW, representatives who do not belong to the family system are chosen to represent selected family members (Cohen 2008). CW is mainly conducted with representatives who do not know the family members of the client (Petersen 2007). Constellations are preferably conducted in seminar rooms or in nature (Mason Boring and Sloin 2013). The setting of Zulu family rituals and CW therefore differs recognisably: rituals are held with family members (dead or alive) at the homestead. Individuals not known to the family usually do not attend.

In the Zulu culture, healing is connected to God, to the ancestors and to a person's spirituality (Washington 2010). The healing ritual should bring healing to the individual and to the collective family, using different categories of healers (Campbell and Amin 2014; Edwards 1998, 2013). Ancestors give advice and offer solutions and healing, and are a source of triangulation in times of crisis (Hammond-Tooke 1994). In CW the concept of healing is seen as intergenerational healing, peace and reconciliation process (Hellinger et al. 1998) which is not necessarily connected to a particular belief system, God or belief in supernatural powers. Healing is promoted through communication with representatives of the family, and an increase of consciousness and awareness of individuals in terms of shadow sides and shades of a person or family system (Ruel 1997). At the end of a constellation a healing sentence, word or movement is conducted. A solution is thereby brought to the conscious mind (Schneider 2007) and a healing image is constructed by the client and the constellation facilitator. Obviously, the underlying concepts of healing in Zulu culture and CW differ hugely: here, the professional traditional healer introduces healing, whilst communicating with the ancestors. Healing is seen as a religious act, based on the belief in a higher power and/or the ancestors (Mpofu et al. 2011). Besides, the difference between belief, religion and higher power in Zulu culture and CW is that the commonalities reside in the holistic and systemic view of healing and wellbeing (Kirsten et al. 2009) and the assumption that inter-generational communication can contribute to healing.

Communalities between CW and Zulu concepts are defined as, a symbolic group activity to facilitate change and healing in individuals or social groups (Ochoa de Eguileor 1997), in the social contact they provide (Bojuwoye 2005), in the assumption of a phenomenologist principle of healing and the ancestral systemic rituals performed (Bojuwoye 2005), and in the work with secondary healing (Prince 1974). 'Familien-Stellen' ritual sentences are used to communicate with the ancestors in a constructive and respectful way (Cohen 2006; Mbele et al. 2015). It may happen that "burdens" that have been carried by a person for former generations may be returned to the person responsible in the form of a symbol (for example, a stone). Therefore, in CW, the returning of issues, experiences or burdens is an individualistic process, whilst in Zulu culture, it is assumed that the generation to follow is *per se* connected to the experiences of the ancestors (Hellinger 2013) who are defined as a collectivity (Hammond-Tooke 1981) and therefore are part of carrying family burdens and deal with issues of the past.

Ancestors are defined as part of the collectivity in Zulu concepts. In CW, ancestors are thought of as individual members of the family who are in distinguished relationships to each other. Therefore, the concepts of how ancestors influence family members differ as well: in Zulu concepts, ancestral influence on family members can be positive (protective) and/or negative (destructive) (Cohen 2006). In CW, the positive and the negative influences of former generations on an individual can also become visible (Schneider 2007; Ulsamer 2005). However, this influence is not seen as being positive or negative *per se*, but rather as part of the constellations within a certain family system and with regard to a certain question that is supposed to be explored or resolved.

In CW, it is assumed that an individual crisis might derive from complex family constellations and intergenerational patterns and might be triangulated during the process of CW (Hellinger 2001; Mayer and Hausner 2015). In the Zulu culture however, ancestors themselves are viewed as a source of triangulation in times of crisis and are directly asked for help and support (Hammond-Tooke 1994). Therefore, the aim of the communication with the ancestors is to promote responsibilities and obligations (Olupona 2000), harmony, peace and togetherness in the family

(Lutheran World 2004; Setiloane 1992). In CW, the aim is to deal with the problem or crisis whilst understanding intergenerational family patterns, thereby promoting harmony and/or togetherness within the family at a spiritual and/or systemic level (Cohen 2006). Both Zulu concepts and CW value a high degree of respect between family members that needs to be shown in family relationships (Hellinger 2001; Mbele et al. 2015; Nel 2009). How respect is shown and why respectful relationships are important might differ in CW and Zulu culture.

In the Zulu culture traditional healers diagnose illness, determine problems and find solutions by communicating with the ancestors (Berglund 1973; Campbell and Amin 2014). Ancestors and family relationships are seen as part of the individual and family, and also as a key to healing and well-being (Jithoo and Bakker 2011). In CW, the facilitator is also viewed as a facilitator to make family connections visible across generations (Cohen 2006). Constellators support the individual client to look at the connections between the cause of illnesses, problems and family relationships. Individual solutions are found through the interpretation of the 'concepts of place' and the communication with the family and ancestral system, but not necessarily through the advice of the ancestors (Abraham 1962; Hellinger 2013; Rogers 2010; Ulsamer 2005; Washington 2010). Therefore, the traditional healer is a professional person who talks to the ancestors, whilst the constellation facilitator is a professional person who uses the constellation method in the ideal way to provide options of re-interpretations of relationships and situations.

In the Zulu culture, ancestors remain 'living' invisibly in the household after death and do not bring an end to the family relationship (Nxumalo 1981). In CW, it is not necessarily part of beliefs that ancestors live invisibly in the home of a living family member; therefore, CW opens a space to communicate with the ancestors. Both concepts are open to the assumption of life after death, although they might differ in the philosophical and theological details and foundations of life after death.

CONCLUSION

The aims of this paper were to explore CW and Zulu culture, and to respond to the question of what CW is, how cultural concepts of Zulu culture are viewed, and what commonalities and differences exist between CW and Zulu

culture. Finally, the international and transcultural potential of CW was explored.

It can be concluded that in the Zulu tradition, communication with the ancestors is performed in a ritual way as it is in Hellinger's early stages of 'Familien-Stellen'. In both Zulu culture and CW, the positively and negatively valued influences of ancestors on present-day situations can be seen and experienced across generations. The aim of rituals in Zulu culture and in CW is to heal intergenerational wounds that have been left unattended or unaddressed in the past, at an individual or collective level. Whilst respect and honour are central concepts in the Zulu culture, CW often aims at restoring respect and honour across generations, following a particular hierarchical approach of communication. In Zulu rituals and in CW, togetherness and communion are installed to increase family harmony. For both, the aim of Zulu and constellation rituals is to (re-)install health, healing, peace and optimal living conditions for the members within a (family) system. Definitely, several commonalities between Zulu culture and CW exist, which might be seen as promoting CW with international and transcultural potential. It might be assumed that the cultural concepts of the Zulu culture influence Bert Hellinger in developing CW during his 16 years in South Africa, which can be recognised as transcultural overlaps in CW. This transcultural potential needs to be made conscious and used in therapeutic intervention in transcultural contexts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Further research should focus more deeply on the overlaps of ethno-specific culture concepts and therapeutical intervention methods, such as CW. Transcultural foundations and integral aspects of therapeutic interventions should be studied in detail and the potential to develop transcultural intervention tools should be recognised. In practice, CW should be consciously recognised as a transcultural intervention method and as such integrated into transcultural therapeutic practices.

NOTES

1. Cultural concepts are defined as general and complex systems which influence the perceptions, feelings, thoughts and actions of human beings (Bhugra and Becker 2005) and are created through these systems.
2. Translated from German by the author.

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