

Counter-response to John Beebe and Lionel Corbett

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John Beebe writes: "We psychotherapists are taught to be very tentative in our formulations of theory." This makes sense when considering that presently no theory in psychology is built and tested in the way theories are built and tested in more advanced disciplines, such as physics. However, my compensation theory of dreams and symptoms is constructed using the physicists' method and is tested in more than 1000 phenomena using again the physicists' method. Whether a generalization is valid and useful or not can be understood only through its consequences, i.e., through its usefulness in explaining, predicting, and controlling the phenomena. Jung's enlarged compensation theory does all these (Loker, 2002, 2007).

Beebe quotes Jung (1921, p. 458): "Most objective values—and reason itself—are firmly established complexes of ideas handed down by the ages." This is true in general, but most dreams deal with "objective values" that are based on objectively knowable experience, such as material gains or losses, mental or social failures or successes that can cause material losses or gains, etc., about which everyone agrees, at least in a given society. Evaluations may vary from person to person, but as far as mentally healthy individuals of a given society are concerned, only in some measure. Nevertheless, the individual's precise evaluations need to be known in therapy. Dreams interpreted correctly—on the basis of the person's life experiences—are the most reliable source of knowledge about unconscious material.

Beebe correctly credits me for recognizing that in the unconscious these functions can deploy their rationality in all of these ways. My belief in the rationality of the unconscious is based on respect for the unconscious and for the human mind as a whole. This is the kernel of my contribution. But I also know that the rationality of the unconscious is limited in the sense that it is incapable of seeing distant consequences because it cannot use deductive logic. I believe that the unconscious is capable of doing its compensation work most effectively because of its analogic mode of thinking. I also believe that the ideas such as intuition, inspira-

tion, creativity, strike of genius, gift from God, etc., are often, or always, caused by the automatic analogic thinking of the unconscious.

The enlarged compensation theory solves the problem of the dream's meaning and function and post-Jungian discoveries fit this theory (e.g., the facts I mentioned under the heading *Jungian Interpretation of the Results of Modern Dream Research*, and in Loker, 2002). Beebe appears to have reservations when he states that my clarification of compensation does not constitute a complete theory of dreams. As becomes clear in his comments, he has not assimilated my theory sufficiently and my article does not cover all consequences of enlarging the theory of compensation. This may have prevented a full appreciation.

Jung's Dream and a Crick in the Neck

Beebe and I disagree about the meaning of Jung's dream about waking up with a crick in his neck. Beebe views this dream as revealing a lopsided conscious attitude "to too much 'look down' on the patient." However, Jung clearly says that his conscious attitude was seeing his patient as highly intelligent, which is the opposite of looking down at her. Therefore the lopsided conscious attitude that his dream sought to compensate for, or correct, was his looking up at his patient. This is what hurt him, not his looking down at her.

Beebe insists otherwise: "The pain with which Jung awakes is a judgment delivered by his body that the effort he has been making, or thinking about making, to revalue his patient, is really too much." However, Jung does not say that he was consciously making an effort to overvalue or undervalue his patient. He simply admits that he was considering her a highly intelligent woman, i.e., he was overvaluing her. The dream says that this conscious attitude of his was hurting him, or was harming his interests.

Beebe is not quite right when he states that the compensation resides in the feeling about the action taken in the dream, not in the action itself. It is the action that presents a lopsidedness or a compensation, and the *feeling* tells only which one of these two is presented by the action. Feeling unattached to an action cannot present a lopsidedness or a compensation, and a dream containing only a feeling without an action would not fit the compensation theory. When a dream presents a compensation, both the action and the feeling mean compensation. But when a dream presents a lopsidedness, the feeling may be considered to mean compensation, or to call for compensation, while the action presents what needs to be compensated. Beebe is right only in this sense.

It seems to me that Beebe sometimes thinks about lopsidedness as it is usually done, other times as clarified in my article. Moreover, he tries to find loopholes in my arguments. This may be one of the reasons why he thinks that my article does not present a complete theory.

Beebe's response contains some correct interpretations of my article, then obscures the issue with his following lines:

I think it is simpler to state that the compensation to the conscious attitude lies in the dream affect, whether positive or negative, and that the dream, unlike life, sets up a situation that allows for an unambiguous appraisal of whether one feels good or not about what one is doing.

A dream action describes either a lopsidedness, or its causes, or its compensation. The place for the action in the dream and the affect it carries expose which one of these three types of thought that particular dream action conveys. It is not the affect but the action that presents, or represents, a lopsidedness or a compensation. The affect is loaded to the action by the unconscious to tell consciousness what is bad and what is good for it, or what is a lopsidedness and what is a compensation.

Beebe's statement "the compensation to the conscious attitude lies in the dream affect, whether positive or negative" is wrong, as explained above. I feel that Beebe complicates and obscures the issue when trying to simplify it.

"The dream, unlike life, sets up a situation that allows for an unambiguous appraisal of whether one feels good or not about what one is doing." This to me needs clarification: the appraisal in dreams is done by the unconscious, and the result is a judgment, rather than a feeling, about what consciousness has been doing. This judgment is being produced through analogic thinking. Feelings are experienced consciously, and there is no evidence showing that the unconscious too has feelings, although it appears to induce them into consciousness. Therefore, the statement "whether one feels good or not about what one is doing" is not clear as to the meaning of "one," i.e., whether it refers to consciousness or the unconscious.

Beebe's observation that dreams rarely present positive alternatives may be true for therapists who deal with persons with psychological problems. Most healthy people, on the other hand, are more impressed by the pleasurable aspect of dreams.

The dream Jung reports [father driving carelessly], for instance, may have been about his patient's father complex and not about the father's own way of operating in

the world. Were that the case, the interpretation would be that the young man's father complex is out of control, inflated to the point of driving the young man's ego in a decidedly harmful way—an interpretation that does not assume anything about the actual father.

I used the information provided by Jung in my interpretation and I did not assume anything about the actual father. He knew that the dreamer relied too much on his father and that this was not a healthy attitude.

Beebe proposes a new possible interpretation of the dream but presents no proof of it. It is always possible to invent several different ad hoc interpretations, or explanations, of any phenomenon. This is especially true about mental phenomena, which are not objectively observable. The correct interpretation is one that is deduced from a few general principles that explain many other phenomena, and the mission of science is to discover such general principles. The generalized compensation theory fits this specification. It explains many phenomena consistently without being contradicted by any fact.

Dreams and Works of Art

In the end, Beebe is in my judgment too tentative about the theory of compensation. To him, dreams are like works of art. I have concluded that dreams serve to make us conscious—and not just of anything. They aim at protecting us. They influence post-dreaming behavior in the waking state. The positive effect of dream rehearsal on mental health is a proof of this fact. Dreams are products of analogical *reasoning* and are not works of art.

The influence of dreams on behavior appears to come about via the association of ideas that they produce in the waking state. For example, someone who dreams of swimming in cold water may use an additional blanket the next night even without becoming conscious of the meaning of the dream. Correct dream interpretations enhance therapy. Wrong interpretations hinder it or prevent the cure. In fact, most dreams remain non-understood at the conscious level and most dream interpretations by professionals are wrong.

Someone who does not understand the real meaning of a dream can liken it to anything else, such as a message from God or from the Devil. Beebe concludes that dreams can “underline, refine, and even create conscious attitude.” All these are covered by the three types of thought that exist in dreams in accordance with the rationality of the unconscious. He also concludes that they “regularly explore that [con-

scious] attitude's many possibilities without necessarily compensating it." I explained that not every dream contains compensation of the lopsidedness that it treats, compensation being only one of the three types of thought that can be found in a dream. More importantly, when *compensation* is understood as the compensation of the harmful effect of severe failures on self-confidence, self-esteem, and mental health, it is seen that every dream fits the compensation theory (Loker, 2002).

However, dreams never contain thoughts that point to possible consequences. Dreams only deal with *causes*. They explore past events to determine analogies that will explain the *causes* of failures. Dreams will attribute these failures to external *causes* and will determine the *causes* of the desired situation. This is how they compensate for lopsidedness. Finding consequences, on the other hand, is a function of consciousness, which is capable of using deductive logic and performing sequential operations (Loker, 2002). The unconscious, or the right brain, operates using analogies and fast parallel processing. It searches for ways of dealing with close dangers by trying to find causes.

One of the reasons why Beebe does not think that the enlarged compensation theory can solve the problem of dream meaning and function is perhaps that my article did not cover all the consequences of that theory (see Loker, 2002). Hopefully, my article is nevertheless a beginning in this regard and what Beebe views as "a welcome addition to the literature of dreams."

I disagree with all of Lionel Corbett's criticisms, as explained below.

He says, "The fact that Jung develops a pain in the neck when he looks up at his patient suggests that it is painful to do so." This is wrong in many ways. It is not looking up that is painful in the dream. Jung hurts himself by looking up at his patient. The dream says this unmistakably. Having pain carries an analogic, or metaphoric, meaning like looking up does. Corbett may say that he means moral pain. He may say that the pain was real and therefore has to be interpreted realistically. This too is wrong, because the physical pain belongs to the real world but has a metaphoric meaning in the dream. Jung must have caused the physical pain by his posture during the sleep, and his unconscious seized the occasion to treat a standing problem. The correct analogic, or metaphoric, meaning of the dream is that Jung harmed his interests by overvaluing his patient.

If looking up at his patient were painful for Jung's *consciousness*, he would know it and would try to terminate his self-harming conscious behavior of looking up at his patient. He therefore would not need a dream that tells him to do that. Moreover, if he had consciously found

looking up painful, he would say so in his interpretation of the dream. He did not say that.

Also, such a dream would not fit the general understanding of dreams and the compensation theory as understood by Jung and by me, because the unconscious is believed to warn consciousness about facts ignored by consciousness. If Corbett means that Jung's looking up at his patient was painful to his unconscious instead of to his consciousness, this would mean (a) that his unconscious was dealing with its own problem instead of a problem of his consciousness, and (b) that the unconscious can experience pain. The first consequence contradicts the compensation theory, and the second one is an assumption without any factual basis.

We know that pain is a conscious experience, whereas unconscious pain is simply meaningless. Thus, assuming that Jung's looking up at his patient was painful to his unconscious is as impossible as assuming that it was painful to his consciousness. Besides, inventing ad hoc explanations to singular phenomena and not proving those explanations in any way is not a valid scientific method. The mission of science is to discover general principles which serve to explain, predict, and control many phenomena.

Moreover, if the compensation theory is the basis of the argument, saying, as Corbett does, that Jung's looking up at his patient was painful for him, and saying, as I did, that Jung hurt himself by looking up at his patient lead to the same message of the dream, which is, "Don't look up at her!" in the metaphoric sense. This is the message I found in the dream, which is the opposite of the message Jung found by neglecting to take the neck pain into consideration. If looking up was a compensation instead for lopsidedness, it would not cause pain. I did not say that this dream disproves the compensation theory. It proves that not every dream presents the compensated state of a lopsidedness. I stated clearly that the function of dreams is to realize compensation, or the termination of harmful mistakes in the conscious attitude, and that some dreams present the mistake, or lopsidedness, while others present the compensation.

Special Unconscious Abilities

Corbett writes: "The author says that Jung had been overestimating her and this hurts him. How on earth does the author know this without asking Jung more about his feelings towards his patient?" I did not say, and Jung did not say, that he felt hurt consciously by looking up at her patient. In fact, Jung said that he consciously evaluated his patient positively: he saw her as a "highly intelligent woman." The dream's ana-

logic, or metaphoric, language expresses this fact by making him physically look up at her, and he harmed himself, or rather his interests, by doing that. His unconscious was telling him something that he ignored consciously, i.e., that he was hurting his interests by overestimating his patient. Hurting himself, or his interests, by looking up at his patient and ignoring this was the lopsidedness in Jung's attitude which his dream sought to terminate, or compensate.

This is how dreams work, because the unconscious has special abilities to see some facts better than consciousness can, especially concerning the evaluation of certain qualities of people. And the unconscious does not try to deceive consciousness, as Jung believed, whereas consciousness is known to be capable of deceiving itself. Evidently, Jung's unconscious evaluated his patient more realistically than he consciously did and tried to correct his self-harming conscious attitude. The dream presents the lopsidedness, not its compensation, which is only implied.

Corbett: "Jung may have consciously devalued her even though he recognized her intelligence." Someone like Jung would know this and would say it. Besides, if Jung were really devaluing his patient consciously, and his unconscious were considering this a harmful mistake, looking up at her in the dream would be the compensation, and there would be no neck pain. In fact, this is the misinterpretation by Jung. He disregards the meaning of the neck pain. If Jung were devaluing her consciously, and her unconscious wished to show him this as a mistake, or lopsidedness, instead of its compensation, the dream would make him look down at his patient and get hurt by doing that. Only if Jung really devalued his patient consciously and there were no neck pain could the dream be interpreted as Jung did. But both of these conditions were not realized.

Corbett suggests how Jung felt about his patient at the cost of contradicting Jung's expressed opinion about his patient. However, he does not check if this fits with the compensation theory. Corbett should ask himself what makes him suspect that Jung was consciously underestimating his patient even though he found her *highly* intelligent.

Corbett: "I don't think the author can merely contradict what Jung says he feels about his patient with no evidence." Jung thought that his dream presented a compensation, whereas I showed that it presented a harmful lopsidedness. This is where I contradict him. But I do not contradict him regarding his expressed evaluation of his patient as a highly intelligent woman. Corbett also asserts that even if I were correct, and Jung overestimated his patient, "this overestimation could only be true unconsciously, because he clearly says he was undervaluing her." However, Jung does not say that he was undervaluing her consciously. Rather: "If in the dream I had to look up at the patient in this fashion, in

reality I had probably been looking down on her." To repeat, this is not what he consciously felt and knew but what he deduced from his misinterpretation of his dream. The claim that the overestimation, or lopsidedness, belongs to the unconscious again contradicts Jung's idea of unconscious compensation of a lopsidedness in the conscious attitude through a dream.

The Mind-Body Misnomer

It is generally accepted that the right brain produces the dream thoughts. However, it appears that the left brain contributes the details of the pictures, as some psychologists maintained (e.g., Antrobus, 1986). Evidently, all cognitive-behavioral explanations raise the body-mind problem. But this problem cannot be solved, or considered to be solved, or made nonexistent, by referring to concepts such as psyche, soul, and thinking with the body. In reality, the expression "body-mind problem" is a misnomer, because the functioning of the brain has an unconscious part which is known to control the body in many ways. Thus there is no need for hypothetical concepts. The real problem is to account for consciousness-body relation. I have shown elsewhere (Loker, 2002) that consciousness is inseparable from free will, or the necessity of making a choice.

Thus, the consciousness-body problem, and therefore the mind-body problem, is in reality the free will-body problem. Quantum mechanics offers a possible solution to this problem. The brain is a quantum system with probability waves which are related to the integrated functioning of the brain and which we perceive as free will, or free thinking. The probability waves, which are also called matter waves, are not material entities, because, for example, they cannot be observed or recorded. The probability waves of the brain collapse when a decision is made, and then the related parts of the brain operate to perform the chosen task.

This would mean that the probability waves determined by phylogenetic and ontogenic factors constitute the psyche or soul. However, this is only speculation, and it is not necessary to solve the body-mind problem to solve the problem of dreams. I mentioned the above explanation of body-mind interaction to show that I am far from ignoring it, and that scientific explanations of it can be tried and are tried without reference to hypothetical entities that are not scientifically studied.

"Daily clinical experience belies the author's assertion that true symbols cannot occur in dreams unless they become concrete through frequent use." How can Corbett know whether dreams contain true symbols or not without being able to prove that a given interpretation is the only correct one? Dream symbolism is just one more means of interpreting

dreams arbitrarily, as the many dictionaries of dream symbols show. Dream symbols used by most psychologists, including Freud and Jung, are in reality concrete analogies, or pictorial metaphors, not symbols or signs.

Corbett: "The dream about the father driving drunk could be simply a comment from the unconscious about the father." This is of course true, but the comment has self-protective function. Jung interpreted the dream as a compensation, whereas I interpreted it as the presentation of a lopsidedness in the dreamer's conscious attitude. Jung acknowledges the lopsided, or unhealthy, attitude of his patient on the basis of his knowledge of his patient's life experiences. In fact, he says, "This dream has no foundation in fact." So, we have to interpret it not realistically but analogically. Therefore "drunk" and "driving clumsily" mean analogically not being in his senses, or being unable to think and act adequately. I interpreted being drunk as being unable to think straight, "*Maybe* because of a love affair or a new and ambitious business enterprise (represented again analogically by driving a new car carelessly.)"

Corbett: "When a man dreams that he puts on a stranger's hat, the author says this merely means the dreamer too easily accepts other people's views." Jung means the same thing: "A stranger's hat imparts a strange personality." According to the compensation theory, dreams deal with harmful mistakes that cannot be prevented consciously. Jung additionally introduced the concept of mandala because he could not interpret this dream as compensation, due to the fact that it clearly presented a lopsidedness, not its compensation.

Corbett also insists that, according to Jung, some dreams are complementary, underlining the conscious attitude. I quoted Jung's statements in which he upheld the compensation theory. Corbett is unable to see the difference between compensation as a function and compensation as the presentation of the compensated state or the means of compensation. "Underlining the conscious attitude" is the presentation of a lopsidedness and implies its compensation. Every dream seeks to compensate, or terminate, a lopsidedness in the conscious attitude, but some dreams present the lopsidedness and imply that compensation, or termination, is necessary.

Mandalas and Dreams

In Corbett's reading, I claim that we don't need ideas such as the mandala to understand dreams. I showed that that dream could be interpreted on the basis of the compensation theory without reference to mandalas. But this does not mean that I see the concept of the mandala as totally meaningless and useless. In fact, I consider it one of Jung's most valuable ideas which is not fully appreciated yet.

The mandala is essentially a circular figure. The ancients believed that heavenly bodies were perfect gods moving in perfect circular orbits. The circle is the symbol of perfection. Autistic children produce circular shapes or move in circles without being educated to do this. Alfred Adler claimed that to be perfect, or to be like God as much as possible, is an instinct. I believe that striving for perfection, represented by mandala figures, is one of the basic instincts, and that its conscious development will be the salvation of the humankind.

The social instinct was belatedly recognized consciously although it has been always operating. Social concern is now a very useful part of all human activities, but it does not look sufficient because it can be abused by particular social groups. Humanity needs to cultivate the perfection instinct as superior to the social instinct and the mastery instinct or "general goal." The signs of this development are clearly observed. Humanity still has much to learn from Jung by developing his ideas scientifically instead of mystically.

The fact that Jung did not use the concepts of manifest and latent dreams does mean that these concepts have no reality. According to Corbett, dreams present what we do not know. In my view, the mind cannot express any knowledge that it does not possess, irrespectively of the source of the knowledge and its location in the mind/brain. Because dreams are produced by the unconscious, what they express is evidently what is known by the unconscious, and they express it truthfully, whereas consciousness is known to be capable of deceiving itself for various reasons, which is one form of lopsidedness.

Dora's Dream and Symbolism

Corbett: "The author's interpretation of Dora's dream is simply naïve. He equates fire with sex and jewel case with female genitals." I do not "equate" fire with sex; those who make such mistakes are the believers in dream symbolism. I interpret fire analogically as meaning sex in this dream, because a dream analogy acquires meaning in the context created by the dreamer's life experiences, which are reported by Freud.

However, I do not repeat Freud's interpretation. When the dream says that Dora's mother wanted to stop and save her jewel case, it does not mean female genitals. It means the real jewels that Dora's mother was receiving from Dora's father for allowing him to have an affair with Frau K. and for allowing Herr K. to flirt with Dora. These ideas constitute external attributions of Dora's failure to protect herself from Herr K. and are included in my interpretation but not in Freud's interpretation.

I chose Dora's dream "because the information provided by Freud about her real life experiences is sufficient to interpret both the manifest and the latent dreams on the basis of Jung's theory." My interpretation also uses plenty of Dora's associations of ideas reported by Freud. Discovering associations of ideas was probably the best thing Freud was able to do. I stated explicitly the meanings that Freud missed in the dream. Corbett appears to be trying to hide what Dora's dream means instead of exposing it. This was Freud's approach to mental disorders and dreams.

"If there is a wish in the dream, it may be Dora's wish that her father would save her emerging identity or her real sense of self." This is something Freud rightly read in the dream but considered superficial. I presented what Corbett calls a "wish" as the short-term solution of Dora's problem recommended by her unconscious. I did so in accordance with the compensation theory, not in accordance with Freud's wish-fulfillment theory. I also showed that Freud failed to see most of the meanings in the dream.

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