THE JOURNAL OF
ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Journal of Analytical Psychology, 2011, 56, 56–75

Winnicott on Jung: destruction, creativity and the unrepressed unconscious

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Abstract: This paper considers Winnicott's critique of Jung, principally expressed in his review of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, which asserts that Jung's creative contribution to analysis was constrained by his failure to integrate his 'primitive destructive impulses', subsequent to inadequate early containment. It is argued that although Winnicott's diagnosis illuminates Jung's shadow, particularly his constraints *vis-à-vis* the repressed Freudian unconscious, it fails to appreciate the efficacy of the compensatory containment Jung found in the collective unconscious.

This enigmatic relationship between destruction and creativity—so central to late Winnicott—is illuminated by Matte Blanco's bi-logic, and further explored in relation to William Blake. Winnicott's personal resolution through his Jung-inspired 'splitting headache' dream of destruction—previously considered in this Journal by Morey (2005) and Sedgwick (2008)—is given particular attention.

Key words: Blake, destructive impulses, Jung, Matte Blanco, unrepressed unconscious, Winnicott

Introduction

Well into his last decade, though still working vigorously despite his heart attacks, Winnicott had his powerful 'splitting headache' dream of destruction in which he experienced being cured of a lifelong malady. The dream was threefold: first there was absolute destruction and he was destroyed, then there was absolute destruction of which he was the agent, finally his 'waking' acknowledgement within the dream of his role in all three parts allowed him to conclude that now 'There was no dissociation . . . this felt immensely satisfactory'. He attributed this dream to his immersion in Jung's autobiography *Memories, Dreams, Reflections,* and he recorded it, appropriately enough, in a letter to Michael Fordham in which he makes explicit reference to Jung, asserting 'as the dream flowed over me before I quite became awake (I became aware) that I was dreaming a dream for Jung, and for some of my patients, as well as for myself' (Winnicott 1964).

So, clearly, Winnicott's belief was that the resolution experienced in his dream would have addressed Jung's basic fault as well, which he goes on to define as his 'lack of contact with his own primitive destructive impulses'

0021-8774/2011/5601/56
Published by Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 9600 Garsington Road, Oxford OX4 2DQ, UK and 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148, USA.

(Winnicott 1964). For Winnicott this was a most serious critique, though here of course also a self-criticism; for it was in just these 'primitive destructive impulses' that Winnicott maintained lay the energizing drivers of creativity and the 'True Self'. It is a typically Winnicottian paradox that this charge be levelled at two of the most creative minds of their respective eras: I endeavour to reconcile this contradiction by drawing on Matte Blanco's (1975) concept of the unrepressed unconscious, which, I will argue, Winnicott was striving towards his own idiosyncratic version of in his last years under the stimulus of his engagement with Jung.

A bi-logical perspective

Jungians might well assume that Matte Blanco's unrepressed unconscious is a psycho-analytic analogue of the collective unconscious of analytical psychology. Whilst there is indeed considerable territorial overlap—e.g., the unknowability of the archetypes per se—there are clinically important differences of emphasis that a brief overview of Matte Blanco's schema will illuminate.

Essentially bi-logic proposes that there are two dynamics at work simultaneously in the ordering of our experience, the one asymmetric, geared towards discrimination of difference and associated with developing consciousness, the other symmetric, geared towards dissolution of difference and associated with unconsciousness and/or universal identity. Matte Blanco thus expands Freud's original insight that dream 'logic' displays the '5 characteristics of the unconscious'—displacement, non-contradiction, condensation etc.—and elucidates and evolves its symmetricizing structure.

So at one extreme we would have an absolutely symmetrical experience of pure 'Being'—as in the absence of dimensions no 'happening' is possible—for instance, mystical union of which nothing can be said, or utter oblivion. For schematic purposes this may be designated Stratum 5. At Stratum 4 affect would begin its primary differentiation—the emergence of attraction and repulsion, love and hate (and this is the area that came to pre-occupy the late Winnicott). As we move towards Stratum 3 unfolding differentiation has constellated in structures like Jungian archetypes or Kleinian 'bedrock'. At Stratum 3 self-consciousness and initially rather concrete thinking emerges ('I am a tiger'), whilst at Stratum 2 confidently discreet identity and metaphor becomes possible ('I feel like a tiger'). Stratum 1 would accommodate the pure thought of science etc.

This bi-logical structure takes on a deeper resonance with the realization that the magnetic pole of affect is symmetrical, whilst that of thought is asymmetrical. Thus a strong emotion—fear, love, hate—will tend to saturate all experience (dissolving differentiation), and threaten to overwhelm: conversely, affect that can be held in mind can be assimilated and refined. *Pari passu* thought that is too divorced from affect becomes mere 'thinkating' (the *modus operandi* of the 'False Self'). Hence the emphasis on containment allowing energizing

affect into mind where it can fuel and integrate with a conscious sense of identity. Uncontained and unassimilated affect remains highly symmetrical as it has not been able to emerge into asymmetry and thought and might therefore be better regarded clinically as 'dissociated' components of an unrepressed rather than a repressed unconscious.

This overly condensed survey is merely to orientate the reader to my sense of Matte Blanco's relevance to the theme of this paper – for a fuller and more authoritative exposition please refer to Richard Carvalho's earlier contributions to this Journal (Carvalho 2006, 2007). The pertinence here is that Winnicott regarded both Jung and himself as dissociated, and I will argue that much of Winnicott's later writing reaches back to some prior phase (pre-repression) that he instinctively felt to be the core of the True Self, and whose necessarily assertive drive ('primitive destructive impulses') needed to be assimilated (having been inhibited in the infant/child's early environment) if a rich relational life was to ensue. Winnicott intuitively realized that the key problem was with affect not having been able to come into mind in the first place rather than it having been pushed out (repression): his attempt to leapfrog back to some postulated 'primary unity' is very analogous to Jung's concern with regression/re-birth and reparative immersion in the collective. Matte Blanco's unrepressed unconscious implicitly underpins both men's endeavour: had Winnicott had the concept available his appraisal of Jung and of his contribution to psycho-analysis might have been more rounded, less coloured by his own shadow.

The context of Winnicott's dream of destruction

The challenge of addressing this enigmatic dream has already been taken up with some style in recent issues of this Journal by Morey (2005) who is primarily concerned with vindicating the maintenance of an archetypal rather than reductive vertex, and Sedgwick (2008) who is especially good on the almost symbiotic relationship between the two men.

> The whole process of reviewing and immersing himself in Jung's psyche became, as has been noted, a therapeutic activity for Winnicott. So through his contact with Jung—Jung ostensibly possessing psychological splits that match those right at the centre of Winnicott's psyche and fantasy—Winnicott got split open and, as a result, got to the healing he needed, which corresponded to the healing he felt Jung needed.
> (Sedgwick 2008)

This passage is the culmination of an absolutely absorbing few pages ('Winnicott's journey with Jung') in which Sedgwick tracks the remarkable parallels which had led Rodman (2003), Winnicott's biographer, to suggest that Winnicott experienced Jung as his 'twin': both suffered from depressed mothers, both had prophetic/visionary dreams and aspirations, both aspired to be the gentile heir-apparent to Freud.

Whatever healing Winnicott experienced through his Jung-stirred dream bore fruit in his final contributions to psychoanalysis, notably his 'Use of an Object' paper. But here, rather anticlimactically after having set the scene so wonderfully, Sedgwick declares himself baffled, concluding by wittily returning Winnicott's own haughty dismissal of Jungian jargon back on himself: 'I cannot be communicated with in this language'. This is a shame: for we need to immerse ourselves in the idiom of the late Winnicott to fully appreciate the role of 'destructiveness' in mediating between subjective and objective realities. Moreover the intelligibility of this cryptic paper is considerably helped by reading it in conjunction with its satellite material collated as Chapter 34 in *Psychoanalytic Explorations* (Winnicott 1989): these include the splitting headache dream and a clinical commentary on an analysand known as the 'Blake-man' which we will consider later.

'Primitive destructive impulses'

Winnicott asserts in his letter to Fordham that

> Jung seems to have no contact with his own primitive destructive impulses, and he gives support to this in his writing (*Memories, Dreams, Reflections*). When playing as a small child Jung built and then destroyed, over and over again; he does not describe himself playing constructively in relation to having (in unconscious fantasy) destroyed. In my review I had related this to a difficulty Jung may have had being cared for by a depressed mother (if this be true).
>
> (Winnicott 1964)

In other words, in a Winnicottian vertex, the (maternal) environment in which his spontaneous gestures with their admixture of 'primitive destructive impulses' could be risked and absorbed was not available. So Jung developed a 'fatal resistance to life in this world' (Jung 1961, p. 24), which, in Winnicott's opinion, turned him away from object relations towards a restless, rather manically impelled search for subjective containment instead. Consequently his necessarily aggressive assertion remained unassimilated and concretely enacted. Or so Winnicott interpreted Jung's childhood game of constructing model buildings only to parade his insistent omnipotence by triumphantly toppling them with simulated earthquakes.

Certainly this would make poignant sense of Jung's school phobia, his childhood belligerence, its projection into the threatening Jesuit figure and the images of violence and death that haunt these early chapters (Jung 1961). Indeed his hiding his emblematic mannequin and stone in their secret and secure hiding place—which echoed his childhood fascination with castles and fortifications—may have been a touching effort to preserve the integrity of his No 1 personality from just such threat. Later, when Jung's relationship with Freud broke down precipitating his profound crisis of 1913, this theme dramatically resurfaced in images that anticipate Winnicott's own dream of world-destruction. Jung

dreamt, repeatedly, of a destructive flood (of uncontained affect?) submerging Europe in a sea of blood[1] only checked by the Swiss Alps which 'grew higher and higher to protect' (1961, p. 175). Shortly after he wrote: 'I felt as if gigantic blocks of stone were tumbling down on me. . .. Others have been shattered by them – Nietzsche. . .' (1961, p. 177). So Jung too felt himself both destroyer and destroyed: but Jung returned to his childhood stone building activities, found some reparation and survived.

Such is the background to his more mature, sophisticated preoccupation with mandalas and his life work of evolving a 'containing' metapsychological system. Winnicott expresses his suspicion of such 'self containing' defensive formations in no uncertain terms:

> The mandala is a truly frightening thing for me because of its absolute failure to come to terms with destructiveness, and with chaos, disintegration, and the other madnesses. It is an obsessional flight from disintegration.
>
> (Winnicott 1964)

In other words from his point of view it is the last bolthole of the false self, which defensively excludes the madness that threatens but also nourishes (Phillips 1988).

But here I feel Winnicott (despite his analogous assumption of the role of the yearned for maternal container) fails to appreciate that Jung's turning to such resorts, such substitute containments, was not merely evasive, but also creatively resourceful (Feldman 1992). Nevertheless Winnicott was at least consistent over this: he was also to take his second analyst, Joan Riviere, to task for being overly invested in the 'completeness' of Kleinian theory (Rodman 2005, p. 272). And he certainly endeavoured to put his principles into clinical practice, providing a containing environment sometimes beyond the usual analytic boundaries, patiently waiting until his analysands could reach back to their original ambivalent assertiveness and bring their needy assault to bear on him. In pursuing this vision of cure he opened up new analytic ground, albeit he acknowledged (rather grudgingly) the Kleinian contribution:

> many others using varying techniques recurrently reached the ruthless primitive love impulse in which the body—breast—mother—or whatever it is called—undergoes ruthless attack and the result is something important taken out and eaten, that is to say destroyed . . . we are sometimes able to reach this very thing. . .
>
> (Winnicott 1999, Letter to Dr. Lantos, 1956)

In fact, Winnicott, by his own admission, was not able 'to reach this very thing' through either of his two analyses: so it remained a life-long preoccupation until he achieved some resolution through his Jung-inspired dream. The quoted passage helps our endeavour to understand 'this very thing' by combining the

[1] Collectively engendered, prophetic anticipations of the Great War? Satinover (1985) makes a persuasive case for this personal/relational reading.

necessarily destructive (carnivorous) primitive hungry impulsion with the (love) yearning for an object. That this albeit ruthless yearning should have an object is of the essence: 'in my opinion the aggressive impulse that is inherent is extremely powerful and is part of the instinct which calls for relationships. It is therefore an essential part of the primitive love impulse' (Winnicott 1999, p. 40, Letter to Money-Kyrle, 1952). Winnicott's shorthand for this combination was 'mouth love': at first glance this might look like a sentimental version of what Kleinians might call oral sadism, but this would not do Winnicott's vision justice. He is increasingly at pains to differentiate his particular position on destructiveness from either Freudian presumptions of the operation of the death instinct or Kleinian notions of primary envy. For Winnicott the first hurdle in life was not so much an ego implying splitting and repression as a more fundamental dissociation between the quiet (the erotically merging) and excited (the aggressively differentiating) parts of infant experience. The baby is not able to realize, except through risk and mother's tolerance (her non-retaliatory ongoing survival) that the cuddled and peaceful baby is the same as the one who can be 'screaming for immediate satisfaction, possessed by an urge to get at and destroy something unless satisfied by milk' (Winnicott 1960).

This evocation of the momentum of visceral assertion reaching for what it needs out there in reality is the distinguishing hallmark of Winnicott's vision. 'The assumption is always there, in orthodox theory, that aggression is reactive to the encounter with the reality principle, whereas here it is the destructive drive that creates the quality of externality' (Winnicott 1960). Instinctual aggressiveness stirs appetite (and creative aspiration) whilst simultaneously constellating a reality to meet it.[2]

From a bi-logic perspective this is the front line of asymmetrical impulsion, the differentiation out of the maternal matrix.

The primary phase of (symmetric) unity

Winnicott's appraisal of Jung's mandala-like defence as a foreclosing on both the disturbance and nourishment of 'madness' implies the risk that the 'at rest' baby may become dissociated from the 'instinctually urgent destructive' baby. This is why he insistently emphasizes the unity (pre-splitting into conflictual drives where the Kleinian model starts) of the primary phase where 'the crux is that the first drive is itself one thing, something that I called destruction, but it could have been called a combined love strife drive. Unity is primary' (Winnicott 1958). Without this primary experience of undifferentiated (still symmetric) love/hate being able to unfold within containment, normal maturational process is forestalled. This would include the evolution of a

[2] Fortunately it was only after completing this paper that I discovered Jan Abram's excellent *The Language of Winnicott* (Karnac Books, 2007) else I would not have presumed to stumble towards this territory that she has so authoritatively signposted, particularly in her entry on 'aggression'.

personal repressed unconscious (via Oedipus complex etc), towards which Jung was notoriously impatient (see 5th Tavistock Lecture), prioritizing instead 'individuation' through engagement with the collective, archetypal stratum. Winnicott, however, characterized Jung as being 'left without a self with which to know' (1964), and worse, threatened with dissociation, depersonalization and incipient disintegration into psychosis.

From a classical psychoanalytic perspective Winnicott's shattering diagnosis is probably correct enough. Yet his attitude toward Jung in the review is always warm, the tone throughout animated and engaged: there is no hint of the haughty, cool dismissiveness of which he was quite capable in other contexts. Moreover, the more one reads of Winnicott on the agency of the self (True Self in his terminology) the more like our Jungian understanding of the incipient individuating psyche it sounds: the infant needs to 'start by existing not reacting' else the false self will develop which always 'lacks something, and that something is the essential element of creative originality' (Winnicott 1960). And in his critique of Fairbairn he appeals 'for a hypothesis that would allow for areas of infancy experience and of ego development that are not basically associated with instinctual conflict and where there is intrinsically a psychic process such as that which we have here termed "primary (psychic) creativity" (Winnicott 1989).

These notions, expressed in such language, are easily assimilable within a Jungian perspective, particularly one informed by Michael Fordham's postulates of a primary self with its rhythm of reintegration and deintegration echoing Winnicott's 'quiet' and 'excited' baby. Nowhere is this sympathy (bearing in mind that 'psyche' derives from 'breath') more evident than in this ancillary comment on his 'Object' paper, resonant of the bi-logical schema adumbrated earlier:

> There is a phase prior to that which makes sense of the concept of fusion. . . . To get quickly to the idea that I have in mind one could profitably use the idea of the fire from the dragon's mouth. I quote from Pliny who (in paying tribute to fire) writes, 'Who can say whether in essence fire is constructive or destructive?' Indeed the physiological basis for what I am referring to is the first and subsequent breaths, out-breathing.
> In this vitally important early stage the 'destructive' (fire-air or other) aliveness of the individual is simply a symptom of being alive. . . and has a vital positive function (when, by survival of the object, it works), namely the objectivisation of the object (the analyst in the transference). This task is bypassed [as we shall see, by Blake certainly, but not entirely by Jung] in the schizoid personality or borderline case, and presumably in schizophrenic illness.
>
> (Winnicott 1989, p. 239)

This is the background to Winnicott's great 'The Use of an Object' paper in which he makes his most formal 'statement of the positive value of destructiveness'. The self is first registered through recognitions (initially the mother's response to the spontaneous gesture) but necessarily consolidated by aggression. The subject has to feel able to influence potentially implacable,

impenetrable 'objective' reality, and in the earliest primitive terms this amounts to a phantasy of imposing itself on it by destroying it. And of course it is equally important that reality survives the assault else the self is left marooned in a wasteland. This is the fruition of Winnicott's original brilliant insight—derived from his exceptional depth of paediatric observation—that this dynamic tension was also played out in his consulting room between infant and spatula. He noted how characteristically the initial apprehension would lead onto tentative mouthing, then to confident possession and finally to dismissal, a cycle revealing the infant's exploration of whether the spatula/breast/world could be assailed without disastrous consequence before settling down to play with it.

Thus we find Winnicott talking about the necessity of a backdrop of destruction, in fantasy, that keeps the object real, and so available for 'use': in other words 'me' and 'not-mine' become securely differentiated. The object has survived the assertive/destructive impulse whilst not retaliating or inhibiting, and thereby established its integrity beyond the omnipotent control of the subject. This mature state of object usage represents progression from the mere subjective manipulation by or of one's objects now termed 'object relating' (Winnicott 1969).

Blake and the creativity of destruction

My sense of a more palpable grasp on these matters came not from reading Winnicott himself but from Ron Britton on William Blake (Britton 1998). Britton argues that Blake's visionary belief could be understood in psychoanalytic terms as a defensive organization he designates as epistemic narcissism, a state of being compulsively invested in one's own ideas only, a counterpart in the realm of knowledge to the libidinal narcissist in the realm of love. This would roughly equate to Winnicott's charge that Jung 'went down under and found subjective life' (Winnicott 1964). Thus:

> Blake regarded his imagination as the divine source, the creator, and he regarded belief as the act of creation; self doubt he saw as destruction:
>
> If the sun and moon should doubt
> They'd immediately go out.
>
> He saw belief as truth formed by imagination and not received by perception; not seeing is believing but believing is seeing... In psychoanalytic terms, it is a psychic reality that claims to be true because it is internally valid and is independent of any correspondence with external reality. We could paraphrase Blake's description of the eternal self as that of a true self that is only true to itself:
>
> And in melodious accents, I
> Will sit me down and cry, I, I.
>
> From outside, this self would seem to oppose any version of reality other than its own; from inside, any belief opposing that of the **true self** threatens to annihilate it.
>
> (Britton 1998)

It is surely no coincidence that Britton spontaneously adopts a Winnicottian idiom with this emphatic reference to a true self and the threat of annihilation (destruction pre-empted by destructiveness). For what looks like visionary stubbornness derived of infantile megalomania from one perspective is surely also in its origin and its core this same intangible essence that Winnicott is so concerned to protect and conserve as being the source of the spontaneous gesture and subsequent mature creativity (and Jungians might say the driver of individuation). The problem of course is with bringing it into an effective relationship with object relations and external reality, and this is where Winnicott constantly recurs to the value of 'fantasized destruction survived'.

So let us turn again to Blake whose visionary art could 'body forth' these abstracted unconscious dynamics. He saw this struggle of the child whose raw assertion had not been sufficiently mediated by a Winnicottian mother in apocalyptic terms. Los (imagination equated with subjective will personified) so exasperated by the impenetrable, material, objective world created by Urizen (your reason) that he smashes it into fragments, thus producing a bottomless abyss into which he then falls. The external world does not survive his attack and the terrifying void thus created can then only be pre-empted by subjectively meaningless compliance or else bounded by an even more insistent investment in his own beliefs. The former option would in Winnicott's terms be a resort to the defence of the false self, but this brief overview of Blake's visionary world is as salutary a warning against the dangers of idealization of the true self, which can lead to unrelated isolation (as it did for Blake), and even, in Bion's (1959) view, to attacks on the reality apprehending capacities of the psychic apparatus itself.

With the benefit of hindsight some may feel that Winnicott's translation of this profound insight into clinical practice was, on occasion, not well judged. Frameworks and boundaries were insufficiently valued as a neutral/mediating aspect of reality, and the prioritizing of the true self's presumed needs led to confusing indulgence as the inhibited Los element in Winnicott sought compensation through projective identification with—at least in the case of Masud Khan—his analysand (Hopkins 2006).

Winnicott's 'Blake-man'

This patient's appearance as a clinical illustration of 'The Use of an Object' paper was contemporaneous with Winnicott's Jung pre-occupation, and I believe, acted as a further bridge between them. This is how he is introduced:

> I refer to a married man of 50, an erudite person held in high esteem in academic circles. He is very sensitive and no doubt is not very satisfactory as a husband at a physical level. . .along with his lack of aggression is a stubbornness which has provided an alternative so that in fact he has a high position in his work.
>
> (Winnicott 1969)

Here, surely, we are reminded of Winnicott himself: difficulty with inhibitions was his original reason for embarking on analysis, his first long marriage remained unconsummated, and his stubbornness became legendary.

The name arose because one day he brought a quote from Blake—'I fear the fury of my wind'—which this 'extremely unaggressive' man associated with both his own and Blake's primitive anger. Winnicott describes him (like Jung) as 'fearing his strong mother and hating the weakness of his father' and as suffering from 'inhibition (that) had to be of all spontaneity and impulse in case some particle of the impulse might be destructive. The massive inhibition necessarily involved his creative gesture'. The symptomatic consequence was twofold, a stunted creativity and an unpredictable blasphemous compulsion 'as if he must think of whatever is sacred or holy or pure and spit over or soil it' (Winnicott 1969, p. 235–8).

This is irresistibly reminiscent of the extraordinarily intense and sustained passage where Jung describes the culmination of his childhood spiritual angst:

> I gathered all my courage, as though I were about to leap forthwith into hellfire, and let the thought come. I saw before me the cathedral, the blue sky; God sits on his golden throne, high above the world – and from under the throne an enormous turd falls upon the sparkling new roof, shatters it, and breaks the walls of the cathedral asunder. So that was it! I felt an enormous, and indescribable relief . . . I had yielded to His inexorable command.
>
> (Jung 1964)

Winnicott earlier in his review had asserted that Jung, because of his 'vertical split' (implying by this dissociation rather the repression consequent on a 'horizontal split'), had been unable to constellate a repressed 'unconscious-according-to-Freud'. He now comments:

> We could not expect to find Jung feeling God to be a projection of his own infantile omnipotence and the shitting as a projection of his own hate of the father in the mother.

And certainly Jung does appear to dissociate himself from his own exclusion and helplessness by grandly attributing his consequent retaliatory destructiveness to the will of God: thus neatly bypassing any Oedipal conflict and any reparative object related remorse. More controversially Winnicott continues, 'or at a more primitive level, his own destruction of the good object because of its being real in the sense of being outside the area of his omnipotence' (Winnicott 1964). Here, I think, he goes too far, effectively placing Jung in the world of Los and Urizen that we looked at earlier. Though there is something Blakean about the terrible beauty of Jung's vision he is not so absolutely invested in the iconoclastic subjective imperative. Blake invented his own mythology; Jung went to exceptional lengths to research and find a collective basis for his.

Nevertheless we are certainly in that strange symbiotic territory where Winnicott dreamt 'for Jung, for my patients, and for myself'. Might we further

wonder just how much projection of his own pathology—spiced perhaps by an admixture of Winnicott's diffident masculinity envying Jung's phallic assertiveness—there was in his diagnosis of Jung?

Winnicott's shadow

There is a typically Winnicottian paradoxical tension between his constant call to respect the essential 'privacy of the self', so vulnerable to intrusion and impingement, and what Bollas (1987) has called his delight in 'the role of the impishly critical other'. Nevertheless we might make bold and speculate on the distant echo of his 'Blake-man's' blasphemous compulsion and Jung's cathedral/turd dream in his first analyst's (Strachey) report that Winnicott believed he might have urinated on his mother just after birth and that he subsequently loved to piss in the sea (Rodman 2005, p. 72). The nearest the young Winnicott got to any public expression of an uninhibited impulse was his celebrated 12-year-old 'Drat!' that precipitated his corrective consignment to boarding school (Rodman 2005, p. 20).

Rodman, in his splendid biography, introduces this late period of Winnicott's life, initiated by the review and the dream, as one when he 'proceeded into Jungian territory, and . . . wrote his poem 'The Tree' (in which he identifies with Christ's sacrifice) the most profound autobiographical statement of his life' (Rodman 2003). This passage conveys the essence of his conviction that servitude to his mother's depression had defined his life trajectory:

> Once, stretched out on her lap
> as now on dead tree
> I learned to make her smile
> to stem her tears
> to undo her guilt
> to cure her inward death
>
> To enliven her was my living
>
> So she became wife, mother, home
> The carpenter enjoyed his craft
> Children came and loved and were loved . . . . .

Here Winnicott symmetrically identifies both with Christ and his mother, casting himself as the wounded healer—'Children came and loved and were loved. . .' But as André Green (1986) has shown, the legacy of an affectively 'dead mother' can be extraordinarily persistent: Winnicott's own embodying of a resilient maternal presence was an inestimable boon for his patients, not enough for himself. The poem was written in 1963, the same year as his most explicit acknowledgement of Jungian influence in his 'Communicating' paper, his immersion in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, and his splitting headache dream—of which I now offer a fairly full transcription in italics with my commentary interpolated.

The 'splitting headache' dream of destruction

This was one in the long line of significant dreams that... appear as a result of work done... (presumably the review on Jung) *it cleared up the mystery of an element of my psychology that analysis could not reach, namely, the feeling that I would be all right if someone would split my head open (front to back) and take out something (tumour, abscess, sinus, suppuration) that exists and makes itself felt right in the centre behind the root of the nose.*

This metaphor of requiring surgery to correct something he can 'smell' is profoundly wrong has the deepest of roots for Winnicott. In a letter to his sister Violet as early as 1919 he wrote: 'the brain is the mass of grey and white matter which lies hidden in the skull... psychoanalysis cuts right to the root of the matter... an instinct repressed along abnormal paths is liable to be shored down deep into the unconscious and act as a foreign body; this 'foreign body' may remain in the subconscious for a whole lifetime...' (Winnicott 1999).

Within the dream Winnicott's wish for metaphorical surgery is realized as he '*could see my head split right through, with a black gap between the right and left halves. I found the words 'splitting headache' coming and waking me up, and I caught on to the appropriateness of the description*'. Morey (2005, p. 345) made the brilliantly apt connection of this to Emblem 23 of Michael Maier's *Atalanta Fugiens* alchemical illustrations depicting a furnace worker splitting open the skull of a reclining, contemplative Zeus-like figure. Imagos arising spontaneously from the collective unconscious? Or could Winnicott have had access to such material through his friendship with Michael Fordham?

Either way the dream problem addressed here, which the young Winnicott had intuitively anticipated as an 'instinct repressed', we might now characterize as the malignant rumbling of primitive destructive impulses as yet unassimilated.

The dream can be given in its three parts:

1. *There was absolute destruction, and I was part of the world and of all people, and therefore I was being destroyed.* Is this the cosmic escalation of infantile (omnipotent) expectation utterly dashed? (*The important thing in the early stages was the way in which in the dream the pure destruction got free from all the other modifications, such as object relating, cruelty, sensuality, sadomasochism, etc*). This bracketed elaboration is particularly worth noting; in Matte Blancian terms it describes the dreaming Winnicott accessing a more symmetrical level of experience, thereby engaging the collective and beyond that the unrepressed that underlies the personal repressed unconscious.
2. *Then there was absolute destruction and I was the destructive agent.* This would be the counterpart, the ultimate extension of the tantrum's rage. *Here then was a problem for the ego, how to integrate these two aspects of destruction?* Note the perfectly symmetric form of Winnicott's vision, in

which he is alternately both subject and object: just as earlier we saw Jung cast as both the tower-toppler and the avalanche victim.

3. *Part three now appeared and in the dream I awakened. As I awakened I knew I had dreamed both (one) and (two). I had therefore solved the problem, by using the difference between waking and sleeping states.* This is his dream analogue of finding access to maternal reverie or bringing alpha function to bear on otherwise unmetabolizable beta elements. *Here was I awake, in the dream, and I knew I had dreamed of being destroyed and of being the destroying agent. There was no dissociation… this felt to be immensely satisfactory…* crucially, from a bi-logical perspective, we can now understand this as a description of 'affect' (experienced here with archetypal intensity) being able to come into personal/ego-based 'mind'. As asymmetric thought is introduced, not in divorce from the dissociated affect but out of it, love and hate, subject and object can begin to separate.

Without this third I must remain split, solving the problem alternately in sadism and masochism, using object relating, that is, relating to objectively perceived objects.

This last phrase, quietly slipped in—'*relating to objectively perceived objects*'—is pure Winnicott. At first glance teasingly paradoxical: surely relating to '*objectively perceived objects*' would be a positive thing, a perception unsaturated with projections? But Winnicott implies that such a basis can only offer an engagement with reality, with others, that is reduced essentially to compliance or control ('*…alternately in sadism and masochism*'). It is the affectively driven pursuit of the realization of a *subjective* need *through* the other that shapes the transitional object, and leads on to mature 'object usage'. This is the capacity that Winnicott felt was so vulnerable to impairment by the inhibition of '*primitive destructive impulses*' so vividly illustrated by his own bind to his mother depicted in 'The Tree'.

I now began to wake up.

He concludes—*first there is the creativity that belongs to being alive, and the world is only a subjective world.* This is the world of Blake. *Then there is the objectively perceived world and absolute destruction of it and all its details.* This is the world that Blake (Los) felt compelled to destroy or deny; but Winnicott (unlike Blake, who remained absolutely defiant) now realizes that 'object usage', rather than the inhibited, compromised 'object relating', may be discovered to lie at the other side of this destruction. He concludes—*The wasteland (of destroyed reality) turns out to have features in its own right, or survival value, etc, and surprisingly the individual child finds total destruction does not mean total destruction* (Winnicott 1989 p. 228–9).

Object usage may now begin, but not apparently for Jung: for, as we saw, Winnicott construes Jung's building towers/simulating earthquakes 'activity' (Winnicott would hesitate to call it a 'game') as evidence of his failure to

integrate his primitive destructive impulses. They had not been 'brought into mind', imaginatively assimilated, as they needed to be, in order to create transitional objects: objects whose implacable otherness could be destroyed yet could also be allowed to remain actual, separate and there.

Winnicott's ambivalence about Jung

Such a reading certainly fits Winnicott's agenda, and, as we noted earlier, is consistent with Jung's bleak childhood memories. Perhaps, symbolically, it accounts for Jung's later attack on the edifice of Freud's work, which, of course, he had had a significant hand in constructing. And certainly the ruthless Old Testament Yahweh, the omnipotent creator and destroyer that he addressed in *Answer to Job*, fascinated Jung.

But Winnicott himself, if not iconoclastic, was certainly determinedly idiosyncratic. Let us recall that Sedgwick suggests 'Winnicott's unconscious created this particular Jung to get the healing he needed' (Sedgwick 2008). My argument is that 'this particular Jung' served as a vehicle through which Winnicott could address his own constrained destructiveness because it was writ so large in Jung, while remaining so inhibited in himself. Through 'his' Jung he could vent 'the fury of his wind' by proxy and thus reach back to that stratum of the unrepressed unconscious where assertive and destructive impulses were not yet differentiated.

This was a resource that was missing from his classical psychoanalytic vocabulary. He was reaching (ambivalently) towards it through his relationship with Fordham and his immersion in Jung's childhood autobiography; and he made a palpable curative contact with it in his splitting headache dream. The closest he got to conscious awareness, certainly to public recognition of this, was in his 'Communicating' paper when he wrote that in the context of patients with infantile disturbance diagnosed as psychotic or schizophrenic (as he was later to describe Jung in his review), 'I find I am able to join up with a whole lot of Dr. Fordham's observations, which, however, I think he did not properly link with the classification of the patients because he had not time' (Winnicott 1963a).

This, presumably, is Winnicott with rather disingenuous politeness, suggesting that Fordham had underestimated his patients' pathology. Ironically it was Fordham, not Winnicott, who first diagnosed the autobiographical Jung as a childhood schizophrenic: Jung apparently did not demur (Fordham 1975). However the contemporary consensus amongst experienced Jungian child analysts is that Jung displayed psychotic structure, not schizophrenia. Nevertheless Winnicott has unflinchingly drawn our attention to the shadow that haunts the Jungian tendency to immersion in the subjective world and the extent to which that may be a defence against psychotic fears of abandonment/object-loss fore-closing on normal maturational processes (the development of a repressed 'unconscious-according-to-Freud' leading onto Oedipal conflict and resolution) (Satinover 1985).

We might cavil that although Winnicott's Jung was very much a 'subjective object', his diagnosis is nevertheless delivered in a quasi objective, albeit somewhat cavalier, psychiatric style. But it is evidenced and is absolutely consistent with the more formal and measured description of early childhood pathology he presented in a contemporaneous paper, 'The mentally ill in your caseload' (Winnicott 1963b). This is an enlightening accompaniment to any re-reading of the review: indeed in Winnicott's hands *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* becomes a classic clinical case history illustration of pre-Oedipal disturbance.

No, for me the issue is not so much the diagnosis as the long shadow it cast, his insistence that Jung's attempt at self-cure—his creative vision of the Self—was essentially defensive pretension. 'The centre of the self' was evidently not a useless concept to Jung, or to generations of those beforehand in a variety of mystical traditions who expressed themselves in similar terms. It may well be that the relinquishment of investment in the ego, often adumbrated within such disciplines as a necessary precursor to being enfolded in God's arms, is in part a sublimation of the pain of the infant's abandonment. Winnicott presents the aspiration to such a union as only a defensive closure, the attainment of such enlightenment a spurious evasion of reaching down to the 'basic forces of individual living' (Winnicott 1964).

If we define destructiveness in neo-Kleinian idiom as the disposition to denigrate the generosity of the 'good breast' and to attack the 'creativity of the parental couple', then those early chapters of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* reveal what compelling reason Jung had for being at the very best deeply conflicted in these (literal) respects. It is no great stretch to see his lifelong quest for the centre of the self—surrounded/symbolized by the mandala—as in part a sublimation of his unrequited longing for the breast; and in his deep appreciation of arcane traditions his implicit homage to the wished for creativity of the parental intercourse. In the absence of an original satisfying object, Jung made a wonderfully rich use of such cultural transitional objects instead.

Moreover, whatever the shortcomings deriving from his unintegrated ambivalence towards his objects—the hint of paranoid volatility in his reaction to Freud over the Kreuzlingen incident, his handling of Sabina Spielrein, his occasional irascibility and, possibly, his disconsolate air of dissatisfaction towards the end (Fordham 1993)—throughout his life he kept the door open wide to the unrepressed unconscious, and was rewarded by his exceptional ongoing creativity. Winnicott's charge that Jung's preoccupation with mandalas was a defensive closure against the threat of madness seems misconceived: the recently published *Red Book* is hardly the work of a man lacking courage in that respect. I think that what Winnicott misses—curiously for a man with his natural love of paradox—is Jung's innate gift, shared with many artists, for engaging with what Matte Blanco calls symmetric logic. Evidences of this manifested in paranormal phenomena, synchronicity, alchemy, and multifarious esoteric disciplines across the spectrum from the physical to the

spiritual, fascinated Jung. Though Winnicott acknowledges the brilliance of Jung's insights in these fields—which culminate in his conceptualization of the collective unconscious—he nevertheless insists they make little contribution to the practice of psychoanalysis.

So why is Winnicott so ambivalent about recognizing the achievement of his 'twin'? Most obviously there is the historical tension between the Freudian and Jungian traditions which, to be fair, Winnicott addresses and illuminates explicitly in his review. But although he does indeed recommend cross fertilization he is much more articulate about Jung's liabilities than he is about his assets. As Rodman puts it, 'The plea that he makes for psychoanalysts to come to terms with Jung, however, is never supported by evidence of the value of Jung's contributions to analysis. . .' (Rodman 2003, p. 287). Jung, as well as being a source of (unconscious) inspiration to Winnicott, also embodied his shadow (from a Jungian perspective there would be no contradiction in this): so it is no surprise to find him both fascinated by and dismissive towards him. His contemptuous swipe at Jungian concepts, 'I cannot be communicated with in this language', in the midst of an otherwise constructive dialogue with Michael Fordham in his 'Counter-transference' paper is typical of this ambivalence. And there was surely political pressure as well: although he had twice served as president of the British Psychoanalytic Society he had long been marginalized by the dominant Kleinian group, whilst being treated with some wariness by the classically-orientated for his innovative technique. Too overt a rapprochement with Jung would have risked even further isolation.

There may also have been some envy in the mix. Although he writes 'nevertheless the idea of the self is very well dealt with by Jungians, and it is for psychoanalysts to learn what they can in this field' (Winnicott 1963a), in fact he is not overly helpful in facilitating this. It is more a polite acknowledgement of a neighbour who may indeed have every, possibly even prior, right to be there (in this territory of the 'self') but Winnicott is not looking for that close a relationship, as if anticipating a potential tension over territorial rights.

But the most satisfying explanation, certainly in the context of this paper, is that this ambivalence is Winnicott's sophisticated, grown-up enactment of his bringing these very 'primitive destructive impulses' to bear on that which feels closest. What is more distant does not threaten to pre-empt or impinge; does not merit destruction in order that it might be (re)found for oneself. In which spirit it is of course vital that Jung (and Jungians) survive: if not unmodified, certainly undestroyed.

Conclusion

This paper suggests that Matte Blanco's bi-logic offers us a framework for understanding Winnicott's engagement with Jung: an engagement driven by his intuitive recognition of their shared dissociated predicament occasioned by the frustration of their elemental assertiveness (love/hate) which remained

uncontained in early object relations. The consequent cost to Winnicott's potency remained unalleviated by extensive analysis of his 'unconscious-according-to-Freud', nor, Winnicott avers, would that have resolved Jung's difficulties with his 'primitive destructive impulses'. Both men endeavoured to reach beyond the repressed unconscious 'to get at the healing (they) needed' in some primary emergence (construed as affect by Winnicott, psyche by Jung) of the unrepressed unconscious. Winnicott found it, appropriately enough, in his archetypal, symmetrically structured dream of destruction being able to come into mind (feel contained). He felt Jung needed this too—but his was the earthquake-inducing Jung, not the patient stone-carver, the veteran survivor of just such '*conjunctio oppisotorums*'.

Yes, as Winnicott, and later Satinover (1985), argued persuasively, there was avoidance of object loss (and its destructive consequences for self and other) in Jung's claim that '*the objective psyche* forms the counterposition to the subjective ego. It can therefore be designated as a Thou' (1951, para. 1505, 'Reply to Buber'). But Jung's omnipotence, in contrast to Blake's insistent investment in the subjective imperative, was at least partially contained by his lifework of assimilating and articulating personal, clinical and cultural evidences of the objective psyche coming into mind—the unfolding into the collective unconscious of the inexpressible unrepressed.

I have sought to correlate this with Winnicott's enduring quest to reach back to the emergence of affect—the fire of the dragon's breath. On which we might allow Blake the last word:

> Tyger! Tyger! Burning bright
> In the forests of the night,
> What immortal hand or eye
> Could frame thy fearful symmetry?
> (Blake 1988)

Translations of Abstract

Cet article analyse la critique de Jung par Winnicott, principalement contenue dans son compte-rendu de l'ouvrage de Jung, *Ma vie, souvenirs, rêves, pensées*. Winnicott y affirme que l'apport créatif de Jung à l'analyse fut entravé par son échec à intégrer ses « pulsions destructrices primaires » résultant d'une inadéquation du contenant précoce. Bien que le diagnostic de Winnicott mette en lumière l'ombre de Jung, essentiellement ses réticences vis-à-vis de l'inconscient freudien, William Meredith-Owen soutient qu'il ne parvient pas à évaluer la portée du contenant compensatoire découvert par Jung dans l'inconscient collectif. Ce lien énigmatique entre destruction et créativité—si essentiel chez le dernier Winnicott—est éclairé par la bi-logique de Matte Bianco et, au-delà, exploré en lien avec l'œuvre de William Blake. L'équation personnelle de Winnicott, à travers son rêve de destruction inspiré par Jung, rêve à l'origine d'un « violent mal de tête » et précédemment analysé dans ces pages par Morey (2005) et Sedgwick (2008), est ici étudiée avec une attention particulière.

Dieser Beitrag behandelt Winnicotts Kritik an Jung wie sie hauptsächlich in seiner Bewertung von 'Erinnerungen, Träume, Gedanken' zum Ausdruck kommt und in der behauptet wird, daß Jungs kreativer Beitrag zur Analyse durch sein aus einem unzureichenden frühen Gehaltensein resultierenden Unvermögen behindert wurde, seine 'primitiven destruktiven Impulse' zu integrieren. Es wird argumentiert, daß, obgleich Winnicotts Diagnose Jungs Schatten beleuchtet (hierbei besonders dessen Einschränkungen gegenüber dem unterdrückten Freudschen Unbewußten), es verpaßt wird, die Wirksamkeit des kompensatorischen Gehaltenwerdens zu würdigen, welches Jung im Kollektiven Unbewußten gefunden hat. Die enigmatische Beziehung zwischen Destruktion und Kreativität—so zentral für den späten Winnicott—wird anhand von Matte Biancos Bi-Logik beleuchtet und weitergehend in Beziehung zu William Blake gesetzt. Winnicotts persönlicher Lösung durch seinen von Jung inspirierten 'spaltenden-Kopfschmerz-Traum' von Zerstörung—in der Vergangenheit in diesem Journal abgehandelt von Morey (2005) und Sedgwick (2008)—wird besondere Aufmerksamkeit gewidmet.

Questo scritto prende in considerazione la critica di Winnicott a Jung, principalmente espressa nella sua revisione di *Sogni, ricordi, riflessioni* dove si afferma che il contributo creativo di Jung all'analisi fu limitato dal suo fallimento nell'integrazione dei suoi "primitivi impulsi distruttivi" susseguenti a un inadeguato contenimento precoce. Si sostiene che sebbene la diagnosi di Winnicott mette a fuoco l'ombra di Jung, manca tuttavia di apprezzare l'efficacia del contenimento compensatorio che Jung trovò nell'inconscio collettivo. L'enigmatica relazione tra creatività e distruttività—così centrale all'ultimo Winnicott—viene chiarita dalla bi-logica di Matte Blanco, e ulteriormente esplorata in relazione a William Blake. Viene data particolare attenzione alla soluzione personale di Winnicott attraverso il sogno della distruzione, ispirato al terribile mal di testa di Jung – precedentemente considerato in questo Journal da Mlorey (2005) e Sedgwick (2008).

Эта статья рассматривает критику Юнга Винникотом, изначально высказанную в его обзоре «Воспоминаний, сновидений, размышлений»; Винникот считает творческий вклад Юнга несколько натянутым, поскольку Юнг неудачно интегрировал свои «примитивные деструктивные импульсы» вследствие неадекватного раннего контейнирования. В статье утверждаеця, что хотя диагноз Винникота высвечивает тень Юнга, и, особенно, его напряженность по отношению к вытесненному фрейдисцкому бессознательному, все же такой подход не способен воздать должное действенности компенсаторного контейнирования, найденного Юнгом в коллективном бессознательном. Загадочные отношения между деструктивностью и творчеством—столь важная, центральная тема для позднего Винникота—освещаются с помощью би-логики Мате Бланко и исследуются далее по отношению к Уильяму Блейку. Особое значение придаеця личному разрешению этого конфликта Винникотом на примере его (вдохновленного Юнгом) сна о «раскалывающей головной боли» и деструкции, сна, ранее разбиравшегося в этом журнале Мореем (2005) и Седжвиком (2008).

Este trabajo considera la crítica de Winnicott a Jung, principalmente aquella expresada en su revisión de 'Recuerdos, Sueños y Pensamientos', donde afirma que la contribución creadora de Jung al análisis estuvo limitada por su fracaso para integrar los 'impulsos primitivos destructivos', como consecuencia de una inadecuada contención temprana. Se argumenta que aunque el diagnóstico de Winnicott ilumine la Sombra de Jung, especialmente sus limitaciones vis-a-vis con respecto al inconsciente freudiano reprimido, fracasa en apreciar la eficacia de la contención compensatoria encontrada por Jung en el inconsciente colectivo. Esta relación enigmática entre destrucción y creatividad—tan central en el Winnicott tardío—es ilustrada por la bi-lógica de Matte Blanco, y más explorado aún en relación a William Blake. Se presta especial atención a resolución personal de Winnicott a través de su sueño de destrucción 'del lacerante dolor de cabeza' inspirado por Jung–anteriormente estudiado en este Journal por Morey (2005) y Sedgwick (2008)

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[Ms first received August 2009; final version September 2010]