

The archetypal Dao

A look at C. G. Jung's reception of Chinese thought

Karl Baier

Introduction: The slow arrival of China within the 'Jung and the East' discourse

Among the various types of literature on the famous Swiss psychiatrist, psychologist and psychotherapist Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961), there is a genre one could call 'Jung and the East'. In the relevant texts, the category 'the East' is hardly ever defined or even critically discussed. Interestingly, until the end of the twentieth century, Jung's 'East' is often more or less identified with South Asian sources, with Jung's commentaries on Buddhist texts of Tibetan and Japanese origin and on Daoist writings being neglected if not entirely disregarded. The best example is Harold Coward's seminal study *Jung and Eastern Thought* (Coward 1985). As Sonu Shamdasani stated in his *Jung's Journey to the East* – an introduction to Jung's lectures on Kundalini Yoga – Coward's book 'remains the most useful overall study of Jung and Indian thought, upon which it focuses' (Shamdasani 1996: xliii). The fact that Coward's focus reduces the 'East' more or less to South Asia does not seem to be a serious problem.

The paradigmatic status of South Asian traditions for Jung's understanding of 'Eastern' religion is suggested, *inter alia*, by his use of the Sanskrit term 'yoga'. For him, it is a general category for all 'Eastern' religious practices and especially for meditation methods, including their theoretical justification and descriptions of their effects (Coward 1985: 3).¹ He was particularly interested in comparing 'Eastern' yoga with his 'Western' psychotherapy and the experiences he made with his patients. This contributes to the impression that South Asian concepts dominated his understanding of Eastern thought *in toto*.

Additionally, the South Asian bias one can find in interpretations of Jung's relation to 'the East' is supported by the sheer quantity of texts that Jung produced referring to Sanskrit sources and to India in general (see the bibliography in Borelli 1985). Thus, with a superficial glance at the matter, and guided by older secondary literature, one could readily conclude that Jung's intellectual journeys to 'the Orient', like his real travels, ended on the Indian subcontinent and did not continue further East.

It was not until the 1990s that more attention was given to Jung's relationship to Daoism, and again Coward played a leading role in this development. The turn started with John Clarke's inclusion of a chapter on Daoism in his monograph on *Jung and Eastern Thought* (Clarke 1994: 80–103). In 1996, Coward contributed to the debate with a surprising article on Jung's reception of Daoist concepts (Coward 1996), where he revised central claims of Clarke's study and asserted hitherto underestimated Daoist influences on the Swiss psychologist, in particular with regard to his notion of the Self and his theory of synchronicity. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the significance of Daoism for Jung, as highlighted by Clarke and Coward, found its way into the seminal *Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion* (Schlamm 2009).

Independent from the domain of psychology, research into the modern reception history of Chinese traditions outside China has flourished since the second decade of the twentieth century. To date this highly interesting field is dominated by the Chinese classics and their interpretations by Western sinologists and philosophers. Jung is addressed occasionally, mainly because of his collaboration with Richard Wilhelm (1873–1920), the most famous German sinologist of the first half of the twentieth century (e.g. Wulf 2005: 281–2). The impact of Jung's reference to Chinese thought for a broad global audience, and especially in the counter culture of the 1960s and early 1970s, with psychologized New Age religion and today's holistic milieu as its offspring, has thus far not been mapped.

Situating Jung within modern psychology and religion

Jung was one of the leading figures in the formative phase of modern psychology and psychotherapy (Shamdasani 2003). Besides his contributions to psychology in general he became a pioneer in the field of the psychology of religion (e.g. Wulf 1997). What makes his case intricate is that he was not only a psychotherapist and psychologist studying the psychological dimensions of religion, but through

his writings also acted as a player within the religious field. That alone would not be a problem if he would not have mixed the two roles in a questionable but nonetheless extremely influential way. His way of thinking has many roots. Looking at the historical conditions of his works reveals a fertile rhizome from which they emerged.

Jung belonged to those European intellectuals who had been socialized in a nineteenth-century Protestant-Christian culture with which they could no longer identify as young adults due to biographical reasons and the profound cultural, social and political changes of the long nineteenth century, with the First World War being its disastrous climax. Like many other members of his generation, he did not completely abandon religion. The search for sources of a post-Christian religiosity plays an important role in his life and work. He considered a psychology based on data from psychotherapeutic treatments as the possible birthplace of future religion. Furthermore, he was also influenced by texts, symbols and myths from different religious traditions made available by translations, comparative religious studies and the modern historiography of religions. He participated to a certain extent in the widespread fascination with 'Eastern' religions among the European and American educated classes, which promised to offer alternatives to the outdated forms of Christianity.

Jung reports that even in his childhood he had dreams and experiences that alienated him from his religious environment. In his student years, he intentionally sought alternatives to the conventional Protestant faith represented by his father who was an Evangelical Reformed pastor. He did not have to look far. His interest in the spiritualist movement, which was very popular at the time, found support in the maternal line of his kinship, which had a spiritualist branch. Between 1895 and 1899, Jung attended and organized séances in which his cousin, Helene Preiswerk (1881–1911), acted as medium through which different spirits spoke. In the oldest known lectures of Jung, which he gave at meetings of the student fraternity Zofingia between 1896 and 1899, he advocates a philosophical spiritualism based on empirical research (Jung 1983). As warrantors for this project he refers to outstanding spiritualists like the physicist Friedrich Zöllner (1834–82), the philosopher Carl du Prel (1839–99) and the chemist and physicist William Crookes (1832–1919), who in 1897 became elected president of the Society for Psychical Research.²

In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (Jung 1995: 120) he mentions in passing that during this time he also read representatives of German Romantic mesmerism (perhaps mediated through his reading of du Prel, who builds on them), namely, Carl August Eschenmayer (1768–1852), Johann Karl Passavant (1790–1857)

and Justinus Kerner (1786–1862).³ It is difficult to estimate how influential Romantic mesmerism on Jung actually was, as he hardly refers to it explicitly besides this unique reference. It seems that for him Kerner's *Die Seherin von Prevorst* (The Seeress of Prevorst; 1829) was the most important work in this regard.⁴ Jung read it in 1897 when he was regularly attending séances and gave it as a birthday present to his somnambule cousin who subsequently called herself a reincarnation of Friederike Hauffe (1801–29), the seeress of Prevorst. As late as 1933–4, he treated Kerner's book at length in his lectures on the history of modern psychology at the ETH Zürich as an instructive study of what happens in cases of extreme introversion (Jung 2019a). At least at that time his attitude towards Kerner and Romantic mesmerism was anything but uncritical. He stated (Jung 2019a: 39):

Justinus Kerner's *The Seeress of Prevorst* is not a case history in a modern sense, but as it were a dubious account of one of the peculiar and romantic lives that were quite common at the time. Kerner belonged to the school of Romantics. He was not a scientist, and his book contains a series of more or less naïve observations and interpretations. So please do not think that I subscribe to anything and everything that my deceased colleague Dr. Kerner tells us in his book.

In later years, Jung repeatedly conceded the proximity of his psychology to German Romanticism, especially the theory of the unconscious formulated by Carl Gustav Carus (1789–1869) in his late Romantic *Psyche. Entwicklungsgeschichte der Seele* (Psyche: Developmental History of the Soul; 1846).⁵ Moreover, he underlined that the scientific-rationalistic line of his thought would be as important as his roots in Romanticism (von Stuckrad 2022: 81). The combination of both, that is, influences from Romanticism and a more rationalistic approach, can be found in representatives of what was called 'scientific occultism' or 'psychical research', to which the aforementioned theoreticians and researchers of spiritualism contributed in a contested way, as well as in representatives of the psychology of the unconscious (diverse hypnotherapists, Flournoy, Freud, etc.) (Ellenberger 1994).

Spiritualism influenced his religious quest and at the same time opened the door to a promising field of psychological research that was just emerging (Charet 1993). After his study of medicine in Basel, Jung started to work at the 'Burghölzli', the Psychiatric University Clinic of Zürich. His chief, the famous psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler (1857–1939), who was also interested in spiritualism and attended séances, supervised his doctoral thesis on *Die Psychologie und*

Pathologie sogenannter occulter Phänomene (The Psychology and Pathology of so-called Occult Phenomena) based on notes taken at the séances Jung had organized. It was published in 1902 by the spiritualist press of Oswald Mutze (Jung 1902). Jung's thesis is a good example of how psychology and psychiatry around 1900 were intertwined with psychical research and the seemingly paranormal phenomena produced by somnambules and spiritualist mediums (Treitel 2004: 29–30). His concept of 'synchronicity' that is also highly relevant for his reception of Chinese thought (see below), and on which he worked until his late years, shows that he remained involved in this kind of research.⁶ He was also in contact with Joseph B. Rhine (1895–1980) and followed the statistical method of the American parapsychologist in his empirical astrology study. Apart from this work, Jung was too little involved in the field to be called a full-fledged parapsychologist. He remained a psychologist in favour of psychical research, who insisted on the scientific examination of each individual case and considered psychological explanations as very useful but not completely sufficient. Jung believed that there was enough empirical evidence for most paranormal phenomena to consider their existence proven (Main 2004: 71). This applied to apparitions of the deceased as well as materialization and dematerialization phenomena, poltergeist apparitions, precognitions and prophetic as well as telepathic dreams.

I suggest that his attitude towards religious topics throughout his later life followed the basic trajectory of those scientists and occultists around 1900 who pursued psychology and psychical research as scientific disciplines in which religion and empirical science could be reconciled in one way or the other. The settings of his experiments which should provide the data for this synthesis switched from the séance room and the laboratory of empirical psychology to the intimate spaces of his meditative self-experimentation and of the psychotherapeutic encounter with his patients.

Jung's thesis nonetheless manifests a change of thought that was to shape his entire work. Spiritualistic mediums as revelators of metaphysical truths receded into the background as Jung pursued a more psychological approach. The model for this were the works of several psychologists engaged in psychical research, and especially the Geneva-based Théodore Flournoy (1854–1920), whose study of the medium Hélène Smith (real name: Catherine Élise Müller; 1861–1929) *Des Indes à la planète Mars* (1900) had become a bestseller.

What was novel about Flournoy's study was that it approached her [Helene Smith's] case purely from the psychological angle, as a means of illuminating

the study of subliminal consciousness. A critical shift had taken place through the work of Flournoy, Frederik Myers, and William James. They argued that regardless of whether the alleged spiritualist experiences were valid, such experiences enabled far-reaching insight into the constitution of the subliminal, and hence into human psychology as a whole. (Shamdasani 2009: 8)

The spirits encountered by mediums retain to some extent their status of objective realities, but they cease to be inhabitants of the Otherworld and become instead 'objective psychic phenomena' (Jung 1995: 120). The framework for this interpretation is a theory of the unconscious that assumes a creativity of the psyche independent of ego-consciousness. In the case of splits in consciousness, unconscious personalities are formed that take on the features of independent actors. Jung could easily extend this approach beyond the spiritualist context to an 'intrapsychic model of religion' (Aziz 1990: 9–51) that, not least through his influence, also gained ground in transpersonal psychology and alternative religious currents of the second half of the twentieth century.⁷ As Hanegraaff (1996: 252) observes with reference to transpersonal psychology,

[t]he angelic and demonic realms [. . .] are identified as realms of the human unconscious, and this collective unconscious is in turn identified with an objective transpersonal realm [. . .]. This is how the 'gods' that seemed to have been banned from heaven reappear [. . .] from the depths of the human psyche.

In Jung's case, the relocation of the divine and demonic within an extended psyche was not merely a theoretical move. The psychologized religious world that puts personal experience at the centre is connected with transformative (therapeutical) practices that help cope with emotional problems and improve the relationship with oneself and the world one lives in.

The initial success he had with his merger of personal religious interests and academic research was crucial for his further career: in his later professional life as founder of an influential form of psychology and psychotherapy, he continued adhering to the programme of translating both his own religious explorations and experiences as well as those of his patients into psychological theory. For the interpretation of dreams and visions he did not ignore the contribution of psychoanalysis, but also drew on material provided by the historiography of religions, including the study of myths.

During the First World War and in the years that followed, Jung went through a midlife crisis and immersed himself into his subconscious by means of a meditation practice that he developed at that time and later called 'active

imagination' (Baier 2009: 623–47; Baier forthcoming). Struggling to articulate his own myth, he drew on a similarity between his thoughts and ancient gnostic authors (Segal 1992). At the end of the 1920s, inspired by a Daoist treatise that he commented on for Richard Wilhelm (see the following), the study of European alchemy took the place of processing the productions of his own unconscious in his famous *Red Book* (Jung 2009), which remained a fragment. Via his research on alchemy, Jung deeply immersed in early modern Paracelsism and Hermeticism. From the 1920s, he further broadened his knowledge of religions by conversations with scholars of different traditions, among them specialists of Asian religions like the Indologists Jakob Wilhelm Hauer (1881–1962) and Heinrich Zimmer (1890–1943), but above all the Protestant theologian and sinologist Richard Wilhelm.

With the help of these sources, Jung attempted to extract from his own biographical experience and from the material provided by his patients a type of inner logic of personal development or, as he called it, the 'individuation process'. In this process independent psychic factors called 'archetypes' interact (in the form of mental images and sometimes even through manifestations in the material world) with the conscious personality like characters in a stage play.⁸ The drama of individuation ultimately leads to symbolic manifestations of the archetype of the Self which indicate the emerging unity and wholeness of the psyche and the union of its opposites, especially the balance between consciousness and the unconscious. The following quote from Jung's *The Relationship between the Ego and the Unconscious* (1928) illustrates his concept of the Self. In his typical way, Jung switches back and forth between two poles: (1) a spatial choreography of his drama psychological theory in which the separate areas of the conscious ego and the unconscious are finally reconciled by the Self as the emerging center of the whole space, and (2) the appropriation of elements from various religious traditions, in this case Christianity and Daoism (Jung 1972b: 221–2):

If we picture the conscious mind, with the ego as its centre, as being opposed to the unconscious, and if we now add to our mental picture the process of assimilating the unconscious, we can think of this assimilation as a kind of approximation of conscious and unconscious, where the centre of the total personality no longer coincides with the ego, but with a point midway between the conscious and the unconscious. This would be the point of new equilibrium, a new centering of the total personality, a virtual centre which, on account of its focal position between conscious and unconscious, ensures for the personality a new and more solid foundation. [. . .] I could say the same thing in the words of St. Paul: 'Yet not

I live, but Christ liveth in me.' Or I might invoke Lao-tzu and appropriate his concept of Tao, the Middle Way and creative centre of all things. In all these the same thing is meant. Speaking as a psychologist with a scientific conscience, I must say at once that these things are psychic factors of undeniable power; they are not inventions of an idle mind but definite psychic events obeying definite laws and having their legitimate causes and effects, which can be found among the most widely differing peoples and races today, as thousands of years ago.

According to Jung, a huge part of the human psyche – the so-called collective unconscious – contains patterns and laws (e.g. the archetype of the self and the rule of unification of opposites on the path of individuation), which are independent from specific individual, cultural and historical contexts but interact with the given circumstances so that culture-dependent images and concepts of the archetypes and travelogues for the path to individuation emerge. Thus, the powerful impact of these transcultural dimensions of the soul is responsible for the formation of diverse myths, religious symbols, and world views around the globe. One could call this a historically relativized perennialist theory of religion with a psychological twist. Jung's concept of the self and the whole process of individuation that results with the emergence of symbols of this archetype have an obvious religious connotation as he himself, for example, identifies Jesus Christ and the Dao as images of the Self in the aforementioned quote and elsewhere. The process of finding one's personal identity becomes the stage where numinous powers manifest.

Psychologization in this sense does not mean that religion is reduced to the realm of mere subjective human wishes, images and thoughts. On the contrary, Jung tries to show that religiously charged 'numinous' intra-psychical symbols and figures are real powers that transcend the insights and desires of the (conscious as well as unconscious) individual psyche and decisively influence the life of everyone. He argues that they have to be respected if the process of becoming oneself is to succeed. His theories and psychotherapeutic practice contributed to the creation of sociocultural spaces in which religious dreams and visions were accepted and could flourish without being dominated by the distinct views of certain faith communities or dismissed as infantile.

It was this approach that made Jung one of the mentors of the emerging unchurched religiosity of the twentieth century.⁹ His influence on the New Age movement and the contemporary holistic milieu is well known (Hammer 2006). Important New Age authors like Fritjof Capra (b. 1939) and Marilyn Ferguson (1938–2008) referred to him (Gruber 2000: 240–1). He also became a crucial figure for twentieth-century astrology and modern interpretations of the Tarot. Jung's

thoughts were and still are present within the Wicca movement (Hanegraaff 1996: 90) and modern magic (Luhmann 1991: 280–2). With regard to the reception of Chinese sources in these areas, so far Jung has been mainly mentioned because of his preface to the English edition of Wilhelm's translation of the *Yijing* 易經 (Classic of Changes) (see, e.g., Redmond 2021). Only recently, in a study on the psychologization of Eastern religions, which extensively considers alternative religious contexts, did Elliot Cohen devote a section of the chapter on 'The Dao of Psychologisation' to Jung's understanding of Daoism (Cohen 2022: 61–4).

Jung's reception of Daoism before his encounter with Richard Wilhelm

As far as we know, Jung only began studying Chinese sources after the publication of *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido* (literally, Transformations and Symbols of the Libido, whereas the title of the English version in Collected Works 5 is 'Symbols of Transformation') in 1912. In this study he already incorporated many materials from the history of religions, including translations from the Vedas, but China was not mentioned. In Jung's left behind library there is a copy of Alexander Ular's (1876–1919) translation of the *Daodejing* 道德經 in the German edition from 1912. He must have been reading in it because one passage is marked (Shamdasani 2012: 138). No further details are known. The first references to Chinese sources can be found in his *Psychologische Typen* (Psychological Types) published in 1921. As the foreword to this work is dated "Spring 1920," he apparently finished writing it already in early 1920.

A subchapter to the chapter "Die Bedeutung des vereinigenden Symbols" (The Significance of the Uniting Symbol) deals with "Das vereinigende Symbol in der chinesischen Philosophie" (The Uniting Symbol in Chinese Philosophy) (Jung 1971: 214–21). In it, Jung focuses on discussing the concept of *dao* in the *Daodejing*. His textual basis is the third section of the first volume of Paul Deussen's (1845–1919) *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie* (A General History of Philosophy; 1908) that contains an appendix on Chinese and Japanese philosophy ('Einiges über die Philosophie der Chinesen und Japaner'; Deussen 1908: 673–715). Deussen presents basic concepts of the *Daodejing* using the translation of Viktor von Strauss (Deussen 1908: 692–704). Jung takes his Laozi quotations from there.

The psychologist treats the *Daodejing* in the context of a comparison of different uniting symbols within three kinds of religion: primitive, Eastern and

Western. The discussion of his understanding of 'primitive' religion is beyond the scope of this chapter. With the term 'Western religions' he refers to the Christian denominations and Judaism. Brahmanism, Buddhism and Daoism comprise 'Eastern religions'. Jung's orientalism, evident in his East/West opposition, is discussed in more detail later. He focuses on demonstrating that uniting symbols play a central role in both Western and Eastern religions. However, both have developed a different type.

As can be seen from the *Red Book*, the reconciliation of opposites was at that time neither a purely theoretical question for Jung nor a problem he faced mainly through his patients. It was central topic of his own crisis (Shamdasani 2009: 58–9). He was personally involved in finding a way to cope with inner contradictions and experienced the power of uniting symbols during his visionary self-experimentation.

According to Jung, uniting symbols represent an attitude that reconciles conflicting psychic tendencies through an irrational unification of opposites and thus banish the danger of a split of the psyche. The flow of libido, or life force, that is always directed towards the vital optimum 'withdraws from the opposing extremes and seeks a middle path which must naturally be irrational and unconscious, just because the opposites are rational and conscious' (Jung 1971: 194). The emergence of the middle path finally unites the contradictions. It is experienced as redemption from the conflict of opposite aspirations and as the creation of a new potential, a new manifestation of life (Jung 1971: 199, 193). The unconscious integration process enters consciousness in the form of uniting symbols. Jung describes the difference between Western and Eastern uniting symbols as follows (Jung 1960: 207, my translation; the English translation in Jung 1971: 194 is misleading):

For our Western forms of religion, which are more primitive in terms of insight, the new possibility of life appears as a God or Savior who, out of love or paternal care, but out of his own decision, cancels the split when and how it suits him for reasons that are hidden from us. The infantility of this view is striking. The East has recognized this process for millennia, and has therefore established a doctrine of salvation which places the path of redemption within the realm of human intention.

Jung criticizes that Judaism and Christianity believe in God as an authoritarian father-figure who redeems people through acts of his arbitrariness without them understanding the reasons or being able to contribute anything themselves. The rejection of this infantile image of God is combined with a criticism of the

heteronomous morality that according to Jung, is connected with this form of religion. ‘We are still so uneducated that we actually need laws from without, and a task-master or Father above, to show us what is good and the right thing to do’ (Jung 1971: 213). Against this view, Jung argues that mature morality is based on freedom. But to gain this freedom and overcome heteronomy requires more than the simple abolishment of external laws and values, and giving in to one’s immediate urges and desires (Jung 1971: 213, original emphasis):

There is no morality without freedom. When the barbarian lets loose the beast within him, that is not freedom but bondage. Barbarism must first be vanquished before freedom can be won. This happens, in principle, when the basic root and driving force of morality are felt by the individual as constituents of his own nature and not as external restrictions.

Jung then outlines a vitalistic morality that invokes the natural flow of the life force and identifies it with the ‘middle way’ of Eastern religions. Autonomy does not mean to surrender to every desire one has; rather, it is to listen to one’s own nature in the form of the laws of the movement of libido (Jung 1971: 212–13):

Morality is not a misconception invented by some vaunting Moses on Sinai but something inherent in the laws of life and fashioned like a house or ship or any other cultural instrument. The natural flow of libido, this same middle path, means complete obedience to the fundamental laws of human nature, and there can be no higher moral principle than harmony with natural laws that guide the libido in the direction of life’s optimum. [. . .] The optimum can be reached only through obedience to the tidal laws of the libido, by which systole alternates with diastole – laws which bring pleasure and the necessary limitations of pleasure, and also set us those individual life tasks without whose accomplishment the vital optimum can never be attained.

Jung understands the *dao* as a typical Eastern uniting symbol. He sees a kinship with Vedic thought but also with the philosophy of Henri Bergson (1859–1941). At the time Jung was influenced by the French philosopher whose thought helped him to reinterpret the Freudian concept of libido (for the reception of Bergson by psychoanalysts and especially Jung, see Shamdasani 2003: 227–30). What he would later call the process of individuation is already conceived here as a deliverance from the tension of conflicting opposites that manifests itself as a renewal of the flux of life. Like *brahman*, according to Jung, *dao* not only denotes the ultimate union of opposites, but also stands for the creative process that leads to this unity (Jung 1960: 230, my translation):

The realization of Tao [. . .] has the same redeeming and uplifting effect as the realization of Brahman: one becomes unified with Tao, with the infinite 'creative duration' [Bergson's *durée créatrice*], to appropriately add this newest philosophical term to its older relatives, for Tao is also the course of time.

Dao is divided into *yin* and *yang*, the fundamental pair of opposites, which, as universal principles, connect the human microcosm with heaven and earth. 'Yang signifies warmth, light, maleness; yin is cold, darkness, femaleness. Yang is also heaven, yin earth. From the yang force arises shen, the celestial portion of the human soul, and from yin force comes kuei, the earthly part. As a microcosm, man is a reconciler of the opposites' (Jung 1971: 216–17).

Jung understands the *dao* as an 'irrational union of opposites' and identifies it with 'the creative process' (Jung 1971: 215), again with allusions to Bergson. Both the process thought and the emphasis on creativity, as well as the use of the term 'irrational' – which often appears in this early interpretation of Daoism and in the rest of *Psychological Types* – point to Bergson's influence. In line with Bergson's critique of intellectualism, Jung defends the significance of the irrational as a realm of experience that is not against reason but outside its reach (see Jung 1971: 454; Shamdasani 2003: 229).

From the irrationality of the *dao* it follows that it cannot be attained through will-driven action (Jung 1971: 217, original emphasis):¹⁰

This lends particular significance to another specifically Chinese concept, *wu wei*. *Wu wei* means 'not-doing' (which is not to be confused with 'doing nothing'). Our rationalistic 'doing,' which is the greatness as well as the evil of our time, does not lead to *tao*.

In a manner typical of the period after the First World War, Jung combines the reception of Chinese 'not-doing' with a critique of the rationalism and activism of Western culture as it was widespread in the Lebensreform and youth movement and the Keyserling circle. He does not go into detail here about what this concept means and what therapeutic significance it could have. A little later, however, he became acquainted with a Chinese method of recognizing the direction of the flow of time without using one's own will: the *Yijing*.

It is an open question why Jung does not yet refer to the *Yijing* in *Psychological Types*. Deussen's appendix to the *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*, Jung's major source with regard to Chinese thought, contains an introduction to this divination text, which the psychologist very likely read. Jung may also have been pointed to the *Yijing* by his patient, lover and collaborator Toni Wolff (1888–1953), whose father was a sinologist (Main 2004: 77). Obviously, however, his

interest in the text was not aroused by Deussen or Wolff. In the summer of 1919 he held a seminar in London at the medical practice of his friend, the neurologist and psychiatrist Maurice Nicoll.¹¹ On 3 June 1919, he wrote from London to his wife that he had become acquainted with the magic of the *Yijing* and would try to get a copy of it.¹² The fact that Jung speaks of having been made familiar with the magic of the *Yijing* suggests that he was not only referred to the book, but also had practical experience with the oracle in London. As far as we know today, this was the beginning of his decades-long preoccupation with the book.¹³

Most likely during the summer holidays of the following year, Jung himself began to practice the divination method described in the book. His interest in divination techniques was not new. As can be seen from a letter to Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) from 1911, he was already engaged at that time in making horoscopes of his patients and checking whether they could be used for diagnosis. He wrote to Freud that his experiments with astrology had amazing results, which he assumed would certainly seem incredible to the Viennese psychoanalyst (Jung 1972a: 45).

In the case of the Chinese oracle, Jung again claims the role of the observing researcher who was not convinced from the outset that it would produce some sort of insights (Jung 1995: 407):

One summer in Bollingen I resolved to make an all-out attack on the riddle of this book. Instead of traditional stalks of yarrow required by the classical method, I cut myself a bunch of reeds. I would sit for hours on the ground beneath the hundred-year-old pear tree, the I Ching beside me, practicing the technique by referring the resultant oracles to one another in an interplay of questions and answers.

According to Jung, this procedure led to ‘remarkable results’ in the sense of the emergence of meaningful connections between the oracle’s messages and his own thoughts, connections which he was not able to explain: ‘During the whole of those summer holidays I was preoccupied with the question: are the I Ching’s answers meaningful or not? If they are, how does the connection between the psychic and the physical sequence of events come about?’ (Jung 1995: 407). In later years, he would have continued his experiments with the *Yijing* with some of his patients and again came to the result ‘that a significant number of answers did indeed hit the mark’ (Jung 1995: 407).

The ground was well prepared for the encounter with the rising star of German sinology, whose work, like Jung’s, was not limited to the confines of a particular scientific discipline and connected sociocultural reform efforts with his scholarly expertise.

Magic in the air: Jung's relationship with Richard Wilhelm

It was a tremendous experience for me to hear through him, in clear language, things I had dimly divined in the confusion of our European unconscious. Indeed, I feel myself so very much enriched by him that it seems to me as if I had received more from him than from any other man. (Jung 1966: 62)

In summer 1920, the Lutheran missionary, educator, translator and connoisseur of Chinese culture Richard Wilhelm left the seaport Qingdao 青島 where he had lived since 1899 because the German colony to which Qingdao belonged was handed over to Japan (Wippermann 2020). He went back to his homeland and prepared his final settlement there by establishing new contacts and building on old ones. These included his acquaintance with the philosopher Hermann Count Keyserling. Keyserling traveled to China in 1912 shortly after the Xinhai 辛亥 Revolution and visited Qingdao to meet Wilhelm. The meeting of the two was instigated by Keyserling's diplomat friend Gerhart von Mutius.¹⁴ In his 1919 bestseller *Reisetagebuch eines Philosophen* (Travel Diary of a Philosopher; English translation: Keyserling 1925), the Count notes that in Qingdao Wilhelm introduced him to representatives of the (disempowered) political and cultural elite who had gathered there because of the revolution and interpreted between him and his Chinese interlocutors (Keyserling 1925: 39).¹⁵

The *Reisetagebuch* had a major impact on the popularity of Daoism in 1920s Germany. Using Wilhelm's translation of the *Daodejing* Keyserling defended 'Daoist wisdom' against accusations of being a kind of 'unfruitful quietism'. It would indeed fail in the conscious, volitional shaping of life, the Count conceded, but then continued (Keyserling 1925: 47, translation slightly altered):

It cannot be denied, however, that the works of the Taoist classics contain, perhaps, the profoundest sayings of wisdom which we possess, the profoundest precisely from the angle of our ideal, the ideal of creative autonomy. How is this possible? It is possible, because the Tao, 'Meaning' (as Richard Wilhelm translated it so admirably) – is expressed more perfectly so far in the creativity of nature than in the freest realization of freedom; so that a life which reflects the workings of nature cannot but lead to perfection.

When the *Reisetagebuch* was published, Wilhelm was no longer unknown in the German-speaking world. Together with Martin Buber's (1878–1965) *Die Reden und Gleichnisse des Tschuang-Tse* (The Discourses and Parables of Tschuang-Tse; 1910), his translations *Laotse: Tao Te King. Das Buch des Alten vom SINN*

und LEBEN (Laotse: Tao Te King. The Book of the Old one about MEANING and LIFE; 1911) and *Dschuang Dsi – Das wahre Buch vom südlichen Blütenland* (Dschuang Dsi – The True Book of the Southern Blossom Land; 1912) caused a ‘Dao fever’ that particularly infected the postwar alternative cultures of the German Lebensreform and youth movement (Pohl 1999: 29–30; Grasmück 2004: 25–8).

When Wilhelm arrived in Germany, Keyserling was just preparing the foundation of the so-called ‘School of Wisdom’, which eventually took place at an inaugural conference in November 1920 in Darmstadt. Keyserling’s School became an elitist center for adult education and a meeting point of renowned intellectuals. Its fame in the Weimar Republic was based on its conferences, where scholars from various fields lectured.¹⁶ The activities of the School of Wisdom were designed to contribute to the spiritual and cultural renewal of postwar Germany and the European civilization in general (Gahlings 1996: 120–59). A lecture of Keyserling held at the inaugural conference on *Indische und Chinesische Weisheit* (Indian and Chinese Wisdom) made clear that one of the main aims of the School of Wisdom was the study of Asian thought and the development of a concept of wisdom that integrates European, Indian and Chinese traditions.

Despite the pluralist outlook of the conferences, Keyserling pursued a kind of perennialism that was connected with a criticism of the materialism and rationalism of the modern world and of modern democracy as the rule of mediocrity. The concert of voices from different religions, philosophies and sciences should, through the contrast of diverse historical manifestations, lead to a realization of the timeless basic truths that shape the course of history but are in danger of being forgotten in the modern times.

In a letter to Wilhelm he wrote that the purpose of the School of Wisdom would be ‘to let the eternal basic tones, which underlie all spatio-temporal melodic formation of a religious, social and philosophical kind, resound as such – we take nothing from any special form, add something to each.’¹⁷ The Chinese would have been the first to recognize these basic tones and at the same time were able to take account of the changing historical situations (Letter to Wilhelm, 29 August 1921) – obviously a reference to the *Yijing*, which thus becomes, at least in this letter, the historical model for Keyserling’s own philosophical approach and for the kind of insights his conferences aimed at.

It was only after the inaugural conference that Keyserling heard about Wilhelm’s return to Germany and it was him who took the initiative to contact Wilhelm. In a letter dated 8 February 1921, he invited him via Wilhelm’s publisher

Eugen Diederichs (1867–1930) to speak at the first official conference of the School of Wisdom in May.¹⁸ Wilhelm received this letter belatedly on February 26. He replied immediately telling Keyserling that he had given a talk in Beijing on the relationship between Chinese and European philosophy just before he left for Germany. Therein, he would have called for ‘European philosophy to depart from its purely theoretical nature and offer wisdom of life.’¹⁹ He would have seen it as a confirmation of his thoughts that immediately after his talk, he had received the news that Keyserling had founded a School of Wisdom. It would therefore go without saying that he would have been very delighted to lecture there.²⁰ Finally, Wilhelm not only gave two lectures at the May conference, but also participated as a speaker in the second conference, again with two talks. In between, he visited the School of Wisdom’s famous Tagore week that took place between 10 and 14 June 1921. Through these activities, he became a formative figure in the early days of Keyserling’s School. The Count’s network was useful for his career in Germany but his proximity to the School of Wisdom also provoked criticism (Wippermann 2020: 61, 73, 75–6).²¹

Decades later Jung recounts that he got to know Wilhelm at a meeting of the School of Wisdom but only vaguely dates this to the early 1920s (Jung 1995: 407). It would be possible that Jung attended at least one of the early Darmstadt conferences and met Wilhelm there. But it is more likely that his memory is mistaken in this respect as no other source mentions such a visit. His first attested participation in Keyserling’s School of Wisdom took place in April 1927. Additionally, Wilhelm gave a talk about the *Yijing* at the Psychological Club in Zurich as early as 15 December 1921 – and not in 1923, as Jung mistakenly claims in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (Stein 2005: 211). As far as we know today, the first verifiable encounter of the two took place on this occasion.

At the Psychology Club, Wilhelm did not only talk about the *Yijing* but also demonstrated how to make it work as an oracle. Jung tells us: ‘At his first lecture at the Psychological Club in Zurich, Wilhelm, at my request, demonstrated the use of the I Ching and at the same time made a prognosis which, in less than two years, was fulfilled to the letter and with the utmost clarity.’ Wilhelm would have confirmed what he already knew of the *Yijing* in the conversations that took place at their first meeting and would also have taught him many new things (Jung 1969b: 590). Both were practitioners, convinced of the oracle’s divinatory power. Additionally, it was used as a therapeutic device by Jung and Jungian therapists (Smith 2012: 198).

Soon after this meeting, the connection between the two was interrupted or at least significantly impeded, as in January 1922 Wilhelm went back to China to

work as scientific advisor at the German Embassy in Beijing and as a lecturer at Beijing University.²² In 1924 he returned to Germany where he finally received a professorship in Chinese history and philosophy at the University of Frankfurt and founded the China-Institute there which he directed until his death.

In the same year, the translation and commentary of the *Yijing*, on which he had been working with his Chinese teacher Lao Naixuan 勞乃宣 (1843–1921) since 1913, was published as *I Ging. Buch der Wandlungen* (I Ching: Book of Changes). Jung was very impressed by this work. He thought it surpassed by far previous translations and suggested to his American collaborator and translator Cary F. Baynes (1883–1977) to translate it into English.²³ Baynes started her translation in 1929. After Wilhelm's death in 1930, her work progressed slowly (McGuire 1989: 19). It was not until 1950 that it was published with a foreword by Jung as volume XIX of the Bollingen Series, named after the Bollingen Tower, Jung's country home in Bollingen (Wilhelm 1997). The *I Ching or Book of Changes* became a bestseller and until today is the most popular English version of the *Yijing*. Jung's preface affirmed the importance of the *Yijing* as a source of wisdom and offered an explanation for the functioning of the divination technique associated with the book combined with a criticism of Western rationalism. It thus supported the spread of the *Yijing* in the counterculture of the 1960s and 1970s (Redmond 2021). Given the success of the book, Jung's foreword most likely became the most read text that he ever published (Karcher 1999: 296).

Jung not only learned from the sinologist. In fact, some of Wilhelm's commentaries on the *Yijing* point to Jung's incipient influence on him, particularly those that refer to the powers of the unconscious, such as in his introduction (Wilhelm 1997: liv):

The only thing about all this that seems strange to our modern sense is the method of learning the nature of a situation through the manipulation of yarrow stalks. This procedure was regarded as mysterious, however, simply in the sense that the manipulation of the yarrow stalks makes it possible for the unconscious in man to become active. All individuals are not equally fitted to consult the oracle. It requires a clear and tranquil mind, receptive to the cosmic influences hidden in the humble divining stalks.

Later in the text he explains that, according to the *Yijing*, the unconscious not only receives influences but, in a very concentrated state of mind, mysterious currents of force emanate from it to go beyond the individual and affect the unconscious of other people and even the realm of physical cosmic phenomena (Wilhelm 1997: 360).

Lu Zhao deserves credit for pointing out the role of the unconscious in Wilhelm's interpretation of the *Yijing* (Zhao 2021: 160–5). Probably because of the aforementioned misleading statements by Jung regarding the history of his relationship with Wilhelm, he supposes that Jung only became interested in Wilhelm's scholarship through his reading of *I Ging. Buch der Wandlungen* in 1924, and that they began to strongly influence each other from the latter's trip to Zurich in 1926. As a result, Zhao assumes that Wilhelm's concept of the unconscious in *I Ging* owes nothing to the Swiss psychiatrist but it is drawn from nineteenth-century theories from Friedrich Schelling (1775–1854) up to Eduard von Hartmann. In light of Wilhelm's *Yijing*-focused visit to Zurich in 1921, I find it more plausible that through Jung's influence Wilhelm conceived the unconscious as key factor for the assumed divinatory power of the *Yijing*. They apparently developed their understanding of the unconscious as an explanatory principle for paranormal forces and occurrences in dialogue with each other and through theoretical and practical engagement with the Chinese text (or, in Jung's case, its translations).

The fact that Jung first mentions the term 'synchronicity' in his 1930 obituary of Wilhelm is significant (Jung 1966: 56). Jung developed this concept – not exclusively, but to a large extent – in dialogue with Wilhelm and in the context of their practice of the *Yijing*. I will return to this later.

Without any doubt, the relationship between the two intensified during the second half of the 1920s. Wilhelm again lectured at the Psychology Club, now on *Chinesische Jogapraxis [sic]* (Chinese Yoga Practice) and *Chinesische Seelenlehre* (Chinese Doctrine of the Soul) in May 1926, and on *Einige Probleme der buddhistischen Meditation* (Some Problems of Buddhist Meditation) in January 1929 (Stein 2005). In April 1927, Jung and Wilhelm lectured at the seventh annual conference of the School of Wisdom.

One year later, Wilhelm sent his translation of the Chinese alchemical treatise *Taiyi jinhua zongzhi* 太乙金華宗旨 (translatable as The Great Unity's Principle of the Golden Fluorescence/Flower)²⁴ to Jung with the request to write a commentary that would be published along with the translation. Jung agreed and the volume appeared in 1929 with the title *Das Geheimnis der Goldenen Blüte. Ein chinesisches Lebensbuch* (The Secret of the Golden Flower: A Chinese Book of Life) – later in this chapter, I will go into the content of Jung's commentary in more detail; here I focus on the biographical circumstances.

The arrival of Wilhelm's manuscript was accompanied by a strange coincidence that caught Jung's attention. He was just painting an image that he felt had a Chinese atmosphere. It showed a symmetrically structured fortified city with

a golden castle in the middle. Later he wrote a legend beneath his painting, in which he hints at the similarity between the symbolism of the Chinese text and his creation. 'When I painted this image, which showed the golden well-fortified castle, Richard Wilhelm sent me from Frankfurt the Chinese, thousand-year-old text of the golden castle, the embryo of the immortal body' (Jung 2009: 422, n307).

The reading of Wilhelm's manuscript of the *Golden Flower* had a profound impact on Jung's work that underwent a difficult phase at the time. In the preface to the second edition of the *Golden Flower* he writes that he had so far searched in vain for examples from cultural and religious history that were comparable to the results of what he calls his 'investigating the processes of the collective unconscious' – that is, of his visions and active imaginations in which he had been intensively immersed since 1913 (Jung 1968: 3).²⁵ The insights he had obtained from his self-experimentation and also from the psychotherapies he conducted were far from the categories and methods of recognized forms of psychology. He felt that his research results were in a state of limbo unless he was able to prove that this personal material transcends the realm of private fantasies and enters into the sphere of universal human ('collective') relevance testified by historical sources.

Thus far he had found the greatest similarities in late antique gnostic systems. But Jung was not satisfied with this 'strange and confused literature' for various reasons. He found the gnostic scriptures to consist more of systematic speculations than references to direct experience. Moreover, most of what we know about Gnosticism were accounts of its Christian critics. He would also have missed key points of his own experience in it: 'The text that Wilhelm sent me helped me out of this difficulty. It contained exactly those items I had long sought for in vain among the Gnostics. Thus, the text afforded me a welcome opportunity to publish, at least in provisional form, some of the essential results of my investigations' (Jung 1968: 4). From then onward he regarded alchemy to be the link 'between Gnosis and the processes of the collective unconscious that can be observed in modern man' (Jung 1968: 4). Wilhelm, for his part, was thrilled by Jung's commentary. Thenceforth, Jung considered him a close ally and they became friends.

At least one of the aims of the work on the *Red Book* was to create a document that would compensate for the lack of historical writings that would testify the significance of the visionary process he was going through. It is therefore understandable that the *Golden Flower* eventually led him to stop working on it. 'The beginning of the end came in 1928, when Wilhelm sent me the text of

the “Golden Flower”, an alchemical treatise. There the contents of this book [the *Red Book*] found their way into actuality [*Wirklichkeit*, in the sense of historical reality, KB] and I could no longer continue working on it’ (Jung 2009: 555). Furthermore, his interest in alchemy as symbolic expression of a psychological and spiritual transformation process deepened significantly through the Chinese text.²⁶ Subsequently, he started to collect old alchemical texts and the study of European alchemy became a focus of his research for more than twenty years.

The commentary to the *Golden Flower* is the most important of Jung’s texts that emerged from the collaboration with Wilhelm. At its beginning Jung argues that from the perspective of prevailing Western intellectualism and overvaluation of conscious will, Eastern ideas and values, including Chinese philosophy, seem to have no practical relevance and are at best perceived as curiosities (Jung 1968: 10). Modern psychology, however, would offer a way to understand and appreciate ‘Eastern wisdom’ (Jung 1968: 11). He then tries to substantiate this claim by interpreting basic notions and certain elements of the practice described in the *Golden Flower*.

The subsequent commentary deserves a closer examination. I can only address one point here, however, which is suitable for linking to the section on Jung’s early reception of Daoism and at the same time building a bridge to topics yet to be dealt with in the present chapter.

Jung reports on a line of development which he had observed in certain patients and which, in his opinion, corresponds to a path known in the East for a long time (Jung 1968: 13–19). These would be people with a highly developed but one-sided consciousness and strong will who are harassed by contents rising from the unconscious, which rebel against their conscious attitude and cannot be assimilated. Both for him as a therapist and for those patients, the basic problem presented itself as unsolvable if one did not want to act violently to one or the other side of the patient’s being. This is the situation already described in the chapter on the uniting symbol in *Symbols of Transformation* discussed earlier and with which Jung himself had to cope during his crisis. Some patients would have failed. Often, however, they would not have solved the unsolvable problem, of course, but would have, as Jung says, ‘outgrown it’ (Jung 1968: 14–15; in the German original text Jung speaks of *überwachsen*). They would have reached a higher level of personal growth from which the insurmountable aporia lost its urgency. In light of *Symbols of Transformation*, one can say that they have thus found the kind of solution that is represented by unifying symbols.

Jung tells us that he noticed a commonality in the fates of these patients. The salutary new thing that approached them from the ‘dark field of possibilities’

never came only from outside or only from within (Jung 1968: 15; the English translation is misleading, so I stayed closer to the German original): ‘If it came from outside, it became a profound inner experience; if it came from inside, it became an outer happening. In no case was it conjured into existence intentionally or by conscious willing, but rather seemed to be borne along on the stream of time’ (Jung 1968: 16). Jung alludes here to the topic of synchronicity and its time-theoretical justification, to which a separate section is devoted below, because they are of utmost importance for Jung’s approach to Chinese thought.

Jung asks what these people would have done to bring about the redemptive progress, and states (Jung 1968: 17, original emphasis):

As far as I could see they did nothing (*wu wei*) but let things happen. As Master Lü-tsu teaches in our text, the light circulates according to its own law if one does not give up one’s occupation. The art of letting things happen, action through non-action, letting go of oneself as taught by Meister Eckhart, became for me the key to open the way. *We must be able to let things happen in the psyche.*

In the following passages, which I cannot go into further analysis here, he discusses the difficulty of letting go with reference to his method of active imagination. Compared with *Symbols of Transformation* where he commented on *wuwei* 無為 for the first time and rather vaguely, he is now relating it to his therapeutical and meditation experiences. His reception is still to some extent in line with the Lebensreform movement and related forms of cultural criticism. There, alongside the Daoist *wuwei*, Meister Eckhart’s *Gelassenheit* was an important point of reference for a critique of the will-driven activism of modern Western civilization (Largier 1991).

In April 1929, he managed to have Wilhelm invited to a psychotherapy congress at Nauheim and enthusiastically wrote about this to him: ‘This is historic! Think about what this means if medical practitioners, who reach the ordinary people directly in their most vulnerable areas, become inoculated with Chinese philosophy! [. . .] This hits the bull’s eye. Medicine is powerfully converting itself to the psychic, and here the East must enter!’ (Jung 1973: 63; quoted after Stein’s translation of the original German letter in Stein 2005: 215).

After Wilhelm had sent him a reply in which he agreed to speak at the congress, Jung replied: ‘Dear Friend, It is lovely to hear the word “friend” from you. Fate seems to have assigned us the role of being two pillars that support the weight of the bridge between East and West’ (Jung 1973: 66; quoted after Stein’s translation of the original German letter in Stein 2005: 216).

Wilhelm's lecture at Nauheim eventually did not take place, as he died in March 1930, only fifty-seven years old. It fits the relationship of the two that Jung foresaw Wilhelm's death in a vision:

A few weeks before his death, when I had no news from him for a considerable time, I was awakened, just as I was on the point of falling asleep, by a vision. At my bed stood a Chinese in a dark blue gown, hands crossed in the sleeves. He bowed long before me, as if he wished to give me a message. I knew what it signified. (Jung 1995: 410)

Wilhelm died of tropical sprue, a chronic disease he contracted while in China and which was diagnosed late. Jung interpreted the deadly disease of his friend as psycho-somatic expression of a deep inner conflict that Wilhelm could not properly cope with. The psychologist had the impression that Wilhelm was totally absorbed by Chinese thought when he returned to Germany. 'The Oriental point of view and ancient Chinese culture had penetrated him through and through' (Jung 1995: 409). But there he was exposed to the pressure of the European spirit, and his older Christian convictions came more and more to the fore.

I saw it was a re-assimilation to the West, and felt that as a result of it, Wilhelm must come into conflict with himself. Since it was, so I thought, a passive assimilation, that is to say, a succumbing to the influence of environment, there was the danger of a relatively unconscious conflict, a clash between his Western and Eastern psyche. [...] If such a process takes place without a strong, conscious attempt to come to terms with it, the unconscious conflict can seriously affect the physical state of health. (Jung 1995: 409-10)

Jung warned him and, according to the psychologist, Wilhelm agreed to a certain degree to his analysis, but was not really able to deal with this problem.

From this interpretation of Wilhelm's early death it is clear that Jung understood bridge-building between East and West to be not only a demanding but also a dangerous undertaking. It puts the mental health and sometimes even the lives of those involved at risk. He was not thinking of political or socially motivated physical attacks, but on cognitive and emotional dissonances that can arise through intercultural processes – the latter Jung conceptualizes against the backdrop of slightly psychologized Orientalist East/West stereotypes, discussed in the next section. As a psychologist, he could easily connect to the Orientalist view because it was already based on the assumption of different emotional and cognitive attitudes, which were held responsible for social and religious differences.

Jung's orientalism

The orientalist juxtaposition of 'the East' and 'the West' functioned, on the one hand, as an ideology to justify colonialism by emphasizing the superiority of the West. On the other hand, it could be used to put the Western mindset into perspective as historically conditioned and launch a self-critique of Western culture and a related reform agenda. As Gert Baumann pointed out, the usual Orientalist scheme combines a negative mirroring of West and East with its positive reversal: 'What is good in us is (still) bad in them, but what got twisted in us (still) remains straight in them' (Baumann 2006: 18–21). This pattern can also be found in Jung's reflections on Eastern and Western psychology (Jung 1976b: 654–5):

Knowledge of Eastern psychology provides the indispensable basis for a critique of Western psychology, as indeed for any objective understanding of it. And in view of the truly lamentable psychic situation of the West, the importance of a deeper understanding of our Western prejudices can hardly be overestimated.

For Jung, East and West not only denote different ways of thinking that can cross-fertilize each other. They are spheres that compete with each other on different levels. In this fight Jung takes a stance and supports the claim of Western supremacy. Western knowledge in the form of Jungian psychology would be able to elevate the insights of Eastern wisdom to a scientific level and thus develop a superior Western response to the challenge of the spirit of the East. In his commentary to the *Golden Flower*, he (1968: 43) writes:

The East came to its knowledge of inner things in childlike ignorance of the external world. We, on the other hand, shall explore the psyche and its depths supported by an immense knowledge of history and science. [...] We are already building up a psychology, a science that gives us the key to the very things that the East discovered – and discovered only through abnormal psychic states.

Given the scope of this chapter, I cannot go into detail; I will only give a rough overview of the way in which Jung constructs the stereotypes of East and West (Table 8.1).

He conceives cultures as independent plantlike entities that develop, stagnate and finally decline according to their inner laws. China (and the same could be said of India) is an ancient culture 'which grew logically and organically from the deepest instincts, and which, for us, is forever inaccessible and impossible to imitate' (Jung 1968: 8). This also applies to the history of religion that Jung

Table 8.1 Jung's Orientalist East/West Polarity

	West	East
Direction of Libido	Extraversion	Introversion
Relationship between consciousness and the unconscious	Dissociation; exclusion of unconscious contents under the rule of the ego	Connectedness and compensation; ego in danger of being overwhelmed by the unconscious
Prevailing world view	Materialism (outer world as true reality)	Idealism (soul as true reality)
Dominant form of knowledge	Analytical differentiation Science Technological know-how One-sided intellectualism	Perception of the totality and paradox polarity of all life; wisdom articulated in parables and images Immature intellect and lack of knowledge of the outer world
Dominant category of thought	Causality	Synchronicity
Typical religious practice	Extraverted prayer and worship directed to 'God in the Heights'	Yoga: methodological introversion through meditative practices of self-development directed to 'God in the depths of the soul'

understands in an evolutionistic manner reminiscent of Edward Burnett Tylor (1832–1917) (Jung 1973: 39, letter to Oskar H. A. Schmitz from 26 May 1923):

Those [Eastern] people have gone through an uninterrupted development from the primitive state of natural polydemonism to polytheism at its most splendid, and beyond that to a religion of ideas within which the originally magical practices could evolve into a method of self-improvement. These antecedents do not apply to us.

According to Jung, the dissociation between consciousness and the unconscious, and therefore the rupture within religious evolution which distinguishes the Western from the Eastern psyche, started long ago when Christianity was forcibly grafted onto the European pagan and particularly the Germanic psyche. It has been reinforced by Protestantism and the modern culture of rational knowledge and will. In the light of this history, to take up Eastern practices and superficially adopt Eastern ideas would only mean further strengthening the cramped Western mindset. Nothing should be forced on the unconscious: 'On the contrary everything has to be done to help the unconscious to reach the conscious mind and to free it from its rigidity' (Jung 1969a: 537). The task for the Western mind would be to give the suppressed primitive sides, including archaic religiosity, the chance

to develop. To this end, he considers his active imagination, which stimulates the unconscious, to be the appropriate form of meditation for Westerners.

As might be expected, Jung also firmly rejects experimentation with the exercises of inner alchemy as described in the *Golden Flower*: ‘There could be no greater mistake than for a Westerner to take up the practice of Chinese yoga, for that would merely strengthen his will and consciousness against the unconscious and bring about the very effect to be avoided. The neurosis would then simply be intensified’ (Jung 1968: 14). As we will see in the next section, he makes only one significant exception to this attitude towards Asian practices, namely, the use of the *Yijing* as an oracle and book of wisdom.

The *Yijing* as synchronicity-based science

‘Synchronicity’ is one of Jung’s most contested ideas. His various attempts to define the term are only partially consistent with each other.²⁷ ‘The only definitions he offers that are not at odds with one or other of his examples are such basic ones as “meaningful coincidence” and “acausal connection”’ (Main 2004: 47). In the literal sense, ‘synchronicity’ means the simultaneity of events. In some of his examples, Jung indeed describes events whose coincidental and (more or less) simultaneous occurrence makes astonishing sense to those involved. But in other cases, this element is missing. In 1951, he distinguished three kinds of synchronicity:

(1) Correspondences perceived as somehow meaningful between a psychic state or content and a simultaneous external event within the perceptual field of the respective person; (2) Coincidences between a psychic state (dream, fantasy, intuition) and a more or less simultaneous external event that takes place outside the perceptual field; (3) Precognitions of future events (Jung 1972c: 526).

Moreover, Jung uses the term to denote a universal connecting principle that underlies the individual synchronistic events. At this level, synchronicity is identical with the meaningful order of the world that encompasses the psychic life and the outer world and relates them to each other. In his view, this ordering principle does not contradict but complete the causal connectedness of phenomena. He is aware of the difference between the empirical-descriptive and the theoretical use of the term and tries to link them. Synchronicity, he says, ‘is not a philosophical view but an empirical concept which postulates an intellectually necessary principle’ (Jung 1972c: 512). It is not clear from the text what Jung means by an empirical concept ‘postulating’ a necessary principle.

Presumably, he thought that the empirically ascertainable synchronicities would inevitably lead to the assumption of synchronicity as universal principle.

His earliest recorded reflections on synchronicity were delivered in seminars on dream analysis, which he held weekly at the Zurich Psychology Club for a select small circle of licensed or trainee psychotherapists from November 1928 until the end of June 1930. His contribution to the seminar of 28 November 1928, shows that Jung's orientalism and the *Yijing* were involved in his conceptualization of synchronicity from the outset. In that seminar Jung introduces it under the title 'synchronism' in the following way (Jung 1984: 44):

The East bases much of its science on this irregularity and considers coincidences the reliable basis of the world rather than causality. Synchronism is the prejudice of the East; causality is the modern prejudice of the West. The more we busy ourselves with dreams the more we shall see such coincidences—chances. Remember that the oldest Chinese scientific ['scientific' is missing in the German version of the Seminar] book is about the possible chances of life.

In a later meeting of this seminar, he refers to astrology and at this occasion formulates the main features of his time-theoretical approach to synchronicity. He explains meaningful relative simultaneities with the assumption that time phases have a certain quality, and events that take place around the same time participate in this quality (Jung 1984; Main 2004: 51–3). It fits with his reflections on time as fundamental reality in *Psychological Types* in which, as shown earlier, he connects the psychoanalytical concept of libido with Bergson's philosophy.

In his obituary of Wilhelm, published in 1930, he uses the term 'synchronistic' publicly for the first time. He praises the translation of the *Yijing* as Wilhelm's greatest achievement and regrets that the book has been misunderstood, among both sinologists and modern Chinese, as a 'collection of absurd magical spells'. In fact, it would embody 'the living spirit of Chinese civilization' like no other work (Jung 1966: 54–5). In this context, Jung recounts that a few years ago, the president of the British Anthropological Society asked him why such an intelligent people as the Chinese had not produced science. He replied that the Chinese did have a science, the standard work of which was the *Yijing*. However, the principle of Chinese science would be fundamentally different from its Western counterpart. Following on from this anecdote, he again contrasts causality and synchronicity as typical forms of Western and Eastern thought: 'The science of the *I Ching* is based not on the causality principle but on one which – hitherto unnamed because not familiar to us – I have tentatively called the *synchronistic* principle'

(Jung 1966: 56, original emphasis). He affirms the explanation of synchronicity developed in the dream analysis seminar (Jung 1966: 56):

It seems as though time, far from being an abstraction, is a concrete continuum which possesses qualities or basic conditions capable of manifesting themselves simultaneous in different places by means of an acausal parallelism, such as we find, for instance, in the simultaneous occurrence of identical thoughts, symbols, or psychic states. Another example, pointed out by Wilhelm would be the coincidence of Chinese and European periods of style, which cannot have been causally connected to one another.

Accordingly, he claims that the hexagrams of the *Yijing* make the hidden qualities of specific moments in time legible (Jung 1966: 57). He outlines parallels between Western astrology (especially the birth horoscope) and the Chinese oracle. Both would be based on synchronicity, but compared with the European ‘twilight of astrological speculation’ (Jung 1966: 57), Jung considers the *Yijing* to be a higher developed scientific form of knowledge based on this principle.

Years later, he still advocates the theory of qualitative time in his preface to the English edition of Wilhelm’s *I Ging*, published in 1950. The meaningful simultaneity of physical and psychic events emerges time and again ‘because they are all exponents of one and the same momentary situation. The situation is assumed to represent a legible or understandable picture’ (Jung 1969b: 593). He might have taken from Richard Wilhelm the view that hexagrams indicate time in the sense of the quality of a particular situation, which opens up certain possibilities for future developments. The sinologist writes (Wilhelm 1997: 359):

The situation represented by the hexagram as a whole is called the time. This term comprises several entirely different meanings, according to the character of the various hexagrams. [. . .] In all cases the time of the hexagram is determinative for the meaning of the situation as a whole, on the basis of which the individual lines receive their meaning.

However, as Main pointed out, Jung distanced himself from his time-theory in the course of the 1950s: ‘He came to consider that synchronistic events were not expressions of the already existing quality of a moment of time but created and were constitutive of that quality’ (Main 2004: 77).²⁸ Jung replaced the concept of qualitative time by his theory of the ‘psychoid’ character of the unconscious, and in particular the archetypes as psychoid factors, which he first elaborated in his essay *On the Nature of the Psyche* (1947/1954) (see Main 2004: 25–6, 51). He used the term ‘psychoid’ to refer to an inaccessible dimension of the collective

unconscious that connects the psyche and the physical world. Insofar as they are 'psychoid', archetypes are no longer only capable of manifesting themselves in the form of inner images and the emotions and attitudes attached to them, but they also constellate outer events that have a meaning corresponding to the inner processes. Thus, in his new theory of synchronicity, the archetypes function as the origin of the quality of a particular time that coordinates mental states and physical events in a meaningful way. Moreover, in the psychoid world, the usual boundaries of time and space are relativized or even abolished, and contact with it makes precognition and other paranormal powers possible (Main 2004: 25–6, 38, 51). Furthermore, Jung postulates that the psychoid unconscious contains an extra-spatial and extra-temporal cognition that he calls 'absolute knowledge' (Jung 1972c: 481, 489, 493, 498, 506).

In the chapter 'Forerunners of the Idea of Synchronicity' of his seminal essay *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle* (1952), Jung treats Daoism along with premodern European concepts. This time he takes his quotes of Daoist sources and also parts of his interpretation from Wilhelm's *Chinesische Lebensweisheit* (Chinese Wisdom; 1922) and his translation of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子, *Das wahre Buch vom südlichen Blütenland* (The True Book of the Southern Flower Land; 1912).²⁹

He underlines the importance of the *dao* as 'one of the oldest and most central ideas' that 'pervades the whole philosophical thought of China' (Jung 1972c: 486). Thirty years after *Psychological Types*, Jung sketches a new perspective on this topic. He interprets *dao* not primarily as a symbol of the irrational unification of psychological opposites, or as an image of the self as in *The Relation between the Ego and the Unconscious* (1928), nor as the abolition of the separation of consciousness and life in a meditative inner alchemy, as in his commentary to *The Golden Flower*. Rather, he now more or less identifies it with his concepts of the psychoid archetypal unconscious and synchronicity.

Whereas in his commentary to the *Golden Flower* Jung only cited Wilhelm's translation of *dao* as 'meaning' (*Sinn*) alongside others, he now calls it a 'brilliant' interpretation and endorses it (Jung 1972c: 486). This move allows him to build a bridge to synchronicity. Immediately before his reflections on the *dao*, he describes synchronicity as the connection of the terms of a coincidental simultaneity by a shared meaning. Extrasensory perception experiments and other observations would lead to the conclusion 'that besides the connection between cause and effect there is another factor in nature which expresses itself in the arrangement of events and appears to us as meaning' (Jung 1972c: 485). *Dao* would be described as formless, empty and being 'nothing', because 'it does

not appear within the world of the senses, but is only its organizer' (Jung 1972c: 487).

In the context of a longer passage consisting more or less of quotations from the *Zhuangzi* that deal with the state of mind necessary to realize the *dao*, Jung says: 'If you have insight, says Chuang-tzu, "you use your inner eye, your inner ear, to pierce to the heart of things, and you have no need of intellectual knowledge.'" He comments on this saying by relating it to his concept of the psychoid unconscious: 'This is obviously an allusion to the absolute knowledge of the unconscious, and the presence in the microcosm of macrocosmic events' (Jung 1972c: 489).

Like the concept of synchronicity, Jung first shared his equation of synchronicity and *dao* in the small circle of a seminar at the Zurich Psychological Club; this time in a seminar on the topic of visions given from 1930 to 1934.

On 6 May 1931, he introduced it by telling the story of the rainmaker of Jiaozhou 膠州, a story that was originally told by Richard Wilhelm. Jung obviously appreciated it very much as he often retold it, especially to Jungian therapists. He refers to it in his seminar on Friedrich Nietzsche's (1844–1900) *Zarathustra* and includes it in a footnote of his later major work *Mysterium Coniunctionis*.³⁰ As the many mentions in internet sources show, it is still popular in the contemporary Jungian community. As is often the case with good stories, several versions are in circulation. This is the one from the 1931 seminar (Jung 2019b: 333):

There was a great drought where Wilhelm lived; for months there had not been a drop of rain and the situation became catastrophic. The Catholics made processions, the Protestants made prayers, and the Chinese burned joss sticks and shot off guns to frighten away the demons of the drought, but with no result. Finally, the Chinese said: We will fetch the rain maker. And from another province, a dried up old man appeared. The only thing he asked for was a quiet little house somewhere, and there he locked himself in for three days. On the fourth day clouds gathered and there was a great snowstorm at the time of the year when no snow was expected, an unusual amount, and the town was so full of rumors about the wonderful rain maker that Wilhelm went to ask the man how he did it. In true European fashion he said: 'They call you the rain maker, will you tell me how you made the snow?' And the little Chinaman said: 'I did not make the snow, I am not responsible.' 'But what have you done these three days?' 'Oh, I can explain that. I come from another country where things are in order. Here they are out of order, they are not as they should be by the ordinance of heaven. Therefore, the whole country is

not in Tao, and I am also not in the natural order of things because I am in a disordered country. So, I had to wait three days until I was back in Tao, and then naturally the rain came.”

In this story, conventional Catholic and Protestant practices as well as Chinese rituals of banning demons are portrayed as being useless. Real help only comes from a Daoist ‘rainmaker’. The narrative focuses on the non-causal interweaving of the disorder or order of current external events and the condition of the involved human beings.³¹ Once more with a side blow on the Western fixation on causal relationships, Jung (2019b: 333) comments:

That is how the East thinks – without causality. He simply got back into Tao. You see, when the atmosphere in this room is wrong, I restore here a little bit of Tao and it spreads like a quick-growing tree, with branches extending everywhere. Tao is in the room and nothing wrong can happen. This is the idea of what I call synchronicity. We think according to the Western assumption of causality, that one thing brings about another thing. But that is in itself a magic idea; we give magic value to causes, we think one thing inevitably gives rise to another.

The oracle practice of the *Yijing* is the great exception to Jung’s attitude towards the East. He considers its divinatory power to be ‘an Archimedean point’ from which to unhinge the hegemonial Western mind (Jung 1966: 55). Wilhelm’s translation would have inoculated the West with the ‘living germ of the Chinese spirit’ (Jung 1966: 55). The consequences with regard to the East–West relationships are far reaching. ‘We are no longer reduced to being admiring or critical observers, but we find ourselves partaking of the spirit of the East to the extent that we succeed in experiencing the living power of the I Ching’ (Jung 1966: 55).

Jung thus breaks through the border between East and West, which he otherwise regards as impermeable. The possibility of a positive, enriching entanglement of cultures becomes apparent at least in this example. As far as I can see, there are three reasons for this:

(1) he appreciates the *Yijing* as a scientific approach to synchronicity, which, unlike Western mantic practices such as astrology, is on par with European science, even if it is built on a different principle; (2) he is convinced that Wilhelm’s congenial translation successfully transferred the work into a European language, thus making it part of Western culture; (3) the oracle practice as such is not dominated by mind and will, but overrides mind control through chance operations.

All three reasons taken together banish the danger that *Yijing* practice only reinforces the alienation of the European mind. The unconscious is admitted and addressed through Wilhelm’s language in a way that is adequate for Europeans –

not least because the intellectual elaboration of the Chinese oracle is on par with European science, so that no cognitive regression is associated with its practice.

Conclusion

The question of whether Jung's thinking was changed by the Chinese sources he studied or if he was merely citing them as examples and confirmation of his own ideas is not easy to answer. As outlined above, Chinese sources significantly influenced two themes of his thought: his understanding of alchemy as a process of personal transformation and his concept of synchronicity as a scientific principle. The Chinese material does not introduce something completely new into his writings. Claims such as that Jung's discovery of the self should be regarded as a result of his study of Daoism (Coward 1996: 484) have not yet been convincingly demonstrated on the basis of the texts. It is possible that the meaning of 'letting things happen', which Jung knew from his therapeutic experience and his practice of active imagination, was brought to the point for the first time by the principle of *wuwei*.

But even in cases where Jung quotes Chinese sources more extensively to illustrate his own ideas, the text is colored in a certain way by the quotations. The readers receive the Chinese concepts in light of Jung's thinking, but also vice versa – which puts him in a somewhat different light. So, the Jungification of the *dao* is to some extent also a daofication of Jung.

His interest in Asian religious literature and philosophy was manifold. This is also evident from his dealings with Chinese sources. He obviously wanted to confirm his own theories and their universal validity by referring to Daoism and the *Yijing*. Jung also used the reference to Chinese material to verify his psychological, cultural and religious criticism of the 'West' in the mirror of 'the other'. Thus, it strengthened his psychological and cultural reform agenda. Furthermore, Jung's study of Oriental sources was part of a programme to develop a comparative psychology and theory of religion that was intellectually superior to the Eastern traditions. Occasionally, a kind of intellectual colonialism surfaces. This is not precluded by the fact that he saw himself as a bridge builder between East and West, developing keys to understanding Chinese thought. Indeed, his writings contributed to the growth of interest in Daoism and the *Yijing* in Europe and the Americas. Last but not least, Jung was deeply impressed by Wilhelm's version of the *Yijing*. He let himself be influenced by its advices and motivated his students and patients to use it in the same way. Jung was

convinced that not only his and their lives could be enlightened by this ‘germ of the Chinese spirit’. As was shown earlier, he even expected that the *Yijing* would give decisive impetus to the necessary transformation of Western culture.

Notes

- 1 Among Jung’s acquaintances interested in Eastern wisdom, Hermann Keyserling (1880–1946) had already used yoga as a comparative category and spoke of Daoist yoga before Jung (Keyserling 1925: 111).
- 2 Additionally, during this period of his life Jung studied the work of the natural scientist, Protestant theologian and visionary Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772) (cf. Jung 1995: 120), who articulated his Enlightenment theology and philosophy in the form of visions of the afterlife that became as popular as they were controversial (Stengel 2011). In the nineteenth century, Swedenborg was an important source of modern spiritualism.
- 3 According to Wouter Hanegraaff (2012: 284), Jung also possessed a copy of Joseph Ennemoser’s (1787–1854) *Geschichte der Magie* (The History of Magic; 1844), but we do not know when and to what extent he studied it.
- 4 For the importance of Kerner’s book for Jung, see Gruber 2000: 219–33; Shamdasani 2012: 31–4.
- 5 The second author that is often mentioned by Jung with regard to influences of Romanticism is Eduard von Hartmann (1842–1906), who was a bridgebuilder between late Romanticism and the *fin de siècle* currents of psychology, neo-Romanticism and occultism.
- 6 For a discussion of the relationship between Jung’s concept of synchronicity and parapsychological theories, see Palmer (2008).
- 7 As already pointed out by Aziz and as will be shown later in this chapter, the intrapsychic model of religion was later relativized by Jung through his theory of synchronicity (see Aziz 1990: 167–217).
- 8 The dramatic nature of his psychology owes much to the practice of active imagination, in which one enters into dialogue with imagined figures.
- 9 The answer to the question of whether Jung can be called an esotericist depends, of course, on which concept of esotericism one uses and how strictly it is applied. Most of the characteristics of the esoteric form of thought that Antoine Faivre elaborated (correspondences, living nature, importance of imagination and mediations between a seen and an unseen world, transmutation, etc.) can be found in Jung (Main 2010). He was also influenced by writings from the imaginary canon of esoteric literature often assumed in esoteric research. Faivre’s attempt at a definition of esoteric thought, however, is highly controversial in esotericism research, and

- Hanegraaff surely simplifies a complex matter when he claims that ‘Jung himself [. . .] was essentially an esotericist’ whose thinking can be traced back in an unbroken line to Romantic philosophy of nature or even Renaissance esotericism (Hanegraaff 1996: 395; see also 2012: 281–95 now stressing the influence of Romantic mesmerism on Jung). In line with Roderick Main (2010: 172–3), I would argue that the roots and offspring of Jung’s thinking are too diverse for that.
- 10 By ‘will’ here he obviously understands the rational appetite (Latin: *appetitus rationalis*), that is, a concept that has played a dominant role in European philosophy since Aristotle.
 - 11 Nicoll met Jung in 1912. The fact that he became a follower of Georges I. Gurdijeff (1866–1949) in 1921 is a good example of the close connection of the Jung circle with the alternative-religious milieu of its time.
 - 12 A complete German translation did not exist at that time. The standard English version of the *Yijing* was James Legge’s (1815–1897) *The Yi King* published in 1882 as volume 16 of Friedrich Max Müller’s (1823–1900) seminal series *Sacred Books of the East*. A complete set of this series is part of the Jung library (Shamdasani 2012: 61). Either Müller’s series was not yet in Jung’s possession when he wrote this letter, or he was simply not aware that there was already a copy of Legge’s translation in his library.
 - 13 I would like to thank Dr. Thomas Fischer from the Foundation of the Works of C. G. Jung for informing me of Jung’s mention of the *Yijing* in this previously unpublished letter to his wife. I am also grateful for the exchange with Dr. Fischer about Jung’s participation in School of Wisdom events.
 - 14 See the Letter of Gerhart von Mutius to Richard Wilhelm, September 18, 1911, at: <http://tudigit.ulb.tu-darmstadt.de/show/Keys-191/0348/>.
 - 15 For more details about the relationship of Keyserling and Wilhelm, see Hon (2022).
 - 16 The programmes of the conferences and the content of the publications of the School of Wisdom are treated in Gahlings (1996: 115–83).
 - 17 Letter to Wilhelm, 29 August 1921: ‘daß die Schule der Weisheit den Sinn hat, die ewigen Grundtöne, die aller raum-zeitlichen Melodiebildung religiöser, sozialer u. philosophischer Art zu Grunde liegen, *als solche* erklingen zu lassen – wir nehmen keiner Sondergestaltung etwas, geben jeder etwas hinzu’ (original emphasis), at: <http://tudigit.ulb.tu-darmstadt.de/show/Keys-191/0361/>. For his understanding of different cultures as temporal expressions of the absolute reality, see also Keyserling (1925: 364). Keyserling introduced the idea of eternal basic tones of life and their historical manifestations in his *Reisetagebuch* (Keyserling 1925: 119).
 - 18 Cf. letter from Keyserling to Wilhelm, 8 February 1921, at: <http://tudigit.ulb.tu-darmstadt.de/show/Keys-191/0357/>.
 - 19 ‘Dabei stellte ich die Forderung auf, dass die Europäische Philosophie von ihrer rein theoretischen Art abkommen und Lebensweisheit bieten müsse.’ At: <http://tudigit.ulb.tu-darmstadt.de/show/Keys-191/0566/>.

- 20 With regard to the date of the founding of the School, Wilhelm obviously was misinformed or, when writing his letter, he remembered wrongly.
- 21 Towards the end of the 1920s Wilhelm distanced himself from Keyserling and his School and criticized the superficial enthusiasm for Chinese Wisdom of the postwar era (Wippermann 2020: 221–2).
- 22 Perhaps Jung wrote letters to Wilhelm during these two years, which have not been published in *C. G. Jung Letters 1906-1950. Vol. 1-3*. These volumes contain only a selection of Jung's letters to Wilhelm from the late 1920s. Earlier letters as well as some of Jung's later ones, and, needless to say, Wilhelm's contributions to this correspondence have not yet been published. Murray Stein (2005) analyses the late correspondence of the two, including all of the extant letters from this period, which are kept in the library of the ETH Zurich.
- 23 In his foreword to the *I Ching* he explicitly criticizes Legge for not succeeding in making the work 'accessible to Western minds' (Jung 1969b: 589).
- 24 The text of the *Taiyi jinhua zongzhi* that Wilhelm used was published in 1775 but actually dates from the seventeenth century. It belongs to the so-called Daoist inner alchemy (*neidan*) that deals with the visualization of alchemical processes within the practitioner's body. The *Taiyi jinhua zongzhi* is influenced by Confucian and Buddhist thought. Jung did not know that it is a product of spiritwriting (cf. Mori 2002), but given his interest and interpretation of spiritualism he would have certainly appreciated its origin.
- 25 Here Jung exaggerates a bit. As mentioned earlier, in Chapter 5 of his *Psychological Types* he had already discussed the resolution of opposites, one of the eminent topics of the *Red Book*, via commenting on historical analogies from Brahmanism, Daoism, Meister Eckhart and examples from poetry. In his commentary on the *Golden Flower*, Jung introduced two other central themes of his visionary explorations, the mandala and the circumambulation of the center, by using analogies from the Chinese text.
- 26 Jung's reception of alchemy dates from around 1910 (Shamdasani 2009: 86). His first rather Freudian approach to the topic in *Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido* (Symbols of Transformation) was criticized by Herbert Silberer (1882–1923). Jung's later interpretations further developed the theories of Silberer and Flournoy.
- 27 For a detailed analysis of the problems connected with the concept of synchronicity, see Main (2004: 36–62); Aziz (1990: 51–91).
- 28 Main here summarizes the basic arguments against the concept of qualitative time that Jung developed in a letter to André Barbault (1921–2019) from 26 May 1954 (see Jung 1976a: 175–7; here p. 176).
- 29 He also makes sweeping references to two other sources on Chinese thought that would prove its holistic or synchronistic orientation: Marcel Granet's (1884–1940) famous *La pensée chinoise* (1934) and Lily Abegg's (1901–74) *Ostasien denkt anders* (1949), the latter being the work of a Swiss journalist and author influenced by Jung

to which the psychologist had contributed a foreword (see Jung 1976b). Probably influenced by Granet, Jung underlines the orientation of Chinese thought towards wholeness in this essay. It suits his Orientalistic cliché that juxtaposes the analytic West and the synthetic, holistic East.

- 30 In the Nietzsche seminar he says: 'I always think of the story of the rainmaker of Kiau Tschou. If that fellow had not gone into Tao it would not have rained, yet there is no causality; the two things simply belong together, the order is established when the order is established. He had to experience the order in that chaos, in that disharmony of heaven and earth; and if he had not experienced the harmony, it would not have been' (Jung 1998: 204). In *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, he quotes the story literally from the privately multigraphed notes of the seminar on visions (Jung 1970: 419–20, n. 211).
- 31 In the seminar of 29 November 1933, he affirms that he believes in the way of the rainmaker and connects it with an anti-political statement: 'I do not believe in magic made by man, magic as made by Germany or in Great Britain or in America; it does not work. But I firmly believe in the natural magic of facts. I believe in the rain maker of Kiao Tchow – that one should do the right thing to oneself and by oneself, and wait until the rain falls' (Jung 2019b: 1204).

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