

## Teaching Jung in the University

Perhaps it would not be too much to say that the most crucial problems of the individual and society turn upon the way the psyche functions in regard to spirit and matter. (1947/1954 CW 8: 251)

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### A. Jung in the Academy

#### 1. intellectual knowledge and intuitive experience

As a university student in the early 1970s, I was exposed to Jung's thought as it were 'off-campus', in various books and journals that were not on the curriculum, and in conversations with non-academic individuals. I found his work fascinating and wondered why it was not on any of my university courses, and certainly not in psychology, philosophy or literature, my three selected disciplines. When I tried to explore the exclusion of Jung from the university I was told by a couple of Jungian analysts who lived in Perth and Sydney that Jung did not belong in the university and is best not taught there. One of the strongest advocates of this view was Marie-Louise von Franz, who wrote to me from Zurich that Jung in the university might degenerate into a 'head trip' (1976). That is, he might become an object of purely intellectual study, and the emotional and psychological process that makes Jung's work meaningful – namely, one's own personal encounter with unconscious contents – would be missing. Effectively, this view maintained that analytical psychology in its clinical practice *owned* Jung, and universities could not participate in this ownership, since they could only view Jung externally and superficially, and not from the inside.

Searching through the literature to find explicit statements about the clinical ownership of Jung is a difficult process, and yields few results. Mostly, this problem is expressed in personal remarks and letters, and not in the public domain. Andrew Samuels, however, can always be relied on to be outspoken about what others do not divulge. In his Preface to *Post-Jungian Criticism*, Samuels writes:

Certain analysts say that academics cannot really feel or suffer complex emotions because of their precocious intellectual development, which vitiates empathy and sensitivity. As this character assassination of the typical academic continues, she or he cannot really understand most of the concepts derived from Jungian psychology, because their provenance, and certainly their utility, are matters on which only practicing clinicians can rule. (Samuels 2004: xi-xii)

Samuels is a psychoanalyst and a clinical professor who is sticking up for academics, whereas I am an academic who wishes to support the analysts. I agree

with Samuels that we cannot bracket out Jungian studies from the university curriculum, on the grounds that the clinicians have exclusive ownership of this knowledge. However, I tend to agree with analysts who object to the purely intellectual and therefore incomplete and inauthentic deployment of Jungian psychology in a university setting.

In his writings and interviews Jung made many disparaging remarks about universities and academic knowledge. In his famous tribute to Richard Wilhelm, Jung scolded the universities and said that, due to 'sterile rationalism', they have forfeited the right to appear as 'disseminators of light' (1930: 86). Time and again Jung accuses the universities of lacking the breadth of vision to grasp the meaning of his analytical psychology. Although I appreciate Andrew Samuels sticking up for my colleagues and me, I think that, in this case, his defence of academic culture is misplaced. The so-called 'character assassination' of the 'typical academic', or rather, the *stereotypical academic*, is probably a good thing, and something that needs to occur. We in academia would learn more by listening to Jung's attack than by attempting to protect ourselves from it. Many of us are aware of the one-sided nature of academic life, and see the need for change to occur. We are aware that we are not educating the whole person, that the intuitive side of human experience is bracketed out, and much is not being engaged in our students' lives as well as in the cultures that we attempt to interpret.

Some education theorists are trying to address this problem, including Bernie Neville in Australia and Jack Miller in Canada, but I am not sure that the system is changing. The students themselves want change, but often their complaints fall on deaf ears. Sometimes they use their favourite word, 'spirituality', to describe what is missing in the university system. By *spirituality* they don't mean anything otherworldly or spooky, but they are referring to the absence of intuition, creativity, spontaneity, pattern-thinking, feeling, emotion, affect – in short the 'right hemisphere' of the brain seems to be missing in our system. It is not correct to say that 'subjectivity' or 'subjective experience' is missing, because there is a great deal of subjective content, especially in the way universities encourage students to introduce their opinions, ideologies and beliefs into the classroom. Since the early impact of feminism, universities have been open to the idea that the 'personal is political', that is, the personal is valuable, necessary and should be included.

## **2. intuitive students as outsiders**

However, a certain kind of personal experience is still not included – the right-brain dimension of the subjective is not welcomed into essays or discussions. Academics will ask for proof, for reasons for believing an idea or concept, and if the sources of the idea are merely intuitive, it will be dismissed as arbitrary and without foundation. This is perhaps changing among younger academics, who have been exposed not only to the feminist revolution but to the postmodern revolution. Subjectivity and its intuitive depths is more acceptable to a rising

generation of thinkers who have been brought up in a fluid, uncertain and complex world, in which simple answers are distrusted and exploration is welcomed. But the reception of intuitive knowledge in the academy is very much dependent upon the personality type of the academic concerned, and whether or not a certain level of 'negative capability' has been acquired in his or her development.

Intuitive students have several responses to the rationalism of the academy. One is to shut down their intuition in this environment, and play the academic game at a cognitive level. This means a large part of them is suppressed and does not come out to play. They sense academic rigidities and this narrows their horizons and their range of enquiry. Some become cynical and vow to recommence their more intuitive education once they have completed their studies and have been awarded their degree. They become less involved in their studies, and manage to do enough to pass the subjects and graduate, often with low grades. Others dig in their heels and become dogmatic, asserting their right to believe in this or that religion or esoteric system, such as astrology for instance, and they go into battle against academic culture, often to their detriment. If their intuitive system is defensively bolstered, it can become inflexible and immune to the educational process. Hidden behind a barrier of resistance, their belief is beyond the range of criticism and remains in a primitive condition, not benefiting from the dialectic of critical exchange.

Still other students withdraw from their studies and drop out from university, deciding that it is not for them. I have observed this pattern time and again. In this case, the university does not benefit from the challenge of intuitive students. If the university is to grow and develop, it has to enter into dialogue with the non-rational. If it believes it already has the answers, it is failing as an educational system and is no longer open to the new elements that could transform it. It is true that postmodernism has taught academics to be receptive to the Other and to whatever it has to bring. But as we saw with the realm of subjectivity, the Other that is capable of being admitted to the academy is heavily determined by the ethos of the time. The Other, for instance, as foreign students, foreign cultures, foreign languages is accepted, but the Other as the non-rational, the intuitive or spiritual side is kept out, unable to be assimilated by the dominant consciousness. To paraphrase Donald Rumsfeld, there are the known unknowns that the system can handle. Then there are the unknown unknowns that remain at the edge, and are governed by taboo. Even an ideology that pretends to embrace the unknown and to accept what has been marginalised is unable to bring in everything into its orbit.

### **3. unseen forces and the intuitive vision**

Jungian psychology is still far too scary and unknown to be able to be drawn into the centre of knowledge. What Jung does is disturbing to any system of secular knowledge. He deconstructs and relativises the human subject that seeks knowledge and enlightenment. Our seeking for knowledge is experienced as

primary and secure, but for Jung it is secondary and uncertain. Prior to our seeking, there are forces at work in the psyche that seek us and that invite us into a conversation. For Jung, our search for knowledge is impoverished and truncated if we fail to appreciate that there are forces that seek us. We are not only active subjects in a quest for knowledge, but passive objects of forces that hold sway over us, conditioning our minds and limiting what we can know. Jung's is a neo-Platonic challenge to the Aristotelian academy, and his challenge shakes the foundations of the academy to the core. Much like Derrida or Levinas, Jung doubts the solidity of our knowing, and he doubts the value of our knowing if we fail to discern the forces that shape us.

The real problem Jung poses to the academy is suggested in this passage of his late writings:

In the realm of consciousness we are our own masters; we seem to be the 'factors' themselves. But if we step through the door of the shadow we discover with terror that we are the objects of unseen factors. To know this is decidedly unpleasant, for nothing is more disillusioning than the discovery of our own inadequacy. It can even give rise to primitive panic, because, instead of being believed in, the anxiously-guarded supremacy of consciousness, which is in truth one of the secrets of human success, is questioned in the most dangerous way. (1934/54: 49)

The academy operates mainly in the heroic mode, developing the boundaries of knowledge and science, inspiring the knowing subject with confidence, and presenting the world as a puzzle to be solved. It uses heroic metaphors such as 'conquering' the unknown, 'exploding' myths of the past, and 'extending' its borders. A successful Phd is a work which goes to the frontiers and pushes forward the perimeter of the known world. This, to paraphrase Jung, is one of the secrets of human success. But Jungian thought 'questions' this enterprise in 'the most dangerous way'. Jung says that to take unseen forces into account induces not only resistance and defensiveness, but primitive panic. He is claiming that forces which cannot be seen or proved are observing us, and to the heroic ego this looks like a paranoid viewpoint that has to be defeated, or a medieval superstition that has to be exposed as unscientific.

What makes the situation of Jungian thought more difficult is that we only gain 'evidence' for the existence of these unseen factors indirectly, via the subjective experience of dreams, fantasies, intuitions, hunches, visions – and these forms of mental activity are viewed as suspect or invalid by an heroic consciousness. Jung's sense of conviction comes from the night side of the psyche, from its lunar or starry aspect, whereas the university is driven by solar knowing that arises from the clear light of day: empirical world, laboratory testing, evidence-based research. The world of solar knowing has the opportunity to open its borders to the wisdom of the night, the knowledge of the underworld and the unconscious, or it can shut down its borders and declare such wisdom to be mysticism and superstition. Postmodernism presents the best opportunity that has ever occurred to Jungian thought. If the prevailing knowledge can see that its

embrace of the Other has to include the subterranean, the intuitive and the non-rational, then Jung is automatically in favour. The poetics of being, and the shadowy forces of psyche and cosmos, are revealed only under the partial, fragmentary and liminal glow of the starry night.

#### **4. who trains the teachers?**

It is undoubtedly the case that the royal road to gaining knowledge of the unconscious remains psychoanalytic psychotherapy. When, in 1982, I was fortunate enough to win a post-doctoral fellowship to the United States, I elected to work with James Hillman in Dallas. I was not sure at the time just what our relationship would be – I suppose I envisaged some supervisory sessions, and that Hillman would read my current writings and comment on them. Hopefully, there would be seminars on depth psychology, dream workshops and others writers and analysts to talk to. Neither of us really knew what a ‘post-doctoral’ relationship meant, or what it might entail. After a month of these arrangements, Hillman admitted that I would probably find going into analysis with him to be more fruitful and rewarding than merely ‘talking about’ the unconscious in our intellectual meetings. I wrote to my sponsors in New York and asked if they would agree to the new arrangement. But I was careful not to use the terms *patient* or *client* in describing my new relationship with Hillman. This would not have met the criteria of the postdoctoral award and did not sound academic enough!

It is true that I gained much insight into the workings of the unconscious through my experience of psychotherapy. The subjective experience remains a primary window onto the so-called ‘objective’ psyche and the collective unconscious. Although I can hardly insist that my colleagues who want to teach Freud or Jung should go into analysis, I do not know how I would have gained the necessary insights for my academic career without the experience of being – let’s face it – a *patient* in psychotherapy. I know some of my academic colleagues who do go into analysis, but it is mentioned in hushed and quiet tones, as if a dark secret that should not be made public. Certainly, the whole idea about how academics can qualify themselves to teach Jung in the university has not been discussed at any level, either in the universities or in the training institutes. Many of us are self-proclaimed authorities, and this raises ethical and intellectual problems which will have to be dealt with. Even my brush with analysis did not necessarily ‘qualify’ me to teach Jung, and no one was asked to judge my analysis or determine whether or not it was successful.

#### **5. an experiment in teaching**

After returning to Australia from the United States, I took up an academic post at La Trobe University in Melbourne, and met there a colleague in Philosophy, Robert Farrell, who suggested we should join forces and establish a semester course in Jungian psychology. I was based in the English Department, but we conducted our teaching experiment in a program called Interdisciplinary

Studies. This seemed like an ideal place to teach Jung, whose work and vision encompass at least eight disciplines, including psychology, classical studies, mythological studies, comparative religion, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, and the history of ideas.

Indeed, one of the reasons why Jung is not taught in the university is because his work does not fit any specific academic discipline. Staff in psychology are likely to refer to it as religious studies, and lecturers in religious studies are likely to say that it is science and not religion. Philosophers regard the work of Jung as not squarely in the philosophical tradition, and Jung himself often said that his work was not philosophy but empirical science. However, the empirical scientists are likely to point to the highly speculative, intuitive, and philosophical nature of Jung's enquiry. As a doctoral candidate in Jungian studies, I was moved back and forward from English to Anthropology, to Psychology, and eventually back to English Literature. The psychology professor referred to Jung as a 'literary critic', and thus I incorporated the work into literary studies.

Jung's solitary confinement to the Arts and Humanities is, let us hope, temporary. It is an interesting place for him to be, but he cannot be confined to these disciplines. He is more than myth and literature; he is, or represents, an amalgam of mythos and logos, story and science. In truth, he does not belong to the Arts faculty or to the Science faculty – he belongs to both. He belongs to a university system that does not yet exist, one in which the whole of life is studied and taken seriously. Jung is the scientist and artist of life integration. His thinking is organic, holistic, literary, and scientific. As such, there is no available box or category for him. He is a scholar in the grand style, and his extraordinary breadth makes most academics feel humbled. Academics are often said to know more and more about less and less, but Jung works in reverse: his momentum is centrifugal, encompassing more fields in a desire to understand human reality.

There is always the grave danger, however, that such a colossal intellect, which seemingly fits everywhere, will be said to belong nowhere. Like God in creation, Jung in the academy can almost be said to be *felt everywhere* and *seen nowhere*. I think when integrative sciences finally emerge in our universities, which they must with the rise of ecological and organic thinking, we will find that Jung will eventually find his place in a new paradigm of knowledge that will appreciate his synthetic style and encompassing worldview.

Robert Farrell and I called our subject 'Jungian psychology', but there was a protest from the Psychology department that we were encroaching on their territory. I responded to this protest with a brief lecture on the etymology of the word *psychology*, pointing out its true meaning as the *logos of the psyche* or *soul*, and suggesting to the Psychology department that they had left *psyche* out of the study of human behaviour. This protest was dropped, and we were free to develop our own subject, although it was noted that our students were frequently defecting from Psychology to Interdisciplinary Studies. In due course, Psychology dropped

its antagonism, and decided to include us in its range of subject choices, so that students majoring in Psychology could study Jung as part of their behavioural science degree. We could not be defeated, and so we were incorporated.

As Robert and I designed our subject, we spoke about many things including the objection of Marie-Louise von Franz: How could we do this so that it did not become a mere head trip, which lost the value and intensity of Jung's vision? Obviously, we could not play the role of *de facto* therapists in the academic setting, and yet we both agreed that this subject would need to be *different*. Neither of us had the time, energy, or expertise to engage the students' interior processes, and yet we agreed that we might be able to teach the subject in such a way that the nonrational dimension of life could be incorporated and assumed into the subject.

Robert Farrell and I have taught the Jung subject for nearly twenty years, and we feel that we have done so with reasonably good results. I am not talking about results in the narrow sense of high grades, but in the deeper and more important sense of having encouraged our students to engage the unconscious and to take the nonrational side of their experience seriously. We have concluded that the success or otherwise of this teaching depends on the way Jung is taught and the attitude of the teacher. A Jung subject has to be taught with *psychological* intelligence, and this may not be the same as intellectual intelligence. If the teacher can be open to the depths of the psyche and receptive to its autonomous and living reality, then a certain 'reverence' toward the psyche can be found, which prevents the academic experience from falling into a head trip.

I believe there is a lot of *middle ground* to be explored between Jung as an object of intellectual enquiry and Jung as an approach to the psyche in therapy. I will later explore four approaches to teaching Jung that demonstrate the range of possible approaches to this academic challenge.

#### **6. the religious factor**

Every year, I teach scores of students who have a desire to discover the life of the unconscious, yet who cannot afford to go into analysis. There must be other ways to encounter the unconscious apart from the clinical model, especially if, as Jung often claimed, individuation is a *natural* process (1917/1926/1943: 187). In the past, there were numerous traditional methods to transcend the conscious realm and engage the unconscious, and these would include religious worship and spiritual practice, ritual and dance, artwork and poetry, romance and relationship, music and dreams. In other words, any form of human activity that is creative, intuitive, or open to the nonrational side is a potential site for the encounter with the unconscious. Of course, having that encounter monitored by someone with special knowledge is something that the clinical model has refined to an extraordinary degree, with its sensitivity to transference and unconscious contents.

The increasingly rational nature of modern life has had a destructive impact on our traditional forms of transcendence. Typically, the modern person has little

or no access to religion, to ritual or poetry, and even romance and relationship have become attenuated, commercialised, and clichéd. Many of our nonrational outlets and avenues have been blocked, devalued or destroyed. The question came to us in the late 1980s: How can we, as university teachers, help our students approach the unconscious in a creative way?

The academic teacher cannot engage the subjective or emotional process of every student. This is not possible, nor is it desirable. But my colleague and I found that a form of therapy does indeed take place in the classroom when Jung is taught with passion and concern. As soon as the teacher conveys a convincing sense that he or she is open to the depths of the psyche, to its existence and effects on us, something therapeutic happens in the classroom which is quite uncanny and moving. I have experienced this many times, and such moments are transformative for teachers and students alike. However, not all students are interested in exploring these depths in the classroom. Some found that our emphasis on trying to engage and connect with the unconscious was far too esoteric for their tastes. In other words, such students are not ready for an experience of the autonomy of the psyche and in this case no harm is done; but an opportunity has been missed or deferred until later.

There is of course a *religious* dimension to any experience of the autonomy of the psyche. When we acknowledge that we are in the presence of something greater than ourselves, something large and unseen, yet which 'sees us' (Jung 1934/54: 49), we are in the domain of religious or spiritual experience. We shift from being subjects who pursue knowledge for our own ends, to being objects of an invisible and autonomous reality. This obviously has to be handled carefully by teachers and students. To call into being, or into academic consideration, a numinous and powerful *other*, a life which lives us, which holds sway over us and to which we must listen or adhere, is to cultivate what Jung calls a *religious attitude*.

The main problem for the teacher is not to identify with the wisdom that is generated by this educational process. The teacher has to watch his or her reactions, and make sure that psychological inflation does not occur, that he or she does not become the classroom guru, the arrogant fount of all wisdom. Obviously, there is an inescapable sense of reward and personal elevation in introducing a sense of spirit into students' lives, but the teacher has to contain this feeling and not allow it to gain the upper hand. As soon as this feeling wins, we lose the educational plot, and our integrity is in jeopardy. It is fine to be an instrument of knowledge, but not to identify oneself with this knowledge and become grandiose.

For their part, students do not use Jung's term 'religious attitude', which does not seem to resonate with them. They speak instead about 'spirituality', and an invitation into a spiritual view of the world can trigger reactions of various kinds (Tacey 2004). Those students who are rationalistic may reject this invitation out of hand, and find it repellent, manipulative, or even anti-human. Those who

have a committed religious faith will possibly reject this new approach for opposite reasons, and say 'No thanks, I already have my religion and I don't need another one'. But the vast majority of my students are secular adults who have had no exposure to formal religion, or who had only a rudimentary religious upbringing that they shrugged off at some early stage in their development.

### **7. pedagogical problems in the teaching of Jung**

Many of these students are eager for a new experience of the numinous, and long to feel themselves connected to a sense of a greater *other*. This creates problems of its own, because Jungian psychology is not a religious faith, but rather an approach to the psyche which advocates a reverential attitude (Gundry 2006). Some students want to turn Jung himself into the religion they don't have or have never had. This approach can severely limit the capacity of the student to think critically. Instead, some adopt Jung as a religious system, and use the technical terms as articles of faith, speaking about the archetypes as if they were real objects in time and space, rather than metaphors for processes of the psyche.

Contact with the numinous, with what is infinite and *other*, is fraught with emotional reactions, resistances, defences, and enthusiasms. The stability of the ego is relativised and even threatened by the realisation that it is not the master of its house. Some students give away their ego authority too readily, while others defend against the *other* as from a hostile attack. Still others insist that the *other* is only to be found in heaven or in scriptures sanctified by orthodox religious authority. Some respond to the suggestion that the *other* can be found within as an outrageous expression of gnosticism or heresy.

I do not see Jung as an 'outbreak' of gnosticism which is designed to belittle religious traditions. His psychology provides an existential ground upon which the statements of faith can be tested. If anything, Jung's psychology adds weight and value to the religions, but they tend to respond with resistance because this internal dimension is feared. It is regarded as unorthodox or an acquired taste. The exception is where religious authorities have embraced the mystical sub-streams of their respective traditions. Jung's psychology is a science of the relations between the human person (the ego) and the God Within (the Self).

The numinous calls for a response, and mostly the educated ego in the West responds through resistance and denial. It is either dismissed as an *illusion* by rational minds, or viewed as a truth greater than literal truth by those who are religious. Either way, presenting a balanced apologetic to students in secular universities can be difficult. How will students respond? What emotions will the numinous arouse? How will it impact upon their present beliefs and attitudes? By the time most academics have reflected on these questions, they have realised that the task is too daunting, and it is best not to bother. As one academic said to me, 'To teach Jung is to look for trouble'.

Jung writes of the capacity of the unconscious to paralyse our critical faculty, and to hold us in its power (1928: 262). The same is true for the numinous, and for

those who speak on its behalf. It is not uncommon for some students to fall helplessly under Jung's spell, before they reach a more mature relationship to his ideas (Tacey 1997). But reaching this mature level can be difficult and time-consuming. It is hard to be objective about Jung, if one is responding principally through a complex, and not through the mind. It may take some time for the mind to catch up, because the complex works automatically and independently. Therefore, it is not surprising to discover that some students dismiss Jung's work as gobbledygook or mysticism, while others fall under its sway and are unable to take up a critical dialogue with it.

In such cases, fear and fascination of the numinous become difficult pedagogical issues. Do we have the capacity to deal with these responses in the university? Generally not, but if we are able to identify an emotional response as soon as possible, the teacher may have a chance to dialogue with it. In my experience, uncritical adulation is more common than hostile rejection. This can be contained by a sensitive teacher, but other faculty members are likely to point to this problem and announce that the Jung subject produces disciples and followers rather than critical readers. This may increase the academic prejudice that Jungians are part of what Richard Noll calls a 'worldwide cult' (1994: 3). Jung seems to act as a trigger to what I have called the spirituality complex of the secular West (Tacey 2004).

Once the spirituality complex is activated, it asks for objects of belief, and Jung is a likely target for such projections. But after the student has become adjusted to the reality of the spirit, he or she finds their way to religious, mythological, or cosmological attitudes and symbols, and Jung is let off the hook. Then Jung can be returned to reality, and seen as a scientific investigator of our human depths, rather than a god or idol. In technical terms, Jung acts as a transference object while we are sorting out our relationship with spirit. Jung activates and arouses our need to believe, which we hardly knew we had before, because this libido was withheld by the secular ego and rendered unconscious.

## **B. Teaching Styles**

### **8. towards a taxonomy of Jungian studies**

Over recent years, I have been travelling interstate and overseas to see how other academics are dealing with the challenge of teaching Jung in the university. In every case, the success or otherwise of our efforts seems to be determined by our approach to the numinous. If we ignore the numinous, as is sometimes found in academic study, and if we teach only the 'nuts and bolts' of Jung's psychology, we are not teaching him properly. Rather, we are excluding the essence of his approach, which relates to the experience of the numinous (Tacey 2006b).

But how do we, in the post-Christian West, in a university system governed by secular values, make the numinous convincing, real, and present? How do we handle our personal cynicism toward the unseen dimension? Just as importantly,

how do we educate ourselves to become critical of the numinous, rather than fall for it with unthinking devotion? How can we avoid dualisms and complexes when we step into this realm? How can we teach Jung's work when we do not yet have the cultural and religious forms to understand it? My guess is that new cultural forms are emerging now, and yet they are not widely known. When these new forms arise, and when the numinous can be properly incorporated into our knowledge, Jung will find his natural context and belonging, but until then he is in danger of being seen as an oddity.

I have discerned four main approaches to the teaching of Jung. Each could be seen to be governed by a particular 'god' or archetypal style. I am sure there are more than four, and that I have left others out, but this at least will set the ball rolling toward a taxonomy of Jungian Studies.

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Fitting in or Conforming       | ruled by the Father, Senex, or Old Man |
| 2. Updating or Reconstructing     | Hermes, the Trickster                  |
| 3. Soul-Making or Overturning     | Dionysus                               |
| 4. Keeping Pure or Standing Still | Disciple and Acolyte                   |

As with all taxonomic categories, these styles are almost never found in pure form. As one sketches out these archetypal styles, they invariably become somewhat clichéd and stereotypical, but we have to take that into account.

#### **9. fitting in or conforming**

Here the desire is to fit Jung into the university system, rather than to challenge the system by advocating new knowledge. Analytical psychology under this influence sets itself the task of conforming to prevailing standards, expectations, and assumptions. The keyword for this approach is 'respectability'.

The aim is to show how *respectable* Jungian psychology is, if only academic scholars took the time to understand the nature of Jungian thought. If scholars sat and reflected, they would see that the exclusion of Jung from the academy has been based on a misunderstanding. This approach is rational, cool, and collected; it is non-combative and diplomatic. It seeks to demonstrate the validity of Jungian psychology, by fitting it alongside other theories and knowledges.

Its aim is to demonstrate that the exclusion of Jung has been based on misconceptions. Jung is not a mystic, but a sound and worthy scientist of the more difficult reaches of mind. These depths are not 'mystical' but are accessible to scientific analysis that is properly attuned to deep structures. This approach emphasises his scientific credentials, his career as a leading-edge psychiatrist, his philosophical education, and his empirical approach to mental illness and social problems.

Archetypally, this approach is ruled by the senex or old man, both in its creative aspect (accommodating and including) and its negative aspect (manipulating and controlling). This approach teaches the 'nuts and bolts' of Jung, without teaching that the work is ultimately about self-transformation. Students are given information, but not the goal of self-transformation, and they

rightly complain about the dryness and aridity of this approach when they find out more about the field. This drying-out effect is part of the long-standing opposition that many analysts have to bringing Jung into the academy. Divorced from the mystery dimension of the unconscious, is 'knowledge about' Jung useful? Can Jung be understood without the kind of experience we gain from the encounter with the numinous?

Ironically, in our desire to include Jung in the academy, we have to be careful that we are not 'excluding' him all over again. If our pedagogical style is too narrow, we are not including enough of this thinker's work. If I can use a metaphor from physics, it is as if we are trying to pull in a single particle into the university, only Jung is not a particle, but a wave of vast extension. I was stuck in this rut myself some years ago, so I know all about it.

This is largely an emotional and pedagogical problem of the senex archetype. The senex (in men and women) thinks of itself as being important and in control. It won't risk the self-disclosure that transformation demands, since this involves the anima or soul, the revealer of the inner life. The more identified the teacher is with the persona, the more unconscious and distant the anima will be. To teach the art of transformation demands that the teacher shows that he or she is vulnerable to the numinous and receptive to the soul. We stand before the sacred not as someone in control, but as someone who receives. If the teacher is not prepared to risk their controlling stance, to let the guard slip, to show vulnerability, there can be no teaching with soul. As Jung once said of Freud, he was not prepared to 'risk his authority', and as a result he 'lost it altogether' (1961: 182).

The other problem with senex pedagogy is that in its conservative interest in scientific standards, empirical evidence, rational proof, it fails to see that the academy itself has been radically transformed by postmodern knowledge. Many of the old, academic ideals, such as objectivity, precision and exactness in scientific method, have been overturned by postmodern thought and by feminist theory, at least in the social and human sciences, if not in the exact sciences. To some extent, the image of the academy that the senex holds no longer exists. This is because Hermes, the central archetype of the postmodern era, has got into the academy and turned things around (Neville 1992).

#### **10. updating or reconstructing**

Hermes governs the second teaching style I have detected, although Hermes can also outwit himself. The emphasis in this approach is on 'reconstructing' Jung in the light of progressive discourses that have taken place in the social sciences, arts and humanities. If *respectability* is the keyword for the senex, here the overriding concern is *updating*.

Hermes is the messenger who moves between worlds, and he brings to the Jungian world messages from other knowledges, and he even introduces Jungian concerns to worlds that have never been interested in Jung. His concern is with potential connections and creative dialogues.

Hermes, the trickster, adopts the view that an unreconstructed Jung cannot be admitted to the academy. Whatever 'Jung' may signify to Jungians, he has to be deconstructed before he can be authentically brought before the university. This style may be paradoxical: it may even side with the established views of the academy, and argue against 'Jung' in his unreconstructed form. This approach may be embarrassed by unreconstructed Jung, and seek to differentiate a 'post-Jungian' from an earlier 'Jungian' position.

This approach will seek to re-read Jung with current views in mind, often sharply critical of the ways in which the classical Jungian work falls short of contemporary values. It critiques the Jungian work, especially in terms of the 'big three' preoccupations of the academy, namely: class, gender and race. It may seek to revise his metapsychology and his philosophical underpinnings, in an effort to bring these into line with contemporary philosophical thought, postmodern theory and phenomenology. This second approach might employ as its credo: 'reparation works best in the open', and it will enjoin scholars and critics of Jung to enter into dialogue with 'post-Jungians' in a mutually enriching work of cultural reconstruction.

A major drawback is that with all this fancy footwork and 'adaptation' to contemporary concerns essential elements are not addressed. What happens to the numinous? Where is the divine? They are often ignored in the move to find meaningful connections between post-Jungian interests and the concerns of race, class and gender. This approach often says: we will redeem Jung's psychology, but not bother about his theology. But this won't do. Hermes outwits himself at this point. Jung's religious attitude is not an added extra, an optional element we can do without. We cannot just say his religion is a residue of his conservative nature and that as radical post-Jungians we do not need to be concerned with it.

This problem is linked to other, larger issues. In the academy, religion is frequently relegated to the *right* side of political life, since religion is often viewed as the glue that binds society together and that keeps it stable and ordered. The socially progressive Jungian concern for updating, changing and renewing is forced to engage a basically leftist agenda that is hugely allergic to religious problems (Schmidt 2005). But I do not believe that the religious dimension is extraneous to Jung; it is integral to his psychology.

Jung's work seems to call for a 'religious left' that does not yet exist on campus. The religious are often conservative; the politically aware are often very secular. The major exception to this rule is Western Buddhism, which seems to be politically progressive. I know that progressives like to typecast Jung as irredeemably conservative and stuffy, but the implications of his psychology are radical (Tacey 2006a).

### **11. soul-making or overturning**

The third approach focuses on the numinous dimension, but often has little to say about social and political aspects. Its interest is in the inner life and the

cultivation of the soul. An exception to this rule is where Jungian visionaries suddenly decide that the outer world has 'soul', and then behave almost as religious converts to political realities (Hillman and Ventura 1993).

Soul-Making or Overturning is iconoclastic and rebellious. It accepts that the work of bringing Jung into the university is a subversive act, i.e. a counter-cultural enterprise. It is not interested in conforming Jung to existing paradigms, but in challenging the models of knowledge that have kept Jung out of the academy in the first place. Its concern is not *respectability* or *updating*, but *revolutionising* the system.

The third approach likes to employ language that flies in the face of the academy, using terms like 'soul' and 'spirit' that the academy considers obsolete. I know a Jungian teacher who gave a staff seminar on the gods and goddesses of the psyche, and some of his colleagues left the room. The revolutionary approach often decides that the academy 'lacks soul', that it privileges knowledge but 'not wisdom', that it is repressive toward 'what counts', that it avoids an encounter with 'ultimate questions'. This approach is what Jung would call 'inflated', or what the world calls arrogant. But whether arrogant, inflated, or inspired, it fails to see that the academy has been secular for many years, and if it wants to bring the numinous into the system, it has to be tactful and present an appropriate apologetic for the gods.

Scholars of the third approach frequently scorn what is current and contemporary, and often devalue these concerns as merely fashionable. They dislike the contemporary and are in love with antiquity. Their models of how to live are usually premodern, ancient or primordial. Favoured sources of inspiration are the Florentine Renaissance, the Perennial Philosophy or Medieval Alchemy – which all look like hocus pocus to the university. The third approach believes that a primordial truth can be found, and this is an inspiration for championing such traditions as alchemy, shamanism, Neoplatonism, metaphysics and wisdom literature.

Scholars who follow this way have difficult and often lonely careers. They are generally not liked by their colleagues (apart from a few close associates), and develop ill feeling and rivalry in the workplace. They may exacerbate the problem by their repeated criticisms of mainstream knowledges. Because they celebrate soul and spirit they are often given a high profile by the media, and this rubs salt into the wounds of colleagues, who can be beset by envy. However, such teachers are often highly successful with students, who view them as inspired prophets on campus. They form the 'Dead Poets Society' of the Jungian academic world, but they often get too entangled in the emotional currents and complications of students' lives. The senex persona is dropped in the name of 'soul', but sometimes propriety and professional boundaries are dropped as well.

## **12. keeping pure or standing still**

There is also a purist approach, and this group tries to have as little to do with the intellectual life of the academy as possible. They do not stir the pot like the dynamic soul-makers. They hope that if they confine themselves to a Jungian bubble, the rest of the intellectual world will go away. They are suspicious of postmodernity, do not like Derrida or Foucault, ignore the post-Freudians and try as hard as possible to keep themselves pure for Jung. Their job is to inform people about Jung – a kind of informational bureau on campus.

I can't think of an archetype that governs this approach, but I can think of a stereotype: the disciple or acolyte. This style, as Jung observes (1928), is secretly identified with the master, and hides this under a mask of subservience to the teachings. Such teachers do not talk about Jung's scientific research, but about his 'findings', as if they are commandments written in stone or brought down from on high. The problem with this approach is that it is not doing Jung any favours. It is keeping him hermetically sealed off from the world, away from the critical debates, making him almost gloriously irrelevant to intellectual life.

Teachers in this mode often behave as converts and their students are sometimes expected to become Jungians, rather than critical readers of Jung. Students rightly complain that this approach is claustrophobic, although it may suit the kind of student who is looking for something to believe in. Teachers in this mode are not always liked by their colleagues, who see them as priests or nuns of a religious sect. Often this style is short-lived, because it is sometimes a phase that people go through, a moment in which they fall in love with the numinous as revealed by Jung. This tendency of the work is savagely, and I think unfairly, attacked by Richard Noll (1994).

Again, this is largely a religious problem: How to incorporate the numinous in the secular academy? Jung evokes and stirs a spirituality complex; some reject him out of hand as a mystic, others revere him as a prophet. Converts do not know how to gain the necessary critical distance, since criticism is viewed as a transgression or heresy, signs that our spirituality complex has been activated. If Jungian purists are incapable of genuine criticism, their colleagues will argue that they are indoctrinating students, making them incapable of living politically aware and astute lives. This sets up the conditions for fundamentalism and intolerance, and arguably education should work in the opposite direction.

### **13. diversity and experimentation**

These four approaches cannot be pinned down to particular personalities in the world, but rather represent leanings or biases in the teaching of Jung. The first approach seeks to *conform*, the second to *reform*, the third strives to *transform*, and the fourth seeks to *inform*. It is sometimes the case that the one academic will experience elements of all four styles and approaches. Basically, they can be reduced to two larger categories: one and four are static styles, while two and three are dynamic. Number one is the static and number two is the dynamic form of

adjusting to the academic world; whereas number three is the dynamic and number four the static form of adjusting to the numinous.

Hostility between our camps could be attributed largely to these different styles. The fast-moving trickster finds the disciple or acolyte to be static and uninteresting. The senex finds the trickster to be slippery and deceitful. The soul-makers find all other types to be superficial and defensive, and the purists argue that all the others are in danger of losing the plot. Sometimes soul-makers push the system too far, and are in danger of losing their jobs. The university might decide that soul-makers are actually trouble-makers, and it can get on better without them. Soul-makers can reinvent themselves as updaters or reformers, where at least they can hold down their jobs, and where passions are cooled by the need to enter into dialogue with contemporary concerns. The acolytes are also nudged onward to new styles, partly due to criticism from others, since the university will not tolerate an exclusive bubble world for very long. A Jungian information booth is arguably best dealt with by Jung clubs, and not by universities.

But the field is new and still being born. There will be other styles to discover and more problems to elaborate. We must expect this diversity in Jungian Studies, and if possible, hold the tension between conflicting positions. The recent establishment of an International Association for Jungian Studies, which specifically focuses on the teaching of Jung in university and college contexts, will do much to provide a forum for valuable discussion and critical reflection on teaching styles, pedagogical issues, and the meaning and purpose of Jung in the university. Readers are invited to consult the website, which can be found in the list of references.

In conclusion, we serve Jung best not by turning his work into a fixed ideology, but by playfully deconstructing it for the new era. We have to deconstruct his ideas about the numinous, but we cannot *eradicate* the numinous to suit the needs of a secular academy. Using one of Jung's key phrases, we have to 'dream the myth onward' (1940: 76). As we move the work into the academy, we have to avoid the various pitfalls, including getting stuck in the senex and leaving out the soul; getting intoxicated by updating and leaving out the numinous; getting identified with the soul and condemning the world; or getting stuck in a ghetto and ignoring the world. These problems are not unique to Jungians. They are found wherever the numinous raises its head in a secular context.

*This essay is dedicated to Robert Farrell, in recognition of twenty years of exploring the teaching of Jung at La Trobe University, Melbourne.*

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