From Sonu Shamdasani, London

Reply

The integrity of historical work depends upon the consideration of evidence and the drawing of due inferences. If the documentation put forward is considered insufficient, then it should be countered with new documentation and detailed argumentation, and not with spurious character analysis, such as F. X. Charet has presented in his response to my ‘Misunderstanding Jung: The afterlife of legends’. If such defamation and smears are the embodiments of the civility and courtesy that he recommends, then it is clear that we understand these virtues in antithetical ways. I regret that The Journal of Analytical Psychology did not grant my request to reply to Charet’s ‘I beg to differ’ in the same issue, thus legitimating such defamation and allowing it to stand unchallenged.

In my response, ‘Misunderstanding Jung: The afterlife of legends’, my critical remarks solely referred to Charet’s paper and not to his person, and I provided documentary evidence supporting my arguments and detailing his errors. Charet contends that I do not consider that ‘others may understand and interpret the same material differently’ (Charet 2000b, p. 474). I do not contest anyone’s right to have different opinions or interpretations, but simply stress the difference between opinion, interpretation and documentation, and request that arguments are accurately represented before being dismissed. I commenced my response by writing ‘In the following, I will restrict myself to false, mistaken and egregious comments about my work’ (Shamdasani 2000a, p. 459). I do not see how anyone could imagine that what followed claimed in any way to be a review of Jung scholarship. There are no grounds for Charet’s false assertion that I consider the other works he discusses ‘and the place of Jung’s spiritual inclinations in his life and thought … [as] also ‘fallacious’ or insignificant and unworthy of comment’ (Charet 2000b, p. 473).

He claims that my response served to ‘dismiss all other views of Jung’ (ibid.). This is patently ludicrous. I am thus taken to task for statements I never wrote and for views I do not hold but which Charet imagines to be mine. He also implies that I have failed to sufficiently acknowledge ‘the work of others in the field of Jung scholarship’ (ibid., p. 474). This is a calumny. In Cult Fictions, I had written:

In recent years, several books on Jung have appeared which have made far more important historical contributions than Noll’s: Paul Bishop’s The Dionysian Self: C. G. Jung’s Reception of Nietzsche, F. X. Charet’s Spiritualism and the Foundations of C. G. Jung’s Psychology, Ann Lammers’ In God’s Shadow: The Collaboration between Victor White and C. G. Jung, Magnus Ljunggren’s The Russian Mephisto,
and Marilyn Nagy’s *Philosophical Issues in the Psychology of C. G. Jung*. None of these works have received the attention they deserve.

(Shamdasani 1998, p. 7)

I also referred to James Heisig’s work, *Imago Dei: A Study of C. G. Jung’s Psychology of Religion* (which found no mention in Charet’s ‘Understanding Jung’) as ‘the best account of the evolution of Jung’s work on Western religion’ (*ibid.*, p. 50) and drew attention to works by other scholars. (Incidentally, in *Cult Fictions*, which Charet dealt with in less than a sentence in his ‘Understanding Jung’, discussion of the role of Jung’s ‘spiritual inclinations’ plays no small part).

When I commenced my historical researches, it became clear to me that the published editions of Jung’s works were incomplete and not wholly reliable – not only in matters of translations. Regarding the *Collected Works*, there were dozens of unpublished papers. In a number of instances, the versions of texts reproduced in the *Collected Works* did not exactly correspond to the manuscripts. Furthermore, critical editions of a number of Jung’s seminal works are not found there. Thus research on Jung had to start from the basis of manuscripts and first editions. Regarding Jung’s correspondences, approximately less than 10% have been published. Scholarly editions of many seminars are yet to be prepared. However, much of the secondary literature on Jung had relied on a textual corpus that was neither fully representative nor wholly reliable. This is one factor that has contributed to the fictionalizing of Jung. Thus much primary research – which had been commenced, but by no means completed by the team of the *Collected Works* – still remained to be done. This is what I set out to do. Thus it was learning from Michael Fordham in 1988 of critical discrepancies between the published version of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* and the manuscripts that led me to track down the manuscripts and study the composition of the work.

Charet continues to maintain his views on *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, and dismisses the documentation I brought forward as ‘marshalling yet more evidence to bolster his claims to support his tendency to give us a rather flawed, unidimensional reading of Jung’ (*op. cit.*, p. 475). This *ad hominem* comment is a clear example of the disregard for evidence, proof and documentation that I was criticizing. He informs us that his source for claiming that Jung’s family were the chief influence on the editing of *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* was Alan Elms’s statement that the chief suspects were ‘Jung’s adult children and their spouses, especially his daughter Marianne, her husband Walther Niehus, and Jung’s only son Franz’ (*ibid.*, p. 474). Charet quotes Elms’s statement that ‘As R. F. C. Hull eventually determined to his satisfaction, and as several other sources have attested, these were the major auntifiers, both before and after Jung’s death’ (*ibid.*). Charet adds that ‘Elms has a different reading of the same archival data that Shamdasani claims to know so well’ (*ibid.*, p. 475). This calls for comment. In point of fact, some of
my sources of information and documentation have not been consulted by Elms. For example, the papers in the Rascher archives that I cited in ‘Misunderstanding Jung’ were not utilized by Elms in his piece. There I distinguished two strata of changes: between the transcripts and the manuscripts of Jung which Aniela Jaffé utilized, and the first manuscript which she prepared, and between this manuscript and the published version. In reference to the editing of the manuscript, Hull referred critically to what he called ‘Jafféisms’. Around the summer of 1961, he wrote to Herbert Read,

Her [Jaffé’s] contribution is considerably greater than I had supposed. For instance, in the last chapter (which incidentally was written, not dictated, by Jung) it became clear that her procedure was to rewrite, or paraphrase, the obscure passages and then submit them to Jung for approval ... If this was her procedure with the written material, one wonders how much of the dictated, composite chapters has been similarly ‘processed’. But she has done it with such skill and empathy that although the results can hardly be called an original work of Jung’s, and an autobiography at that, it reads uncommonly like one. Probably no one will know how great her contribution is unless and until the dictated notes are examined (1).

As this statement makes clear, Hull had not examined the transcripts. As he correctly points out, such examination is the only way to establish the level of processing. I have spent nine years doing this. As a result, my contention is that by far the larger share of the changes occurs in the first stratum, that is, up to the preparation of the first manuscript. In my view, the most critical selecting, interpreting and shaping of the material had already occurred by this stage. I also think that it was the alterations in this stratum that most concerned Jung himself – not least because he never became aware of the full extent of the changes that took place in the second stratum, both before and after his death. Hull’s own damage limitation exercise took the form of attempting to restrict alterations between the first manuscript and the final version. As to the attestations of ‘several other sources’, I can only consider the status of their views if their names are given and documentation produced. Contrary to Charet, I do not regard it as by any means established at a documentary level that the bulk of the alterations in the second stratum were due to the interference of the Jung family. The resolution of this question in part depends on which elements one accords more significance to: for example, details concerning Jung’s family and youth, or his contacts with such figures as Eugen Bleuler, Albert Einstein, Leo Frobenius and Thomas Mann? So many individuals were involved in making, negotiating and accepting the changes in the second stratum that I don’t think that it would be particularly fruitful to attempt to establish a league table of responsibility for cuts.

The quotation from Bennet’s book that Charet now cites in support of his view that Memories was indeed Jung’s autobiography differs from that in the first 1961 UK edition published by Barrie and Rockliff, where the clause reads: ‘(as part of a volume – a Life – since written by Mrs. Aniela Jaffé)’. (p. xi.) I contend that Bennet was referring here to Jung’s manuscript, ‘From the earliest experiences
of my life’, which was incorporated into Memories in a heavily edited form. Jung had actually requested that his signature be placed under this to mark a caesura in the text, differentiating his own writing from Jaffé’s work. Thus I see Benner’s statement as fully consistent with his 1963 statement that I cited which claimed that many reviewers had been mistaken to regard Memories as an autobiography.

Charet contends that I am mistaken not to regard Memories as Jung’s Autobiography. As I indicated, Memories was referred to in a myriad of ways during the course of its composition by figures involved with it, including Jung. My contention was that his repeated declarations that Memories was not his autobiography taken together with the legally binding documents that he signed have an especial weight. If this were not the case, it would follow that Jung was lying when he wrote his letter to Walther Niehus on 5 April 1960, when he made his statements at the editorial meeting on 26 August 1960, and then again when he reviewed these statements and signed the declaration of 29 November 1960. (I have seen originals of this declaration, and Jung’s signature, in ink, is not forged and the document has not otherwise been tampered with). I do not think that Jung was intentionally misleading all parties concerned on these occasions. A further account of the editorial meeting of 26 August 1960 was given by Vaun Gillmor of the Bollingen Foundation, who was also present:

On the subject of the biography being prepared by Frau Jaffé, Dr. Jung stated that he wishes this book to be called a biography as told to Frau Jaffé. He also stated that he himself has written three chapters of the book, the remaining being written by Frau Jaffé from notes taken in conversation from him. He specifically stated that he does not wish the work to be considered as his as he has only contributed to the book of Frau Jaffé (2).

These statements are fully in keeping with his lifelong aversion to writing an autobiography. I cited a number of these statements in ‘Memories, Dreams, Omissions’. In my view, this was one area where Jung remained consistent throughout his life. Here is another declaration, which Jung wrote to Emma von Pelet: ‘I have always vowed to myself that I would never write an autobiography and in this case I have only wetted my feet a little; it is rather Frau Jaffé who is writing a biography of me to which I have made a few contributions’. (6 January 1960, C. G. Jung: Letters, vol. 2, p. 531, tr. mod.) There are many sentences in Jung’s writings which are ambiguous, and which can be read in many ways. I do not think that this is one of them (one may also recall that Gerhard Adler selected and edited these letters in collaboration with Jaffé.) On 11 February 1961 Jaffé herself informed Esther Harding that the “Biography” had now been translated (Jung papers, ETH). Moreover, on 3 February 1961, Jaffé informed Jung that Hull was ready to look through the ‘Biography’ (Jung papers, ETH). Once again, individual references do not prove anything, but it would seem rather bizarre if both Jung and Jaffé were as mistaken as Charet claims that I am concerning the status of Memories.
Finally, Charet considers my praise for Eugene Taylor’s reconstruction of William James 1896 lectures on exceptional mental states as ‘indulging in hyperbole’ and the work itself as ‘unrelated’ to the issues at hand (Charet 2000b, p. 474). I had indicated why this work played a pivotal role in Taylor’s reconstruction. It was one of the works which showed me what scholarship was capable of: namely, how painstaking philological work could overturn decades of false interpretation, make available once more a lost chapter in psychology for both scholars and practitioners and open new vistas for research. Amongst historians, I am not alone in my estimation of this work. To make serious headway, the work of scholars requires institutional support. The Journal of Analytical Psychology has sponsored a series of conferences exploring the relations between psychoanalysis and analytical psychology. If it is thought by some that James’ significance for Jung has yet to be established, one wonders if the journal might consider sponsoring a conference on the relation between James and Jung. To Kurt Wolff, Jung wrote of James, ‘aside from Théodore Flournoy he was the only outstanding mind with whom I could conduct an uncomplicated conversation. I therefore honour his memory and have always remembered the example he set me’. (17 June 1958, C. G. Jung: Letters vol. 2, p. 452; incidentally, Jaffé incorporated parts of this letter in the deleted chapter in Memories on James). Of Flournoy and James, Jung also wrote, ‘I owe it mainly to these two researchers that I learnt to understand the essence of psychic disturbances within the setting of the human soul as a whole’. (‘Concerning the archetypes, with special reference to the anima concept’ 1936, CW 9, pt. 1, § 113, tr. mod.) This is no small acknowledgment (3).

Notes
1 I thank Mrs. Birthe-Lena Hull for permission to cite this letter.
3 For further clarification concerning the inception of Jung’s practice, his adoption of psychoanalysis, and what he understood this to comprise, see my ‘The Magical Method that works in the Dark’: C. G. Jung and Suggestion’, and for further information on the French psychological sources from which Jung drew, see my ‘Claire, Lise, Jean, Nadia, and Gisèle: Preliminary Notes towards a Characterisation of Pierre Janet’s Psychasthenia’.

References