

Introduction

LEON PETCHKOVSKY

ANZSJA PRESIDENT AND CONFERENCE CONVENOR

Gold Coast and Alice Springs, Australia

‘THE USES OF SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE: A WEEKEND OF CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN CLINICIANS AND ACADEMICS WORKING WITH JUNG’S IDEAS’

‘The Uses of Subjective Experience’ Conference, from which these *Proceedings* are taken, was an ANZSJA¹ initiative, celebrating the companionship between those two domains, clinic and university, which share, in their very different ways, a preoccupation with depth psychoanalytic ideas and praxis.

As President of ANZSJA, it was my intention to help ANZSJA provide a milieu in which both domains had an opportunity to present themselves more fully to each other; hopefully to encourage a deeper and more refined level of appreciation of each other’s contributions into the depth psychoanalytic arena, to foster engagement and, perhaps, to create a base for further collaboration.

However, as President of one of the few professional clinical bodies in Australia charged with the responsibility of both the psychoanalytic training of clinicians and of promoting a depth psychoanalytic approach to healing psychic pain, I must admit to a broader purpose: to present to a larger world - including overseas Jungian colleagues, fellow clinicians in related fields

(psychoanalysts, psychologists, psychiatrists), licensing/accrediting bodies (both for training institutions and for professional guilds), and even health care funding bodies – something of the richness and depth of a psychoanalytic and Jungian and post-Jungian clinical praxis and scholarship.

This purpose is given away in our title ‘The *Uses* of Subjective Experience’.... with its implied dialectic counter-pole; those discourses which would see subjectivity as useless.

It is clear that the present is a time when the depth psychologies are seen as increasingly irrelevant to mainstream psychology and psychiatry. Our Freudian psychoanalytic colleagues also find themselves embroiled in this. Patricia Cohen, in a recent article in the *New York Times* (Cohen, 2007) has noted that the American psychoanalytic institutes have recently commissioned a survey of 150 public and private universities in the U.S. and found that, of the 1,175 courses that referenced psychoanalysis, more than 86 per cent were offered outside psychology departments. She writes:

‘Psychoanalysis and its ideas about the unconscious mind have spread to every nook and cranny of the culture from Salinger to “South Park”, from Fellini to foreign policy. Yet if you want to learn about psychoanalysis at the nation’s top universities, one of the last places to look may be the psychology department. A new report by the American Psychoanalytic Association has found that while psychoanalysis — or what purports to be psychoanalysis — is alive and well in literature, film, history and just about every other subject in the humanities, psychology departments and textbooks treat it as “desiccated and dead,” a historical artefact instead of “an ongoing movement and a living, evolving process”. The study, which is to appear in the June 2008 issue of psychiatry’s flagship journal, *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, is the latest evidence of the field’s existential crisis.’

This is not necessarily all bad. At least it tells us that the arts and the humanities are passionately interested in psychoanalysis. They have no problem with 'the uses of subjective experience'.

But in the mainstream mental health domain, this attitude is apparent in the 'evidence base' debate that smoulders in the field of psychotherapy, and which threatens to disenfranchise those models and approaches that, precisely because they are intersubjective, are insufficiently mechanical to lend themselves to facile 'evidence base' analyses. This accounts, to some extent, for the ascendancy of simplistic (some would say disingenuously over-simplistic) CBT and psychopharmacology approaches which can be more readily measured.

This is not the place to review the debate; however I would recommend a paper by Jungian analyst Roger Brooke (Brooke, 2006) for any reader wishing to inform themselves of some of the key issues.

I can point out, in passing, that the American Psychological Association Report (APA 2005) on 'competence in evidence-based practice in psychology' stresses that 'psychological practice is, at root, an interpersonal relationship between psychologist and patient' (p.12). More pointedly, there is an emerging body of work to support the proposition that 'adherence to treatment manuals is negatively correlated with treatment outcomes', even with CBT! (Castonguay et al., 1996; Ablon and Jones, 1998.) Furthermore, the work of Jungian analyst W. Keller and his associates in Germany (Keller et al., 2006) reminds us that permanent positive structural changes in the organisation of the 'self' can usually only be achieved in longer term (two-plus years) psychoanalytic (including Jungian) therapy, and that shorter therapies, while temporarily producing measurable improvements, show high relapse rates. The work of Keller and his colleagues was powerful enough to persuade the German health insurance authorities to support Jungian analysis (or Analytical Psychology as it is also known)!

Finally, as Brooke (ibid.) points out, the APA has again recognised ‘expertise’ (as opposed to mechanical manual-based training) as ‘essential to professional competence’.

We in the depth psychologies will be bearing the brunt of this debate in the coming decade. Currently, ANZSJA analysts Sue Austin, John Merchant and colleagues are negotiating with IAAP² (the International Association of Analytical Psychology) to develop an ‘Evidence-Based/Efficacy of Jungian Analysis’ project which will include the use of J. Okishi and Michael Lambert’s innovative methodologies (Okishi, Lambert et al., 2006).

CONFERENCE FORMAT

The two-day Conference was organised around the notion of a conversation between clinic and academy: papers delivered by clinicians were responded to by academics and visa versa.

On each day a panel comprising both clinicians and academics addressed themselves to one of two pivotal statements by C.G. Jung. The first:

‘For two personalities to meet is like two different chemical substances: if there is any combination at all, both are transformed. In any effective psychological treatment the doctor is bound to influence the patient; but this influence can only take place if the patient has a reciprocal influence on the doctor. You can exert no influence if you are not susceptible to influence.’

However extroverted the person or the culture, subjective experience is ontological bedrock. But psychoanalysis involves two subjectivities, that of analyst and analysand. And the interaction generates a mutually transformative third field, the intersubjective. Jung was deeply struck with this, hence his engagement with alchemical metaphors of transformation. The above quotation,

from the *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, para. 163, posits intersubjectivity as a principal theme for our discussion.

The second panel focussed on another quote from Jung to a further central theme that we might call the passing of ‘the subjectivity of nature’. The provocative Jungian analyst David Holt mourns this ‘alienation of man from nature, where nature is to be thought of both as man’s own nature and also the natural world’ (Holt, 1992).

This quote is taken from Jung’s autobiography, *Memories, Dreams and Reflections* (1963, p.144):

‘[Indigenous people] live[d] in a period and in a milieu in which man was still linked by myth with the world of the ancestors, and thus with nature truly experienced and not merely seen from the outside.’

This seemingly inoffensive statement spreads across a huge terrain, which might include ecology, anthropology, spirituality and geopolitics and economics (the desacralisation of the earth, nature and lived experience, the alienation of capital and the mass market, the intercultural struggle of indigenous people, but also the alienated nature of urban life for the individual). We were particularly keen to draw our anthropologist colleagues’ views.

JUNG AND THE UNIVERSITY: AN ACADEMIC QUESTION?

That there is a broad and rich tradition of Jungian, post-Jungian and depth psychoanalytic scholarship, while known within analytical psychology domains, may not be widely appreciated elsewhere. In Australia we are especially fortunate to have internationally recognised scholars Peter Bishop, Francis Gray, Bernie Neville, David Russell, Brendon Stewart, David Tacey

and Terrie Waddell contributing to debate and all, except Francis, were able to accept invitations to our conference. At the conference we were also fortunate to be able to welcome several anthropologists who bring a psychoanalytic approach to their work. These included Jadran Mimica and John Morton.

However, engagement between clinicians and scholars, or perhaps it might be more true to say, the academy, is sometimes, though thankfully not always, a fraught affair. In the Jungian arena there has been an attempt to form a bridge between the two domains with the establishment, in 2003, of the International Association for Jungian Studies (IAJS)³ to facilitate (rather than authorise) Jungian scholarship and exchange between academy and clinic. 'Jung in the academy' is often unpopular (see David Tacey, this volume) and Jungian researchers suffer isolation. While our Melbourne conference had no formal affiliation with, or sponsorship from, IAJS, readers might find it useful to know that it places, as central to its debate, the question: what do we mean by the term 'Jungian Studies'? And what is the relation between clinical practitioners and non-clinical academics and students?

As Andrew Samuels (Jungian analyst and Professor of Analytical Psychology at Essex University, U.K.) puts it in his position statement on the IAJS website (Samuels, 2005):

'...in the end it is a choice between Analytical Psychology/Jungian Studies as a defined area centring on clinical (particularly analysts), practice, and a different conception of an academic field; one of liminal borders, flexible and oriented towards a creative approach to knowledge-making. A second related perspective on academia ... is to seek out the largely scientific body of research that might underpin or validate the essential premises of analytic practice for a sceptical modern age. Such research is likely to be focused upon neurology and psychology, perhaps seeking additional resources from philosophy.'

WHO – IF ANYBODY – OWNS JUNG?

There is a well-known paper by the Jungian scholar Jean Knox (Knox, 2007) which examines this question in detail. Jean proposes a list of Jung's 'signature concepts':

- The self as an organising psychic structure.
- Archetypes and the collective unconscious.
- The dissociative nature of the psyche and the formation of complexes.
- The unconscious as an active and purposive agent in individuation.
- The psyche as self-regulating - the transcendent function.
- Libido as neutral psychic energy, available for a number of purposes.
- Psychic imagery as symbols not signs, reflecting something as yet unknown.

(To which we might add Jung's clinical principle that one cannot exert influence unless one is available to be influenced.)

A Jungian analytical training ensures that these ontological insights both inform and are actualised within the candidate's training experience, through the process of personal analysis. But Jean also makes it clear that no organisation has a copyright or patent on any of these concepts. They belong to the world. And the *Proceedings* of this Conference give ample evidence of this.

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WHICH JUNG?

Giles Clark, in his response to David Tacey (this volume) when considering the question 'can the academy teach Jung?' asks the further pertinent question 'which Jung?'

While there is some historical substance in the classification that Andrew Samuels (Samuels, 1985) proposed two decades ago of a distinction between

three major schools or approaches to the training and practice of analytical psychology: the Classical tradition of Jung and the Zurich school; the Developmental approach of Michael Fordham in London; and the Archetypal perspective so eloquently articulated by James Hillman, my colleagues and I have argued elsewhere (Petchkovsky, San Roque and Bescow, 2003) that the post-post-Jungian world is now so diverse that it can no longer be said that any ‘one Jungian “method”, “school” or metapsychology ...can claim centrality’. The best we could claim, at that time, was a ‘Jungian sensibility’ with its love of art and the transpersonal, its telic thrust, and its distaste for reductionist explanations of the person.

This ‘Jungian sensibility’ has obvious appeal to the arts and humanities; both David Tacey and David Russell in their contributions spoke to the influence of James Hillman and the archetypal approach, for example, in their orientation to university teaching. And at the centre of the Jungian sensibility, that very quality of intersubjective engagement, whether in the clinic, teaching or field-research of anthropology, was present in each conference contribution, and made for a vibrantly engaging event.

THE CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

From the clinical perspective, the highlights of the Conference were the challenging and confrontational papers by two senior ANZSJA analysts, Peter Fullerton and Giles Clark. Both Peter and Giles, it should be said, work out of a post-Jungian developmental sensibility, informed by psychoanalytic embodiment paradigms, and bring their uniqueness to this task. Both papers focused on the analyst’s painful, often somatic, and sometimes almost unendurable countertransference as masterful demonstrations of the ‘uses of subjective experience’ in the therapeutic consulting room. Peter, focussing on the festering but potentially fertile impact of the wound of a couple’s relational dysfunction; Giles, on the sickening shock of interrelationships between

the borderline and narcissistic agony of his more damaged analysands. Both opened the question of what it may mean to ‘choose to be made to have to think through’ (Clark this volume) these abysmal states of being.

JUNGIAN THOUGHT AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Here we must take issue with Patricia Cohen’s (Cohen, 2007) claim that psychoanalytic clinicians would be hard put to see the point of psychoanalytic investigations of colonialism. Not in Australia! Our conference was marked by a significant contribution from the anthropological domain. Anthropologist Jadran Mimica both presented a major paper and responded to two clinical papers; ANZSJA clinician and anthropologist Leslie Devereaux presented a paper; John Morton, a Freudian/psychoanalytic anthropologist opened the second panel discussion and ANZSJA member Craig San Roque contributed a paper to these *Proceedings* after speaking to it during the second panel. All engaged in various ways with issues of post-colonialist critique and repair, as prompted by Jung’s quoted concern about the loss of immersion in a nature imbued with subjectivity.

Jadran Mimica’s passionate, ur-eloquent, and very deeply confronting presentations (and images) of his immersion field-work in Papua New Guinea with funerary practices were probably the most powerful.

Leslie Devereaux brought a soft and deeply sensitive influence to the group both in her paper and her panel interactions. Again, the theme of personal impact on the practitioner was re-explored, both in a transcultural setting, as she described her challenging experience of immersion field-work in a Mayan village as a young anthropologist, and as contemporary clinician.

Craig San Roque’s poetic essay on Miles Franklin Award-winning author Alexis Wright’s novel *Carpentaria* is also informed by his many years of immersion in the indigenous field in Central Australia, including the impact

of ‘country’, and walytja the ‘psychosocial ecosystem’ so central to indigenous ontology, but also arguably to our own, however much we might disown it. Craig has enlarged the countertransferential intersubjective theme to consider phenomena of collective, inter-cultural countertransference, and this is developed in his paper and other publications (San Roque, 2005).

THE TRANSCENDENT

Spirituality in its broadest sense of personal encounter or the subjectivity of engagement with transcendent processes was a recurring theme. Readers will see this especially well developed in papers by David Tacey, David Russell and Brendon Stewart (the leading figures in the unique University of Western Sydney Masters of Analytical Psychology programme and its attempts, including drawing on Jungian experiential paradigms, to address this domain in a university setting).

David Haynes, in his contribution to the first panel, also gave a very warm, engaging and impressive oral presentation to the theme of the transcendent in a university setting but was unable to submit a written version of this contribution to the *Proceedings*.

JUNG AND PEDAGOGY

In this Conference, we found that the ‘new corporatism’ of university culture was also a recurring theme, from both presenters and the floor. Given increasing interest in Jungian thought among students from various backgrounds, there was obviously a constituency out there in the broader student community, or a ‘market’, to lapse into ‘new corporate-speak’. By the same token, the strategic and structural changes brought about by the ‘new corporatism’ had been inimical to anything not clearly connected with economic impera-

tives, and humanities departments had suffered. ‘Market’ is anathema to the Jungian opus of individuation (and its opposition to mass consumerism) and to Jungian engagements with the transcendent (as opposed to materialist reductionism). Peter Bishop’s elegiac exploration of alternative visions to that of global corporate capitalist hegemony in his paper ‘The Death of Shangri-la’ exemplified how a mythopoeic imagination may be brought to global socio-cultural reflections in gently provocative ways.

The university exists to teach. Presentations by David Tacey, David Russell and Brendon Stewart gave detailed and subtle consideration to how Jung might be taught in a university setting. There are obvious and inherent tensions between the necessities of an academic milieu and the experientially-based learning that characterises clinical analytic training. See, especially, David Tacey’s tersely titled ‘Teaching Jung in the University’.

It is often forgotten that engaged teaching has a deeply subjective experiential side, as does engaged learning. Teaching cannot be confined or reduced to narrow cognitive models. Nor can the realm of Jungian thought be confined to the clinic, even if Marie Louise Von Franz thought Jung had no place in the university (Tacey, this volume). Conversely, our university-based presenters reminded us that the drive to personal growth takes place in the classroom without benefit of formal Jungian analysis – or indeed any therapy – the university, as nurturer of scholarship, is also a ‘facilitating environment’. See Judith Pickering’s panel contribution as she addresses this theme. Yet the clinic, striving to improve the lot of its patients, is more concerned with practical outcomes; another area of intrinsic and necessary tension between the clinic and the classroom.

An area of exploration that time did not allow for in this Conference was a public articulation from ANZSJA practitioners about how they envisaged (and effected) various teaching (and scholarship) tasks relevant to clinical training and practice and the ways in which our various members have con-

tributed to university courses. It is my personal hope that a further conference might take the opportunity to explore this important area. I rather suspect that such opportunities for depth reflection and public articulation might make for even deeper and more appreciative interactions between clinic and campus.

THE FUTURE

This Conference gave us the opportunity to celebrate both past achievements and current strengths - working relationships, clinical approaches, localised Australia/Oceania cultural and social issues etc. At the conclusion of the Conference I took the opportunity to make a brief position statement with respect to what I see as a potential future direction for depth psychology research. The future, as I have already said, will include hard considerations of efficacy ('evidence base') and validity. The latter, especially, is closely tied to advances in physiological psychology and brain imaging which promise to unveil the bio-substrate of subjective experience in ever greater detail. This, in turn, will open the way for tracking the efficacy (or otherwise) of depth psychological treatments neurophysiologically, a much more credible outcomes measure than the questionnaires of the psychological outcomes industry. Our understanding of the dance between brain function and the inner world is, in the view of colleagues like psychoanalyst/neuropsychologist Mark Solms (Solms, 2002), the current major growth area in the field.

Jungian psychology might be advantageously placed here, largely because Jung's theory of complexes is paradoxically the most biologically embedded of all the psychoanalytic models. This bold assertion is unpacked in a brief working paper by the author in these *Proceedings* ('A Work in Progress: Some preliminary reflections on the biological substrate of meaning-making') where the relationship of Jungian thought to the biosciences and Jungian contributions to the 'neuropsychanalysis' project promoted by Solms are noted. Here

in Australia ANZSJA member Robert Bosnak, not present with us at the Conference, has written about his ‘neuropsychanalytic project’: the psychophysical correlates of dream experience and dream recall (Bosnak, 2004).

And as we begin to understand ever more closely the biophysical substrate of this process of meaning-making in dream and complexed association, the conclusion that the Jungian opus could be an important part of this 21st Century thrust is inescapable, in my view at any rate.

IN CONCLUSION

Many participants reflected back to me that they found this Conference “the most alive they had attended in decades”. The neurophysiologist in me reflected: those subliminal cues, the enigmatic signifiers of Frosh and Pontalis (Frosh, 2002), were clearly active and humming, enlivening the debate. And this in turn generated connections at many levels, connections of meaning, connections of beings. And with each connection, a dopamine surge, which further facilitated meaning-making, resulted in a veritable cascade. Just when we had thought it could not possibly get any better, the next presentation would disabuse us. By the end of the weekend, we felt pleasantly buffeted, as if we had survived a spectacular fireworks display.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Deep gratitude must also go to our co-editors and ANZSJA members Amanda Dowd and Craig San Roque, who have brought that rare combination of high poetic sensibility and attention to detail and praxis to this work.

This is also an opportunity to extend our especial appreciation of the passionate engagement in the Jungian domain over the years of David Tacey and colleagues at La Trobe University and David Russell and Brendon Stewart at the University of Western Sydney. The UWS project of which David Russell speaks in his paper ‘Analytical Psychology as a Spiritual Practice: an Australian Perspective’, as many may be aware, is in the process of closing. It was, to quote my colleague Craig San Roque who contributed to this project along with others (see his Response to David Russell’s and Brendon Stewart’s papers, this volume) “a bold experiment in exploring, developing and applying depth psychological experience vigorously in an educational milieu”. We mourn its passing.

On behalf of ANZSJA I would also like to extend our warmest wishes to David Russell on his retirement, and look forward to further contributions from him as opportunity opens.

Apart from re-stating my enormous appreciation and gratitude for the contributors to the Conference and these *Proceedings*, I will avoid further gratuitous commentary on this collection of quite extraordinary papers, and leave the reader to judge for themselves. Enjoy, critique, contribute.

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NOTES

1. ANZSJA – the Australian New Zealand Society of Jungian Analysts – is best understood as a professional guild. It was established in 1977 and is the clinical and professional organisation responsible for the training and professional development and support of psychoanalytic practitioners of Jungian Analysis in the Australasian region. ANZSJA is a member of the IAAP (see Note 2) and a member of the psychoanalytic psychotherapy section of PACFA (the Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia; see www.pacfa.org.au). For further information on our organisation and training, please see our website: www.anzsja.org.au.
2. IAAP – The International Association of Analytical Psychology – was established in 1953 and is the umbrella body for Jungian analytical professional and training organisations worldwide. See www.iaap.org.
3. IAJS – The International Association of Jungian Studies – was established in 2003. It holds conferences every three years, the most recent in Zurich in July 2008. For further information please see www.jungianstudies.org.