

Response

to David Tacey

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I was initially surprised to hear that such culturally capacious classical Jungians as Marie-Louise von Franz (and others) thought that ‘analytical psychology in its clinical practice owned Jung’. I thought that there was a family culture shared by von Franz, her school and Hillmanian archetypal psychologists; and I knew that the latter most certainly do not think that Jung ought to be kept to the consulting room, but that his psychology and therapy is a far wider endeavour. So it was good to hear Andrew Samuels, David and others argue that ‘we cannot bracket out Jungian studies from the university curriculum on the grounds that the clinicians have exclusive ownership of this knowledge’. I have myself much valued and enjoyed teaching the History of Ideas to the Jungian MA course at the University of Western Sydney: an analyst teaching a non-clinical, academic subject outside my professional field.

I have always felt, and argued, that a subject or field can draw upon another discipline as a secondary source to try to help itself, but that the borrowing subject had better not claim to usefully teach the drawn-upon discipline anything. They do not need me or us, unless they ask for such support. For example, I use certain philosophies and philosophers to enhance my analytic thinking, but I certainly do not think philosophers need Jung, Freud or

any form of psychoanalysis. Similarly, some Jungian analysts and academics utilise neuroscience, but neuroscience/neuroscientists certainly do not need Jung! This is, or would be, an embarrassingly arrogant imperialism and ‘deformation professional’.

Until reading and hearing David’s seminal paper I often wondered and worried about, not ‘can’, but ‘how does’ the academy teach Jung? And, what or which Jung? And how to do this without the process becoming a wild therapy of group and individual? Since Jungian studies are bound to touch and evoke deep psychic disturbances, confusions and desires, how are these to be managed and how do they fit into academic processes, requirements and goals? The study of Jungian and post-Jungian psychology with those who initially know little or nothing, let alone those who are already epistemophilically curious and interested (for some reason or another), is bound to become an emotionally-loaded, demanding and difficult therapeutic endeavour at some level; the problem is that it cannot be dealt with analytically by academic teachers within an academic setting.

Well, David has gone a good way to addressing and answering these tricky matters. There is much I can take up and support enthusiastically. I like his typology of rationalists, intuitives and withdrawers; I like the idea of Jung as a neo-Platonic disturber of the Aristotelian academic mind; I am, as always, roused by the issue of the numinous, the religious or spiritual dimension, and ‘soul-making’; I am intrigued by his taxonomy of Jungian studies and its archetypal ‘rulers’ - especially since this aims to demonstrate how rational and respectable Jungian psychology is! And, as for David’s comparative and critical approach to the ‘revolutionary wisdom’ of the not-only-antiquarian vitality of neo-Platonism, soul-speak, alchemy and so on - this is a carefully thought-through and creatively explained perspective on such controversial matters.

At the beginning of his book, *The Analytic Experience*, Neville Symington writes:

‘Psychoanalysis cannot be taught. ... Psychoanalysis is a phenomenon which occurs at the centre of the individual. So when I say you cannot be taught psychoanalysis it is because it can occur only through a personal act of understanding.... Psychoanalysis is not a thing; it is a complex reality which is both intrapsychic and interpersonal, both individual and social. I can try to describe it, I can lead you to it, but you have to experience the reality of it.’
(p.15)

Yet, in distinction to the practice and experience of analysis, ‘Jung’s psychology’, by which I mean his creative construction of relatively coherent theories out of (1) personal-subjective or temperamental-emotional; (2) intellectual-cultural; (3) interpersonal psychological and psychiatric experience - this vast psychology - is hugely open to critical and comparative study, to amendment and to further fruitful elaboration.

What is most vital about Jung is his extraordinary historical, cultural, philosophical and psychological breadth and depth. This attitude can blow open narrow and exclusive fundamentalism and dogmatism, in all these intellectual and value-laden fields, including clinical theories - and perhaps practices? It is in this capacious sense, and only in this sense, that I am a Jungian, and it underlies everything I shall go on to say.

I would suggest that Jung might nowadays be of most interest to serious critical studies within a historical and cultural context: for example as a seminal part of the development of early twentieth century psychotherapy, theories of the mind, history of ideas, historical and current philosophical and religious debates, critical and comparative cultural studies etc. So I reckon that David and other academics are actually ‘better and bigger’ Jungians than most analytic clinicians.

Under the aegis of 'Studies in Jungian Psychology' the main subjects might include: the Self/self and the structure of the dynamic psyche; psychic reality, complexes and images; psychic disturbances; psychic experience; psychic relations; finding or making meaning; the development and nature of the symbolising function and its problems; and the critical study of these subjective-objects, including their relation to body and matter - and to relations.

For me, Jung's most important *clinical and cultural* contributions are his study of, and hypotheses about, the personal symbolising function, its disturbances and healing, and the depths and breadth of comparative cultural symbolisations. This is an area that clinicians meet in their daily encounter with emotional stress and struggles for order and meaning; and it must be what academic Jungians deal with in their creative and critical thinking about Jung's psychology, in questioning their own objects of curiosity, and in the nature and management of their students' motivations, processes, problems and goals.

Why I reckon that Jung is well suited to the academy is that I think he created more of a 'school of psychological wisdom', rather than a 'school of suspicion' and hence of subtle clinical technique. The classical Jungian method of amplifying and archetypalising psychic content, especially images, dreams and fantasies, rather than interpreting and linking them to current relations and so to the forces of unconscious personal history, can sometimes either energise psychotic content and/or enhance magical defences against delusional ideation, or it can be used defensively to re-inforce both the patient's and the analyst's grandiose narcissistic defenses.

Jung's emphasis on the primacy of subjective internal imagos, sub-personalities or complexes, can seem overly intra-psychic, too solipsistic, an emphasis on content, and so a preclusion of internalised relational forces and of deeply patterned responses and reactions which are reconstellated and repeated through later (and transferential) desires and defenses. It is a real problem that

there is no Jungian baby - or it was until we stole Klein's and Winnicott's babies.

It was once thought to be helpful for a person to learn that their unconsciously derived imagery and phantasy is 'typical' and belongs to a deep universal and historical psychic patterning. My clinical experience has been that beyond an initial narcissistic searching for and identification with idealised self-objects, people are often not helped at all by such an inflated and impersonal bolstering of false self-ideation. People both need and want an observation and analysis of their personal and idiosyncratic internalised family demons and wounds, and hence to slowly come to dare; dare to see and feel their way through their illusions, delusions and self-defeating defences, and to develop their own mind.

For some of us, Jung's definitive names for psychic sub-personalities or affective internal part-relations (anima, animus, shadow etc.) are now both too un-particular and too impersonally general, and so have become a useless or deadening language. They incline towards false reification and magic hypostatization. Perhaps, though, here again this privileging of the intra-psychic was conditioned by his experience of severely psychotic and schizophrenic patients, rather than of more normal neuroses? Do academic theoreticians agree with me here? Do any analysts?

Jung best offers a hypothetical but subjectively or experientially qualifiable metapsychology, an analysis of human natures, a dynamic model of psychic structures, and an interpretative amplification of culture from a psychological perspective; this is all well suited to the rigours of academic critical and creative thinking.

But for me, Jung does not say nearly so much that is of practical use to analysts:

1. He does not come up with many techniques or practices or explanations as to why certain responses work and/or what to do and what not to do.
2. Jung often seems to privilege essences over relations; teleological purpose over effective cause; impersonal meaning over personal links; amplification over interpretation.

I suppose it must be a matter of the use we make of Jung, and/or our taste, our values and/or our beliefs that ultimately determines our relation to these issues. Who shares Jung's weighting of personal and collective, a Jungian privileging of the latter? I don't know. But I am again struck by the thought that overtly Jungian thinkers like David, supported by his experience with persons (students) specifically thinking about and being affected by and developing Jung's ideas, are working in a much more Jungian culture than are many analysts and can be well-honed in such a discourse.

Returning, now, to the psycho-political debate around teaching Jung in academe. The psycho-political tension here is surely around perceptions, fantasies and fears of power and territory, including the ownership of ideas, which in its primitive iteration becomes an idea of the ownership of Jung. My own initial response to 'who owns Jung?' was - who cares? But then I realised that actually it depends upon which Jung? Or, rather, Jung put to which use? There are different Jungs put to different uses.

When it becomes a matter of who owns Jung as the name that goes with the clinical practice of Analytical Psychology, then I find that, actually, I do care, especially if unqualified others use his imprimatur thus.

Perhaps an issue here is also who treats Jung and his ideas as a self-object realm. This has to do with attachments and values, with a certain relativism and mourning. As I have said, I think that some academic Jungians pay much more attention and attach far more importance to Jung and Jungiana than

do many analysts, particularly non-classical post-Jungian clinicians. Speaking entirely for myself, Jung, the idea of Jung and Jungian psychology are no longer objects with which or whom I primarily identify. 'Jungian analyst' and 'Jungian analysis' are the two terms that define my public professional identity.

Otherwise I do not identify myself via Jung; I am post-Jungian in that I trained under the auspices of Jungian analysts and a Jungian body and belong to a local and to an international Jungian professional association, but Jung's psychology is no longer a dominant intellectual culture for either my clinical theory or practice. I have so much internalised a whole crowd of other and different theoretical ideas, explanations, experiences, relations and thoughts that I do not look to any one's mind in particular. In fact, I feed and inform my mind with certain philosophers/ies as much as with clinical theorists and practitioners.

I suggest, however, that there are several commonalities that usefully straddle post-Jungian practice and post-Jungian studies where the academic can teach didactically and 'educate' through Socratic doubt, evoking critical thought - neither of which an analyst can do; and through which analysts can filter their clinical experience so as to help amend and develop their practical theory.

One, which I have already mentioned, is the matter of the symbolising function, its formation and its disturbances: the emergence and problems of 'self'. Other tricky and controversial areas include 'individuation' in distinction to the analysis of problems through the transference; amplification in distinction to interpretation; the religious attitude; the usefulness of the idea of the archetypes and archetypal images.

Of continuing significance are Jung's hypotheses around internal, as well as cultural (and social?), motivation and value, in other words, his relevance to the wellsprings of ethics. Can there be there a Jungian contribution to Value

Ethics or indeed to the background of a Ratiocentric Ethics as the philosopher John Cottingham (in *Philosophy and the Good Life*) suggests?

Psychic reality as unconscious fantasy should surely be open to conscious doubt, critical thinking, linking and interpretation, and not swallowed wholesale as more than something arising out of unconscious experience; or do Jungians believe otherwise? In what way do we all believe in, evaluate and react to the autonomous other object within? The psychic reality of teleology is a fantasy of teleology, subjectively an idealist part of animal faith, but actually very precarious; etc. etc.

And finally, the 'numinous'. Neville Symington warns of the dangerous inference of Jung's assertion (which is anyhow philosophically erroneous) that 'the numinosum, the outer reality, is identical with the 'consentium gentium', which, in its turn, is an objective reality'.

For those who believe and feel that the numinous is *more and other* than psychically real fantasies and feelings, partly based on early object experience, a particular pleasurable aesthetic affectivity, a particular poetic sensibility and creativity, a terrible beauty, a psychic maker of personal meaning and therefore a (supremely?) valuable and ethically good internal object (and/or subject-state), well, so be it. For those of us who believe that this is a good enough human-centred explanation of the experience of what some call the Divine, well, may God save us.

REFERENCES

- Cottingham, John (1998) *Philosophy and the Good Life*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press
 Symington, Neville (1986) *The Analytic Experience*, New York, St. Martin's Press