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# **Jung and Buddhism : A Hermeneutical Engagement with the Tibetan and Zen Buddhist Traditions**

**Rinako Yogo**

Thesis submitted to the University of Kent at Canterbury  
for the degree of PhD in Psychoanalytic Studies in the Humanities

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## Abstract

This thesis examines Jung's relation to Buddhism, in particular the Tibetan and Zen Buddhist traditions from a hermeneutic perspective. It addresses the way Jung attempted to make a dialogue between Analytical Psychology and Buddhism and the extent to which he was successful. Jung's approach to Buddhism is sometimes affected by Eurocentric prejudices, which led him to misunderstand some of the concepts of Buddhism. Moreover, from the standpoint of a psychologist, Jung had a tendency to reduce Buddhist thought to its psychological aspects, and not to pay sufficient attention to its traditional meanings. Jung was also highly selective in his use of Buddhist texts and focussed on those texts which appeared to confirm, or conform to, his psychological thinking, but dismissed other Buddhist materials which had no common base with his psychology.

To contrast his approach, this thesis examines the theory of the phenomenology of religion, which emphasises the recognition of the irreducibility of religious phenomena and claims that we must understand religion within its own cultural context. From the perspective of the phenomenology of religion, Jung's methodology lacks objectivity and fails to exercise *epoché*, which means a suspension of one's own judgement or the exclusion of every possible presupposition. Rather, Jung seems to over-emphasise *eidetic vision*, which is a form of subjectivity that implies an intuitive grasp of the essentials of a situation in its wholeness.

There are important achievements in Jung's engagement with Buddhism and indeed Jung should be regarded as a pioneer in this field of research. Jung's writings on Buddhism had a major influence on later studies of the various Buddhist traditions and meditation in relation to Western psychology and its therapeutic techniques. From this more positive perspective, this thesis explores in detail the strengths and shortcomings of Jung's engagement with the different Buddhist traditions, in order to assess its potential contribution to the contemporary dialogue between East and West.

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## Abbreviations

Ch.	Chinese
CW	<i>The Collected Works of C.G. Jung.</i> The first number refers to the volume, the second to the paragraph number.
CWA	<i>The Collected Works of C.G. Jung Supplementary Volume A: The Zofingia Lectures.</i>
DA	<i>The Seminars Vol. I: Dream Analysis.</i>
Jap.	Japanese
Letters I	<i>C.G. Jung: Letters Vol. I: 1906-1950.</i>
Letters II	<i>C.G. Jung: Letters Vol. II: 1951-1961</i>
MDR	<i>Memories, Dreams, Reflections.</i>
NZ I	<i>The Seminars Vol. II: Nietzsche's Zarathustra, Part I.</i>
NZ II	<i>The Seminars Vol. II: Nietzsche's Zarathustra, Part II.</i>
Skt	Sanskrit
Tib.	Tibetan

# Introduction

## 0.1 Issues addressed in the thesis

The religious traditions of India, China, and Japan, particularly Buddhism, Taoism and Yoga are of considerable important for Carl Gustav Jung. Western enthusiasm for Eastern thought grew during the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries. The ways and ideas of Eastern religions fascinated Jung and were recurrent preoccupations throughout his life. Jung moved outside the European tradition and attempted to explore the religious and philosophical ideas of the East. Jung played a pioneering role in this field of research, addressing the possibility of a fruitful dialogue between psychology and Buddhism. Jung's writings on Eastern thought had a major influence on later studies of the various traditions of Buddhism and meditation in relation to Western psychology and its therapeutic techniques.

This thesis examines Jung's hermeneutical engagement with Buddhism, in particular the Tibetan and Zen Buddhist traditions. It considers the way in which Jung attempted to establish a dialogue between Western psychology and Buddhism and the extent to which he was successful. There is a range of sources addressing Jung's engagement with Eastern thought and the link between Jung's psychological concepts and Eastern religions. Those who read Buddhism through the conceptual lens of Jung's Analytical Psychology have tended to accept Jung's interpretation of Buddhism uncritically. However, a careful examination of Jung's understanding of Eastern philosophies and religions shows considerable limitations in his understanding of Buddhism. However those who approach Jung from a background in religious studies and knowledge of Buddhism find that the definitions of classic Buddhist texts are sometimes distorted and modified to fit his psychological framework, and his use of certain Buddhist concepts is at odds with their vernacular Buddhist usage.

This thesis is not merely trying to argue the esoteric aspect of Jungian studies or to find points of contact between Jung's Analytical Psychology and Buddhism, since there are a number of literatures previously published on these issues. The central purpose of this thesis is to critically examine these issues in depth from a perspective of the theory of hermeneutics and the phenomenology of region in order to show that Jung's relation to the Orient is in fact more complex and problematical

than has previously been discussed. This thesis, by using the available writings on Jung and the East, attempts to examine in detail Jung's relation to Buddhist thought from both the standpoints of Jung's Analytical Psychology and of the Buddhist religious tradition in order to understand in what way they are different and for what reason such a chasm appears to exist between the two systems. Moreover, this thesis seeks a possible mutual point of dialogue between Jung's psychology and Buddhist thought, by considering their commonalities. In this way this thesis strives for a contribution to illustrate a whole view of Jung's engagement with Buddhism.

The thesis provides an assessment of the impact of Buddhism on Jung's life and his psychological thinking. Jung was greatly influenced by Eastern thought, especially the teachings of Buddha, which were very important in the formation of Jung's psychological theory. Jung's interest in Buddhism is considered from his perspective as a physician. After his break with Freud, Jung needed to establish his own psychology based on the scientific observation of psychic phenomena. Jung was especially concerned with the Buddhist emphasis on the experience of the individual. Christianity in its traditional orthodox mode emphasised reliance on the authority of the Church and on faith. Buddhism, on the other hand, emphasised a direct experience of the inner-path to self-discovery, that is, an individual's discovery of his own path to salvation. Jung believed studying Buddhism enabled us to take a more objective look at ourselves with regard to issues such as the concept of psychic integration and the reconciling of the conscious and unconscious elements of the psyche into a balanced and harmonious whole. Thus Buddhism for Jung functioned as a support for his psychological assertions and endeavours.

Jung's primary concern was that people in the West in the twentieth century were undergoing what he termed a spiritual crisis. Jung claimed that since the Enlightenment, European culture tended to overlook its ancient traditions, which were rich in sources of archetypal myths, images and rituals and instead tended to focus on the external, materialistic environment. Consequently, Europeans had lost touch with their sources of individual and cultural meaning. Jung paid considerable attention to the religious symbolism of the East, which he believed offered a way to give life meaning. Furthermore, Jung believed the symbolism of the East in general expressed a deep need for healing and wholeness. The discoveries from his study of Buddhism and his empirical evidence from his own experiences and those of his patients offered Jung confirmation of his psychological insights. Jung's psychology, and his

understanding of Buddhism, were not static throughout his life however. One issue considered in detail is Jung's understanding of *karma*. In his earlier works Jung interpreted *karma* as a psychic inheritance and rejected personal *karma*. However, shortly before his death, Jung appears to have softened his view on personal *karma* and adopted a very close position to the Buddhist theory of *karma*

The thesis addresses the issue of Orientalism in relation to Jung's engagement with Eastern thought. 'Orientalism' here is used in the sense developed by Edward Said, that is as a description and explanation of the ways in which Western authors created particular images of the Orient to serve their own purposes. Jung's approach to Buddhism was sometimes influenced by a 'Eurocentric' prejudice, which led him to misunderstand some of the concepts of Buddhism by projecting Western concerns and ideas onto Buddhist thought. The thesis aims to demonstrate that Jung suffers from a colonial frame of mind which not only reifies East and West but places them in a relationship of domination and servitude for the sake of affirming European identity and superiority. For instance, Jung believed that the Eastern mentality is fundamentally different from the Western one as it has emerged from quite different history and cultural traditions. Jung elaborated East/West psychic relativism in terms of the introverted and extraverted distinction. However, Jung's psychic relativism seems to be over-simplified and sharply contrasts the extraverted attitude of the West and the introverted attitude of the East. Furthermore, Jung sometimes seems to speak as if he has some kind of intellectual authority over Asian religions and to suggest that his psychological interpretation is the correct one. This attitude contradicts Jung's relativistic standpoint, that is, there is no final definitive interpretation of the text. This thesis will examine Jung's ambiguous and unclear attitude towards Buddhism.

A discussion of Gadamer's theory of hermeneutics is presented in order to contrast it with Jung's approach to Buddhism. Jung's approach generally demonstrates elements of hermeneutics such as a holistic and open-ended interpretation based on a tendency for contextualism and relativism. Jung was aware of the 'difference' of Eastern religions and of the difficulties inherent in understanding ideas which were quite foreign to European thought. However, within a hermeneutical framework Jung attempted to make sense of these foreign ideas by way of the method of amplification, which aimed at clarifying obscure meanings through the use of metaphors and analogies derived from mythological and religious contexts. In this way Jung interpreted the religious symbolism of the Buddhist

tradition to reveal its meaning and context in a creative manner. For instance, Jung interpreted the Tibetan tantric mandala as a symbol of psychic wholeness which helps to integrate the conscious and the unconscious parts of the psyche into a balanced whole personality. Thus Jung suggested that the mandala best symbolises the archetype of the self. Jung also examined a number of mandala images derived from the dreams and fantasies of his patients and discovered these mandala images tend to appear in conditions of psychic dissociation. Jung interpreted this tendency of mandala images as an expression of need to resolve psychological tensions. Thus working through these images, for Jung, could bring these psychic disorientations into mutual reconciliation from both the conscious and the unconscious.

To provide a contrast with Jung's hermeneutical method, the phenomenological approach to religion is examined. A phenomenological approach emphasises the recognition of the irreducibility of religious phenomena and claims that we must understand religion within its own cultural context. From the perspective of the phenomenology of religion, Jung's methodology lacks objectivity and fails to exercise *epoché*, that is, suspension of one's own judgement or the exclusion of every possible presupposition. Rather, Jung seems to over-emphasise *eidetic vision*, which is a form of subjectivity and implies an intuitive grasp of the essentials of a situation in its wholeness. Also, Jung's use of the method of amplification, described above, demonstrates important hermeneutical principles. This thesis examines the extent to which Jung's hermeneutical approach to understanding Eastern religions is compatible with his claims to also adopt a phenomenological approach.

Jung frequently claimed that it is not his aim to introduce Buddhist teachings to the West. As a psychologist, Jung tended to focus on the 'psychological' aspects of Buddhism and paid insufficient attention to its traditional meanings. This leaves him open to the criticism of engaging in psychological reductionism. It must be noted that Jung was not concerned with the significance of Tibetan mandalas within their own cultural context. In his writings Jung did not discuss mandalas as religious teachings and ritual instructions which the practitioner must follow under the guidance of his or her lama, whose main task is to help the him or her to properly understand and practise the teachings and oral instructions. Jung was mainly concerned with psychological aspects of the mandala symbols which he discovered from his empirical research. Jung was also highly selective in his use of Buddhist texts, namely he

selected only those Buddhist texts (or parts of texts) which appeared to suit his psychological thinking while ignoring or dismissing other Buddhist materials which shared no common base with his psychology. Thus Jung's hermeneutical understanding of Buddhism ignored the crucial issue that the 'right' understanding is pivotal in any Buddhist tradition.

This thesis argues that Jung's attitude toward Buddhism may seem to be ambivalent at times: on the one hand Jung demonstrates his positive attitude toward the teachings of Buddha, but on the other hand he displays his negative attitude toward Western application of Buddhist meditations and spiritual practices. Within the framework of post-Kantian empiricism Jung could not understand the final stage of yoga, *samadhi*, in which the flow of consciousness is so completely identified with the object alone that there is a complete loss of ego consciousness, since he cannot conceive of any consciousness without reference to an ego. Jung claims that a direct application of yoga is not suitable for Europeans. Instead, Jung invented a method called 'active imagination' aiming at spontaneously bringing the unconscious contents to the conscious, while the ego is at work to some extent.

Jung's 'misinterpretation' of Eastern religion is a crucial issue in this thesis. In his study of Buddhism, Jung believed that through the method of amplification he discovered a number of similarities between Buddhist thought and his psychological theory. For example, Jung amplified the meaning of tantric mandala and equated it with his concept of archetype of the self. Jung seems to suggest to the reader that what Analytical Psychology is doing is in fact Buddhism in Western form. This thesis extensively examines and compares Buddhist thought and Jung's understanding of it. It attempts to disclose that there is a chasm between Jung and Buddhism, since Jung unfortunately failed to understand Buddhist concepts within the traditional and cultural context, and thus provided a misrepresentation of Buddhism.

## **0.2 The literature on Jung and Buddhism**

This research has relied principally on primary sources, in particular an extensive reading and detailed examination of Jung's psychological writings from the twenty volumes of *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung* CW 11, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*. This is especially significant to this thesis as it contains many of Jung's writings on Eastern religions and philosophies. In addition, the lectures and seminars, which Jung delivered, such as *The Zofingia Lectures* (1896-1899), *The Seminars:*

*Dream Analysis* (1928-1930), and *The Seminars: Nietzsche's Zarathustra* (1934-1939), and Jung's correspondence published as *Letters Vol. I: 1906-1950*, and *Vol. II: 1951-1961*, and his autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1993) are also useful, since they include his psychological discussion on Eastern thought.

For Buddhist texts, this thesis mainly relies on English translations of Buddhist material. For Tibetan Buddhist texts, W.Y. Evans-Wentz' edition of *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* (1954) and *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (1960) are essential for this research, since Jung wrote psychological commentaries to these texts and had a fruitful correspondence with the editor. However, Evans-Wentz' texts have serious translation problems. F. Fremantle and C. Trungpa (1975), and Robert A.F. Thurman (1994) re-translated *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and attempted to reveal a closer understanding of the original text of the *Bardo Thödol*. John Myrdhin Reynolds (1989) retranslated and commented on *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*. Reynolds' translation is particularly useful, as it has an excellent discussion of important misconceptions about Tibetan Buddhism and the Eastern mind in the writings of Jung based on the errors of Evans-Wentz.

For Zen Buddhism, D.T. Suzuki produced a large number of writings on Zen Buddhism in English. Of particular importance for this thesis is *Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (1969), which Jung relied on in his understanding of Zen Buddhist teachings and wrote a foreword to. Daniel J. Meckel and Robert L. Moore's *Self and Liberation* (1992) contains English translations of the Jung and Hisamatsu conversation which took place in 1958. But Meckel and Moore's translation is problematic and has a number of misunderstandings and mistranslations. Shoji Muramoto (1998) clarified mistranslations in the original transcription of the dialogue. Muramoto's transcription is clearly superior and is the one used in this thesis. The Jung-Hisamatsu conversation is particularly significant because of the question it generates regarding a possible mutual point of dialogue between Jung's Analytical Psychology and Buddhist thought.

Recent years have seen a growing interest in the relationship between C.G. Jung's psychology and Eastern philosophies and religions and there is a growing literature on these questions in English. These literatures are of great importance to this dissertation as they principally deal with Jung's engagement with Eastern thought in general and Buddhism in particular. J.J. Clarke's book, *Jung and Eastern Thought* (1994) offers an excellent examination of Jung's psychological writings on Eastern

thought, particularly Taoism, Hinduism, and Buddhism, and discusses this issue in the context of the West's dialogue with the East. Clarke's analysis of Jung's dialogical approach from the perspective of hermeneutics and his discussion of recent controversies about Orientalism in relation to Jung are the most useful for this research. Another important scholar who has written at length on this topic is Harold Coward. Coward's book, *Jung and Eastern Thought* (1985) provides a critical examination of Jung's relation to Eastern thought, particularly looking at his understanding of yoga and Indian traditions. Luis O. Gómez (1995) and Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (1995 and 1998) are particularly beneficial and they examine the manner in which an Orientalist bias and a colonial frame of mind manifest themselves in Jung's writings on Eastern religions by exploring his ambivalent attitude towards the East, i.e., the positive and negative attitude which Jung adopted. Richard H. Jones's article "Jung and Eastern Religious Traditions" in *Religion* (1979) is particularly important in the context of my thesis and provides a highly critical examination of Jung's understanding of Eastern religions and criticises Jung for distorting these religious traditions through the conceptual framework of his psychological thinking. Eric J. Sharpe (1975) offers a detailed survey of the history of comparative religion, and discusses this issue in the context of Jung's approach to the study of religion.

There are literatures which undertake a biographical account of general works of Jung's psychology. These literatures are particularly important in the context of my thesis in order to understand the history and the context of development of Jung's psychological ideas. G. Wehr (1988) provides an excellent biography of Jung, which includes useful chapters on Jung's relation to Eastern thought, the *Erano*s conference and his trip to India. The appendix is particularly beneficial and offers a critical examination of Jung's engagement in a dialogue between East and West. Frank McLynn (1996) gives a chronological account of Jung's psychological works, including a chapter on his relation to Eastern thought.

A range of work addresses Jung's relation to Tibetan and Zen Buddhist traditions. Literatures of this kind are beneficial in the context of my thesis, since they offer a detailed examination of Jung's understanding of the specific tradition of Buddhist teachings and practices. Radmila Moacanin (1986) discusses the link between Jung's Analytical psychology and Tibetan Buddhism. However, this work is less concerned with differences between the two systems, and is sometimes not only led astray but also generates a series of highly problematic conclusions regarding



Tibetan spirituality. Moacanin seems to blindly rely on Jung's view of Tibetan Buddhism, which often contains a number of fundamental errors and misinterpretations of the text. With more particular reference to Tibetan Buddhism, Peter Bishop (1993) provides important discussion of the use and misuse of Eastern ideas in the West, and focuses in particular on Jung's understanding of Tibetan Buddhism.

J. Marvin Spiegelman and Mokusen Miyuki (1985) provide a collection of writings which seek a link between Analytical Psychology and Zen Buddhism. Miyuki highlights some striking similarities between a series of Zen Buddhist ox-herding pictures and Jung's theory of the individuation process. Erich Fromm (1950 and 1960) provides a critical examination of Jung's relation to Buddhism and argues that Jung misunderstood the nature of the *satori* experience in Zen because of his general relativistic position with regard to the truth of religious experience. There are many other significant writings which focus on Jung's relationship with Buddhism. Through a solid analysis of the available publications on this issue, this thesis attempts to demonstrate a whole view of Jung's engagement with Buddhism.

### **0.3 Methodology**

This thesis principally focuses on Jung's relation to Buddhism. This study is conducted by an extensive reading and detailed examination of primary sources, both Jung's psychological writings on the East and English translations of Buddhist material. In addition it is essential to carry out a comprehensive analysis of secondary sources, especially publications and articles on Jung's Analytical Psychology including biographies of Jung; books on Buddhism; and publications dealing with Jung's relation to Eastern thought in general and his understanding of Buddhism in particular. A chronological survey and a historical account of Jung's dialogue with the East is developed, which attempts to illustrate the impact of Buddhism on the formation of his psychological thought in relation to Oriental ideas. Buddhism is of great significance in understanding Jung and his psychoanalytic theory as he frequently discussed Buddhist teachings and practice throughout his writings. Jung's interest in Buddhism started in his youth and discussed Buddhist thought at the Zofingia Lectures in his student days. His enthusiasm for Buddhism lasted until the end of his life. This study also seeks to explore Jung's dialogue with the East in the wider historical context, and discusses the recent controversies about Orientalism in

relation to Jung. From the Nineteenth Century, with the growth of Orientalism, Buddhism gradually became a popular subject in the West and has been discussed in various fields of research. Buddhism particularly had an impact on Western philosophers such as Schopenhauer, through whose work Jung undoubtedly became familiar with the philosophy and religions of the East. It is a crucial task to address, from the perspective of Edward Said's discussion of Orientalism, the issue of prejudices and assumptions which Jung inherited from the intellectual traditions in the West, and to examine Western attitudes of superiority and cultural hegemony which have seriously distorted Jung's perception of non-Western cultures.

A conceptual framework for the examination of Jung's relation to Buddhism is provided, by presenting a detailed account of Hans-Georg Gadamer's theory of hermeneutics, which is a key subject to understand Jung's dialogical approach to Eastern religions. Secondly the theory of the phenomenology of religion mainly from the perspectives of W. Brede Kristensen and G. van der Leeuw is addressed, in order to contrast it with the hermeneutical approach and demonstrate how religious experiences and traditions can be interpreted. This thesis argues that Jung's method of interpreting Buddhist texts is characterised as holism, contextualism, open-endedness and historical relativism, all of which are the features of a hermeneutical understanding. By contrast, as this develops, a different approach to the understanding of religion is discussed through methods of *epoché* and *eidetic vision*, which are important concepts in the phenomenology of religion. Within the framework of hermeneutics and phenomenology, this thesis attempts to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of Jung's approach to Buddhism.

This thesis principally focuses its attention on Jung's relationship to Buddhism. Firstly, because in the limited space, this thesis cannot comprehensively address whole areas of Eastern religions and philosophies which Jung was interested in, and there is a growing number of scholars who have already paid critical attention to a wide range of Eastern religious traditions, such as Hindu yoga and Chinese Taoism, in relation to Jung's psychological thought. Secondly, Jung's attachment to Asian religions is most noticeable in the case of Buddhism. Jung's life-long enthusiasm for the teachings of Buddha and its traditions appears throughout his writings. Furthermore, Jung's frequent reservations concerning the adoption in the West of Eastern practices seems to be quieter in the case of Buddhism, and late in his life his position became extremely close to the ways and ideas of Buddhist traditions.

Consequently there is a discussion of Jung's relation to Buddhism by dealing with specific texts and concepts, ranging through the major historical traditions of Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism.

This is followed by a detailed examination of Jung's relation to Tibetan Buddhism and Zen Buddhism. This thesis looks in detail at Jung's relation to Mahayana Buddhist traditions, particularly the Tibetan and Zen Buddhist traditions. These texts were significant in the formation of Jung's psychological theory, and offered a number of confirmations for his psychological thinking. Another area that receives only general attention is Jung's relation to Pure Land Buddhism. Jung only discussed particular types of Mahayana meditation, that is, Pure Land, Tantric and Zen Buddhist meditation practices.

#### **0.4 Outline of thesis**

The thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter One examines Jung's relationship with Eastern thought in general. In his early career, Jung was interested in mythological and religious studies in relation to schizophrenics. Consequently Jung discovered a connection between schizophrenic delusions and mythical motifs, and argued that the collective symbols of mythology and world religions could transform libido from an unconscious to a conscious level. Jung developed this from a variety of sources, including the myths and symbols of Hindu and Buddhist literatures. It is argued that Jung's enthusiasm for studying Eastern religion resulted from his profound concern with the spiritual crisis of the West, that is, his belief that Europeans tend to focus their attention on the materialistic outer environment at the cost of their inner psychic needs. However, Jung believed that the myths and religious symbols of the East are involved with the direct experience of the inner world of the self-knowledge, and that understanding the teachings of the Oriental religions would help in the formation of a spiritual cure for the West.

A chronological examination of Jung's study of Chinese Taoism, Hindu philosophy, yoga, and Buddhism is then given. Jung believed that a dialogue with the East was a way to discover what had been lost in the West. Thus, for Jung, studying Eastern religion and philosophy was very important as it offered him a confirmation of the existence of the human psyche as a teleological system which seeks the integration of consciousness with the unconscious. Having discussed the development of Jung's dialogue with Eastern thought, this chapter, then, addresses

this issue in view of recent controversies following the publication of E. Said's *Orientalism* (1978), and seeks to examine the manner in which an Oriental bias and a colonial frame of mind manifest themselves in Jung's writings on Eastern religions.

Chapter Two examines Jung's approaches to understanding Eastern religion from the perspective of Gadamer's theory of hermeneutics. It is argued that Jung's method of understanding patients, alchemy, mythology, Occidental and Oriental religions shows the features of a hermeneutical approach. Above all, Jung's hermeneutical strategy is expressed by explaining his method of amplification, which seeks to clarify psychic contents by linking them within a network of meanings expressed in symbols and images through using metaphors and analogies derived from mythological and religious contexts. Jung applied the method of amplification in his interpretation of Buddhist thought largely through the postulation of analogies. I also examine the problem with Jung's tendency to make parallels between the spiritual method of the East and the practice of psychotherapy, as a result of which Eastern spiritual disciplines are squeezed to fit into his own model of psychological development. Jung's psychological reductionism can be seen throughout his writings on the Eastern religions. By contrast, the phenomenology of religion is discussed as this develops a different understanding of religion in order to argue that Jung's methodology lacks objectivity and fails to exercise *epoché*, which indicates suspension of judgement and the exclusion from one's mind of every possible presupposition. However, from the perspective of *eidetic vision*, which is the observer's capacity for seeing the essentials of a situation as opposed to what it has been or ought to be, the phenomenology of religion inevitably involves a certain degree of subjectivity and is closer to Jung's hermeneutical position.

Chapter Three examines the history and context of Jung's relation to the Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhist traditions. It is argued that Jung focussed on the 'psychological' aspects of Buddhism, which he regarded as a useful tool and possible basis of therapeutic method. Jung studied Buddhism from a particular perspective and with a particular aim. Thus Jung's understanding of Buddhist concepts such as *nirvana* develops sharp contrasts with its meaning within its traditional and cultural context. Jung's selective approach to Buddhist materials is also discussed as Jung did not offer a systematic account of Buddhism. Jung paid considerable attention to Mahayana Buddhism, and wrote psychological commentaries for translations of particular Mahayana texts of Tibetan and Zen Buddhism. He also gave lectures on

Pure Land Buddhist meditation. However, Jung only looked at these specific texts and teachings. Most of the other Mahayana traditions are excluded from his attention. For instance, Jung had very little to say about the significant concepts of Mahayana Buddhism such as the Bodhisattva or Nagarjuna's concept of the Middle Way. A careful examination of Jung's study of Buddhism shows that Jung was more familiar with Hinayana Buddhist thought and thus Mahayana Buddhism was sometimes interpreted through his knowledge of Hinayana Buddhism. However Jung hardly discussed Theravada meditation practices such as *vipassana* meditation.

Chapter Four considers in detail Jung's understanding of Tibetan Buddhism: his study of the W.Y. Evans-Wentz edition of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (1935), and *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* (1939), for which Jung wrote psychological commentaries, and Tibetan tantric mandalas, which he discussed at great length in his writings. Jung's understanding of *karma*, which is the main argument of his psychological commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is discussed. Jung interpreted *karma* as psychic heredity, namely, the inheritance of psychic characteristics, and equated the *Chönyid Bardo* with his developing notion of archetypes. At this stage Jung rejected the notion of personal *karma*, but later in his life Jung appeared to modify his theory of *karma* and became much closer to traditional Buddhist thought. Jung's scepticism concerning the Tibetan concept of the *Dharmakaya* as a complete identification of the ego with the archetypes, which in his view leads to psychosis is also discussed. In order to make sense of the Tibetan text to Europeans, Jung recommended that it should be read in reverse order. Jung's commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, contains several misunderstandings, which may have been caused by Evans-Wentz' faulty translation of the text. Finally, Jung's hermeneutical understanding of Tibetan tantric mandalas, which Jung equated with the archetype of the self is addressed.

Chapter Five examines Jung's relation to Zen Buddhism, particularly his foreword to D.T. Suzuki's *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (1939). Compared to his relation to Tibetan materials, Jung adopted a relatively close position to Zen Buddhism. Jung's understanding of *satori*, which is one of the most important concepts in Zen Buddhism is considered first. Jung interpreted *satori* as a breakthrough by a consciousness limited to the ego-form into the non-ego-like self. Jung went on to say that in the *satori* experience the ego becomes itself the object of another subject, the self. This is extremely similar to Jung's idea of the individuation

process in which there is the shifting of the centre of gravity from the ego to the self. Jung never conceived of the consciousness without ego but his claim of the objectification of the ego does not seem to indicate the loss of the ego but is similar to the concept of emptiness or Hakuin's concept of Great Death, in which one has to objectify one's ego in order to abandon any intentional standpoint at all and thus create empty consciousness. The Jung-Hisamatsu conversation of 1958 is considered in detail, in particular the key theme of Jung's affirmative answer to the question posed by Hisamatsu on the possibility of liberation from the collective unconscious. Lastly, the Christian-Zen Buddhist dialogue and the relationship between the Zen ox-herding pictures and Jung's theory of the individuation process are addressed in order to display a possible dialogue between Western psychology and Buddhism.

Chapter Six, the concluding chapter, offers an overall appraisal of Jung's engagement with Buddhist traditions. I recapitulate the main features of my argument in each of the chapters and evaluate the significance and importance of Jung's study of Buddhism. In the light of the generally, though not exclusively, critical approach to Jung's interpretation of Buddhism in this thesis, the final chapter raises the question of why Jung's 'misinterpretation' of Buddhist traditions is an issue. This dissertation examines the reservations and qualifications arising from Jung's own reflections on his task, and discusses some of the apparent shortcomings which are found in Jung's hermeneutical approach, by examining his warnings concerning the adoption of Eastern spiritual techniques by Westerners. Furthermore, it examines Jung's inconsistent attitudes towards the metaphysical assumption of the East, i.e., on the one hand Jung dismisses such assumptions, but on the other hand Jung himself is involved with the metaphysical position by addressing such a concept as the archetypes.

# Chapter One:

## Jung's Dialogue with the East

### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a history of Jung's interest in Eastern thought. Jung enthusiastically studied Eastern thought, such as Chinese philosophy, the Hindu tradition and Buddhist ideas throughout his life. Jung was, on the one hand, an enthusiastic admirer of Oriental religious ideas, yet, on the other hand, he repeatedly warned against the uncritical adoption of Eastern spiritual methods. Nevertheless, the influence of Oriental thought on Jung's Analytical Psychology was particularly significant, in that he believed the East offered a confirmation of his psychological ideas. Jung was concerned with the 'psychic imbalance' of Europeans due to what he believed was a one-sided emphasis on external materialism at the expense of inner psychic needs. Jung called this situation, 'a spiritual crisis,' and sought a solution to it. He suggested that since the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution in the West, European culture had tended to overlook its religious traditions and rituals and eventually lost touch with these sources of individual and cultural meaning. For Jung however, the fullness of human life requires a quest for ultimate meaning in the realm of myth and religion. Jung believed the religious function involved the activity of harmonising in symbolic form. The archetypal symbolism of things in myth and religion become meaningful when appropriated into the experiential world of the individual. Thus, Jung's enthusiasm for Eastern thought can be seen as closely linked to his concern with the one-sidedness of the European psyche and his psychological justification of religious symbolism.

This chapter firstly examines Jung's interest in religion and mythology in his early career as an analytical psychologist. Jung became interested in mythological and religious studies in relation to schizophrenics. Jung saw a connection between schizophrenic delusions and mythical motifs, and argued that the collective symbols of mythology and world religions could transform libido from an unconscious to a conscious level. Jung developed this from a variety of sources, including the myths and symbols in the oriental philosophies and religions. Secondly, the chapter examines Jung's relationship with Chinese philosophy, in particular Richard Wilhelm's translations of the *I Ching* and *The Secret of the Golden Flower*. It is

argued that familiarity with Chinese philosophy led to a significant change in Jung's theory. The third section addresses Jung's engagement with Indian philosophy and yoga. Jung's attitude towards Hinduism was more complex than his attitude to Chinese alchemy, he was not as enamoured by India and Indian philosophy and was especially critical of the practice of yoga by Westerners, which he believed may lead to psychic dissociation illness such as schizophrenia, namely, a complete identification of the ego with unconscious materials. This is followed by an examination of Jung's relationship with Buddhism. Contrary to his negative view of Hinduism, Jung was especially interested in Buddhist thought and his fascination with Buddhism lasted until the end of his life. Lastly, this chapter discusses the issue of Orientalism in relation to Jung's dialogue with Eastern religions and philosophies.

## **1.1 The history of Jung's interest in Eastern thought**

### **1.1.1 The spiritual problem of modern man**

Jung claimed that many people in the West in the twentieth century were undergoing what he termed a spiritual crisis. Jung asserts, "Spiritually the Western world is in a precarious situation, and the danger is greater the more we blind ourselves to the merciless truth with illusions about our beauty of soul" (CW 10: 183). Elsewhere he writes, "everywhere the mental state of European man shows an alarming lack of balance. We are living undeniably in a period of the greatest restlessness, nervous tension, confusion, and disorientation of outlook" (CW 11: 514). The development of science and technology in the West had led, he believed, to over-attention to the outer material world at the expense of the inner psychic world. Jung was critical of too much emphasis on materialism, as it could create a situation in which, "a real human psyche appears to be excluded" (CW 10: 498). Jung believed this spiritual crisis in Western man can be traced back to the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution. As a consequence of these developments, European culture tended to overlook its ancient traditions which were rich in sources of archetypal myths, images and rituals. As a result, Western man had lost touch with his sources of individual and cultural meaning, and thus became a slave to social and political forces. Jung argued,

Ordinary reasonableness, sound human judgement, science as a compendium of common sense... afford no answer to the question of psychic suffering and its profound significance. A psychoneurosis must be understood, ultimately, as the suffering of a soul which has not discovered its meaning. But all creativeness in the realm of the spirit as well as every psychic advance of man arises from the



suffering of the soul, and the cause of the suffering is spiritual stagnation, or psychic sterility.

(CW 11: 497)

In order to understand Jung's answer to the spiritual problems of the West, it is important to look at his view of religion. In his early life Jung was ambivalent towards Christianity and had complex emotions about his father, Paul Jung, a Lutheran pastor. In his school days Jung had a terrifying thought that God dropped a enormous turd and shattered Basel Cathedral (MDR: 52-6). Far from feeling that he would suffer divine wrath for his vision, Jung had a sense of the closeness of divine grace. Jung describes,

I felt an enormous, an indescribable relief. Instead of the expected damnation, grace had come upon me, and with it an unutterable bliss such as I had never known. I wept for happiness and gratitude. The wisdom and goodness of God had been revealed to me now that I had yielded to His inexorable command.

(MDR: 56)

His experience of this vision of God made Jung conclude that God could be terrible and raised in his mind the issue of the problem of evil. Jung asserts, "This was what my father had not understood, I thought; he had failed to experience the will of God, had opposed it for the best reasons and out of the deepest faith" (MDR: 56-7). Jung became more doubtful about everything his father said, and "what he said sounded to stale and hollow" (MDR: 59). When he was eighteen Jung had many discussions with his father about religion but the discussions came to an unsatisfactory end. His father claimed, "You always want to think. One ought not to think but believe" (MDR: 60). However, Jung said to himself, "No, one must experience and know" (MDR: 60). Attending the communion became a chore for Jung. Jung asserts, "this ceremony contained no trace of God – not for me, at any rate" (MDR: 72). In the communion Jung observed no sign of union, becoming one with God. Jung asserted,

The communion proved hollow; more than that, it had proved to be a total loss. I knew that I would never again be able to participate in this ceremony. 'Why, that is not religion at all,' I thought. 'It is an absence of God; the church is a place I should not go to. It is not life which is there, but death'.

(MDR: 73)

None of these events such as the communion, the religious sermons in the Church or the theological discussions with his father, revealed divine experience to Jung as his vision of Basel cathedral had.

Some years later Jung states in his writing, "the soul possesses by nature a religious function" (CW 12: 14). The soul is used broadly by Jung in the same sense

as the totality of human psyche as a unity of the conscious and unconscious mind. In his definition of religion, Jung states, “Religion, as the Latin word denotes, is a careful and scrupulous observation of what Rudolf Otto aptly termed the *numinousum*, that is, a dynamic agency or effect not caused by an arbitrary act of will” (CW 11: 6). Hence, M. Watanabe argues that statements of Jung’s such as, “the soul is by nature religious function” seem to imply that, “the human subject is equipped with an innate disposition to revere the numinous” (Watanabe, 1991: 25). In the *Zofingia Lectures*, Jung discussed ‘causal instinct’ in connection with a human religiosity.<sup>1</sup> Marie-Louise von Franz (1983) argues that ‘causal instinct’ is an individual urge to understand the causes of things, in other words, a drive towards the discovery of meaning (von Franz, 1983: xx). Jung maintained,

Man wants to know why and what for, just as he wants his own actions and those of his fellow men to have a purpose. Man is a Prometheus who steals lightning from heaven in order to bring light into the pervasive darkness of the great riddle. He knows that there is a meaning in nature, that the world conceals a mystery which it is the purpose of his life to discover.

(CWA: 194)

Watanabe asserts, “through this passionate desire for knowledge, the human being asks after the meaning of the world and a *raison d’être* for being alive, not satisfied with what the realm of philosophy and science can deliver but pressing on to ultimate meaning in the realms of myths and religion” (Watanabe, 1991: 26). Thus Jung’s notion of ‘causal instinct’ is the inclination that gives rise to myth and religion. Jung claims,

In every healthy, reflective person the simple need to satisfy the principle of causality develops into a metaphysical longing, into religion. When the first man asked: ‘why?’ and tried to investigate the reason for some change, science was born. But science alone does not satisfy anyone. It must be expanded into what DeWitte calls a philosophy ‘full of faith and enthusiasm, which alone merits the exalted name of wisdom.’ Every genuine philosophy, as the complete expression of metaphysical desire, is religion. Religion is the mother who receives her children with loving arms when they flee to her terrified by the confusion and the ‘merciless tumult of nature stripped of its gods,’ and driven to despair by the shattering enigma of existence.

(CWA: 181)

Therefore, in Jung’s view, in order to live a fully human life, one requires myth and religion. The lack of such meaning can only lead us to affliction. Jung points out,

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<sup>1</sup> Marie-Louise Von Franz argues that Jung borrowed the term ‘causal instinct’ from Edward von Hartmann (von Franz, 1983: xx).

Man positively needs general ideas and convictions that will give a meaning to his life and enable him to find his place in the universe. He can stand the most incredible hardships when he is convinced that they make sense; but he is crushed when, on top of all his misfortunes, he has to admit that he is taking part in a 'tale told by an idiot.'

(CW 18: 566)

From this perspective, Jung claimed, "It is the purpose and endeavour of religious symbols to give a meaning to the life of man" (CW 18: 567). However, there is a clear distinction in Jungian psychology between individual meaning and collective meaning in symbolism. Watanabe argues, "The collective meaning contained in the archetypal symbolism of things like myth is psychologically meaningless as far as its surface content goes, and it is only when it has been appropriated into the experiential world of the individual that it becomes meaningful" (Watanabe, 1991: 31). In the same sense, 'religion' for Jung, has always to be kept distinct from a 'creed.' Confession of a particular creed belongs to a definite religious organisation and provides a position of worldly authority, whereas religion, "expresses a subjective relationship to certain metaphysical, extramundane factors" (CW 10: 507). Thus, for Jung, "the meaning and purpose of religion lie in the relationship of the individual to God (Christianity, Judaism, Islam) or to the path of salvation and liberation (Buddhism)" (CW 10: 507). This means that the true meaning which mystical and religious symbolism has for us is not exhausted by merely knowing about the symbol but by our appropriating it as an inner fact.

For Jung the religious function involves the activity of harmonising the balance between ego-consciousness and the collective unconscious in symbolic form, and thus maintains the health of the psyche. Jung speaks of the "religious instinct for wholeness" (CW 10: 653). Watanabe explains this as, "the human person is disposed to seek psychic integration and to heal the inner dividedness of the psyche" (Watanabe, 1991: 28). Watanabe claims this may lead to Jung's idea of the transcendent function, which is a spontaneous unconscious activity which coordinates the various functions of the psyche, such as thought, feeling, sensation and intuition, and transforms the one-sidedness of consciousness by uniting the opposites of the conscious and the unconscious mind into a single totality. Jung speaks of this activity as the process of individuation.

### 1.1.2 Jung's engagement with Eastern religion

In the early years of his career Jung became interested in mythological and religious studies in relation to schizophrenics. In 1911 Jung was working on *Symbol of Transformation* in which he used mythological studies to show that there is a similarity between the cosmogonies of primitive races and the fantasies of schizophrenics.<sup>2</sup> Jung investigated Théodore Flournoy's publication of the fantasies of Miss Frank Miller. Miss Miller produced three main fantasies which became vital evidence for Jung to link schizophrenic delusions with mythical motifs. Jung also came to argue that the collective symbols of mythology and world religions could transform libido from the unconscious to a conscious level. In *Symbol of Transformation* Jung used a variety of sources including Sanskrit and Hindu literatures and the myths and symbols of Eastern cultures.

At this point a significant disagreement emerged between Freud and Jung on the subject of the libido. For Freud, the concept of libido remained primarily psychosexual in nature, whereas, for Jung, it referred to a more neutral sense of psychic energy. Freud disregarded Jung's argument of the libido on the basis of data drawn from religion, mythology and occultism. In 1913 their disagreement eventually led to the breakdown of their collaboration and friendship. During 1913-14, after the break with Freud, Jung became more mentally and psychologically unstable. Jung reflected in later life that, "a period of inner uncertainty began for me. It would be no exaggeration to call it a state of disorientation" (MDR: 194). From 1912 to 1920, Jung was undergoing a process of radical introversion and he became preoccupied with his inner images and the materials that burst forth, such as dreams and waking fantasies. For instance, Jung often sketched in a notebook mandala-like figures which he thought corresponded to his inner situation at the time. In Sanskrit, mandala means circle and its typical features are quaternity, and a circle containing a cross, a star and a square. The most sophisticated mandalas are seen in Tibetan Buddhism. Jung also found mandala figures in dreams and the fantasies of schizophrenics. In the therapeutic process Jung considered the appearance of mandalas in dreams and fantasies as an indication that psychic healing is taking place. Later Jung argued the mandala symbol was an expression of the self, the goal of psychic development.

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<sup>2</sup> *Symbols of Transformation* is composed of three parts: the first part was published in the 1911-12 edition of *Jahrbuch*, and the second and third parts in the 1912-13 edition (McLynn, 1998).

Jung characterised the images and fantasies as archetypes, which, as autonomous psychic entities, are never directly apprehended by consciousness, and are located in the collective unconscious. Jung later refined his concept of archetype by introducing the distinction between ‘psychoid,’ the archetype as it is in itself, and ‘archetypal image,’ the archetypes as they manifest themselves in myths, dreams and fantasies and are shaped by the idea required by the conscious mind. Jung went on to theorise the ‘archetypes as psychoid’ as transcendent realities and therefore transpsychic. Furthermore, they are form without content and thus are irrepresentable in nature. F.X. Charet argues that the formulations of the concept of archetypes, “moved Jung beyond the limits of empirical science and involved his psychology in metapsychological questions that are fundamentally religious in nature” (Charet, 1993: 293). This can be seen in Jung’s statement on the aspect of the archetypes.

The archetypes have, when they appear, a distinctly numinous character which can only be described as ‘spiritual,’ if ‘magical’ is too strong a word. Consequently this phenomenon is of the utmost significance for the psychology of religion... It not frequently happens that the archetype appears in the form of a *spirit* in dreams or fantasy-products, or even comports itself like a ghost. There is a mystical aura about its numinosity, and it has a corresponding effect upon the emotions. It mobilizes philosophical and religious convictions in the very people who deemed themselves miles above any such fits of weakness.

(CW 8: 405, Jung’s italics)

According to Jung, when the spiritual characteristics of archetypes are experienced by consciousness, this has a therapeutic function, that is, it prevents a person from, “sinking back into the instinctual sphere, which would only lead to blank unconsciousness or, worse still, to some kind of intellectual substitute for instinct” (CW 8: 414).

Jung continued to study Oriental ideas throughout his life. His key interests in Eastern thought were with Chinese, Indian and Buddhist materials and he wrote several commentaries on texts from these traditions. Jung believed he saw similarities between Eastern religion and his psychological thinking, such as, an emphasis on inner psychic experience, a belief in the possibility of self-transformation, a notion of a pair of opposites between the conscious and the unconscious, and the idea of the self as the manifestation of psychic wholeness. In Jung’s view, for instance, *The Secret of the Golden Flower* provided a useful illustration of psychic integration, that is the reconciliation of the conscious and unconscious elements of the psyche. I will

address this in more detail in the next section. For Jung the idea of complementary opposites in Eastern thought – *shiva/shakti* in Hindu tradition and *yin/yang* in Taoism - became a significant point of contact with his psychological ideas. Moreover, through the discovery of what he saw as an Eastern mentality, Jung was convinced that Eastern and Western psychologies are divided by fundamental differences in orientation. While the West developed the extraverted aspect of the psyche which tends to emphasise rational understanding of the external world, the East, by contrast, developed the introverted aspect of the psyche which focuses on the understanding of the inner world. Jung argued the problem of Western man is that he has developed an extraverted attitude at the expense of the introverted. Thus, “in the West, the outer man has gained the ascendancy to such an extent that he has been alienated from his innermost being” (CW 11: 785). What is needed for Western man is not a Christian faith or belief but experientially based self-knowledge. R. Aziz asserts,

Certainly Jung’s great respect for the religious systems of the East such as Taoism, Zen Buddhism, and Indian yoga stems from his understanding that they offer, through their respective methods leading to the systematic unfoldment of personality, so much more to the individual on the experiential level than Christianity. The outstanding attraction of these Eastern systems for Jung is that they call for the cultivation of knowledge, particularly self-knowledge, through direct experiential involvement.

(Aziz, 1990: 22)

Jung was particularly interested in Buddhist thought which attempted to explore and understand the world-view within the individual psyche and to find one’s Buddha-nature within oneself. Jung asserts, “Oriental philosophy has been concerned with these interior psychic processes for many hundreds of years and is therefore, in view of the great need for comparative material, of inestimable value in psychological research” (CW 7, p. 124-5). The East gave Jung an important confirmation of the existence of the human psyche. Jung points out that the East, “finds the essence of all things grounded in the psyche. Between the unknown essences of spirit and matter stands the reality of the psychic - psychic reality, the only reality we can experience immediately” (CW 8: 748). Furthermore, Jung believed he had discovered an essential connection between Eastern thought and his idea of the psyche as a teleological system which seeks the integration of the conscious and unconscious mind. In his study of Zen Buddhism Jung believed he had discovered, “[An] Eastern method of psychic ‘healing’ - i.e., ‘making whole’” (CW 11: 905) which matched his

conception of the self. Jung also interpreted mandala symbols in Tantric Buddhism as symbol of psychic wholeness.

However, it is important to note that Jung had serious reservations about the application of Eastern spiritual practices such as yoga and meditation in the European context. Jung asserts,

I wish particularly to warn against the oft-attempted imitation of Indian practices and sentiments. As a rule nothing comes of it except an artificial stultification of our Western intelligence.

(CW 11: 933)

Jung was, “in principle against the uncritical appropriation of yoga practices by Europeans” (CW 11: 939), because, he argued, the rationalistic Western mind easily undervalues what it does not know and does not understand, and it is also unwilling and unprepared to face the dark corners of its unconscious. Jung was concerned that the adoption of Eastern methods would alienate individuals from their own authentic psychic background and thus produce the very reverse of what these systems seek to achieve. Jung writes,

If we snatch these things directly from the East, we have merely indulged our Western acquisitiveness, confirming yet again that ‘everything good is outside,’ whence it has to be fetched and pumped into our barren souls. It seems to me that we have really learned something from the East when we understand that the psyche contains riches enough without having to be primed from outside, and when we feel capable of evolving out of ourselves with or without divine grace.

(CW 11: 773)

Jung claims that individuals who would truly learn from the East must look for Eastern values within their own psyche, rather than seeking them outside of themselves. Only through coming to terms with Western, “spiritual pride and blasphemous self-assertiveness” and through overcoming their fear of their unconscious, could Western individuals discover the “*self-liberating power of the introverted mind*” (CW 11: 773, Jung’s italics). Thus, Jung’s attitude towards Eastern thought appears to be ambivalent: he was an enthusiastic admirer of the East; yet at the same time he was sceptical of the value of an uncritical imitation of Eastern spiritual methods.

## 1.2 Jung and Chinese philosophy

### 1.2.1 *The Secret of the Golden Flower*

Although Jung never went to China and could not read Chinese, he felt a great affinity for Chinese philosophy, particularly Taoism, which was a major influence on the formation of Jung's psychological thought.<sup>3</sup> L. Van der Post points out that, "when Jung spoke of the East as he often did, the East that he had mainly in his mind was that represented by China" (Van der Post, 1976: 57). Jung first met Richard Wilhelm through Count Hermann Keyserling, during a meeting of the 'School of Wisdom' in Darmstadt in 1922.<sup>4</sup> Wilhelm was an ex-missionary to China and was intrigued by Chinese culture. He translated the *I Ching* and *The Secret of the Golden Flower* into German. Jung invited him to lecture at the Psychological Club in Zurich the following year, and they became close friends. In 1928 Wilhelm invited Jung to write a commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*. However, in 1930 Wilhelm became ill in Frankfurt and was diagnosed as suffering a recurrence of the amoebic dysentery he had picked up in China. Jung was concerned with Wilhelm's state of mind on his return to Europe. Jung felt Wilhelm had been powerfully influenced by China and he, "seemed completely Chinese, in outward manner as much as in his way of writing and speaking" (MDR: 407), and also that he had been too quickly re-assimilated into European society. Jung recounted that, "His dreams were filled with memories of China, but the images were always sad and gloomy, a clear proof that the Chinese contents of his mind had become negative" (CW 15: 94). Jung argued that the conflict between Wilhelm's love of Chinese culture and his Christian faith became so painful for him that this may have caused his terminal illness. Jung argued that it is, "a conflict between consciousness and the unconscious, which in his [Wilhelm's] case took the form of a clash between West and East" (MDR: 408). Wilhelm died on 1 March, 1930, and Jung was aggrieved at the loss of his friend.

John Clarke (1994) argues that Wilhelm's death, "may have been significant in convincing Jung of the dangers for a Westerner in becoming too closely identified

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<sup>3</sup> According to B. Hannah (1976), there was an offer for Jung to go to China in about 1934 and the proposal originated with Erwin Rousselle, who was then director of the China Institute in Frankfurt, but Jung declined the offer (Hannah, 1976: 240-1).

<sup>4</sup> Jung first met Herman Keyserling in 1922, who was a founder of the Darmstadt 'School of Wisdom'. Paul J. Stern (1976) argues that enamoured of philosophy, a restless cultural entrepreneur, Keyserling was "a super-intellectual, a man who in Jung's opinion lived too exclusively in his head" (Stern, 1976: 202). His intellectual interest was to bring about a synthesis of the wealth of Eastern and Western thought. The 'School of Wisdom' in Darmstadt provided a forum for leading Western Eastern intellectuals, and Jung was among them. Keyserling first became aware of Jung in the early 1920s through *Psychological Types*. Keyserling met Jung and they became friends. However, Keyserling felt that "even after they had known each other for years, a true intimacy never developed between them" (Stern, 1976: 203). For more details of his relationship to Jung, see P. Stern (1976).



with a non-European culture” (Clarke, 1994:197). In light of this, we can understand why Jung developed the idea of a fundamental psychic relativism between East and West. For example, Jung frequently identified an antithetical opposition between the introverted psychological type in the East and the extraverted in the West. Because of these differences, in Jung’s view, it is almost impossible for Westerners to engage in Eastern religious practices like yoga. Jung pointed out,

The historical development of our Western mentality cannot be compared in any way with the Indian. Anyone who believes that he can simply take over Eastern forms of thought is uprooting himself, for they do not express our Western past, but remain bloodless intellectual concepts that strike no chord in our inmost being. We are rooted in Christian soil.

(CW 9ii: 273)

Jung continued, “The spiritual development of the West has been along entirely different lines from that of the East and has therefore produced conditions which are the most unfavourable soil one can think of for the application of yoga” (CW 11: 876). These statements emphasise that it is necessary for Europeans not to lose their own tradition when they take on Eastern ideas and spiritual practices. To do this, Jung suggests that people in the West need to develop their own yoga based on the Christian tradition.

During the years between 1918 and 1920 Jung had been drawing a number of mandalas without knowing their purposes and meanings. In 1928 Jung received from Wilhelm the Taoist-chemical treatise, *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, which provided for Jung a conclusive proof that the mandala was a symbol of the self. Around the same time, Jung had a dream which also provided him with a confirmation of his ideas about the centre and the self. Jung described this ‘Liverpool dream’ as follows,

I found myself in a dirty, sooty city. It was night, and winter, and dark, and raining. I was in Liverpool. With a number of Swiss – say, half a dozen – I walked through the dark street. I had the feeling that there we were coming from the harbour, and that the real city was actually up above, on the cliffs. We climbed up there. It reminded me of Basel, where the market is down below and then you go up through the Totengässchen (‘Alley of the Dead’), which leads to a plateau above and so to the Petersplatz and the Peterslirche. When we reached the plateau, we found a broad square dimly illuminated by street lights, into which, many streets converged. The various quarters of the city were arranged radically around the square. In the centre was a round pool, and in the middle of it a small island. While everything around about was obscured by rain, fog, smoke, and dimly lit darkness, the little island blazed with sunlight. On it stood a single tree, magnolia, in a shower of reddish blossoms. It was as though the tree stood in the sunlight and was at the same time the source of

light. My companions commented on the abominable weather, and obviously did not see the tree. They spoke of another Swiss who was living in Liverpool, and expressed surprise that he should have settled here. I was carried away by the beauty of the flowering tree and the sunlit island, and thought, 'I know very well why he has settled here.' Then I awoke.

(MDR: 223)

Jung added further details of the dream and described how the individual quarters of the city were themselves arranged radically around a central point, which formed a small open square illuminated by a large street lamp, and constituted a small replica of the island. This dream represented Jung's personal situation at the time – just like the dream he felt extremely unpleasant and dark and at the same time he had a vision of unearthly beauty, that is, a 'pool of life' as he interpreted the word 'Liverpool.' The dream also provided Jung with a sense of finality, as he saw the centre in the dream as representing the goal towards which everything is directed. Thus the dream was significant in confirming Jung's idea that, "the self is the principle and archetype of orientation and meaning" (MDR: 224), and that this is where the healing function lies.

In Wilhelm's translation of *The Secret of the Golden Flower* Jung believed he discovered a parallel between his theory of anima/animus archetypes and the concept of *hun* and *p'o*. Jung defined anima and animus as manifesting in the unconscious, complementary to the character of the consciousness, and containing, "all those common human qualities which the conscious attitude lacks" (CW 6: 804). In the light of the Taoist concept of *yin* and *yang* Jung argues that the *yin* or female aspect of a male unconscious is called *p'o*, and the *yang* or masculine aspect of a female unconscious is *hun*. Jung interpreted *hun* as a, "'cloud-demon,' a higher breath-soul belonging to the *yang* principle and therefore masculine" (CW 13: 57). The Chinese characters *p'o*, which for Jung were equivalent to anima, mean, "'white ghost,' belongs to the lower, earthbound, bodily soul, the *yin* principle, and is therefore feminine" (Ibid., 57).

Jung argues the Tao is, "the method or conscious way by which to unite what is separated... the realization of the opposite hidden in the unconscious - the process of 'reversal' - signifies reunion with the unconscious laws of our being" (CW 13: 30). Jung believes that a re-establishment of balance between the *yin* and *yang* in the Tao has a parallel with the goal of psychotherapy, that is, a balancing of the psychic opposites between the conscious and the unconscious in the experience of the self.

Coward (1996) argues that in comparison with Hindu thought, in which the external world is mere *maya* and ultimately disappears, leaving a universal consciousness, Jung's notion of the self is not the same as the universal consciousness, which he believes is equivalent to the unconscious. Rather, "The Taoist insistence on a balance between inner and outer, between *yin* and *yang*, confirmed in Jung's mind that both sides were essential for the development of the self" (Coward, 1996: 484). Moreover, Coward points out that Jung was critical of the Hindu Upanisadic teaching in which the *Brahman* becomes one-sidedly identified as pure consciousness and is no longer in interrelation with the physical world. In Jung's view, losing the balance between the external world and the inner psychic world leads to a pathology, namely, being either caught up in the unconscious or over-focussed on the external consciousness. However, Coward asserts, "Taoism is structured such that an overbalance on one side is necessarily compensated by a stress on the other so that within the personality the two sides are always seeking to be in balance" (Coward, 1996: 484). Thus the connection between the pairs of opposites is never lost. For this reason, Jung had much more in common with a Taoist model for the development of the self than with Hindu thought.

### 1.2.2 The *I Ching*

In 1920 Jung began studying the *I Ching*, the Chinese book of hexagrams, in the English translation by James Legge. Jung spent his spare time casting reed sticks and trying to find parallels between the message of the reeds and external events. Jung's interest in *I Ching* developed further after he met Wilhelm in Darmstadt in 1922. Wilhelm translated the *I Ching* into German and in 1949, twenty years after Wilhelm's death, Jung wrote an introduction to the *I Ching*, seeking to convey the spirit of its method to Westerners. Ira Progoff states, "Jung's association with Wilhelm was of major importance in the development of his conception of synchronicity, for it gave him an opportunity to draw upon Wilhelm's knowledge of the non-causal sense of 'patterning' that plays so important a role in ancient Chinese thinking" (Progoff, 1973: 21).

Jung first used the term synchronicity in his memorial address for Richard Wilhelm in 1930. Jung defined synchronicity as, "the simultaneous occurrence of a certain psychic state with one or more external events which appear as meaningful parallels to the momentary subjective state" (CW 8: 850). It also refers to the cases of

similar or almost identical thoughts and dreams occurring in different places at the same time, which are not causally but meaningfully connected. Jung went on to state: “Synchronistic events rest on the simultaneous occurrence of two different psychic states” (CW 8: 855): one is the normal state which is causally explicable; the other is critical experience which cannot be derived causally from the first and whose objective existence can only be verified afterwards. Jung states,

They are evidently not *synchronous* but are *synchronistic*, since they are experienced as psychic images *in the present*, as though the objective event already existed. An unexpected content which is directly or indirectly connected with some objective external event coincides with the ordinary psychic state.

(CW 8: 855, Jung’s italics)

A. Jaffé argues that Jung’s definition of synchronicity does not mean an astronomical simultaneity depending on clock time but, “a *relative simultaneity*, to be understood as the subjective experience of an inner image coinciding with an outer event. Only in this experience is the time difference abolished, since the event, whether in the past or future, is immediately present” (Jaffé, 1968: 20, Jaffé’s italics).

In such an experience, an *a priori* category of time and space is not at work, and accordingly causality also disappears along with it. For this reason, Jung claims, “synchronistic phenomena cannot in principle be associated with any conceptions of causality. Hence the interconnection of meaningfully coincident factors must necessarily be thought of as acausal” (CW 8: 855). One example of a synchronistic event frequently cited involved a session Jung had with a female patient recounting a dream she had had, in which someone had given her a golden scarab beetle; at that very moment a scarab beetle was tapping at the window behind Jung. Jung pointed out that the golden scarab was an Egyptian symbol of rebirth and that this synchronistic event enabled the therapeutic session to make satisfactory progress later on. (CW 8: 982)

Jung frequently sought evidence for synchronistic phenomena. He drew attention to a treatise of Schopenhauer’s, “On the Apparent Design in the Fate of the Individual” which deals with ‘chance’, that is, ‘simultaneity of unconnected causality.’ Jung particularly looked at Schopenhauer’s idea of a geographical analogy, “where the parallels represent the cross-connection between the meridians, which are thought of as causal chains” (CW 8: 828). Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646-1716) provided Jung with a confirmation of synchronistic phenomena. Jung

discussed Leibniz's idea of pre-established harmony, which is "an absolute synchronism of psychic and physical events" (CW 8: 937).<sup>5</sup> In addition, Jung cited an American psychologist, J.B. Rhine's ESP experiments, a physicist, Wolfgang Pauli's contribution to quantum physics, Jung's own astrological experiment, and the method of the Chinese oracle book, the *I Ching*, or *Book of Changes* as further evidence of synchronistic phenomena.

Jung argued that the *I Ching* is, "the experimental foundation of classical Chinese philosophy" and is, "one of the oldest known methods for grasping a situation as a whole and thus placing the details against a cosmic background, the interplay of Yin and Yang" (CW 8: 863). Its method is that the random throw of the forty-nine yarrow stalks have to be counted off according to fixed rules, although Jung used the rather simpler method in which three coins are thrown six times, each throw giving one of the six lines that constitute the hexagram, of which there are sixty-four in all. To each line is appended an oracle text with a commentary. Therefore,

The *I Ching*... consists of a collection of sixty-four interpretations in which the meaning of each of the possible Yin-Yang combinations is worked out. These interpretations formulate the inner unconscious knowledge that corresponds to the state of consciousness at the moment

(CW 8: 865)

Jung argued that the *I Ching* technique seeks to explain, "the simultaneous occurrence of a psychic state with a physical process as *an equivalence of meaning*" (CW 8: 865, Jung's italics). This provided a confirmation of Jung's idea that there is a connection between our inner psychic realm and the external cosmos. Coward draws his attention to the Chinese doctrine *T'ien-jen chih chi* ('the interrelation of heaven and man') and Jung's notion of archetype. Coward claims, "Like the Chinese doctrine of the interrelation of the individual with the cosmos, Jung conceived of the archetype as interrelating the meaning content of the inner psyche with the meaning content of the external cosmos" (Coward, 1996: 481). Coward goes on to state,

The inherent patterning activity by the archetype is not only present at the level of the collective unconscious but, under Chinese influence, came to be regarded by Jung as a psychophysical continuum present throughout the cosmos. Thus the deepest levels of the collective unconscious were seen to participate in the underlying patterns of the external world of nature. When the two are brought

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<sup>5</sup> It is important to note here that Leibniz was also deeply concerned and interested in Chinese thought and his idea of 'established harmony' may have derived from the Chinese tradition. See JJ Clarke *Oriental Enlightenment* (1997: 47-48).

together a significant moment of synchronicity is experienced, and the archetypal meaning is revealed.

(Coward, 1996: 482)

Jung was highly influenced by Chinese thought in this respect, and took a standpoint not based on Western ideas of cause and effect but on the Taoist idea of the interdependence between the human and nature coming together synchronistically in a meaningful whole.

### 1.3 Jung and Indian thought

Jung's systematic engagement with Indian thought can be identified with his involvement with the *Eranos* conference. In 1930 when Jung attended the Darmstadt 'School of Wisdom,' he met a wealthy Dutch woman called Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn. She, coming from the Anglo-Indian theosophical tradition, was a founder of the *Eranos* conferences held annually in the grounds of her estate at Ascona near Lake Maggiore in Switzerland. Initially the conferences had no title, but later Rudolf Otto suggested the term *Eranos*, the Greek for a banquet at which the guests bring their own contributions. In the Foreword to the first *Eranos Yearbook* (1933), in which the texts of the individual lectures were printed in their original languages (German, English, and French), Fröbe-Kapteyn described her original intention as follows,

The Eranos conferences have set themselves the goal of mediating between East and West. The task of this mediation, and the need to create a place for the promotion of such an understanding of the spiritual realm, have become ever clearer... The question of a fruitful confrontation of East and West is above all a psychological one. The clear-cut questions posed by Western people in matters of religion and psychology can undoubtedly find added, meaningful fructification in the wisdom of the Orient. It is not the emulation of Eastern methods and teachings that is important, nor the neglecting or replacing of Western knowledge about these things, but the fact that Eastern wisdom, symbolism, and methods can help us to rediscover the spiritual values that are most distinctively our own.

(Fröbe-Kapteyn cited by Wehr, 1988: 263)

The first meeting took place in August 1933 when Jung delivered a lecture on "A Study in the Process of Individuation"<sup>6</sup>. Jung attended most years between 1933 to 1951 and presented ideas on alchemy, archetypal theory, and synchronicity. There were a wide range of participants including Martin Buber, Joseph Campbell, Jean Daniélou, Mircea Eliade, Erwin R., Friedrich Heiler, E.O. James, Károly Kerényi, Gerardus van der Leeuw, Erich Neumann, Raffaele Pettazzoni, Laurens van der Post,

Paul Radin, C.A.F. Rhys Davis, Gershom Scholem, D.T. Suzuki, Paul Tillich, Giuseppe Tucci, R.C. Zaehner and Henrich Zimmer (Sharpe, 1975: 211-2).

### 1.3.1 Indian philosophy

Jung's relationship to Indian thought shows his ambivalence towards Eastern thought more distinctly than in the case of Chinese thought. Nevertheless, Indian philosophy played an important role in the development of Jung's theory of *Psychological Types* (1921). In *Psychological Types* Jung believed he had discovered that the self as a primordial image was similar to the ideas in the *Atman-Brahman* teachings of the *Upanishads*. Jung stated,

The Indian conception teaches liberation from the opposites, by which are to be understood every sort of affective state and emotional tie to the object. Liberation follows the withdrawal of libido from all contents, resulting in a state of complete introversion... As a result of the complete detachment of all affective ties to the object, there is necessarily formed in the inner self an equivalent of objective reality, or a complete identity of inside and outside, which is technically described *as tat tvam asi* (that art thou).

(CW 6: 189)

*Dvandva* is the Sanskrit term for the pair of opposites in Indian thought, and includes the individual experience of opposites such as hot and cold, love and hate, male and female, and good and evil. Jung argues the purpose of this concept was to, "free the individual altogether from the opposites inherent in human nature, so that he can attain a new life in Brahman" (CW 6: 329). For Jung the *Brahman* is, "the union and dissolution of all opposites, and at the same time stands outside them as an irrational factor" (CW 6: 330). In Indian thought *rta* is a principle of dynamic regulation by withdrawing energy from any imbalance existing between the pairs of opposites until a balance is achieved. For Jung *rta* was a symbol for libido. Jung argued, "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" (CW 6: 356).

Coward argues that in the teachings of the *Upanishads* the *Brahman* (Divine Spirit) which is seen manifested in the external world all around you was the same spirit thought of as your true self within (*Atman*). The ignorant person (*avidya*) at first takes the conscious ego to be one's true inner self. However, the Upanisadic

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<sup>6</sup> It was later revised and is in CW 9i.

teachings say that one's true self is not the self-conscious ego but the moment of highest insight in which the *Atman* is seen to be identical with the life essence of all the external universe, the *Brahman*. Jung paid particular attention to this uniting of the internal and the external in the *Atman-Brahman* symbol. What struck Jung about the *Atman-Brahman* symbol for the development of the self is that, "it is not the individual ego which speaks, thinks, and acts, but rather the universal Brahman, which speaks through the individual and so uses the individual as a means of expression" (Coward, 1985: 53-4).

Jung found a close agreement with the Indian view of the relationship between the pairs of opposites. However, Jung did not agree with the possibility of moving beyond the pair of opposites in this life. Coward argues that the Hindu concept of *moksa* means a complete liberation from the tensions of the pairs of opposites (Coward, 1985: 16). However Jung asserts,

It is certainly desirable to liberate oneself from the operation of opposites but one can only do it to a certain extent, because no sooner do you get out of the conflict than you get out of life altogether. So that liberation can be only a partial one. It can be the construction of a consciousness just beyond the opposites. Your head may be liberated, your feet remain entangled. Complete liberation means death.

(Letters I: 247)

Jung's disagreement results from his dualistic view of the psychic structure. The ego is the centre of the consciousness, and all our experience of the outer and inner worlds must pass through our ego in order to be perceived. Thus, the thing which is not perceived through the ego-consciousness is the unconscious. The complete freedom from the pair of opposites in Indian thought requires the eradication of the ego altogether. But for Jung if there is no ego, there is no knower and therefore no consciousness. Abolishing the ego to transcend the opposites for Jung simply means the unconscious. Jung states, "One assumes however that there is a consciousness without ego, a sort of consciousness of the *atman*. I'm afraid this supreme consciousness is at least not one we could possess. Inasmuch as it exists, we do not exist" (Letters I: 247).

### 1.3.2 Indian yoga

In the formation of his psychological theory Jung was strongly influenced by Indian yoga, particularly Kundalini yoga and Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. In the autumn of 1932 the Indologist, J. W. Hauer came to Zurich to give a seminar on Kundalini yoga.



Following Hauer's exposition, Jung devoted four lectures to an interpretation of Kundalini yoga. Jung was already familiar with the Tantric *chakra* system through his reading of Arthur Avalon's *The Serpent Power*.<sup>7</sup> In his lectures, Jung presented Kundalini yoga as a parallel to the process of individuation. Coward argues that Jung's approach was to examine the meaning of each of the seven *chakras* of Kundalini Yoga, and, "provide added insight into his understanding of the process of individuation, not an accurate description of Kundalini" (Coward, 1985: 123). Here I will focus only on Jung's psychological interpretation of Kundalini Yoga.

Jung understood *chakras* as symbols and they have three aspects: *sthula* or things as we ordinarily see them; *suksma*, the level of theoretical understanding, or wisdom; and *para*, the transcendent level beyond sense experience. Kundalini Yoga aims to transcend *sthula*, discover the *reality* in the *suksma*, and go further into the *para* or completely 'other worldly'. The first *chakra*, the *Muladhara Chakra*, is characterised as our ordinary world in which the self is asleep and the ego is awake. Jung states, "we may assume that the place where the Self, the psychological non-ego, is asleep, is the most banal place in the world – a railway station, a theatre, the family, the professional situation – there the Gods are sleeping, there we are just reasonable, or as unreasonable as unconscious animals. And this is muladhara" (Jung, 1975: 10).

The *Svadhithana Chakra*, Jung says, must be understood as below and unconscious, as the *muladhara* must be seen as above and ego-consciousness. This is the reverse of Kundalini Yoga, but Jung thought this order necessary for Westerners to understand it. Jung asserted, "we begin in our conscious world, so our *muladhara* might be not down below in the belly, but up in the head. You see that puts everything upside down" (Jung: 1975: 12). Jung argues that in the awakening of Kundalini, one needs the urge which will not let one turn back, and pushes one forwards, because Jung believed Kundalini is the anima in the unconscious (Jung, 1975: 14). The third, the *Manipura Chakra*, is the point where one begins to realise one's true self, symbolised as fire. The *Anahata Chakra* is located at the level of the heart and lungs, and is the point where its withdrawal occurs, where one is no longer identical with them and begins to discover the Self. Jung points out,

In *anahata* individuation begins... individuation is becoming that thing which is not the ego, and that is very strange. Nobody understands what the Self is, because the Self is just what you are not – it is not the ego. The ego discovers

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<sup>7</sup> Arthur Avalon is a pseudonym of J.G. Woodroffe.

itself as a mere appendix of the Self in a sort of loose connection. The ego is always far down in *muladhara* and suddenly becomes aware of something up in the fourth story, above, in *anahata*, and that is the Self.

(Jung, 1975: 30-1)

The *Visuddha Chakra* is, Jung says, “a full recognition of the psychical essences or substances as the fundamental essences of the world, and not by virtue of speculation but by virtue of fact, *as experience*” (Jung, 1976: 7, Jung’s italics). At the *visuddha chakra*, Jung drew a line of the possibility of the assimilation of Kundalini Yoga into Western experience. Jung argues the last two *chakras* are completely beyond Western reach. Coward asserts that at this level Jung believes “the psychological interpretation of Kundalini Yoga useful to Westerners has been completed” (Coward, 1985: 122).

The sixth, the *Ajna Chakra*, Jung argues, consists of nothing we can experience. In the *ajna*, there is only psychic reality in which one is united with *Shiva*, and the ego completely disappears into the self. This is something which Jung believed to be psychologically impossible. In the last, the *Sahasrara Chakra*, Jung asserts,

There is no object, no God, there is nothing but *brahman*. There is no experience because it is one, it is without a second. It is dormant, it is not, and therefore it is *nirvana*.

(Jung, 1976: 17)

Jung says it, “is merely a philosophical concept with no substance whatever for us: it is beyond any possible experience,” and therefore, “is without practical value for us” (Jung, 1976: 17).

Jung’s relationship to Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra, which is derived from the Sankhya-Yoga school of thought of the fourth century, is equally important in the formation of his psychological theory. In 1939 Jung gave lectures on Patanjali’s Yoga Sutra at the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule, Zurich.<sup>8</sup> Jung argues, “yoga is... the perfect and appropriate method of fusing body and mind together so that they form a unity that can hardly be doubted. They thus create a psychological disposition which makes possible intuitions that transcend consciousness” (CW 11: 867). However, Jung’s standpoint differs on the point of the last stage of yoga,

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<sup>8</sup> Unpublished manuscript by B. Hannah, ‘Notes on Lectures given at the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule, Zurich, by Prof. C.G. Jung,’ 1938-1939.

*samadhi*.<sup>9</sup> In the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali, *samadhi* means that the flow of consciousness is so completely identified with the object alone that there is a complete loss of ego consciousness. Cowards asserts: “one is so ‘caught-up’ in the object that there is no room left for a separate awareness of one’s own ego as the thing that is having the experience. One has forgotten oneself” (Coward, 1985: 138). Moreover, the final stage of *samadhi* transcends the limitation of time and space. Thus, “the *yogin* is so completely one with the object that he is one with all its past states, as well as its present moment, and shares fully in the various possibilities of the future” (Coward, 1985: 138-9). Furthermore, the highest level of the Patanjali yoga is reached when even the limitation of focusing on a finite object is left behind. Now the consciousness becomes one with its own self-luminous nature, and there remains only the existence of the reality itself which is revealed to be nothing other than the pure discriminative consciousness of the true self (*purusa*) (Coward, 1985: 139).

In contrast, while *yogins* considered *samadhi* as a state of pure consciousness, Jung identified it with a trance-like or unconscious state. Jung asserts,

One hopes to control the unconscious, but the past masters in the art of self-control, the yogis, attain perfection in *samadhi*, a state of ecstasy, which so far as we know is equivalent to a state of unconsciousness. It makes no difference whether they call our unconscious a ‘universal consciousness’; the fact remains that in their case the unconscious has swallowed up ego-consciousness. They do not realize that ‘universal consciousness’ is a contradiction in terms, since exclusion, selection, and discrimination are the root and essence of everything that lays claim to the name ‘consciousness.’

(CW 9i: 520)

As mentioned earlier, for Jung something which is not perceived through the ego-conscious is fundamentally the unconscious. Working within this framework, Jung cannot conceive of any consciousness without reference to an ego. Coward argues a possible cause of Jung’s failure to understand the last stage of *samadhi* as being connected to his empiricist and post-Kantian perspectives. In Jung’s view,

The Indian lacks the epistemological standpoint just as much as our own religious language does. He is still ‘pre-Kantian.’ This complication is unknown in India and it is still largely unknown with us. In India there is no psychology in our sense of the word. India is ‘pre-psychological’: when it speaks of the ‘self,’ it *posits* such a thing as existing. Psychology does not do this. It does not in any sense deny the existence of the dramatic conflict, but reserves the right to the poverty, or the riches, of *not* knowing about the self.

(CW 11: 956, Jung’s italics)

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<sup>9</sup> In Patanjali yoga, there are four stages of increasingly pure object *samadhi*, and the final state is

Moreover, Coward asserts. “Jung is a ‘healer,’ a psychotherapist, and his whole system is built for the function of this healing process” (Coward, 1985: 164). Jung’s idea of good mental health is, “the self as the essence of psychic wholeness, i.e., as the totality of conscious and unconscious... because it does *in fact* represent something like a goal of psychic development, and this irrespective of all conscious opinions and expectations” (CW 11: 959, Jung’s italics). Jung went on to say, “everything requires for its existence its own opposite, or else it fades into nothingness. The ego needs the self and vice versa” (CW 11: 961). Therefore the final stage of *samadhi* is not only acceptable to Jung but also, he believes, “ [is] almost unattainable to Western man” (CW 11: 961).

### 1.3.3 Jung’s trip to India

In late autumn 1937 Jung accepted the invitation of the British Government of India to take part in the celebrations connected with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the University of Calcutta where Jung would be awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Law on 7 January 1938. His desire to go to India was quickened by two visitors from India in the early summer of 1937: Subramanya Iyer, spiritual adviser to the Maharajah of Mysore, and Paul Brunton, an English writer and specialist on India, and a pupil of the famous guru Ramana Maharishi, whose work had so fascinated Somerset Maugham (McLynn, 1998: 398). Jung travelled out to India by ship, and arrived in Bombay in December 1937. Bombay did not interest Jung and he soon travelled north to Delhi, where he was attracted by its Islamic influence. Jung had a long-standing interest in Islam as he once recounted,

I positively do not believe that Christianity is the only and the highest manifestation of the truth. There is at least as much truth in Buddhism, and in other religions too. If for instance I had to choose between the Greek Orthodox Church and Islam, I would opt for Islam.

(Letters I: 127)

Jung then proceeded south-east to Agra, where he found the Taj Mahal a revelation and visited the stupas at the hill of Sanchi, where Buddha delivered his fire sermon. The visit to the stupas of Sanchi impressed Jung greatly and he said,

A new side of Buddhism was revealed to me there. I grasped the life of the Buddha as the reality of the self which had broken through and laid claim to a personal life. For Buddha, the self stands above all gods, a *unus mundus* which represents the essence of human existence and of the world as a whole. The self

embodies both the aspect of intrinsic being and the aspect of its being known, without which no world exists. Buddha saw and grasped the cosmogonic dignity of human consciousness; for that reason he saw clearly that if a man succeeded in extinguishing this light, the world would sink into nothingness. Schopenhauer's great achievement lay in his also recognising this, or in rediscovering it independently.

(MDR: 309)

In fact Jung admitted that the Buddhism of Sanchi was the most impressive thing in India, as impressive as the Himalaya mountains in the North of India (Letters I: 242), where Jung moved to next. At the monastery of Bhutia Busty near Darjeeling, Jung had a conversation about mandalas with a Lamaic *rimpoche*, Lingdam Gomchen (CW 12: 123). When Jung went to Trivandrum, the capital of Travancore, he met a disciple of Ramana Maharashi. However, Jung carefully avoided meeting Shri Ramana Maharashi himself. Jung recalled,

Perhaps I should have visited Shri Ramana. Yet I fear that if I journeyed to India a second time to make up for my omission, it would fare with me just the same: I simply could not, despite the uniqueness of the occasion, bring myself to visit this undoubtedly distinguished man personally. For the fact is, I doubt his uniqueness; he is of a type which always was and will be. Therefore it was not necessary to seek him out. I saw him all over India... Shri Ramana is, in a sense, a *hominum homo*, a true 'son of man' of the Indian earth. He is 'genuine,' and on top of that he is a 'phenomenon' which, seen through European eyes, has claims to uniqueness. But in India he is merely the whitest spot on a white surface

(CW 11: 952)

For Jung the Maharashi was not so unique, as he could be seen everywhere in India. Thus Jung believed it is not necessary to seek him. G. Wehr (1988) argues that, "at bottom, Jung said to himself, the truth of these initiates of the East is not a truth for all the world" (Wehr, 1988: 290). Here we can see Jung's psychic relativism in which what was true in India was not necessarily an absolute truth for Western man, or vice versa. Jung must have been satisfied with his own truth. This may explain why Jung avoided contact with a so-called 'holy-man.'

I did so because I had to make do with my own truth, not accept from others what I could not attain on my own. I would have felt it as a theft had I attempted to learn from the holy men and to accept their truth for myself. Nor in Europe can I make any borrowings from the East, but must shape my life out of myself - out of what my inner being tells me, or what nature brings to me.

(MDR: 305)

Jung travelled south-west to Orissa province to visit the temple at Konarak. He was accompanied by a Hindu pundit, and objected to the man's explanation that the *lingam* and *yoni* symbols were purely spiritual, because in his Western sensibilities

Jung believed that young men could not so easily forget their sexuality. However, the pundit simply replied to Jung that they could not become spiritualised until they had first fulfilled their *karma*.

Jung's failure to understand the notion of *karma* resulted from the fact that he did not know the Hindu concept of the four stages of life (*varnasrama-dharma*).<sup>10</sup> T.J. Hopkins (1971) asserts that the Dharma Sutra established Brahminical rules for the social as well as ritual activities of every member of society. Its basic focus was not the goal beyond society but the arrangement of life within the social system. The basic principle of this arrangement of life was summarised in the four stages of life: (1) as a student, (2) householder, (3) a hermit who has retired to the forest, and (4) a *sannyasin* (a 'renounced' person) who has completely severed his ties to society (Hopkins, 1971: 73-5). Studentship was a time of rigorous discipline during which the student learned a way of life: rituals, values, duties, and patterns of behaviour. Householdship began with marriage, the most single ritual in a person's life. At this stage sexuality is necessary because it produces offspring for the second generation and provides for the continuing support of society. According to Hopkins, "the *dharma* of householders is in fact largely the fulfilment of *artha* (economic and political activity) and *kama* ('desire' especially sexual desire), since it is the householders' production and procreation that satisfies society's debts to the gods and ancestors and supports those who preserved the tradition. Therefore, the householder purified the desires for wealth and sensual enjoyment carried over from his past lives and transformed them into spiritual benefits for himself, his family, and society" (Hopkins, 1971: 78). However, Jung simply did not know the Hindu concept of this particular stage of life, in which sexuality is regarded as a purely spiritual task to be fulfilled. As a result, Jung failed to understand the significance of the *lingam* and *yonis* symbols.

When this stage is completed those who are qualified should go on to seek release. The *vanaprastha* in effect is retired from active household life to live as a hermit in the forest. He practises restraint of the senses and performs austerities, seeking constantly to achieve purity and self-control. The final and highest stage of life is that of the *sannyasin* whose life was aimed more distinctly at the attainment of

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<sup>10</sup> According to Hopkins, The Dharma Sastras made a similar point in their discussion of the four main goals of life: *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, and *moksa*. *Moksa* is a release from rebirth and the supreme goal,

*moksa* or release from rebirth. Sannyasinhood is entered by means of a formal ritual in which the initiate renounce all worldly ties including all relationships with wife and family. His life should be characterised by restraint of speech (observance of silence), restraint of action (non-injury to any creature), and restraint of mind (performance of breath control, meditation, and other yogic practices); by these he would gradually purify himself, attain desirelessness (*vairagya*), and achieve knowledge of self and *Brahman* that would bring final release from the transitoriness of *samsara* (Hopkins, 1971: 76-83). Jung simply overlooked these four stages of life in Hindu tradition, and therefore he could not understand the mechanism of *karma* which one has to fulfil at each stage of life in order to attain the final release from rebirth.<sup>11</sup>

When he returned to Calcutta, Jung went down with dysentery and was unable to attend the honorary degree ceremony. When Jung recovered, he had a Grail dream (MDR: 310-2). The dream essentially had European contents, which was expressed in the quest for the Holy Grail, when Jung, in reality, had barely worked his way out of the overwhelming mass of Indian impressions. Jung asserts, “Imperiously, the dream wiped away all the intense impression of India and swept me back to the too-long-neglected concerns of the Occident” (MDR: 312-3). This Grail dream had been significant in convincing Jung to look for Western material. Jung points out,

It was as though the dream were asking me, ‘What are you doing in India?... I was taken out of the world of India, and reminded that India was not my task, but only a part of the way – admittedly a significant one – which should carry me closer to my goal.

(MDR: 313)

Jung sailed to Ceylon, and then headed for the hilly country of the interior, visiting the old royal city of Kandy and the Dalada-Maligawa temple, which contains the relic of the Holy Tooth of Buddha. Jung embarked at Colombo for his homeward voyage to Europe and did not bother to disembark when the ship docked a second time in Bombay. His journey to India eventually led Jung to reaffirm his interest in the Western alchemical texts.

## 1.4 Jung and Buddhism

### 1.4.1 Jung’s encounter with Buddhism

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but only a few could attain it in their present lives. The attainable goals for the majority of men are *artha* and *kama*. (Hopkins, 1971: 78).

<sup>11</sup> Jung’s relation to *karma* in Tibetan Buddhist tradition is discussed in Chapter Four.

In contrast to his relationship with the Hindu tradition, Jung was particularly attracted to Buddhist thought. Buddhist ideas played an important role throughout Jung's life. In 1960, shortly before he died, he was still studying Buddhist sermons and said, "I am trying to get nearer to the remarkable psychology of the Buddha himself, or at least of that which his contemporaries assumed him to be" (Letters II: 548). As mentioned earlier, during his student years Jung made an extensive reading of Schopenhauer whose major work, *The World as Will and Representation*, drew a close affinity between his own philosophy and that of both the Hindu and Buddhist philosophies. Hence Schopenhauer may have provided Jung with this important influence in the shaping of his interest in Buddhism. Jung's brief remark on Buddhist ideas first appears in the *Zofingia Lectures* (1896-99). Jung was familiar with Edwin Arnold's poetic version of the story of Buddhism, *The Light of Asia*, which was first published in 1879, and was cited by Jung in *Symbols of Transformation* (1911-2). By the time Jung wrote *Psychological Types* (1921), he had acquired an extensive knowledge of Hinayana as well as Mahayana Buddhist thought.

In his study of Buddhism, Jung's central focus of attention is on the notion of the self. As mentioned earlier, the visit to the stupas of Sanchi made a great impression on Jung, and he saw in Buddha an embodiment of the archetype of the self (MDR: 309-10). For Jung the Buddha's teaching was essentially about psychic healing. Jung claims that the model of good mental health is the self. Moreover, the self is the goal of psychotherapy, namely, a balancing between the psychic opposites, the conscious and the unconscious, in the experience of the self. In other words, the shifting of the centre of gravity of the personality from the ego to the self plays a vital role in Jung's Analytical Psychology. Jung saw a similarity between his process of individuation and the Buddhist path to salvation, as both methods are built not so much on the medium of an external agency – the acceptance of doctrine and the reliance on faith - but on the agency of the autonomous individual, the direct experience of the individual seeker.<sup>12</sup>

What drew Jung to Buddhist thought was neither the history of religion nor the study of philosophy, but his professional interest as a doctor whose task was, "the treatment of psychic suffering" (CW 18: 1575). Jung asserts,

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<sup>12</sup> There is one exception in Pure Land Buddhism, which emphasises the element of faith in Amitabha Buddha.



The study of Buddhist literature was of great help to me, since it trains one to observe suffering objectively and to take a universal view of its causes. According to tradition, it was by objectively observing the chain of causes that the Buddha was able to extricate his consciousness from the snares of the ten thousand things, and to rescue his feelings from the entanglements of emotion and illusion. So also in our sphere of culture the suffering and the sick can derive considerable benefit from this prototype of the Buddhist mentality, however strange it may appear.

(CW 18: 1575)

His approach to Buddhism was embodied by his belief that the Western traditional sources of psychic healing were dying out due to the fact that, “the Christian ritual has lost its meaning or the authority of religious ideas has collapsed” (CW 18: 1577). Hence Jung claims that the teachings of the Buddha, “offer Western man ways and means of disciplining his inner psychic life, thus remedying an often regrettable defect in the various brands of Christianity” (CW 18: 1577).

However, there is one important difference over the issue of suffering between Buddhism and Jung’s Analytical Psychology. Jung did not agree with the Buddhist notion of a complete liberation from suffering, which he held to be impossible. R. Moacanin argues, “unlike Buddha, Jung does not perceive the possibility of an end to suffering. In his view happiness and suffering represent another pair of opposites, indispensable to life, and one cannot exist without the other” (Moacanin, 1986: 85). Jung argued,

Man has to cope with the problem of suffering. The Oriental wants to get rid of suffering by casting it off. Western man tries to suppress suffering with drugs. But suffering has to be overcome, and the only way to overcome it is to endure it.

(Letters I: 236)

For Jung, Buddhist concepts such as *nirvana*, in which an individual is finally released from suffering, is a condition irreconcilable with the condition of being human. Just as Jung rejected the possibility of a state in which the *Brahman* one-sidedly identified with pure consciousness, so he could not make sense of the condition in which the dynamic interrelation between the inner psychic world and the external empirical world is suspended by an overbalance on one side or the other. Thus Jung claims, “Complete redemption from the sufferings of this world is and must remain an illusion... The goal is important only as an idea; the essential thing is the *opus* which leads to the goal: *that* is the goal of a lifetime. In its attainment ‘left and right’ are united, and conscious and unconscious work in harmony” (CW 16: 400, Jung’s italics).

### 1.4.2 Tibetan Buddhism

Following the publication of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (edited by the American scholar W.Y. Evans-Wentz in 1927), Jung became familiar with Tantric Buddhism. Jung wrote a psychological commentary for the German edition of 1935. The book is an instruction for the dead and the dying, and a guide for the soul of the departed in its passage of forty-nine days from death to rebirth. Jung considered the visions of the wrathful as well as the peaceful deities attributed to the dead soul as samsaric projections of the human psyche and at the same time as a metaphysical reality (CW 11: 833). Jung claimed that, “Metaphysical assertions, however, are *statements of the psyche*, and are therefore psychological” (CW 11: 835). Thus Jung believed that these visions of the deities in the *Bardo Thödol* were psychological truth. Jung interpreted all kind of symbolic figures in the methods of visualisation in Tibetan Buddhism in terms of his theory of archetypes and the collective unconscious. But Jung rejected the possibility of individual *karma* and insisted the idea of *karma* is only understood as psychic heredity, that is to say, “there is inheritance of psychic characteristics such as predisposition to disease, traits of character, special gifts, and so forth” (CW 11: 845).<sup>13</sup>

Jung also wrote a psychological commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, published in the introduction to Evans-Wentz’s edition of 1939. In his commentary Jung addressed the difference between East and West in relation to his theory of introversion and extraversion. For example, Jung argued that Western man projects meaning into objects, whereas Eastern man seeks wisdom within himself. Jung recognised the need of the extraverted Western mentality to be supplemented with the introverted Eastern attitude. Jung argued, however, that East and West each represented half of the universe and that each of these standpoints, “however contradictory, have their psychological justification” (CW 11: 786). I discuss this issue in detail in Chapter Four.

### 1.4.3 Zen and Pure Land Buddhism

Jung became familiar with Zen Buddhism through the Japanese Zen scholar Daisetz T. Suzuki’s book, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, for which Jung wrote a foreword

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<sup>13</sup> Jung later changed his opinion concerning individual *karma*. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

to the German edition in 1939. Jung found in Zen, “the most crashing nonsense” (CW 11: 882) or “the bizarre surface of individual satori experiences” (CW 11: 883). But he also points out at the same time that, “just as the obviously absurd chemistry of alchemy was a half-conscious blind for a very real spiritual longing, the secret passion which keeps Zen and other spiritual techniques alive through the centuries is connected with an original experience of wholeness - perhaps the most important and unique of all spiritual experiences” (Letters II: 602). Jung believed the *Zen koan* represented a method of breaking through from the conscious to the unconscious level, namely, “the complete destruction of the rational intellect” (CW 11: 895) aiming at one’s inner potential to be realised in a special moment of illumination. The teachings of Zen Buddhism provided Jung with a great deal of confirmation in his psychological thinking. I discuss this in more detail in Chapter Five.

Jung also discussed Pure Land Buddhism to a great extent. During March-May 1943 Jung delivered a lecture on ‘The Psychology of Eastern Meditation’ in Zurich, Basel and Bern.<sup>14</sup> In the lecture Jung had undertaken to describe a yoga text, “which allows a deep insight into the psychic processes of yoga.” (CW 11: 912) This Buddhist text is called *Amitayur-dhyana-Sutra*, the Sutra of Meditation on *Amitayus*, written in Chinese and translated from the original Sanskrit dating from A.D. 424. The text is used in Japan as a major source of the Buddhist tradition and also as a visualisation text. Jung pointed out that Eastern meditation provides a way of exploring the psyche which the extraverted tendencies of the West had ignored or even repressed. However Jung emphasised a clear difference of orientation between the Eastern and Western mind, “The West is always seeking uplift, but the East seeks a sinking or deepening” (CW 11: 936). For this reason Jung particularly warned against the frequent attempt to imitate Eastern meditation by Western man. What the European needs is to achieve a balance between these two movements, not by negating the upward and extraverted tendency, but by developing the capacity to move downward to explore the unconscious, and consequently to find their lost spiritual life. Jung’s interpretation of Pure Land Buddhism is examined further in Chapter Three. Enough has been discussed thus far regarding Jung’s dialogue with Eastern thought. In the next section we shall look at this issue in the wider historical context, and discuss the recent controversies about Orientalism in relation to Jung.

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<sup>14</sup> The lecture can be found in CW 11: 908-949.

## 1.5 Jung and Orientalism

### 1.5.1 Orientalism

To examine in depth Jung's dialogue with Eastern thought, it is crucial to explore some of the attitudes, prejudices, and stereotypes which have developed Western attitude towards the East. Edward Said (1978) critically examined the Western conception of the Orient, and what he named 'Orientalism.' According to the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 'Orientalism' is defined as follows:

1. Oriental character or style; an oriental trait or idiom.
2. Oriental scholarship; knowledge of Oriental languages.

(Williams, 1996: 141)

Said's concept of Orientalism, the Western understanding of Asian societies and cultures, includes both of the definitions above. To these, however, he added a third definition:

3. A Western political ideology or discourse about the Orient which has stressed its sensuality, its tendency to despotism, its aberrant mentality, its habits of inaccuracy, its backwardness, as a justification for European, American and Israeli colonization of Asia

(Williams, 1996: 142)

According to Said, the Orient is an idea and is, "almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences" (Said, 1995: 1). Thus, Orientalism means the Western understanding of societies and cultures of the East. Said was influenced by Michel Foucault's 'power/knowledge' theory, and argues that Orientalism is "the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said, 1995: 3). He also states, "Orientalism is more particularly valuable as a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient than it is as a veridic discourse about the Orient (which is what, in its academic or scholarly form, it claims to be). Nevertheless, what we must respect and try to grasp is the sheer knitted-together strength of Orientalist discourse, its very close ties to the enabling socio-economic and political institutions, and its redoubtable durability" (Said, 1995: 6). In the light of this, Orientalism, in Said's sense, does not suggest a true picture of the Orient but a representation of it. Clarke argues that Said's argument of Orientalism means "reconstruction, in effect a 'colonising' knowledge,

created by the conqueror to comprehend the conquered, and designed to confirm the West's own distinctive identity, and to enhance the West's political and cultural hegemony over Asian peoples" (Clarke, 1997: 22). In Said's view, therefore, Orientalism represents "the expression and justification of the global authority of the modern West" (Clarke, 1997: 22).

Said says, "*Orientalism* is the generic term... to describe the Western approach to the Orient; Orientalism is the discipline by which the Orient was (and is) approached systematically, as a topic of learning, discovery, and practice" and Orientalism also designates that "collection of dreams, images, and vocabularies available to anyone who has tried to talk about what lies east of the dividing line" (Said, 1995: 73). The images and ideas of Orient were "based more or less exclusively upon a sovereign Western consciousness out of whose unchallenged centrality an Oriental world emerged, first according to general ideas about who or what was an Oriental, then according to a detailed logic governed not simply by empirical reality but by a battery of desires, repressions, investments, and projections" (Said, 1995: 8). Orientalism in Said's view, therefore, is "a kind of Western projection onto and will to govern over the Orient" (Said, 1995: 95). For instance, many terms are used to express the relation between Orient and Occident: "The Orient is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, 'different': thus European is rational, virtuous, mature, 'normal'" (Said, 1995: 40). Clarke argues that the West constructing such an image and articulating such a frame of discourse in order to "establish a 'significant other' by means of which to define Europe's (or the West's) own self-identity, and to establish thereby Europe's superiority and right to rule" (Clarke, 1997: 24). Said argues that, "The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other" (Said, 1995: 1). In Said's view, Orientalism constitutes the image of other, which is opposite to Europe as strange and alien, and it is this otherness which helps to confirm the self-image of the West and to define its self-identity. Said, thus, argues that Orientalism is "a collective notion identifying 'us' Europeans as against all 'those' non-Europeans, and indeed it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures (Said, 1995: 7).

It is important to note that the Orient which Said is mainly concerned with is not that of China, Japan, or India but the Middle East, the Islamic countries. Said argues, "I... already limited [my] (but still inordinately large) set of questions to the Anglo-French-American experience of the Arabs and Islam, which for almost a thousand years together stood for the Orient" (Said, 1995: 16-7). Clarke argues that Said is primarily concerned with the Middle East, since the Islamic world "has historically represented a very real threat to the survival of Christendom. It has inflicted on the West a number of humiliating defeats, and it is therefore not surprising that it has provoked in the West a need to assert its superiority" (Clarke, 1994: 23). By contrast with Islam, "neither India nor China has been a military threat to Europe in the modern period, nor has Christianity been theologically intertwined with the religions of East and South Asia" (Clarke, 1997: 23). Therefore, in Said's view, the whole history of the Arab/Islamic world has been tied to that of Europe politically, religiously and intellectually. In this sense, Said claims that the Middle East sharply contrast with the rest of Asia. While Said's explanation of Orientalism could generally apply to the present study of many Asian countries, his association of Orientalism with colonising power may represent rather a narrow and limited view of the Orient. Clarke argues that "The narrowness of the Saidian explanation... arises from its inclination towards reductionism, and its tendency to ignore much of the richness and complexity of orientalism and of its accompanying motivations and impulses, or else to constrain these to fit into an overly simple mould" (Clarke, 1997: 27). Using the Saidian model of Orientalism, we shall now look at Jung's own dialogue with the East.

### **1.5.2 Jung's dialogue with the East in the context of Orientalism**

It is essential at this point to discuss the issue of Jung and Orientalism. The Western discovery of the Orient has not been merely the extension of Western hegemony or colonisation of the East in a Saidian sense, but has also represented a self-criticism and self-renewal on the Western part. Clarke argues that Western dialogue with the East played an important role, "first, in the critical self-awareness of the West, as a mirror in which to examine its own shortcomings, and to inspire, renewal; and, secondly, in the emergence of a sense of universalism, a conception of the unity of mankind that transcends all its local and historical variations" (Clarke, 1994: 23). The Western discovery of the philosophies of China and India in the period of economic

and political expansion, for instance, enabled Europe to step outside of its history and inquire into its own beliefs and self-understanding in search of something which the West believed it had lost. This phenomenon seems to be conspicuous in Jung's own engagement with the East. The purpose of Jung's dialogue with the East was not absorbing and integrating Eastern religions and philosophies into a single global belief system. However, Jung was rather sceptical about the value of modernity and of Western civilisation, which, he believed, was the possible cause of the one-sidedness of the Western psyche. Thus Jung attempted to find a cure for Western culture through a dialogue with the East. Clarke argues that for Jung, "the East could lead the West to the rediscovery of the inner cosmos, of the worlds of the imagination, of intuition, of the unconscious, but only in its own terms and with its own methods" (Clarke, 1994: 145).

Luis Gómez (1995) examines the manner in which an Oriental bias and a colonial frame of mind manifest themselves in Jung's writings on Eastern religions by exploring his ambivalent attitude towards the East, that is, the positive and negative attitude which Jung envisaged. Gómez states,

Jung reveals the fundamental contradictions and ambiguities of his position vis-à-vis Buddhism and 'the East.' On the one hand, he makes the sweeping statement that 'religions are systems of healing for psychic illness'; on the other hand, he privileges psychotherapy over religion. On the one hand, he will use the authority of Western culture and religion in support of his own concept of the self; on the other, he uses the authority of 'Eastern' religion and culture as a basis for a critique of Western views of the individual. Conversely, he uses the Western model to criticize his own construct of the East. In the end, Jung emerges from this ambiguity triumphant as the one who has not only bridged, but transcended the two worlds he created for his readers.

(Gómez, 1995: 200)

Clarke (1994) also acknowledged Jung's ambivalent, rather paradoxical, attitude towards Eastern thought. Clarke argues that, on the one hand, Jung highly admired Eastern thought, and, "often seems to rank it above Western culture, using it... as a tool for criticising, even for undermining, the European cultural tradition," but on the other hand, "he was careful to distance himself from it," his writings on Eastern religions are "full of reservations and qualifications," and he repeatedly "warned of the dangers for the Westerner in approaching the East too closely"(Clarke, 1994: 143). Jung was fascinated by Wilhelm's translation of the *Secret of the Golden Flower* (1929), in which he believed he had discovered a confirmation of his theories

of mandala symbolism.<sup>15</sup> What is more important in this text is that Jung became more interested not in Chinese but in Western alchemy. The Chinese text in some way led Jung away from the East. Jung wrote, “Light on the nature of alchemy began to come to me only after I had read the text of the *Golden Flower*, that specimen of Chinese alchemy which Richard Wilhelm sent me in 1928. I was stirred by the desire to come more closely acquainted with the alchemical texts” (MDR: 230). In fact the bulk of Jung’s work thereafter was with Western sources, i.e., on alchemy, on Gnosticism, and on Christian theology, all of which took an important role in the formation of his psychological theories such as individuation, the collective unconscious, the archetypes, and the transformations of the unconscious.

Yet, Jung’s enthusiasm for the East and admiration of the teaching and spiritual practice of Asian religions never ceased until the end of his life. It has been discussed earlier that the Eastern religions and philosophies are indeed of considerable significance in the formation of Jung’s psychological ideas. It is equally important to recognise “Jung’s sense of self-recognition in Asian symbols that alternated with his sense of distance” (Gómez, 1995: 206). Jung kept a certain distance from the Eastern religions and regarded them as exotic and alien, and repeatedly warned Europeans not to attempt the practice of yoga. Jung believed that Eastern spirituality cannot simply be absorbed by Europeans, as it is foreign to Western history and culture. Jung said, “I wish particularly to warn against the oft-attempted imitation of Indian practices and sentiments. As a rule nothing comes of it except an artificial stultification of our Western intelligence” (CW 11: 933).

Gómez examines Jung’s ambivalence, his admiration and caution of Eastern thought from the point of view of Orientalism, and the history of the Western view of Asia. Under the influence of the nineteenth-century Western perception of the East, Jung’s distinction between East and West was a questionable one. For Jung, the East seems to represent any non-European groups and is hardly distinguishable from Africa and native America. Furthermore, Jung considered non-western religion as illustrating the mentality of the primitive. Jung compared the primitive mind and Eastern religions in the following passage,

The only known analogy to this fact is the mental condition of the primitive, who confuses dream and reality in the most bewildering way. Naturally we hesitate to call the Eastern mind primitive, for we are deeply impressed with its

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<sup>15</sup> For a detailed discussion of Jung’s understanding of Tibetan tantric mandala, see 4.3.



remarkable civilization and differentiation. Yet the primitive mind is its matrix, and this is particularly true of that aspect of it which stresses the validity of psychic phenomena.

(CW 11: 800)

Jung was influenced by Lévy Bruhl's notion of the psychology of the primitive. In his writings, although he tended to reject any attempt to establish an order between East and West, Jung frequently made comments which may appear as rather naïve. For example, Jung asserts, "compared with it [the Western intellect] the Eastern intellect must be described as childish" (CW 13: 8). This demonstrates one of the problems posed by Said regarding the dangers of projecting Western prejudices onto other cultures. Clarke argues that although Jung qualified this remark by denying that this had anything to do with intelligence, "the suspicion must remain in the mind of the reader that he was implicitly ranking the Western mentality above the Eastern" (Clarke, 1994: 193). In his observation of Indians, Jung wrote,

I have, so it seems to me, observed the peculiar fact that an Indian, inasmuch as he is really Indian, does not think, at least not what we call 'think.' He rather perceives the thought. He resembles the primitive in this respect. I do not say that he is primitive, but that the process of his thinking reminds me of the primitive way of thought-production. The primitive's reasoning is mainly an unconscious function, and he perceives its results. We should expect such a peculiarity in any civilization which has enjoyed an almost unbroken continuity from primitive times.

(CW 10: 1007)

However, Jung also gave the Eastern mind a certain advantage over Europe by arguing that the Indian psyche is spiritually superior to that of Europeans, and Indians experienced a development from the most primitive to the most spiritual state of consciousness (Letters II: 39-41). Gómez argues that, for Jung, the primitive represents two aspects: "It is the so-called dark side, the unconscious, but it is a dimension that must be touched and accepted, a dimension that cannot be ignored, although it must be explored with caution" (Gómez, 1995: 208). Jung says, "the East..., cultivates the psychic aspect of primitivity together with an inordinate amount of abstraction," whereas, "the West simply cultivated..., the scrupulously accurate observation of nature at the expense of abstraction" (CW 11: 800). In his perception of the East, Jung tends to vacillate between viewing it negatively, for example as strange, childlike and incomprehensible, and viewing it positively, for example as spiritual, symbolic and experientially superior.

Jung's ambivalent attitude towards Eastern thought can be understood in the context of the historical development of interpretations of Buddhism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. P. Almond (1988) argues that the Western attitude towards Buddhism in the Victorian period displays ambivalence: Buddhism was ideally constructed and positively esteemed on one hand, and negatively evaluated on the other. Almond states,

Permeating Victorian discourse about Buddhism we find a persistent polarity of acceptance and rejection, of sameness and otherness. Most often, that which is inherently incapable of assimilation in the West and that which is most at odds with Victorian values is described as a feature of or ascribed to the Oriental mind. In contrast to its Occidental counterpart (though this term was rarely used, the first person plural pronoun substituting for it), the Oriental mind was less intelligent, more fanciful, childish and simple, prone to exaggeration, generally indolent, and lacking in originality.

(Almond, 1988: 41)

Almond argues that Western hegemony "provided a fundamental and governing mode of organizing the East. More specifically, it provided a filter through which those aspects of Buddhism acceptable in the Victorian context could be assimilated, and by means of which those aspects essentially unassimiliable could be rejected. This polarity of assimilation and rejection of Buddhism expressed latently and manifestly through the image of the Oriental mind was to underlie much of the discourse on Buddhist that developed in the Victorian age" (Almond, 1988: 52-3). It would seem that Jung was influenced by the dominant view of Buddhism in the West, and that consequently he became a victim of Western ignorance on Buddhism.

It is important to note at this point that the way Jung constructs his argument often demonstrates the way he came to conceive of the Orient, which is the issue that has been brought up by Said. Jung was not interested in Eastern religions within their cultural context. Nor was Jung a convert himself to Eastern thought or a scholar of Eastern religions. Clarke states that Jung was not interested in "absorbing and integrating Eastern thought into a super-philosophy"(Clarke, 1994: 145). For instance, Jung was highly critical of movements such as Theosophy which sought to merge East and West in a universal philosophy. Jung claims, "You cannot mix fire and water. The Eastern attitude stultifies the Western, and vice versa"(CW 11: 772). The chief purpose of Jung's engagement with Eastern thought was to "set out to explain, and somehow make accessible to a Western audience, the practice of yoga, an aspect of a culture that Jung regarded as not only unfamiliar to the European ('dem

Europäer ungewohnte’) but in fact alien and inaccessible (‘fremdartig und unzugänglich’)” (Gómez, 1995: 209-10). Jung altered Asian religious teachings for the Westerner to understand and utilise them for the cure of Western psychic ills. Jung concentrated on finding an Asian parallel to his psychological theory such as the individuation process. In interpreting Asian religious texts, Jung states, “If we wish to understand at all, we can do so only in the European way” (CW 11: 934). Clarke argues,

The exalted image of the East which frequently – thought not, it would be added, exclusively – emerges from Jung’s writings does indeed represent a refreshing antidote to Western arrogance, and is a welcome corrective to some of the distorted perceptions Europeans have had of their own civilisation and its place in world history. But at the same time it may, in its turn, represent a subtle form of cultural imperialism... there is a danger that his own approach to the East falls into the same trap, a danger that the East becomes an ideal, unreal object controlled and manipulated for our own purposes, a vision which is effectively blind to the real East, deaf to its real voice.

(Clarke, 1994: 165)

Gómez argues that at the heart of Jung’s ambivalence towards the East there is a quest for Jung’s own self-confirmation. Eastern thought appears as a pre-text, which Jung used as confirmatory data for a self-concept. Donald S. Lopez (1998) summarises Jung’s appropriation of Tibetan Buddhism in the following,

Jung... uses the Bardo Thodol (as he did the other Asian texts about which he wrote) as raw material for his own theories. Like the colonial industrialist, he minded Asian texts (in translation) for raw materials, without acknowledging the violence (both epistemic and otherwise) that he did to the texts in the process; revising the order of the three bardos is but one example. He then processed these war materials in the factory of his analytic psychology, yielding yet further products of the collective unconscious. These products were then marketed to European and American consumers as components of a therapy and exported back to Asian colonials as the best explanation of their own cultures.

(Lopez, 1998: 59)

Gómez argues, “In an ironic twist to ‘Orientalism,’ Buddhism and yoga become methods of psychic healing, ‘in the Jungian sense,’ for those who would adopt Asian religious practices. The Asian practice is re-conceived and appropriated through the lens of a reconception and appropriation of Jungian ideas” (Gómez, 1995: 223). Thus Gómez states,

The Buddha could be right too... but only if he agrees with Europe – needless to say, with Jung’s Europe. Or, perhaps it is better to say the Buddha’s teachings (like alchemy) could become intelligible only if his teachings are those of yoga, and if the teachings of yoga represent at least one aspect of Jungian metapsychology.

(Gómez, 1995: 228)

Gómez defined the Orientalist bias and colonial frame of mind as follows: “the European maintains his control over Asia first by conceding authority to the alien culture, then by assuming that authority for himself, and last by asserting the difference that separates him from the other” (Gómez, 1995: 229). The above exposition of Jung’s view on the East thus far would reveal that he was influenced by Orientalism in Said’s sense, that is to say, the Orientalist bias and colonial stance appear in Jung’s writings on Eastern religions. Lopez (1995) argues, “throughout, true understanding rests only with Jung, who uses the authority of his Asian texts to claim a privileged access to a tradition, over which he then claims authority. The healing power of Asia only heals when mediated through Jung’s theories, with Jung serving as the intermediary between East and West, both as diagnostician and healer.” (Lopez, 1995: 17).

## 1.6 Conclusion

In the early years of his career Jung was researching the fantasies of schizophrenics. Jung believed that these fantasies are similar to mythical motifs and religious symbolism, and that these collective symbols could make a bridge between the unconscious and the conscious through the transformation of libido. Jung’s interest went further to the myths and symbols of Eastern religions. The fantasies and dream images are, for Jung, archetypes in the collective unconscious. Jung maintains that the archetypes have a numinous character which can be described as spiritual. The spiritualistic character of the archetypes is significant for the psychology of religion, for when it is experienced by the individual, it becomes a therapeutic function which prevents one from falling into a psychic imbalance between the conscious and the unconscious.

A meeting with Richard Wilhelm spurred Jung’s interest Eastward. Jung found many similarities between Taoism and his psychological thought. In Richard Wilhelm’s translation of *The Secret of the Golden Flower* Jung discovered the similarity between his theory of anima/animus archetypes and the Taoist concept of *hun* and *p’o*. Furthermore, Jung argued that the attempt to establish a balance between the *yin* and *yang* in the Tao has a parallel in the goal of the individuation process, namely, a balancing of the psychic opposites between the conscious and the unconscious in the experience of the self. Jung was interested in the *I Ching*, the

Chinese oracle book, which was of major importance in the development of his conception of synchronicity. Jung's concept of synchronicity took a standpoint not based on Western ideas of cause and effect but on Taoist ideas of interdependence between the human and nature coming together synchronistically in a meaningful whole. In this respect, it can be said that Chinese Taoism, rather than Hinduism, provided the fundamental influence in the development of Jung's psychological thinking.

Nevertheless, it is certainly true that Indian philosophy and yoga contributed to the development of Jung's psychological theory. Yet Jung could not agree with the Hindu concept *moksa*, a complete liberation from the tension of pairs of opposites, which requires the eradication of the ego altogether. Nor could he agree with the last yogic state of *samadhi*, complete absorption, in which the ego is dissolved. For Jung abolishing the ego to transcend the opposites simply means unconsciousness. In the same way, the state of *samadhi*, in Jung's view, is equivalent to unconsciousness. Jung's idea of good mental health is the self, namely, a psychic totality of the conscious and the unconscious, and thus the self needs the ego and vice versa. For this reason, Jung believed that the notion of *moksa* and *samadhi* are unattainable to Westerners.

In contrast to his relationship with the Hindu tradition, Jung was attracted to Buddhism. Jung found the Buddhist path to the salvation was similar to his concept of the individuation process, since both methods are based on the direct experience of the individual rather than the acceptance of doctrine and the reliance on faith. Jung had reservations concerning the Buddhist concept of suffering. He believed it was impossible to be completely liberated from suffering. In Jung's view happiness and suffering are indispensable to life, and one cannot exist without the other. Therefore, for Jung, the Buddhist notion of *nirvana*, in which an individual is finally released from suffering, is irreconcilable with the condition of being human. The essential thing in Jung's Analytical Psychology is to achieve a harmony between a pair of opposites – the conscious and the unconscious.

Lastly this chapter discussed the issue of Orientalism in relation to Jung's dialogue with the East, particularly from the perspective of Edward Said. Jung's approach to understanding Oriental religions was influenced by Western prejudices, which Jung tends to project onto Eastern cultures. Furthermore, Jung's reification of East and West appeared to be questionable, since he was sometimes inclined to put

them in a relationship of domination for the sake of affirming Western superiority. In the next chapter I will develop my discussion of Jung's relation to Eastern thought by addressing in more detail the hermeneutical and phenomenological issues that underlie Jung's Analytical Psychology.

## **Chapter Two:**

# **Hermeneutical Issues in Jung's Approach to Eastern Religion**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter examines the hermeneutical issues in Jung's approach to Eastern religion. There are a number of different ways of interpreting Oriental religious texts. Central to this chapter is a discussion of the ways Jung understood Oriental materials and to what extent his understanding of religious traditions is related to his Analytical Psychology. These issues enable us to understand the difficulties which stand in the way of Jung's hermeneutical dialogue with Eastern thought. This chapter firstly examines Jung's approach to understanding religious texts from the perspective of Gadamer's model of hermeneutics in order to illustrate that Jung's method of constructing a bridge of understanding between Western psychology and Eastern religion was characterised by typical features of a hermeneutical approach. An overview of Gadamer's theory of hermeneutics is given, followed by an examination of Jung's hermeneutical understanding of Oriental texts. The methodological problems with hermeneutical understanding are addressed, and Gadamer's model of hermeneutics is contrasted with Jung's method of interpretation. The hermeneutical situation involves a dialogical structure of understanding, fusion of horizons, hermeneutic circle, and the opening up of interpretation. These characteristics of hermeneutics may have a danger of lapsing into relativism. The relativistic standpoint can also be seen in Jung's method of interpretation of Eastern materials.

Secondly, this chapter examines the phenomenological approach to understanding religion in order to demonstrate how religious experiences and traditions can be interpreted. In contrast to the hermeneutical approach to understanding religious texts, the phenomenology of religion emphasises the recognition of the irreducibility of religious phenomena and claims that we must understand religion in its own cultural context. Following this overview of the concept of the phenomenology of religion, the objective and empirical status of the phenomenology of religion are examined, particularly from the viewpoints of Kristensen and Van der Leeuw. The methodological problems with the

phenomenology of religion, namely, the tension between the objectivistic approach in the study of religion and the scholarly subjectivity in interpreting the religious phenomena are also discussed. Thirdly, a critical discussion of Jung's hermeneutics of Eastern thought is presented, demonstrating his ambivalent attitude towards Eastern religion, namely, his fascination with - as well as his concerns over - Eastern thought, his relativistic standpoint and his tendency to reductionism in interpreting religious experiences.

## **2.1 Jung and hermeneutics**

### **2.1.1 Gadamer's theory of hermeneutics**

This section firstly provides an overview of Gadamer's theory of hermeneutics. Hans-Georg Gadamer is one of the most important contemporary exponents of hermeneutics and published *Warheit und Methode* in 1960 (translated into English in 1975 as *Truth and Method*), in which he presented a traditional model of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is defined as the art of interpreting texts from the past whose meaning may seem to be obscure. Gadamer (1975) asserts that understanding is primarily an agreement between two people. When the common subject matter between them is disturbed, misunderstandings arise, because one's opinion is unintelligible to the other. Then the task of understanding becomes awareness of the individuality of the other and taking account of his uniqueness. In the hermeneutical situation there is a historical distance between the text and the interpreter. But this temporal distance is not something that we must overcome, but a positive and productive condition in which, "we must transpose ourselves into the spirit of the age, think with its ideas and its thoughts, not with our own, and thus advance toward historical objectivity" (Gadamer, 1975: 297). The task of seeking the true meaning of a text is never finished because it is an infinite process. Nevertheless, the temporal distance brings about genuine understanding of the object to emerge clearly as such, by distinguishing our prejudices and misunderstandings. Gadamer emphasises the hermeneutical rule that in interpreting the text, "we must understand the whole in terms of the detail and the detail in terms of the whole" (Ibid., 291). In this hermeneutical circle the anticipation of meaning in which the whole is envisaged becomes actual understanding when the parts which are determined by the whole themselves also determine this whole. Thus, "harmony of all the details with the whole is the criterion of correct understanding" (Ibid., 291).



Gadamer observed that all human thinking is historically embedded, and human reason exists only in concrete and historical terms. Thus all thinking presupposes a tradition in which the thinker participates, and to which the sense of his thinking is subject. Therefore we can never abandon prejudices because our thinking always carries them with it. The important thing is, Gadamer asserts, “to be aware of one’s own bias, so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one’s own fore-meanings” (Gadamer, 1975: 269). Once we recognise our judgement and prejudices, the fundamental suspension of our prejudices can be achieved through a constant questioning of our analysis of the hermeneutical situation. The interpretation always involves a relation to the question that is asked of the interpreter. Thus the interpreter must question what lies behind what the text actually says, and understand it as an answer to a question. What is more important is, “the question that the text puts to us, our being perplexed by the traditional word, so that understanding it must already include the task of the historical self-mediation between the present and tradition” (Gadamer, 1975: 373-4). In order to answer the question put to us, we must reconstruct the question to which the traditional text is the answer. Reconstructing the question to which the meaning of a text is understood as an answer merges with our own questioning. The close relation between questioning and understanding gives the hermeneutic experience its true dimension. Questioning brings out the undetermined possibilities of the interpretation of the text. Gadamer says, “Questioning opens up possibilities of meaning, and thus what is meaningful passes into one’s own thinking on the subject” (Ibid., 375).

‘Application,’ which is the important issue for Gadamer, is the essential element in the process of hermeneutical understanding. Gadamer argues, “understanding always involves something like the application of the text to be understood to the present situation of the interpreter” (Gadamer, 1975: 274). This approach indicates that the task of interpreter is not only to reproduce what is said in the text or discussion he is translating, but to express what is said in the way that seems necessary to his considering the real situation of the dialogue. A task of application in hermeneutical understanding, “serves the validity of meaning, in that it explicitly and consciously bridges the gap in time that separates the interpreter from the text and overcomes the alienation of meaning that the text has undergone” (Gadamer, 1975: 278). Gadamer asserts, “all reading involves application, so that a person reading a text is himself part of the meaning he apprehends. He belongs to the

text that he is reading. It will always happen that the line of meaning that is revealed to him as he reads it necessarily breaks off in an open indefiniteness.” (Ibid., 304). From this it follows that the reader must accept the fact that future generations will understand differently what he has read in the text. Through the method of application, therefore, the text is to be understood at every moment, in every particular situation, in a new and different way. Gadamer claims, “in the human sciences the interest in tradition is motivated in a special way by the present and its interests,” furthermore, “the theme and area of research are actually constituted by the motivation of the enquiry,” and therefore, “it is senseless to speak of a perfect knowledge of history, and for this reason it is not possible to speak of an object in itself towards which its research is directed” (Ibid., 253). For Gadamer,

To think historically always involves establishing a connection between those ideas and one’s own thinking. To try to eliminate one’s own concepts in interpretation is not only impossible, but manifestly absurd. To interpret means precisely to use one’s own preconceptions so that the meaning of the text can really be made to speak for us.

(Gadamer, 1975: 358)

The method of hermeneutical understanding is a dialogue through which a transformation of its participants develops, namely, one’s willingness to move forward and to allow one’s initial position to develop. Gadamer states, “To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one’s own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were” (Gadamer, 1975: 379). Consequently, there can be no single correct interpretation of a text, and therefore the interpretation of the text will open up. As Gadamer puts it,

There cannot...be any one interpretation that is correct ‘in itself,’ precisely because every interpretation is concerned with the text itself. The historical life of a tradition depends on constantly new assimilation and interpretation. An interpretation that was correct ‘in itself’ would be a foolish ideal that failed to take account of the nature of tradition. Every interpretation has to adapt itself to the hermeneutical situation to which it belongs.

(Gadamer, 1975: 358)

Historical tradition can be understood as something always in the process of being defined by the course of events. For it is the course of events that brings out new aspects of meaning in historical material. By being re-actualised in understanding, texts are drawn into a genuine course of events in the same way as are events themselves. This follows that every actualisation in understanding can be regarded as

a historical potential of what is understood. Thus Gadamer argues that it is the historical finitude of our being that we are aware that others after us will understand in a different way, and therefore, “hermeneutical reduction to the author’s meaning is just as inappropriate as the reduction of historical events to the intentions of their protagonists” (Gadamer, 1975: 373). It is important to emphasise here that Gadamer’s view could be described as a form of relativism. I will discuss this in detail later in this chapter.

The hermeneutical understanding constitutes the ‘horizon,’ which is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point. Gadamer asserts, “working out the hermeneutical situation means acquiring the right horizon of inquiry for the questions evoked by the encounter with tradition” (Gadamer, 1975: 269). Gadamer argues, “the historical movement of human life consists in the fact that it is never utterly bound to any one standpoint, and hence can never have a truly closed horizon” (Gadamer, 1975: 271). The horizon is, rather, “something into which we move and that moves with us. Horizons change for a person who is moving” (Ibid., 271). Hence the historical horizon is always in motion. When we enquire into the historical horizon, we are not passing into alien worlds unconnected with our own, but together they constitute “the one great horizon that moves from within and, beyond the frontiers of the present, embraces the historical depths of our self-consciousness” (Gadamer, 1975: 271). Thus Gadamer believes that understanding of the past requires an historical horizon. Gadamer argues, however, “it is not the case that we acquire this horizon by placing ourselves within a historical situation. Rather, we must always already have a horizon in order to be able to place ourselves within a situation” (Gadamer, 1975: 271). For Gadamer, this placing of ourselves is

not the empathy of one individual for another, nor is it the application to another person of our own criteria, but it always involves the attainment of a higher universality that overcomes, not only our own particularity, but also that of the other.

(Gadamer, 1975: 272)

Every encounter with tradition involves the experience of a tension between the text and the present. In the hermeneutical situation, “understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves” (Ibid., 273), and this process of fusion of horizons is continually going on, for, “there old and new are always combining into something of living value, without either being explicitly

foregrounded from the other” (Ibid., 306). In other words, the fusion of horizons that takes place in understanding mediates between the text and its interpreter.

Gadamer argues that all understanding is grounded in tradition and understanding therefore can only arise through the mediation of a shared tradition. Gadamer states, “Understanding is not to be thought of so much as an action of one’s subjectivity, but as the placing of oneself within a process of tradition, in which past and present are constantly fused” (Gadamer, 1975: 258). From this we may assume that it must inevitably be frustrated for any attempt to fuse one’s horizon with one from a tradition as different as the East is from the West would be impossible. It is important to emphasise here that in *Truth and Method* Gadamer does not discuss the possibility of transcending the European tradition. Gadamer, however, sees the possibilities of hermeneutical dialogue only within the European tradition.

W. Halbfass (1988) discusses the issue of the East-West dialogue with the use of Gadamer’s model of hermeneutics. He accounts for some of the characteristics of the Western attitude towards with Indian thought in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Halbfass argues, in the context of Gadamerian hermeneutics, that the recognition of the other, the foreign, as such is a decisive step on the way to its understanding. Gadamer’s hermenutics can encourage one to see the fact that in one’s approach to Indian thought one carries with one Western perspectives and presuppositions. These are not just an impediment and aggravation, but also a necessary and positive ingredient of understanding itself. Moreover, in Gadamer’s hermeneutics, it is indispensable to accept prejudices and to discard the vacuous ideal of unprejudiced understanding. Therefore understanding ancient Indian thought

cannot mean ‘becoming like the ancient Indians,’ thinking and seeing the world exactly like them. We are not capable of such ‘objectivity,’ and if we were, we would obviously not be ‘like the Indians.’ The goal of a radical ‘philosophical εποχη,’ an unqualified abstention from one’s own background and presuppositions, is unrealistic and undesirable. We cannot and need not ‘disregard’ ourselves in the process of understanding.

(Halbfass, 1988: 164)

Halbfass claims, in line with Gadamer, that what is needed is not ‘extinction of one’s self but the conscious assimilation of one’s own fore-meanings and prejudices. The important thing is to be aware of one’s bias, so that the Indian text may present itself in all its newness and therefore be able to assert its own truth against one’s own fore-meanings. Despite the exclusion of non-European materials from Gadamer’s work,

Halbfass believes that Gadamer's hermeneutics can be applied to the general encounter between India and Europe.

There is... no compelling reason why its hermeneutical concepts and perspectives should not be applicable in a wider, trans-cultural context. Indeed, we belong to the European tradition which has its origins in Greece. But this tradition has its own modes of openness and self-trans-transcendence. Within the European tradition itself, there has been a 'fusion' of different cultural horizons - Greek, Roman, Hebrew, etc. That we relate to other traditions, does not imply that we are estranged from 'our own' tradition. The phenomena of understanding and misunderstanding, which occur 'within' a particular tradition, need not be fundamentally different from those which we encounter when we try to approach other traditions.

(Halbfass, 1988: 165)

Halbfass argues that understanding, as well as misunderstanding, is an inevitable result in the European encounter with Oriental thought, "just as it takes place in Europe's relationship with its own Greek sources, and just as it has taken place in the encounter between other traditions" (Ibid., 166).

However, F. Dallmayr (1996) argues that Halbfass's approach to seek for a cross-cultural understanding or dialogue, "is complicated by Western hegemony and the ongoing process of Westernization of the globe" (Dallmayr, 1996: 130). In Halbfass's view, the conditions and perspectives of the two sides of the encounter are fundamentally different, and the relationship is an asymmetrical one. Therefore he considers that the modern India finds itself in a historical situation created by Europe and it has difficulties speaking for itself. Consequently, understanding under such conditions requires a special effort to transcend Eurocentrism in the direction of greater reciprocal openness. For,

in the modern planetary situation, Eastern and Western 'cultures' can no longer meet one another as equal partners. They meet in a Westernized world, under conditions shaped by Western ways of thinking.

(Halbfass, 1988: 169)

Dallmayr argues that under present conditions of Westernization, cross-cultural understanding is liable to be intensely agonising. Halbfass's argument shows ambivalence in this regard: on the one hand, Halbfass "strongly defends the 'merit of Anglo-American analysis'" (Dallmayr, 1996: 123), and, in the pursuit of objectivity, he approves the instrumental value of modern formal and analytical models; on the other hand, "objectivity may well be an elusive and perhaps even deceptive standard" (Ibid., 123), and, in fact, analysis and the search for conceptual precision can be

obtrusive and interfere with the task of translating and understanding non-Western traditions in their own context and dimensions.

The crucial question is whether it is really possible to move from Eurocentrism to anti-Eurocentrism in the dialogue between East and West. In the globalizing context, is there not still room and need for cross-cultural understanding beyond the confines of Eurocentrism? To answer this, Dallmayr argues, “an exit from Orientalism in our time seems to accord a certain privilege to an ‘ontology of openness’ over an ‘ontology of (objectified) substances’; whatever its other corollaries may be, openness implies at least a certain willingness to transcend established categories in favour of a freer recognition of alien life-forms, thus permitting otherness ‘to be’ in a non-possessive way” (Dallmayr, 1996: 130). Yet, further questions arise: How far can openness to the other extend? Are there normative limits to understanding? Or, “Are there perhaps legitimate aspects of ‘Europeanization’ – beyond the pale of colonial domination and technological or economic supremacy?” (Dallmayr, 1996: 130).

To this, Dallmayr focuses on the issue of equality and inequality in terms of the dominant comparisons of East and West. Dallmayr argues, “It is clear that much depends on the meaning of terms such as liberty and equality, which cannot simply be left to Eurocentric preferences” (Dallmayr, 1996: 131). In the modern West liberty and equality are usually regarded as qualities of individual agents, whereas distinctions or differentiations ought to be justified against the standard of equal liberty. By contrast, the Western conception of equality has little corresponding to the Oriental culture, for instance, in India. Thus, ‘liberation from the world’ in Hindu religious practice, for example, cannot or must not be misunderstood as the Western model of universalism. Nor should such Hindu expressions as ‘unity of life’ be misread in the sense of a multi-cultural society. Dallmayr asserts, “In traditional Indian thought, both the notion of fraternal contextuality and the idea of soteriological liberation were closely linked with and even predicated on the assumption of an all-pervasive differentiation and distinctness of world elements,” and “this emphasis on differentiation can ultimately be seen as the legitimating underpinning of the Indian caste system” (Dallmayr, 1996: 132). From this it follows that, “Indian thought, transcendence of difference (or equality) has itself to be justified in light of a differentiated dharma, which is precisely the opposite of modern Western thought

where difference or distinction is radically put on the defensive (as in need of justification)” (Ibid., 134). Dallmayr points out,

What is called ‘Europeanization’ or ‘Westernization’ of the world is to a large extent the militant extension of egalitarianism or the principle of equivalence to other parts of the globe (with capital serving as the currency of equivalence). Liberty here is not adverse to equality, because it basically means freedom of choice (where all choices are equivalent or of equal value). Whatever their intrinsic merits may be, the principles of equality and equal liberty are today exported around the globe in a missionary and largely unthinking way, without much reflection on the premises of such principles and how they (and their consequences) might be vindicated. Non-Western societies, which are not readily swayed by these principles, are quickly dismissed as illiberal and undemocratic. India in particular – given the long legacy of ‘homo hierarchicus’ – is likely to be denounced as a major obstacle on the road to world democracy (in a not very subtle resurrection of Orientalism).

(Dallmayr, 1996: 134)

This statement is an important contribution to a cross-cultural understanding and helps us to re-think such basic philosophical categories as equality or sameness and difference in terms of a cross-cultural dialogue between East and West. Commenting on Dallmayr, it is important to note that the issues of equivalence and difference “need to be articulated jointly, but in a way that resists synthesis, yielding only reciprocal destabilization” (Dallmayr, 1996: 134), i.e., beyond the limits of assimilation and exclusion. Gadamerian Hermeneutics and other scholars’ approach to hermeneutical understanding have been discussed thus far in order to illustrate the nature of the European discourse on the cross-cultural dialogue between Eastern and Western traditions. I will turn to Jung’s own hermeneutical approach.

### **2.1.2 Jung’s hermeneutical approach**

Generally speaking Jung’s methodological approach in his psychology is hermeneutical. There is a form of dialogue in his method of dealing with patients, philosophies, alchemy and with oriental texts. J.J. Clarke argues that Jung’s approach to understanding all of these spheres was, “characterised by holism, contextualism, open-endedness, tolerance, self-reflectiveness, and historical relativism - all features typical of the hermeneutical approach” (Clarke, 1994: 47). For example, when he was an intern student and treating schizophrenics at the Burghozli Hospital from 1900 to 1909, Jung came to realise that their symptoms, such as strange behaviour and senseless utterances can be explicable and interpreted in meaningful ways. Jung

appropriated hermeneutics in order to reveal the symbolic meaning of patients fantasies.

The essence of hermeneutics, an art widely practised in former times, consists in adding further analogies to the one already supplied by the symbol: in the first place subjective analogies produced at random by the patient, then objective analogies provided by the analyst out of his general knowledge. This procedure widens and enriches the initial symbol, and the final outcome is an infinitely complex and variegated picture the elements of which can be reduced to their respective *tertia comparationis*. Certain lines of psychological development then stand out that are at once individual and collective. There is no science on earth by which these lines could be proved 'right'; on the contrary, rationalism could very easily prove that they are wrong. Their validity is proved by their intense value for life. And this is what matters in practical treatment: that human beings should get a hold of their own lives, not that the principles by which they live should be proved rationally to be 'right.'

(CW 7: 493)

R.S. Steele (1982) argues that, like Dilthey's theory of hermeneutics, Jung believed empathy had an important role in interpretation. Dilthey proposed that empathetic and intuitive understanding can be supplemented by a great deal of interpretative work in order to make one's insight clear to oneself and to another. Steele asserts that Jung's empathetic understanding is seen in his study of symbolism, religion, gnosticism, alchemy and in his confrontation with the unconscious. Jung is a good hermeneut because he clearly conceptualised what was involved in the activity of interpretation. Steele argues, "[Jung] recognized that the interpreter and interpreted - the unconscious, a patient, or a text - must enter into a genuine dialogue and that from this exchange there arises a synthetic understanding" (Steele, 1982: 352). J.L. Jarret asserts that in the therapeutic process, "Jung was ever conscious that the patient/analyst relationship was inevitably dialectical, but to keep it so, the analyst has to remind himself he is not just the wise authority and the analysand is not just a helpless other: rather, both are learners, and thus engaged in a conjoint inquiry, supplementing each other's observations" (Jarret, 1992: 79). Jung clearly points out,

It is exactly as if a dialogue were taking place between two human beings with equal rights, each of whom gives the other credit for a valid argument and considers it worth while to modify the conflicting standpoints by means of thorough comparison and discussion or else to distinguish them clearly from one another. Since the way to agreement seldom stands open, in most cases a long conflict will have to be borne, demanding sacrifices from both sides.

(CW 8: 186)



Jung carried out this hermeneutical method not only with his patients but also with mythology, symbolism and Eastern religious texts. In his interpretation of ancient texts Jung said,

The importance of hermeneutics should not be underestimated: it has a beneficial effect on the psyche by linking the distant past, the ancestral heritage which is still alive in the unconscious, with the present, thus establishing the vitally important connection between consciousness oriented to the present moment only and the historical psyche which extends over infinitely long periods of time.

(CW 14: 474n)

Jung's point here is different from Gadamer's hermeneutics in terms of the historicity of understanding. According to Jung, history is imprinted in human psyche, that is to say, the unconscious contents are the expression from the past. Jung asserts, "it became clear to me that without history there can be no psychology, and certainly no psychology of the unconscious" (MDR: 232). Jung observed that historical context such as myths and religion has a strong connection with archetypal images and symbols in the collective unconscious, through which modern man can discover the significant meaning of human reality. Ancient texts contain a view of the world which has been lost to modern consciousness and thus interpreting such texts transforms one's vision of life. However, Gadamer has no such notion of history as embedded in the unconscious but regards historical material only as conscious content. Jung says,

The need for mythic statements is satisfied when we frame a view of the world which adequately explains the meaning of human existence in the cosmos, a view which springs from our psychic wholeness, from the co-operation between conscious and unconscious. Meaninglessness inhibits fullness of life and is therefore equivalent to illness. Meaning makes a great many things [*sic*] endurable - perhaps everything. No science will ever replace myth, and a myth cannot be made out of any science. For it is not that 'God' is a myth, but that myth is the revelation of a divine life in man. It is not we who invent myth, rather it speaks to us as a Word of God.

(MDR: 373)

Jung had a strong sense of history particularly from a psychological point of view. Jung was always aware of his own historical and cultural roots, and recognised that his own ideas were highly influenced by the traditions from which he sprang. Clarke (1992) argues, "Jung viewed the psyche itself as essentially historical in the sense that its development can only be understood in the context of its personal and collective past" (Clarke, 1992: 48). Jung asserts,

He [Man] carries his whole history with him; in his very structure is written the history of mankind. This historical element in man represents a vital need to which a wise psychic economy must respond. Somehow the past must come alive and participate in the present.

(CW 6: 571)

Jung's argument suggests that a knowledge of history is essential to understand the present condition of the human psyche. Jung was also aware of the diversity of histories and traditions in different societies and cultures. Jung believed that despite the diversity of these different historical conditions there lay an underlying psychic unity, the collective unconscious, which is, in his view, common to all mankind, and would make historical and human understanding possible by deciphering the unconscious contents manifested in the form of symbolism and universal archetypal patterns. Clarke argues that Jung's theory of archetype explains, "the experience of mankind is not entirely contingent upon local and historical circumstances, but is also built around certain themes, expressed symbolically, which are common to all cultures" (Clarke, 1992: 56).

However, Jung drew a sharp contrast between the Western and Eastern psyche, as he believed that the Eastern mentality is based on its own unique history and culture, and therefore it is different from the Western psyche. Thus, although Jung was very much inspired by Eastern religions and philosophy, he insisted that Indian yoga, and Chinese philosophy remain somewhat foreign to the Western mentality. Jung warned Europeans against simply adopting ideas and practices from foreign traditions, and discarding their own history, upon which their psyche is built. We can see here again Jung's ambivalent approach to Eastern thought: on one hand Jung admired the teachings of Asian religions, on the other hand, he emphasised its foreign character, and drew a sharp contrast between Eastern and Western psyches. Furthermore, Jung formulated the distinction between the extraverted and the introverted psychological types. Jung claims that the West has a tendency to objectivity, an egocentric disposition, and the development of rational consciousness, whereas the East has a less egocentric, more passive character and an insight into the unconscious mind. Nevertheless, Jung's claim of psychic difference between East and West does not seem to be entirely coherent. Jung wrote, "there is only one earth and one mankind, East and West cannot rend humanity into two different halves" (CW 8.682). This statement contradicts Jung's insistence on the fundamental chasm between East and West in terms of psychic differences.

Yet, Jung attempted to find a link between the divisions of East and West, and used a method of analogies in order to search for underlying psychological identities. Jung postulated the analogies through archetypal motifs and ideas, upon which he believed the psyche is built. Clarke argues, however, “At one level Jung’s search for a common language in which to communicate with foreign or with lost cultures is admirable, for it widens the possible dimensions of human sympathy, and enhances our sense of the commonality of the human race. But at another level the methodology employed lends itself to special pleading and to indulgence in wishful thinking” (Clarke, 1994: 169). This problem again leads to the issue of Jung’s ambivalent attitude towards the East. On the one hand, Jung argues Eastern thought can offer something which the West has lost, on the other hand, his writings seem to suggest that when Europeans attempt to understand the teachings of Eastern religions, they should not progress beyond the level of psychologically inherited archetypes. Clarke, asserts, “For all his good hermeneutical intentions, Jung is still vulnerable... to the charge of ‘Orientalism’ – namely, that the East with which he claims to be in conversation is, in the final analysis, something of his own making, a fiction conjured out of his own peculiarly Western needs” (Clarke, 1994: 188). Jung’s historical awareness has its limitations, in that Jung did not pay sufficient attention to the social and traditional circumstances of the Asian texts that he was reading. Jung’s interpretation of the Eastern thought demonstrates the framework of orthodox Western understanding.

In comparison with Jung’s approach to the symbolism of myth and religion, the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur sought to develop a critical hermeneutical theory of myth. Ricoeur was interested in myths of evil and argued that, “the function of the myths of evil is to embrace mankind as a whole in one ideal history. By means of a time that represents all times, ‘man’ is manifested as a concrete universal” (Ricoeur, 1967: 162). In this way, “experience escapes its singularity; it is transmuted in its own ‘archetype’” (Ibid., 162). Ricoeur claims, “the universality of man, manifested through the myths, gets its concrete character from the *movement* which is introduced into human experience by narration” (Ibid., 163, Ricoeur’s italics). Thus, “experience is no longer reduced to a present experience; this present experience was only an instantaneous cross-section in an evolution stretching from an origin to a fulfilment, from a ‘Genesis’ to ‘Apocalypse’” (Ibid., 163). Furthermore, “the myths try to get at the enigma of human existence, namely, the discordance between the fundamental

reality – state of innocence, status of a creature, essential being – and the actual modality of man, as defiled, sinful, guilty” (Ibid., 163). Ricoeur claims that the myth accounts for this transition by means of a narration because, “there is no deduction, no logical transition, between his ontological status as a being created good and destined for happiness and his existential or historical status, experienced under the sign of alienation” (Ibid., 163).

Ricoeur asserts, “the myth has a way of *revealing* things that is not reducible to any translation from a language in cipher to a clear language” (Ibid., 163, Ricoeur’s italics). How the myths reveal their meanings is through symbols. Ricoeur says, “*the most primitive and least mythical language is already a symbolic language*” (Ibid., 9, Ricoeur’s italics). At this point Ricoeur claims the necessity of hermeneutics in understanding the myth. Ricoeur claims that, “what we need is an interpretation that respects the original enigma of the symbols, that lets itself be taught by them, but that, beginning from there, promotes the meaning, forms the meaning in the full responsibility of autonomous thought” (Ibid., 349-50). The immediacy of the symbol and the mediation of thought can be held by interpretation. Since we no longer hear myth in a primitive naïve way, we can only hear it again by interpreting it. Ricoeur continues, “it is in hermeneutics that the symbol’s gift of meaning and the endeavor to understand by deciphering are knotted together” (Ibid., 351). This knot appears in hermeneutics as a circle, namely, “We must understand in order to believe, but we must believe in order to understand” (Ibid., 351).

Ricoeur was highly critical of a purely comparative phenomenology such as M. Eliade’s,<sup>1</sup> since he believed it limited itself to understanding symbols through symbols. Phenomenology is able to, “display the multiple and inexhaustible intentions of each symbol, to discover intentional analogies between myths and rites, to run through the levels of experience and representation that are unified by the symbols” (Ibid., 353). This way of understanding myths and symbols is satisfactory in that it is panoramic, but it lacks vital concern. Rather, what the philosopher should do is to, “think with the symbols as a *starting point*, and no longer *in* the symbols” (Ibid., 355, Ricoeur’s italics). Thus philosophy starts from symbols and seeks to promote or uncover their meaning through creative interpretation.

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<sup>1</sup> Eliade’s phenomenology of religion will be discussed in depth in the next section.

In some ways Ricoeur's notion of myth and symbols is similar to Jung's. There are, however, distinct differences in their understanding of the symbolism of myth. Ricoeur emphasises the ideological, political and social function of myths and is much less concerned with myth as a psychological factor. Ricoeur's understanding of the symbolism of myth seems to remain at the conscious level and to aim at a better understanding of society. By contrast, Jung's view of myth and religion is embedded in the unconscious of the individual. Jung argues that the understanding of mythic motives and religious symbols gives life meaning. For Jung the true meaning of the symbolism of myth and religion cannot be achieved by simply knowing about the symbol, but by experiencing and appropriating it as a inner fact within one's experiential world.

In his interpretation of Eastern texts Jung was well aware of the strangeness of oriental thought and of difficulties in understanding such ideas which were quite foreign to European thought. But Clarke argues that Jung's hermeneutical approach is based on the belief that, "in order to understand the other, one must start by recognising the chasm which needs to be crossed" (Clarke, 1994: 50). Clarke points out that Jung's hermeneutical strategy is best expressed by explaining his method of amplification. It is a therapeutic method which seek to clarify psychic contents by linking them within a network of meanings expressed in symbols and images through using metaphors and analogies derived from mythological and religious contexts. Jung asserts that amplification, "is always appropriate when dealing with some obscure experience which is so vaguely adumbrated that it must be enlarged and expanded by being set in a psychological context in order to be understood at all" (CW 12: 403). Jung provided us with a couple of examples as follows,

In the case of a very rare word which you have never come across before, you try to find parallel text passages, parallel applications perhaps, where that word also occurs, and then you try to put the formula you have established from the knowledge of other texts into the new text. If you make the new text a readable whole, you say, 'Now we can read it.' That is how we learned to read hieroglyphics and cuneiform inscriptions and that is how we can read dreams.

(CW 18: 173)

For the therapeutic setting, particularly dream analysis, Jung gave us another example,

Let us assume a man dreams about a simple sort of peasant's house. Now do I know what a simple peasant's house conveys to that man's mind? Of course not; how could I? Do I know what a simple peasant's house means to him in general? Of course not. So I simply ask, 'How does that thing appear to you?' – in other words, what is your context, what is the mental tissue in which that

term 'simple peasant's house' is embedded? He will tell you something quite astonishing...In each case I know what tissue that word or image is embedded in. That is *amplification*. It is a well-known logical procedure which we apply here and which formulates exactly the technique of finding the context.

(CW 18: 174)

Clarke argues that the amplification method, "becomes for Jung a hermeneutical key with which to unlock the ideas of the East" (Clarke, 1994: 52). Jung applied the method of amplification in the interpretation of symbolism in Eastern religion, until its meaning and context are "enriched by the stuff of association and analogy and thus amplified to the point of intelligibility" (CW 12: 403).

### **2.1.3 Methodological problems with hermeneutics**

There are methodological problems with Gadamer's model of hermeneutics, which also reflect Jung's hermeneutical approach to oriental texts. Firstly, there is one distinctive difference between Gadamer's method of hermeneutics and Jung's approach: Jung, like Dilthey, stressed the need for empathic understanding whereas Gadamer repudiated it. Dilthey argues that in order to attain a better understanding one needs to try to project oneself into, and needs to empathise with, the mind of the original writer. In Dilthey's conception, understanding and experience are related to each other, since new experiences revise the way in which the past is understood and the future anticipated, and at the same time those experiences are interpreted in the context of an understanding of past and future. Dilthey locates self-understanding within the temporal structure of an individual life. G. Warnke argues Dilthey's view of self-understanding is related to the conduct of one's life, and thus, "the way in which one lives one's life and the way in which one understands it are mutually determining" (Warnke, 1994: 29). Basing his historical study on a psychology of understanding, Dilthey claims historical understanding is possible because of the homogeneity of human nature. Thus Dilthey sees that one can reach true historical understanding by re-experiencing the historical world through sympathy. In this way Dilthey's hermeneutics psychologically interprets the text itself and the intention of the author behind it by using empathy and by way of the intersubjectivity of the communal world. Dilthey's point here is close to one that Jung makes about hermeneutics, which inquires into the meaning or intention of the psyche. As Jung puts it,

In the same way that the body needs food, and not just any kind of food but only that which suits it, the psyche needs to know the meaning of its existence - not just any meaning, but the meaning of these images and ideas which reflect its nature and which originate in the unconscious. The unconscious supplies as it were the archetypal form, which in itself is empty and irrepresentable. Consciousness immediately fills it with related or similar representational material so that it can be perceived. For this reason archetypal ideas are locally, temporally, and individually conditioned.

(CW 8: 476)

By contrast, Gadamerian hermeneutics does not rely on empathy or an effort to gain access to the mind of the author. Therefore Gadamer regards it as futile to try to construct what the author had in mind or to imagine how that meaning was derived by the original reading audience.

Secondly, Warnke argues that Gadamer's conception of understanding, "does not involve re-experiencing an original understanding but rather the capacity to listen to a work of art and allow it to speak to one in one's present circumstances" (Warnke, 1994: 69). According to Warnke, the problem of Gadamer's hermeneutics is that if readers necessarily see the claims of the text in the context of their own situation and interpret it in its light, this seems to imply that their interpretation is entirely arbitrary. Gadamer does not solve the problem of whether or not our understanding is distorted, or how we decide what the appropriate facets of our situation are for understanding the historical text. This is also the case with Jung's hermeneutics, particularly his method of amplification. Jung's study of Eastern religions is based very largely on the postulation of analogies (mandala = the self, *karma* = archetypes, Kundalini yoga = individuation process, etc.). By making these analogies Jung dismissed the religious meaning in their own cultural contexts, and instead delivered his own desired conclusion. Moreover, Gadamer asserts that although all understanding is prejudiced and historically conditioned there is the possibility of assessing the adequacy of prejudices or revising them through the hermeneutic circle of whole and part interpretation in order to reach a better understanding of the issue. However, "if one begins to understand the individual parts of a text in light of an assumption as to the meaning of its whole, it is not clear how these parts, so understood, can lead one to revise one's understanding as whole" (Warnke, 1994: 84). The hermeneutic circle may possibly lead to a viciousness of the hermeneutic circle in which "one's understanding of the individual parts of a text confirms one's assumption as to the meaning of the whole and vice versa" (Ibid., 84). In the worst case the hermeneutical

circle may move the interpreter further away from the meaning of the text and lead him to subjectivistic or opportunistic misinterpretation.

Lastly, Gadamer's theory of the dialogical structure of understanding implies a transformation of the participant, namely, the dialogue involves the willingness to move forward and to allow one's initial position to develop through the opening up of new horizons and possibilities. Consequently, there can be no final or absolutely complete interpretation of a text. This could be described as a form of relativism, which is the view that "all claim to truth can only be judged in the light of rules and principles which are integral to specific historical conditions and which therefore have no absolute or culture-free validity" (Clarke, 1994: 45). Jung's method of understanding is also characterised by relativism. Jung considered relativism as a philosophical position and maintained a relativistic standpoint that there is no single correct view of the world but many. This is the case with Jung's method of amplification, which involves a task of understanding, a capacity to become aware of one's own prejudices and assumptions, and an openness to the possibility of going beyond one's present limitations. It follows that the amplification method indicates there is no final definitive understanding of symbolic products of oriental texts. In his method of amplification the aim is not trying to understand the absolute truth of the religious traditions in the East, but is interpreting the symbolism of Eastern religions by using its analogies and its parallels. For instance, Jung was sceptical of the absolute truth in Christianity and said, "I positively do not believe that Christianity is the only and the highest manifestation of the truth. There is at least as much as truth in Buddhism, and in other religions, too" (Letters I: 127).

Judaism has a morally ambivalent God; Christianity a Trinity and Summum Bonum; Buddhism has no God but has interior gods. *Their truth is relative and not an absolute truth* – if you put them on the same level

(CW 18: 1584, my italics)

Furthermore, Jung claims the modern scientific rationalism of the West is not the only possible one but is a prejudice and a bias. This is why Jung's interest turned Eastward to obtain a more ample conception of human reality. Jung's attitude is summed up in his statement,

since there is only one earth and one mankind, East and West cannot rend humanity into two different halves. Psychic reality still exists in its original oneness, and awaits man's advance to a level of consciousness where he no longer believes in the one part and denies the other, but recognizes both as constituent elements of one psyche.



(CW 8: 682)

An important consequence of this view is that Jung formulated a psychic relativism between East and West. Jung constructed a grand dichotomy between an introverted tendency in the East and an extraverted tendency in the West. Due to this difference, Jung believed it was impossible for Europeans to practice Eastern spiritual techniques such as yoga and meditation. Jung argued that, “The spiritual development of the West has been along entirely different lines from that of the East and has therefore produced conditions which are the most unfavourable soil one can think of for the application of yoga” (CW 11: 876).

## **2.2 The phenomenological approach to the understanding of religion**

### **2.2.1 The phenomenology of religion**

Having discussed Jung’s hermeneutical approach, this section examines a phenomenological approach to the understanding of religion in order to observe other ways of studying religion and to show how religious traditions and experiences can be interpreted from the perspective of the phenomenology of religion. There are four major different approaches to the study of religion: sociological, anthropological, psychological, and phenomenological approaches. Associated with the sociological approach to the study of religions are Emile Durkheim, Lucien Levy-Bruhl, Max Weber, Joachim Wach, and so forth. Wilhelm Schmidt and Claude Levi-Strauss are contributors to the anthropological approach. Freud and Jung made major contributions to the psychology of religion. William James also studied religious experiences from a psychological perspective. Of all the approaches in the study of religions, the phenomenology of religion is arguably the most revolutionary approach. Douglas Allen asserts that the phenomenology of religion, “rendered possible systematic study of religions and has shaped much of the nature of the History of Religions today” (Allen, 1978: 57). The earliest form of the phenomenology of religion is merely a descriptive phenomenology, which is meant to be a systematic counterpart to the history of religion. The main task of the descriptive phenomenology is to bring together groups of religious phenomena, such as the object of worship, idolatry, sacred stones, trees and animals, nature-worship, the worship of men, the gods, magic, and divination, sacrifice and prayer, holy places, times and persons, the community, scriptures, doctrines, mythology, dogmas and philosophies, ethics and art. Eric J. Sharpe (1975) asserts that it is “an elementary method of cross-

cultural comparison of the constituent elements of religious belief and practice, as opposed to their treatment in cultural isolation and chronological sequence” (Sharpe, 1975: 223).

Sharpe argues that the philosopher Edmund Husserl had an influence on the phenomenology of religion and provided two important concepts: *epochê* and *eidetic vision* (Sharpe, 1975: 224). Let us first examine these concepts from the perspective of Husserl’s phenomenology. Husserl’s phenomenology involves the ‘bracketing of being’ or ‘disconnecting’ from the ‘natural attitude,’ in which “unacknowledged ontological prejudices hinder access to an understanding of the phenomena as they would present themselves to a naive consciousness” (Brooke, 1991: 33). Husserl called this process *epochê*, “*a certain refraining from judgement which is compatible with the unshaken and unshakeable because self-evidencing conviction of Truth*” (Husserl, 1931: 109, Husserl’s Italics). Roger Brooke (1991) argues that, “what is bracketed are the ontological and scientific assumptions which prejudicially affirm, doubt, or otherwise categorise the phenomena as they primordially appear” (Brooke, 1991: 33-4). It is, however, extremely difficult to suspend one’s own judgement and prejudices, since this involves “an abstention that is not given within factual existence” (Brooke, 1991: 34). Brooke argues, therefore, “there is no appeal to experience in arguing for the value of the reduction, which, in the end, can only be grasped in doing and having done it” (Ibid., 34). What is important in the process of *epochê* is to recognise that a complete freedom from presuppositions is in fact impossible. Husserl asserts, “as regards the eidetic fields of study on their material side, *one* of these is of such outstanding significance for us that the impossibility of disconnexion can be taken for granted: that is, the essential domain of the phenomenologically purified consciousness itself” (Husserl, 1931: 177).

Husserl asserts that the essence (*eidos*) of a thing is “given within the imaginative intuition of the consciousness which discriminates that essence from its empirical contingencies” (Brooke, 1991: 37). This is what Husserl called *eidetic reduction*, and it is achieved through using individual intuition. Husserl argues, “*empirical or individual intuition can be transformed into essential insight (ideation)* – a possibility which is itself not to be understood as empirical but as essential possibility. The object of such insight is then the corresponding *pure* essence of *eidos*, whether it be the highest category or one of its specializations, right down to the fully ‘concrete’” (Husserl, 1931: 54, Husserl’s Italics). Brooke noted the

following points concerning Husserl's concept of the *eidetic* reduction: "the essences of phenomena are given within the things themselves," but they are different from empirical contingencies; "these essences can be intuited by a naïve consciousness," which are free from the natural attitude; "these essences are revealed in the mode of imagination," and finally, "in the life-world these essences are meaningful relations" (Brooke, 1991: 37).

Let us now examine Sharpe's concept of *epoché* and *eidetic vision*, which is mainly used in this thesis. According to Sharpe, *epoché* means 'stoppage,' suspension of judgement, and the exclusion from one's mind of every possible presupposition. In the phenomenological point of view it emphasises, "the need to abstain from every kind of value-judgement, to be 'present' to the phenomenon in question purely as an impartial observer, un-concerned with the question of truth and falsehood" (Sharpe, 1975: 224). *Eidetic vision*, on the contrary, is the observer's capacity for seeing the essentials of a situation as opposed to what it has been, or ought to be. It is a form of subjectivity and implies an intuitive grasp of the essentials of a situation in its wholeness. By these two terms, the phenomenologists of religion attempt to see, "something of what is essential in religion, not in spite of oddities of individual believers, but through the eyes of those who believe or... those who are committed" (Sharpe, 1983: 32) The phenomenology of religion aims to describe and to systematise the basic structures and meaning of religious phenomena in a specific manner which insists upon the irreducibility and uniqueness of the religious dimension of experience.

Streng asserts the phenomenologists of religion believe that, "any method of interpreting religion must include the recognition that *religious experience cannot be reduced to other elements of human life*" (Streng, 1979: 59). The lack of such awareness limits the study of religion to non-religious factors. Sharpe argues that the division-of-labour approach, which distributes the field of religious studies out among technical subject specialists such as philosophers, psychologists, historians, sociologists, and the rest, is convenient but is based, "less on a basis of the nature of the material to be dealt with than be the accidental criteria of the recent history of western scholarship" (Sharpe, 1983: 92). For instance, psychologists tend to see religion only from a psychological point of view and fail to see the totality of the religious phenomena. Religious phenomena reveal an irreducibly religious dimension, such as religious belief, behaviour and experience, which must be

approached in their own cultural context. (Allen, 1978: 44). Thus the phenomenologists of religion emphasise a detailed study of the peculiarities which make religious life significant for the religious adherent, and one should try to learn the religious assumptions which give order and meaning to the adherent (Streng, 1979).

Sharpe argues there are two ways of studying religion: from a position within, and from a position outside the community of those whose lives are shaped by religious belief and practices. Those who are inside the religious community are “often seeking to make more firm their grasp of the tradition to which they belong, while the others... are looking for intellectual explanations of what, in human terms, it is to be religious” (Sharpe, 1983: 18). The former is a believer’s position and the latter a non-believer’s. Sharpe asserts, “Believer and non-believer look at the same religious phenomena, but in the end arrive at totally different interpretations of their meaning and sources of religious experience” (Sharpe, 1983: 63). Those who are religiously committed, “stand in a definite personal relationship to the unseen world which is believed to control human destiny,” and such a relationship “is one of dependence, and involves attitudes of the mind and the will, as well as of the emotions” (Ibid., 19). By contrast, those who are outside the religious community can only observe intuitively from a distance the divine human relationship which lies at the heart of the religious believer. In this sense, the believer knows something which the non-believer can never fully grasp. Furthermore, the believer knows, “religion actually refers itself to a supernatural or a transcendent order, and were capable of demonstrating its control over the universe on the one hand, and its communication with the world on the other” (Ibid., 20). Because of his commitment, therefore, “the believer has a vast advantage when it comes to an instinctive understanding of religion” (Ibid., 21).

However, this view is not always accurate. Sharpe says, “powerful commitment to one religious position has usually led those involved, not to appreciate, but to pour scorn, on what they evidently regard as the false or mistaken commitment of others” (Sharpe, 1983: 20). Moreover, it would be quite possible that, “the stronger the commitment of an individual or a community to one set of religious values (which the believer claims to be so helpful when it comes to understanding all the others), the *less* likely they are to give much thought to what other people may believe; and if they do notice these alternative values, as a rule they do so only to call

them in question or condemn them” (Ibid., 20-21, Sharpe’s Italics). It seems, therefore, that commitment can be a barrier to the understanding of religion, because, “it tends to prevent individuals from seeing religion in any other perspective than their own” (Ibid., 21).

Allen argues that, in studying religious phenomena, the commitment of the scholar must be different from the that of the believer. Sharpe asserts that the commitment of the believer’s position means, “total trust – in a person, in a community, in a tradition, in a scripture, or in a combination of all four” (Sharpe, 1983: 30), whereas the commitment of the intellectual position generally “makes no personal demands on the individual, and of itself mediates little of the transcendent” (Ibid., 27). The scholar’s commitment in the study of religion needs to have, “a sympathetic attitude and interest in the religious experiences of humankind, a sensitive awareness of what is religious expressed in her or his data, a respect for the irreducibly religious nature of the phenomena” (Allen, 1978: 90). The phenomenology of religion uses the method of ‘sympathy’ and ‘empathy’ and attempts to enter into the position of religious believer. Furthermore, with the method of *epoché* (the suspension of judgement) and *eidetic vision* (the capacity to see things as wholes), “we shall be able to see something of what is essential in religion, not in spite of the oddities of individual believes, but through the eyes of those who believe – or if you prefer, those who are committed” (Sharpe, 1983: 31-2).

### **2.2.2 Kristensen and Van der Leeuw’s phenomenology of religion**

In this section I will consider the approaches of two phenomenologists: W. Brede Kristensen and G. Van der Leeuw. Kristensen (1971) asserts the phenomenology of religion is the systematic treatment of the History of Religion, and “its task is to classify and group the numerous and widely divergent data in such a way that an over-all view can be obtained of their religious content and the religious values they contain” (Kristensen, 1971: 1). Kristensen’s main methodological concern was with the problem of value judgements. He believed scholarly presuppositions are inadequate for an understanding of religious phenomena. Kristensen states, “Every religion ought to be understood from its own standpoint, for that is how it is understood by its own adherents” (Kristensen, 1971: 6). Therefore the phenomenologists of religion

must... be able to forget themselves, to be able to surrender themselves to others. Only after that will they discover that others surrender themselves to them. If they bring their own idea with them, others shut themselves off from them. No justice is then done to the values which are alien to us, because they are not allowed to speak in their own language. If the historian tries to understand the religious data from a different viewpoint than that of the believers, he negates the religious reality. For there is no religious reality other than the faith of the believers.

(Kristensen, 1971: 13)

In Kristensen's view the believer's own understanding of his faith is given absolute priority. He claims, "For the historian only one evaluation is possible: 'the believers were completely right'" (Ibid., 14). What the scholar must do is to respect the integrity of the believer, to refrain from imposing on him the scholar's own value-judgement, and to aim at the ideal of integral objective knowledge and total understanding. However Kristensen is well aware that this is an ideal, and in fact an unattainable one. He says the scholar, "cannot understand the absolute character of the religious data in the same way that the believer understands them" (Ibid., 7), for there is an inevitable distance between the scholar and the object of the research. Thus the phenomenologists can understand the absolute reality only in an approximate way by means of empathy. A certain amount of intuition, an indefinable sympathy, and a feeling for the religious data are indispensable for the scholar to understand the essence and the meaning of the religious phenomena.

G. Van der Leeuw's<sup>2</sup> approach is not only descriptive phenomenology, but also the systematic discussion of what appears. Van der Leeuw states: "'appearance' refers equally to what appears and to the person to whom it appears" (Van der Leeuw, 1967: 671). The phenomenon is not an object related subject, and a subject related to an object, "its entire essence is given in its 'appearance,' and its appearance to 'someone. If (finally) this 'someone' begins to discuss what 'appears', then phenomenology arises'" (Ibid., 671). Van der Leeuw had a theology background and he claimed that the phenomenology of religion is not identical to theology. Religion can be observed as an intelligible experience, which is a human phenomenon and can be studied as such. On the contrary, the revelation can never be studied, since revelation is not a phenomenon, and in this sense it can only be grasped from God's

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<sup>2</sup> After World War II, Van der Leeuw became interested in the studies of Jung, who was also concerned with the religious experience in the psyche of mankind. Sharpe asserts, "as a participant in the Eranos Conference Van der Leeuw was clearly receptive to the general message of the 'Jungians'" (Sharpe, 1975: 235).

point of view. We can only observe one's response to the divine revelation. Van der Leeuw clearly states the goal of understanding is pure objectivity. He writes that phenomenology desires to,

gain access to the facts themselves; and for this it requires a meaning, because it cannot experience the facts just as it pleases. This meaning, however, is purely objective: all violence, either empirical, logical or metaphysical, is excluded.

(Van der Leeuw, 1967: 677)

Van der Leeuw points out, "the phenomenology is neither metaphysics, nor the comprehension of empirical reality," but is man's true vital activity... standing aside and understanding what appears into view" (Ibid., 675-6). To be thoroughly empirical is the symptom of what Van der Leeuw called the typical twentieth-century sickness. He did not entirely dismiss empirical research, but to be exclusively empirical is to deny one's own wholeness, and thus fail to attain genuine understanding. To sum up, the task of the phenomenology of religion is, firstly, to assign names to groups of phenomena, such as sacrifice, prayer, saviour, myths, etc. Secondly, we must interpolate the appearances within one's own life and experience them systematically.<sup>3</sup> In the third place, we must put empirical reality and the truth of phenomena in suspension as *epochê* or restraint of judgement. Fourthly, we attempt to clarify what it has seen, and try to comprehend what has appeared. Finally, we must confront chaotic reality and testify to what has been understood (Van der Leeuw, 1967: 688).

There is a certain weakness in Van der Leeuw's phenomenology of religion. Waardenburg argues that Van der Leeuw, "does not distinguish between the significance of a phenomenon for the believers concerned and the meaning which it acquires for the understanding scholar" (Waardenburg, 1978: 234). Moreover, "Van der Leeuw's phenomenology presupposes an objective mind, that is, an objectively structured whole of objective meanings to which the scholar ascends through his self-induced experience of structures and ideal types" (Ibid., 234). Waardenburg criticises Van der Leeuw and argues that the religious phenomena which causes one to question the reality of the subject and object of understanding is never put by Van der Leeuw. In this phenomenology, "all attention is given to the Phenomenon, which is separated from its context, introduced into the mental universe of the phenomenologist, and made a building-stone in the construction of the ideal types" (Ibid., 234). In so doing,

Van der Leeuw's phenomenology "tends to reduce reality to phenomena of the mind clustered into ideal types, and to stop questioning subject and object in favor of religious meanings taken nearly as absolutes in themselves" (Ibid., 234). For Van der Leeuw, understanding simply indicates, "the pursuit of the psychological experience of meaning and the comprehension of the contents of experience in a realm of ideal typical structures" (Ibid., 235). Furthermore, Van der Leeuw's phenomenology of religion confronts the problem of meaning. Waardenburg states that the notion of meaning for Van der Leeuw is a third term between objective facticity and subjective evaluation, and this notion of meaning has determined his treatment of the significance of religious phenomena. By making his interpretations not only in theology but also in phenomenology in view of an ultimate meaning, Van der Leeuw, "arrives at a frank absolutization of the whole notion of meaning" (Waardenburg, 1978: 235). Hence Waardenburg claims in Van der Leeuw's phenomenology the significance of the phenomena is cut off from the people for whom it is or was valid,

and there is a neglect of the role of human intersubjectivity in any understanding. The experience of understanding has thus become a lonely religious experience, the results of which can be attested but hardly discussed.

(Waardenburg, 1978: 235)

Having discussed the fundamental outline of the phenomenology of religion, we can now make use of it in order to help illuminate Jung's own engagement with the oriental religions. From the perspective of the phenomenology of religion, Jung's methodology lacks objectivity and fails to exercise *epoché*, that is, to suspend his own judgement or exclude from his mind every possible presupposition. As mentioned earlier, Jung's approach is hermeneutical, which accepts and uses his own subjectivity. Jung did not see religious phenomena from their own standpoint. For instance, Jung claimed a similarity exists between his notion of the self and mandala symbols in Tibetan Buddhism. Jung claimed that the mandala symbolised his idea of the archetype of the self. Jung was especially concerned with the healing aspect of the mandala which was confirmed by the 'empirical evidence' that his patients felt a great deal better after they had considered a mandala. Jung clearly stated that, "My standpoint is exclusively phenomenological, that is, it is concerned with occurrences, events, experiences – in a word with facts. When psychology speaks, for example, of the motif of the virgin birth, it is only concerned with the fact that there is such an

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<sup>3</sup> Sharpe states that this point, "seems at first sight hard to reconcile with the claim that the aim of



idea, but it is not concerned with the question of whether such an idea is true or false in any other sense” (CW 11: 4). However, Jung failed to understand the religious significance and the ritualistic usage of the Tibetan tantric mandala within their own traditions and cultures. In this case Jung’s position seems to be un-phenomenological, as against his claim that his method is phenomenological.

After gaining access to the objective facts of religious data, the phenomenologist of religion applies the method of *eidetic vision*, which is a form of subjectivity, in order to grasp the essentials of a situation in its wholeness. Kristensen argues, one can only understand the absolute reality of the religious phenomena approximately by means of a certain amount of intuition and empathy. Van der Leeuw also argued that one of the tasks for the phenomenologists of religion is to interpolate the appearances of the phenomena within one’s own life and experience them systematically. The fact that the phenomenology of religion inevitably involves a certain degree of subjectivity becomes similar to Jung’s position. R.S. Steele argues that, like Dilthey’s theory of hermeneutics, Jung considered empathy as an important role interpretation. Dilthey proposed that empathetic and intuitive understanding can be supplemented by a great deal of interpretative work in order to make one’s insight clear to oneself and to another. Jung’s empathetic understanding is seen in his study of symbolism, religion, gnosticism, alchemy and in his confrontation with the unconscious. At this point we can say that the phenomenology of religion takes a similar position to the fundamental hermeneutical principle.

There is no doubt that Jung’s approach to understanding psychological phenomena and religious experiences is essentially hermeneutic. Brooke claims that Jung’s approach illustrates a particular form of hermeneutics called existential phenomenology. Existential phenomenology and hermeneutics overlap considerably. For, both existential phenomenology and hermeneutics are “embedded within language; both are an attempt to conduct a receptive dialogue with the other (phenomenon, text, and so on); both recognise the impossibility of asking presuppositionless questions and therefore acknowledge that in principle the dialogue never ceases, or can be taken up again and again” (Brooke, 1991: 30). Existential phenomenology involves a description of reality as it is within lived experience. Brooke asserts,

To describe is to return repeatedly to the phenomenon itself so that it may show itself in ever deeper, richer, and more subtle ways. This repetitive return is the disciplined and self-critical hermeneutic circle. Description is not opposed to interpretation, therefore, but interpretation is required to remain intrinsically descriptive.

(Brooke, 1991: 31)

Jung's approach shows an aspect of existential phenomenology. Brooke claims Jung's approach is "not restricted to the reading of texts but is expanded to describe an approach to the structures of psychological life" (Brooke, 1991: 39). Thus for Jung pathological symptoms, dreams and religious experiences are interpreted as texts, which express their own meanings. Jung exercised the method of amplification in order to specify the essential meaning of these psychological phenomena. It seems, therefore, that Jung's hermeneutic method has much in common with existential phenomenology.

### **2.2.3 Problems with the phenomenological approach in the study of religion**

The difficulty facing the phenomenology of religion is the dilemma between the objective status, in which the scholar examines the religious phenomena as objective facts, and the subjective position, that is, a certain degree of subjectivity is inevitably involved with the scholarly interpretation of the religious data. As far as the majority of phenomenologists are concerned, they attempt to apply the principle of *epoché* and to ensure that their material is gathered and verified according to the strict principle of historical scholarship. However there are limits to scholarly objectivity. Whatever the phenomenologist does in his writing or teaching, he selects, systematises and interprets. He, then, establishes types, patterns of the religious data, and arranges whatever the material he happens to have available around those patterns. Sharpe points out,

there is very little reason here for the scholar to claim an ideal (an in any case wholly unrealisable) state of freedom from presuppositions. Presuppositions are writ large across the whole phenomenological enterprise. Materials have been acquired under strictly scientific conditions, and the phenomenologist may wish to claim that his systematising activity is equally scientific. But in this respect at least, science must be content to acknowledge its affinity with art.

(Sharpe, 1975: 245)

There is a tension between scientifically acquired objective facts and subsequent interpretation of those facts which has given rise to scholarly subjectivity. Sharpe argues, "the phenomenologist of religion must, if he is honest, confess that the

enterprise on which he is engaged cannot but involve the subjective faculty of interpretation” (Ibid., 248). Waardenburg thinks the clue to a proper analysis of religious materials as well as of scholarly interpretations of such materials is the concept of intention. He argues that phenomenological research should be directed toward the intentions contained in human expressions of or in human responses to given religious data in order to understand both religious and non-religious intentions within the same perspective. Waardenburg points out that the phenomenology of religion may be an art, since it considers the religious phenomena as human expressions, and thus the art of interpretation is necessary to discover the meaning of one’s religious experience (Waardenburg, 1978: 17-9).

Mircea Eliade illustrates the dialectical relation of subject and object in the study of religion. This approach explores the way in which men relate to the object of their attention. Joseph D. Bettis states that what makes a situation ‘religious’ in the dialectic approach is, “neither the subjective element nor the objective element, but the way in which these elements come into contact” (Bettis, 1969: 199). Eliade argues that we experience our environment in two different ways: the modern world in which man discovers the empirical world of sense data through his experience; and the archaic world which separates experience into sacred and profane. In Eliade’s view man has traditionally lived in these two realms of sacred and profane. However the modern mentality makes it difficult for us to understand what is meant by these two spheres. The distinction between sacred and profane lies not in the difference between kinds of objects, but in the way men relate to things and events in their environment. What we experience is a product of the data in our environment, and the images, symbols and expectations we bring to it. These trans-experiential factors have a significant influence in shaping our experiential world. Bettis argues, “Religious symbols and images provide the fundamental archetypes or paradigmatic models for organizing and shaping the religious man’s environment” (Bettis, 1969: 202). Eliade was convinced that reality is not to be identified with what can be empirically experienced, but rather, “it is identified by the myths, images, and symbols of his religious traditions” (Bettis, 1969: 204). Eliade states,

Images and symbols and myths are not irresponsible creations of the psyche; they respond to a need and fulfil a function, that of bringing to light the most hidden modalities of being. Consequently, the study of them enables us to reach a better understanding of man - of man ‘as he is’, before he has come to terms with the conditions of History.

(Eliade, 1991: 12)

Sharpe argues that for Eliade, the desire to understand and interpret the archaic world, “has been part of a personal confrontation with the Western intellectual heritage and its compulsive historicism, and parallels similar attempts made by Jung” (Sharpe, 1975: 214). Eliade was influenced by Jung’s view on the symbolism of myths and Eastern religions. Although they both used the term, ‘archetypes’ there is a significant difference in their usage of the term. The archetypal symbols were characterised by Jung as unconscious material, whereas, for Eliade, archetypes are purely historical and archaic. For Jung, symbols of myth and religion are imprinted in the psyche and thus the contents of the collective unconscious manifest themselves through archetypal symbols in the therapeutic settings. By contrast, for Eliade, interpreting symbols of myth and religion reveals archaic human behaviour. Thus Eliade argues that through a study of religious symbolism and traditions the modern man, who had lost touch with the archaic world, would, “not only rediscover a kind of archaic behaviour, he would also become conscious of the spiritual riches implied in such behaviour” (Eliade, 1991: 35). Eliade was deeply concerned with the historicism of the Western mind and the value of the archaic mentality. The former is obsessed with ideas of progress, evolution, history and making the most of every moment, and the latter is dominated by a belief in timelessness, the trance-experience of *yogin* and shaman, and those annually or seasonally repeated rituals and festivals by which archaic man has attempted to come to terms with the passage of time. It follows that, in contrast to Judeo-Christian man, who feels himself to be placed within an ongoing process, “‘archaic man’ localises himself by constantly attempting to return to the mythical time at the beginning of things” (Sharpe, 1975: 215). In this way everything is constantly beginning afresh at every moment, and the archaic man is therefore, “freed from being in terror of the passage of time, since time itself is constantly being regenerated” (Ibid., 216). Eliade asserts,

If all moments and all situations of the cosmos are repeated *ad infinitum*, their evanescence is, in the last analysis, patent; *sub specie infinitatis*, all moments and all situations remain stationary and thus acquire the ontological order of the archetype.

(Eliade cited by Sharpe, 1975: 216)

Eliade’s point here seems to imply that, “archaic man lives his archetypes, as it were; modern man, on the other hand, has fallen out with his” (Sharpe, 1975: 216). Eliade attempts to seek for a fruitful dialogue between archaic and modern man, particularly

a Western man in search of his lost soul. This is the theme of the *Eranos* conference. Eliade asserts,

Sooner or later our dialogue with the ‘others’ - the representatives of the traditional, Asiatic, and ‘primitive’ cultures - must begin to take place not in today’s empirical and utilitarian language (which can approach only realities classifiable as social, economic, political, sanitary, etc.) but in a cultural language capable of expressing human realities and spiritual values.

(Eliade cited by Sharpe, 1975: 216-7)

This statement suggests that Eliade’s approach to understanding religion is similar to Jung’s methods since both methods are hermeneutical in their approach, seeking for essential meanings through a dialogue with either the collective unconscious by Jung or the archaic world by Eliade through the interpretation of images, symbols and myth.

## **2.3 A critical discussion of Jung’s hermeneutics of Eastern religion**

### **2.3.1 Jung’s metapsychology and Eastern thought**

Having discussed Jung’s hermeneutical method of understanding Eastern religion, and the theory of the phenomenology of religion this section provides a critical discussion of Jung’s methodology in the study of religion. Jung’s hermeneutical approach allows him to observe that his metapsychology has many analogies with Eastern religious thought. Jung asserts, “Taoist philosophy as well as Yoga have very many parallels with the psychic processes we can observe in Western man... I do not get anybody to draw or contemplate mandala pictures as in Yoga, but it has turned out that unprejudiced people take quite naturally to these aids in order to find their bearings in the chaos of unconscious processes that come to light” (Letters I: 195). The idea of complementary opposites, such as the Chinese *yin/yang* duality, is a significant parallel with Jung’s own thinking. The Chinese *tao* is a uniting symbol of pair of opposites. Jung uses the term as evidence for the existence of a uniting archetype, the self, in the collective unconscious. The *tao* is hidden and nameless and at the same time the source of all creation. The *tao* manifests itself in the created universe by being divided into a fundamental pair of opposites named *yang* and *yin*. *Yang* signifies warmth, light, maleness, heaven; *yin* is cold, darkness, femaleness, and earth. In Jung’s view psychic danger occurs when a split between the opposites becomes too great and causes a serious imbalance between consciousness and the unconscious. Jung says, “The stronger and more independent our [Western]

consciousness becomes, and with it the conscious will, the more the unconscious is thrust into the background, and the easier it is for the evolving consciousness to emancipate itself from the unconscious, archetypal pattern” (CW 13: 13). However, Jung utilises Chinese insights to prevent further splits, “When yang has reached its greatest strength, the dark power of yin is born within its depths, for night begins at midday when yang breaks up and begins to change into yin” (Ibid., 13). From his medical investigations Jung argued, “an unconscious that is in full revolt against the conscious values, and that therefore cannot possibly be assimilated to consciousness, while the reverse is altogether out of question” (CW 13: 15). Thus Westerners need to face the question, “as to what has become of the much needed unity of the personality, and with the necessity of seeking it” (Ibid., 15). In order to seek its answer, Jung strongly felt the West could learn a great deal from the East.

Jung also discovered the peaceful and wrathful aspects of gods, which play a great role in the meditations of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, symbolising the opposites. For Jung the peaceful and wrathful aspects of gods are, “archetypal thought-forms belonging to the *sambhogakaya*” (CW 11: 791). They are, “no more than human conflicts, but in *sambhogakaya* they are the positive and negative principles united in one and the same figure” (CW 11: 791). Jung observed this corresponded to psychological experience. The opposites’ appearance as gods comes from the simple recognition that they are exceedingly powerful. But their power increases the more one tries to separate from them. Jung argues that this is characteristic of the Western mentality. Jung asserted that the peaceful and wrathful deities, psychologically speaking, are, “projections of the human psyche” (CW 11: 833). In order to understand one’s own psyche, Jung believes the knowledge of the unconscious is essential. For, “the more weight we attach to unconscious processes the more we detach ourselves from the world of desires and of separated opposites, and the nearer we draw to the state of unconsciousness with its qualities of oneness, indefiniteness, and timelessness. This is truly a liberation of the self from its bondage to strife and suffering” (CW 11: 792).

Likewise in Indian thought the representation of the divine in artistic forms includes the various aspects of the pair of opposites. For instance, the Hindu god, *Shiva*, is balanced by his goddess, *Shakti*. Tibetan *yab-yum* images also show the same theme. Jung was concerned with the question of evil and its relation to good within the context of Christian theological assumptions since his youth, and

developed a theoretical structure of the Christian experience of God, which, “can then be understood as man’s creative confrontation with the opposites and their synthesis in the self, the wholeness of his personality” (MDR: 370). Jung’s discovery of the pair of opposites from his study of Eastern religion was very similar to his view on good and evil images of Christ. Jung says, “To the Oriental, good and evil are meaningfully contained in nature, and are merely varying degrees of the same thing” (MDR: 305).

Jung became interested in mandalas as symbols of contemplation through Richard Wilhelm’s *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, on which Jung wrote a commentary in 1929 (CW 13). Jung’s central concern with this text is the concept of psychic integration into a harmonious whole. Jung asserts, “the union of opposites on a higher level of consciousness is not a rational thing, nor is it a matter of will; it is a process of psychic development that expresses itself in symbols” (CW 13: 31). These symbols are chiefly of the mandala type. Jung explains that mandala means a magic circle, most of them taking the form of a flower, cross, or wheel, and that they, “show a distinct tendency towards a quaternity structure” (Ibid., 31). Jung found mandalas not only throughout the East but also in the West. For instance, he found mandala-like figures in the Christian tradition in the Middle Ages, most of which show “Christ in the centre, with the four evangelists, or their symbols, at the cardinal points” (CW 13: 31). Jung asserts that a similar pattern can also be seen in the Egyptian symbolism, in Jakob Böhme’s book *XL Questions concerning the Soul*, and in the religious paintings of the Pueblo and Navaho Indians. Most interestingly, Jung saw his patients producing mandala paintings, and, “among them persons who certainly did not have the least idea of any of the connections” (Ibid., 31).

Jung interprets mandalas as symbols of psychic wholeness, the self, since they express both wholeness and balance and also point towards a centre. Jung says when the self finds expression in mandala symbols, “the unconscious reacts by enforcing an attitude of devotion to life” (CW 13: 36). Consequently, the mandala symbols produce a therapeutic effect. Jung asserts, “Its effect is astonishing in that it almost always brings about a solution of psychic complications and frees the inner personality from emotional and intellectual entanglements, then creating a unity of being which is universally felt as ‘liberation’” (CW 13: 43). Jung also has a strong affinity for Buddhism and says the teachings of the Buddha, “offer Western man ways and means of disciplining his inner psychic life... and give him a helpful training

when either the Christian ritual has lost its meaning or the authority of religious ideas has collapsed, as all too frequently happens in psychogenic disorders” (CW 18: 1577). Here again the self is a key term in Jung’s study of Buddhism. In Jung’s view his argument that the symbols of the self are indistinguishable from the God-image fits well with Buddhist thought that in Mahayana Buddhism the true self is emptiness or Buddha-nature. As Jung puts it,

I grasped the life of the Buddha as the reality of the self which had broken through and laid claim to a personal life. For Buddha, the self stands above all gods, a *unus mundus* which represents the essence of human existence and of the world as a whole.

(MDR: 309)

So far it has been shown that Jung observed the parallels and affinities between his metapsychological theory and Eastern religion by means of the method of amplification. But Jung was also aware of the differences. The Eastern idea of liberation and Jung’s idea of the individuation process differ over a fundamental point. The Hindu concept of *moksa* means complete freedom from all worldly bonds and transcendence of the tensions of the pairs of opposites. Similarly the Buddhist notion of *nirvana* is a liberation from the wheel of rebirth and from attachment to illusions and desires. However, for Jung there is no possibility for man to achieve ultimate perfection. He says,

It is certainly desirable to liberate oneself from the operation of opposites but one can only do it to a certain extent, because no sooner do you get out of the conflict than you get out of life altogether. So that liberation can be only a very partial one. It can be the construction of a consciousness just beyond the opposites. Your hand may be liberated, our feet remain entangled Complete liberation means death.

(Letters I: 247)

In Jung’s view the dynamic interplay of opposites between consciousness and the unconscious is the driving force of life, and the human psyche aims not at perfection but at a balance of forces leading to dynamic equilibrium. Therefore Jung asserts that suffering is not something we can overcome completely through the individuation process. Jung argues,

The Oriental wants to get rid of suffering by casting it off. Western man tries to suppress suffering with drugs. But suffering has to be overcome, and the only way to overcome it is to endure it.

(Letters I: 236)

Jung’s disagreement with these Eastern ideas of cessation of suffering and of complete liberation from the pairs of opposites is rooted in his view of ego-



consciousness. For Jung the experience of oneself as an individual ego is an experience of separation of oneself from other objects. But if there is no ego there is not knower and then no consciousness. If you abolish the ego altogether to transcend the pair of opposites, then you create merely unconsciousness. Thus, “there must always be somebody or something left over to experience the realization, to say ‘I know at-one-ment, I know there is no distinction’” (CW 11: 817). For this reason Jung could not understand the non-dualistic standpoint of Eastern thought. The higher state of consciousness known as *samadhi* in Vedanta philosophy, in which the individual conscious ego is dissolved, represents for Jung a psychological impossibility. The disappearance of ego-consciousness in his theory can only lead to psychosis, caused by psychic imbalance. For Jung, a healthy mental condition means to have a good balance between consciousness and the unconscious. Loosing the balance between the two can only lead to psychic illness. As Jung argues,

One assumes however that there is a consciousness without ego, a sort of consciousness of the atman. I’m afraid this supreme consciousness is at least not one we could possess.

(Letters I: 247)

Despite his desire to incorporate the insights of Eastern cultures into his understanding of the situation of Western man, Jung found a fundamental difference between Eastern and Western mentalities. He says,

In the West there is the mania for ‘objectivity,’ the asceticism of the scientist or of the stockbroker, who throw away the beauty and universality of life for the sake of the ideal, or not so ideal, goal. In the East, there is the wisdom, peace, detachment, and inertia of a psyche that has returned to its dim origins, having left behind all the sorrow and joy of existence as it is and, presumably, ought to be.

(CW 11: 786)

The West tends to have a typically extraverted point of view and the East has a tendency to be introverted. Jung says both are one-sided because, “they fail to see and take account of those factors which do not fit in with their typical attitude” (CW 11: 786).

The differences Jung observed consequently gave him serious misgivings over Westerners attempting simply to imitate Eastern spiritual practices such as yoga. Jung asserts, “Unfortunately, the spiritual beggars of our time are too inclined to accept the alms of the East in bulk and to imitate its ways unthinkingly. This is a danger about which too many warnings cannot be uttered” (CW 14: 88). Rather, Jung

suggests that confrontation with the spirit of the East should be taken as a sign that Western man is beginning to relate to alien elements within himself.

Denial of our historical foundations would be sheer folly and would be the best way to bring about another uprooting of consciousness. Only by standing firmly on our own soil can we assimilate the spirit of the East.

(CW 13: 72)

Jung developed the concept of active imagination, which he believed is the Western equivalent of Eastern yoga. Active imagination consists of, “a special training for switching off consciousness, at least to a relative extent, thus giving the unconscious contents a chance to develop” (CW 11: 875). In practice, patients are asked to place themselves in a relaxed state of mind and to suspend rational judgement as far as possible in order to allow images and fantasies to emerge. Its purpose is to bring unconscious material into consciousness and to integrate it with the whole personality.

### 2.3.2 Jung’s tendency to reductionism

In his interpretation of religion Jung tends to reduce religion to no more than a subjective phenomenon. Jung’s tendency toward psychologism is frequently found in his writings on religion. For instance, Jung saw all the peaceful and wrathful gods in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* as archetypal contents of the unconscious. He also states, “the world of gods and spirits is truly ‘nothing but’ the collective unconscious inside me” (CW 11: 857). James A. Heisig defined the characteristics of Jung’s psychology of religion and categorised them into three stages,

(1) the gathering of the primary data; (2) the search for parallels, analogies, and comparative material among the documents of history; and (3) the interpretation of the former in the light of the latter.

(Heisig, 1983: 142)

These characteristics can be seen through his use of archetypes, though Jung frequently made analogies to Eastern religious symbolism. Jung claims that the parallel images which exist in world religions and mythology are the archetypes in the collective unconscious. Michael Palmer claims that in so doing Jung is, in fact, “postulating its existence as a *conceptual necessity* required to explain the patterns and repetitions of psychic phenomena” (Palmer, 1997: 176). For example, mandala symbols found in different cultures, for Jung, are expressive of psychic wholeness because of their patterns and diagrams. The Tibetan notion of the passage of the dead soul through the *Bardos* is parallel to personal transformation in the process of

individuation.<sup>4</sup> Palmer argues, however, that these parallels Jung made only reveal, “the extreme subjectivity of Jung’s method, in which evidence must conform to Jung’s own convictions” (Palmer, 1997: 174). Moreover Jung’s theory of archetypes further exemplifies the weakness of his empirical method and his tendency to rush to a definition having once established cogently similar information. As Gardner Murphy puts it,

Jung’s method - it is no more than a friendly exaggeration to say this - is to argue that because A is somewhat like B and B can, under certain circumstances, share something with C, and C has been known on occasion to have been suspected of being related to D, the conclusion in full-fledged logical form is that A=D. As the language of science this is meaningless.

(Murphy cited by Palmer, 1997: 174-5)

The important point here is that Jung was not interested in religious symbolism in the East as it is experienced within the East’s own traditions and cultures. Nor is he attracted by its practice or metaphysical beliefs. Jung was only concerned with the exploration of the inner world of the human psyche. Brooke argues, “Jung is guilty of enclosing psychological life into a solipsistic inner world from which, among other things, it is impossible to speak coherently of any real relationships with other beings. In other words Jung is guilty of psychologism” (Brooke, 1991: 66). In contrast with Jung’s methodology, the phenomenology of religion attempts to systematise the elements of religious phenomena such as religious belief, practice and experiences, and compare and examine these accumulated data in a specific way in which the irreducibility of religious phenomena is regarded as an essential aspect in the study of religion. From this point of view, Jung’s approach to both Western and Eastern religion falls into psychologism. Moreover, the concept of *epoché* and *eidetic vision* are important methodological issues in the phenomenology of religion. Jung’s methodology lacks an objectivistic approach in the study of religion, namely, Jung fails to suspend his own judgement or exclude from his mind every possible presupposition. Thus Jung did not see the religious phenomena from believers’ own standpoint.

Jung thought Buddhism’s emphasis on self-awareness and self-realization matched well with his concept of the individuation process through which one can become a fully developed individual. However, there is, in fact, a clear difference between the Buddhist notion of self-realization and Jung’s concept of the

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<sup>4</sup> See Chapter 4.

individuation process, which is discussed in depth later. For Jung, the goal of individuation is the realization of the self: to unite the conscious and unconscious sides of the psyche. In the course of individuation our images and visions generated from the unconscious are expressed by way of dreams, myths, fantasies, and drawings. Among these images there is the image of God, which Jung believes is not distinguishable from archetypal images of the self as symbols of psychic wholeness. These symbols reveal therapeutic significance in that they show the stage of individuation reached by the individual personality. Palmer points out that Jung describes these images and symbols as religious not because their contents are religious but because, “through them is opened up a specific dimension of psychic reality, the collective dimension, which transcends the individual even as he or she apprehends it” (Palmer, 1997: 188). For example, Jung claims there is a similarity between his notion of the self and mandala symbols in Tibetan Buddhism. He believes the mandalas are symbols of the self. Jung states, “the mandala symbolizes either the divine being hitherto hidden and dormant in the body and now expected and revived, or else the vessel or the room in which the transformation of man into a divine being takes place” (CW 11: 166). For Jung the mandalas are religious not because they are determined and depicted by the Tibetan religious tradition but because they simply have archetypal contents. This is confirmed by his empirical evidence that the patients felt a great deal better after they had had the vision of the mandala. Palmer argues that in his study of the symbolism of the East Jung formulated, “a generalized truth about the human psychic condition - the archetypal disposition towards the realization of Self - which could just as easily be presented in other images, such as images of Buddha or Purusha or Tao” (Palmer, 1997: 190). These images are divine because Jung believes they reveal psychological significance. Thus they have archetypal contents and their validity is ensured by its psychic effects. Jung asserts,

Religious experience is absolute; it cannot be disputed... No matter what the world thinks about religious experience, the one who has it possesses a great treasure, a thing that has become for him a source of life, meaning, and beauty, and that has given a new splendour to the world of mankind... That is the reason why I take careful account - *religio!* - of the symbols produced by the unconscious. They are the one thing that is capable of convincing the critical mind of modern man.

(CW 11: 167)

Jung's psychologism is the tendency to reduce religious experience to the psychological level and to claim that religious statements about God, spirit and the transcendent are really statements about the psychological reality of the archetypes. One of the accusations of Jung's psychological reductionism was made by the Jewish theologian, Martin Buber. In his book, *The Eclipse of God* (1957), Buber criticised Jung's psychological account of God in terms of a God archetype which does indeed reduce God into an entity that has reality only within the human psyche. Thus, Buber accuses Jung of overstepping "the boundaries of psychology in its most essential point" (Buber, 1957: 78).

According to Buber, Jung's explanation of religion is in relation to psychical events which do not depend upon consciousness but take place in the collective unconscious of the archetypes. Buber claims that Jung "conceives of God not as a Being or Reality to which a psychical content corresponds, but rather as this content itself" (Buber, 1957: 80). For Jung religion is not related to the transcendent God, but God is seen as a function of the contents of the unconscious. However, Buber believes that Jung's psychological approach to religion is by no means valid, for it is opposed to the orthodox conception of God. Buber compared Jung's view with the Kantian conception of noumena, which is not recognised through any categories because it is not phenomena but is only conceived of as an unknown something. Jung repeatedly emphasises that he avoids metaphysical statements about God transcending beyond the psychic experience. For Jung the archetypal image of God has to be psychically experientiable within the individual psychic reality.

Buber also points out that Jung tends to emphasise knowledge and abhor Christian faith. For Jung the importance of religion lay not in beliefs and doctrines but in an inner psychic experience of the God image. Jung claims that modern consciousness needs to turn towards the unconscious, the only sphere in which one can experience the divine. Furthermore, Buber considers Jung a Gnostic, due to Jung's concept of God, "in whom good evil are bound together" (Buber, 1975: 85). This is, in fact, of essential significance for Jung's psychological theory of individuation process and archetype of the self. From the standpoint of the basic Gnostic view, the orthodox theological conception of God, Jung added the Satanic aspect. Jung, thus enlarged the Trinity into the Quaternity, in which the autonomous devil is included as the fourth.

In his rebuttal of Buber, Jung consistently denied the accusation of psychologism. Jung claims that his method was based on psychology and empirical science, not on theology. Jung did not affirm or deny the existence of the traditional viewpoint of a transcendent God. In reply to Buber, Jung states,

One can, of course, believe that the concepts of the conscious mind are, through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, direct and correct representations of their metaphysical referent. But this conviction is possible only for one who already possesses the gift of faith. Unfortunately I cannot boast of this possession... I have merely expressed an opinion about something that can be experienced, that is, about one of the very palpable 'powers of the unconscious'... What I described is a psychic factor only, but one which exerts a considerable influence on the conscious mind.

(CW 18: 1505)

Jung does not actually identify God from the traditional religious viewpoint with psychic images of God. He leaves the theologians and metaphysicians to talk about the possibility of the existence of the transcendent God. Jung's primary concern is not God as the transcendent reality, which he believes is a matter of faith, but the psychology of the God-image, and God-as-he-is-experienced. Shelburne (1988) argues that it is hard to avoid perceiving the manifest incompatibility between Jung's treatment of religion and the traditional religious viewpoint, since, "the Jungian image of humankind with its archetypal understanding of the spirit is in real conflict with a traditional religious viewpoint based on faith" (Shelburne, 1988: 78). The question remains, however, to what extent psychologism is a valid criticism for Jung's treatment of religion in relation to the archetypal theory. Shelburne claims that "if... the claim is made that the psychological perspective is the only valid way to understand a religious, philosophical, or aesthetical work or event, then there exists the manifest possibility of an illegitimate reductionism" (Shelburne, 1988: 80). Shelburne points out that Freud's psychologistic understanding of religion and art in terms of sublimation of sexuality seems an example of religion as 'nothing but' psychological application of a theory.

But a similar example can be found in Jung's treatment of religion when he fails to appreciate religious phenomena in anything but his own terms and reduces it to psychological elements. As a psychologist Jung sometimes seems to admit agnosticism concerning religious and metaphysical claims. In his commentary on '*The Secret of the Golden Flower*' Jung claims, "Every statement about the transcendental is to be avoided because it is only a laughable presumption on the part

of a human mind unconscious of its presumptions” (CW 13: 54). Jung insists that any statement about the transcendent reality such as God or Tao is not to be taken literally. He says, “I suspect them of being symbolical psychologists, to whom no greater wrong could be done than to take them literally. If it were really metaphysics that they mean, it would be useless to try to understand them” (CW 13: 74). Clarke argues that “the problem is that Jung wanted to leave open the possibility of making metaphysical assertions, while at the same time offering us a psychological theory which purports to close the door to them” (Clarke, 1994: 176). It is important to note here that we can see Jung’s ambivalent attitude manifested in his writings on Eastern thought. Jung suggests that the European can learn something important from Eastern religion, yet at the same time that the European should not progress beyond the level of psychology - Jung’s psychology of the archetypes, whereby the Oriental materials are to be treated as a projection of the collective unconscious.

### **2.3.3 Methodological problems in Jung’s understanding of religion**

Jung repeatedly stresses that psychology is only concerned with certain observable psychic facts or phenomena. They are regarded as a psychic reality which includes dreams, fantasies, visions, pathological states and religious experiences. Jung argues,

Psychic existence is the only category of existence of which we have immediate knowledge, since nothing can be known unless it first appears as a psychic image. Only psychic existence is immediately verifiable. To the extent that the world does not assume the form of a psychic image, it is virtually non-existent.

(CW 11: 769)

Jung claims in the West, the realization of psychic existence is rather neglected but the East, on the contrary, “bases itself upon psychic reality, that is, upon the psyche as the main and unique condition of existence” (CW 11: 770). Jung was largely concerned with Eastern religions such as Buddhism where primacy is given to psyche or mind. Thus he says, “The East is wiser, for it finds the essence of all things grounded in the psyche” (CW 8: 748). The psychic reality is crucial concept in Jung’s psychological thinking.

In his study of religion Jung insists that his approach is empirical and scientific based on a phenomenological standpoint. Jung says,

I am an empiricist and adhere as such to the phenomenological standpoint... I approach psychological matters from a scientific and not from a philosophical standpoint. Inasmuch as religion has a very important psychological aspect, I deal with it from a purely empirical point of view, that is, I restrict myself to the

observation of phenomena and I eschew any metaphysical or philosophical considerations.

(CW 11: 2)

Jung believes his standpoint is purely phenomenological because, “it is concerned with occurrences, events, experiences - in a word, with facts,” and “its truth is a fact not a judgement,” and therefore it is “psychologically true inasmuch as it exists” (CW 11: 4). Jung uses the term phenomenology in a very loose and broad sense, and he also uses it in the same way as the term empiricism. Heisig (1983) points out that Jung’s usage of the term cannot be identified with Brentano or Husserl’s phenomenology. Heisig asserts, “Phenomenology means for Jung simply a concern with the observable world of facts that is unprejudiced by theoretical presuppositions - in contrast to what were for him the empty abstractions of speculative metaphysics” (Heisig, 1983: 111). Brooke examines Jung’s usage of phenomenology and argues that, “although Jung referred to phenomenology with a broad understanding of its aims, and although he made use of some of its essential guidelines, phenomenology was not a consistent methodological home” (Brooke, 1991: 50). In his writings Jung did not make use of the methodological conventions of phenomenology in a systematic way. Brooke asserts, “Jung’s success as a phenomenologist owes to his skill as a psychologist and hermeneut, but the necessary philosophical understanding was severely lacking. Thus the heart of the method, the phenomenological reduction, was entered without sufficient rigor or self-criticism” (Brooke, 1991: 50). As discussed earlier, Jung did not make use of the phenomenological method, *epoché*, and brought his own psychological assumptions into his interpretation of Eastern thought. It would seem, therefore, that Jung’s failure to understand the religious significance of the East within its own traditions is a consequence of his misuse of the phenomenological method.

In Jung’s psychological theory, there is a clear antithesis between metaphysics and science, and knowledge and faith. For Jung states, “psychology as the science of the soul has to confine itself to its subject and guard against overstepping its proper boundaries by metaphysical assertions or other professions of faith” (CW 12: 15). Heisig argues in Jung’s view, metaphysics indicates philosophical speculation about the unknowable, and faith is in this category. On the contrary, science refers to the knowable, and “*knowledge* is synonymous with the fruit of reflection on ‘experience’” (Heisig, 1983: 121). Jung desired himself to be known in the latter category as a



scientist in order to establish his own Analytical Psychology. Indeed Jung insists in several places of his writings that he is not concerned with the metaphysical assumptions lying behind religious experience. Jung claims,

Not being a philosopher, but an empiricist, I am inclined in all difficult questions to let experience decide. Where it is impossible to find any tangible basis in experience, I prefer to leave the questions unanswered. It is my aim, therefore, always to reduce abstract concepts to their empirical basis, in order to be moderately sure that I know what I am talking about.

(CW 8: 604)

Jung's methodological statements essentially result from his emphasis on the primacy of experience, and he tends to identify fact and reality with experience. Jung affirms the primacy of experience by drawing attention to its hypothetical nature and says,

The methodological principle in accordance with which psychology treats the products of the unconscious is this: Contents of an archetypal character are manifestations of processes in the collective unconscious. Hence they do not refer to anything that is or has been conscious, but to something essentially unconscious. In the last analysis, therefore, it is impossible to say what they refer to. Every interpretation necessarily remains an 'as-if.'

(CW 9i: 265)

Jung was convinced that the truth of his theories was a function of their effectiveness in therapeutic practice. Heisig however argues that despite his insistence on calling himself a scientist, Jung's psychological theory lacks sufficient scientific evidence, verification, or falsification. This is because Jung did not seem to admit that, "repeated therapeutic failure can falsify a theory or decrease its probability; nor had he adequately allowed for the operation of factors other than use of psychological theory that might be significant in any given cure (e.g., the passing of time, the personality of the therapist, the conditions external to the encounter of doctor and patients, etc.)" (Heisig, 1983: 141).

Jung's suspicion of faith as metaphysical speculation is seen in his writings on Eastern religion. It seems that Jung sometimes slips into the mode of criticising and dismissing such metaphysical assumptions. Clarke argues that in his studying of Eastern religious texts Jung, "attempted to set on one side all metaphysical claims, treating them with agnostic indifference, and concentrating his attention on their psychological nature and significance" (Clarke, 1994: 150). Jung asserted,

I must confess that I cannot detach a certain feeling of dishonesty from any metaphysical assertion – one may speculate but not assert. One cannot reach beyond oneself, and if somebody assures you he can reach beyond himself and his natural limitations, he overreaches himself and becomes immodest and untrue.

(CW 18: 1670)

Thus Jung went on to state,

Every statement about the transcendent is to be avoided because it is only a laughable presumption on the part of a human mind unconscious of its limitations. Therefore, when God or the Tao is named an impulse of the soul, or psychic state, something has been said about the knowledge only, but nothing about the unknowable, about which nothing can be determined

(CW 13: 82)

For this reason Jung was highly sceptical concerning Indian metaphysical speculations which he perceived as lacking a firm empirical ground. Jung asserts,

The modern Indian, as I can testify from my own experience, has largely adopted European habits of language, 'self' or 'atman' being essentially synonymous with 'God.' But, in contradiction to the Western 'man and God,' the Indian posits the opposition (or correspondence) between 'ego and self.' 'Ego,' as contrasted with 'man,' is a distinctly psychological concept, and so is 'self' – to *our* way of thinking. We might therefore be inclined to assume that in India the metaphysical problem 'man and God' has been shifted on to the psychological plane. On closer inspection it is clear that this is not so, for the Indian concept of 'ego' and 'self' is not really psychological but – one could well say – just as metaphysical as our 'man and God.' The Indian lacks the epistemological standpoint just as much as our own religious language does. He is still 'pre-Kantian.' This complication is unknown in India and it is still largely unknown with us. In India there is no psychology in our sense of the word. India is 'pre-psychological': when it speaks of the 'self,' it *posits* such a thing as existing. Psychology does not do this. It does not in any sense deny the existence of the dramatic conflict, but reserves the right to the poverty, or the riches, of *not* knowing about the self. Though very well acquainted with the self's peculiar and paradoxical phenomenology, we remain conscious of the fact that we are discerning, with the limited means at our disposal, something essentially unknown and expressing it in terms of psychic structures which may not be adequate to the nature of what is to be known.

(CW 11: 956)

However, in his engagement with Eastern thought, Jung's scepticism about metaphysics seems ambiguous at times. Jung claims that, "Metaphysical assertions, however, are *statements of the psyche*, and are therefore psychological" (CW 11: 835). Jung went on to say,

My admiration for the great philosophers of the East is as genuine as my attitudes to their metaphysics is irreverent. I suspect them of being symbolical psychologists, to whom no greater wrong could be done than to take them literally. If it were really metaphysics that they mean, it would be useless to try to understand them. But if it is psychology, we can not only understand them but can profit greatly by them, for then the so-called 'metaphysical' comes within the range of experience.

(CW 13: 74)

His statements like those above clearly show that Jung is not interested in interpreting Eastern religious ideas in their own terms, but he rather claims that these ideas really are psychological ones. Jung clearly imports his own psychological assumptions into his account of the phenomenal experience of Oriental religions. Here again, we can see Jung's tendency to psychologism, that is, to reduce the religious ideas to merely an expression of psychological forces. This is what phenomenologists of religion try to avoid. Jung is certainly inconsistent here: on the one hand he insists that he is a phenomenologist; on the other hand, he falls into psychological reductionism. For phenomenologists of religion believe that any method of interpreting religion must include the recognition that religious experience cannot be reduced to other elements of human life. Thus, however strange and peculiar they may appear to us, we must understand religious phenomena as they are experienced within their own traditions.

#### **2.4 Conclusion**

Gadamer's theory of hermeneutics explains the task of understanding historical texts through the dialogic structure of understanding. Any dialogue with the text must take account of the historical situation both of the text itself and that of the reader. This can allow the text to speak for itself and also allow the reader to recognise his own prejudices. Furthermore, the task of interpreting the historical text can never be completed and there is no interpretation which is absolute or correct in itself. In many ways Jung's method of understanding is hermeneutical. Jung's manner is different from Gadamer's in that Jung stressed the need for sympathetic understanding in the therapeutic process but Gadamer dismissed it and denied the necessity of reproducing the author's intentions of the original text. Jung was concerned with interpreting symbols, religious texts, mythology and alchemy through which he sought for the meaning of human existence. However, in the light of hermeneutics, Jung's method of interpreting Eastern religious texts shows a relativistic standpoint.

The phenomenology of religion, by contrast, has a different emphasis in the study of religion. In Kristensen's view of the phenomenology of religion he asserted the scholar must suspend his presuppositions in order to understand religious phenomena from its own standpoint. He claims a believer's understanding of his faith is always true but the scholar will never be able to understand the absolute character of the religious phenomena in the same as the believer understands them. The phenomenologists of religion can only understand them approximately through a

certain amount of intuition and sympathy. Van der Leeuw's approach focused on the manifestation of the religious phenomena. He attempted to see the elements of religious phenomena as objects by assigning names to them. With the methods of *epoché* and *eidetic vision* the scholar can comprehend the appearance of these phenomena. The problem with the phenomenology of religion is that there is a conflict between objectivistic approach in the study of religion and the scholarly subjectivity in interpreting the religious phenomena. Eliade sought for a dialectical relation of subject and object in the study of religion. In Eliade's view men have traditionally lived in the archaic world which is divided between sacred and profane. However it is hard for the modern mentality to understand what is meant by these two spheres. What is needed is a dialogical relationship between man and the archaic world, in which man relates to things in the environment through religious images and symbols.

Jung tends to reduce religious elements to psychological ones, and to study the symbolism which he accumulated from world religion in order to confirm his metapsychological theory. This is because Jung was primarily concerned with the cure of psychic illness of Western man who had lost the meaning of life, or what Jung would call, loss of the soul. Jung found the way to cure modern man's illness through religious symbols and images, which he believed had certain connections with images and ideas in the patients' dreams or fantasies. In his study of Eastern religion Jung saw a number of parallels between his psychology and the religious data he collected. Jung found that the mandala symbols in Tibetan Buddhism, for instance, are the best expression of the archetype of the self. However careful consideration of his approach reveals that Jung was highly selective of Eastern materials, and only chose religious data which could confirm his psychological observations. Jung was ambivalent towards metaphysical concepts in religion. On the one hand, Jung dismissed the transcendental religious phenomena as metaphysical concepts, and thus considered them of no use in practice. On the other hand, Jung regarded metaphysical concepts of Eastern religion as statements of the psyche. But again this falls into the category of psychologism, in that Jung tended to reduce religious data to psychological concepts. The following chapter discusses Jung's relation to Buddhism by dealing with specific texts and concepts, ranging through the major historical traditions of Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism.

## **Chapter Three :**

### **Jung's Approach to Buddhism: History and Context**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter examines Jung's understanding of Buddhism and suggests that while Jung was familiar with both the Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhist traditions, he tended to impose Hinayana concepts onto the Mahayana tradition. Jung was particularly attracted by the psychological aspects of Buddhism, which he regarded as a useful tool and possible basis of a therapeutic method. Thus Jung studied Buddhism from a particular perspective and with a particular aim. It must be remembered that there are a number of Buddhist traditions which are not considered by Jung, and also a number of conceptual confusions where he failed to address, as well as distinctions between different Buddhist traditions he did not understand. In this chapter the way in which Buddhism was interpreted and modified by Jung to enable it to become a psychotherapeutic device for Europeans is analysed. In addition, this chapter considers aspects of Buddhism which Jung did not consider. The chapter consists of three parts: the first examines Jung's understanding of the Hinayana Buddhist tradition, the second assesses his interpretation of Mahayana Buddhism, and the third considers his study of Buddhist meditation.

#### **3.1 Hinayana Buddhist tradition<sup>1</sup>**

##### **3.1.1 The Pali Canon texts**

This section will examine the way in which Jung came to know Hinayana Buddhism. 'Hinayana' literally means the small or lesser vehicle of salvation and the term was created by Mahayana Buddhists to distinguish this school of Buddhism from their own Mahayana or greater vehicle school. Approximately one hundred years after the Buddha's death, the Buddhist order split into two schools: the Theravadins (Skt. Sthaviravadins), 'Followers of the Teaching of the Elders,' and the Mahasanghikas (Skt.), the 'Great Community.' The Theravadins claim to possess the unadulterated tradition of the Buddha's word, and it is their canon which in complete form is handed

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<sup>1</sup> Pali is used for Buddhist terminology in this section.

down to us in Pali. On the canon of the Mahasanghikas which was written in Sanskrit interspersed with dialectisms, only one work, the Mahavatsu is extant today. Numerous sub-schools split off from the Theravada and the Mahasanghika<sup>2</sup> (Schumann, 1973: 84-5). The Theravada survived in the south until the seventeenth century, and then withdrew to its stronghold in Sri Lanka. All other pre-Mahayana schools of thought died out in India (Harvey, 1990: 73-89).

The Theravadin 'Pali Canon' is preserved in the Pali language, which is based on a dialect, Old Magadhi, spoken by Buddha. It is the most complete early canon and contains some of the earliest known Buddhist material.<sup>3</sup> The Pali canon is divided into three collections called 'basket' (*pitaka*),<sup>4</sup> the *Vinayapitaka*, which contains the rules for monastic discipline (*vinaya*); the *Suttapitaka*, which contains the sermons (*sutta*) of the Buddha and his monks; and the *Abhidharmapitaka*, which contains systematic philosophy, a scholastic elaboration of doctrine, especially as regards the analysis of mind (Gombrich, 1988: 4). The *Suttapitaka* is subdivided into five collections (*nikaya*): *Dighanikaya* (collection of long *suttas*); *Majjhimanikaya* (collection of medium-long *suttas*); *Samyuttanikaya* (collection of *suttas* grouped according to topics); *Anguttaranikaya* (collection of *suttas* in gradual order, i.e., according to the number of topics); and *Khuddakanikaya* (collection of smaller texts), which consists of fifteen individual works. (Schumann, 1973: 36).

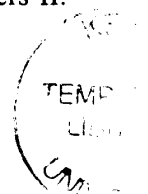
It is vital to consider the texts through which Jung gained his knowledge of Buddhism, in particular the fact that throughout his writings, the Buddhist concepts which Jung most frequently considered were mainly based on the Hinayana Buddhist tradition: Jung typically quotes the Buddha's teaching from translations of the Pali Canon texts.<sup>5</sup> There are numerous references to the Pali Canon, although Jung was

<sup>2</sup> The most important ones in Hinayana schools are the Puggalavada (Skt. Pudgalavada), the Sarvastivada (Skt.) and the Sautrantika (Skt.). Their origins are traced back to the Theravada.

<sup>3</sup> The canon in Pali was compiled and edited by three monastic councils: the First Council was assembled just a few months after the Buddha's death (483 B.C.) in Rajagaha and recounted his sermons and put them together to form a canon; the Second Council was assembled about a hundred years later (around 383 B.C.) in Vasali and was responsible for the inclusion of sermons and poems by monks and nuns into the canon and for the screening of the material; and the Third Council was assembled in 225 B.C. in Pataliputta (today's Patna) and revised the texts anew and added to the two older *Pitakas* scholastic works (Schumann, 1973: 34-5).

<sup>4</sup> This expression arises from the fact that the texts were written on dried palm leaves and were kept in baskets.

<sup>5</sup> See *inter alia* CW 5: 437, CW 6: 494, CW 9i: 200, 248, 596, CW 10: 991, CW 18: 745, Letters II: 103, 548, and NZ II: 1436.



highly selective in his choice of texts in his study of Buddhism. The texts Jung mentioned are the *Majjhimanikaya*, the *Samyuttanikaya*, the *Maha-Parinibbana Sutta*, and the *Sutta-Nipata*. The source of these texts can be found in the bibliographies of *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung*. For the *Mahajimanikaya* Jung cited from *The First Fifty Discourses from the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (Majjhima Nikaya) of Gotama the Buddha* (1912-13), edited and translated by Bhikku Silacara (CW 9i: 596f and Letters II; 548f). For *Samyutta-Nikaya*, Jung used *The Book of the Kindred Sayings (Sangyutta-Nikaya), Part II: The Nidana Book (Nidana-Vagga)* (1922), translated by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, and also *Dialogues of the Buddha, Part II* (1951), translated by T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids (CW 9i: 200f, 248, CW 18: 745f, Letters II: 103f, NZ II: 1436). Jung was also familiar with the Pali Canon text, the *Maha Parinibbana Sutta* (CW 10: 991), which is the one of the long *suttas* from *Dighanikaya* and includes the sermon of the Great Decease or passing into the final *nibbana* (Humphreys, 1994: 120).<sup>6</sup> Jung cited a passage from Victor Fausböll's translation of *Sutta-Nipata* (1881) (CW 5: 437f). *Sutta-Nipata*, which is one of the texts from the *Kuddaka Naikaya*, contains the 'Group of Discourses,' a collection of 71 verse *Suttas* (Harvey, 1990: 322). Jung also cited a passage of the Fire Sermon of the Buddha from H.C. Warren's translation of *Buddhism in Translations* (1900) (CW 6: 494f). Jung's bibliographies on the Pali cannon texts show that he was relatively familiar with the fundamentals of Hinayana Buddhism.

### 3.1.2 Life of Buddha

In his discussions of Buddha, Jung sometimes saw Buddhism in connection with Hinduism, and identified the Buddha with the Hindu god, Vishnu. Jung asserts, "the great Hindu Reformation, Buddhism, is grounded, in true Indian fashion, on yoga, and, in India at least, it was almost completely re-assimilated by Hinduism in less than a millennium, so that today the Buddha himself is enthroned in the Hindu pantheon as the avatar of Vishnu" (CW 9ii: 272). From the Hindu perspective, the Buddha is regarded as the ninth and latest avatar, or incarnation, of the god Vishnu. Of significance here is P. Almond's (1988) argument that, "Part of the confusion in determining the relation of Buddhism to the religion of India and in ascertaining a

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<sup>6</sup> Jung did not provide a reference for the *Maha Parinibbana Sutta*.

clear picture of Buddhism was the reliance of many early investigators on information related to them by Hindu pundits” (Almond, 1988: 15). Furthermore, Almond points out that in nineteenth century in Europe it was often assumed that Buddhism was not simply of Indian origin and there were claims, for instance, of the existence of Buddhism in Persia or Mongolia. These assumptions can also be seen in Jung’s writings. Jung believed Persia was the meeting point between Buddhism and Christianity,

We spoke of the Persian origin of Christianity, but a great deal came also from Egypt, something from India even, because already in the second century B.C. there were Buddhistic monasteries in Persia, so through Persia the Buddhistic ideas probably crept into the formation of Christianity.

(NZ I: 41)

As mentioned in the previous chapter, since his youth Jung had a long-standing interest in Buddhism, which had a great impact on his psychological thought. When Jung visited the stupas at the hill of Sanchi in India, he was particularly impressed by the significance of Buddhism, and convinced that the life of the Buddha signified,

the reality of the self which had broken through and laid claim to a personal life. For Buddha, the self stands above all gods, a *unus mundus* which represents the essence of human existence and of the world as a whole. The self embodies both the aspect of intrinsic being and the aspect of its being known, without which no world exists. Buddha saw and grasped the cosmogonic dignity of human consciousness: for that reason he saw clearly that if a man succeeded in extinguishing this light, the world would sink into nothingness.

(MDR: 309)

A problem is that it seems to be unclear which Buddhist tradition Jung was discussing in this statement. If Jung was dealing with Theravada Buddhism, this statement suggests that he had misread the Theravada Buddhist tradition. Jung seems to equate human consciousness with the light. By contrast, the concept of *nibbana* in Theravada Buddhism, means extinction of a fire. Everything internal and external to a person is ‘burning’ with the ‘fire’ of attachment, hatred, and delusions, and of birth, ageing and death. In this sense the ‘fire’ refers to the cause of suffering (*dukkha*) and suffering itself. Hence one has to destroy these fires of defilement in order to attain *nibbana*, which is a condition of calm and absence of desire. (Harvey, 1990: 61). It may be assumed that Jung is referring here to the Yogacara view that without mind/consciousness there is no world. Yet, this assumption appears to be strange, because the Buddhist stupa Jung visited at Sanchi in India belongs to the Hinayana



Buddhist tradition. Yogacara is the one of the schools of Mahayana Buddhism. Thus it seems to be odd for Jung to think of the Yogacara teaching when he was in the Hinayana Buddhist stupa at Sanchi. I shall examine Jung's understanding of *nibbana* in more detail later.

For Jung the Buddha represents a symbol of the self, which depicts a psychic totality, that is, a higher unity of conscious and unconscious. This statement is different from a Buddhist point of view, since the Buddhist believes in not-self (*anatta*): not a permanent, self-secure, happy, independent self or I. It is 'empty' (*sunna*) of such a self, or anything pertaining to such a self. The Buddhists deny liberating a person's true self (Skt. *atman*, Pali. *atta*), because it is the unchanging substantial entity. In Brahmanism this *atman* was seen as a universal Self identical with Brahman. The Buddha argued that anything subject to change, anything not autonomous and totally controllable by its own wishes, anything subject to the disharmony of suffering, could not be a such a perfect true self. Moreover, in Buddhism to take a single independent entity as *atman* is to lay the basis for much suffering. (Harvey, 1990: 52-1). Jung's concept of the self is more likely in the category of the Brahmanical concept of self, as he substantiated it. Jung argued,

The Lord Buddha was a man like Jesus; he was real, but he has become a symbol. He is not even called by his real name; that is a ritual name. Or he is called the Tathagata, meaning, 'the perfect one, the accomplished one.' He is a symbol; he is the idea of perfection.

(NZ I: 212)

For Jung, Christ in the West, Khidr in the Near East, *Atman*, Tao or the Buddha in the Far East, and Mondamin in the Far West represent the same archetype, that is, all these religious figures represent a psychic wholeness and the symbol of the self (CW 10: 779). M.L. von Franz argues, "Christ for Jung was not the *only* god-man as the Christian doctrine maintains. We know from his later writings that the Buddha was for him also such a god-man" (von Franz, 1983: xxiii, italics in original). We can clearly see that Jung's hermeneutical approach does not aim at introducing these Buddhist teachings to the West but at interpreting them within his psychological thinking in order to make sense of these foreign ideas by making analogies. Clarke argues that, "What he [Jung] hoped to uncover through the accumulation of such data was evidence of the underlying archetypal structure of the human psyche, and

confirmation of his belief that this structure applied universally and, as such, was part of the inheritance of mankind” (Clarke, 1994: 137). However, Fromm criticised Jung’s approach to religion as a standpoint of psychological reductionism, which, “is in its spirit fundamentally opposed to religions like Judaism, Christianity, and Buddhism. These consider the striving for truth as one of man’s cardinal virtues and obligations and insists that their doctrines whether arrived at by revelation or only by the power of reason are subject to the criterion of truth” (Fromm, 1950: 16).

Any account of Jung’s interest in the Buddha’s life would be incomplete without reference to the Mara episode. Jung found a parallel between his idea of evil and the Mara episode in the Buddha’s life (CW 17: 319 and NZ II: 1304). The Buddhist canonical text refers to a Satan-like figure known as Mara, a deity who uses his power to entrap people in sensual desire and attachment, so as to stay within the realm of rebirth and repeated death. Mara came to urge Gotama to abandon his quest and take up a conventional religious life to generate merit. Gotama replied that he had no need of more merit and scorned Mara’s spiritual faults such as sense-desire, jealousy, hunger, thirst, and craving. Mara then retreated in defeat. Harvey asserts, “the conquest of Mara is commemorated as a victory over evil by countless images and paintings” (Harvey, 1990: 21). Jung interpreted Mara as the inner voice which comes from the unconscious, which most people have difficulty in facing or confronting. Jung says,

The fear that most people naturally have of the inner voice is not so childish as might be supposed. The contents that rise up and confront a limited consciousness are far from harmless, as is shown by the classic example of the temptation of Christ, or the equally significant Mara episode in the Buddha legend.

(CW 17: 319)

According to Jung, what the inner voice whispers to us is generally something negative, tempting, and convincing in order to make us succumb. This is called the shadow in Jung’s terminology. Jung wrote,

If we do not partially succumb, nothing of this apparent evil enters in to us, and no regeneration or healing can take place (I say ‘apparent,’ though this may sound too optimistic.) If we succumb completely, the contents expressed by the inner voice act as so many devils, and a catastrophe ensues. But if we can succumb only in part, and if by self-assertion the ego can save itself from being completely swallowed, then it can assimilate the voice, and we realize that the

evil was after all, only a semblance of evil, but in reality a bringer of healing and illumination.

(CW 17: 319)

There is a clear difference between Jung's understanding of Mara and the Buddhist conception of it. Jung's interpretation is that the ego can only assimilate the evil aspect of the unconscious. For Jung this creates a totality, in which the opposites are united, and brings a synthesis between ego-consciousness and the unconscious. In Buddhism, on the other hand, Gotama was able to completely conquer the evil Mara in the end. Jung argues, "How Buddha himself could obtain such insight without losing himself in a complete mental inflation borders on a miracle (But any genius is a miracle)" (Jung's bracket, CW 10: 1003). This statement suggests that it is a miracle that one can overcome the evil completely, and it is only the Buddha that can achieve this through miraculous power. But Jung believes that ordinary people cannot do this. Jung argues that one must not identify oneself with the evil aspect of the unconscious. In his idea of psychic structure, Jung claims that the ego must always be a part of the psyche, "as a reference-point of cognition" (Letters II: 259), and its identification with the unconscious materials leads to what he called 'inflation,' or psychosis. Jung believed it was impossible for ordinary people to conquer evil completely, in contrast to the Mara experience of Buddha. Jung asserts,

When he [the Buddha] was attacked by the devil with his whole host, the city of Buddha was empty. He had the great simplicity to say, 'What is all this talk about the great Buddha? He is not, he is a void.' We wonder how he should say of himself that he was the perfect one, the accomplished one, the *Tathagata*, but that was because he knew he was a void, that he did not even exist; such as big sounding word as *Tathagata* can only be compensated by a void. If you have reached the stage where you are not even the *dumme Michel*, where you are less than the simpleton, then you can use a very big word on the other side without being attacked by the devil. But as long as you are feeling that you *are* something, the devil will attack you. So you had better doubt it. We are not *Tathagata*.

(NZ II: 1304)

### 3.1.3 Jung's understanding of the teaching of the Buddha

Jung regarded Buddhism as a potentially helpful remedy for psychic illness in the West. He claims that the teachings of the Buddha, "offer Western man ways and means of disciplining his inner psychic life, thus remedying an often regrettable defect

in the various brands of Christianity” (CW18: 1577). As mentioned in Chapter One, Jung’s approach to Buddhism was shaped by his belief that the traditional orthodox mode of Christianity put too much emphasis on the authority of Church and faith but it did not help to solve the problem of psychic suffering. Jung argues,

In most cases the Christian faith of which people speak simply isn’t there, and no one can tell how it might be obtained (except by the special province of God), it is a truism that anything known becomes so familiar and hackneyed by frequent use that it gradually loses its meaning and hence its effect... If a Christian insists so much on his faith when it does not even help him to ward off a neurosis, then his faith is vain, and it is better to accept humbly what he needs no matter where he finds it, if only it helps.

(CW 18: 1576)

Jung asserted, “It is neither the history of religion nor the study of philosophy that first drew me to the world of Buddhist thought, but my professional interests as a doctor” (CW 18: 1575). From this standpoint, Jung’s main concern was, “How does one come to terms in practice with the unconscious? This is the question posed by the philosophy of India, and particularly by Buddhism and Zen” (CW 8, pp. 67-8).

Suffering was a central issue for Jung’s psychological theory. The treatment of psychic suffering in the West was a key reason Jung became acquainted with the views and methods of the teaching of the Buddha, “whose principal theme was the ‘chain of suffering, old age, sickness, and death’” (CW 18: 1575). Jung argued that the essence of the Buddha’s teaching is, “deliverance from suffering through the maximum development of consciousness, as one of the supreme helpers on the road to salvation” (CW 18: 1578). Jung went on to state,

The study of Buddhist literature was of great help to me, since it trains one to observe suffering objectively and to take a universal view of its causes. According to tradition, it was by objectively observing the chain of causes that the Buddha was able to extricate his consciousness from the snares of the thousand things, and to rescue his feelings from the entanglements of emotion and illusion. So also in our sphere of culture the suffering and the sick can derive considerable benefit from this prototype of the Buddhist mentality, however strange it may appear.

(CW 18: 1575)

Jung’s point here is very close to the Buddhist position concerning the notion of suffering. The statement above seems to imply that Jung was in agreement with the Buddhist position in which one can transcend suffering. However, Jung’s understanding of suffering is quite inconsistent: on the one hand, Jung showed his

positive attitude towards the Buddhist treatment of the problem of suffering; on the other hand, he showed a negative attitude towards the Buddhist teaching of the termination of the suffering and rejected its possibility. In contrast with Jung's passage above, he argued,

The Oriental wants to get rid of suffering by casting it off. Western man tries to suppress suffering with drugs. But suffering has to be overcome, and the only way to overcome it is to endure it.

(Letters I: 236)

For Jung suffering and happiness are a pair of opposites that are indispensable to life, and the one cannot be eliminated by the other. Jung claims that, "None can escape the chain of suffering that leads to sickness, old age and death" (CW 10: 680), and quotes from Schopenhauer (who was also profoundly influenced by Indian thought)<sup>7</sup> that, "there can be no happiness unless there is suffering" (Letters I: 247). For Jung, therefore, man has to cope with suffering in order to achieve happiness. Jung asserts,

man's real life consists of inexorable opposites – day and night, wellbeing and suffering, birth and death, good and evil. We are not even sure that the one will prevail against the other, that good will overcome evil, or joy defeat pain. Life and the world are a battle ground, have always been and always will be, and, if it were not so, existence would soon come to an end.

(CW 18: 564)

Although Jung's main concern was the healing of the sick, Jung was bound to recognise that, "there are many diseases and states of suffering which, not being susceptible of a direct cure, demand from both patient and doctor some kind of attitude to their irremediable nature" (CW 18: 1575). Jung's emphasis on the therapeutic necessity of adopting some kind of attitude to the problem of suffering is summed up in the following passage:

Suffering that is not understood is hard to bear, while on the other hand it is often astounding to see how much a person can endure when he understands the why and the wherefore. A philosophical or religious view of the world enables

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<sup>7</sup> Schopenhauer in fact denies such influence and does not believe that the development and expression of his ideas is in any way dependent on the ideas expressed in the Hindu or Buddhist texts. However, Moira Nicholls (1999) argues that Schopenhauer was keen to demonstrate parallels between his own doctrines and those of the East. Schopenhauer was profoundly interested in Hindu and Buddhist thought and frequently refers to these Eastern ideas in his works. Nicholls, therefore, claims that, "Schopenhauer's increasing knowledge of and admiration for Eastern thought actually influenced his thinking, giving rise to changes in his views concerning the knowability, nature, and ways of describing the thing-in-itself" (Nicholls, 1999: 175). For a detailed discussion on Schopenhauer and Eastern thought, see Nicholls (1991: 171-212).

him to do this, and such views prove to be, at the very least, psychic methods of healing if not of salvation.

(CW 18: 1578)

Jung saw the *Nidana*-chain of causes as the very essence of Buddhism. In Buddhist doctrine there is a principle of conditionality: that all things, including mental and physical things, arise and exist due to the presence of certain conditions and cease once their conditions are removed. In this sense nothing is independent except *nibbana*. The main application of this principle is in the form of a series of conditioned links (*nidana*). A series of twelve *nidanas* are:

(1) spiritual ignorance (*avijja*) → (2) constructing activities (*sankhara*) → (3) (discriminative) consciousness → (4) mind-and-body (*nama-rupa*) → (5) the six sense-bases (*ayatana*) → (6) sensory stimulation (*phassa*) → (7) feeling (*vedana*) → (8) craving (*tanha*) → (9) grasping (*upadana*) → (10) existence (*bhava*) → (11) birth (*jati*) → (12) ageing, death (*jara-narana*), sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, ‘Thus is the origin of this whole mass of *dukkha*’.

(Harvey, 1990: 55)

Jung asserts, “Again and again Buddha says that coming into existence causes such-and-such desires and illusions, and that man produces through that chain of causes and effects, invariably ending in disease, old age, and death; and the only means to disrupt that inexorable chain of cause and effect is knowledge and understanding” (NZ II: 1382). Jung continues,

Now if you stop the *avidya* of the beginning, there is no becoming, and if you stop the becoming there is no birth. If you stop birth there is no age and death. So the whole world of suffering is abolished.

(NZ II: 1315)

Jung argued that in the West people cultivated an extraverted tendency in which they tended to focus their attention on the outer world at the expense of their own inner world. Jung asserted that in the East, however, the Western tendency of extraversion is, “deprecated as illusory desirousness, as existence in the *samsara*, the very essence of the *nidana*-chain which culminates in the sum of the world’s sufferings” (CW 11: 770). Among a series of twelve *nidanas*, Jung discussed the first two *nidanas*: *avidya* (Skt. Pali. *avijja*) and *samskara* (Skt. Pali. *Sankhara*).<sup>8</sup> Jung saw the state of *avidya* as, “ignorance or unconscious” (CW 12: 123) and also as, “a cardinal evil for Buddhists” (Letters I: 488). In some places Jung’s usage of the term *samskara* seems to be identical with the concept of *samsara*. *Samskara* is the second link in the chain

of *nidanas* and indicates the action-intentions which precede the execution of the action. Whereas *samsara* is the cycle of rebirth. In Buddhist cosmology the death of an unliberated person is necessarily followed by his rebirth, in which the suffering of living and dying is repeated. Thus *samsara* is regarded as a long and often aimless process. Jung says the *samskara* is “the cycle of repeated incarnations” (NZ II: 1526). In other places Jung interpreted *samskara* as “the unconscious formative forces, must be transformed through religious self-development” (CW 6: 419). This shows that Jung used these terms almost identically and this results in a confusion in distinguishing their particular meanings.

The Third Noble Truth is *Nibbana*. In the first sermon, the Buddha expressed, This, monks, is the Noble Truth of the termination of suffering; the complete extinction, destruction, abandonment, rejection, leaving (and) casting off of this very craving.

(Cited by Schumann, 1973: 66)

When craving comes to an end, suffering ceases. This is equivalent to *Nibbana* (Skt. *Nirvana*), and is the ultimate goal of Buddhism. It is also known as the ‘unconditioned’ or ‘unconstructed’ (*asnakhata*). *Nibbana* literally means ‘extinction’ and the word used for the extinction of a fire. In this case fire refers to the causes of suffering (*dukkha*) or suffering itself. (Harvey, 1990: 61). *Dukkha* can be ended only by enlightenment and *nibbana*, the ‘blowing out’ or ‘extinction’ of desire, a condition of complete calm and detachment. It is not that the self has been extinguished or eliminated, since there never was a real self; what has ended is the ignorant clinging to selfhood and personal identity. The destruction of craving and ignorance eventually leads to a termination of the *kamma* process. A person who is no longer bound to the circle of rebirth (*samsara*) can attain *Nibbana*. T.J. Hopkins argues that *nibbana* is,

not an entity or thing; it is a condition or state of calm and absence of desire. *Nirvana* alone is uncreated and unchanging; *all* entities are transient, void of self-existence, dependent on other phenomena that are themselves in flux. This is what the Buddhists called ‘dependent origination,’ the origination of all phenomena from other transient phenomena and not from a single independent entity such as Brahman or *atman*. [In Buddhism] the existence is always characterised by *dukkha* because all phenomena are impermanent. But there is a way out of this through elimination of desire, that is to say, the Buddha’s Noble Eightfold Path, will lead those who follow it to *nirvana*.

(Hopkins, 1971: 57)

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<sup>8</sup> Jung uses Sanskrit for these terms.

Jung argues that in Buddhism, “the attainment of perfect illumination, or consciousness, means nirvana, positive non-existence” (NZ I: 132). Jung argues, however, that *Nirvana* is not what the West understands as ‘non-being,’ which refers to a mere negation,

Nirvana is a positive non-being, which we cannot render in our language because we have no conception of a thing which is positively non-existing. To the Buddhist it is as if non-existence were just as much as a quality as existence.  
(NZ I: 325)

This view is based on Jung’s belief that there are two forms of existence in Eastern philosophy: one is a potential existence in which the god is dormant before his expansion or his manifestation; and the other is extended or actual existence in which the god already appears, the first manifestation of the god. However, this view is not from the Buddhist tradition but is based on the Vedanta tradition of Hinduism, in particular the *advaita* (non-dualistic) tradition., This was founded by the Vedanta philosopher Sankara (A.D. 788-820) whose main teaching was that both the individual self and the phenomenal world are the product of ignorance and illusion, so the apparent bondage of the self, which is the false assumption of an individual self, can only be removed by knowledge of the pure unqualified Brahman (Hopkins, 1971: 119-122). Jung then went further to explain *nibbana* by using the idea of Hindu Tantrism, in which potential existence is contained in *Shiva* bindu, and the actual existence contains the corresponding divinity *Shakti*. Jung asserts, “the world is always existing and non-existing at the same time. Inasmuch as there is existence, there is non-existence” (NZ I: 326). This statement seems to resemble Jung’s theory of consciousness and the unconscious, namely, the former belongs to existence and the latter to non-existence. Yet, in Buddhism *nibbana* is not understood as the unconscious in Jung’s sense. Jung’s misunderstanding of *nibbana* is based on his knowledge of Hindu tradition as can be seen in his following statement,

The assumption is in Buddhism that the attainment of perfect illumination, or consciousness, means, nirvana, positive non-existence. The perfect consciousness is the complete identity with divinity. Man has returned into the deity, the world has returned to God, and nothing is because there is no object any longer.

(NZ I: 132)

However, Jung was reluctant to accept that one can attain perfect consciousness, since perfect consciousness through the complete identity with divinity is what Jung



understood as psychosis. Rather, Jung held the view that one can only expand consciousness through recognising unconscious projections, so that one can uncover what had been previously unconscious. Jung asserts,

Now of course we don't know whether perfect consciousness is possible, but we know that with the progression and extension of consciousness, the number of known projections becomes diminished, so we assume that if consciousness were capable of still greater extension, still more projections would enter the field of our vision. We would destroy more of the world, as it were.

(NZ I: 132)

The problem with Jung's understanding of *nibbana* in the Hinayana Buddhist tradition is that he ontologised the concept of *nibbana* and thus he did not understand the quality of non-existence. In the Hinayana Buddhist tradition, *nibbana* is 'emptiness' (*sunyata*), in that it is empty of attachment, hatred and delusion, being known in this aspect by deep insight into phenomena as 'empty' of a substantial self. Harvey argues, "While to a Western-educated person, an extinct fire goes nowhere because it does not exist, the Buddha's audience in ancient India would generally have thought of an extinguished fire as going back into a non-manifested state as latent heat" (Harvey, 1990: 66). From a Buddhist perspective, Jung's statement does not convey the correct view of *nibbana*. Almond argues that the ontologised account of *nibbana* was a dominant view in the nineteenth century in the West.

Ontologically, the central issue in this hotly disputed question concerned what the attainment of Nirvana meant for the existence of the previously suffering individual. The majority opinion throughout the nineteenth century was that Nirvana, *essentially*, entailed the annihilation of the individual.

(Almond, 1988: 102)

In addition to the annihilationist account of *nibbana*, there was also a tendency to assimilate Hinduism and Buddhism. Almond claims that, "Consequently, Nirvana was spoken of in terms of absorption, even though there was often uncertainty about what such absorption amounted to." (Almond, 1988: 105). R.C. Zaehner made the same kind mistake as Jung in ontologising the concept of *nibbana*. In his *Mysticism Sacred and Profane* (1971) Zaehner tends to identify *nibbana* with the eternal being, the Brahman in Hindu tradition. Zaehner states that the Buddhist teaches the transient and instability of the world can be overcome by the attainment of *nirvana*. Although Zaehner claims that there is nothing in our mortal existence which is free from birth and death, coming to be and passing away. Nevertheless, he believes that, "the mere

fact of transience is said to imply its opposites, the permanent, the unborn, *nirvana*, immortality” (Zaehner, 1971: 52). In Zaehner’s view *nirvana* is parallel to the absolute eternal being, which he also called ‘self.’ Zaehner argues that, “the Buddha, like the Samkhya, recognizes that there is an eternal being transcending time, space, and change: and this is the beginning of religion. Moreover the Hindus, overwhelmingly, and the Buddhists when they are off their guard, speak of this eternal being as the ‘self’” (Zaehner, 1971: 126).

In Buddhist doctrine the way to the termination of suffering is called the Noble Eightfold Path (Middle Way). The Path has eight factors: (1) right view (*samma-ditthi*), (2) right directed thought (*samma-sankappa*), (3) right speech (*samma-vaca*), (4) right action (*samma-kammanta*), (5) right livelihood (*samma-ajiva*), (6) right effort (*samma-vayama*), (7) right mindfulness (*samma-sati*), and (8) right meditation (*samma-samadhi*).<sup>9</sup> Right view is the true wisdom and knowledge of the nature of reality in a profound insight. This is based on the Middle Way of Conditioned Origination which, “avoids the extremes of ‘eternalism’ and ‘annihilationalism’: the survival of an eternal self, or the total annihilation of a person at death” (Harvey, 1990: 58). Right directed thought concerns emotions, free from sensuality and away from ill-will and cruelty to loving kindness and compassion. Right speech is abstaining from lying, harsh speech, gossip and idle talk. Right action is avoiding taking of life, taking what is not given, and wrong conduct in regard to sense-pleasure. Right livelihood is abstaining from making a living which causes suffering to others, such as trickery and greed or trade in weapons, living beings, meat, alcoholic drink or poison. Right effort is to avoid and overcome the arising unskilful states of mind which express attachment, hatred or delusion, to aim at the meditative development of skilful states of mind and maintain and stabilise it. Right mindfulness is a state of keen awareness of mental and physical phenomena as they arise within an individual. Right meditation refers to various levels of deep calm known as *jhanas*.<sup>10</sup> Buddhist

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<sup>9</sup> Factors 3-5 belong to *sila*, moral virtue: factors 6-8 belong to *samadhi*, meditative cultivation of the mind (*citta*); factors 1-2 belong to *panna*, or wisdom (*sila*, *samadhi*, and *panna* are always given in this order) (Harvey, 1990: 68).

<sup>10</sup> *Jhana* is subdivided into eight stages: (1) Attentive pondering, free from sensual desires, and reflection with the feeling of well-being, (2) Desertion of pondering; inner stillness and mental concentration on *one* object with the feeling of well-being, (3) Equanimity, devotion, and clarity-of-knowledge, (4) drying up of all feelings of bliss and suffering and of the recollection of them; equanimity and devotion of greatest purity, (5) Termination of the perception of forms and shapes;

scriptures stress the importance of the Eightfold Path for liberation from suffering. A person who has completed the Eightfold Path and so has attained the Nibbanic experience becomes an *Arahat*. The term *Arahat* means ‘worthy,’ that is, worthy of great respect. The *Arahat* is one who has fully completed spiritual training and has overcome suffering.<sup>11</sup>

Jung’s account of the Noble Eightfold Path was shown in connection with his idea of Christians and rationalists:

I know that the Buddhist would say, as indeed they do: if only people would follow the noble eightfold path of the Dharma (doctrine, law) and had true insight into the Self;<sup>12</sup> or Christians: if only people had the right faith in the Lord; or the rationalists: if only people could be intelligent and reasonable – then all problems would be manageable and solvable. The trouble is that none of them manages to solve these problems himself.

(CW 18: 600)

For Jung, the Buddha’s teaching of the Noble Eightfold Path, just as the Christians’ and rationalists’ ideas, does not seem to solve the psychic problem of Western man, since it dismisses the significance of the unconscious. Jung states,

The Buddhist discards the world of unconscious fantasies as ‘distractions’ and useless illusions; the Christian puts his Church and his Bible between himself and his unconscious; and the rationalist intellectual does not yet know that his consciousness is not his total psyche, in spite of the fact that for more than seventy years the unconscious has been a basic scientific concept that is indispensable to any serious student of psychology.

(CW 18: 601)

Thus Jung interpreted the Buddhist idea of the Middle Way as the natural flow of libido between a pair of opposites, namely, the consciousness and the unconscious. Jung argues that the split in the psychic energy or libido is a hindrance in the individual. “As a result, the vital optimum withdraws more and more from the opposing extremes and seeks a middle way, which must naturally be irrational and unconscious, just because the opposites are rational and conscious” (CW 6: 326). For Jung, the middle path, as the natural flow of libido, means, “complete obedience to

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experience of the infinity of space, (6) Experience of the ‘infinity of consciousness’ (i.e. experience that consciousness is all-pervasive), (7) Realisation of the essential no-thing-ness of all empirical things, and (8) the State of ‘neither-perception-nor-perception’ (= deep trance) (Schumann, 1973: 74).

<sup>11</sup> An *Arahat* is different from a Buddha in that he owes his deliverance to instruction. The honorary title ‘Buddha’ is for those who realise salvation through their own insight.

<sup>12</sup> This statement suggests that Jung did not understand the concept of the no-self (*annata*) in Buddhism. As mentioned earlier Buddhism speaks of no-self, which is not a permanent or independent self but is empty of such a self.

the fundamental laws of human nature, and there can positively be no higher moral principle than harmony with natural laws that guide the libido in the direction of life's optimum" (CW 6: 356). He asserts that the vital optimum cannot be found in egoism, nor in a craving for individual supremacy. But, "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" (CW 6: 356). Jung went on to state that, "Since the middle position, as a function of mediation between the opposites, possesses an irrational character and is still unconscious, it appears projected in the form of a mediating god, a Messiah" (Ibid., 326). Jung argues that in the primitive Western form of religion, "the new bearer of life appears as a God or Saviour who, in his fatherly love and solicitude or from his own inner resolve, puts an end to the division as and when it suits him and for reasons we are not fitted to understand" (Ibid., 326). Although this conception may seem to be childish, Jung stresses it is an essential process. Jung observed that in the East this process has been common practice for years. Jung states,

The East has for thousands of years been familiar with this process and has founded on it a psychological doctrine of salvation which brings the way of deliverance within man's ken and capacity. Thus the religions of India and China, and particularly Buddhism which combines the spheres of both, possess the idea of a redemptive middle way of magical efficacy which is attainable by means of a conscious attitude. The Vedic conception is a conscious attempt to find release from the pairs of opposites in order to reach the path of redemption.

(CW 6: 326)

There is a clear difference between Jung's understanding of the Middle Path and the Buddhist position. The former indicates the natural flow of libido between the unconscious and the conscious, seeking for a psychic totality, whereas the latter refers to the path which avoids the extreme of eternalism and annihilationalism and leads to a termination of suffering, *nibbana*. This section has shown that Jung was familiar with the fundamental concepts of Hinayana Buddhism but has argued, however, that Jung's interpretation differs from Hinayana Buddhist thought, as Jung failed to understand Buddhist thought within its own traditions and cultures. We can see that the aim of Jung's hermeneutical exercise is not to convey Buddhist thought to

Westerners but to interpret these Buddhist ideas within his own psychological thinking in order to make sense of such foreign ideas to Westerners.

### 3.2 Mahayana Buddhist tradition

This section examines Jung's understanding of Mahayana Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism, also known as the 'Great Vehicle' (across the ocean of suffering), appeared in India about four hundred years after the Buddha's death, and as such is a more recent tradition than Hinayana Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism developed new ways to emancipation and made this goal accessible to a wider range of human types than the older Hinayana Buddhism. While the Mahayanins claim the Hinayana is merely the introductory part of the teaching of the Buddha, the Hinayanins call the Mahayana a distortion of what Gotama taught. Apparently Jung paid considerable attention to Mahayana Buddhism, and wrote psychological commentaries for translations of particular Mahayana texts of Tibetan and Zen Buddhism. He also gave lectures on Pure Land Buddhist meditation. However, Jung only looked at these specific texts and teachings. Most of the other Mahayana traditions are excluded from his attention. Jung also knew that Buddhism was divided between the Hinayana and the Mahayana traditions, but he did not provide a detailed account of the conceptual differences between these traditions. Jung did, however, draw a distinction between them in terms of the existence of gods: the former has no gods but the latter has many of them. In his account of Hinayana Buddhism, Jung asserts,

In Hinayana Buddhism – the original small school of Indian Buddhism<sup>13</sup> – there were no gods apparently. But if you know that Buddha's first teaching was over against a pantheon of two million Hindu gods, you quite understand why he did not feel the need of inventing new ones. He was already sick of all those gods so he ceased talking of them.

(NZ I: 69)

Here Jung misunderstood the Hinayana Buddhist conception of the gods. Hinayana Buddhism is not atheistic but transpolytheistic. Buddhism incorporated the gods of India who were perceived to be less powerful than the Buddha himself. J. M. Reynolds argues,

The Buddha was neither an atheist nor an agnostic in the modern sense. On the contrary, since He was the Buddha, the enlightened one, He was one who

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<sup>13</sup> This may be Sinhalese but Jung made no mention of it.

understood directly the nature of existence – not only human existence, but the nature of the existence of all types of sentient beings. The Devas<sup>14</sup> have a different karmic vision than we do as humanity, resulting from different karmic causes. The Devas, therefore, exist in a different dimension than our conventional human reality. They are superior to human beings in a large number of respects, having great clairvoyant powers and a much longer life-span, measured in divine years rather than human terms. Nonetheless, they are samsaric beings; they are not enlightened beings, nor are they all-knowing or all-powerful.

(Reynolds, 1989: 96)

In his account of the distinction between Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism, Jung went on to state,

When Buddhism first reached the barbarous people behind the borders of India, it came quite naked, without gods, because there were already two million gods in India. They were simply swamped by them, so, of course, as Buddhism was a sort of protest against the prevailing Hinduism, they thought they did not need them. They thought the decisive action took place in the sphere of man and not of the gods; even the gods had to become men in order to be redeemed. But when Buddhism reached Nepal, Tibet, and China, that condition of the Hinayana, the so-called small vessel, did not fit. They found there only the old tribal gods and fetishes and shamans, and all sort of black magic, like the Bung religion in Tibet. So Buddhism instantly felt the need of gods again, and they had a series of prophets who revealed the existence of the Mahayana deities. The ideas of the bodhisattvas [*sic*], who became even more important than Buddha himself, originated then, and all the goddesses, like Kwan Yin and the white Tara. They naturally had to invent female gods, of course, not artificially, but through special revelation for this purpose, coming from the unconscious.

(NZ I: 97)

Jung's account of Mahayana Buddhism also contains erroneous statements. In India, there were 330 million gods and not two million. In contrast with Jung's statement on the gods in Buddhism, Indian Mahayana Buddhism developed many transcendent Buddhas and *Bodhisattvas*, existing in many regions of the universe. A number of these saviour beings, Buddhas and *Bodhisattvas* became objects of devotion and prayer, and greatly added to the appeal and missionary success of the Mahayana (Harvey, 1990: 91). These deities are later assimilated and transformed in Tibet and China. Jung's account of the distinction between Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism is very far from the historical truth and is imprecise due to his lack of reading and knowledge of Buddhist materials.

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<sup>14</sup> *Devas* are Sanskrit terms for gods. They are not the creator of the world but represent only one type of sentient existence within the world.

In comparison with Jung's view of the differences between Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism, Schumann summarises as follows (Schumann, 1973: 91-3): firstly the Hinayana tradition regards suffering as real, whereas the Mahayana tradition regards it as an illusion. Secondly, the Hinayana tradition denies a 'true being' or transcendental self behind phenomena and avoids making metaphysical statements, whereas the Mahayana tradition teaches an Eternal Absolute, which is both transcendent and imminent in *Samsara*. Thus Gotama, the Buddha, is considered as a projection of the *Dharmakaya* (truth-body) and the Absolute in the Mahayana. By contrast, the Hinayana tradition regards him as only a natural man himself and a teacher.<sup>15</sup> Thirdly, Hinayana Buddhism insists that liberation can only be achieved by one's own effort, whereas the Mahayana tradition considers assistance from outside as a possible way to deliverance. Moreover, Harvey points out that Mahayana Buddhism emphasises the *Bodhisattva* path - the person who enters this path aspires to be compassionate and self-sacrificing in order to build up moral and spiritual perfections not only for his own exalted state of Buddhahood, but also as to be able to aid others by teaching, good deeds, 'merit' transference, and offering response to prayers (Harvey, 1990: 94). Fourthly, The Hinayanins, except Mahasanghikas, see their immediate goal in reaching *nirvana* (Pali. *nibbana*). Most Mahayanins, on the other hand, have set themselves the intermediate goal of Bodhisattvahood in order to lead all beings to liberation, since for them their own liberation is of secondary importance. The primary importance for the Mahayanins is to aid others and transfer merit for them. Fifthly, the Hinayana tradition understands *nirvana* as victory over *samsara* and the final exit from the world. On the contrary, the unconditioned *nirvana* is not seen as a *dharma* different from conditioned *dharmas* of *samsara*, in that both are found to be emptiness. Harvey points out that: "*Nirvana* is not attained by the eradication of anything real, namely defilements, but by the non-construction of the conditioned world of *samsara*... *Nirvana* and *samsara* are not two separate realities, but the field of emptiness, seen by either spiritual ignorance or true knowledge"

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<sup>15</sup> Beatrice Lane Suzuki (1981) argues that the Mahasanghikas school of Hinayana Buddhism viewed the Buddha not only as a man like us but also as an eternal and ideal infinite power (B.L. Suzuki, 1981: 31). M. Pye (1979) asserts that the tale of the Buddha's life was often mythologised in cosmic terms in which the Buddha could scarcely be conceived of as an ordinary man but as the major identifier, almost the revealer, of the basic character of human existence. Pye argues that, "Since he himself was

(Harvey, 1990: 103). Furthermore, the Mahayanists believe that *nirvana* is something already present in *samsara*. This non-duality of *samsara* and *nirvana* is fully realised when Buddhahood – *nirvana* in the highest sense – is reached. Harvey asserts that, “The nature of Buddhahood, ‘Buddhanness’ (*buddhata*), is of course emptiness, as is the nature of everything. Because of this all beings are seen to have a nature which is non-different from Buddhanness” (Harvey, 1990: 104). Thus the task of beings is not to attain something they do not already possess, but to uncover and know their Buddhanness (Harvey, 1990: 104). One of the central Mahayana concepts is skilful means (*upaya-kausalya*). The task of the *Bodhisattva* is to not only seek to mature his or her own wisdom but also to skilfully help beings to achieve enlightenment. The skilful means enable him to reconcile the wisdom (*prajna*) with his compassion (*karuna*), and thus urges him to work for the salvation of all beings, for such empty fluxes do experience themselves as suffering beings.

### 3.2.1 *Bodhisattvas*

The *Bodhisattva* is one of several core teachings of Mahayana Buddhism. The *Bodhisattva* is the name for those beings (*sattva*) who strive systematically for enlightenment (*bodhi*), that is Buddhahood. Their task is to compassionately help beings to achieve enlightenment while maturing their own wisdom (*prajna*). The way of achieving enlightenment is called the *Bodhisattva* path. The purpose of the *Bodhisattva* path is to strive for Buddhahood for its own sake, and for the sake of helping suffering beings. The *Bodhisattva*-path is practised by developing a number of perfections (*paramita*) and progressing through the ten *Bodhisattva* stages (*bhumi*).<sup>16</sup> Jung was familiar with the idea of the *bodhisattva* in relation to his concept of archetypes but he did not address the *Bodhisattva* Path directly in his writings. In his account of the *Bodhisattva* as the archetypal figure, Jung asserts,

In India... there is the idea of the savior or reaper that appears every thousands years, in the series of the incarnated bodhisattvas; for instance, the bodhisattva

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taken to represent in person the principle of enlightenment, it is perhaps not surprising that he was declared to be a ‘great man’ or indeed a ‘superman’ (Pye, 1979: 4).

<sup>16</sup> The ten stages are: (1) the perfection of generosity (*dana*), (2) the perfection of moral virtue (*sila*), (3) the perfection of patience (*ksanti*), (4) the perfection of vigour (*virya*), (5) , the perfection of meditation (*dhyana*), (6) the perfection of wisdom (*prajna*), (7) the perfection of the skilful means (*upaya*), (8) the perfection of transferring the kamic merit to unliberated beings (*parinamana*), (9) the perfection of the power (*bala*), and (10) the perfection of knowledge (*jnana*) (Harvey, 1990: 122-4).



of the past world, Buddha Amitabha, and Buddha Sakya Muni of the real actual world, and Buddha Maitraya of the coming worlds; and there are many others because there have been many other worlds. Buddha Amitabha is one of the most important ones. Particularly worshipped in Japan, he is the Buddha of clarity, of truth; and Maitraya, who is still to come, is the Buddha of perfect love. It is the same idea of periodicity. And this is based upon such experience as Nietzsche's of the archetypal figure of the wise old man: that is, an exceedingly historical figure which brings with it the flavor of past centuries, a feeling of the actual presence of remote times, as if time were at a complete standstill, and 5000 B.C were just in the next room to A.D 2000.

(NZ I: 13)

Jung did not make a significant distinction between the Buddha and the *Bodhisattva* in his writings. For Jung both are projections of the archetypal contents of the unconscious, that is to say, the symbol of the self, representing a totality of the psyche, both the conscious and the unconscious.

### **3.2.2 *Trikaya* (the three bodies): *Dharmakaya*, *Sambhogakaya*, *Nirmanakaya***

By around 300 AD, the early Mahayana ideas on the nature of Buddhas were systematised by the Yogacarins into the *Trikaya* or Three-body doctrine.<sup>17</sup> The framework of Mahayana belief sees Buddhahood as having three aspects: the *Nirmanakaya*, the *Sambhogakaya*, and the *Dharmakaya*. The *Nirmanakaya* or the transformation body refers to earthly Buddhas, such as the historical Buddha Gotama, who expounded the *dharma* in the world. They are seen as teaching devices compassionately projected into the world to show people the path to Buddhahood. Some texts see them as actual beings of flesh and blood, whereas others, such as the *Suvarna-bhasottama Sutra*, see them as mere appearances. At death they are generally withdrawn back into the heavenly Buddha, or even Great Being *Bodhisattva*, who manifested them (Harvey, 1990: 126). The *Sambhogakaya* or the body of bliss (enjoyment body) is seen as the transcendent Buddhas, for it is a form in which he can appear to and teach beings through visionary experiences. The *Sambhogakaya* Buddhas are seen as mental creations, as ideations of the *Bodhisattvas*: to the *Bodhisattva* his ideal becomes so vivid and alive that it takes shape as a subjective reality. The transcendent Buddhas are held to be manifestations of the Buddhahood and therefore of a higher degree of reality than the objects of the

material world (Schumann, 1973: 103-4). The mechanism and purpose of these creations is that they are mental projections for teaching as skilful means (*upaya*). Each *Sambhogakaya* Buddha is seen as presiding over his own 'Buddha Land' (*Buddha-ksetra*), the world-system where he finally attained Buddhahood in its Akanistha heaven. Such lands are called 'Pure Land,' mystical universes created by the appropriate Buddha. The most popular transcendent Buddha is *Amitabha* who is also called *Amitayus* or *Amida* in the Pure Land *Sukhavati*. In the Mahayana, the *Dharmakaya* or the *dharma*-body refers to the ultimate nature both of Buddha and reality, and has two meanings. The first is the 'Knowledge-body' (*Jnana-kaya*), which is the inner nature shared by all Buddhas, that is, their Buddha-ness (*buddhata*). It is the omniscient knowledge, perfect wisdom and spiritual qualities through which a *Bodhisattva* becomes a Buddha. The second is the 'Self-existent-body' (*Svabhavikakaya*), which refers to the ultimate nature of reality, thusness and emptiness (*sunya*), that is, their *dharma*-ness (*dharmata*). It is attaining Buddhahood, *Nirvana* (Harvey, 1990: 125-8).

Jung discussed the concept of *Trikaya* in his psychological commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* (1939). Very significantly, Jung argues, "the *Trikaya* is the All-Enlightened Mind itself" (CW 11: 790). In this sentence, the Mind, for Jung, means, "the Eastern equivalent of our concept of the unconscious, more particularly of the collective unconscious" (CW 11: 807). Thus *Trikaya* is the realisation of the One Mind, namely, the unconscious. Jung explained each of the Three-bodies as follows,

The unconscious is the root of all experience of oneness (*dharmakaya*), the matrix of all archetypes or structural patterns (*sambhogakaya*), and the *conditio sine qua non* of the phenomenal world (*nirmanakaya*).

(CW 11: 790)

Jung argues the peaceful and wrathful deities, which play a great role in the mediations of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, symbolise a pair of opposites. Such gods are, "archetypal thought-forms belonging to the *sambhogakaya*" (CW 11: 791). Tibetan Buddhists regard the *sambhogakaya* as an important concept for the understanding of the deities of the *Bardo* visions. In *Sambhogokaya*, which belongs

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<sup>17</sup> Yogacara is one of the philosophical schools in Mahayana Buddhism. The details will be discussed later in this chapter.

to the sphere of spiritual experience beyond sensory images and perceptions, the reality manifests itself in radiant beings like the *Bodhisattva* and the meditation-buddhas. In the realm of the *Sambhogakaya* is the *Chönyid bardo* (one of the three intermediate states between death and rebirth), where the dead person slowly perceives the rays of the five elements, which develop into light and visionary images of the peaceful and wrathful deities. If the person can recognise that these visions are projections of his own mind and overcome the fear they inspire to be able to move towards them, he will be liberated and will not be subjected to further rebirth. But if not, one passes into the third intermediate state after death, the *Shidpa bardo*. Jung's exposition of *Sambhogakaya* and that of Tibetan Buddhism are similar, in that both emphasise that visions of the deities are mental creations or projections of one's own mind. I will discuss in detail Jung's relationship to Tibetan Buddhist materials in Chapter Four.

Jung asserts, "In the *nirmanakaya* these opposites are no more than human conflicts, but in the *sambhogakaya* they are the positive and negative principles united in one and the same figure" (CW 11: 791). In *dharmakaya* these opposites are dissolved into absolute unity and formlessness. Jung argues,

The psyche is... all-important; it is the all-pervading Breath, the Buddha-essence; it is the Buddha-Mind, the One, the Dharmakaya. All existence emanates from it, and all separate forms dissolve back into it.

(CW 11: 771).

It is important to emphasise here that Jung made a close parallel between the Buddhist doctrine of *Trikaya* and the path of the individuation process. This statement above demonstrates Jung's psychological reductionism, that is, Jung brought his own psychological assumption into the concept of *Dharmakaya*, and interpreted it as a psychic unity of both the conscious and the unconscious, which is a goal of the individuation process. Jung's theory of the individuation process envisages the possibility of there being certain processes in the unconscious which compensate for the defects of the conscious attitude. When these unconscious compensations are made conscious through the analytical technique, they produce a change in the conscious attitude, which Jung regarded as a new level of consciousness. Jung asserts, "The first effect, however, is usually a conflict, because the conscious attitude resists the intrusion of apparently incompatible and extraneous tendencies, thoughts,

feelings, etc.” (CW 11: 779). Jung interpreted these human conflicts as occurring in the state of *nirmanakaya*, which is the phenomenal world. Jung then argues that the incompatible contents must not be suppressed again but must be accepted and integrated. The conscious suspension of suppressing the incompatible unconscious contents, then, is a new compensatory reaction in the unconscious. This reaction, which is usually manifested in dreams, is brought to conscious realisation in turn. The images in the dream are manifestations of the unconscious and Jung called them archetypes. Jung asserts,

it is necessary to give special attention to the images of the collective unconscious, because they are the source from which hints may be drawn for the solution of the problem of opposites. From the conscious elaboration of this material the transcendent function reveals itself as a mode of apprehension mediated by the archetypes and capable of uniting the opposites. By ‘apprehension’ I do not mean simply intellectual understanding, but understanding through experience. An archetype, as we have said, is a dynamic image, a fragment of the objective psyche, which can be truly understood only if experienced as an autonomous entity.

(CW 7: 184)

These archetypes or structural patterns, for Jung, are in the sphere of *sambhogakaya*. Jung argues that, “the unconscious compensation of a neurotic conscious attitude contains all the elements that could effectively and healthily correct the one-sidedness of the conscious mind if these elements were made conscious, i.e., were understood and integrated into it as realities” (CW 7: 187). Thus the healing factor is brought about through the unconscious compensation and consequently the conflict is satisfactorily resolved. Jung argued that in the state of *dharmakaya* these conflicts are dissolved into oneness, a psychic unity. This process as well as method is what Jung called the transcendent function. The transcendent function, “facilitates the transition from one psychic condition to another by means of the mutual confrontation of opposites” (CW 11: 780). Jung argues the transcendent function is a purely natural process which can sometimes be accomplished in the face of opposites. The meaning and purpose of the process is, “the realization, in all its aspects, of the personality originally hidden away in the embryonic germ-plasm; the production and unfolding of the original, potential wholeness” (CW 7: 186). This is what Jung called the individuation process.

It is important to note this psychological reductionism by Jung as he equated the *Dharmakaya* with his idea of the individuation process, and dismissed the meaning of the *Dharmakaya* in its own traditional context. Jung's approach to understanding *Dharmakaya* lacks what the phenomenologist of religion calls *epoché*, "the need to abstain from every kind of value-judgement, to be 'present' to the phenomenon in question purely as an impartial observer, un-concerned with questions of truth and falsehood" (Sharpe, 1975: 224). Thus Jung reduced the concept of these three-bodies into his idea of the transcendent function, in which the conflict between the conscious and the unconscious is resolved. Jung interpreted the *Dharmakaya* as a psychic totality of the conscious with the unconscious, which is the purpose of the individuation process. Hence, the concepts of *Trikaya* have a significant meaning for Jung, as he believed they provided him with a confirmation of his theory of individuation. Jung claims, "These formulations are extremely valuable from the psychological point of view as they provide a fitting terminology for such experiences" (Letters I: 257). Nevertheless, there are fundamental ontological differences between the concept of *Trikaya* in Mahayana Buddhism and Jung's use of it. In Mahayana Buddhism the *Trikaya* refers to the three aspects of Buddhahood, and is a teaching device to show people the path to Buddhahood, *nirvana*, whereas Jung interpreted it as the individuation process, seeking a psychic wholeness. Buddhist teaching does not discuss *nirvana* in terms of ontology, whereas Jung's discussion of the self, the goal of the individuation process, can be interpreted as assuming such an ontology, namely, a substance-like thing. Given that Jung's formative education was grounded in the Western tradition, which generally assumes a substance ontology, Jung failed to understand the difference between Buddhism and his psychology and interpreted Buddhist literatures in terms of the ontological assumptions with which he was familiar.

### 3.2.3 Madhyamika school

The Mahayana perspective is expressed both in *Sutras* and *Sastras* (treatises). These systematically present the outlook of particular Mahayana schools, based on *Sutras*, logic and meditation experience. In India the Mahayana developed two main philosophical schools: the Madhyamika school (or also known as *Sunyavada*), and

Yogacara school (or *Vijnanavada*). Both schools have had a major influence on Northern (Tibet, Nepal, and Sikkim) and Eastern Buddhism (Vietnam, China, Korea, and Japan). In the Madhyamika school there are two fundamental *Sutras*: the *Prajnaparamita* and the *Saddharmapundarika*. The Madhyamika school was founded by Nagarjuna (c. AD 150-250), who was born into a brahmin family in Central India.<sup>18</sup> The *Prajnaparamita* or ‘Perfection of Wisdom’ *Sutra* regards the world as a deceiving phenomenon or illusion (*maya*). For instance, there is something in experience which one can describe, but it does not have substantial existence. That is to say, what we experience does not exist in an absolute sense, but only in a relative way. Nagarjuna’s understanding of the Middle Way indicates that the nature of all things lies in between absolute non-existence and substantial existence (Harvey, 1990: 95-8).

From the Sunyatavadin perspective, each phenomenon lacks inherent nature, and thus all are said to share an empty ‘non-nature’ as their ‘nature’. In other words, their shared ‘nature’ is ‘emptiness’ (*sunyata*). Emptiness is not the substance of the world like the Brahman of the *Upanishads*. It implies that no such self-existent substance exists, because the world is a web of fluxing, interdependent, baseless phenomena. Harvey points out that, “Emptiness, then, is an adjectival quality of ‘*dharmas*’, not a substance which composes them. It is neither a thing nor is it nothingness; rather it refers to reality as incapable of ultimately being pinned down in concepts” (Harvey, 1990: 99). The Madhyamika school claims that there are two levels of truth to the Buddha’s teachings: the conventional truth (*samvrtisatra*) and the ultimate truth (*paramarthasatya*). The conventional truth employs conventional terms and makes use of logical arguments. Most people only understand this kind of language, as they are unable to think of what is beyond the phenomenal realm. The ultimate truth is expressed in terms of *dharma*, and is trans-logical, that is, transcends the language at the level of conventional truth. For instance, when the emptiness of all appearances is indicated as the absolute, we must apply the ultimate truth. However, the ultimate truth, such as attaining the bliss of *Nirvana*, is an inconceivable and inexpressible reality. The Sunyatavadin literature contains an elusive series of

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<sup>18</sup> The following works of Nagarjuna were preserved in Sanskrit: *Madhyamikasastra*, *Vigrahavyavartani*, *Ratnavali*, *Catuhstava*, *Mahayanavimsika*, *Sharmasangraha*, and *Suhrillekha*

subtle allusions to that which lies beyond words. This is the notion of *tathata*, thusness or suchness, and is equivalent to emptiness. In Sunyatavadin thought *Nirvana* is not seen as a *dharma* different from conditioned *dharmas* of *samsara*. The conditioned and the unconditioned cannot be differentiated because both are found to be emptiness. This means that all *dharmas* are nirvanic from the very beginning. Thus Harvey asserts, “*Nirvana* and *samsara* are not two separate realities, but the field of emptiness, seen by either spiritual ignorance or true knowledge” (Harvey, 1990: 103). In other words, to become aware of one’s essential emptiness is to achieve liberation from the cycle of rebirth.

Jung did not mention the Madhyamika school of Mahayana Buddhism. Nor did he discuss the concept of the Middle Way, which is one of the most important concepts of the Madhyamika school. As mentioned earlier, for Jung, the middle way simply indicates the natural flow of libido between a pair of opposites, namely, the conscious and the unconscious. However, the Madhyamika school is concept of the Middle Way, between affirming and non-affirming, was not discussed or properly understood by Jung. Yet, Jung did discuss the concept of *sunyata*, which is an essential concept in the Madhyamika school and also a key concept in order to understand Zen Buddhism. Jung argues,

‘*As long as Sunyata is cognized by a subject it remains object.*’ But when the subject enters *Sunyata* and becomes identical with it, the subject itself is *Sunyata*, namely void. And when the void is really void, there is not even a cognizing subject in it. The subject has vanished and there cannot be a consciousness of this fact, because there is nothing left any more. There can also be no memory of it, because there was nothing.

(Letters I: 263, Jung’s italics)

This statement suggests that Jung ontologised the concept of *sunyata*. In the Sunyatavadin perspective, *sunyata* is neither a thing nor is it nothingness. Jung went on to state that *sunyata* is the Buddhist paradox, “the non-existent existence, the being which is non-being, or the consciousness that is absolutely void” (DA: 467). Yet, this is not *sunyata* in the Mahayana Buddhist sense, as it is emptiness of ‘own-being.’ Jung attempted to see *sunyata* objectively but *sunyata* is non-objectifiable or non-substantial. Jung saw the idea of the void of consciousness as, “a consciousness that is not dominated by its contents” (DA: 467). Jung goes on to say,

These contents attack our consciousness with the fire of desire and we become possessed by them. The Buddhist idea of liberation is that we should not be devoured by them, we should rather be their masters; therefore one has to empty the conscious, as it were, of those overpowering contents.

(DA: 467-8)

Again this statement does not seem to indicate the concept of *sunyata* in the Sunyatavadin standpoint. Jung claims, however, “To experience *Sunyata* is ...an impossible experience by definition” (Letters I: 263), because, “it is absolutely impossible to know what I would experience when that ‘I’ which could experience didn’t exist any more” (Ibid., 263). This statement again suggests that Jung did not understand the experience of *sunyata*, because in the experience of *sunyata* ‘I’ does not disappear. *Sunyata* means that ‘I’ is empty of own being. According to Jung’s theory of psychic structure, the psyche consists of two complementary but antithetical spheres: the conscious and the unconscious. The ego is the centre of consciousness, and all our experience of the outer and inner worlds must pass through our ego in order to be perceived. Thus, “relations to the ego that are not perceived as such are the unconscious” (CW 6: 700). From this dualistic standpoint as well as his misunderstanding of *sunyata* in which the ego disappears, Jung came to a conclusion that *sunyata* signifies the unconscious. Jung asserts,

All psychic functioning without an ego has peculiar characteristics that adhere to every psychic fragment which is not the result of conscious functioning. Dreams, for instance, are not the result of conscious functioning in the main. They have therefore a peculiar character which we call unconscious. If the Indians would call sublime psychic experience ‘psyche’ or something equivalent to it, I would agree with them, but to call it consciousness cannot be substantiated by any evidence. If the highest psychic condition is *Sunyata*, then it cannot be consciousness, because consciousness is by definition the relationship between the subject and a representation. One is conscious of something. As long as you are conscious of *Sunyata* it is not *Sunyata*, because there is still a subject that is conscious of something. Void is even the void of consciousness

(Letters I: 249-50)

Jung went on to say,

void, is perhaps better described as a vast unconsciousness, holding so many contents that there is nothing there because nothing matters. This is the nearest approach I can give you to the idea of Nirvana: positive non-being or non-existent existence.

(DA: 468).



This statement seems to indicate that Jung was unable to grasp the concepts of *sunyata* and *nirvana*. Jung was apparently content with locating these concepts in the category of the unconscious. The closest Jung came to understanding *sunyata* is his statement regarding ‘positive non-being.’ But this is similar to Jung’s idea of Gnostic pleroma. In his own Gnostic myth, the ‘Seven Sermons to the Dead’ (1916) Jung asserts,

Nothingness is the same as fullness. In infinity full is no better than empty. Nothingness is both empty and full. As well might ye say anything else of nothingness, as for instance, white is it, or black, or again, it is not, or it is. A thing that is infinite and eternal hath no qualities, since it hath all qualities.

This nothingness or fullness we name the PLEROMA. Therein both thinking and being cease, since the eternal and infinite possess no qualities. In it no being is, for he then would be distinct from the pleroma, and would possess qualities which would distinguish him as something distinct from the pleroma.

In the pleroma there is nothing and everything. It is quite fruitless to think about the pleroma, for this would mean self-dissolution.

(Jung in Segal, 1992: 181-2)

R.A. Segal argues that Jung’s idea of Gnostic pleroma stands for primordial unconsciousness, since it is, “undifferentiated, so that none of the commonly assumed distinctions is yet made” (Segal, 1992: 39). Yet, *sunyata* is not the same as the unconscious in Jungian sense. Jung has ontologised the void into Gnostic pleroma. As mentioned earlier, Jung did not discuss the concept of the Middle Way from the Madhyamika school perspective. But the Middle Way is closely linked with the concept of *sunyata*. M. Abe (1992) argues,

the ultimate Buddhism is neither conditioned nor unconditioned, neither relative nor absolute, neither temporal nor eternal. Therefore, the Buddhist ultimate is called *sunyata* – that is, ‘Emptiness.’ It is also called the ‘Middle Way,’ because it is neither an eternalist view which insists on the existence of an unchanging eternal entity as the ultimate, nor an annihilationist view which maintains that everything is null and void.

(Abe, 1992: 130)

Why did Jung go wrong with understanding the concept of *sunyata*? One possible answer to this question lies in the historical development of interpretations of Buddhism in the West. Almond (1988) provides a historical survey of the discovery of Buddhism in the West, particularly in the Victorian period in Britain. Almond’s survey shows how Europeans interpreted Buddhism in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries and demonstrates distinct features in their understanding of

Buddhism. Almond argues that it was not unusual that among Victorians Buddhism was understood from an ontological perspective. From an ontological point of view, for instance, “the majority opinion throughout the nineteenth century was that Nirvana, *essentially*, entailed the annihilation of the individual” (Almond, 1988:102), and consequently, “the annihilationist interpretation of the doctrine of Nirvana came to determine the overall picture of Buddhism” (Ibid., 106). It is precisely in this approach that the concept of *sunyata* was understood by Jung. Thus, it is not surprising to recognise that under the influence of nineteenth and twentieth centuries Western thought Jung became a victim of Western ignorance on Buddhism. Jung’s ontological account of Buddhism can also be found in his approach to the concept of no-mind in Zen Buddhism. I will discuss this in more detail in Chapter Five.

### 3.2.4 Yogacara school

The Yogacara school emerged in the third century AD. The fundamental texts of the Yogacara school are the *Lanikavatara*, the *Avatamsaka* and the *Sandhinirmocana Sutras* of which only the first is preserved in Sanskrit. The Yogacara was founded by Asanga (fourth/fifth century). His teacher was Maitreya-(*natha*) (third/fourth century).<sup>19</sup> In time Asanga converted his half-brother Vasubandhu (fourth/fifth century) to Mahayana.<sup>20</sup> Asanga and Vasubandhu developed and systematised ideas of the Yogacara school. Asanga was a religious practitioner and particularly emphasised meditation (*dhyana*). He regarded the way to deliverance as the practice of yoga and he called the system Yogacara, ‘conduct in Yoga’. Vasubandhu, on the other hand, was more of a theoretician and explained all that exists as consciousness or mind and he called the system *Vijnanavada*, ‘consciousness doctrine’ (Schumann, 1973: 150).

The Yogacara school distinguishes between two layers of the mind (*citta*): the storehouse-consciousness (*alayavijnana*) and the thought-consciousness (*manovijnana* or *manas*). The storehouse-consciousness is an underlying unconscious level of mind, and all existing things spring from it. When a person performs actions

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<sup>19</sup> Maitreya’s historicity is questioned by scholars: he may have been a human teacher, or the heavenly *Bodhisattva* (Harvey, 1990: 104).

or *karmas*, seeds of his future karmic effects sink into the *alaya* (storehouse), a receptacle which actively stores them. Within the *alaya*, the karmic seeds are matured by the karmic impressions (*vasana*). Then these karmic seeds ripen into thinking (*manas*) or the thought-consciousness (*manvoijnana*). *Manas* splits the flow of experience into an experiencing subject and object. It then generates other forms of delusory discrimination (*vikalpa*), and takes the supposed subject as a real permanent self or I. This I-delusion becomes the source of craving, which eventually generate karmic seeds again to be stored in the *alaya* till they ripen into the future flow of experience. This cycle takes place within the mutual relationship between *alaya* and *manas*, and the Yogacarins see it as the wheel of rebirth (see Figure 3.1).

According to the Yogacara everything perceptible is only thought (*cittamatra*). In other words, our actual world is merely thought or a representation produced by consciousness. The central Yogacarins concept is the three modes of natures (*svabhava*): (1) the imagined (*parikalpita*), (2) the other dependent (*paratantra*), and (3) the absolutely accomplished (*parinispanna*). The *parikalpita* is what is structured by the subject/object discrimination. It is the common sense world of self, people and things but is just an illusory appearance. The *paratantra* is the level of relative reality in the form of the flow of changing mental phenomena, arising dependent on one another. It is not the highest level of reality because it generates the subject/object duality and constructs the unreal world. The *parinispanna* is the highest nature at the absolutely real level without subject/object duality, in which knowledge is perfected due to directly knowing the world as representation only.

The first two natures are the basis of defilement and thus of suffering. In deep meditation the mind gradually overcomes the tendency to interpret experiences as external objects. As this tendency diminishes, consciousness is perceived as more real than the 'objective' world. Then, the transcending of any object leads to the collapse of any notion of subject, and so arises the experience of transcendent knowledge beyond the subject/object duality. This is the realisation of the 'absolutely accomplished'. *Nirvana* is reached by the reversal of basis (*asraya-paravrtti*), which is a momentous spiritual transition or a shattering upheaval which takes place in *alaya*

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<sup>20</sup> Asanga and Vasubandhu were brothers from a brahmin family in Purusapura, (today's Peshawar, in Pakistan). Before their conversion to Mahayana they are said to have been adherents of the

in its form as *manas*. It is where the usual flow of the worldly mind suddenly stops, so that the main senses of consciousness no longer present information. Having stopped discriminating ‘objects’ in the flow of the six consciousness, *manas* turns around from these and attains direct intuitive knowledge of *alaya* at its base. Because of this, *alaya* is no longer capable of carrying karmic seeds, as its deluding nature is seen through. The intuition thus penetrates to the non-dual depths of *alaya*, the *Dharma*-realm which is ultimate reality, so that everything is seen as ‘thought-only in the highest sense’. In the mirror of *manas*, the unknowing *alaya* has gained knowledge of its inner nature, so that *nirvana* is the *alaya*-consciousness realised inwardly, after a reversal has taken place (Harvey, 1990: 104-112).

Jung did not use the term Yogacara but he discussed some of the concepts of the Yogacara school in his commentaries on Tibetan Buddhism, which was influenced by the Yogacara school of thought. Moreover, Jung frequently took up the issue of the Buddhist concept of the wheel of birth and discussed it a great deal. There are similarities between the Yogacara school’s concept of the storehouse consciousness (*alayavijnana*) and Jung’s idea of the unconscious. J.M. Reynolds (1989) asserts, “In Buddhist terms, what Dr. Jung is talking about when he speaks of the unconscious is the Alaya or Kunzhi (*kun-gzhi*), ‘the receptacle or store-house of consciousness’” (Reynolds, 1989: 111). R. Moacanin (1986) examines this similarity, and argues that, like the *alaya*, Jung’s concept of the unconscious includes, “future contents of the conscious psyche, and anticipates future conscious processes,” and also contains ancestral deposits accumulated since immemorial time” (Moacanin, 1986: 74). These two aspects of the unconscious are based on the fact that the unconscious is “the matrix of all potentialities” (CW 14: 253), as well as “a creative factor” (CW 16: 62). Moacanin argues that the unconscious is like a treasure-house, which, “is the source of all inspiration, creativity and of wisdom” (Moacanin, 1986: 74). The role of the unconscious is to correct the biases of the conscious mind through a symbolic language, and compensate its one-sidedness with a non-rational perception which reveals a more comprehensive meaning. Moacanin asserts, therefore, “the unconscious may be a valuable guide pointing the way to one’s true destination, a

destination that is true to one's self and not falsified by prejudices of the conscious mind" (Moacanin, 1986: 75).

The later developments of Mahayana Buddhism - the Tantric, Pure Land, and Zen traditions which spread into Northern and Eastern parts of Asia - are of great significance to understanding Jung and the development of his ideas. Jung's understanding of Tantric and Zen Buddhism is discussed in Chapters Four and Five respectively. Jung's understanding of Pure Land Buddhism, particularly its method of meditation, is examined in the following section.

### **3.3 The practice of Buddhist meditation**

#### **3.3.1 Theravada meditation: Calm and insight mediation (*Jhanic* and formless state meditation)**

Harvey argues that Buddhist meditation practice is the most important method in the development of wisdom (Pali. *panna*, Skt. *prajna*). Meditation requires the guidance of a meditation teacher, known in the Theravada tradition as one's 'good friend' (*kalyanamitta*), as meditation involves a subtle skill which cannot be properly conveyed by written teachings. The teacher guides his pupil through difficulties and guards against inappropriate use of the powerful means of self-transformation which meditation provides. Most meditation is performed with the legs crossed in the lotus position, with the hands together in the lap, and the back straight. The general effects of meditation are a gradual increase in calm and awareness. The practice of meditation differs according to the different traditions and schools of Buddhism (Harvey, 1990: 244-5).

Theravada meditation is based on a moral virtue to use right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration as mental tools in order to cultivate one's own wisdom. Right effort helps to develop and sustain the meditative state and prevent the meditator from falling into an unskilful state of mind. Right mindfulness is an awareness which does not drift along the surface of things but is a thorough observation. Thus mindfulness observes without judgement or habitual reaction, and acknowledges what is actually there in the flow of experience. Right concentration is a state of *samadhi*, in which one's full attention is focussed on a chosen object, and his or her mind becomes free from all distraction, in a state of inner stillness. This

will be achieved on the basis of right effort as well as right mindfulness. The development of concentration and mindfulness to high degrees is called *Samatha*, or 'Calm' meditation, in which an object is chosen, and concentration is focussed on it until a state of tranquillity arises (see Table 3.1). *Kasina-mandala* or 'universal-circles' are used as chosen objects for the meditation. A meditator concentrates on the circle until he can clearly see a mental image in his mind. Mindfulness of breathing (*anapana-sati*) is also a common calm meditation. The breathing method induces calm, and at a certain state a mental image or sign (*nimitta*) arises, which becomes a focus of attention in a state of deep inner stillness.

As the meditator learns to work with the mental image, he has to gradually suspend the five hindrances which obstruct further progress: (1) sensual desire, (2) ill-will, (3) sloth, (4) restlessness and worry, and (5) fear of commitment. Once the hindrances are suspended, the image becomes much brighter and subtler in form. This is the stage of 'access concentration' (*upacara-samadhi*), which is access to the full concentration of *jhana*. Working with the image constructs the five factors of *jhana*: (1) applied thought, the process of projecting the mind onto the object; (2) examination, which leads to the mind remaining on the object; (3) joy, a feeling of bliss pervading the entire body; (4) happiness, a feeling of deep concentration; and (5) 'one pointedness of mind,' which is a unification of the mind on the object. In fact these factors are the first of a set of four *ghanas*. As the meditation proceeds, the meditator drops certain *jhana* factors and cultivates a deeper degree of calm until he reaches the fourth *jhana*, in which the mind rests with unshakeable equanimity.<sup>21</sup> From this point the further four 'formless attainment' (*arupa-samapatti*) can be pursued. The meditator concentrates on: (1) infinite space, (2) infinite consciousness, (3) nothingness, and (4) neither-cognition-nor-non-cognition. From the highest formless state, a meditator can reach the level of the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samapatti*), in which the mind totally shuts down, without any cognition or feeling, and he can attain *Nirvana*. However, it is said that only *Arhat* can attain this state.

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<sup>21</sup> From the fourth *jhana*, higher knowledge (*abhinna*) can also be developed: Psychic powers (*iddhi*), Clairaudience (the ability to hear sounds at great distance, including the speech of the gods), Mind-reading, memory of previous lives, Clairvoyance, and *Nirvana*. The last three are called threefold knowledge (*tevijja*) and lead to the attainment of *Nirvana* (Harvey, 1990: 252).

### 3.3.2 Theravada meditation: Insight meditation (*Vipassana* meditation)

The second principal way of meditation, known as ‘Insight’ meditation (*Vipassana*), is to generate a high degree of mindfulness, based on right effort and concentration. Insight meditation is often combined with calm meditation, as both calm and insight are necessary elements for the experience of *Nibbana*.<sup>22</sup> The fundamental framework for developing Insight practice is known as ‘the four foundations of mindfulness’ (*sati-patthana*) which are described in the *Maha-sati-patthana Sutra*. The four foundations are body, feelings, states of mind, and *dhammas*. During meditation, the mind observes various physical sensations as they occur. Then feelings are observed as they arise and pass away. Mindfulness then moves on to states of mind, observing moods and emotions as they arise. Finally, mindfulness investigates *dhammas*, notices when they are present and absent, and how they come to arise and cease. The aim of these investigations is to recognise their shared features, which is known as the ‘three marks of conditioned things’: impermanence, illness, and not-self. E. Conze (1975) argues all the conditioned phenomena which take place in the interval between birth and death are impermanent because of their constant arising and ceasing. Since the conditioned phenomena are impermanent, therefore they are also ill, “owing to the fact that they are constantly molested (by rise and fall), that they are hard to bear, that they are the basis of suffering, and that they are opposite to Ease” (Conze, 1975: 148). They are also not-self because of the fact that they are empty of ability, or cannot be controlled at will, as opposed to the self. Once these have occurred during the meditation, the mind can come to turn away from them and perceive *Nibbana*.

The stages of development within insight meditation are based on a scheme of seven purifications. The first two relate to morality and Calm, and the other five relate to Insight. In the third purification, no being is seen apart from changing mental and physical phenomena. In the fourth purification, insight into Conditioned Origination starts to develop, so that the tendency to think of self-identification starts to diminish. In the fifth purification, clearer insight leads to the arising of ten defilements of insight, such as flashes of light and knowledge and great joy. In the sixth purification, a series of direct forms of knowledge develop, such as focusing on

the cessation of each passing phenomena, and a desire for deliverance from such conditioned phenomena. In the seventh purification, the mind finally lets go of conditioned phenomena, and attains the unconditioned *Nibbana*.<sup>23</sup>

### 3.3.3 Jung's understanding of Buddhist meditation

Eastern meditation was frequently addressed and considered by Jung. However, Jung did not provide a comprehensive account of meditation in the Theravada Buddhist tradition, but more frequently discussed particular types of Mahayana meditation: the Pure Land, Tantric and Zen Buddhist meditation practices. Jung frequently used the term *yoga* which, in his view, also means meditation. H. Coward (1985) argues,

For Carl Jung, yoga is a general term indicating all of Eastern thought and psychological practice. In his writings yoga is used to designate Eastern traditions as diverse as Hinduism, Indian Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, Japanese Buddhism and Chinese Taoism.

(Coward, 1985: 3)

Thus, it is confusing that Jung invariably did not specify which yoga tradition or Buddhist meditation practice he was discussing. Nevertheless, Buddhist meditation has a significant status in terms of Jung's idea of the unconscious. Jung says,

Through *dhyana*, through the sinking and deepening of contemplation, the conscious has evidently taken on form. It is as if the light of consciousness had ceased to illuminate the objects of the outer world of the senses and now illuminates the darkness of the unconscious.

(CW 11: 938)

P. Bishop (1993) argues that, "Jung did not fully appreciate Buddhist meditation. He tended to see meditative concentration and absorption (*samadhi*) as an unconscious state" (Bishop, 1993: 49). Jung interpreted the state of *samadhi* as, "the dissolution of the consciousness in the unconscious" (NZ II: 1364). The problem of the concept of *samadhi* is that in Jung's view the state of *samadhi*, in which "the unconscious has swallowed up ego-consciousness" (CW 9i: 520), is equivalent to a state of psychosis. Thus the ego-consciousness has to exist along with the unconscious. Jung asserts,

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<sup>22</sup> There are three ways of developing meditation: Insight preceded by Calm, which is known as 'vehicle of Calm' (*Samatha-yana*); Calm preceded by Insight, known as 'vehicle of Insight' (*Vipassana-yana*); and Calm-and-Insight-yoked-together' (Harvey, 1990: 253-4).

<sup>23</sup> This is perceived either as the signless, which is devoid of graspable signs; as the undirected, which lies beyond goal-directedness in the conditioned phenomena; or as emptiness (*sunyata*), which is void of ego-feeling and incapable of conceptualisation. (Harvey, 1990: 256).



The yogi attains the state of *nirdvandva* (freedom from opposites) in the rigid lotus position of non-conscious, non-acting *samadhi*. But the ordinary man stands between the opposites and knows that he can never abolish them. There is no good without evil, and no evil without good. The one conditions the other, but it does not become the other or abolish the other.

(CW 18: 1417)

Jung believes that the psyche of the European is differently constituted from that of the Asian and that consequently the practice of yoga in the West must be regarded as damaging to the psychic development of the individual. Jung drew a sharp contrast between Eastern and Western mentalities, which Jung believed are important differences. Jung saw, for instance, the East/West differences such as Western materialism and rationalism on the one hand, and Eastern spirituality and mysticism on the other. Jung elaborated East and West psychic relativism in terms of the introverted and extraverted distinction. Clarke argues, “Jung’s discussion of the relationship between Eastern and Western mentalities is pervaded by the assumption that East represented a distinct and opposites, though complementary, psychological type” (Clarke, 1994: 22). Jung believed that both Western and Eastern mentalities are one-sided – incomplete science and incomplete yoga, and that both are understood in terms of complementary opposites. Jung observed that,

the two standpoints, however contradictory, each have their psychological justification. Both are one-sided in that they fail to see and take account of those factors which do not fit in with their typical attitudes. The one underrates the world of consciousness, the other the world of the One Mind. The result is that, in their extremism, both lose one half of the universe; their life is shut off from total reality.

(CW 11: 786)

Jung believed that the Eastern mentality is fundamentally different from the Western as it has emerged from quite different history and cultural traditions. Consequently, Jung warns against Western application of Eastern religious practices. Jung wrote,

If I remain so critically averse to yoga, it does not mean that I do not regard this spiritual achievement of the East as one of the greatest things the human mind has ever created. I hope my exposition makes it sufficiently clear that my criticism is directed solely against the application of yoga to the peoples of entirely different lines from that of the East and has therefore produced conditions which are the most unfavourable soil one can think of for the application of yoga.

(CW 11: 876)

Leon Schlamm (2000) calls into question Jung's account of these psychic differences between East and West by exploring his letter to Oskar Schmitz, who is the author of the *Psychoanalyse und yoga*, written in 1923.<sup>24</sup> Schlamm argues that in this letter Jung claims, "whereas the Indian psyche experienced a healthy, uninterrupted religious development from the most primitive to the most spiritual states of consciousness, this development was aborted within the European psyche by its premature, psychically wounding, encounter with Roman Christianity" (Schlamm, 2000: 5). Due to the historical suppression of its indigenous polytheism, in European psyche there is a chasm between an undeveloped primitive form of culture and religion on the one hand and Christianity on a much higher level on the other. Thus Jung believed that "the only way to address the problem of the mutilation of the European psyche today is to attempt to encourage the repressed energy of the primitive in man to develop - through a confrontation with the unconscious - in order to facilitate the flow of libido, the source of psychic vitality, into consciousness" (Schlamm, 2000: 5). Schlamm argues that "only by overcoming the split in the European psyche between the undeveloped, but dangerous, energy of the primitive and his own higher spiritual civilisation can a new experience of God be created, but this cannot be triggered by yoga exercises, which are experienced by the European, although not by the Indian, as

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<sup>24</sup> In this letter Jung wrote,

The product of the Oriental mind are based on its own peculiar history, which is radically different from ours. Those peoples 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. The Germanic tribes, when they collided only the day before yesterday with Roman Christianity, were still in the initial state of a polydemonism with polytheistic buds. There was as yet no proper priesthood and no proper ritual. Like Wotan's oaks, the gods were felled and a wholly incongruous Christianity, born of monotheism on a much higher cultural level, was grafted upon the stumps. The Germanic man is still suffering from this mutilation. I have good reasons for thinking that every step beyond the existing situation has to begin down there among the truncated nature-demons. In other words, there is a whole lot of primitivity in us to be made good.

It therefore seems to me a grave error if we graft yet another foreign growth onto our already mutilated condition. It would only make the original injury worse. This craving for things foreign and faraway is a morbid sign. Also, we cannot possibly get beyond our present level of culture unless we receive a powerful impetus from our primitive roots. But we shall receive it only if we go back behind our cultural level, thus giving the suppressed primitive man in ourselves a chance to develop... We need some new foundation. We must dig down to the primitive in us, for only out of the conflict between civilised man and the Germanic barbarian will there come what we need: a new experience of God. I do not think this goal can be reached by means of artificial exercises.

(Letters I : 1973, 39-40)

of a wholly spiritual nature and therefore divorced from the world of his instinctual experience” (Schlamm, 2000: 5).

From these observations Jung concludes that yoga practice constitutes a “royal road to the unconscious” (CW 11: 827) for the Indian, whereas the European inevitably misuses it to strengthen his will, in order to repress his unconscious contents, rather than exploring their many undeveloped, primitive features. Therefore Jung claims that the intensity and narrowness of the European consciousness have a prohibiting effect on the unconscious, and that this effect should not be further emphasised by yoga which applies itself exclusively to the conscious mind, and is incapable of bringing about detachment from unconscious contents. Instead of a direct application of Eastern techniques, Jung argues, “we should then be in a position to built our own ground with our own methods” (CW 11: 773). Jung suggested that the Western alternative to yoga is his own method of active imagination in which, under the supervision of a therapist, the patient is “switching off consciousness, at least to a relative extent, thus giving the unconscious contents a chance to develop” (CW 11: 875). This is, Jung claims, an especially suitable method for the Western psyche. Through this technique for liberating the unconscious from its rigidity, Jung believes he can re-unite spirit with instinct, the civilised with the primitive, within the European psyche, and thereby heal its tragic wound, created by the imposition of Christianity on the West.<sup>25</sup>

### 3.3.4 Mahayana meditation: Pure Land Buddhist meditation

The Mahayanin modified Calm (Skt. *Samatha*) and Insight (*Vipasyana*) meditation to their framework of belief and motivation. The meditator starts with a combination of Calm practices and the foundations of mindfulness (Skt. *smrtyupasthana*) in order to attain access concentration (Skt. *anagamyā*) and full *dhyana* (Pali. *jhana*). The Mahayana version of Calm and Insight meditation is seen as a way of cultivating the *Bodhisattva*-path, and primarily involves techniques of visualisation or cultivating spontaneous insight. Jung was more familiar with Mahayana Buddhist meditation practice. He often discusses Tantric visualisation in Tibetan Buddhism and *koan*

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<sup>25</sup> However, there is a sharp contrast between active imagination and Eastern meditation, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

meditation in Zen Buddhism, which are discussed in the following chapters. This section focuses on Jung's understanding of Pure Land Buddhist meditation.

The central figure in Pure Land Buddhism is the heavenly Buddha, *Amitabha*, also known as *Amita* in China or *Amida* in Japan, who is the focus of devotion as a saviour being.<sup>26</sup> The Pure Land school was based on the three *Sutras*: the larger and smaller *Sukhavati-vyuha*, or 'Array of the Happy Land' *Sutra*, and the *Amitayur-dhyana*, or 'Meditation on *Amitayus*' *Sutra*.<sup>27</sup> These texts only exist in Chinese translation and have played an important role in shaping Pure Land Buddhism in China and Japan. The larger Happy Land *Sutra* tells how the monk *Dharmakara* aspired to become a Buddha, *Amitabha*, who resides over the far-distant Happy Land (*Sukhavati*) in the Western region of universe.<sup>28</sup>

The *Sukhavati-vyuhopadesa Sutra* outlines five kinds of mindfulness, which are used to awaken absolute faith in *Amitabha* Buddha. M. Kiyota (1978) describes the faith in terms of the five items of mindfulness: "1. Worship, 2. Praise, 3. Vow, 4. Meditation, and 5. Transferring merits" (Kiyota, 1978: 256). This means that a person needs to worship the power of *Amitayus*, chant *Amitabha's* name, '*namo mitabhaya buddhaya*,' 'Honour to *Amitabha* Buddha,' and make a vow to express determination to realise birth in Buddha-land. He needs, then, meditation to visualise the merits of Pure Land, Buddha *Amitayus* and *bodhisattvas*. The fifth mindfulness describes the process of enlightening others, which transfers the merit to help all beings gain rebirth in the Pure Land. Worship and praise are the practices of body and speech and generate a mental calm (*samatha*). Vow and meditation are the practice of mind-perfection and promote an insight (*vipasyana*).

The main theme of the *Amitayur-dhyana Sutra* is a sermon which Shyvakamuni delivers to Queen Vaidehi. Her son has seized power by imprisoning his father the

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<sup>26</sup> The name 'amitabha' or 'Infinite Radiance,' is an expression of light symbolism, and the alternative name of 'Amit-ayus' means 'Infinite Life,' referring to the immeasurably long life of this Buddha (Harvey, 1990: 129).

<sup>27</sup> The larger *Sukhavati-vyuha Sutra* was composed by the late second century AD, and the *Amitayur-dhyana Sutra* may have been composed in Central Asia or China (Harvey, 1990: 129).

<sup>28</sup> According to Harvey, after hearing of the Pure Lands of many Buddhas, Dharmakara decided to create one combining the best aspects of all of them. He then made forty-six *Bodhisattva* vows, affirming that he would only become a Buddha when his *Bodhisattva* path had been karmically potent enough to produce such a Pure Land. Moreover, Dharmakata vowed that he would appear before any dying being who aspired to enlightenment and devoutly called him to mind, so as to conduct him to his Pure Land (Harvey, 1990: 129-30).

King and leaving him to starve to death. The Queen has also been imprisoned because of visiting her husband and smuggling food to him. Imprisoned by her son and unable to help her husband, the Queen in her agony prays to Shayakumi, who lives on a nearby mountain. The Queen is full of depravities and longs for rebirth in a world that is pure. In an act of her devotion, the Queen confesses her sins, and begs for his mercy and instruction. The Buddha responds to her devotion and projects from his forehead a visualisation of the pure and admirable countries of the Buddhas in the ten quarters. Queen Vaidehi declares that she wishes herself to be born in the realm of Buddha *Amitayus* (*Amitabha*) in the world of highest happiness. Then Shayakamuni Buddha teaches her sixteen meditations: the first thirteen meditations describe in detail *Amitabha* Buddha and his Pure Land of Bliss (*Sukhavati*); the last three meditations describe the three grades of people who attain rebirth in *Amitabha's* Pure Land in three different ways (Coward, 1992).

### 3.3.5 Jung's understanding of Pure Land Buddhist meditation

Pure Land is one of the schools of Mahayana Buddhism with which Jung was familiar, but of the three major texts of Pure Land Buddhism, the *Amitayur-dhyana Sutra* is the only one which Jung addresses directly. In 1943 Jung gave a lecture on the *Amitayur-dhyana Sutra*, under the title of 'The Psychology of Eastern Meditation' (CW 11: 908-949). Jung is not concerned with presenting a full account of this text, he stated, "I had no intention whatever of expounding classical Buddhism, but... my aim was to analyse the psychology of this particular text" (CW 18: 1675).

Jung used the text translated by J. Takakusu in the nineteenth-century as *Amitayur-dhyana Sutra: The Sutra of Meditation on Amitayus*. In the first half of his essay, Jung provided lengthy quotations from the text and in the second half he gave his interpretation of the text. As Jung advised against Europeans imitating Buddhist meditation, he devised his own method for Europeans, using a series of symbols which are discussed in the text. Jung argues, "If we wish to understand at all, we can do so only in the European way" (CW 11: 934). Through meditating on the symbols, such as the sun, the water, and the blue lapis lazuli, "the meditator can penetrate into the depths of the psyche's secrets. There he sees what should not be seen before, i.e., what was unconscious" (CW 11: 938). Jung goes on to say, "By throwing light on the

unconscious one gets first of all into the chaotic sphere of the personal unconscious, which contains all that one would like to forget, and all that one does not wish to admit to oneself or to anybody else, and which one prefers to believe is not true anyhow” (CW 11: 939). Only the man who is strong enough to go through this darkness can make any further progress to a still deeper layer of the collective unconscious. The main aim of Jung’s account of meditation is, “to establish scientifically a deeper layer of unity in the unconscious” (CW 11: 945). Jung argues that the mythological motifs which have been demonstrated by the exploration of the unconscious form a certain order which constitutes the true centre or essence of the collective unconscious. Jung called this the central symbol mandala. Thus the image of the Buddha sitting in the round lotus in the centre of the octagonal *Amitabha* land is for Jung a type of mandala which symbolises the centre of the psyche, the self.

In his discussion of the text, Jung dismissed the aspect of faith, which is made supreme and is essential to deliverance in Pure Land Buddhism. P. Bishop (1989) argues, “Jung makes no mention of the question of faith and focuses instead upon the technical and symbolic details of the meditational visualisations” (Bishop, 1989: 1). Bishop (1993) argues that the image of ‘science’ has been used since the eighteenth century in attempts to legitimise and validate Eastern religion, particularly Buddhism, in the West. In the nineteenth century many Westerners claimed that rational, empirical Buddhism, rather than Christianity which relied on faith alone, was suited to healing the gap between religion and science. Because they believed that, “Buddhism apparently had no gods and did not depend on blind faith, it seemed pre-eminently suited to the scientific mind” (Bishop, 1993: 78).<sup>29</sup> For this reason, it is understandable that Jung was ignorant of the aspect of faith in Pure Land Buddhism. Bishop argues that: “[Pure Land] Buddhism is not readily reduced to a technique, nor is it conducive to scientific status, and in addition it relies almost totally upon faith. Hence Pure Land beliefs do not easily fit the dominant scientific image that the West seems to want from Buddhism” (Bishop, 1993: 87).

There are other significant difficulties with Jung’s reading of Buddhism here. He failed to mention the three prerequisite requirements for entering the meditation: to

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<sup>29</sup> This interpretation of Buddhism was not accurate, of course, as Buddhism was not atheistic but transpolytheistic, see section 3.2.

act filially toward parents, and serve and respect one's teachers; to take the vow of seeking refuge with three jewels and fulfil all moral precepts and ritual ceremonies; to give one's whole mind to the attainment of *bodhi* and deeply believe in dependent origination by studying the Mahayana *sutras*. Moreover, Coward argues that Jung dismissed the setting and interaction between Shyakamuni Buddha and Queen Vaidehi. He states, "Aside from one brief paragraph (para. 913) in which he simply sets the stage, all of Jung's attention is focused on an analysis of the first thirteen meditations... Jung's omission of this material is most unfortunate, for it serves to foster the common Western misconception that Eastern meditation is detached from ethical considerations" (Coward, 1992: 249-250).

### 3.4 Conclusion

In his writings Jung addressed several traditions of Buddhist thought. However, it is sometimes confusing for the reader that Jung employed Buddhist terms without specifying the traditions or philosophical schools to which these terms belonged. This is particularly true with regard to his analysis of Buddhist meditation. Jung not only used the term yoga and meditation interchangeably, but also he failed to mention the varieties of practice within different traditions of Buddhism or schools of meditation. It becomes clear from his writings that Jung was more familiar with the Hinayana than Mahayana tradition, and Jung apparently had more a systematic understanding of Hinayana Buddhist thought. When he discussed Buddhist concepts, his understanding of them was actually based on his knowledge of the Hinayana tradition – and this is a particular problem because he wrote important commentaries on aspects of the Mahayana tradition from this perspective. In spite of the fact that Jung wrote psychological commentaries on Mahayana Buddhist texts and frequently mentioned Mahayana Buddhist concepts, he failed to address fundamental concepts in the Mahayana tradition such as the *Bodhisattva*, and failed to understand the meaning of *sunyata*. Nor did Jung mention two major philosophical schools in Mahayana: the Madhyamika and the Yogacara schools. Furthermore, there are conceptual differences between Jung's standpoint and Buddhism. In the next chapter I will focus on Jung's relation to Tibetan Buddhism in order to show how he engaged with

Tibetan Buddhist materials such as *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* and *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, and Tantric mandala symbolism.



## Chapter Four:

### Jung and Tibetan Buddhism

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter examines Jung's consideration of Tibetan Buddhism. Tibetan Buddhism is one of the Mahayana Buddhist traditions which Jung explored in depth. Jung was interested not only in its teachings but also its religious practices and symbolism. The aim of this chapter is to show the general concepts of Tibetan Buddhism which Jung discussed, how he understood these ideas from a psychological and psychoanalytical perspective, and to compare and contrast Tibetan Buddhist thought and Jung's use of it. This chapter consists of three parts: Jung's study of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, for which he wrote psychological commentaries, and Tibetan tantric mandalas, which he discussed at great length in his writings. The main argument of this chapter is to show that there is a sharp contrast between Tibetan Buddhist concepts and Jung's use of them. Jung's hermeneutical approach allows him to interpret these Tibetan concepts by making analogies and metaphors. However, in so doing, Jung failed to understand these concepts within their own traditions and cultures.

#### 4.1 Jung and *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*

##### 4.1.1 General outline of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*

The *Bardo Thödol* was written by Padmasambhava, who came to Tibet in the eighth century (around 750 AD) in order to spread the tantric doctrines of Indian Mahayana Buddhism. This tantric form of Mahayana is also called Vajrayana, or the "Diamond Vehicle." The text was hidden by him for a later era, and was discovered by the renewed treasure-finder Karma Lingpa in the fourteen century. The *Bardo Thödol* was translated by Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup<sup>1</sup> and edited by W.Y. Evans-Wentz and published in 1927 under the title, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. This translation was

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<sup>1</sup> According to Evans-Wentz (1960), although the translating of the manuscript was done wholly by himself, the chief credit should be given to Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup, who could read both Tibetan and English and is the actual translator of the *Bardo Thödol*. I discuss this in more detail in section 4.3.1.

given a Swiss publication, *Das Tibetische Totenbuch* by Rascher Verlag in 1938, and it was for this version that Jung's 'Psychological Commentary' was first published.<sup>2</sup>

The *Bardo Thödol* is first of all a book for the living, to prepare them, not only for the dangers of death, but also to give them an opportunity to make use of the great possibilities which offer themselves in the moment of relinquishing the body - either for a better rebirth or for final liberation. The *Bardo Thödol* is one of a series of instructions on six types of liberation. It focuses its attention on liberation through hearing. The other five types of instructions are concerned with liberation through wearing, liberation through seeing, liberation through remembering, liberation through tasting, and liberation through touching. The text is designed to be read in the presence of the corpse by a relative, friend, or preferably a guru.

It is important to consider some of the key Buddhist concepts contained within *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. The Buddha saw all life as ultimately suffering (*dukkha*). As long as man suffers from the circumstances of the world and his behaviour, he is not liberated and finds himself in ignorance, which arises through desire, through lasting attachment to worldly things and events, and through attachments to one's own falsely understood personality. Attachment is the opposite of liberation. All activity that deepens the immersion in *samsara*, the cycle of rebirth, will detract from the goal of liberation and lead to suffering and to actions that are bad or negative according to the law of *karma*. In Buddhist cosmology the death of an unliberated person is necessarily followed by his rebirth, in which the suffering of living and dying is repeated. Thus *samsara* is regarded as a long and often aimless process. All persons and things, including the living bodies of humans, animals, and plants are transitory, are subject to suffering through transformation and the perishability of their temporal form. Beyond all this there is the deathless realm of salvation, the totally Other, the immeasurable place of the Absolute, which in Buddhism is called *nirvana*, the goal of the teaching of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*.

All actions that loosen the attachments to the transitory world of existence are directed towards liberation and lead to good or positive deeds, which lead out of the circle of *samsara*. The law of *karma* indicates the conditionality of our actions and

the absolute effect of these actions upon the present and future path of our existence. The law of *karma* places man in a position of unconditioned responsibility for his actions, for every deed and even every resolution to act has inevitable visible or invisible consequences. According to this Buddhist view, man remains in the cycle of birth and death until perfected knowledge puts an end to it. Rebirth is a consequence of not having attained liberation in the previous life. Each life is the result of *karma* that has been formed by actions attached to the world.

For instance, Buddhist cosmography lists five realms into which a person can be reborn: the sphere of gods (*deva*); humans; spirits (*peta*), generally known as ‘hungry ghost’; animals; and hell (*niraya*). The realm of gods is sometimes divided into two, that of gods proper and of that demons (*asura*). The way we find ourselves reborn in any of these destinies results from our actions in previous lives. J. M. Reynolds (1989) argues that, “our stream of consciousness becomes dominated by a particular passion, and thus with rebirth our consciousness finds itself in a space or situation which is structured in terms of that predominant passion” (Reynolds, 1989: 89). The principle of karma is of interdependent origination, that is to say, one event occurs and this is followed by another event dependent on the occurrence of the first, and so on. Reynolds states, “The energy generated by our actions and stored in our stream of consciousness cannot be fully exhausted in a single lifetime and so this leads to the arising of experiences in future lives” (Ibid., 90). According to Buddhist teaching, *karma* is not mere fatalism. While our present circumstances, including our own material body, are the result of our *karma*, at the same time we are free to choose the course of our actions within the limitations of our capacities and external circumstances. Hence the development can take place on lower or on higher destinies, in better or worse circumstances with respect to salvation, depending on our karmic facts. The unavoidable and incorruptible law of life is the path that man can build, given that he recognises the significance of his actions and the meaning of the life that can lead to freedom.

There is no Tibetan expression translatable as ‘Book of the Dead.’ The actual Tibetan title is the *Bardo Thödol* and simply means the ‘intermediate state.’ In Tibetan, ‘bar’ means ‘between’ and ‘do’ is a numerical concept which designates the

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<sup>2</sup> Evans-Wentz, Preface to the third edition to *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, p. vii.

equality or equilibrium between two things or between two weights, values, numbers, or contents. In the *Bardo Thödol*, ‘*bardo*’ indicates a state between two similar states or conditions, namely, the state ‘between two lines’ of kinds of existence in bodily or earthly form. In the context of the *Bardo Thödol*, which is oriented toward preparing for a successful use of the intermediate state to accelerate progress toward Buddhahood, the process of the sequence of lives, daily life, and the single lifetime can be described as the six intermediate states: *sKye-gans bar-do* (the *bardo* of the realm of life, place of birth), *rMi-lam bar-do* (the *bardo* of the dream state), *bSam-gtan bar-do* (the *bardo* of meditation), ‘*Chi-khai*’ *bar-do* (the *bardo* of the experience of death), *Chos-nyid bar-do* (the *bardo* of the experience of reality), *Srid-pa’i bardo* (the *bardo* of seeking rebirth).

The doctrine of the ‘three Buddha bodies’ (Skt. *Trikaya*; Tib. *sKu-gsum*) is one of the indispensable foundations of Mahayana Buddhism. It constitutes an important background to understanding the structure of the teachings of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. The three Buddha bodies encompass the possibilities of Being, between the highest Being in the spiritual sense and objective existence in the world of form. *Kaya* in Sanskrit means body as a form of being and a plane of the working of *dharma* (law) between transcendence and immanence. For details of the doctrine of the *Trikaya*: *Dharmakaya*, *Sambhogakaya*, and *Nirmanakaya*, see Chapter Three.

#### 4.1.2 Jung’s approach to *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*

Jung first became acquainted with Tibetan Buddhism in the inter-war years when Tibet was a remote and inaccessible region that few from the West had ever visited, and its philosophical systems were known only through often unreliable sources. In 1927 *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* was published by the American scholar W. Y. Evans-Wentz. This book was a major step in the opening up of the religious culture of Tibet. The book itself clearly had a major impact on Jung who at this time was being initiated into the Chinese alchemy of *The Secret of The Golden Flower*. Jung agreed to write a ‘Psychological Commentary’ for the German edition of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (1935), which played a major role in first bringing this text to the attention of the modern West. Moreover, for Jung, this commentary was, “an act of considerable professional courage at a time when he had barely established his own

reputation as a psychologist independently of Freud” (Clarke, 1994: 124). Jung emphasised the psychological nature of the Tibetan text, since he believed that the psychological tone of the Tibetan text fitted exactly with a Western belief in psychological reality.

When Evans-Wentz asked Jung to write a psychological commentary, Jung was looking to the East for independent and parallel support for many of his own psychic discoveries. In *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* Jung believed he had found how psychological needs and fears are projected in the forms of divine beings, both good and evil. Jung was greatly impressed by the fact that in the *Bardo Thödol* not only the ‘wrathful’ but also the ‘peaceful’ deities are conceived as projections of the human mind. In Jung’s reading, the projected deities of the mind are not only psychological but also real, since the processes of the mind are real. Jung said:

...the *Bardo Thödol* offers one an intelligible philosophy addressed to human beings rather than to gods or primitive savages... Not only the ‘wrathful’ but also the ‘peaceful’ deities are conceived as samsaric projections of the human psyche, an idea that seems all too obvious to the enlightened European, because it reminds him of his own banal simplifications. But though the European can easily explain away these deities as projections, he would be quite incapable of positing them at the same time as real. The *Bardo Thödol* can do that, because, in certain of its most essential metaphysical premises, it has enlightened as well as the unenlightened European at a disadvantage.

(CW 11: 833)

In the first place Jung believed he had discovered in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* an emphasis upon the importance of the psyche. Jung saw the Tibetan text as presenting a conception of the mind in which the psyche is taken to be the fundamental datum of the typically Western experience and that the material world is a projection of it. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is not only a set of instructions for the dying, but also can be seen at a much deeper level to represent an insight into the secrets of the human psyche. Jung asserted,

The ever-present, unspoken assumption of the *Bardo Thödol* is the antinomian character of all metaphysical assertions, and also the idea of the qualitative difference of the various levels of consciousness and of the metaphysical realities conditioned by them. The background of this unusual book is not the niggardly European ‘either-or’, but a magnificently affirmative ‘both-and’... Metaphysical assertions... are *statements of psyche*, and are therefore psychological.

(CW 11: 833-835)

In the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* the visionary images appear simultaneously as realities or as illusory images. In other words, they are on the one hand the highest reality and on the other the mere images of psychic projection. As D. I. Lauf (1977) argues, “the Tibetan Book of the Dead teaches that the buddhas are only the visible forms of the inner, pure Buddha-nature of awareness, representable manifestations of the enlightened nature of man which is always present in him” (Lauf, 1977: 224-5). From a psychological perspective all the images and visions are figures from one’s own awareness. Lauf continues, “We thereby recognize them as projections, in which deep contents of consciousness are made accessible to us through images” (Ibid., 225). These images are psychic, “...because the visionary deities are recognized as symbols of the spirit, and because they are the archetypal symbolism of processes immanent in awareness” (Ibid., 225).

Let us now move on to examine Jung’s interpretation of *Karma*. In his psychological commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Jung clearly rejected any notion of personal rebirth. Jung argues that, “The *Chönyid* state is one of karmic illusion – that is to say, illusions which result from the psychic residua of previous existences” (CW 11: 845). Jung accepted the idea of *karma* only on the psychic level: that there are universal dispositions of the mind, that is, the archetypes. Jung asserts that, “According to the Eastern view, *karma* implies a sort of psychic theory of heredity based on the hypothesis of reincarnation, which is the last resort if an hypothesis of the supratemporality of the soul” (CW 11: 845). Jung went on to say,

we may cautiously accept the idea of karma only if we understand it as *psychic heredity* in the very widest sense of the word. Psychic heredity does exist – that is to say, there is inheritance of psychic characteristics, such as predisposition to disease, traits of character, special gifts and so forth.

(CW 11: 845)

Jung was quite fascinated by the contents revealed by the *Chönyid Bardo*, which he equated with his developing notion of archetypes. Jung saw the idea of *karma* in Tibetan Buddhism as allowing psychic contents to be transmitted from one life to the next just as are the archetypes of the collective unconscious. Jung said,

It is a primordial, universal idea that the dead simply continue their earthly existence and do not know that they are disembodied spirits - an archetypal idea which enters into immediate, visible manifestation whenever anyone sees a ghost. It is significant, too, that ghosts all over the world have certain features in common. I am naturally aware of the unverifiable spiritualistic hypothesis,

though I have no wish to make it my own. I must content myself with the hypothesis of an omnipresent, but differentiated, psychic structure which is inherited and which necessarily gives a certain form and direction to all experience. For... the archetypes, as organs of the psyche, are dynamic, instinctual complexes which determine psychic life to an extraordinary degree. That is why I also call them *dominants* of the unconscious. The layer of unconscious psyche which is made up of these universal dynamic forms I have termed the *collective unconscious*.

(CW 11: 845)

Jung was impressed by the Buddhist description of the visual images of a good or evil nature as hungry ghost, hell being, animal, human, demi-god or god, all of which Jung had found in the form of archetypes. Therefore, for Jung, there was evidence in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* that archetypes with specific contents, both good and evil, were inherited. By 1942, in his writing 'The Psychology of the Unconscious' Jung admits to "a deliberate extension of the archetype by means of the *karmic* factor" and states, "the *karma* aspect is essential to a deeper understanding of the nature of an archetype" (CW 7: p. 77f). Thus Jung argues,

the unconscious contents, as it were, two layers: the personal and the collective. The personal layer ends at the earliest memories of infancy, but the collective layer comprises the pre-infantile period, that is, the residues of ancestral life. Whereas the memory-images of the personal unconscious are, as it were, filled out, because they are images personally experienced by the individual, the archetypes of the collective unconscious are not filled out because they are forms not personally experienced. When, on the other hand, psychic energy regresses, going beyond even the period of early infancy, and breaks into the legacy of ancestral life, the ,mythological images are awakened: there are the archetypes. An interior spiritual world whose existence we never suspected opens out and displays contents which seem to stand in sharpest contrast to all our former ideas.

(CW 7: 118)

However, Jung drew the line between his own and the Buddhist view of reincarnation. In the Buddhist view, such forms and contents are a direct karmic inheritance whereas Jung believed that psychic inheritance could only be accepted in a collective sense and there was no individual reincarnation of the kind described in *The Bardo Thödol*. Jung clearly argued in his commentary:

So far as I know, there is no inheritance of individual prenatal, or pre-uterine, memories, but there are undoubtedly inherited archetypes which are, however, devoid of content, because, to begin with, they contain no personal experiences. They only emerge into consciousness when personal experiences have rendered them visible.

(CW 11: 846)

In his lecture entitled ‘Concerning Rebirth’ in 1940, Jung demonstrated a negative view towards personal inherited *karma* and argued that, “the Buddha himself experienced a very long sequence of such rebirths,” but that, “it is by no means certain whether continuity of personality is guaranteed or not: there may be only a continuity of karma” (CW 9i: 200). In a letter to E.L. Grant Watson in 1956 Jung clearly distinguishes his understanding of the personal experience of inherited *karma* from what he considers to be the Indian view.

Inasmuch as *karma* either a personal or at least an individual inherited determinant of character and fate, it represents the individually differentiated manifestation of the instinctual behaviour pattern, i.e., the general archetypal disposition. *Karma* would express the individually modified archetypal inheritance represented by the collective unconscious in each individual. I avoid the term of *karma* because it includes metaphysical assumptions for which I have no evidence, f.i. that karma is a fate I have acquired in a previous existence becoming my own. For such assumptions there is no empirical evidence I am aware of.

(Letters II: 289)

The questions of *karma*, the problem of personal rebirth, or the transmigration of souls were obscure to Jung, since, for him, these questions lacked epistemological evidence. Jung claims,

Neither our scientific knowledge nor our reason can keep in step with this idea [*karma*]. There are too many ifs and buts. Above all, we know desperately little about the possibilities of continued existence of the individual soul after death, so little that we cannot even conceive how anyone could prove anything at all in this respect. Moreover, we know only too well, on epistemological grounds, that such a proof would be just as impossible as the proof of God.

(CW 11: 845)

Thus in his early thinking, for Jung, there is no personal inherited *karma* as such, but there is only the collective inherited *karma* of one’s archetypes. Jung’s understanding of *karma* as psychic heredity of one’s archetypes sharply contrasts with the Buddhist theory of *karma*. Sogyal Rinpoche (1992) asserted, “*Karma* is often totally misunderstood in the West as fate or predestination; it is best thought of as the infallible law of cause and effect that governs the universe” (Sogyal Rinpoche, 1992: 92). According to Buddhist teaching, however, *karma* does not mean mere fatalism. Reynolds argues that: “While it is true that our present circumstances, including our own material body, are the result of our *karma*, at this very moment we are free to



choose the course of our actions within the limitations of our capacities and external circumstances” (Reynolds, 1989: 93). Thus, by means of free moral choice in the present and its consequent actions, we create our own *karma*, which will bear its fruit in future lives. In this sense we are the creators of our own destiny, whether rebirth in heaven or hell, rebirth as a human or as an animal. Reynolds thus asserts that: “All is determined by what we do now” (Ibid., 93).

However, Jung’s attitude to *karma* was ambivalent. Clarke suggests that, “He [Jung] was happy to remain agnostic about metaphysical matters, and to view the account of the figures that appear on the soul’s journey as indicative of the deep psychological understanding evident in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition” (Clarke, 1994: 125). Shortly before his death, Jung seems to modify his earlier rejection of the notion of personal *karma* and its psychological function in rebirth. In his autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*,<sup>3</sup> Jung asserts that, “Recently, however, I observed in myself a series of dreams which would seem to describe the process of reincarnation in a deceased person of my acquaintance... after this experience I view the problem of reincarnation with somewhat different eyes, though without being in a position to assert a definite opinion” (MDR: 351). Although Jung did not give any detailed analysis of the psychological process which would be involved in personal reincarnation, he offered a general speculation which brings him very close to traditional Buddhist thought, when he stated,

I could well imagine that I might have lived in former centuries and there encountered questions I was not yet able to answer; that I had to be born again because I had not fulfilled the task that was given to me. When I die, my deeds will follow along with me - that is how I imagine it. I will bring with me what I have done.

(MDR: 349)

Coward (1986) argues that “in his later thought, Jung sees *karma* and rebirth in terms of a ‘motivation toward knowledge’ which may be personal or impersonal in nature” (Coward, 1986: 262). Jung asks “the question of whether the *karma* which I live is the outcome of my past lives, or whether it is not rather the achievement of my

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<sup>3</sup> R.J. Woolger (1987) claims that, according to his colleague who visited Jung’s daughters in order to interview them on Jung’s past life beliefs, Jung apparently had written quite a lot about the subject in his autobiography, but it had all been excised by members of his family as being embarrassing to the family name. For the same reason, the chapter on Toni Wolf was also removed before publication (Woolger, 1987: 347).

ancestors, whose heritage comes together in me” (MDR: 349). Coward asserts that Jung answers this question in terms of a psychological motivation toward knowledge. Thus Jung perceives the meaning of his existence in terms of a question which life has addressed to him, a question which perhaps preoccupied him and/or his ancestors in a previous life, and which they could not answer. Jung admits that this question from the past could be the result of the collective *karma* of his ancestors or the result of his own *karma* acquired in a previous life. Thus the karmic motivation toward knowledge is the explanation for this life and the cause of the next (Coward, 1986: 262-3). If Jung’s way of posing the question of his answer proves unsatisfactory, then he says, “someone who has my karma – or myself – would have to be reborn in order to give a more complete answer” (MDR: 350).

Jung even goes so far as to consider the Tibetan Buddhist concept of liberation from the cycle of rebirth to *nirvana*. Jung asserts, “It might happen that I would not be reborn again so long as the world needed no such answer, and that I would be entitled to several hundred years of peace until someone was once more needed who took an interest in these matters and could profitably tackle the task anew” (MDR: 350). This statement suggests that Jung’s point here is consistent with Buddhist theory of *karma* and rebirth. According to Lauf, *karma* is the personal experience of the fruit of one’s own thoughts, intentions, and actions. All actions that loosen the attachments to the transitory world of existence are directed towards liberation, which lead out of the cycle of *samsara*.

Karma as law signifies the conditionality of our actions and the absolute effect of these actions upon the present and future path of our existence. The law of karma places man in a position of unconditioned responsibility for his actions, for every deed and even every resolution to act has an inevitable visible or invisible consequence.

(Lauf, 1977: 17)

In the Buddhist view, man remains in the cycle of birth and death until perfected knowledge puts an end to it. Thus in Buddhism rebirth is a consequence of not having attained liberation in the previous life, for each life is the result of the working out of *karma* that has been formed by actions attached to the world in a previous life. This is very similar to Jung’s following statement:

The soul would vanish from the three-dimensional world and attain what the Buddhist call *nirvana*. But if a karma still remains to be disposed of, then the

soul relapses again into desires and returns to life once more, perhaps even doing so out of the realisation that something remains to be completed.

(MDR: 353)

In Jung's own case it must have been "a passionate urge toward understanding which brought about my birth" (MDR: 353). Jung suggests that the psychological processes resulting in psychic dissociation illness such as schizophrenia may be analogous to the understanding of life after death. For Jung, just as in a disturbed person a split-off complex can manifest itself as a projected personification, so rebirth might be conceived as psychic projection. As evidence Jung describes one of his dreams:

I was walking along a little road through a hilly landscape; the sun was shining and I had a wide view in all directions. Then I came to a small wayside chapel. The door was ajar, and I went in. To my surprise there was no image of the Virgin on the altar, and no crucifix either, but only a wonderful flower arrangement. But then I saw that on the floor in front of the altar, facing me, sat a yogi – in lotus posture, in deep meditation. When I looked at him more closely, I realised that he had my face. I started in profound fright, and awoke with the thought: 'Aha, so he is the one who is meditating me. He has a dream, and I am it.' I knew that when he awakened, I would no longer be.

(MDR: 355)

Jung interpreted that his meditating yogi is the symbol or psychic projection of his self from the other worldly reality of the archetypes. Thus, empirical world is merely the projected karmic illusion and is characterised by an ego-conscious focus. Jung asserts, "the decisive question for man is: Is he related to something infinite or not?" (MDR: 356). The problem with the modern Western world is that its *karma* is too ego-centered. Thus what is needed is a shift of the karmic centre of gravity from the ego to the self. For Jung this is the essence of transcendence in religious experience.<sup>4</sup> In summary, Jung first rejected the Buddhist theory of *karma* due to its lack of empirical verification. What Jung attempted to do is to reinforce his parallel between Western psychological theory and his reversed reading of the *Bardo Thödol*,<sup>5</sup> by identifying *karma* with the collective unconscious and hence adding weight to the argument that the *Chönyid bardo* (the 'bardo of karmic illusion') corresponds with the collective

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<sup>4</sup> In Jung's psychology the religious experience requires the successful individuation of the self or God archetype. At this point Coward argues that, "Jung's karmic understanding of the religious experience has had a significant impact on at least one contemporary Christian theologian namely Paul Tillich (Coward, 1986: 264).

<sup>5</sup> Jung read the *Bardo Thödol* backward: from *Sidpa Bardo*, *Chönyid Bardo*, and finally to *Chikhai-Bardo*. Jung believed the backward reading of a text helps Western readers to understand. I discuss this issue in detail in section 4.2.5.

layer of the psyche. He was fundamentally making an analogy between *karma* which is the mechanism of individual rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism and psychic heredity which is the mechanism of the collective unconscious in its effect on the individual psyche. He strove to turn this simile into a proof by posing an identity between *karma* and the collective unconscious. However this identity is clearly invalid as the *karma* as interpreted by Jung means something different from the *karma* of Tibetan Buddhism. In his later life, however, Jung's dream discussed above and his acquaintance's dream, which for him were empirical reality and thus gave him evidence, led him to a very positive assessment of the Buddhist theory of *karma* and rebirth.

I will now examine Jung's view on the *Dharmakaya*. Jung was concerned with making analogies between his psychological thought and Tibetan Buddhist concepts, based on the assumption that the goal towards which the *Bardo Thödol* is oriented is the same goal towards which Jungian psychology strives. However these two goals are, in fact, extremely different. According to Tibetan Buddhism, those who meditate on the Great Perfection - the state of perfection, which is reached by way of perfected integration - and on the Great Symbol - the great attitude of unification and wholeness - will see the clear light and gain illumination in the moment of death and realise the state of liberation in the *Dharmakaya* (Govinda, 1960). The *Dharmakaya* is the essence of doctrine and reality in Tibetan teachings. Lauf (1975) explains,

As foundation, the dharmakaya is the principle of absolute totality, and in relation to pure matter it is spiritual Being. In their true essence the Buddha and all buddhas are identical with the nature of pure dharmakaya. Since the dharmakaya is absolute reality, beyond all ideas and concepts, there is also no image or form of it. It is not even possible to form an adequate conception of its absoluteness.

(Lauf, 1975: 24)

This concept relates directly to a difference of views between the dominant Western and Eastern traditions over the issue of the perfectibility of the person. The *Bardo* text presumes that not only is the person perfectible in theory, but also that such an exalted state is a necessary one if liberation from birth, death and rebirth is to be realised. The *Bardo Thödol*, in describing the dying person's experience of the *Chikhai Bardo*, says that in the moment before death, a luminosity of clear light may

be seen and will last for a long time in a person who has practised much meditation and perfected the state of tranquillity. Coward points out that, “The perfected person will have a direct perception of the Buddha nature in the form of a pure and all encompassing light” (Coward, 1992: 264-5) Consequently, one’s ignorance is eliminated, the attachment and grasping resulting from the predispositions of previous actions cease to operate, and the cycle of uncontrolled rebirth is ended.

This notion of a perfectly clear mind, namely, one empty of all obscuring ignorance and in which there is only the steady radiance of the clear light of pure reality (the *dharmakaya*), is, Jung said, a very challenging notion to us in the West. To assimilate the identity of the dying person with the divine reality itself, which is the *dharmakaya*, is, from a Christian perspective, downright blasphemous. In Jung’s view it is impossible for one to become a Buddha. Jung stated, “You cannot be a good Christian and redeem yourself, nor can you be a Buddha and worship God” (CW 11: 772). Psychologically it suggests that one who claims to have such an experience is suffering from an unhealthy inflation of the ego, or a complete cessation of the ego, which is inconceivable in terms of the Jungian view of consciousness. Jung wrote,

According to the teachings of the *Bardo Thödol*, it is still possible for him, in each of the *Bardo* states, to reach the *dharmakaya* by transcending the four-faced Mount Meru, provided that he does not yield to his desire to follow the ‘dim lights’. This is as much as to say that the individual must desperately resist the dictates of reason, as we understand it, and give up the supremacy of egohood, regarded by reason as sacrosanct. What this means in practice is complete capitulation to the objective powers of the psyche, with all that this entails; a kind of figurative death, corresponding to the Judgement of the dead in the *Sidpa Bardo*. It means the end of all conscious, rational, morally responsible conduct of life, and a voluntary surrender to what the *Bardo Thödol* calls ‘karmic illusion’.

(CW 11: 846)

For Jung, this amounts to a deliberately induced psychosis. Jung went on to say,

The deliberately induced psychotic state, which in certain unstable individuals might easily lead to a real psychosis, is a danger that needs to be taken very seriously indeed. These things really are dangerous and ought not to be meddled with in our typical Western way. It is a meddling with fate, which strikes at the very roots of human existence and can let loose a flood of sufferings of which no sane person ever dreamed.

(CW 11: 847)

Coward argues that, “what Jung misses in the Buddhist analysis is that the cause of the psychotic terrors that worry him so much is nothing other than the ‘grasping,’

‘desiring’ ego” (Coward, 1992: 269). In the view of *The Bardo Thödol*, to transcend the ego is not to leave the psyche defenceless in the face of the complete realisation of the *dharmakaya*. Coward claims that, “Rooted in his Western conception of the absolute necessity of the ego for any conscious discriminating experience, Jung simply cannot put himself into the Buddhist perspective of seeing the ego as the root of desire, and thus the obstructor of the *dharmakaya*” (Ibid., 269). Yet in spite of his rejection of the Tibetan claim of the perfectibility of the person, Jung saw an important lesson that the West needs to learn from *The Bardo Thödol* that, “the radiance of the Divine comes to us through its reflection in the psychological processes of our own psyches” (Coward, 1992: 266), in other words, the Western experience of God comes to us through the individuation of the God or Self archetype.

Another analogy that Jung drew is that between the *Sidpa Bardo* and Freudian psychoanalysis. According to *The Bardo Thödol*, in the *Sidpa Bardo* you will see a future mother and father lying together and making love. Seeing them, you become emotionally drawn toward them and begin to spontaneously feel strong attachment or aversion toward them. Attraction and desire for the mother and aversion or jealousy toward the father will result in your being born as a male child, and the reverse as a female. However if you give in to such strong passions, not only will you be reborn, but that very emotion may draw you into a birth in a lower realm. In order to prevent rebirth and enable you to be reborn in one of the Buddha realms, you should try to generate a feeling of reunification of a future mother and father against being drawn into feelings of desire, and to think of the pure realms of the buddhas. If you fail to stabilise the mind enough to do even this practice, then there remains a method for choosing rebirth. If you intentionally wish to be reborn in order to pursue your spiritual path, you should not enter any but the human realms. For it is only there that conditions are favourable for spiritual progress. Sogyal Rinpoche accounts for the last stage of the *Sidpa Bardo* as follows:

If you succeed in directing the mind toward a human birth, you have come full circle. You are poised to be born again into the natural bardo of this life. When you see your father and mother in intercourse, your mind is ineluctably drawn in, and enters the womb. This signals the end of the bardo of becoming, as your mind rapidly re-experiences yet again the signs of the phases of disillusion and the dawning of the Ground Luminosity. Then the black experience of full

attainment arises again, and at the same moment the connection to the new womb is made.

So life begins, as it ends, with the Ground Luminosity.

(Sogyal Rinpoche, 1992: 298)

Jung's comment on the *Sidpa Bardo* centres on the rather graphic descriptions in the text of how the being in the Intermediate State selects a womb to be born into. Jung paid attention to the mechanism that, when the intermediate being sees the future parents lying together, it desires the mother (if it is to be reborn as a male), or the father (if it is to be reborn as a female) and this desire causes the intermediate being to enter the womb to be reborn. This fact reminded him of the claims of the Oedipus complex of Freudian psychoanalysis, namely, the young boy who is sexually attracted to the mother, the young girl to the father. Jung argued,

...in the *Bardo Thödol*, the initiation is a series of diminishing climaxes ending with rebirth in the womb. The only 'initiation process' that is still alive and practised today in the West is the analysis of the unconscious as used by doctors for therapeutic purposes. This penetration into the ground-layers of consciousness is a kind of rational maieutics in the Socratic sense, a bringing-forth of psychic contents that are still germinal, subliminal and as yet unborn. Originally, this therapy took the form of Freudian psychoanalysis and was mainly concerned with sexual fantasies. This is the realm that corresponds to the last and lowest region of the *Bardo*, known as the *Sidpa Bardo*, where the dead man, unable to profit by the teachings of the *Chikhai* and *Chönyid Bardo*, begins to fall a prey to sexual fantasies and is attracted by the vision of mating couples. Eventually he is caught by a womb and born into the earthly world again. Meanwhile, as one might expect, the Oedipus complex starts functioning. If his karma destines him to be reborn as a man, he will fall in love with his mother-to-be and will find his father hateful and disgusting. Conversely, the future daughter will be highly attracted by her father-to-be and repelled by her mother.

(CW 11: 842)

Jung suggested it is unfortunate that Freud did not pursue the development of this complex backward to the intra-uterine experiences rather than forward into the problems created in adolescence and adulthood. He went on to say,

I say 'unfortunately' because one rather wishes that Freudian psychoanalysis could have happily pursued these so called intra-uterine experiences still further back. Had it succeeded in this bold undertaking, it would surely have come out beyond the *Sidpa Bardo* and penetrated from behind into the lower reaches of the *Chönyid Bardo*.

(CW 11: 842)

Although Jung attempted to draw analogies between the *Sidpa Bardo* and Freudian psychoanalysis, it is impossible to argue that the *Bardo Thödol* can be used to suggest Freudian psychoanalysis, as it is dealing with a completely different subject. Coward argues, “Jung draws the “tongue in cheek” line of theoretical speculation to a close but such a bold attempt to follow psychic evolution backward is doomed to failure, however, because it is impossible to find even some trace of an experiencing subject at the intra-uterine and pre-uterine stages” (Coward, 1992: 270).

Jung suggested that since Westerners cannot give up their philosophical and scientific assumptions, the only way they can read the *Bardo Thödol* is backward. Tibetan Buddhists read the text in a right order, namely, *Chikhai*, *Chönyid* and *Sidpa Bardo*. Jung, however, read the text in a reverse order, that is, *Sidpa*, *Chönyid* and *Chikhai Bardo*. According to Jung, Freudian investigation backward into the beginnings of the *Sidpa Bardo* gives some insight into our biological drives, but is unable to go further. In order to go further into the *Chönyid Bardo*, we need to give up Freud’s uncritical assumption that everything psychological is subjective and personal. Jung was able to read backward into the *Chönyid* state by using his own theoretical assumptions regarding the psychic reality of the collective unconscious. Coward suggests that for Jung, the *Chönyid Bardo*, “is not an Intermediate State between death and rebirth, but a valuable mythic description of the archetypal forms and contents of the collective unconscious” (Coward, 1992: 270-1), since Jung thought the *Chönyid* state, “are not mere fantasies or speculative metaphysical forms but psychic realities - psychic data that is real in itself” (Ibid., 271). However Jung’s backward reading of the text failed to go further into the *Chikhai Bardo*, namely, into an understanding of the possibility of direct experience of the *dharmakaya* at the point of death.<sup>6</sup>

Jung asserted, “The reversal of the order of the chapters, which I have suggested here as an aid to understanding, in no way accords with the original intention of the *Bardo Thödol*” (CW 11: 855). His claim that the text must be made more intelligible for Westerners suggests that his real intention is to reorder the text until it produces some resemblance to something which is already familiar to Western

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<sup>6</sup> For Jung’s view on *Dharmakaya*, see section 4.2.3.



readers.<sup>7</sup> Jung wrote, “it is characteristic of Oriental religious literature that the teaching invariably begins with the most important item, with the ultimate and highest principles which, with us, would come last” (CW 11: 842). But this statement is not always the case in Oriental teachings, and there are various instances in which the motion seems to move from the lowest level to the highest. For example, in *kundalini* yoga the practitioner’s consciousness ascends from the lowest *chakra*, the *muladhara* located in the abdomen, towards the highest *chakra*, the *sahasrara* located at the top of the head.<sup>8</sup> P. Bishop (1993) argues that, “he [Jung] wanted to turn these Eastern systems upside-down, inside-out, back-to-front, in order to adapt them to Western culture” (Bishop, 1993: 61). Bishop claims that this was because Jung saw the structure of the *bardo* text paralleled in the initiation rituals of the Western mystery religions, which are characteristically imagined as journeys, as rites of passage. During such processes one is conscious of being involved in a ritual, in a symbolic drama. But this Tibetan text is more than just an initiation ritual. Bishop asserts,

In the Tibetan case... the fine, but important, distinction between symbolic ritual and literal reality has collapsed. The book represents itself as the voice of omniscient consciousness describing Absolute Reality. It describes itself as being, not symbolic, but analytic, not as presenting a mystery but as outlining empirical fact.

(Bishop, 1993: 61)

#### 4.1.3 A critical discussion of Jung’s understanding of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*

At this point, something should be mentioned regarding the translation of the text upon which Jung based his commentary. The Evans-Wentz’s edition of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* contains many serious errors in its interpretation of the Tibetan text.

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<sup>7</sup> Lama Anagarika Govinda asserts in his ‘Introductory Foreword’ to the Evans-Wentz edition of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*: “To add to or omit from the Sacred Scriptures a single word or letter has ever been looked upon by Tibetans as a heinous sin, which even the most impious would fear to commit” (Evans-Wentz, 1960: liv-lv)

<sup>8</sup> In his Psychological Commentary on Kundalini Yoga, Jung also reverses the order of the *chakras* so as to make it intelligible for the Westerners. He asserts: “It is all changed round, we begin in our conscious world, so our *muladhara* might be, not down below in the belly, but up in the head. You see that puts everything upside down... In the East the unconscious is above, which with us it is below, so we can reverse the whole thing, as if we were coming down from *muladhara*, as if that were the highest centre” (Jung 1975; 12). For Jung the ascent towards the higher *chakras* is a path, not towards super-consciousness, but rather towards a greater integration with the unconscious. For detailed discussion of Jung’s relation to Kundalini yoga, see Chapter 1.

Jung was sometimes led astray because he relied on a source text which is often inaccurate. Evens-Wentz was born on February 2, 1878 in Trenton, New Jersey and his readings of the bible as a child gave the peculiar Biblical tone to the translations he edited. Later he read extensively in the new Theosophical literature which was then appearing. Following the completion of a BA and MA at Stanford in 1907 he entered Jesus College, Oxford and studied Social Anthropology under the supervision of Sir John Rhys in Celtic studies. During the first World War he was in Egypt and stayed there for three years and sailed from there to Ceylon. The following year, 1918, he was in South India and finally arrived in Darjeeling (Reynolds, 1989: 73-5).

Evans-Wentz did not visit Tibet, nor did he live as a Buddhist monk. It is sometimes claimed that he spent three years in Darjeeling studying under Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup, but in fact he spent barely a few months among the Tibetans in Darjeeling and Sikkim. He did not even know or read any Tibetan language. Hence the Tibetan texts which he collected were first translated by Tibetan Lamas knowing English into a rough translation, and then these were reworked and edited by Evans-Wentz over a number of years. He also composed lengthy introductions and copious footnotes to the translations, which formed a kind of running commentary to them. In *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, the actual translations form only a small part, while the bulk of the text is so overwhelmingly taken up by the material written by Evans-Wentz that, “we tend to overlook and forget who were the actual translators of the Tibetan texts” (Reynolds, 1989: 72).

It is a crucial point that Evans-Wentz approaches Tibetan Buddhism from the standpoint of Theosophy.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, this is combined with some knowledge of Neo-Platonic philosophy and modern popularised Advaita Vedanta,<sup>10</sup> which he cited many times as sources for his interpretation of the text. Reynolds argues, “In this way he comes to impose on the rough translation he obtained from his Tibetan informants a conceptual construction, an odd mixture of ancient and modern, which has little

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<sup>9</sup> Reincarnation, one of the principal themes of the Theosophical system, first attracted Evans-Wentz to Theosophy. One of the founders of the Theosophical Society in New York, Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, wrote *The Secret Doctrine* (1888) which gives an account of the origin of the world and the evolution of humanity from an occult standpoint, which had an important influence on Evans-Wentz.

<sup>10</sup> For instance, Evans-Wentz used the term ‘the One Mind,’ by which he meant “some sort of Neo-Platonic hypostasis, a universal *Nous*, of which all individual minds are but fragments or appendages” (Evans-Wentz, 1954: 80).

relation to the actual meaning of the texts in Tibetan” (Reynolds, 1989: 79). His disregard for the differences between Hindu and Buddhist tantra was heightened by the fact that Evans-Wentz took advice from Sir John Woodroffe, who was an authority on Hindu tantra and also added a foreword to the text which is printed along with Jung’s ‘Psychological Commentary’ in the Oxford publication of Evans-Wentz’s version of the text. Coward asserts, “Evan-Wentz’s [*sic*] references were mainly to Woodroffe’s works on Hindu tantras which have little relevance for the Buddhist tantric tradition source text which is often inaccurate” (Coward, 1992: 263).

Evans-Wentz and Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup in fact opened the text up to a psychological interpretation. Moreover, they rendered Tibetan concepts into the language of European thought without attention to the subtleties and implications of these concepts. F. Fremantle and C. Trungpa (1975) warned against such over-enthusiastic use of specific Western intellectual terms, which brings about a danger of distorting the true meaning of the original text. In his introduction Fremantle argued,

Translating into a twentieth-century European language presents an entirely different line from the vocabulary of East, and so if an English word is chosen from the vocabulary of philosophy or religion, it will inevitably contain all kinds of associations and implications which may be quite alien to the understanding assumptions of Buddhism. Conversely, the full range of meaning of a Sanskrit word may not be found in any single English word. In such cases an English equivalent would need just as much explanation as the original, while the Sanskrit word has the advantage of being free from possibly misleading associations in the reader’s mind.

Certain terms are therefore kept in Sanskrit, their original language, although the Bardo Thötröl was written in Tibetan.

(Fremantle, 1975: xv)

Lama Anagarika Govinda has clearly seen the need for a revision of the translation of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, which was faulty and inaccurate in many regards. In spite of Govinda’s demand for a correction of Evans-Wentz’s mistranslation of the text, the book was reprinted with all the original mistakes and misunderstandings. According to Govinda, in Tibet it is considered sinful to alter even one word of a sacred text and therefore, “the Tibetans themselves have put forth considerable effort to free their Scriptures from errors and non-Buddhistic accretions, and to ensure the correctness and reliability of their traditions” (Govinda, 1960: lvii-lviii). For this reason, it is important that its translator and interpreter have a thorough knowledge of

its background and of the religious experience associated with it. However this is not often the case among Tibetologists.

Our modern attitude, unfortunately, is a complete reversal of this; a scholar is regarded as being all the more competent ('scholarly') the less he believes in the teachings which he has undertaken to interpret. The sorry results are only too apparent, especially in the realm of Tibetology, which such scholars have approached with an air of their own superiority, thus defeating the very purpose of their endeavours.

(Govinda, 1960: lxiii)

In fact Evans-Wentz and Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup themselves did not regard their translation as final or infallible. In his introduction of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Evans-Wentz wrote,

The Tibetan of Tantric texts, such as ours, is especially difficult to turn into good English; and owing to the terseness of many passages it has been necessary to interpolate words and phrases, which are bracketed.

In years to come, it is quite probable that our rendering - as has been the case with pioneer translations of the *Bible* - may be subject to revision.

(Evans-Wentz, 1960: 78)

Although Evans-Wentz was not a professional Buddhologist or Tibetologist, he nonetheless performed a great service by introducing this and other Tibetan texts in translation to the West for the first time. Reynolds (1989) asserts, "Much of what he was writing in his introductions and notes was Comparative Religion or Comparative Philosophy, both of which are valid intellectual pursuits on their own" (Reynolds, 1989: 114). However, he also warned against taking a translation of a Tibetan text out of its own traditional context in order to use it to justify some personal philosophy, since, "this is not fair to one's readers who do not know the Tibetan language and have no means to judge whether the translation and the use to which it is put is accurate or not" (Ibid., 114). In order to avoid great confusion and misunderstanding, "translation and comparative philosophy should be kept distinct" (Ibid., 114).

Evans-Wentz asserted that the Tibetan account of rebirth in the *Bardo Thödol* is a kind of evolution through inevitable progress into higher forms. He said: "As set forth in my first important work, *The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries*, forty-four years ago, the postulate of rebirth implies a scientific extension and correction of Darwin's conception of evolutionary law... man attains in the spiritual and psychic sphere that destined perfection which all life's processes and all living things exhibit at the end of their evolutionary course, and from which at present man is so far removed" (Evans-

Wentz, 1960: x). However this conception of reincarnation contradicts the very principle of *karma* in the Buddhist tradition, for *karma* does not represent some sort of spiritualised Darwinism. Reynolds summarises this problem succinctly, “under the influence of the Hindu philosophy of Vedanta, as well as the beliefs of modern day Theosophists, Evans-Wentz made many mistakes in a field that was largely lain elsewhere in Celtic folk-lore studies” (Reynolds, 1989: 71). Consequently, Jung was misled by this translation and had no way to ascertain an accurate reading of the Tibetan text. Reynolds continues, “what Dr. Jung was commenting upon in his ‘Psychological Commentary’ is not the psychic reality of the East but the psyche as represented by Evans-Wentz” (Ibid., 108).

I will now assess Jung’s understanding of the Tibetan Buddhist text. In his reading of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* Jung never attempts to step outside of his own psychological theory. He was more interested in making analogies between Tibetan teachings and his own psychological theories. Thus, for example, *karma* is compared to archetypes, and the Tibetan account of the passage of the dead soul is likened to psychological transformation. Clarke (1994) argues, “He [Jung] hopes that by demonstrating the analogical connections between remote cultures he can penetrate through to the archetypal foundations on which the psyche itself is built” (Clarke, 1994: 168). There is, however, a problem of whether the creation of analogies is capable of delivering any desired conclusion whatsoever, as it is often noted that anything can be compared with anything else, and analogies can be drawn almost at will between any pair of terms. Therefore when we look at Jung’s interpretation, as Clarke asserted, “it is necessary to ask whether Eastern spiritual practices are being squeezed unnaturally to fit into his own model of psychological development” (Ibid., 168).

To understand Jung’s approach to Tibetan Buddhism it is important to locate his study within the intellectual context of his time and the way that Tibet was perceived. In the nineteenth century many Westerners claimed that rational, empirical Buddhism, rather than a Christianity which relied on faith alone, was suited to healing the gap between religion and science. Because they believed that, “Buddhism apparently had no gods and did not depend on blind faith, it seemed pre-eminently suited to the scientific mind” (Bishop, 1993: 78). Bishop asserts that the metaphor of

'scientific' Buddhism, particularly in the case of Tibetan Buddhism, is based on the argument that the East is far superior to the West in spiritual matters is popular and convincing to the West. Jung presented this argument in his commentary not only on Tibetan Buddhist texts but also on Chinese philosophy, the Hindu tradition, and Zen and Pure Land Buddhism. Moreover, for Jung East and West are seen as being complementary, in that while the East was highly advanced in terms of spiritual technology, the West has achieved its mechanical technology. For example, the mandala in Tibetan Buddhism is the most popular of such spiritual tools. Bishop argues that, "since Jung's path-breaking psychological study of mandalas, they have become a household word" (Bishop, 1993: 144). Furthermore, it is frequently asserted that the East is more scientifically advanced than the West. For instance, recent theories of quantum and particle physics were anticipated thousands of years ago in the East with its non-dualistic and relativistic philosophies. Jung would agree with this third point in terms of the healing function in the symbolism of Tibetan Buddhism.<sup>11</sup> Bishop argues, "Contemporary Western interest in Tibetan Buddhism has largely focused upon its advanced and sophisticated religious practices... However, this is not an account of Tibetan Buddhism in the sense of expounding upon its spiritual and philosophical mysteries, but a study of the Western imagination as revealed in the encounter with an Eastern spiritual system" (Bishop, 1993: 18). He claims that Jung considered not only the problems associated with the Western use of Eastern spiritual practices but also articulated this critique with his deep psychological respect for both Eastern spirituality and Western culture. But Bishop asserts, "Jung's pioneering work too can be located within the historical context of Western fantasies about Tibet" (Bishop, 1993: 18).

Jung constantly warned Westerners against practising Eastern spiritual disciplines and methods of mind training. Instead he suggested the use of his own method called 'active imagination,' which is the waking practice of allowing images and symbols to spontaneously emerge from the unconscious, so that the analyst and more importantly the analysand may interpret them in order to understand the unconscious psyche. Jung suggested that the symbolic processes in the Eastern and Western psyche are fundamentally different because of their different cultural

histories. Jung believed that oriental methods such as the tantric visualisation of Tibetan Buddhism would repress this process and cause injury to the Western psyche. For this reason, he indicated that any Western spiritual methods must be based on the Christian tradition (CW 11: 876).

Given that Jung was opposed to Westerners practising Eastern methods of meditation, the question could be asked whether a Westerner is capable, when he dies, of having the visions of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities precisely as described in the *Bardo Thödol*. Jung apparently denied this possibility. Reynolds argues that, in Jungian terminology ‘East’ is in reality a projection of the shadow side of the Western European psyche. He asserts that, “Western Europe saw in the East everything that it denied in itself - the East is dark, sensual, passionate, corrupt, mystical, dreamy, irrational, feminine. Jung himself, otherwise a very wise and perceptive man, fell victim to this projection, having had little direct contact with Asians personality” (Reynolds, 1989: 147). In fact Jung often failed to see the significance of Tibetan Buddhism within its cultural traditions. Nevertheless, today there are a number of Westerners practising Tibetan spiritual practices under the guidance of the lamas. Reynolds argues that, “according to many Tibetan Lamas, to whom I have presented this question, if that Western individual has practised in this life the *sadhana* of the *Zhi-khro*, then indeed he would have the vision of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities in the Bardo after death” (Ibid., 153). In the next section I will examine Jung’s relation to *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*.

## 4.2 Jung and *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*

### 4.2.1 General outline of *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*

The translation of the concepts on *Dzogchen*, which is the most esoteric teaching of the Buddha in Tibet, can be found in *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* by W. Y. Evans-Wentz. He employed two Lamas, Lama Sumdhon Paul and Lama Lobzang Mingyur Dorje, to translate the text for him. It was published in 1954 under the title of *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation: Here follow the (Yoga of) knowing the Mind, the Seeing of Reality, called Self-Liberation, from the Profound Doctrine of Self-Liberation by Meditation upon the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*. However, as

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<sup>11</sup> For a detailed discussion on this issue, see section 4.7.3.

with Evans-Wentz' translation of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, there are many serious errors in the translation of the text, which are addressed later in this chapter. The title of this text in Tibetan is *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgons-pa rantg-grol/Rig-pa ngo-sprod gcer mthong rang-grol*, and Reynolds (1989) has translated this as, "Self-liberation through seeing with Naked Awareness, being a Direct Introduction to Intrinsic Awareness, from the Profound Teaching of Self-Liberation in the Primordial State of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities."

The term *Dzogchen* is usually translated as 'the Great Perfection' and is regarded as the highest teaching of the Buddha. The Lama introduces us to the nature of our own mind by means of symbols and explanations. Thus we come to distinguish between what is the nature of mind (*sems nyid*) and what is mind (*sems*). They are our thought process and the endless sequence of discursive thoughts (*rnam-rtog*) which continuously arise within us. The Tibetan word, 'the nature of the mind' could be translated as 'Mind itself (*sems nyid*).'<sup>12</sup> This nature of the mind (*sems-nyid*) transcends the specific contents of mind, that is, the incessant stream of thoughts continuously arising in the mind which reflects our psychological, cultural, and social conditioning. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche states,

The nature of the mind is like a mirror which has the natural and inherent capacity to reflect whatever is set before it, whether beautiful or ugly; but these reflections in no way affect or modify the nature of the mirror. It is the same with the state of contemplation: There is nothing to correct or alter or modify (*ma bcos-pa*). What the practitioner does when entering into contemplation is simply to discover himself in the condition of the mirror. This is our Primordial State.

(Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, 1987: x)

When we actually come to understand the nature of the mind and its capacity for intrinsic awareness, we will not be affected by our vicious actions, because all of our merits and sins (*dge sdig*) become liberated into their own condition (*rang sar grol*). At this moment we recognise our own intrinsic awareness (*rig-pa*).<sup>13</sup> We will not experience karmically the results of our actions, because we have transcended all duality and all notions of *Samsara* and *Nirvana*. By means of *rig-pa* we come to see

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<sup>12</sup> Reynolds claims that Evans-Wentz translates *sem nyid* as "the Mind Self" which is completely wrong and un-Buddhist. (Reynolds, 1989:134)

<sup>13</sup> The opposite of *rig-pa* is *ma rig-pa*, which is the absence of awareness. This ignorance is the source of attachment and of all the suffering experienced in *Samsara*, the cycle of transmigration.



everything with a direct immediate presence, and eventually come to realise self-liberation.<sup>14</sup>

#### 4.2.2 Jung's approach to *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*

In 1939 Jung wrote his Psychological Commentary to Evans-Wentz's edition of *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, which was published in 1954. The metaphysical implications of this work are apparently less prominent than in the case of the *Bardo Thödol*, and hence Jung's hermeneutical struggles on this occasion are less strenuous. Nevertheless, Jung was largely attracted by the deep psychological insights in the text, which, he believed, provided important confirmation of his theory of the self as an image of the potential and the unity of the personality as a whole. Moreover, in *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, Jung discovered a model of self-awareness which had the potential for uncovering and realising the self-liberating power of the mind and thereby opening the way towards a more adequate level of psychic integration and wholeness. Nevertheless Jung was well aware that this approach had its limitations, for it was bound to transcend the limitations of a purely scientific study. It is a mistake to suppose that the West should completely give up its highly developed scientific intellect. Jung said that religion is equally at fault for maintaining a pre-Kantian position in which it tries to remain a primitive mental condition. Jung claimed, "Faith... tries to retain a primitive mental condition on merely sentimental grounds. It is willing to give up the primitive, childlike relationship to mind-created and hypostatized figures; it wants to go on enjoying the security and confidence of a world still presided over by powerful, responsible, and kindly parents" (CW 11: 763) To be overbalanced in consciousness is a sign of 'barbarism' in Jung's word.<sup>15</sup> Thus the intuitive and feeling aspects of psychic

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<sup>14</sup> *Rig-pa* or intrinsic awareness has been given many different names over the ages. It is called *Tathagatagarbha*, which is the embryo of Buddhahood, because emptiness has a core or heart. It is called *Prajnaparamita*, which is the Perfection of Wisdom, because it transcends everything else. It is called the *Mahamudra*, which is the Great Symbol, because it cannot be comprehended by the intellect and is free of all limitations. It is called *Alaya*, which is the basis of everything, because it is the basis of all the bliss of *Nirvana* and of all the sorrow of *Samsara*. It is also called ordinary awareness, because this awareness is present, lucidly clear, and ordinary.

<sup>15</sup> Coward (1985) writes: "In letters written in 1923, long before he outlined precisely his ideas on the progression of religions, Jung employed the view that religions develop naturally as an argument against the practice of yoga. To Oskar Schmitz, author of *Psychoanalyse und Yoga*, Jung described how the Germanic race was in its initial state of polydemonism developing into polytheism when

function must achieve an equally high development in Western consciousness in order to achieve a good balance of the psyche and a widening of consciousness.

Jung's aim was, "simply to bring ideas which are alien to our way of thinking within reach of Western psychological experience" (CW 11: 788). For instance, the gods mentioned in *The Bardo Thödol* are considered as archetypal thought forms and their peaceful and wrathful aspects are interpreted as complementary psychic opposites (CW 11: 791). The 'self-liberation,' which is the ultimate goal of the method taught in *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, brings Jung back to his own teaching of the path of individuation. However, a central question needs to be raised as to whether the analogies Jung makes are valuable. The next section examines the question of the relevance of Jung's interpretation of *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*.

Before I explain the details of Jung's interpretation of the text, it is, I think, important to look at the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of *Dzogchen* that Evans-Wentz presented in his translations. More than half of Jung's commentary on the text is devoted to his own psychological theories but does not address the *Dzogchen* directly. The actual translation to which Evans-Wentz referred to in the title represents only a small portion of the entire book. The book, in fact, is composed of commentaries and explanation by the editor. There is a section giving an epitome of the life of Padmasambhava, translated by S.B. Laden La. Padmasambhava brought Tantric Buddhism to Tibet in about 747 CE. It was the second section of *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, called Book II: *Here Follows the (Yoga of) Knowing the Mind, The Seeing of reality, Called Self-Liberation, From 'The Profound Doctrine of self-Liberation by Meditation Upon the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities'* that Evans-Wentz considered to be the most important of all his works. In his introduction to Book II of *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, Evans-Wentz wrote, "Our present treatise, attributed to Padma-Sambhava, which expounds the method of realizing the Great Liberation of *Nirvana* by yogic understanding of the One Mind, appertains to the Doctrine of the Great Perfection of the Dhyana School" (Evans-

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Christianity was thrust upon it. A highly developed Mediterranean religion to the god incarnate was a shock to the northern European peoples. The archetypes were repressed as the sacred oaks were severed from their roots. What is most natural for Germans, therefore, is to allow the polytheistic barbarian to emerge so that their religious development can continue" (Coward, 1985: 83).

Wentz, 1954: 196). Evans-Wentz thought that all existence is mind, and this translation only appeared to confirm his preconceptions. Furthermore, all minds and existing things are manifestations of the Absolute or One Mind.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, the path to liberation lies in the inner path of self-knowledge, and those who would attain the full awakening of Buddhahood, must understand that all things are illusory.

Since Evans-Wentz could not read Tibetan, he worked on editing and explicating a translation made by Tibetan lamas. As a consequence he made a number of fundamental errors and misinterpretations of the text. For instance, no such concept as Evans-Wentz' 'Knowing the One Mind, the Cosmic All-Consciousness' is actually found in the original Tibetan text. This misinterpretation by Evans-Wentz not only led Jung astray but also generated a series of wrong conclusions regarding *Dzogchen* in particular and Tibetan spirituality in general. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche asserted that the translation of Buddhist texts from Tibetan is not simply a matter of a scholar learning the Tibetan language and a Tibetan-English dictionary. When one proceeds in this manner, he suggests, it is very likely that the real meaning of the text will elude the translator. Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche continues, "It is necessary that the translator have some direct experience in the practice of the teachings. He must unite textual meanings with his own understanding of the Natural State (*rnal-ma*). Otherwise, not perceiving the real meaning, he is likely to fall into idle speculation over the significance of the words of the text" (Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, 1987: xii).

I shall now examine Jung's view on the One Mind. In his Psychological Commentary Jung interpreted Evans-Wentz's 'the One Mind' as the unconscious. Jung wrote, "This section shows very clearly that the One Mind is the unconscious, since it is characterised as 'eternal, unknown, not visible, not recognized'" (CW 11: 793). He went on to say,

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<sup>16</sup> It might be interesting to compare Evans-Wentz's thought and Yogacara. Yogacara is "a movement which tended to think of the teaching of Absolute Mind. Transcendental in terms of Absolute Mind and which tried to explain why and how the seemingly objective universe came to evolve out of Absolute Mind" (Sangharakshita, 1957: 383). Absolute Mind in the Yogacara school is the sole reality and its principal theme is the perfect mutual interpretation of all phenomena. Evans-Wentz mentioned Yogacara school in his introduction to *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*: "Nagajuna and Ashvaghosha, the Patriarch of the Madhyamika School, named this beyond-Nature Reality the Voidness (Skt. *Shunyata*); Asanga, the founder of the Yogachara School, called it the Basic (or Root)

Should there be any doubt left concerning the identity of the One Mind and the unconscious, this section certainly ought to dispel it. 'The One Mind being verily of the Voidness and without any foundation, one's mind is, likewise, as vacuous as the sky.' The One Mind and the individual mind are equally void and vacuous. Only the collective and the personal unconscious can be meant by this statement, for the conscious mind is in no circumstances 'vacuous.'

(CW 11: 820)

As was shown before, this 'One Mind' is not found in the original Tibetan text, but this represents the speculation of Evans-Wentz in line with his understanding of Neo-Platonism and Vedanta. Thus in his commentary Jung was merely discussing his own understanding of the unconscious psyche informed by Evans-Wentz's misinterpretation of the Tibetan text. However, R.H. Jones (1979) argued,

...these positive features differentiate the two concepts in an important way: the type of enlightened mind he is describing is characterized as non-dual and void of any content. In his notion of the *unconscious*, the unconscious is populated by at least a few distinct archetypes, a feature which cannot but cause us to differentiate the two concepts.

(Jones, 1979: 146)

Reynolds pointed out that Jung was not concerned with *Dzogchen*, but with symbols and their transformations, which is, in Buddhist terms, the province of *Tantra*, the path of transformation. According to the *Dzogchen* teachings, in the tripartite division of our existence into Body, Speech, and Mind, the methods of *Sutra* correspond to Body, those of *tantra* to Speech, and those of *Dzogchen* to Mind. This Speech means the entire field of energy of the individual. It is with this level of individual existence that Jung's psychology is concerned (Reynolds, 1989: 110).

The concept of 'self' also concerns Jung greatly. Jung assumes that the term 'self' in the Evans-Wentz translation has the same significance as his own use of the term in German. In his commentary he wrote,

The text goes on to say that the Mind is also called the 'Mental Self. The 'self' is an important item in analytical psychology... The Mind as 'the means of attaining the Other Shore' points to a connection between the transcendent function and the idea of the Mind or Self. Since the unknowable substance of the Mind, i.e., of the unconscious, always represents itself to consciousness in the form of symbols - the self being one such symbol - the symbol functions as a 'means of attaining the Other Shore,' in other words, as a means of transformation. In my essay on Psychic Energy I said that the symbol acts as a

transformer of energy. My interpretation of the Mind or self as a symbol is not arbitrary; the text itself calls it 'The Great symbol.'

(CW 11: 808-811)

Reynolds asserts, however, "the term 'Mental Self' has been coined by Evans-Wentz and is not found in the Tibetan text. 'The means of attaining the Other Shore' is Evans-Wentz's mistranslation of *Prajnaparamita*, which the text is equating with the nature of the mind (Reynolds, 1989: 145). This term indicates the perfection of wisdom, that is to say, the insight into the nature of reality which perceives that all phenomena are empty in their inherent nature. Moreover, this insight goes beyond all metaphysical concepts and mental constructions. Hence there is nothing about psychological symbols. The term *Mahamudra* may be translated as 'the Great Symbol,' but Jung gave it meaning out of context with its significance in the text. Reynolds claims that the *Mahamudra* is the final stage in the process of transformation in tantra and transcends both the visualisation process and the perfection process. Therefore it is called 'Great,' not because it is a symbol of the 'Self,' but because it is a state of realisation beyond all symbols in the process of transformation (Reynolds, 1989: 145-6).

#### **4.2.3 A critical discussion of Jung's understanding of *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation***

Jung's main concern was with symbols and their transformation as they spontaneously manifest themselves from the unconscious. These manifestations are held to indicate not only the psychic affliction of the patient, but also the process of healing or becoming whole, which Jung called individuation. Hence he put emphasis on the integration of opposites. In his Commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, Jung wrote that in the Tibetan practice of meditation the experiences of different gods are symbolic representations of various aspects of the pairs of opposites, which when taken together constitute the whole, the Self in Jung's term. Jung wrote,

In keeping with this hypothesis, the text goes on to say that the Mind is also called the 'Mental Self.' The 'self' is an important concept in analytical psychology... Although the symbols of the 'self' are produced by unconscious activity and are mostly manifested in dreams, the facts which the idea covers are not merely mental; they include aspects of physical existence as well. In this

and other Eastern texts the 'Self' represents a purely spiritual idea, but in the Western psychology the 'self' stands for a totality which comprises instincts, physiological and semi-physiological phenomena. To us a purely spiritual totality is inconceivable...

(CW 11: 808)

Jung believed that the self is the totality of the psyche which includes the ego. In the process of individuation one places the ego in subordinate relation to the self. In so doing, the ego is no longer the centre of the personality, but the self, which unites all opposites, is the centre. Jones argues that, for Jung, "it is impossible to abolish the conscious ego, and so the objective of therapy is to bring about a balance between, or integration of, the conscious and unconscious" (Jones, 1979: 14). Clearly Jung did not understand the meaning of the non-dual state, which in Buddhism is called *samadhi* and *advayajnana*. He wrote in his commentary,

Whenever there is a lowering of the conscious level we come across instances of unconscious identity, or what Lévy-Bruhl called 'participation mystique.' The realization of the One Mind is, as our text says, the 'at-one-ment of the *Trikaya*'; in fact it creates the at-one-ment. But we are unable to imagine how such a realization could ever be complete in any human individual. There must always be somebody or something left over to experience the realization, to say 'I know at-one-ment, I know there is no distinction.' The very fact of the realization proves its inevitable incompleteness. One cannot know something that is not distinct from oneself. Even when I say 'I know myself,' an infinitesimal ego - the knowing 'I' - is still distinct from 'myself.' In this as it were atomic ego, which is completely ignored by the essentially nondualist standpoint of the East, there nevertheless lies hidden the whole unabandoned pluralistic universe and its unconquered reality.

(CW 11: 817)

Jung simply denied the non-dual states of Buddhist thought because he could not conceive of the consciousness without the ego. Although acceptable from a Buddhist non-dualistic perspective, the obliteration of the distinction between subject and object, for Jung, is contradictory. Jung stated, "If there is no ego there is nobody to be conscious of anything" (CW 11: 774). In Mahayana Buddhist teachings, the individual self and the phenomenal world are regarded as an illusion, and are constructed by the subject/object discrimination. However, this false assumption of the world can only be removed by the knowledge of the very empty 'nature' of all phenomena, namely emptiness, which is totally transcended by the subject/object duality. In Buddhism it is called, thusness, the very nature of reality. According to T.R.V. Murti (1998), the Madhyamika school philosophy puts forward a non-dual

(*advaya*) state which is the very heart of the reality (*prajna*), and is knowledge freed of conceptual distinctions. The highest wisdom (*prajnaparamita*) in the Madhyamika is non-dual knowledge, which is “the abolition of all particular viewpoints which restrict and distort reality” (Murti, 1998: 214). Jung failed to understand the Buddhist non-dualist perspective, as his horizons were limited by the prescriptions of his own theory of psychology. In contrast to Jung’s approach, a phenomenologist of religion argues that, “any method of interpreting religion must include the recognition that *religious experience cannot be reduced to other elements of human life*” (Streng, 1976: 59). The lack of such awareness limits the study of religion to non-religious factors. In Jung’s case, he tends to see the Buddhist non-dualist perspective only from a psychological point of view and fails to see the Buddhist concepts within their own cultural context.

The Mahayana meditation, such as Calm (Skt. *Samatha*) and Insight (Skt. *Vipasyana*) meditations, seeks to overcome the subject/object duality, and eventually allows a full realisation, a liberating insight into emptiness. However, Jung was strongly opposed to importing Oriental techniques of meditation into the West. Clarke argues that, while Jung warned against the undisciplined adoption of Eastern practices, “his failure to encourage or to anticipate the growth of a responsible and disciplined practice of yoga must be seen as a serious shortcoming in his bridge-building enterprise” (Clarke, 1994: 173). Today there are many individuals and organisations which have taken these religious practices seriously and which practise and teach them in a serious and responsible way. These techniques are not without their risks but they have enriched cultural life in the West and have provided for many individuals the opportunity for spiritual and personal growth. Hence, Clarke claims that, “it is difficult to imagine that Jung could have maintained his disapproval had he been able to witness developments during recent decades” (Ibid., 173).

I will now examine Jung’s argument of the extraverted West and introverted East. Jung contended that all psychic activity is composed of reaction, function and compensations of energy processes. He tended to see opposition and harmony all around him as necessary. One of the major significant dualities is a division between Eastern and Western religions:

The East bases itself upon psychic reality, that is, upon the psyche as the main and unique condition of existence. It seems as if this Eastern recognition were a psychological or temperamental fact rather than a result of philosophical reasoning. It is a typically introverted point of view, contrasted with the equally typical extraverted point of view of the West. Introversion and extraversion are known to be temperamental or even constitutional attitudes which are never intentionally adopted in normal circumstances. In exceptional cases they may be produced at will, but only under very special conditions. Introversion is, if one may so express it, the 'style' of the East, an habitual and collective attitude, just as extraversion is the 'style' of the West.

(CW 11: 770)

Western religion sees God at work in the historical events of the external world, whereas Eastern religion finds spiritual information and guidance mainly through introspection. This led Jung to conclude that the religious attitude of the West is extraverted while that of the East is introverted. But Jung also said,

Both are one-sided in that they fail to see and take account of those factors which do not fit in with their typical attitude. The one underrates the world of consciousness, the other the world of the One Mind. The result is that, in their extremism, both lose one half of the universe; their life is shut off from total reality, and is apt to become artificial and inhuman. In the West, there is the mania for 'objectivity,' the asceticism of the scientist or of the stockbroker, who throw away the beauty and universality of life for the sake of the ideal, or not so ideal, goal. In the East, there is the wisdom, peace, detachment, and inertia of a psyche that has returned to its dim origins, having left behind all the sorrow and joy of existence as it is and, presumably, ought to be.

(CW 11: 786)

Jung was certainly not suggesting an abandonment of the whole Western scientific outlook. In his view, the East is equally biased, because of its supposed detachment and inertia. Hence, he pointed out in his commentary that it is more important to seek a balanced view in which the demands of both matter and spirit and of extraversion and introversion are met.

Given Jung's claim that the spiritual development of the West has been along entirely different lines from that of the East, then it is important to raise the question what the 'East' exactly means. To answer this question, we need to understand that the term 'the East' is in fact, a fictional entity created by Western intellectuals and writers without having any historical or cultural consideration. China, Japan, India, Arab and Islamic countries and these countries have different languages, religions, cultures, and histories. Nevertheless, these different religions, cultures and histories were united as the 'East' in the nineteenth century as the result of European



imperialist expansion. The East is often characterised as mystical, dream-like, irrational, intuitive, pessimistic, and so on. By contrast, the West is usually characterised as being realistic, practical, progressive, and so on. As Reynolds argues,

What this amounts to is a stereotyping of Asians and of non-Europeans in general, as being ‘a lesser breed without the Law.’ This becomes, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a rationalization for European imperialist expansion as ‘the white man’s burden.’ ‘They’ are different from us and this difference implies their inferiority. The same stereotyping was also used to demonstrate the moral and practical superiority of Christianity over such ‘Eastern’ religions as Hinduism and Buddhism.

(Reynolds, 1989: 146-7)

In the light of this Eurocentric view of the East, we can understand why Jung was reluctant to see Westerners apply Eastern spiritual disciplines such as yoga, insisting that the Eastern mentality is fundamentally different from the Western one. Reynolds argues, in Jungian terminology ‘the East’ is in reality a projection of the shadow side of the Western European psyche. Western Europe saw in the East everything that it denied in itself, and therefore the East is dark, sensual, corrupt, mystical, dreamy, irrational, feminine. These images of the East which frequently emerge from Jung’s writings also come from his Westernised view towards Eastern religion.

Lastly, I shall take up the question of the contemporary relevance of Jung’s dialogue with the East for the practice of hermeneutics.<sup>17</sup> Jung’s approach to the East is governed by the spiritual needs of ‘modern man,’ and the clinical needs associated with the development of psychotherapy, and therefore Jung draws ancient oriental texts into modern Western discourse. However Clarke asserted Jung’s interpretation of the Eastern texts seems to be reductive in that he tended to reduce the spiritual to the psychic, “and thereby of failing to grasp the full significance of the philosophical systems of the East” (Clarke, 1994: 175).

There is an important issue to discuss here: whether Jung’s approach is essentially hermeneutical, in other words, whether Jung’s approach allows sufficient space for the East to speak for itself. According to Gadamer’s hermeneutical model, any dialogue with the textual past must take account of the historical situation both of the text itself and of the reader of the text. In the case of the former this means

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<sup>17</sup> I use hermeneutics in terms of the art of interpreting texts, particularly the texts from the past whose meaning may seem to be elusive. For a detailed discussion of Gadamer’s hermeneutics in relation to Jung’s method of interpretation, see Chapter Two.

allowing the text to speak for itself and in the case of the latter it indicates the recognition of one's own agenda and pre-judgement. Clarke (1994) argues that the problem with Jung's approach is that it pays much more attention to the latter than to the former. It is true that one cannot simply abandon one's culturally shaped conceptual apparatus and penetrate the meanings of foreign texts without any pre-suppositions, as Gadamer says that one's prejudices and prejudgements represent an essential component of all meaningful exchange. However Jung clung too firmly to his own cultural territory. As mentioned earlier, Jung's approach is based on the postulation of analogies. Jones (1979) adopted a highly critical view towards Jung's tendency to draw analogies between the Eastern religious concepts and his own psychology. He claimed,

...Jung distorts the intention of the Eastern texts by bringing in concepts as parallels which are essentially foreign in intent. Of course conceptual schemes are by their nature selective (since each deals with only certain problems), but in simplifying they still may be useful. Jung's error is to substitute his *theoretical* constructs as parallels or equivalents to religious concepts.

(Jones, 1979: 143-4)

According to Gadamer, in a hermeneutical approach there is no such thing as correctness of interpreting the texts. Gadamer stated that, "To interpret [a text] means precisely to use one's own preconceptions so that the meaning of the text can really be made to speak for us" (Gadamer, 1975: 358). It is important that the task of interpreting a text or historical event can never be completed and is always in the process of revision. In the light of this, we can say that the readings which Jung offered in the 1930's will now appear to some extent inadequate and dated. Clarke asserts, "From a purely historical point of view it is important when trying to assess, Jung's contributions to the East-West dialogue to take full account of their historical relativity, namely to see them in the context of his time and culture, and not simply to judge him in retrospect" (Clarke, 1994: 177). In conclusion, while Jung did succeed in introducing the Tibetan text to a Western audience, he did this at the cost of altering both the substance of the text and its very nature. His interpretation of the text may well include valid material but it has little relation to the Tibetan text itself. In the next section I will examine Jung's relation to the Tibetan Tantric mandalas.

### 4.3 Jung and Tibetan Tantric Mandalas

### 4.3.1 General outline of the Tantric mandala

In Tibet mandalas are used in invocations, meditation and temple services. The series of diagrams in mandalas constitutes a simplified illustration of the structure of the universe (see figures 4.1-4.4.). Tucci states, “[The mandala] is, above all, a map of the cosmos. It is the whole universe in its essential plan, in its process of emanation and of reabsorption” (Tucci, 1973: 23). Robert A.F. Thurman (1998) states that in Buddhist usage, a mandala is a matrix or model of a perfect universe, and is “a blueprint for Buddha-hood conceived as attainment not only of an individual’s ultimate liberation and supreme bliss, but also as the attainment of such release and bliss *by an individual fully integrated with his or her environment and field of associates*” (Thurman, 1998: 127). The traditional definition of tantra is “a process of demolishing the samsaric world by removing its ignorance, and rebuilding the foundation on the basis of wisdom. Within the tantric tradition, “mandalas are models used for creating Buddha-world” (Thurman, 1998: 127).

mandala is a matrix of embodiment. It is the architecture of enlightenment in its bliss- and compassion-generated emanations. It is a womb palace within which infinite wisdom and compassion can manifest as forms discernible to ordinary beings. It is also a structure perceived by misknowledge-dominated ordinary beings as symbolic of the qualities of enlightenment.

(Thurman, 1998: 130)

Mattieu Richard (1995) asserts that in Vajrayana “mandala refers to a divine abode, a perfect Buddha-field, and to the enlightened deities, or buddhas, abiding in it” (Richard, 1995: 158). There is a main deity at the centre of the mandala, surrounded or not by a retinue of other deities. Each aspect of the divine deities is highly symbolic and is meant to develop in practitioners enlightened qualities related to the path of enlightenment. The mandalas are elaborate designs based on a number of concentric squares and circles studded with numerous figures of Buddhas, which are contained within a circle inscribed in the form of a stylised lotus. J. Blofeld states, “Almost the entire surface is covered with intricate designs, all with precise symbolic meanings” (Blofeld, 1970: 103). Mandalas are sometimes drawn in colour on the ground but are more often seen in scroll paintings. The outermost circle, which is painted in lotus form, represents the universe’s periphery. The middle circle contains five Buddha-figures called *Jinas* (see diagram 4.1). E. Conze (1964) argues,

[The five Buddhas] serve... as symbols not only of the final perfection that is the goal of the aspirant, but also as symbols of those very evils which bind him to existence and also of his won fivefold personality and of the fivefold sacrament employed in the rite. The set of five symbolizes then both the condition of nirvana and the condition of samsara, as well as the means towards the realization of their essential identity, which is the aim of all the endeavour.

(Conze, 1964: 248)

The *Jinas* are arranged with one in the centre and one at each compass point. “This part of the *mandala* signifies the core of the universe, i.e., the fivefold emanation of energy-wisdom from the void (equated with pure mind)” (Blofeld, 1970: 103, Blofeld’s bracket). This form is repeated in all the other circles, and makes a replica of the larger pattern, which signifies the interpretation of all things and the identity of microcosm and macrocosm. The five *Jinas* are easily distinguishable from one another, for their colours, symbols and the positions of arms, hands and fingers are different from each other. The five different kinds of wisdom are inherited by each *Jina*. The *Jinas* are also equated with many sets of concepts, realms of existence, types of evil to be remedied, elements, seasons, times of day, etc.

The characteristic of the Tantric method of mediation is visualisation and is often based on the mandala.<sup>18</sup> Conze (1964) argues,

The Mandala is a circle of symbolic forms, which is either just mentally produced for special purposes of meditation, or actually marked out on the ground for the purpose of special ritual. Its function is always the same, mainly as a means towards the reintegration of the practitioner.

(Conze, 1964: 246)

Blofeld asserts that the mandala, “is recognized as a valid diagram of the interlocking forces which in their contracted form comprise the entire universe and in their contracted form fill the mind and body of every individual being” (Blofeld, 1970: 85). His account for the purpose of the tantric visualisation method is, “to gain control of the mind, become skilled in creating mental constructions, make contact with powerful forces (themselves the products of mind) and achieve higher states of consciousness in which the non-existence of own-being and the non-dual nature of reality are transformed from intellectual concepts into experiential consciousness -

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<sup>18</sup> This visualisation practice is called *sadhana* and involves the use of *mudras* (sacred gestures), *mantras* (invocations), *bija-mantras* (the seed-syllables from which the visualisations spring) and whirling *dharanis* (revolving strings of syllables). The *mudras*, *mantras* and visualisations correspond to body, speech and mind. (Blofeld, 1970: 85-6)

non-duality is no longer just believed but felt” (Blofeld, 1070: 84). M. Eliade (1958) argues, “the *mandala* serves as a ‘support’ for meditation; the yogin uses it as a ‘defence’ against mental distractions and temptations” (Eliade, 1958: 225). By mentally entering the mandala, the *yogin* approaches his own centre. This spiritual exercise can be understood in two senses:

(1) to reach the center the yogin re-enacts and masters the cosmic process, for the mandala is an image of the world; (2) but since he is engaged in meditation and not in ritual, the yogin, starting from this iconographic ‘support,’ can find the *mandala* in his own body.

(Eliade, 1958: 225)

According to Eliade, the mandala is an *imago mundi*, therefore its centre corresponds to the infinitesimal point perpendicularly traversed by the *axis mundi* (Ibid., 225). As soon as the disciple has entered the mandala, he is in a sacred space, outside of time.

A series of meditations, for which the disciple has been prepared in advance, help him to find the gods in his own heart. In a vision, he sees them all emerge and spring from his heart; they fill cosmic space, then are reabsorbed in him. In other words, he ‘realizes’ the eternal process of the periodic creation and destruction of worlds; and this allows him to enter into the rhythms of the cosmic great time and to understand its emptiness. He shatters the plane of *samsara* and enters a transcendent plane...

(Eliade, 1958: 225)

Richard states, “In the Buddhist tradition, mandalas are objects of meditation with a specific purpose: to transform our ordinary perception of the world into a pure perception of the Buddha nature which permeates all phenomena (Richard, 1995: 157). The pure perception, the important concept of Vajrayana Buddhism (Diamond Vehicle), is to recognise Buddha nature in all sentient beings and to see primordial purity and perfection in all phenomena. Every sentient being is endowed with the essence of buddhahood. In Vajrayana one makes use of mandalas to train into pure perception. The way we usually experience the outer world, our bodies and our feelings is impure, in the sense that we perceive them as substantially existing entities. With this erroneous perception the negative emotion arises, and thus leads to suffering. However, with a careful examination, one will find that they have no true existence, and that they appear as a result of various causes and conditions. To see things as truly existing is in fact the deluded perception underlying *samsara*. Ignorance is therefore a transient veil without intrinsic existence. When one recognises this, however, there is no impure perception. There is no need to try to get

rid of samsara or to suppress suffering, because neither samsara nor suffering actually even exist. The karmic patterns and negative emotions that lie at its root are severed. This is the experience of the purity of nirvana. Richard asserts that, “it is to be free of grasping that one trains in recognizing all appearances as a mandala, a Buddha-field with all beings considered as deities. To see things in this way transforms one’s perception of the world into primordial purity and allows one to realize all the qualities of buddhahood” (Richard, 1995: 158).

As mentioned earlier, a central feature of Tibetan tantric meditation is visualisation. In practising meditation, a practitioner must find a suitable lama to act as his spiritual guide. When he finds his lama and is accepted as a disciple, he will then implicitly obey all his lama’s instructions. After the practitioner has carried out a number of preliminaries to purify himself, his lama will initiate him into the Mantrayana.<sup>19</sup> An initiation (Skt. *abhiseka*) helps to remove spiritual obstructions in the practitioner, and also transmits a spiritual power from the lama. Moreover, it helps the practitioner to properly understand and practice the teachings and oral instructions. It also authorises the practitioner to address himself to a certain holy being or deity. At the initiation, the lama selects a *mantra* and *yi-dam*, which is a chosen deity appropriate to the practitioner’s character type, and introduces him to the mandala of the *yi-dam*. The *mantras* are sacred words and consist of syllables, which give an arrangement of a sacred sound, *Om Mani Padme hum*.<sup>20</sup>

The *yi-dam* is a holy being who is in harmony with the practitioner’s nature, and acts as his guiding deity. The *yi-dam* reveals aspects of his character that he was overlooking by visual representations. The *yi-dam* also enables the practitioner to change the energy of his characteristic fault into a wisdom. The *yi-dam* is composed of five families of the main Mantrayana Buddhas (Skt. *Jina*). The first of these is the central Buddha and is seen as a personification of the *Dharma*-body. The other four *jin*as are seen as dwelling in Pure Lands: Aksobhya in the east, Ratnasambhava (The Jewel-Born One) in the south, Amitabha (Infinite Radiance) in the west, and Amoghasiddhi (Infallible Success) in the north (Harvey, 1990: 262). The *yi-dams* may be male or female, and peaceful or wrathful. The male peaceful ones are the five

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<sup>19</sup> It is one of the four schools (Vajrayana, Mantrayana, Kalacakrayana, and Sahajayana) in Tantrayana Buddhism (‘Vehicle of the Tantra texts’).

*jinas* and the ordinary *Bodhisattvas* of the Mahayana. The male wrathful *yi-dams* are called *Heruka*.<sup>21</sup> The female peaceful *yi-dams* are called *Tara*, which are the Green and White form of the *Bodhisattva*. The wrathful female *yi-dams* are called *Dakini*, “which are seen as playful but tricky beings, often portrayed wielding a chopper and holding a skull-cup containing poison (human faults) transformed into the nectar of Deathlessness” (Harvey, 1990: 262). These peaceful and wrathful *yi-dams* are seen as the consorts of the male peaceful and wrathful *yi-dams*. A consort is called the ‘Wisdom’ (Skt. *Prajna*) of her male partner, and represents the wise and passive power which makes possible the active and energetic skilful means of the male. The male and female forms are often represented as *Yab* (father) and *Yum* (mother) in sexual union, and symbolise that sexual union, the union of skilful means and wisdom, which leads to enlightenment.

A mandala or sacred circle was developed in India between the seventh and twelfth centuries and portrays the luminous world of specific holy beings. It is constructed by coloured sand or fragrant powders on a horizontal platform, or it is painted on a hanging scroll. Depending on the rites in which the mandala is used, the deities’ vary, but the one portraying the five *jinas* is the most important. When the practitioner is introduced to his *yi-dam*’s mandala, he can familiarise himself with the deities world. Harvey asserts, “by visualisation of the deity and his or her world, he may master and integrate the psychic forces they represent, and achieve a wholeness in his life” (Harvey, 1990: 264). The pattern of a mandala is based on that of circular Stupa with a square base oriented to the four directions. When the practitioner visualises himself entering the mandala, he comes to the central citadel, representing the temple of his own heart.

When the tantric practitioner has been given a *yi-dam*, *mantra* and mandala by his lama, he can go on to perform various meditations in the form of *sadhana* or ‘accomplishing.’ *Sadhana* involves a vivid visualisation, chanting *mantras* and the use of *mudras*, which are ritual gestures showing a certain state of mind. The practice of *sadhana* has two stages. The first is the stage of Generation (Skt. *Utpanna-krama*) and is the process of building up the visualisation. The second is that of Completion

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<sup>20</sup> Jung translated the mantra as “Om! Behold the jewel in the lotus” (CW 6: 298 and NZ I: 264).

(Skt. *Sampanna-krama*) in which the adept draws on the energies and spiritual qualities of the archetypal visualised form. The adept first familiarises himself with the paintings and detailed description of the deity and his mandala-world. He then gradually learns to build up a mental image of the deity till it is seen in full reality as a living, moving being. By visualising himself as the deity, the adept takes on some of its powers and virtues, which are symbolically expressed in many details of its appearance. Finally, the whole visualisation gradually dissolves into emptiness, so as to overcome any attachment to it. Visualisation and dissolution are repeated until the meditator attains mastery of the visualised world. When the visualisation is fully established, the stage of Completion is entered, where there is a manipulation of the meditator and *yi-dam*'s energies and qualities. This takes great discipline and application and is usually done in a retreat setting. He may develop a great inner heat and an ego-transcending 'Great Bliss'; meditate on his reflection in a mirror; gain meditative control of dreams; retain awareness even in dreamless sleep; prepare himself to understand the intermediary period (Tib. *bar-do*) between rebirths, so as to accelerate spiritual progress then; and learn how to transfer his consciousness to *Amitabha*'s Pure Land at death (Harvey, 1990: 166-7). The Tantric mandala and its meditation method based on visualisation have been discussed thus far. I will next examine Jung's approach to the understanding of mandala symbolism.

#### 4.3.2 Jung's approach to mandala symbolism

Jung was concerned with the problem of the West's spiritual crises. He believed that Buddhism "had developed ways of tapping into and assimilating material from the deeper levels of the psyche, the unconscious which in the West we have tended to block off through our excessive refinement of rational consciousness" (Clarke, 1994: 72). Jung recognised a need for psychic wholeness whereby Westerners come to terms with the non-rational aspects of their nature. Wholeness is an important notion in Jung's thought. Jung believed wholeness represents the goal of human activity, the fullest realisation of the human personality which can give the individual a sense of true value and purpose in life. Jung was interested in the Tantric mandala and

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<sup>21</sup> The anger which the *yi-dam* shows is to help open up the practitioner's heart by devastating his hesitations, doubts, confusions, and ignorance (Harvey, 1990: 262).



interpreted it as a symbol of psychic wholeness. In his Commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower* Jung argues that the mandala appears as the image of circulation, in which a rotation from one pole to another, from light to darkness, brings about a progressive sense of integration and completeness. Clarke (1994) asserts,

The ‘circumambulation of the self’ was a favourite image of Jung’s that he used to express the dynamic process of self-discovery whereby the ego is seen to be contained in the wider dimensions of the self, the self being both the centre and the circumference of the psychic life. The circular motion implies a sense of both a marking off and of a process of integration which are essential to the process of individuation, the coming-to-be of the self.

(Clarke, 1994: 85)

Jung first discussed the term mandala in his Commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower* in 1929. According to Jung, “*Mandala* means ‘circle,’ more especially a magic circle” (CW 13: 31), and are found not only throughout the East but also in Christian and Egyptian traditions and among the Pueblo and Navaho Indians. Most mandalas take the form of a flower, cross, or wheel and are based on the figures of the square and circle. The mandala which is used in the East for ritual and meditation purposes, is not only confined to Buddhism but is also characteristic of Hindu tantra. However, Jung’s interest was largely confined to its manifestation in the Tantric Buddhism of Tibet. He asserted that, “The most beautiful mandalas are, of course, those of the East, especially the ones found in Tibetan Buddhism” (CW 13: 31). The Buddhist mandalas or circles of Tibetan origin, “consist as a rule of a circular *padma* or lotus which contains a square sacred building with four gates, indicating the four cardinal points and the seasons. The centre contains a Buddha, or more often the conjunction of *Shiva* and his *Shakti*, or an equivalent *dorje* (thunderbolt) symbol” (CW 11: 113), as shown in Figure 4.6. Jung stated that the mandala of this sort is known as yantra, an instrument of contemplation. In Jung’s opinion a mandala of this kind, “is meant to aid concentration by narrowing down the psychic field of vision and restricting it to the centre” (CW 9i: 630). He continued,

The mandala shown here depicts the state of one who has emerged from contemplation into the absolute state. That is why representation of hell and the horrors of the brutal ground are missing. The diamond thunderbolt, the dorje in the centre, symbolizes the perfect state where masculine and feminine are united. The world of illusions has finally vanished. All energy has gathered together in the initial state.

(CW 9i: 636)

For Jung the mandala is the union of opposites like *yin* and *yang* in Chinese philosophy, the state of everlasting balance and immutable duration.<sup>22</sup> Jung discovered the mandala symbol during a turbulent period of his life following his split with Freud. From 1912 onwards, Jung's imagination was invaded by frightening fantasies. His method of coping with these fantasies was to express them outwardly in drawing, painting and in building models with stones. In so doing, he found himself creating regular, symmetrical images which he later identified as mandalas (figures 4.8-4.12). In his autobiography Jung wrote,

Only gradually did I discover what the mandala really is: 'Formation, Transformation, Eternal Mind's eternal recreation.' And that is the self, the wholeness of the personality, which if all goes well is harmonious, but which cannot tolerate self-deceptions.

(MDR: 221)

Jung considers mandala as psychological phenomena. Jung states that mandala spontaneously appear in dreams and in visions and images caused by schizophrenia. Jung says, "As a rule a mandala occurs in conditions of psychic dissociation or disorientation" (CW 9i: 714), for example, in the case of children whose parents are about to be divorced, in adults with neurosis, or in schizophrenics. In such cases a circular image of mandala is commensurate with the disorder of the psychic state. Jung observed that mandalas "have the purpose of reducing the confusion to order, though this is never the conscious intention of the patient" (CW 9i: 645). The circular image of the mandala compensates for the disorder and confusion of the psychic state through the construction of a central point to which everything is related.

Jung states, "This is evidently an *attempt at self-healing* on the part of Nature, which does not spring from conscious reflection but from an instinctive impulse" (CW 9i: 714). Jung examined a number of mandala images derived from the dreams and fantasies of his patients (figures 4.13 - 4.17). Jung discovered that the mandalas produced by his patients have an intuitive and irrational character, and exert a retroactive impact on the unconscious. The mandala pictures become effective because "the patient's subjective imagination motifs and symbols of the most

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<sup>22</sup> One mandala Jung did not discuss is the mandala called *Yabyum*, involving the union of the two people of opposite sex (Father-Mother). Blofeld suggests, "they symbolize the union of the forces of wisdom and compassion by analogy to a physical union which is the source of the highest bliss next to spiritual ecstasy" (Blofeld, 1970: 72).

unexpected kind that conform to law and express an idea or situation which their conscious mind can grasp only with difficulty. Confronted with these pictures, many patients suddenly realize for the first time the reality of the collective unconscious as an autonomous entity” (CW 9i: 645).

Jung designates archetypes as a formal aspect of instinct and found a fundamental conformity in mandalas. The individual mandalas spontaneously produced by Jung’s patients usually contain a motif of a quaternity or a multiple of four, such as a cross and a square. The ‘squaring the circle’ is one of the most important archetypal motifs from the psychological point of view and is what Jung called the “*archetype of wholeness*” (CW 9i: 715). Jung asserts that whereas ritual mandalas always display a definite style and motifs, the individual mandalas reveal various motifs and symbolic allusions which attempt to express “the totality of the individual in his inner or outer experience of the world, or its essential point of reference” (CW 9i: 717). Jung states,

Their object is the *self* in contradiction to the *ego*, which is only the point of reference for consciousness, whereas the self comprises the totality of the psyche altogether, i.e., conscious *and* unconscious. It is therefore not unusual for individual mandalas to display a division into a light and a dark half, together with their typical symbols.

(CW 9i: 717)

For Jung the mandala implies a circular movement focused on the centre. It is a mental image which aims at engaging all sides of one’s personality, namely, all the positive and the negative opposites of one’s nature. Jung suggested that the mandala best symbolises the archetype of the self and helps to integrate the personality until the state of self-knowledge is finally realised. Clarke argues that, “Jung’s attempt to make sense of this [mandala] image as a universal, archetypal, phenomenon by means of a whole network of analogical links to a wide range of cultural phenomena, West as well as East, modern as well as ancient, was nothing less than a hermeneutical *tour de force*” (Clarke, 1994: 136). Jung elaborated the mandala and the archetypes of the self in the following passage:

[The mandala’s] basic motif is the premonition of a centre of personality, a kind of central point within the psyche, to which everything is related, by which everything is arranged, and which is itself a source of energy. The energy of the central point is manifested in the almost irresistible compulsion and urge to *become what one is*, just as every organism is driven to assume the form that is

characteristic of its nature, no matter what the circumstances. This centre is not felt or thought of as the ego but, if one may so express it, as the *self*. Although the centre is represented by an innermost point, it is surrounded by a periphery containing everything that belongs to the self - the paired opposites that make up the total personality. This totality comprises consciousness first of all, the personal unconscious and finally an indefinitely large segment of the collective unconscious whose archetypes are common to all mankind.

(CW 9i: 634)

Jung came to understand the mandala to be a uniting symbol or an archetype of wholeness, which symbolises Jung's notion of the self. The goal of the mandala, for Jung, is to express the unity of psychic dissociation so that the focal point of the personality is shifted from the conscious ego to the self, which is the totality of the psyche. Hence, both the conscious and the unconscious are brought into harmony and balance. Jung argued that, "the mandala is the centre. It is the exponent of all paths. It is the path to the centre, to individuation" (MDR: 222). Jung's dream discussed above and his mandala paintings, which for him were empirical reality and thus gave him evidence, and also Wilhelm's translation of the *Secret of the Golden Flower* led Jung to confirm that the mandala is the symbol of the self. Jung claims that his patients' mandalas were new and uninfluenced products, and concluded that there is a transconscious disposition in every individual, constantly producing similar symbols at all times and in all places. Thus, all the mandalas which Jung accumulated from his patients and his own dream provided him with an important confirmation of the theory of the collective unconscious and the existence of primordial images, the archetypes. To sum up, the significance of mandala for Jung lies in the self-healing aspect and the archetype of the self, the symbolic representation of the totality of the psyche between the conscious and the unconscious.

### 4.3.3 Comparison between Buddhist mandala and Jung's mandala

Jung claims that mandalas are symbols of psychic wholeness. Is this incompatible with their Buddhist use as cosmic symbols and as aids to meditation? In order to answer this question, I will compare and contrast Jung's mandala as symbol of psychic wholeness with Buddhist use of the mandala as cosmic symbols. In Tantric Buddhism the mandala is a model of the perfect universe, divine abode, perfect Buddha-world. There are the main deities at the centre of the mandala (*jina*), each

aspect of the divine deities is highly symbolic and is meant to develop enlightened qualities in practitioners related to the path of enlightenment. By contrast, Jung claims that the individual mandalas which were spontaneously produced by his patients show various motifs and symbols which attempt to express the totality of the psyche, the archetype of the self. The significance of the mandala in a Jungian sense, which symbolises psychic wholeness, that is, both the conscious and the unconscious in a good balance has a sharp contrast with the Buddhist mandala as a cosmic symbol of Buddha-world.

A further difference lies in the way in which the mandala is utilised between Jung's psychology and Tantric Buddhism. A number of mandala-like figures, which spontaneously appear in dreams and visions of Jung's patients suffering from psychic dissociation such as schizophrenia, have an irrational character and retroactive impact on the unconscious. They have a therapeutic effect on the patients, striving towards self-healing, which derives from an instinctive nature of the collective unconscious. Jung believes that the circular image of the mandala compensates for the disorder and confusion of the psychic state through the construction of a central point to which everything is related. Jung, therefore, was mainly concerned with psychological utilisation of the mandala images for the purpose of the treatment of his patients. By contrast, the Tantric Buddhist mandala is an object of meditation with specific purpose. i.e., to transform our ordinary perception of the world into a pure perception of the Buddha-nature which permeates all phenomena. The Tantric mandala is used only for religious and ritual purposes under the strict guidance and instruction of a lama. With the clear chasm between Jung and the Buddhist significance of the mandala, it is crucial to emphasise that the mandala in Jungian psychology is not compatible with Buddhist use of the mandala.

I will now examine in detail the relation between Tantric visualisation and Jung's method of active imagination. In 1938 in the monastery of Bhutia Busty, near Darjeeling, Jung had the opportunity of talking with a Lamaic *rimpoche*, Lingdam Gomchen, about the mandala. From the conversation with the Lama Jung understood, "the true mandala is always an inner image, which is gradually built up through (active) imagination, at such times when psychic equilibrium is disturbed or when a thought cannot be found and must be sought for, because it is not contained in holy

doctrine” (CW 12: 123). This statement suggests that Jung equated the Tantric visualisation with his method of active imagination. Jung invented the method called active imagination, which is, “a special training for switching off the consciousness, at least to a relative extent, thus giving the unconscious contents a chance to develop” (CW 11: 875). Jung argues,

[The active imagination] is a method (devised by myself) of introspection for observing the stream of interior images. One concentrates one’s attention on some impressive but unintelligible dream-image, or on a spontaneous visual impression, and observes the changes taking place in it. Meanwhile, of course, all criticism must be suspended and the happenings observed and noted with absolute objectivity. Obviously, too, the objection that the whole thing is ‘arbitrary’ or ‘thought up’ must be set aside, since it springs from the anxiety of an ego-consciousness which brooks no master besides itself in its own house. In other words, it is the inhibition exerted by the conscious mind on the unconscious.

(CW 9i: 319, Jung’s bracket)

The aim of this method is that, “it brings a mass of unconscious material to light” (CW 9i: 320). Jung claims, however, “the method is not without its dangers and should, if possible, not be employed except under expert supervision” (CW 8, p. 68). Jung described three possible dangerous aspects of the active imagination. The first danger is that, “the procedure may not lead to any positive result, since it easily passes over into the so-called ‘free association’ of Freud, whereupon the patient gets caught in the sterile circle of his own complexes, from which he is in any case unable to escape” (Ibid., 68). The second possible danger is that the patient evinces an exclusively authentic interest in the unconscious contents, which was produced through the active imagination, and consequently he, “remains stuck in an all-enveloping phantasmagoria, so that once more nothing is gained” (Ibid., 68). Finally, a third danger, which may cause very serious psychological damage to the patients, is that, “the subliminal contents already possess such a high energy charge that, when afforded an outlet by active imagination, they may overpower the conscious mind and take possession of the personality. This gives rise to a condition which temporarily, at least – cannot easily be distinguished from schizophrenia, and may even lead to a genuine ‘psychotic interval.’” (Ibid., 68). The crucial point is that while the active imagination aims at bringing spontaneously the unconscious contents to the conscious, the ego must be at work to some extent.

There are differences between Tantric visualisation and Jung's method of active imagination. Firstly, Blofeld argues that the tantric visualisation method aims at controlling the mind in order to achieve a higher state of consciousness, in which the non-dual nature of reality is transformed from intellectual concepts into experiential consciousness. But the aim of the active imagination is to enable us to bring the unconscious contents to the conscious level. Secondly, the spontaneity of Jung's active imagination is in sharp contrast to Tantric visualisation, in which the meditator practices visualisation step by step by using religious discipline and applications. This causes the fundamental difference between the two systems, that is, Tantric visualisation is a religious practice but active imagination is designed as a therapeutic method for patients.

I will now briefly look at the Tibetan Wheel of Life, which Jung also mentioned in his psychological writings. At the entrance to most Tibetan *gompas* (monastery), there is a large fresco of the Wheel of Life, which is a painting signifying *Samsara* as the plaything of delusion (see figure 4.5 and diagram 4.2). Humphreys argues that, "The Tibetans make great use of pictures of the Wheel to bring before the mind the nature of existence" (Humphreys, 1994: 216). According to Blofeld, there are three creatures in the centre of the wheel: a) a cook signifying craving and greed; b) a snake signifying wrath and passion; and c) a pig signifying ignorance and delusion. Around them is d) a narrow circle half of which is filled with happy-looking but rather worldly people going up, and half with naked wretches falling down. Then there are e) six segments of the circle representing the six states of existence separately (gods, *asuras*, humans, animals, hungry ghosts and denizens of hell). The rim f) is divided into twelve sections each with a picture signifying one of the links in the twelvefold chain of causality whereby beings are ensnared life after life. The whole wheel is in the grasp of g) a huge and hideous demon who dresses in five skulls. Near the top of the picture stands h) the Buddha pointing at i) another simple and beautiful wheel with eight spokes, that is, Asoka's wheel, which for more than two thousand years has been symbol of the *Dharma*, the Doctrine of Buddha (Blofeld, 1970: 119).

The significance of the picture in the Wheel of Life is: a, b and c) Three creatures, which signify craving, wrath and ignorance, are the three fires of evil and

make sentient beings the victims of *Avidhya*, i.e., primordial delusion. d) As a result of karmic actions, sentient beings rise or fall within *Samsara*'s round. All these beings endlessly revolve among the six states. e) Conditions in each state of existence are depicted graphically. f) The twelve links in the chain of causation are illustrated as follows,

1	A blind man	Primordial ignorance
2	A potter	Fashioning: ignorance giving rise to elemental impulses
3	A monkey playing with a peach	Tasting good and evil: impulses giving rise to consciousness
4	Two men in a boat	Personality: consciousness giving rise to name and form
5	Six empty houses	Six senses (including mind): personality giving rise to sense perception
6	Love-making	Contact: the senses giving rise to desire for contact with their objects
7	Blinded by arrows in both eyes	Feeling of pleasure and pain: contact giving rise to blind feeling
8	Drinking	Thirst: feeling giving rise to thirst for more
9	A monkey snatching fruit	Appropriation: thirst giving rise to grasping
10	A pregnant woman	Becoming: grasping giving rise to continuity of existence
11	Childbirth	Birth: birth giving rise to rebirth
12	A corpse	Decay: rebirth giving rise to renewed death and further rounds of birth and death for ever and ever

(Blofeld, 1970: 121)

g) Yama, Lord of Death, represents *Avidhya*<sup>23</sup> with the entire universe in its clutch. The five skulls in Yama's head-dress represent the five senses, the five illusory perceptions, the five kinds of wrongdoing, the five aggregates of being. h and i) The Buddha points to a proper understanding of the Doctrine and conformance with Universal Law as the only way to Liberation.

I will look at Jung's approach to the Tibetan Wheel of Life. The tantric mandala Jung discussed most extensively is the Tibetan World Wheel (*sidpe-korlo*)

<sup>23</sup> Avidhya means ignorance or lack of enlightenment. It also is the fundamental root of evil, and the ultimate cause of the desire which creates the *dukkha* of existence. (Humphreys, 1994: 40)



(figure 4.6), and he suggested that the World Wheel represents the course of human existence in its various forms as conceived by the Buddhists. Jung asserts that, “the World Wheel is based on a ternary system in that the three world-principles are to be found in its centre: the cock, equalling concupiscence; the serpent, hatred or envy; and the pig, ignorance or unconscious (*avidya*)” (CW 12: 123). The wheel has six spokes near the centre and twelve spokes round the edge. The numerical aspects of the World Wheel largely attracted Jung. Jung argues,

The incomplete state of existence is, remarkably enough, expressed by a triadic system. The relation between the incomplete and the complete state therefore corresponds to the ‘sesquitertian proportion’ of 3 : 4. This relation is known in Western alchemical tradition as the axiom of Maria.

(CW 9i: 644)

This statement suggests that Jung interprets the Wheel of Life through his interpretation of Christianity, in which he enlarged the Trinity into the Quaternity by including the autonomous devil as the fourth. Jung believed that the Tibetan Wheel of Life, “is a close parallel to the our Western cosmological, geographical, and physiological representations, of which you find plenty of examples in alchemistic philosophy and in the early mystical texts” (Letters I: 225). According to Jung, there are two kinds of mandala: mandala proper for purposes of magic and worship, generally yoga practices; and the cosmic, geographical ‘scientific’ mandala. The Tibetan Wheel of Life belongs to the latter category (Letters I, 225). Jung asserted that in the Western alchemistic philosophy the trinity is very frequently the centre and such mandalas are usually based upon even numbers. But Jung claims that he “has not come across Buddhist *mandalas* based upon 3, 5, or 6 (2 x 3)” (Letters I: 225). Contrary to Jung’s statement regarding these numbers 3, 5, and 6, the number 3 is significant in the Buddhist mandala, in terms of the *Trikaya*. Moreover, the number 5 in the Buddhist mandala, as I mentioned earlier, is the simple set of symbolic forms in the tantric mandala in Tibetan Buddhism, which normally consists of the group of the five Buddhas, called *Jina*, and signifies the core of the universe and the fivefold emanation of energy-wisdom from the void. Blofeld argues: “Christians... share the Buddhist and Hindu belief in the threefold aspect of divinity which in Buddhism accounts for the *Trikaya* or Three Body concept, but the essential fivefold basis of the mandala *might* be more difficult to fit into a Christian framework, even though the

cross itself is a symbol that exactly conforms with the *mandala's* core” (Blofeld, 1970: 109). The number 6 is also a significant figure, particularly in the Wheel of Life, which represents six segments of the circle symbolising the six states of existence – gods, *asuras*, humans, animals, hungry ghosts and denizens of hell. Jung states that the mandalas which he observed usually contain a motif of a quaternity or a multiple of four, which is an important psychological motif, i.e., the archetype of the self. This may have let Jung disregard other mandalas which contain the number 3, 5 or 6, which does not fit with Jung’s psychological theory.

Jung collected a wide range of mandala-like figures from a variety of different historical and cultural traditions. Jung believed that the idea of psychological and spiritual wholeness can be seen in a number of mandala-like motifs in the representation of Christ. Within ‘Eastern’ traditions, Jung mainly dealt with a few specific tantric mandalas in Tibetan Buddhism, although there are a number of mandalas in the Hindu tantra. Jung’s selective choice of mandala or mandala-like figures results from his psychological purpose. Clarke claims that, “What he hoped to uncover through the accumulation of such data was evidence of the underlying archetypal structure of the human psyche, and confirmation of his belief that this structure applied universally and, as such, was part of the inheritance of mankind” (Clarke, 1994: 137). Jung’s study of mandala symbols was to search out their psychological significance, as Jung believed they matched his psychological theory.

To summarise: in Tibetan Buddhism mandalas are regarded as objects of meditation for the purpose of transforming our ordinary perception of the world into a pure perception of the Buddha nature which transcends subject/object duality. The Tantric mandalas are used for practising visualisation under the strict guidance and instruction of a lama. Jung interpreted mandala-like figures spontaneously appearing in dreams and fantasies as the archetype of the self, which symbolises the totality of the psyche between the conscious and the unconscious. Jung believed that the mandala images become the self-healing aspect: the centre of the personality is shifted from the conscious ego to the self, and psychic dissociation is brought into a harmonious whole. However, this chapter has shown that there is a difference between the Buddhist use of the mandala as a cosmic symbol and as aids to meditation, and Jung’s understanding of the mandala as symbols of psychic

wholeness. The former is to the path of enlightenment for a strictly religious purpose, whereas the latter is to express the totality of the psyche and have a therapeutic effect on the patients striving towards self-healing. Jung failed to understand the significance of the Tibetan wheel of Life, as he grasped it through his interpretation of Christianity.

As has been already argued in Chapter Two, Jung's approach to the Tantric mandala demonstrates some features of hermeneutic doctrine. Jung's understanding of the mandala symbols is largely based on the postulation of making analogies, a method which he often employed in his work as a psychotherapist. Therefore, Clarke asserts that, "the transcultural manifestation of the mandala image is postulated by drawing analogies between patterns and diagrams found in different media in different cultures" (Clarke, 1994: 167). For instance, Jung believed the pig, one of the symbols in the Tibetan Wheel of life, signified the unconscious, which is equivalent to *avidhya* in his view. However, according to Humphreys, *avidhya* simply means ignorance or lack of enlightenment and also is the root of evil, the ultimate cause of the desire which creates the *dukkha* of existence. Jung applied a hermeneutical method, namely, the postulation of analogies, to enable him to understand the mandala as a symbol of the self. But the problem with Jung's method is that Jung failed to understand the significance of Tibetan tantric mandalas within their own cultural context and thus they are moulded to fit into his own model of psychological development.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined Jung's understanding of Tibetan Buddhism, particularly his engagement with *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, and with Tibetan tantric mandalas. Jung's approach was hermeneutical and thus he interpreted Tibetan Buddhist concepts by making analogies and metaphors with his own psychological thinking. As a consequence a sharp contrast emerges between Tibetan Buddhist concepts within their own tradition and Jung's use of them. Jung frequently dismissed the significance of the religious phenomena in their own cultural and traditional context. By contrast, a phenomenologist of religion would insist that religious phenomena cannot be reduced to other elements of human

life. However, Jung often slips into psychological reductionism in his study of Tibetan Buddhism. Although Jung was not concerned much with the rich cultural and doctrinal context of Eastern religious traditions, he was careful to distinguish between the European and Asian traditions. It seems, however, that there is a contradiction in Jung's positions: on the one hand, Jung ignores Asian traditions, but on the other hand, he creates an East/West difference. It needs to be noted that the contradiction may be caused by Jung's Orientalist conception of the Eastern religions, i.e., "the East with which he claims to be in conversation is, in the final analysis, something of his own making, a diction conjured out of his own peculiarly Western needs" (Clarke, 1994: 187). Thus Jung not only dismissed the religious traditions of the East but he also conveyed a distorted image of some aspects of Buddhism.

The *Bardo Thödol* presents itself as a description of the sequence of experiences which happen after one dies, in the period of forty-nine days between death and rebirth, and of the way in which one should respond to these experiences in order to achieve *nirvana* and avoid being reborn. Jung was concerned with the Tibetan concept of *karma*. In his early thought on *karma*, Jung believed that there is no personal inherited *karma* as such, but there is only the collective inherited *karma* of the archetypes. However, his attitude to *karma* and rebirth changed dramatically over the years and he appears to have softened his earlier rejection of the notion of personal *karma* and its psychological function in rebirth in later life. Jung suggested that when a Westerner approached an Eastern spiritual text he or she should entirely reverse the instructions, in order to adapt the Oriental text to Western culture. Evans-Wentz with his theosophical background, mistranslated both of the texts, the *Bardo Thödol* and the teaching of *Dzogchen*. This eventually lead Jung to further misinterpret the Tibetan texts.

In his commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, Jung developed his argument on psychic relativism: an extraverted tendency in the West and an introverted tendency in the East. Jung's attempt to identify the dominant psychological attitude of West and East played a major role in his argument that Westerners should not imitate Eastern religious practices such as Tibetan tantric visualisation. Jung claims that, due to their historical and cultural difference, the Europeans must not throw away their tradition. The current situation of Buddhist

studies in the West bears out Jung's concerns to a certain extent, but in fact there are a number of possibilities and opportunities for Westerners to practice Eastern religious traditions without problems.

Jung was interested in mandala symbols in Tibetan Buddhism, which, he believed, help the Western one-sided consciousness to seek a psychic wholeness. For Jung psychic wholeness is an important idea, which indicates the fullest realisation of the human personality. He asserted the mandala symbolises the archetype of the self and helps to integrate the personality until the state of self-knowledge is realised. The goal of the mandala is to express the unity of a state of psychic dissociation so that the conscious and the unconscious are brought into harmony. However, Jung had a very selective approach to Tibetan tantric mandalas, since his main concern was a psychological one. Jung discussed only a few tantric mandalas, particularly the Tibetan Wheel of Life, which he believed matched his psychological theory. But he completely dismissed other tantric mandalas, which bore no parallels with his psychological thinking. Nor was he concerned with the ritual usage of Tibetan tantric mandalas. The following chapter pursues these concerns further through an examination of Jung's interest in Zen Buddhism.

## Chapter Five:

# Jung and Zen Buddhism

### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter examines Jung's relation to Zen Buddhism. In Zen Jung believed he had discovered a profound link between his psychological theory and Oriental thought, which put its stress on wholeness as a balance between the opposites. However, Jung disagreed with some of a concepts between Zen Buddhism. As a psychologist, Jung's main concern was not with solely bringing Oriental thought to the West but with finding the parallel of Zen Buddhist thought and his psychology. Nevertheless, there appear to be mis-understandings and mis-interpretations of Zen Buddhism in Jung's work and eventually there becomes a sharp contrast between Jung and Zen. Jung was not able to escape from this pitfall for several reasons, most importantly Jung's ontological account of no-mind (emptiness/*sunyata*) which allowed him to interpret the unconscious within the framework of his idea of psychic structure, and D.T. Suzuki's emphasis on the psychological aspect of Zen Buddhism might have affected Jung's understanding of Zen Buddhism. In this chapter I intend to assess Jung's engagement with Zen Buddhism and also examine the difficulties and problems he had in his task of discussing the dialogue between East and West.

This chapter firstly provides a historical overview of Zen Buddhism so as to show its strong connection with Indian Buddhism and Chinese Taoism and to show how Zen was brought to and developed in Japan. This section also examines the way in which Zen was introduced to the West and the extent to which Zen had an influence on Western scholars, not only in the field of Religious Studies but also in psychological research. A key figure is D.T. Suzuki, who took a major role in bringing Zen to the West. Jung, in fact, wrote a foreword to Suzuki's *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*. Secondly it examines Jung's understanding of Zen Buddhist concepts, particularly *satori* enlightenment and no-mind, both of which are important concepts in Zen Buddhism. It also examines the conversation which took place between Jung and the Japanese Zen scholar, Hisamatsu in detail. Lastly, the chapter considers a possible dialogue between Jung or Western psychology and Zen

Buddhism by looking at on-going research on the Christian Zen Buddhist dialogue undertaken by W. Johnston and looking at M. Miyuki's investigation of the strong connection between Zen ox-herding pictures and Jung's individuation process.

## 5.1 General outline of Zen Buddhism

### 5.1.1 Historical background to Zen Buddhism

The way of Zen meditation, its practice of *zazen* and the *koan*, and its goal of the *satori* experience of enlightenment, has its origins in China, where the first Zen master taught and the first Zen schools sprang up. It must be mentioned that Zen is strongly influenced by the indigenous Taoism (Daoism). Chinese Ch'an (Jap. Zen) combines the spirit of Mahayana Buddhism with Taoism and there is obviously a close connection between their teaching and the practice of meditation.<sup>1</sup> However, H. Dumoulin (1979) states the Zen way has its roots deeply embedded in Indian Buddhism, since firstly Zen is connected to Shakyamuni,<sup>2</sup> the founder of the Buddhist religion, and secondly it is closely linked to the ancient Indian tradition of Yoga. In many Japanese Zen temples the image of Shakyamuni is set up as the primary object of veneration. Dumoulin argues that the similarity of Zen and Yoga is evident in their basic techniques of meditation: in sitting, breathing, and concentrating, although the Zen way of meditation is simpler than the *yogic* technique.

Buddhism was transplanted from India to China over a period of three to four hundred years in the first centuries CE. Zen is a product of the fusion of Indian Buddhism with Chinese culture. Its founder was Bodhidharma<sup>3</sup>, who is assumed to have transported Zen from India to China. This legendary founder of Zen is an obscure figure. According to legend, Bodhidharma is known in the tradition as an offspring of the Brahmin class of southern India and came to southern China during the reign of the emperor Wu-ti (502-50). After meeting the emperor he crossed the wide Yangtze River on a reed and propagated a new version of the Mahayana doctrines and a new way of meditation in North China.

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<sup>1</sup> The Chinese term Ch'an is an abbreviated translation of the Sanskrit *dhyana*, referring to the state of deep meditation (Pali. *jhana*). (Harvey, 1990: 153).

<sup>2</sup> Shakyamuni is venerated by the faithful of all Buddhist schools as the Buddha. He was a historical figure who lived in the fifth century B.C.

After Bodhidharma, the Sixth Patriarch, Hui-neng (638-713?), is the important figure in the history of Ch'an in China. There was a vigorous dispute between the Southern and the Northern schools of Chinese Ch'an, and it ended with the total victory of the Southern school. The Northern school<sup>4</sup> soon disappeared, and Hui-neng was recognised as the sixth patriarch of Ch'an. Chinese Ch'an as initiated by Hui-neng is characterised by his way of sudden awakening, contrary to Shen-hsiu's Northern school of gradual enlightenment. Hui-neng says, "Fundamentally not one thing exists" (Hui-neng cited by Dumoulin, 1979: 48). For the nothingness of Hui-neng signifies not nihilism but a supreme affirmation of the ultimate reality that lies beyond all categories. Enlightenment is attainable only by breaking through rational, dualistic thinking. Hui-neng also advocates that practice and enlightenment are not causally connected but identical. This means that meditation is not an indispensable means to attain enlightenment but a spiritual discipline contributing to the process of one's enlightenment. However, this does not mean that Hui-neng rejected practice in general. Rather, Hui-neng emphasises that external practice is to no avail if one's inner nature is not activated. Therefore Hui-neng is more accurately to be seen as the defender of the true practice, as oppose to false, quietistic exercises (Dumoulin, 1979: 49).

The great Ch'an masters, Matsu Tao-I (709-88) and Chih-t'ou His-ch'en (700-790), who lived in the third generation after Hui-neng, were based in present day Kiangsi (Jiangxi) Province. The Golden Age of Ch'an started in the middle of the eighth century during the T'ang period, and lasted some 150 years. Lin-chi I-Shüan (d. 867), who was the founder of the Lin-chi (Jap. Rinzai) school, lived in the last generation of the Ch'an masters of the T'an period. Linchi's style of teaching Ch'an is strict and harsh. His name is associated with the shout of *ho!* (Jap. *Katsu*). Such shouts are intended to shock and awaken the disciple (Dumoulin, 1979: 53-620). During the Kamakura period (1185-1336) Zen Buddhism was introduced to Japan

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<sup>3</sup> There are some doubts about truth of this tradition. Fung Yu-lan suggests that the Bodhidharma story was a pious invention of later times, when the Zen school needed historical authority for its claim to be a direct transmission of experience from the Buddha himself, outside the sutras. (Watts, 1957: 104)

<sup>4</sup> The fifth patriarch, Hung-jen (601-74), attracted a large number of disciples to the seat of his monastery on the East Mountain. One of these disciples, Shen-hsiu (606?-706) inherited the Dharma seal of succession from his master. His school of Zen was called the Lankavatara school. Later the Lankavatra school of Zen spread throughout North China and came to be known as the Northern school.



from China through the Rinzai and Soto schools. Eisai (1141-1215) was the first to transmit the Rinzai tradition to Japan in 1191, establishing monasteries at Kyoto and Kamakura under imperial patronage. The Soto School was introduced in 1227 by Dogen (1200-53), who established the great monastery of Eihei-ji, refusing, however, to accept imperial favours. When this transplanting took place during the Sung period in China, the Neo-Confucianism of the Chu Hsi school established connections with Zen. Hence Zen and Neo-Confucianism were transported to Japan at the same time. For instance, many Zen monasteries in Japan had *tera-koya* (temple schools) attached to them where Confucianism was taught. Many of the highly educated Zen monks studied Buddhism and Confucianism. The ethical dimension of Japanese Zen, that is, its Confucian element, is evident in many writings of Japanese Zen masters. It should be noted that Zen arrived in Japan when the military dictator Yoritomo and his samurai followers had seized power from the hands of the decadent nobility. This historical coincidence provided the samurai class with a form of Buddhism which appealed to them strongly because of its practical qualities and the directness and simplicity of its approach. Thus there arose a way of life called *bushido*, the Tao of the warrior, which is essentially the application of Zen to the arts of war. The contribution of Zen to Japanese culture has not only been confined to *bushido*, but has also entered into almost every aspect of people's lives. A large number of arts and skills are called 'way' in Japan and they are inspired by Zen: a way of flower (*kado*), a way of tea (*sado*), a way of sword (*kendo*), of archery (*kyudo*), of self-defence (*judo*), a way of poetry (*kado*), and of calligraphy (*shodo*). The ink drawing and the style of gardening are also inspired by the spirit of Zen (Dumoulin, 1979: 77-82).

### 5.1.2 The Rinzai school of Zen

The main characteristic of the Rinzai school is a *koan* practice, which is a method leading to enlightenment. The practice of *koans* became widespread in the Rinzai school that flourished in the Sung period in China. The literal meaning of the Chinese *kung-an* (Jap. *koan*) is 'public notice' or 'public announcement,' and the term came into vogue toward the end of the T'ang dynasty. From the beginning, *mondo*, which are exchanges between master and disciple, were the source of material for the *koan*. Besides these *mondo*, the expressions of the masters, anecdotes from the daily life of

the Zen monastery were used as *koans*. When the master gives one of the koans to the disciple, the disciple was to solve the koan by concentrating and devoting all his attention to it until he gave up rational thinking and made headway into the supranational realm of enlightenment. The number of *koan* cases is estimated at 1,700, or more. The two most important *koan* collections in Zen literature are the *Hekiganroku* (Ch. *Pi-yen-lu*), and the *Mumonkan* (Ch. *Wu-men-kuan*). The *Hekiganroku* is an exacting work of literature. Each piece consists of a directive, a core case, comment on the case, explanation of the case, and so on. The *Mumonkan* collection, also known as the *Collection of Forty-eight Koans*, was compiled about one century later and is simpler than the *Hekiganroku*. Japanese Zen masters prefer the *koans* of the *Mumonkan* precisely for their simplicity and succinctness.

Mental concentration is the first effect of *koan* practice. Concentrating on the *koan* literally day and night, the practitioner enters a hyperalert state in which he is aware of nothing but *koan*. This concentration gives rise to a search. The practitioner utilises all his intellectual powers and exerts himself with all his might, but to no avail, because the illogical nature of the *koan* cannot be solved by logical thinking. Then he enters into a state of helplessness and runs up the same wall again and again. He searches for a way out, although the door is open. To see the opening, a one hundred-and-eighty-degree turnabout is necessary. D.T. Suzuki (1969) asserts that the *koan* practices are to shut up all possible avenues to rationalisation (D.T. Suzuki, 1969: 108). Your whole personality must be thrown directly against the iron wall of the *koan*.

This throwing your entire being against the *koan* unexpectedly opens up a hitherto unknown region of the mind. Intellectually, this is the transcending of the limits of logical dualism, but at the same time it is a regeneration, the awakening of an inner sense which enables one to look into the actual working of things.

(D.T. Suzuki, 1969: 109)

The *koan* practice takes place under the master's supervision. There is a formal interview, called *dokusan* or *sanzen*, in which the disciple reports to his master on the progress of his practice, experiences or even disturbances such as visions, fantasies, and hallucinations known as *makyo* (devil's realm). These hallucinations are terrifying and exhilarating and must be unconditionally dismissed (Dumoulin, 1979: 73). During the practice session, called *sesshin* in Japanese, each disciple has a daily

interview with the master for instruction, encouragement and correction. In Zen monasteries, disciples spend the practice session in meditation which includes *zazen* and the *koan* practice.

The Rinzai school stresses personal identity crises resolved only by the achievement of *satori*, a sudden enlightenment, whereas the Soto school puts emphasis on the *zazen* practice, which is often referred to as gradual enlightenment. The Soto school of Zen argues that the *koan* system is much too artificial as it is used as a prerequisite for *satori*. The *koan* lends itself too easily to that very seeking for *satori*, and might induce an artificial *satori*. Alan Watts (1957) asserts,

Adherents of the Rinzai School sometimes say that the intensity of the *satori* is proportionate to the intensity of the feeling of doubt, of blind seeking, which precedes it, but for Soto this suggests that such a *satori* has a dualistic character, and is thus no more than an artificial emotional reaction. Thus the Soto view was that proper *dhyana* lay in motiveless action (*wu-wei*), in ‘sitting just to sit’, or ‘walking just to walk’.

(Watts, 1957: 126)

### 5.1.3 The Soto school of Zen

The Soto school of Zen was derived from Dogen (1200-1253). Dogen is the recognised master of *zazen*<sup>5</sup>, which is one of the best guides to the way of enlightenment. According to T.P. Kasulis (1981), Dogen was trained in the literary arts and Chinese poetry. Dogen lost his parents in his youth, refused an opportunity to become the heir of an aristocratic uncle who fostered Dogen, fled home and was eventually ordained monk at Mount Hiei in Kyoto, which is the centre of the Tendai branch of Buddhism in Japan and was one of the most influential temples at the time. But Dogen was not satisfied with merely gaining knowledge and eventually left Mount Hiei. Dogen then moved to the Kennin-ji monastery of Kyoto, where Eisai had implanted Zen after returning from China, and he conceived the theory and teaching on the one hand, and practice and experience on the other. He realised that only practice and experience would bring him the goal he sought for, and in search for the source, he went to the Zen monastery on Mount Tien-ts’ung in China in 1223. There

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<sup>5</sup> Although his main emphasis is *zazen*, Dogen does not completely reject the practice of *koans*. He often cites *koan* cases of the Chinese masters of old, and *koan*-like expressions often appear in his own explications (Dumoulin, 1979: 94).

Dogen practised under his master Ju-ching (Jap. Nyojo, 1163-1228) and finally attained the Great Enlightenment (Kasulis, 1981: 65-7).

From his new standpoint, Dogen thought that the initial issue posed on Mount Hiei had falsely separated practice from realization, and cultivation (*shu*) from authentication (*sho*) (Kasulis, 1981). That is to say, meditation had been taken to be a means to an end, a technique by which one might achieve enlightenment or *satori*. Dogen believed such distinction between methods and goals was erroneous. He says *zazen* is not a technique by which to achieve enlightenment, it is enlightenment itself. As Dumoulin (1979) puts it,

Practice must be continued, because it is practice in enlightenment. And enlightenment must continually be confirmed in practice. The enlightenment of the practitioner and the practice of the enlightenment are rooted in the same ground and are absolutely necessary for the confirmation of Buddha-nature.

(Dumoulin, 1979: 95)

For Dogen it is the Buddha-nature that is realised in *zazen*, seated meditation, which he calls ‘body-and-mind-casting-off’ (Jap. *shinjindatsuraku*). Dogen had a very strong experience of *satori* when a disciple sitting next to him in Ju-ching’s Zen hall in China kept dozing off and was scolded and struck by the master, who shouted, ‘*Shinjin datsuraku!*’ Upon hearing these words, Dogen awoke to the Great Enlightenment. This is a state in which ‘body and mind are fallen off’ in a experience of self-transcendence known as the state of ‘serene observation’ (Jap. *moku shu*), “a clear awareness in the tranquillity of a state where thought has stopped” (Harvey, 1990: 271). At this stage the natural purity and calm of man’s ‘original nature’ is realised.

The hallmark of Dogen’s Zen is *shikantaza*, ‘nothing but sitting.’ Upon returning to Japan, Dogen’s first work was a brief description of the method of sitting in *zazen*. It was written in Japanesed Chinese (*kambun*), and was called *Fukanzazengi* (Universal promotion of the principle of *zazen*). Dogen recorded his lectures and compiled his essays into a collection known as *Shobogenzo* (Treasury of the correct *dharma*-eye), which is Dogen’s main work and is composed of ninety-five-chapters written in Japanese. The text itself is rather complex partly because of the creative style of his writing. Kasulis states that: “Pushing the medieval Japanese language to its expressive limits, Dogen interweaves the idiomatic and the traditional: even the

most complex and convoluted discussions are interlaced with strikingly concrete and poetic images” (Kasulis, 1981: 68). Dogen also derives new words when it suits his purpose. Because of all these elements, it is difficult to interpret *Shobogenzo* conclusively.

The central focus of Dogen’s thought is Buddha-nature (Skt. *buddhata*, Jap. *bussho*). In the ‘Buddha-Nature’ chapter of the *Shobogenzo* Dogen takes a saying of Shakyamuni that has been handed down in the *Mahaparinirvana Sutra*:

‘*Issai wa shujo nari; shitsuu wa bussho nari; Nyorai wa jojunishite mu nari, u nari, henyaku nari*’: ‘All are sentient beings, all beings are (all being is) the Buddha-nature; Tathagata is permanent, non-being, being and change.’

(Dogen cited by Abe, 1985: 27)

Dogen interprets this sutra passage on the Buddha-nature of all sentient beings in a wider sense so that he includes not only plants or animals but also the inanimate world as well. What Dogen means to say by this passage is that not merely living beings but all of reality itself, i.e., everything that exists, has the Buddha-nature. It is important to mention that Dogen presents the passage by retaining the central concepts in translating the Chinese ideograms into Japanese, but changing the syntax for his own purpose to read: “All living beings are Buddha-nature.” This grammatically unjustifiable translation gives a new sense to the quotation. M. Abe (1985) asserts:

Dogen insists that, to attain the Buddha-nature, one must transcend one’s ego-centrism, homo-centrism, and living being-centrism, and thereby ground one’s existence in the most fundamental plane, that is, in the ‘being’ dimension, which is the dimension of Dogen’s *shitsuu*, i.e., ‘all beings’. The realization of impermanence of *shitsuu* is absolutely necessary for the attainment of the Buddha-nature.

(Abe, 1985: 41-2)

Four sections of the ‘Buddha-Nature’ chapter treat the ‘nothingness of Buddha-nature (*mu-bussho*),’ which Dogen opposes to the ‘being of Buddha-nature (*u-bussho*).’ Traditionally the term *mu-bussho* means living beings have no Buddha-nature within themselves. However, Dogen is not concerned with having or not having the Buddha-nature but with the Buddha-nature itself which is non-substantial. Dogen says, “Since the Buddha-nature is empty it is called *mu* (no-thing)” (Dogen cited by Abe, 1985: 45). In other words, *mubussho* indicates that people are freed from dichotomous thoughts as to whether or not they have the Buddha-nature. This freedom, which is the nothingness of Buddha-nature itself, is the genuine realisation of Buddha-nature.

Hence Dogen's idea of the nothingness of Buddha-nature means "the non-substantiality of the Buddha-nature by rejecting both the 'eternalist' view which substantializes and is attached to the idea of the Buddha-nature, and the 'nihilistic' view which also substantializes and is attached to the idea of no Buddha-nature" (Abe, 1985: 45). Furthermore, Dogen calls this non-dualistic and dynamic oneness of all beings and the Buddha-nature *mujo-bussho*, the impermanence of the Buddha-nature. The impermanence of Buddha-nature is possible because the Buddha-nature is non-substantial (and thus the nothingness of Buddha-nature) and because all beings are limitless and boundless. When Dogen reaches the dimension of 'all beings,' impermanence common to all beings is thoroughly realised as impermanence, he achieves a complete and radical reversal, that is, reversal from the realisation of 'impermanence itself is the Buddha-nature' to the realisation of 'the Buddha-nature in itself is impermanence.' His idea of *mujo-bussho*, the impermanence of the Buddha-nature is the outcome of this reversal. (Abe, 1985: 51).

Regarding the characteristics of Rinzai and Soto schools of Zen, these two schools of Zen Buddhism are distinct in many ways, particularly in their practical training. Rinzai Zen stresses a personal identity crisis resolved only by the achievement of *satori*, which is often called a sudden enlightenment, whereas Soto Zen is referred to as gradual enlightenment because of its emphasis on the dynamics of *zazen* practice. The Rinzai Master, Hakuin Ekaku (1685-1768) centres his discussion on realisation, but Dogen concentrates on the unity of cultivation and authentication. As Kasulis suggests, "Dogen is speaking from the enlightened viewpoint of the Zen Master; Hakuin, as if from the unenlightened viewpoint of his students" (Kasulis, 1981: 104). Although Rinzai Master might agree with Dogen's view that there is complete realisation when *zazen* is practised perfectly, he might question whether the identification between cultivation and authentication is intelligible to the student who has not yet sat in true *zazen*.

#### 5.1.4. Zen Buddhism in the West

European research into Buddhism began in the nineteenth century. Research into Zen was initiated after its introduction in the West, and its enormous development is one of the defining features of Zen in the twentieth century. Robert H. Sharf (1995) points

out that: “Zen was introduced to western scholarship not through the efforts of Western orientalists, but rather through the activities of an elite circle of internationally minded Japanese intellectuals and globe-trotting Zen priests, whose missionary zeal was often second only to their vexed fascination with western culture” (Sharf, 1995: 108). The most significant figure in bringing Zen to the West is probably D.T. Suzuki.

D.T. Suzuki was born in 1870 in Kanazawa, north Japan, and he entered Tokyo University in 1890. He spent most of his time with the Zen master, Imagita Kosen (1816-92),<sup>6</sup> and his successor, Shaku Soen (1858-1919), in Engakuji, Kamakura. Shaku Soen was invited to the World’s Parliament of Religions convened as part of the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago, but “unfortunately Zen Buddhism was less forcefully presented by [him], whose English was not adequate to the occasion” (Dumoulin, 1992: 4). At the conference, Shaku Soen met Paul Carus, who later wrote the book *The Gospel of Buddha*, which D.T. Suzuki translated into Japanese. After Suzuki had many conversations with Carus, D.T. Suzuki gradually became convinced,

Westerners did not understand Buddhism. Consequently, rather than writing on Zen from the outset, I first wrote in English my *Outline of Mahayana Buddhism*.<sup>7</sup> That book got me started, and from that, my translation of the *Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana* naturally followed.

(D.T. Suzuki, 1986: 24)

It was D.T. Suzuki that constituted the first step in the recent interest and popularity of Zen in the West. There were some scholars who wrote books in English, which addressed Zen Buddhism. For instance, Tenshin Okakura wrote *The Book of Tea*, which shows the relationship between Zen and the way of Tea. Chikudo Ohazama put out, in German, a book entitled *Das Lebendige Buddhismus* (Living Buddhism).<sup>8</sup> Kaiten Nukariya, a scholar of the Soto sect, wrote *The Religion of the Samurai*, which

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<sup>6</sup> Imagita Kosen was Shaku Soen’s predecessor as abbot of the historic Rinzai temple Enkakuji in Kamakura. He was familiar with Anglo-American culture and the English language (Dumoulin, 1992).

<sup>7</sup> According to his autobiographical account, D.T. Suzuki (1986) states that Christmas Humphreys of The Buddhist Society of London said to D.T. Suzuki that he wanted to publish D.T. Suzuki’s books, and took copies of his writings to England and published them there. D.T. Suzuki’s translation of *The Awakening of Faith* was published in 1900 and his *Outlines of Mahayana Buddhism* in 1907.

<sup>8</sup> According to Dumoulin (1992), in Germany, Zen was also introduced by Rudolf Otto who is the Marburg philosopher of religion. He wrote the preface to the first book on Zen in German in 1925, and a collection of classical texts translated by a Zen Buddhist Ohasama Shuei, under the title *Zen - Living Buddhism in Japan*. Although Otto acknowledged his debt for his precocious appreciation of Zen to essays published by D.T. Suzuki in *The Eastern Buddhist* in 1922, his own sensitivity to the art of Zen remains remarkable (Dumoulin, 1992).

deals with Zen. However, D.T. Suzuki asserts that: “I guess I was the first to make a special study of Zen in English” (D.T. Suzuki, 1986: 21), since none of them mentioned above focused on Zen itself in the way D.T. Suzuki did. D.T. Suzuki wrote a number of books on Zen: *Three Essays in Zen Buddhism* (1927/1932/1933), *Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra* (1930), *Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (193?), the *Manual of Zen Buddhism* (1935), *Zen and Japanese Culture* (1940) and so forth. He also founded *The Eastern Buddhist* in 1927. D.T. Suzuki was talented in languages - English, German, Japanese, Chinese, Sanskrit and Pali. He gave lectures on Zen several times in America and Europe.

Given his academic approach, it is understandable that D.T. Suzuki had a great influence on Western Buddhist scholarship. L.A. Fader (1986) asserts: “Not only did [D.T. Suzuki] translate Buddhist and Zen materials into English, but he also had a significant effect on such other translators as Paul Carus... Dwight Goddard, Edward Conze, and R.H. Blyth” (Fader, 1986: 98-99).<sup>9</sup> D.T. Suzuki’s contribution to the West was not only the area of religious dialogue and Buddhist scholarship but also the field of psychology and psychotherapy. Particularly, D.T. Suzuki had a profound influence on Carl Jung, Erich Fromm, and Karen Horney. Jung wrote the Foreword to Heinrich Zimmer’s 1939 German translation of Suzuki’s *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, which originally published in English in 1934. Jung met D.T. Suzuki during the 1953 *Eranos* conference and invited him to lecture in Switzerland (Fader, 1986). Fromm learned of Zen Buddhism through D.T. Suzuki’s writings and by attending his lectures at Columbia University during the 1950’s. In 1957 he organised a workshop on Zen Buddhism and psychoanalysis in Cuernavaca, Mexico. It was an important point of contact between the field of psychology and D.T. Suzuki’s interpretation of Zen. D.T. Suzuki’s speech at the workshop was later published as ‘Lectures on Zen Buddhism’ together with Fromm’s address entitled ‘Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism’ and that of Richard DeMartino entitled ‘The Human Situation and Zen Buddhism,’ in a volume which Fromm edited and called *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis* (1960).

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<sup>9</sup> Such personalities as C. Humphreys, Alan Watts, A.C. March, H.P. Blavatsky also came under D.T. Suzuki’s influence. Moreover, thinkers of the stature of Martin Heidegger, James Bisset Pratt and Arnold Toynbee; writers and artists like Jackson Pollack, Herbert Read, Rudolf Ray, J.D. Salinger,



### 5.1.5 D.T. Suzuki's Zen Buddhism

It is important to discuss the role of D.T. Suzuki in introducing Zen Buddhism to the West as Jung's understanding of Zen was mainly based on his commentaries. D.T. Suzuki was specially interested in the psychology of Zen, for he had discovered the significance of Zen for individual development. In his autobiographical account, D.T. Suzuki asserts:

Technology and science are quite splendid, but they tend to create an attitude of indifference toward the value of the individual. Individuality is much talked about in the West, but it is in legal or political terms that it is prized. In terms of religion or faith, however, concern among Westerners with regard to individuality is extremely weak. Furthermore, with industrialization or mechanization, man comes to be used as a thing, and, as a result, the unbounded creativity of mankind is destroyed. Therefore, in order to emphasize the importance of true individuality and human creativity, I consider it necessary to write about Zen more and more.

(D.T. Suzuki, 1986: 25)

D.T. Suzuki's psychologising style of writing mainly resulted from the influence of William James (1842-1910).<sup>10</sup> Clarke (1997) argues: "[D.T. Suzuki's] thinking owes a lot to that of William James, not so much because of the latter's interest in Eastern thought, but because of James's pragmatic approach to religion, his emphasis on experience rather than metaphysical theory, and most especially because of his phenomenological analysis of mysticism" (Clarke, 1997: 152). For instance, in an early essay D.T. Suzuki expanded William James's characteristics of mystical states of mind - ineffability, transience, and passivity - to eight characteristics of *satori* - irrationality, intuitive insight, authoritativeness, affirmation, sense of the beyond, impersonal tone, feeling of exaltation, and momentariness. Especially after his meeting with Jung, psychological issues such as the unconscious and the self frequently appear in D.T. Suzuki's writings.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, D.T. Suzuki was also influenced by German Romanticism and was stimulated into theorising about the unconscious by C.G. Carus. Furthermore he was influenced by Christian mysticism as a result of the work of Meister Eckhart (Dumoulin, 1979: 6). In view of all these

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Merce Cunningham, Jackson MacLow or Dizzy Gillespie; Philosophers of religion such as John Cobb, Richard DeMartino or Huston Smith, were also influenced by D.T. Suzuki (Fader, 1986).

<sup>10</sup> According to Sharf (1995), D.T. Suzuki's American wife, Beatrice Erskine Lane (1878-1938) had contact with William James. Jung was also influenced by James whom he met in America 1909. For the details of Jung's meeting with James, see Chapter 1.

Western influences on D.T. Suzuki, it is also likely that D.T. Suzuki was greatly influenced by Jung himself and his psychological theory.

Dumoulin takes a critical view of D.T. Suzuki's psychologised writings on Zen and argues, "[D.T. Suzuki's] achievement in releasing Zen from its maternal Buddhist soil and his penchant for psychologizing and universalizing inevitably tended to obscure the original Buddhist character of Zen" (Dumoulin, 1992: 8). As a Rinzai Buddhist, D.T. Suzuki focused on the experience of enlightenment, *satori*, and on the paradoxical *koans* that lead to that experience. Therefore *satori* and *koan* became the most familiar Zen terms in the West. However, he neglected the other major school of Soto Zen which emphasises the insistence on meditation in everyday life. Dumoulin asserts: "This neglect is not merely a superficial deficiency; it profoundly affects the character of what has been called 'Suzuki Zen,' leading to an excessive emphasis on the paradoxical and irrational" (Ibid., 5).

Particular mention should also be made concerning Zen, D.T. Suzuki and Japanese nationalism. First of all, Zen was introduced to Western scholarship not through the efforts of Western orientalist, which was the case with most other Buddhist traditions, but through activists belonging to an elite circle of internationally minded Japanese intellectuals and Zen priests. These Japanese Zen propagators emerged out of the profound social and political turmoil engendered by the rapid Westernisation and modernisation of Japan in the Meiji period (1868-1912). In the early years of the Meiji, religion had become the subject of a devastating critique and persecution known as abolishing Buddhism and destroying the teachings of Shakyamuni' (Jap. *haibutsu kishaku*). The early Meiji Japanese Government considered Buddhism to be a corrupt, decadent, antisocial, superstitious creed and inimical to Japan's need for scientific and technological advancement. The university educated intellectuals admitted to the corruption and decay of Buddhism but at the same time they insisted that such corruption lies not in Buddhism itself but merely resulted from the fact that Buddhism had strayed from its pure spiritual roots. The solution was to reform Buddhism from within and the result came to be known in Japan as the New Buddhism (Jap. *shin bukkyo*), which was modern, cosmopolitan,

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<sup>11</sup> D.T. Suzuki first met Jung during the 1953 *Eranos* conference and since then his tendency to psychologise Zen was often seen in his works.

humanistic, and socially responsible. Sharf asserts that: “This reconstructed Buddhism, under the guise of ‘true’ or ‘pure’ Buddhism, was conceived of as a ‘world religion’ ready to take its rightful place alongside other universal creeds” (Sharf, 1995: 110).

Sharf argues that D.T. Suzuki was very much a product of Meiji New Buddhism. While Zen experience is the universal ground of religious truth, D.T. Suzuki attempted to characterise Zen as an expression of a uniquely Japanese spirituality. D.T. Suzuki’s notion of *nihonjinron* (the discourse on ‘Japaneseness’) argues that Zen typifies the innate spirituality of the Japanese, a position which is contradictory to the fact that Zen originated in China. To resolve this issue D.T. Suzuki simply said there are differences between Chinese and Japanese Zen, for Chinese Zen did not permeate the everyday life of the people unlike Japanese Zen (Sharf, 1995: 128). Not only D.T. Suzuki but also Nishida Kitaro,<sup>12</sup> Hisamatsu Shin’ichi, and their followers were most responsible for laying the intellectual foundation for Zen in the West. However they did not emerge from traditional Zen monastic settings but were educated proponents of post-Meiji New Buddhism (Sharf, 1995: 135). They were university graduates who successfully pursued academic careers in their own country. The universities in which they studied and later taught were modelled on systems largely imported from the West. Thus on the one hand students were introduced to Western thought and European philosophy, and on the other hand teachers actively sought to formulate a Japanese response to the challenge posed by Western culture, science, and technology. This response identifies and defends a spiritual sensibility, which is characterised as uniquely Japanese. Sharf argues: “their agenda was a species of *nihonjinron* - a popular discursive enterprise decocted to the delineation and explication of the unique qualities of the Japanese, which invariably touts the cultural homogeneity as well as the moral and spiritual superiority of the Japanese vis-à-vis other peoples” (Sharf, 1995: 136).

*Nihonjinron* thought created by men such as D.T. Suzuki, and Hisamatsu is very popular among Western scholars.<sup>13</sup> However, Sharf argues,

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<sup>12</sup> Nishida is a Japanese philosopher and his major work is *Zen no Kenkyu* [A Study of the Good], 1991.

<sup>13</sup> Nishitani Keiji, who is a student of both Nishida and Heidegger, also had considerable influence on Western students of Japanese philosophy, theology, and Zen thought.

The irony..., is that the 'Zen' that so captured the imagination of the West was in fact a product of the New Buddhism of the Meiji. Moreover, those aspects of Zen most attractive to the Occident - the emphasis on spiritual experience and the devaluation of institutional forms - were derived in large part from Occidental sources. Like Narcissus, Western enthusiasts fails to recognize their own reflection in the mirror being held out to them.

(Sharf, 1995: 140)

Sharf argues that the popular conception of Zen in the West is indeed, "not only conceptually incoherent but also a woeful misreading of traditional Zen doctrine, altogether controverted by the lived contingencies of Zen monastic practice" (Sharf, 1995: 107). It would seem that the writings of D.T. Suzuki and Hisamatsu are not representative of traditional and pre-Meiji Zen definitions, and that the style of Zen training familiar to Western Zen practitioners is influenced by Meiji New Buddhism and has little impact from the traditional Rinzai or Soto monastic orthodoxies. The popular conception of Zen in the West is in fact of relatively marginal status within authentic Japanese Zen monasticism. Sharf asserts, "while Suzuki, Nishida, and their intellectual heirs may have shaped the manner in which Westerners have come to think of Zen, the influence of these Japanese intellectuals on the established Zen sects in Japan has been negligible" (Sharf, 1995: 141). The problem is that many Western scholars, including Jung, "uncritically accept these Japanese missionaries as living representatives of an unbroken tradition, and... refuse to acknowledge the ideological and rhetorical dimensions of the Zen of men like Suzuki" (Ibid., 145). Thus Jung, who was misled by D.T. Suzuki's Zen and uncritically embraced the distortion and confusion which were brought forth by D.T. Suzuki as Zen wisdom, had unfortunately no way to ascertain the orthodox reading of Zen Buddhism.

## **5.2 Jung's relation to Zen Buddhism**

### **5.2.1 Jung's view on *satori***

Jung's interest in Zen was triggered by D.T. Suzuki's *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, which was translated into German by Heinrich Zimmer and published in Germany in 1939, and for which Jung wrote a foreword. Jung was interested in Zen, particularly in its characteristic of transcending rational thinking and words, and its reliance on experience rather than on theories or written teachings. Jung believed that: "there was a point at which the understanding and transformation of the psyche could only

proceed along a path that went beyond words” (Clarke, 1994: 130). Jung assumed that Zen is not offering a system of thought but a certain kind of experience. Jung asserted,

The intellect is essentially concerned with elaboration. A rare philosophic passion is needed to compel the attempt to get beyond intellect and break through to a ‘knowledge of the knower.’ Such a passion is practically indistinguishable from the driving force of religion; consequently this whole problem belongs to the religious transformation process, which is incommensurable with intellect.

(CW 11: 892)

Jung found the *satori* or enlightenment experience, which is ‘the *raison d’être* of Zen’, and ‘a strange conception’ (CW 11: 877). Jung gave an example to illustrate the enlightenment experience by quoting from D.T. Suzuki’s book,

A monk once went to Gensha, and wanted to learn where the entrance to the path of truth was. Gensha asked him, ‘Do you hear the murmuring of the brook?’ ‘Yes, I hear it,’ answered the monk. ‘There is the entrance,’ the Master instructed him.

(CW 11: 878)

However bizarre *satori* may be, Jung believed that *satori*, “is not a question of mystification and mumbo-jumbo, but rather of an experience which strikes the experient dumb” (CW 11: 881). Therefore *satori* can be experienced as something utterly unexpected. Jung asserted, “The occurrence of *satori* is interpreted and formulated as a *break-through*, by a consciousness limited to the ego-form, into the non-ego-like self” (CW 11: 887). Jung agreed with Kaiten Nukariya’s view on *satori* enlightenment as, “an emancipation of mind from illusion concerning self” (CW 11: 884). In Jung’s view the illusion concerning the nature of self means “the common confusion of the self with the ego” (CW 11: 884). He continued,

[The self] is always something other than the ego, and inasmuch as a higher insight of the ego leads over to the self, the self is a more comprehensive thing which includes the experience of the ego and therefore transcends it. Just as the ego is a certain experience I have of myself, so is the self an experience of my ego. *It is, however, no longer experienced in the form of a broader or higher ego, but in the form of a non-ego.*

(CW 11: 885, Italics added)

Jung understood the *satori* experience to be, “a suppression of the ego by the self, which is endued with the ‘Buddha nature’ or divine universality” (CW 11: 888). Similarly, in Jung’s view, yoga in India and Buddhism in China supplies the driving

force for attempts to wrench oneself free from bondage to a state of consciousness. Jung also saw a similar tradition in Western mysticism and said, “its texts are full of instructions as to how man can and must release himself from the ‘I-ness’ of his consciousness, so that through knowledge of his own nature he may rise above it and attain the inner (godlike) man” (CW 11, 890, Jung’s bracket). Consequently it creates a new state of consciousness.

This new state of consciousness born of religious practice is distinguished by the fact that outward things no longer affect an ego-bound consciousness, thus giving rise to mutual attachment, but that an empty consciousness stands open to another influence. This ‘other’ influence is no longer felt as one’s own activity, but as that of a non-ego which has the conscious mind as its object. *It is as if the subject-character of the ego had been overrun, or taken over, by another subject which appears in place of the ego.*

(CW 11, 890, Italics added)

This statement suggests that in *satori* experience the ego becomes itself the object of another subject, the self. Jung clearly asserted that, “The occurrence of *satori* is interpreted and formulated as a *break-through*, by a consciousness limited to the ego-form, into the non-ego-like self” (CW 11: 887, Jung’s italics). This is very close to Jung’s idea of the individuation process in which there is a shifting of the centre of gravity from the ego to the self. However, Jung’s view on *satori* may seem to be inconsistent. In the letter to J. Kirsch in 1958, Jung claimed that to interpret *satori* experience as an imageless condition is *un-psychological*, and thus it is incomprehensible. Jung insisted that in *satori* experience there must be an image, as one should always have a conscious memory of it. Jung said if no conscious ego is present, and nothing ever can be perceived, and thus there can be no conscious memory. Jung wrote,

If there are people in the East who claim to have had an imageless experience, you must always remember that the report is as a rule highly unpsychological. It is the tradition that *satori* experience is imageless and they therefore say it was imageless. That it cannot possibly have been imageless is proved by the fact that they remember something definite. Had it been totally imageless they could never say they remember something, since the memory is an image of something that has been... I have never really succeeded in convincing an Indian that if no conscious ego is present there can be no conscious memory either... But in the *satori* experience something *is* perceived, namely that an illumination or something of the sort has occurred. This is a definite image which can even be compared with the tradition and brought into harmony with it. I therefore regard this assertion of an imageless condition as an uncritical and

unpsychological statement due to lack of psychological differentiation. This lack also explains why it is so difficult for us to have any real contact with such people, and it is no accident that the only person who was able to give you a satisfactory answer is himself an observant psychologist. It is simply not to be comprehended how an experience can be established as having happened if nobody is there who has had it. This 'nobody' who establishes it is always an ego. If no ego is present nothing whatever can be perceived.

(Letters II: 466-7)

This statement suggests that Jung saw *satori* experience only through his psychological framework in which there is no consciousness without the ego. Hence Jung interpreted *satori* as non-ego state, the concept of which he does not agreed with. The problem with Jung's view on *satori* is that in some places Jung misunderstood its concept by interpreting it as the loss of ego like in the last stage of yoga, *samadhi*, in which the flow of consciousness is so completely identified with the object alone that there is a complete loss of ego consciousness. Yet, *satori* enlightenment in Zen Buddhism does not indicate the complete loss of the ego but an empty state of mind, no-mind (*mu-shin*). Shunryu Suzuki (1970), the Japanese Soto Zen master, states that when you sit in *zazen* you will have a genuine experience of an empty state of mind. The idea of emptiness is the most important concept in the *Prajna Paramita Sutra*.<sup>14</sup> In fact the emptiness of mind is the original essence of mind in Zen Buddhism. As discussed earlier, Jung never conceived of consciousness without the ego. However, his earlier claim of the objectification of the ego (the ego becomes itself the object of an another subject, the self) does not seem to indicate the loss of the ego but is similar to the concept of emptiness or Hakuin's concept of 'great death', in which one has to objectify one's ego and to abandon any intentional standpoint at all and thus create empty consciousness.

*Satori* enlightenment is described by Hakuin in terms of his idea of the 'great doubt' and 'great death.' Hakuin considered the great doubt to be a necessary stage on the path to enlightenment. Kasulis argues that the ultimate aim of the great doubt is to help the student enter into without-thinking – a nonconceptual, nondiscriminating consciousness (Kasulis, 1981: 112). But students normally think this impossible

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<sup>14</sup> In *The Zen Doctrine of No Mind* D.T. Suzuki argues, "Hui-neng's concept of nothingness (*wu-i-wu*) may push one down into a bottomless abyss, which will no doubt create a feeling of utter forlornness. The philosophy of *Prajnaparamita*, which is also that of Hui-neng's, generally has this effect. To understand it a man requires a deep religious intellectual insight into the truth of Sunyata" (D.T. Suzuki, 1949: 24).

because “the more effort exerted in trying to break down thinking, the more deeply one is entrapped in nihilistic non-thinking” (Kasulis, 1981: 113). P. Harvey argues that in a profound state of perplexity, the student meets the ‘doubt sensation’, “a pure, countless, existential ‘great doubt’” (Harvey, 1990: 274). Only when the student pushes on and on, throwing himself into the abyss of doubt, the breakthrough comes suddenly. “The deeper he goes into the doubt, the more through will be the ‘great death’ – the death of aspects of ego” (Harvey, 1990: 275). Kasulis points out the great death of the ego in the following passage:

Hakuin’s Great Death did not allow any conceptualization to enter consciousness; but this was unsatisfactory. To detach oneself wilfully from all thinking, one has to *objectify* one’s own thought process, and in so doing one takes an intentional attitude toward thought. This means that one has also objectified one’s self – one has not yet experienced the Great Death of the ego. When that last residual sense of the self is finally abandoned, however, one no longer takes any intentional standpoint at all. As pure without-thinking, one’s formally empty consciousness is suddenly filled by the simple sounding-of-the-bell. There is no I and no bell but rather the hearing of the bell: the apprehending of perfect *genjokoan*. This is the pure state of without-thinking.

(Kasulis, 1981: 115)

Harvey asserts that, “the conceptual, reasoning mind has reached its absolute dead-end, and the ‘bottom’ of the mind is broken through, so that the flow of thoughts suddenly stops, in a state of no-thought, and realization erupts from the depths” (Harvey, 1990: 273). Therefore, there is nothing but a blissful, radiant emptiness beyond self and other, words or concepts.

Jung interpreted the *koan* practice as aiming at the complete destruction of the rational intellect and consequently creating an almost perfect lack of conscious presuppositions. Jung asserts that in *koan* technique these conscious presuppositions are “excluded as far as possible, but not unconscious presuppositions – that is, the existing but unrecognized psychological disposition, which is anything but empty or a *tabula rasa*” (CW 11: 895). Jung believes that if consciousness is emptied of its contents, they will fall into a state of unconscious. Jung saw this displacement occur in Zen *koan* technique. The displacement usually results from, “the energy being withdrawn from conscious contents and transferred either to the conception of ‘emptiness’ or to the koan” (CW 11: 898). Jung then argues that, “the energy thus saved goes over to the unconscious and reinforces its natural charge to bursting point.



This increases the readiness of the unconscious contents to break through into consciousness” (CW 11: 898). Jung argues that the complete destruction of the rational intellect aimed at the *koan* training creates an almost perfect lack of conscious presuppositions. Jung claims,

What the unconscious nature of the pupil presents to the teacher or to the koan by way of an answer is, manifestly, satori. This seems, at least to me, to be the view which, to judge by the descriptions, formulates the nature of satori more or less correctly.

(CW 11: 895)

Toshihiko Izutsu (1977) examines the two theoretical possibilities of the state of *satori* enlightenment in terms of the relation between the interior and exterior. He describes them as “(1) The interior becoming exterior, or the externalization of the internal. (2) The exterior becoming interior, or the internalization of the external world” (Izutsu, 1977: 199). Izutsu argues that in the first case one suddenly experiences one’s ‘I’ losing its own existential identity and becoming completely fused into, and identified with, an ‘external’ object. That is to say, “the ‘I’ is no longer an *I* as an independent entity: *It is no longer a subject standing against the objective world*” (Izutsu, 1977: 199, Italics added). The very absorption of the whole person – the mind-and-body – in the external activity, for example, sweeping the ground, has exactly the same function as that of being absorbed in profound meditation. Izutsu asserts that, “it is the actualization of what Zen usually calls the state of the ‘no-mind’ (*wu-hsin*, J.: *mu-shin*)” (Izutsu, 1977: 202). Since there is no consciousness of the ‘I’ as distinguished from the things, there is here no distinction between the interior and exterior.

In the second case, Izutsu argues, what has heretofore been regarded as ‘external’ to one’s self becomes suddenly taken into the mind. Then everything that happens and is observed in the ‘external’ world comes to be seen as a working of the mind, as a particular self-determination of the mind. Thus even ‘external’ events come to be seen as an ‘internal’ events. Izutsu describes this as, “the sudden realization of the ontological transparency of all things, including both the things existing in the ‘external’ world and the human subject which is ordinarily supposed to be looking at them from the outside. Both the ‘external’ things and the ‘internal’ of

man divest themselves of their ontological opaqueness, become totally transparent, pervade each other, and become submerged into one” (Izutsu, 1977: 203-4).

Izutsu’s account of *satori* experience in which ‘I’ is no longer an I as an independent entity but is no longer a subject standing against the objective world seems to be very similar to Jung’s notion of objectification of the ego by the self during individuation. For Jung the self is higher than the ego and it is now the self as an ultimate subject that experiences and perceives through the ego. This is the heart of the process of individuation. Izutsu then claims everything that is observed in the external world comes to be seen as a working of the mind, namely external events come to be seen as internal events. This is also very similar to what Jung calls the shifting of the centre of gravity from the ego to the self (CW 11: 958).

Jung regards *satori* as psychological problem. Thus he was not concerned with whether a person is really enlightened or not, but with what the person has experienced as a *satori*. For Jung, whatever the person experiences is a psychic fact. Therefore it is not important for Jung whether the person has an actual *satori* experience or just had an imaginary experience. Jung argued,

...we can never decide definitely whether a persona is *really* ‘enlightened’ or ‘released,’ or whether he merely imagines it. We have no criteria to go on. Moreover, we know well enough that an imaginary pain is often far more agonising than a so-called real one, since it is accompanied by a subtle moral suffering caused by a dull feeling of secret self-accusation. In this sense, therefore, it is not a question of ‘actual fact’ but of *psychic reality*, i.e., the psychic process known as *satori*.

(CW 11: 888)

Jung believed that every psychic process is an image and imagining, therefore the consciousness could exist and the occurrence has phenomenality. Jung went on to say,

The person who has the enlightenment, or alleges that he has it, thinks at all events that he is enlightened. What others think about it decides nothing whatever for him in regard to his experience. Even if he were lying his lie would still be a psychic fact. Indeed, even if all the reports of religious experiences were nothing but deliberate inventions and falsifications, a very interesting psychological treatise could still be written about the incidence of such lies, and with the same scientific objectivity with which one describes the psychopathology of delusional ideas.

(CW 11: 889)

Contrary to Jung’s view, Erich Fromm argues that, “It is very important to understand that the state of enlightenment is not a state of dissociation or of a trance in which one

*believes oneself to be awakened*” (Fromm, 1960: 116). Fromm criticised Jung’s, “general relativistic position with regard to the ‘truth’ of religious experience” (Ibid. 116). Fromm believed that “a lie is never ‘a spiritual fact,’ nor any other fact, for that matter, except that of being a lie” (Ibid., 116). In contrast to Jung’s interpretation of *satori* experience, Fromm argues,

Jung’s position is certainly not shared by Zen Buddhists. On the contrary, it is of crucial importance for them to differentiate between genuine *satori* experience, in which the acquisition of a new viewpoint is real, and hence true, and a pseudo-experience which can be of a hysterical or psychotic nature, in which the Zen student is convinced of having obtained *satori*, while the Zen master has to make it clear that he has not. It is precisely one of the fictions of the Zen master to be on guard against his student’s confusion of real and imaginary enlightenment.

(Fromm, 1960: 116)

As mentioned earlier, in the course of Zen Buddhist practice, the mind experiences various disturbances, which hinder progress and divert one from the goal of enlightenment. These disturbances are called *makyo*. Philip Kapleau (1965) accounts for the illusory visions and sensations during the Zen practice. Kapleau argues that, “*Makyo* are the phenomena - visions, hallucinations, fantasies, revelations, illusory sensations - which one practising *zazen* is apt to experience at a particular stage in his sitting” (Kapleau, 1965: 41). *Ma* means devil and *kyo* is the objective world. *Makyo* are disturbing phenomena and, “become a serious obstacle to practice only if one is ignorant of their true nature and is ensnared by them” (Kapleau, 1965: 42). Zen masters warn against the fascination of *makyo*, which “are all the more dangerous the less student recognizes them for what they are” (Dumoulin, 1979: 141). When a student confuses them with enlightenment, he would be led far astray. It is the master’s task to prevent the student from being affected by *makyo* and guide the student to a healthy state. W. Johnston (1970) argues that the one big difference between Jung’s view on visions and imaginations and the *makyo* of Zen is that “whereas the Zen tradition regards all visions as nonsensical things to be rejected, Jung looked upon these as important and significant messages from the unconscious” (Johnston, 1970: 58).

*Satori*, for Jung, “*is not that something different is seen, but that one sees differently, [and] is as though the spatial act of seeing were changed by a new dimension*” (CW 11: 891, Jung’s italics). Thus, for Jung, “Zen is anything but a

philosophy in the Western sense of the word” (CW 11: 881) because it goes beyond the sphere of intellect. Likewise,

Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra* is no longer philosophy at all: it is a dramatic process of transformation which has completely swallowed up the intellect. It is no longer concerned with thought, but, in the highest sense, with the thinker of thought - and this on every page of the book. A new man, a completely transformed man, is to appear on the scene, one who has broken the shell of the old and who not only looks upon a new heaven and a new earth, but has created them.

(CW 11: 892)

Jung’s understanding of *satori* is based on his psychological theory of the compensatory relationship between the conscious and unconscious, “the unconscious contents bring to the surface everything that is necessary in the broadest sense for the completion and wholeness of conscious orientation” (CW 11: 899). To attain wholeness, not only consciousness but also the unconscious are necessary. Jung argued that, “consciousness is always only a part of the psyche and therefore never capable of psychic wholeness: for that the indefinite extension of the unconscious is needed” (CW 11: 906). He claimed the goal of psychotherapy is to achieve psychic wholeness, which he called the individuation process.

Individuation for Jung denotes, “the process by which a person becomes a psychological ‘in-dividual,’ that is, a separate, indivisible unity or ‘whole’” (CW 9i: 489). The Individuation process is a vital concept in Jung’s contribution to the theories of personality development. It is a natural process, which sometimes may pursue its course without the knowledge of the individual. “The meaning and purpose of the process is the realization, in all its aspects, of the personality originally hidden away in the embryonic germ-plasm; the production and unfolding of the original, potential wholeness” (CW 7: 186). The process of individuation is a model and guiding principle for Jung’s method of treatment. Jung believed that Zen demonstrated the significance of achieving completeness, “This Eastern method of psychic ‘healing’ - i.e., ‘making whole’” (CW 11: 905) and it attracted him greatly because he believed it fitted very well with his theory of individuation process.

The enlightenment experience in Zen Buddhism erupts when you finally complete the process of maturation, which is facilitated by intensive *koan* exercise. The enlightenment experience occurs suddenly, sometimes at the sound of the evening

bell, the stroke of a clock, or rain pattering outside. These sounds act as the catalyst. Shibayama Zenkei (1894-1874), the abbot of Nanzenji Temple in Kyoto, analysed and evaluated the remarks of Wu-men Hui-k'ai on the first *koan* of the *Mumonkan*. Shibayama explains in order to achieve the *satori* experience,

one has to cut his ordinary self away and be reborn as a new Self in a different dimension. In other worlds, the student must personally have the inner experience called *satori*, by which he is reborn as the True self. This fundamental experience of awakening is essential in Zen. Although various different expressions are used when talking about the fact of his religious awakening, it cannot be real Zen without it.

(Shibayama cited by Dumoulin, 1992: 132)

Although the equation of enlightenment with the experience of the True Self corresponds to the tradition of the Sixth Patriarch, Shibayama uses the expression *kensho*, which means a vision of the essence or (one's own) nature (Dumoulin, 1992: 133). The True Self, which is also called the original face one had before birth, is, in Shibayama's sense, identical to the essence or nature. Zen Master Yasutani's account of the essence of Zen enlightenment is as follows:

Enlightenment means seeing through to your own essential nature, and this at the same time means seeing through to the essential nature of the cosmos and of all things. For seeing through to essential nature is the wisdom of enlightenment. One may call essential nature truth if one wants to. In Buddhism, from ancient times it has been called suchness or Buddha-nature or the one Mind. In Zen it has also been called nothingness, the one hand, or one's original face. The designations may be different, but the content is completely the same.

(Yasutani cited by Dumoulin, 1979: 152)

*Satori* enlightenment is the way to emptiness through which you can see your own essential nature, that is, Buddha-nature. By contrasting Jung's individuation process with the path to *satori* enlightenment in Zen Buddhism, it is clear that both processes are involved with personal transformation to a certain extent. As Shibayama asserted earlier, *satori* enlightenment is seen as an 'experience of awakening of the True Self,' and it is as if 'one has to cut his ordinary self away and be reborn as a new Self in a different dimension.' This is similar to Jung's idea of the individuation process, which "embraces our innermost, last, and incomparable uniqueness, it also implies becoming one's own self" (CW 7: 266). It involves the development of personality through a realisation of our whole being, that is, both parts of the total psyche, consciousness and the unconscious, are linked together. Jung stated that, "the goal [of

psychotherapy] is transformation – not one that is predetermined, but rather an indeterminable change, the only criterion of which is the disappearance of egohood” (CW 11: 904). But Jung emphasised that for Europeans, “a conscious ego and a cultivated understanding must first be produced through analysis before one can even think about abolishing egohood or rationalism” (CW 11: 904), because Jung believed that, “Zen and its technique could only have arisen on the basis of Buddhist culture, which it presupposes at every turn” (CW 11: 904), and thus that it is not a difficult task for a Zen adept to annihilate a rationalistic intellect.

Nevertheless, the goal of Zen Buddhism differs from that of Jung’s individuation process. In the individuation process one strives for a psychic wholeness, which Jung calls the self. Jung argues,

What this means psychologically can be seen from the simple reflection that consciousness is always only a part of the psyche and therefore never capable of psychic wholeness: for that the indefinite extension of the unconscious is needed... The attainment of wholeness requires one to stake one’s whole being. Nothing less will do; there can be no easier conditions, no substitutes, no compromises.

(CW 11: 906)

For Jung the self is a totality of the psyche which consists of both consciousness and the unconscious. It is therefore never completely known to the subject, because the part of it is unconscious. Zen, however, speaks of the self-awakening, that is, the self is most clearly awakened to itself. Thus in Zen enlightenment the student can experience the True Self, which is identical with one’s own essential nature. I discuss this issue in more detail in the next section.

### 5.2.2 Jung’s view on no-mind (emptiness/*sunyata*)

Before I discuss Jung’s understanding of no-mind, the Zen Buddhist perspective on this term should be clarified. The Japanese characters for the term no-mind are composed of *mu*, which is no or nothingness, and *shin*, which means mind, spirit or heart. The term no-mind is historically related to no-thought (Jap. *munen*, Ch. *wu-nien*), which is the sixth Chinese Zen patriarch, Hui-neng’s main doctrine of Zen. *Upanishadic* Philosophy emphasises the oneness of *Brahman* and *atman*, which is expressed only negatively in terms of *neti, neti*, and is understood as eternal, unchangeable and substantial. Buddhist tradition rejects the substantial nature of

*atman*, and instead advocates *anatman* or absence of eternal self and *anitya* or impermanence (Abe, 1985: 125). Another basic principle of Buddhism is *pratitya samutpada*, which can be translated as, “the conditional or causal interdependence of all things” (Kasulis, 1981: 43). In Buddhist teachings, it is important that everything is impermanent and is also despondently co-arising without an eternal and substantial selfhood. For instance, when one does not realise this truth, and becomes attached to one’s possessions and oneself as though they are permanent and imperishable, one is under an illusion and will inevitably suffer. However when one awakens to this truth, one frees oneself from illusion and suffering, and eventually attains *nirvana* (Abe, 1985: 126). The doctrine of no-mind is really an extension of all these ideas of *anatman* or absence of an eternal self, the impermanence of all things and dependent origination.

Nagarjuna (ca. A.D. 150-250), the Indian founder of Madhyamika Buddhism, firstly established the idea of *sunyata* or emptiness.<sup>15</sup> Nagarjuna’s idea of emptiness is, “not nihilism but a supreme affirmation of the ultimate reality that lies beyond all categories and concepts” (Dumoulin, 1979: 48). Liberation from every possible duality concerning affirmation or negation, being or non-being as the standpoint of emptiness, is what Nagarjuna called the Middle Path. Its philosophy intends to seek something positive in all its negations. Abe states,

[Nagarjuna’s] idea of Emptiness is not a mere emptiness as opposed to fullness. Emptiness as *Sunyata* transcends and embraces both emptiness and fullness. It is really formless in the sense that it is liberated from both ‘form’ and ‘formlessness.’ Thus, in *Sunyata*, Emptiness as it is Fullness and Fullness as it is Emptiness; formlessness as it is form and form as it is formless. This is why, for Nagarjuna, true Emptiness is wondrous Being.

(Abe, 1985: 126-7)

Logically speaking, *sunyata* is realised not only by negating the ‘eternalist’ view but also by negating the ‘nihilist’ view, which negates the former. This means that *sunyata* is not based on a mere negation but on a negation of the negation. This double negation is an absolute negation, which is at the same time an absolute affirmation, since the negation of the negation is affirmation. Yet, this absolute affirmation is not a mere and immediate affirmation, as it is realised only through double negation. Therefore, “absolute negation is absolute affirmation and absolute

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<sup>15</sup> For the detailed discussion of the Madhyamika school, see Chapter Three.

affirmation is absolute negation” (Abe, 1985: 127). This paradoxical statement well express the structure of *sunyata*. Nishitani Keiji (1973) argues,

[The] emptiness is not an emptiness represented as something besides being, apart from being. It is not simply an ‘empty nothing’ (*kumu*). It is an absolute emptiness which has emptied also these kinds of represented emptiness. Moreover, and for that reason, it is from the beginning at one with being. Being also is from the beginning one with emptiness. At the root of being, where being appears as originally one with emptiness, in the home-ground of being, emptiness appears as originally at one with being.

(Nishitani, 1973: 72)

Dumoulin argues that, “The insight into the nature of the self that is awakened in sudden enlightenment is an insight into emptiness, into nothingness” (Dumoulin, 1979: 59). In order to attain the true self as the great affirmation, the total negation of total negation is necessary. Thus, “the true Self is realized only through the total negation of no-self, which is in turn the total negation of the ego-self” (Abe, 1985: 10). All these expressions are in part negatively and in part positively formulated, such as non-seeing, non-thinking, non-clinging, non-form, no-mind, nature, self, mind, form suchness, sameness, equally indicate ultimate reality, such as *Dharma*, and Buddha (Dumoulin, 1979: 50).

Jung saw the no-mind (emptiness/*sunyata*) as the unconscious, as it is unknown to the subject. However, no-mind or *sunyata* is different from Jung’s concept of the unconscious. As shown in Chapter Three, Jung failed to understand the concept of *sunyata*. In Jung’s view *sunyata* means void.

*‘As long as Sunyata is cognized by a subject it remains object.’* But when the subject enters *Sunyata* and becomes identical with it, the subject itself is *Sunyata*, namely void. And when the void is really void, there is not even a cognizing subject in it. The subject has vanished and there cannot be a consciousness of this fact, because there is nothing left any more. There can be no memory of it, because there was nothing.

(Letters I: 263, Jung’s italics)

Thus Jung claims that, “to experience Sunyata is therefore an impossible experience by definition... and it is also impossible to experience consciousness in a field of which I know nothing” (Letters I: 263). Jung went on to state,

If the highest psychic condition is *Sunyata*, then it cannot be consciousness, because consciousness is by definition the relationship between the subject and a representation. One is conscious of something. As long as you are conscious of *Sunyata* it is not *Sunyata*, because there is still a subject that is conscious of something. Void is even void of consciousness.



(Letters I: 249-50)

These passages suggest that Jung ontologised the nature of *sunyata* and considered it as something substantial such as his idea of the unconscious. Kasulis claimed that, “No-thought or no-mind is not an unconscious state at all; it is an active awareness of the contents of experience as directly experienced (before the intervention of complex intellectual activity)” (Kasulis, 1981: 47-8). Dogen categorised threefold ways of thinking: thinking, not-thinking, and without-thinking. Thinking is considered as a conscious activity and the intent of weighing ideas. Not-thinking is an intentional activity and a certain form of thinking which negates or denies attitude. Without-thinking, which is equivalent to the Buddhist doctrine of emptiness, *sunyata*, involves no intentional attitude whatsoever as it neither affirms nor denies. “It is a non-conceptual or prereflective mode of consciousness” (Kasulis, 1981: 75). Kasulis continues,

prereflectively there had been a continuity of consciousness or awareness even with the lack of intentional directionality. Even though the reflection on the act later revealed a content of which one had been conscious at the time of the act, there was, prereflectively, no assumptive, unconscious intentional attitude to constitute that content into a meaning-bearing object.

(Kasulis, 1981: 75)

Kasulis also argues that, “no-mind or no-thought is a state of consciousness in which the dichotomy between subject and object, experiencer and experienced, is overcome” (Kasulis, 1981: 47). Nagarjuna emphasised the idea of the non-differentiating, non-objectifying insight or wisdom, which is called *prajna*. Kasulis states, “*Prajna*, a state of consciousness achieved through meditation..., it is invaluable in reinforcing the awareness that all ideas, their pragmatic usefulness notwithstanding, stand on emptiness (*sunyata*)” (Kasulis, 1981: 25). The world itself is not illusory but our characterisations of the world are fundamentally self-contradictory, relative and tentative. Yet, “the enlightenment... is attainable only by breaking through rational, dualistic thinking; no finite object is grasped, but rather *prajna*, or transcendental wisdom is at work in a non-objective way” (Dumoulin, 1979: 48). There is an ontological difference between the concept of *sunyata* in Zen Buddhism and Jung’s understanding of it. Zen Buddhist teaching does not discuss *sunyata* in terms of ontology, whereas Jung’s discussion of the unconscious, his explanation of *sunyata*, can be interpreted as assuming such an ontology, i.e., a substance-like thing. It would

seem that Jung was not aware of the ontological difference between *sunyata* in Zen and his concept of the unconscious, and that he interpreted Zen Buddhist literatures in terms of ontological assumptions with which he was familiar.

There is a further difference between Jung's understanding of no-mind as the unconscious and Zen doctrine of no-mind as emptiness or *sunyata*. The unconscious of Jungian analytical psychology is composed of the personal unconscious, which is derived from individual experience, and the collective unconscious, which does not derive from the subjective but has a universal character. They are both unknown to the subject. Whereas no-mind in Zen is,

not only known, but most clearly known, as it is called '*Kaku*' (awakening) or '*ryoryo jochi*' (always clearly comprehending). But this is not a state in which something is merely known. Rather, it is a clear 'self-wakening in and to itself' that is without a separation between knower and known, 'No-Mind' is a state in which self is most clearly awakened to itself, such as when we are utterly absorbed in our work.

(Hisamatsu, 1992: 117)

In view of the fact that the self in Zen is most clearly awake to itself, Jung's notion of the self is not parallel to the concept of the self in Zen Buddhism. In Jung's view the self is made up of both the ego-consciousness and the unconscious, which is unknown and disturbs the ego. By contrast, the self in Zen is unbounded self-awakening and perfect liberation from every possible duality concerning affirmation or negation, being or non-being. Therefore, "the 'Self' of Zen is neither the *ego* of psychoanalysis, which is excited and disturbed by the *unconscious*, nor is it the self, which is composed of *ego* and unconscious" (Hisamatsu, 1992: 117). Abe (1992) argues that, "there is no suggestion of the realization of the No-self in Jung. Since the No-self that is the nonsubstantiality of self, is not clearly realized in Jung, it therefore remains as something unknown to the ego" (Abe, 1992: 133-4). In sum, a fundamental distinction between Zen Buddhist no-mind/self and Jung's concept of the self is that the former is the non-substantiality of the self and is fully awoken to itself; and the latter is an ontological concept involving both the conscious and the unconscious, and is not fully known to the ego-consciousness, as it is partly unconscious.

### 5.3 A dialogue between Jung's Analytical Psychology and Zen Buddhism

#### 5.3.1 Jung-Hisamatsu dialogue

On May 16, 1958, Shin'ichi Hisamatsu, who is a Zen scholar and professor of Buddhism at Kyoto University, visited Jung at his home in Küsnacht, Switzerland, and they discussed the relationship of Jung's psychology to Zen, in particular, Jung's notion of the self and the Zen concept of no-mind. This dialogue is of great significance for Jung's understanding of Zen and it has been of great importance to Jung scholars. However the context of the dialogue and the transcripts made available are problematic. According to D.J. Meckel and R.L. Moore (1992), the transcription of the dialogue was compiled by Koichi Tsujimura (in Japanese) and by Aniela Jaffé (in German). In 1960 Koji Sato, the editor of *Psychologia*, a Japanese journal published in English, asked Jung to revise an English translation of the Japanese text for publication. However Jung declined because he believed there was a lack of a satisfactory mutual understanding between Jung and Hisamatsu during their conversation. After Jung's death, the Japanese text was first published in *Fushin*, a magazine connected to Hisamatsu's group. In 1968, seven years after Jung's death, Tsujimura's Japanese version of a protocol of the text was translated into English by Sachi Toyomura, and published under the title "On the Unconscious, the Self, and the Therapy: A Dialogue," in *Psychologia*, Vol. 11. 1968, pp. 25-32. The text of the dialogue was reprinted, with both Jung and Hisamatsu's commentaries on the conversation, and was edited and revised by Daniel J. Meckel and Robert L. Moore, *Self and Liberation: Jung/Buddhism Dialogue*, 1992, pp. 100-118. However, in this translation from Tsujimura's Japanese transcription, there are a number of misunderstandings and mistranslations. Recently, the German text transcribed by Jaffé was translated into English by Muramoto Shoji and published in *The Couch and the Tree: Dialogue in Psychoanalysis and Buddhism*, pp. 37-51. Muramoto clarified mis-translations and misunderstandings of Tsujimura's Japanese transcription. Muramoto's transcription is clearly superior and is the one used in this chapter. In the conversation Hisamatsu asked Jung for a definition of no-mind:

SH: To date there have been many interpretations of *wu-hsin*. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to find a true and strict definition for the term from the standpoint of Zen. This is extremely important. I would like to hear your thoughts on the matter?

CGJ: It is the unknown which affects me psychologically, the unknown which disturbs or influences, whether positively or negatively. Thus I notice that it exists, but what it is, I don't know.

SH: Is this 'unknown' something different from the unconscious? From the collective unconscious?

CGJ: The unknown disturbs or influences me in certain forms, otherwise I could not speak of it. Sometimes I sense that a personal memory is bothering me, or exerting an influence on me; other times I have dreams, ideas or fantasies that do not have a personal origin. Their source is not the subjective; rather they have a universal equality. For example, the image I have of my father is a personal image. But when this image possesses a religious quality, it is no longer solely connected to the personal realm.

(Jung and Hisamatsu in Muramoto, 1998: 40-1)

In this conversation Jung suggested no-mind is something which is unknown, and is equivalent to the unconscious. Jung believed that the unconscious is unknown in the sense that it stands behind the ego. The ego is the centre of consciousness, and all our experience of the outer and inner worlds must pass through our ego in order to be perceived. Thus, "relations to the ego that are not perceived as such are the unconscious" (CW 6: 700). In the conversation Hisamatsu asked Jung for his idea of the self.

SH: Which then is our real self, our putative 'I': the unconscious or conscious?

CGJ: Consciousness refers to itself as 'I.' The self is no mere 'I.' The self is the whole personality – you as a totality – consisting of consciousness and the unconscious. This is the whole, or the self, but I know only consciousness; the unconscious remains unknown to me.

SH: In your view, the self is a totality. This prompts the following question: Is I-consciousness different from self-consciousness?

CGJ: In ordinary usage, one says self-consciousness, but that only means I-consciousness, psychologically speaking. The self is unknown because it indeed designates the whole of the person, both conscious and unconscious. The conscious person you are is known to you, but the unconscious person you are is unknown to you. The human self is beyond description, because it is only one-third, or perhaps two-thirds, in the realm of experience, and that part belongs to the 'I.' That which is known, however, does not encompass the self. The vernacular expression 'self-consciousness; translates psychologically as I-consciousness. The self is much more than the 'I.'

SH: So the self is unknown?

CGJ: Perhaps only half of it is known, and that is the 'I.' The half of the self.

(Jung and Hisamatsu in Muramoto, 1998: 42)

This is the key passage in relation to Jung's quotation earlier where Jung said that the ego, during individuation, becomes itself the object of another subject, the self.<sup>16</sup> Apparently, however, this passage above suggests that the ultimate subject is

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<sup>16</sup> See Jung's quote (CW 11: 890) in the section 5.2.2.

restricted by its object, the ego. Jung asserts, “The ego stands to the self as the moved to the mover, or as object to subject, because the determining factors which radiate out from the self surround the ego on all sides and are therefore supraordinate to it. The self, like the unconscious, is an a priori existent out of which the ego evolves” (CW 11: 391). But Jung also recognises that the two systems need each other, since without the ego nothing whatever can be perceived and thus the self remains without a presence. Jung claims: “Everything requires for its existence its own opposites, or else it fades into nothingness. The ego needs the self and vice versa” (CW 11: 961).

It is very important to note that Jung made a crucial statement over the issue of liberation from suffering. In the following dialogue, Jung answered negatively a question concerning the possibility of gaining freedom from suffering all at once.

SH: Yes. Can psychotherapy liberate us from suffering in one fell swoop?

CGJ: Liberate from suffering? One tries to reduce suffering yet some suffering is always present. There would be nothing beautiful if the beautiful were not in contrast with ugliness or suffering. The German philosopher Schopenhauer once said: ‘Happiness is the cessation of suffering.’ We need suffering. Otherwise, life would no longer be interesting. Psychotherapy must not disturb the problem of suffering too much in people. Otherwise, people would become dissatisfied.

SH: Suffering is, in a sense, necessary for life. You are right. Nevertheless, we have a genuine wish to be liberated from it.

CGJ: Of course, if there is too much of it. The physician strives to reduce suffering, not to put an end to it.

(Jung and Hisamatsu in Muramoto, 1998: 44-5)

In the following conversation, however, Jung answered in the affirmative when Hisamatsu asked Jung whether one can release oneself from the collective unconscious.

SH: The essential issue in this liberation is: how does one reach a fundamental self, one that is no longer captivated by the ten thousand things? How to get there, that is the problem. Is it necessary to liberate oneself from the collective unconscious as well, or from the conditions it imposes on us?

CGJ: If someone is caught in the ten thousand things, it is because that person is also caught in the collective unconscious. A person is liberated only when freed from both. One person may be driven more by the unconscious and another by things. One has to take the person to the point where he is free from the compulsion to either run after things or be driven by the unconscious. What is needed for both compulsions is basically the same: *nirvanda*[sic].

SH: From what you have said about the collective unconscious, might I infer that one can be liberated from it?

CGJ: Yes!<sup>17</sup>

SH: What we in Buddhism and especially in Zen, usually call the ‘common self’ corresponds exactly to what you call the ‘collective unconscious.’ Only through liberation from this self does the authentic self emerge.

(Jung and Hisamatsu in Muramoto, 1998: 45-6)

It is important to note that the key word, which is missing in Hisamatsu’s question of liberation from the collective unconscious, is ‘completely.’ Thus Jung’s affirmative answer to Hisamatsu’s question may suggest that Jung meant ‘free from compulsion to either run after things or be driven by the collective unconscious.’ But this is hardly possible without the total knowledge of the unconscious. For Jung clearly asserted in the dialogue, “What is needed for both compulsions is basically the same: *nirdvanda* [sic]”. Muramoto (1992) argues that *nirdvandva* is a Sanskrit word for ‘freedom from opposites,’ and refers to an idea in which dualism is presupposed and at the same time overcome. In Meckel and Moore’s edition of the Jung-Hisamatsu dialogue which is based on Tsujimura’s transcription, Jung’s statement was translated as: “Both are fundamentally the same: *Nirvana*” (Jung and Hisamatsu in Meckel and Moore, 1992: 111). However, with a confirmation from Jaffé, Muramoto believes that in the Tsujimura’s protocol the word *nirdvandva* was mistranslated into *nirvana*. Muramoto argues,

It is no wonder that Jung adopted this word [*nirdvandva*], as it fits well with his mode of thinking which is expressed, for example, in his key concept of the ‘transcendent function’ – namely, an attitude or a capacity to sustain the tension of opposites, from which a reconciling symbol can then emerge from the depths of the mind. The word *nirvana*, on the contrary, originally meaning ‘extinction of fire,’ suggests an absolute transcendence or denial of dualism to nothingness – reflecting a mode of thinking which is foreign to Jung.

(Muramoto, 1998: 48)

In fact Jung often uses the word *nirdvandva* in his writings and he interpreted it as “the freedom from opposites, which is shown as a possible way of solving the conflict through reconciliation” (CW 9i: 76). Therefore Jung’s affirmative answer, ‘Yes!’

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<sup>17</sup> Muramoto provided a rather psychoanalytical examination of Jung’s affirmative answer ‘Yes!’ in the following passage: “Hisamatsu’s immediately preceding question is, in my opinion, the gravitational center of the entire conversation, comparable with a critical confrontation between a Zen Master and his disciple in Zen *mondo* (question and answer). We are told, in fact, in Vol. 1 of his *Complete Works* that both he and Tsujimura found Jung’s ‘Yes!’ very unexpected. Unfortunately, however, we don’t know what kind of ‘yes’ it was. Was Jung’s reply a heartfelt affirmation, an expression of exasperation, or a ‘yes’ which was somehow forced from his mind, perhaps even against his will, by Hisamatsu’s penetrating and somewhat intrusive questioning? Personally, I believe the latter was the

may seem to be inconsistent with his previous argument on ‘free from compulsions’ to *nirvandva*. For, in Jung’s view, one can not be *completely* liberated from opposites, that is, conscious and unconscious, but can be only *partially* liberated from them to sustain the tension of opposites through reconciliation. From this context, we can assume that in the earlier conversation Jung may have suggested that the suffering cannot be eliminated objectively but *can* be eliminated subjectively by adopting some kind of attitude to the problem of psychic suffering. Elsewhere Jung stated,

Suffering that is not understood is hard to bear, while on the other hand it is often astounding to see how much a person can endure when he understands the why and the wherefore. A philosophical or religious view of the world enables him to do this, and such views prove to be, at the very least, psychic methods of healing if not of salvation.

(CW 18: 1578)

What Jung emphasises here is not the termination of suffering but rather the transformation of suffering, namely, the way in which we see the suffering is transformed from the objective level to the subjective. This seems to be the aim of both Jung’s psychology and Zen Buddhism. P. Young-Eisendrath (1999) discusses the transformation of human suffering from the perspective of Jung’s psychology and Buddhism based on both her Zen Buddhist training and clinical experience in America and she argues,

Buddhism... opened a new avenue for appreciating psychodynamic practices in America. Because Buddhism presents a spiritual argument for the transformation of suffering, it has assisted me in being able to address audiences about the principles and uses of psychodynamic psychotherapy. American depth psychology also has something to offer Buddhism, I believe, especially in our study of individual symbolic meaning and the transformation of psychological complexes – especially the ego-complex – in psychotherapy.

(Young-Eisendrath, 1999: 5)

### 5.3.2 The Christian-Zen Buddhist dialogue

Jung’s attitude towards the Eastern religions appears to be ambivalent in some places. Johnston (1990) states that, “On the one hand he was enthusiastically eloquent about the achievements of the oriental mind; on the other hand, he was very, very wary about the use of Zen and yoga by Westerners. For one thing he did not like to see

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case, and suspect that this was one of the reasons why Jung refused to have the conversation published in *Psychologia*” (Muramoto, 1998: 48).

Westerners abandon their own tradition” (Johnston, 1990). Jung was certain that, “a direct transplantation of Zen to our Western conditions is neither commendable nor even possible” (CW 11: 905), because he believed: “*satori*... designates a special kind and way of enlightenment which it is practically impossible for the European to appreciate” (CW 11: 877). Furthermore, Jung argued,

Great as is the value of Zen Buddhism for understanding the religious transformation process, its use among Western people is very problematical. The mental education necessary for Zen is lacking in the West. Who among us would place such implicit trust in a superior Master and his incomprehensible ways? This respect for the greater human personality is found only in the East.

(CW 11: 902)

Jung was very much concerned with the danger for Westerners of applying Eastern spiritual methods indiscriminately. Jung was very sceptical of the possibility of Europeans attaining *satori*, which he believed, is a non-ego state and thus leads to psychosis.<sup>18</sup> For the same reason, Jung was critical of the Western application of yoga.<sup>19</sup>

As a psychotherapist, Jung was principally concerned with the healing power of Zen. Jung’s interpretation of Zen is to see it as a method to make the unconscious conscious, leading to an integration of the whole personality and abolishing conflicts that might exist between the conscious and unconscious elements. In this sense the application of Zen method to Western man is possible. Jung asserted: “the *satori* experience does occur also in the West” (CW 11: 903). Jung was more interested in the psychological basis of Zen than in its Buddhist origins. Certainly Jung was not the only one to explore the therapeutic possibilities of Zen. Modern Japanese psychology, for instance Morita therapy, is investigating some links between psychotherapy and Zen.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> However, Jung misunderstood the nature of the *satori* experience. As mentioned earlier, in *satori* enlightenment, the ego does not disappear but it is the empty state of mind (*sunyata*).

<sup>19</sup> Jung’s warning against the application of yoga in the West is based on his psychic relativism between East and West. For Jung’s warning against the application of yoga in the West, see CW 11: 876. For my detailed examination of Jung’s critical comment on yoga, see Chapter One.

<sup>20</sup> Morita therapy was founded by a Japanese doctor, Morita Shoma (1874-1938). Morita himself denied that Morita therapy has any direct influence by Zen but it is assumed Morita therapy was largely based on Zen because of Morita’s constant quotations from old Zen masters in support of his theories. Morita therapy is directed toward a group of hypochondriacal conditions characterised as nervousness (Jap. *shinkeishitsu*), and the specific symptoms are headaches or insomnia. Morita thought that the self-conscious focus on one’s own psychological states is perfectly normal but the trouble begins when one is caught in the mode in which the flow of consciousness is blocked (Jap. *toraware*). Johnston asserts that: “Morita therapy aims at creating a state in which the mind flows smoothly and



In contrast with Jung's claims that Westerners cannot practice Eastern spiritual discipline due to their different traditional background, there is a recent movement called 'Christian Zen' whereby Christians turn to Zen for assistance in their own spiritual way. The German Jesuit H.M. Enomiya-Lassalle took a pioneering role in introducing Zen meditation for Christians in Germany. The Irish Jesuit William Johnston and the English Benedictine Aelred Graham also researched on Christian Zen. Johnston believed that there is a possible dialogue between Zen Buddhism and Christianity at the level of mystical and artistic experience. He said, "the Zen technique can teach the Christian how to relax, how to be calm, how to think in a deeper way, how to dispose himself to receive God's love, how to conceive the truth of faith not only in his brain but in his whole body" (Johnston, 1970: 180). Johnston believes this is possible, "because the psychic life of man is everywhere the same; his fundamental aspirations vary but little. Put more concretely, what is common to both is vertical thinking, the supraconceptual grasp of reality without words or concepts or images" (Johnston, 1970: 184). He calls this kind of thinking 'vertical,' as opposed to the ordinary 'horizontal' thinking when images are filtering across the mind. Vertical thinking means that the stream of images is halted, the mind goes down and down, the horizon of consciousness is extended, broadened, and deepened. In Zen terminology this is breaking through layer after layer of consciousness until one reaches the bottom layer and is identified with the universe. Johnston explains that when one meditates vertically this leads to a sense of detachment and interior liberty which is the hallmark of Buddhist art. Eventually one can liberate one's mind from inordinate desires and distractions and is enabled to seek the deepest truth lying at the heart of reality. From the Christian perspective, "vertical meditation creates the detachment that allows the mind to go out to truth..., to God" (Johnston, 1970: 187).

Of course one must cling to God but he does not need to cling to views and ideas about God. "Contemplative prayer demands the rejection of concepts of God;

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continuously without being arrested by attachment to anything; but especially it aims at the state where one is forgetful of self" (Johnston, 1970: 59). To forget the self and return to just what is (Jap. *arugamama*) is the way out of the vicious cycle, which causes suffering and is being trapped in self-reflection. The therapy itself begins with a week of complete bed rest and no activity whatsoever is allowed. A patient is told simply to think what he thinks and to feel what he feels. Eventually, the patient develops a desire to perform some activity and is gradually given increasingly complex duties. Finally, the patient reaches the point when he can see what has to be done on his own initiative

and John of Cross asks for the most rigorous of detachment from all thoughts, ideas, and images of any kind, as well as from all formulations of dogma” (Johnston, 1970: 190). In this sense Johnston clearly asserts: “the kind of *satori* resulting from an utter detachment from all things making one fall into the void is not impossible for the Christian” (Johnston, 1970: 191). The enlightenment is a true change of consciousness when it reaches its climax in which one’s ego is lost to be replaced by that of Christ.

‘I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me,’ ‘Let that mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus,’ ‘Not this is eternal life that they may know Thee the One true and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent’<sup>21</sup>

(Galatians 2:20 cited by Johnston, 1970: 192).

Christian Zen meditation attempts to see the Zen practice as a way to union with God. However, a question can be asked whether or not this Christian experience of being one with God can be called *satori* experience. Here are two more important questions raise by Dumoulin, “can the specific practice of Zen meditation be so totally divested of its religious and metaphysical underpinnings that Christian can take up the practice without endangering their faith? And second, can a Zen so radically severed from its Buddhist foundations still properly be called Zen?” (Dumoulin, 1979: 11). In the case of adaptations of Zen serious problems inevitably arise. For instance, Jung (and perhaps D.T. Suzuki also) tended to exaggerate the psychological aspects of Zen at the expense of religious connections, and the Buddhist basis was not his main concern. In the case of Christian adaptation of Zen, a similar sort of shift of emphasis is unavoidable, since the world view of Zen Buddhism and Christianity differ radically. However Dumoulin states that, “the Christian Zen movement..., is not a monolithic block of teaching and practice; a multiplicity of endeavours is involved. All of them are convinced of the overall value of Zen meditation and attempt to integrate the

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(Kasulis, 1981: 149). For the detailed discussion of Morita’s relation to Zen Buddhism, see Bruno Rhyner (1992) ‘The Image of Healing in a Zen-Therapy,’ *Eranos-Jahrbuch*, Vol. 61.

<sup>21</sup> Jung quoted this line of Paul in comparison with Buddhist standpoint: “Between the Christian and the Buddhist mandala there is a subtle but enormous difference. The Christian during contemplation would never say ‘I am Christ,’ but will confess with Paul: ‘Not I, but Christ liveth in me’ (Gal. 2:20). Our sutra [the *Amitayur-dhyana Sutra*], however, says: ‘Thou wilt know that *thou* art the Buddha.’ At the bottom the two confessions are identical, in that the Buddhist only attains this knowledge when he is *anatman*, ‘without self.’ But there is an immeasurable difference in the formulation. The Christian attains his end *in Christ*, the Buddhist knows *he* is the Buddha. The Christian gets *out of* the transitory and ego-bound world of consciousness, but the Buddhist *still* reposes on the eternal ground of his inner nature, whose oneness with Deity, or with universal Being, is confirmed in other Indian testimonies.” (CW 11: 949, Jung’s italics).

specific merits of the Zen way into Christianity” (Dumoulin, 1979: 12). The coexistence of Zen and Christianity gives rise to a pluralism, which is bound to generate a new path of spiritual exploration (Dumoulin, 1992, 143). The American Trappist monk, Thomas Merton insisted:

we have now reached a stage of (long-overdue) religious maturity at which it may be possible for someone to remain perfectly faithful to a Christian and Western monastic commitment, and yet to learn in depth from, say, a Buddhist or Hindu discipline and experience.

(Merton cited by Clarke, 1997: 148)

Yet the Christian-Zen Buddhist dialogue is still an experimental phase and the questions raised above not yet fully resolved.

### 5.3.3 The Ox-Herding pictures

It is interesting to note that in his writings compiled in the *Collected Works* there is no mention of The Ten Ox-Herding Pictures, despite Jung’s well-known interest in symbols and transformation, such as the *Rosarium Philosophorum*, the series of German alchemical pictures which Jung examined in 1946. In his detailed examination of the *Rosarium Philosophorum*, Jung illustrates transference in relation to the individuation process. The series of ten ox-herding pictures in Zen Buddhism also seem to reveal a remarkable parallel to Jung’s theory of the individuation process. Marvin Spiegelman and Mokusen Miyuki, both graduates of the C.G. Jung Institute, Zurich, researched the ten Ox-Herding Pictures and, “analysed them by employing Jungian methodology and his conceptual framework, and by viewing them as portraying what C.G. Jung calls ‘the individuation process’” (Miyuki, 1985: 29).

In Chinese Ch’an Buddhism there developed a story which shows the experience of *satori*. It is the tale of the ox and the oxherd, and in China and Japan came to be portrayed in a series of pictures, which is usually called, ‘The Ten Ox- (or Cow-) herding Pictures.’<sup>22</sup> The story of these pictures is that, “the ox and the oxherd, two at the start, become united in the course of the way, for the ox symbolizes the true, profound Self, and the oxherd stands for nothing less than the human being” (Dumoulin, 1979: 155). D.T. Suzuki suggested, “these pictures... may better be

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<sup>22</sup> D.T. Suzuki asserted that the cow has been worshipped by the Indian for long time and its allusions are found in the Buddhist scriptures such as ‘On the Herding of Cattle’ in a Hinayana Sutra, in which the eleven ways of properly attending cattle are described (D.T. Suzuki, 1949: 367).

regarded as stages of training for the man and not for the animal” (D.T. Suzuki, 1955). Only a few sets of the Oxherding Pictures exist today. There are two well known sets: the one with ten prefaces and verses was done by a Zen master, Kaku-an Shien (Ch. Kuo-an) of the Sung dynasty; another earlier version with ten verses was drawn by the Zen master, Seikyo (Ch. Pu-ming).<sup>23</sup> According to D.T. Suzuki, Seikyo illustrated stages of spiritual progress by a gradual whitening of the cow until it itself disappears.<sup>24</sup> These pictures are entitled: 1) Undisciplined, 2) Discipline begun, 3) In Harness, 4) Faced Round, 5) Tamed, 6) Unimpeded, 7) *Laissez Faire*, 8) All forgotten, 9) The Solitary Moon, and 10) Both Vanished (Miyuki, 1985: 30). These pictures focus on gradual achievement of *satori* enlightenment, Miyuki argued, “The concept of whitening that which is black is based on the Buddhist doctrine of *tathagatagarbha*, the realization of the Buddha-nature, or the genuine self” (Miyuki, 1985: 30).

Kaku-an presented the ox-herding pictures in a different manner. His pictures are entitled: 1) Searching for the Ox, 2) Seeing the Traces, 3) Seeing the Ox, 4) Catching the Ox, 5) Herding the Ox, 6) coming Home on the Ox’s Back, 7) The Ox Forgotten, 8) The Ox and the Man Both Forgotten, 9) Returning to the Origin, Back to the Source, and 10) Entering the City with Bliss-bestowing Hands (Miyuki, 1985: 30). D.T. Suzuki translated the preface and verse of the Kaku-an’s ox-herding pictures.<sup>25</sup> According to D.T. Suzuki’s translation, the first picture shows that the oxherd has lost his ox and stands alone on the vast pasture. In the second picture he searches and catches the tracks of the ox. However, the preface states, “he is unable to distinguish what is good from what is not; his mind is still confused as to truth and falsehood” (D.T. Suzuki, 1955: 302). In the third picture he finds the ox. “He finds the way through the sound; he sees into the origin of things, and all his senses are in harmonious order” (Ibid., 302). The fourth picture shows he tamed the ox with a lot of effort, although the cow is very hard to keep under control. Then, in the fifth picture, he set the ox out to pasture under surveillance. These two pictures illustrates

<sup>23</sup> Kaku-an’s and Seikyo’s versions of The Ox-Herding Pictures are given in appendix 5.1 – 5.20.

<sup>24</sup> Although the Ox-Herding Pictures show the gradual achievement of *satori*, the transition from ignorance to enlightenment is abrupt. D.T. Suzuki says: “it is like a freezing of water, which takes place abruptly” (D.T. Suzuki, 1926: 362).

<sup>25</sup> D.T. Suzuki, ‘The Ten Cow-Herding Pictures,’ *Essays in Zen Buddhism: First Series*, 1949, pp. 363-376, and ‘The Awakening of a New Consciousness in Zen,’ *Eranos-Jahrbuch*, 1955, pp. 275-304.

the severe and painful practice in Zen hall until enlightenment is achieved. The preface says, “Through enlightenment all this turns into truth; but falsehood asserts itself when confusion prevails... Do not get the nose-string loose; hold it tight, and allow yourself no indulgence” (D.T. Suzuki, 1955: 303). In the sixth picture, with complete certainty, the oxherd straddles the back of the ox and rides home triumphantly, playing flute. Dumoulin argues, “the joy of the oxherd and the head of the ox, no longer bent in craving for grass, intimate the perfect freedom attained” (Dumoulin, 1979: 155). Now that the oxherd in his freedom no longer needs for the ox, he forgets it and stands alone in the seventh picture. In the eighth picture both oxherd and ox have disappeared in the nothingness of the circle. The circle symbolises the idea that, “We all - including the man come from the abyss of absolute nothingness, and we are once more to return to it” (D.T. Suzuki. 1955: 299). In the ninth picture, when the oxherd reappears everything around him is just as it was. The tenth picture illustrates that the oxherd enters the town and the market place, carrying a gourd,<sup>26</sup> and returns home. Dumoulin accounts for the last picture as follows, “The enlightened one lives with his fellow human beings and lives like them, but the benevolence he radiates has its source in his enlightenment” (Dumoulin, 1979: 155).

According to Miyuki, the ox-herding pictures represent the Zen concept of mind, which could be taken as equivalent to Jung’s concept of the total psyche, or the self. In terms of Jung’s idea of the relationship of consciousness to the unconscious, “the Oxherding Pictures can be understood as depicting the attempt of the oxherd, or the ego, to creatively relate itself to the inexhaustible treasure of the ‘mind-ox,’ or the unconscious” (Miyuki, 1985: 31). Miyuki argues that in Kaku-an’s version of the ten ox-herding pictures, the third picture, ‘seeing the Ox,’ represents the Zen goal of seeing into nature itself, then the fourth picture, ‘Catching the Ox,’ represents attained wholeness or completion. Thus, as soon as the fourth state is realised, a new struggle begins on a higher level of consciousness. In the seventh picture, ‘The Ox Forgotten, Leaving the Man Alone,’ depicting the completion of the second ternary series, Miyuki argues that, “individuation or self-realization - in terms of the dialectical confrontation of the ego (the oxherd) and the Self (the ox) - has led the individual to experience a transformation of personality symbolized as ‘the Man’” (Miyuki, 1985:

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<sup>26</sup> D.T. Suzuki asserts that the gourd symbolises emptiness (*sunyata*).

35). The eighth picture, which is depicted as the empty circle, represents, “the fully manifested activity of the Buddha-nature, or the Self, in the conscious life of the practitioner whose ego functions in the service of the Self” (Miyuki, 1985: 37). The last two pictures continue to describe the ‘Self-centric’ functioning of the psyche. To sum up, in Miyuki’s interpretation, the ox-herding pictures portray the individuation process in an art form. Thus he believes that psychological understanding of *satori* enlightenment in Zen is equivalent to the urge of the Self to realise itself through the ego’s integration of the unconscious contents.

Miyuki equated the *satori* enlightenment with Jung’s concept of the individuation process. Miyuki also argues that, “the Zen concept of mind could be taken as equivalent to Jung’s concept of the total psyche, or the Self” (Miyuki, 1985: 31). However, given my earlier comment on the different goals of Zen Buddhism and Jung’s individuation process, Miyuki’s account of the oxherding pictures as the individuation process may seem to be inconsistent with Jung’s standpoint. Nevertheless, Miyuki’s analysis of the relation between the oxherding pictures and the individuation process demonstrates a similarity: both processes are involved with personal transformation to a certain extent. Miyuki argues that the Self in Zen must not be confused with ego-dissolution or ego-depotentiation. This is the point where Jung did misunderstand the concept of *satori*, as I discussed earlier. Miyuki asserts that, “the integrated ego is strong and flexible enough to develop the attitude of listening in order to function harmoniously with the Self. The ego thus strengthened can function in union with, and in the service of the Self” (Miyuki, 1985: 37). This statement seems to be parallel to Jung’s earlier quotation of “[the self] is no longer experienced in the form of a broader or higher ego, but in the form of a non-ego,” (CW 11: 885) and “It is as if the subject-character of the ego had been overrun, or taken over, by another subject which appears in place of the ego” (CW 11: 890). Miyuki argues that the word ‘forgotten’ used in Kuo-an’s title, ‘The Ox and the Man both Forgotten,’ designates the emptying activity of the Buddha-nature or the Self, which is supraordinate to the function of the ego. Hence, “once the ‘Self-centric’ function of the psyche takes place, the ‘ego-centric’ functioning of the psyche is ‘forgotten.’” (Ibid., 37). Miyuki claims that, “What is overcome is not the ego itself but the function of the ego which is to be characterised as ‘ego-centric.’” (Ibid., 37).

This statement displays a remarkable similarity with Jung's notion of the individuation process. Jung argues that in the course of individuation there is "a shift of the psychological centre of personality from the personal ego to the impersonal non-ego, which is now experienced as the real 'Ground' of personality" (CW 9i: 638). Miyuki argues that in Buddhism the 'ego-centric' is described as the ego's appropriating orientation which, "is conditioned by the darkness or ignorance and the egoistic passion of defilement and which, accordingly, obscures the genuine activity of the Buddha-nature" (Ibid., 38). Therefore Miyuki asserts that, "the word 'forgotten' indicates the psychological condition of 'being emptied' (*kung, sunyata*) wherein the ego is opened to the service of the activity of the Self, the matrix of life" (Ibid., 38). In this way the Buddha-nature or the Self, "realizes itself in and through the receptive, flexible ego" (Ibid., 38). Miyuki's account of the ox-herding pictures demonstrates that Jung's position is not so different from Zen Buddhism, as both fundamentally involve the same process: for Jung the individuation process demonstrates "the shifting of the centre of gravity from the ego to the self" (CW 11: 958), and for Zen the path to the *satori* experience shows that the self-centric function of the psyche is supraordinate to the function of the ego, and thus the ego can function in the service of the self.

#### 5.4 Conclusion

Jung became familiar with Zen by way of D.T. Suzuki's writings on Zen Buddhism. It is significant that D.T. Suzuki one-sidedly emphasised the Rinzai school of Zen, had a psychologised view on Zen, and his Zen is highly influenced by a reaction to Japanese nationalism at that time. Jung may not have been aware of these aspects of D.T. Suzuki's Zen, but they undoubtedly affected Jung's understanding of Zen Buddhism. Jung was fascinated by the psychological aspect of Zen and found a parallel between the *satori* experience of Zen and his idea of the individuation process. Jung's interpretation of the *satori* experience as the experience of the ego by the self is in fact very similar to Jung's idea of the individuation process in which there is a shifting of the centre of gravity from the ego to the self. Although Jung's view on *satori* may seem to be inconsistent when he rejected the possibility of attaining *satori* as he misunderstood its concept by interpreting it as the loss of ego

like in the last stage of yoga, *samadhi*, in which the flow of consciousness is so completely identified with the object alone that there is a complete loss of ego consciousness. However, the concept of *satori* enlightenment in Zen Buddhism is not the complete loss of the ego but the empty state of mind, no-mind (*mu-shin*). Despite his misunderstanding, Jung's earlier claim of the objectification of the ego does not seem to indicate the loss of the ego but is similar to the concept of emptiness or Hakuin's concept of Great Death, in which one has to objectify one's ego and to abandon any intentional standpoint and thus create empty consciousness. There is a difference in the notion of the self in Jung and Zen. In Zen the self is fully awakened to itself (*ryoryo jochi*), whereas Jung's notion of the self, which consists of both consciousness and the unconscious, is not completely known but remains something unknown to the ego.

In the conversation between Jung and Hisamatsu, Hisamatsu asked Jung whether one can be liberated from the collective unconscious. Jung answered 'Yes!' However Jung's affirmative answer is inconsistent with his previous argument concerning the impossibility of gaining freedom from suffering all at once. The key word, which is missing in Hisamatsu's question of liberation from the collective unconscious, is 'completely.' Thus Jung's affirmative answer to Hisamatsu's question may suggest that Jung meant, 'free from compulsion to either run after things or be driven by the collective unconscious.' But this is hardly possible without the total knowledge of the unconscious. Jung clearly asserted in the dialogue that what is needed for both compulsions is basically the same: *nirvandva*, which is the freedom from opposites and is, in his view, a possible way of solving the conflict through reconciliation. For, in Jung's view, one cannot be *completely* liberated from opposites, that is, conscious and unconscious, but can be only *partially* liberated from them to sustain the tension of opposites through reconciliation. From this context, we can assume that in the conversation Jung may have suggested that suffering cannot be eliminated objectively but *can* be eliminated subjectively by adopting some kind of attitude to the problem of psychic suffering. What Jung emphasises is not the termination of suffering but rather the transformation of suffering, namely, the way in which we see the suffering is transformed from the objective level to the subjective one. This seems to be the aim of both Jung's psychology and Zen Buddhism.



It can be assumed that, compared with his relation to Tibetan Buddhism, in overall Jung's position is not enormously different from the Zen Buddhist standpoint. In fact, Jung's engagement with Buddhism seems to reveal there is a possible mutual point in the dialogue between Western psychology and Zen Buddhism. In particular, Miyuki's research for the ox-herding pictures in Zen Buddhism discloses that these pictures have similar features shared in common with Jung's theory of the individuation process. In this sense Jung's engagement with Zen Buddhism could be regarded as an important contribution to strive for opening up a fruitful dialogue between Western psychology and Eastern religious traditions. Even outside of Jung's engagement, there are also other attempts to explore a link between Western psychology and Zen Buddhism such as Morita therapy, which is based on Zen and was invented by the Japanese psychotherapist, S. Morita. Furthermore, in contrast with Jung's claim that Europeans should not practice Eastern spiritual discipline due to their different traditional background, W. Johnston investigated so-called Christian-Zen, which is devised for Christians to apply Zen mediation practice. This relatively new movement may also verify the idea that East and West could find a way to a mutual point of departure in the dialogue through understanding each other's religious traditions within their cultural contexts.

# Chapter Six:

## Conclusion

### 6.0 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis has been to examine C.G. Jung's hermeneutical engagement with Buddhism, particularly with Tibetan and Zen Buddhist Traditions. It is certainly true that Jung was in some ways a pioneer of a dialogue with Eastern religions. He took the East seriously - and as a consequence of his study of the East, aspects of thought and psychology were addressed which had been previously ignored, such as mandala symbols. As a consequence of his pioneering work many others followed by studying the relationship between Buddhism and psychology. This thesis has attempted to show that the dialogue between Jung's Analytical Psychology and Eastern thought is highly problematic, and at times erroneous, because of Jung's misunderstanding and misrepresentation of Buddhist thought and spiritual practice. Jung's method of understanding Buddhism displays elements of hermeneutics. Jung believed that he found a number of similarities between Buddhist teachings and his psychological theory. Through making analogies, Jung often seems to suggest that Analytical Psychology is Buddhism in a Western form. This thesis especially focused on such statements in order to argue that Jung in fact misrepresented Buddhist concepts. This thesis also discussed the issue of Orientalism in relation to Jung's dialogue with Buddhism, his tendency to psychological reductionism, his selective reading of Buddhist texts (made more significant by his use of questionable translations), his proposition of psychic relativism between an introverted East and extraverted West, his blanket warning against the application of yoga and meditation by Westerners, his inconsistent position on science and metaphysics, i.e., his hermeneutic method as opposed to his insistence on being a phenomenologist, and his ambivalent attitude towards Buddhist thought.

### 6.1 Findings

Chapter One provided a chronological survey of Jung's dialogue with Eastern thought. In his early career, Jung studied a large variety of Eastern texts, including the myths and symbols of Hindu and Buddhist literatures. Jung frequently affirms his role as psychologist and healer of the psychological problems of Western men, who

tend to focus their attention on the outer material world and to overlook their inner psychic needs, and eventually had lost touch with their individual and cultural meanings. Jung believed, however, that the study of myths and religious symbols gives meaning to the life of man, and that the true meaning which mythical and religious symbolism has for us is not exhausted by merely knowing about the symbol but by our appropriating it as an inner fact. Jung was fascinated by Eastern religion and philosophy, which were rich in sources of archetypal myths, images and symbols. Jung was particularly sympathetic toward Chinese Taoism, since he believed the concept of *yin/yang* bore a striking similarity to his theory of psychic opposites. However, Jung could not agree with the Hindu concept of *samadhi*, in which the flow of consciousness is so completely identified with the object alone that there is a complete loss of ego consciousness. This represented for Jung a philosophical and psychological impossibility, as he believed there is no consciousness without the ego. Jung was particularly attracted to Buddhist thought, in contrast to his relation to the Hindu tradition. Jung believed he had identified a number of affinities between his concept of the individuation process and the Buddhist path to salvation, since he believed both methods attempt to achieve self-transformation and are based on the direct experience of the individual seeker. It must be stressed that Jung's relation to Buddhism appears to be inconsistent. Jung addressed, on the one hand, the Buddhist view on suffering, and admired the way in which the Buddhist objectively observes suffering and its causes, and the Buddha extricates people from it. Jung, on the other hand, denied the possibility of the complete termination of suffering as presented in Buddhist teaching. Jung's ambivalence towards Buddhism can be seen in his writings on Tibetan, Zen, and Pure Land Buddhist materials.

Jung considered himself first and foremost as a psychologist working in the tradition of empirical science. Jung declared, "I am an empiricist and adhere as such to the phenomenological standpoint" (CW 11: 2). Jung was interested in world mythology and religions, which are typically regarded as un-scientific matters. But Jung believed that he addressed these issues seriously and examined them scientifically and phenomenologically. Nevertheless, there is certainly an issue here about the scientific credentials of Jung's phenomenological approach, namely, in what way Jung's method was scientific as he believed, and to what extent he was a scientist who took a phenomenological and empirical standpoint. In some places Jung expressed reservations about the empirical character of analytical psychology. Jung

frequently points out that there are no ultimate or final conclusions in the world of psychology. Jung believed that human knowledge is conditional and our hypotheses must be altered by new facts which come to light. Jung emphasised that we must not regard the language of Analytical Psychology as a final or conclusive body of knowledge but as an 'as if' language. Jung wrote,

The only certain thing is our profound ignorance, which cannot even know whether we have come nearer to the solution of the great riddle or not. Nothing can carry us beyond an 'It seems as if' except the perilous leap of faith, which we must leave to those who are gifted or graced for it. Every real or apparent step forward depends on an experience of facts, the verification of which is, as we know, one of the most difficult tasks confronting the human mind.

(CW 10: 681)

John A. Sanford (1971) argues that Jung's approach suggests, "when one gains knowledge of the psyche there is peculiarly subjective factor at work" (Sanford, 1971: 102). Jung himself pointed out that, "Science cannot exist without hypotheses" (CW 10: 1041). In some places, Jung believed that no science, including all psychology, could discount human subjectivity. For instance, his theory of archetypes is a speculative hypotheses designed to explain a wide range of psychic phenomena. The subjective orientation of Jung's work may appear principally a hermeneutic doctrine rather than an empirical science in a strict sense of the word. Jung writes,

Analytical psychology is fundamentally a natural science, but it is subject far more than any other science to the personal bias of the observer. The psychologist must depend therefore in the highest degree upon historical and literary parallels if he wishes to exclude at least the crudest errors in judgement.

(MDR: 200)

This statement would suggest that Jung's approach, which he claims to be empirical and phenomenological, demonstrates an element of hermeneutics. As has been discussed in Chapter Two, Jung's approach, particularly his method of amplification, is involved with the recognition on the one hand of "the radical finitude of the human mind and the human condition, historically grounded and limited, and on the other of the infinite possibilities that language, dialogue and interpretation open up for us" (Clarke, 1994: 53).

Sanford argues that Jung's phenomenological approach acknowledges the limits of human knowledge. Jung claims that what we know directly is the events present in consciousness. Thus the 'facts' are in essence events on one's screen of consciousness. It follows that there is "a definite limit on what we can expect to know of the world which we presume exists beyond consciousness as the original

source of our impressions. Whether we regard the impressions on our state of consciousness as arising from a physical realm via the senses, or psychic realm via immediate intuition or perception, we can never hope to have direct knowledge of what lies beyond consciousness” (Sanford, 1971: 94). Sanford asserts that, “essentially Jung’s scientific epistemological viewpoint is that of Kantian dualism, in which the existence of reality beyond consciousness always remains an assumption” (Sanford, 1971: 94). With this epistemological outlook Jung consistently rejected the use of metaphysical explanations in his psychological work, and claimed that there can be no such thing as metaphysical knowledge, which is gained in any way other than through experience. Jung rejected, “the claim of metaphysicians to be able to attain to ultimate knowledge, or to knowledge of any sort which transcends what can be known empirically,” and emphasised that such a metaphysical assumption “is not to be confused with science, and only science can claim to have knowledge” (Sanford, 1971: 95).

Clarke also points out that Jung’s scepticism with regard to metaphysics, or any claims to knowledge that transcend the limits of experience is derived from Kant (Clarke, 1992: 32-3). Jung was highly critical of the Hindu Upanishadic teaching in which the Brahman becomes one-sidedly identified as pure consciousness and has no longer any interaction with the physical world. In Jung’s view, losing balance between the external world and the inner psychic world leads to pathology, that is to say, being either caught up in the unconscious or over-focussed on the external consciousness. Jung was also critical of the last stage of yoga, *samadhi*, in which the flow of consciousness is so completely identified with the object alone that there is a complete loss of ego consciousness. From his empiricist and Kantian perspective, Jung could not conceive of any consciousness without reference to ego. Hence Jung dismissed the metaphysical assumptions and imported his own psychological assumptions into his account of the phenomenal experience of the Eastern religions. In his commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, Jung asserts that, “I quite deliberately bring everything that purports to be metaphysical into the daylight of psychological understanding... One cannot grasp anything metaphysically, one only can do so psychologically. Therefore I strip things of their metaphysical wrappings in order to make them objects of psychology” (CW 13: 73).

However, Jung was not always consistent on this point and sometimes engaged in metaphysical speculation. While Jung avowed scepticism concerning

Eastern metaphysical beliefs, and claiming that in any case these beliefs are 'really' psychological in nature, Jung himself has a tendency to make metaphysical claims. For example, Jung examined the images in the dreams or fantasies of his patients, which were similar to mythical motifs and religious symbolism, and characterised them as archetypes, which are autonomous psychic entities and located in the collective unconscious. Contrary to his earlier insistence of his scientific standpoint, the concept of archetypes moved Jung beyond the limits of empirical science and involved his psychology in metaphysical questions that are fundamentally religious in nature. For Jung, the archetypes have a numinous character which is described as spiritual, a factor which is also significant in his understanding of the psychology of religion. With reference to his concept of the psychoid archetype Jung wrote,

We are so accustomed to regard meaning as a psychic process or content that it never enters our heads to suppose that it could exist outside the psyche.... If, therefore, we entertain the hypothesis that one and the same (transcendental) meaning might manifest itself simultaneously in the human psyche and in the arrangement of an external and independent event, we at once come into conflict with the conventional scientific and epistemological views.

(CW 8: 915)

This statement may suggest that Jung himself tacitly concedes his own ambivalence: on the one hand Jung certainly sought to establish his psychological theory from clinical experience through the empirical and phenomenological approach; on the other hand, however, his theories are not always 'devoid of metaphysical import' (Aziz, 1990: 173). According to Aziz, Jung's description of the archetype as a psychoid factor is involved with a form of metaphysics. Aziz points out that for Jung the concept of the archetype is lifted out of the strictly intrapsychic realm, and comes to be regarded as 'transcendental meaning.' Aziz states, "with this progression from the intrapsychic to the transcendental... what we indeed have, in part, is a progression from 'metapsychology' to 'metaphysics', for what Jung is now theorizing about with his concept of the psychoid archetype is not simply the structure of the psyche, but the nature of reality itself" (Aziz, 1990: 174-5). At this point it must be stressed that Jung's concept of the archetype does come from a metaphysical speculation. As was discussed in Chapter Three, Buddhism is also derived from metaphysical beliefs. The problem is that Jung did not seem to acknowledge his own metaphysical position, or the metaphysics of the Eastern religions, but he merely wants to be of a scientific status. Such an ambivalent attitude, therefore, would lead to an inconsistency in Jung's writings on science and metaphysics.

Chapter Two examined Jung's hermeneutical approach to understanding Eastern religion utilising insights from Gadamer's theory of hermeneutics and from the phenomenology of religion. Jung's method of understanding patients, alchemy, mythology, Occidental and Oriental religions demonstrates features of a hermeneutical approach. Above all, Jung's hermeneutical strategy is expressed by explaining his method of amplification, which seeks to clarify psychic contents by linking them within a network of meanings expressed in symbols and images through using metaphors and analogies derived from mythological and religious contexts. However, the problem with Jung's tendency to make parallels between Buddhism and Analytical Psychology is that Buddhist concepts are squeezed to fit into his own psychological terminology. Watts (1971) accused Jung of 'psychologism' in the sense that Jung's view of the unconscious and of the content of the liberation experience in Buddhism is too narrowly psychological. Jung says all experience is psychological experience because it happens in the psyche, but Watts argues,

the unconscious which needs to be examined for man's liberation contains physical, biological, and social relationships which are repressed not so much by a 'psychological organ,' such as the ego, as by defective communication and language. Nor is the content of the liberation experience - *satori*, *nirvana*, 'cosmic consciousness,' etc. - something psychological in the sense of a flash of subjective light. Its content is the physical world, seen in a new way.

(Watts, 1971: 112)

In contrast to the hermeneutical method, a phenomenological approach to religion develops a different understanding of religion. The main characteristics of the phenomenology of religion are *epochê*, which indicates suspension of one's own judgement presupposition, and *eidetic vision*, which involves a form of subjectivity and implies an intuitive grasp of the essentials of a situation in its wholeness. From the perspective of the phenomenology of religion, Jung's methodology lacks objectivity and fails to exercise *epochê* and thus he tends to dismiss religious phenomena from their own standpoint. Jung applies, however, the method of *eidetic vision*, namely, he brings his own subjective assumption into his account of Eastern religions. At this point we can say that the phenomenology of religion takes a similar position to the fundamental hermeneutical principle. Brook argues that Jung's approach demonstrates features of existential phenomenology, which considerably overlaps with hermeneutics. Thus for Jung, pathological symptoms, dreams and religious experiences are interpreted as texts, which express their own meanings.

Jung exercised the method of amplification in order to specify the essential meaning of these psychological phenomena.

Chapter Three examined Jung's understanding of the Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhist traditions. Jung was particularly attracted by the psychological aspects of Buddhism, which he regarded as a useful tool and possible basis of a therapeutic method. Thus Jung studied Buddhism from a particular perspective and with a particular aim. Jung often failed to understand Buddhist concepts within their own cultural context. For instance, Jung not only ontologised the concept of *nibbana* (Skt. *nirvana*), but also sometimes interpreted it through his understanding of Hinduism. Jung was highly selective in his study of Buddhism and did not offer any systematic account of Buddhism. Jung appears to have paid considerable attention to Mahayana Buddhism, and wrote psychological commentaries for translations of particular Mahayana texts of Tibetan and Zen Buddhism. He also gave lectures on Pure Land Buddhist meditation. However, Jung only looked at these specific texts and teachings. Most of the other Mahayana traditions, for example such significant concepts as the *Bodhisattva* or Nagarjuna's concept of the Middle Way, are excluded from his attention. A careful examination of Jung's study of Buddhism shows that Jung was more familiar with Hinayana Buddhist thought and thus Mahayana Buddhism was sometimes interpreted through his knowledge of Hinayana Buddhism. Yet, Jung hardly discussed the Theravada meditation practices such as *vipassana* meditation.

Jung's selective reading of the text, his psychologised view of Oriental religions, and his failure to understand Buddhist concepts are not entirely caused by himself, but in part derive from the limitations of the translations of the original texts he used. Chapter Four discussed that Evans-Wentz' edition of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* has a number of serious mis-translations and mis-interpretations, which consequently led Jung to misunderstand several concepts of Tibetan Buddhism. Chapter Five has examined Suzuki's work on Zen Buddhism which mainly addressed itself to the work of the Rinzai school and hardly discussed the Soto school of Zen. Chapter Three discussed Junjiro Takakusu's technical problems with his translation of the Pure Land Buddhist texts he worked on. *The Secret of the Golden Flower* translated by Richard Wilhelm also has serious flaws in grammar, terminology, and conceptual structures. Cleary has presented his new translation of *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (1991) and in his introduction he argues,



Although Jung credited *The Secret of the Golden Flower* with having clarified his own work on the unconscious, he maintained serious reservations about the practice taught in the book. What Jung did not know was that the text he was reading was in fact a garbled translation of a truncated version of a corrupted recession of the original work.

(Cleary, 1991: 3)

Cleary points out that Wilhelm's mis-translation was caused by the difficulty of the original text that uses Taoist alchemical language mixed with several types of Buddhist Chinese, and that there were no facilities for Westerners to learn these languages and symbol systems at that time. Clarke points out, "part of the problem... is that translations are not ideologically neutral but are shaped by the background and outlook of the translator" (Clarke, 1997: 185). For example, in the case of Evans-Wentz, the work of translating Tibetan texts was affected by his theosophical beliefs, and in the case of Richard Wilhelm his translation of the Eastern texts was affected by his Christian missionary background. As shown in Chapter Five D.T Suzuki's work was affected by Western psychology and his Japanese nationalist background.

Chapter Four examined Jung's understanding of Tibetan Buddhism: his study of the W.Y. Evans-Wentz edition of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, for which Jung wrote psychological commentaries, and Tibetan Tantric mandalas, which he discussed at great length in his writings. The key argument of his psychological commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* addressed the Buddhist theory of *karma*, which Jung regarded as psychic heredity. Jung was fascinated by the contents revealed by the *Chönyid Bardo*, which he equated with his developing notion of archetypes. However, Jung first expressed reservations about the Buddhist view of *karma*, and believed that psychic inheritance could only be accepted in a collective sense and there was no individual reincarnation of the kind described in *The Bardo Thödol*. But, in his later life Jung appeared to modify his earlier rejection of the notion of personal *karma* and its psychological function in rebirth and offered a general speculation which brings him very close to traditional Buddhist thought. Jung suggests that the psychological processes resulting in psychic dissociation illness such as schizophrenia may be analogous to the understanding of life after death. For Jung, a split-off complex can manifest itself as a projected personification, so rebirth might be conceived as psychic projection. Jung argues that the empirical world is merely projected karmic illusion and is characterised by an ego-conscious focus. The problem with the modern Western world is that its *karma* is

too ego-centred. Thus what is needed is a shift of the karmic centre of gravity from the ego to the self. This is, in Jung's view, the essence of transcendence in religious experience.

In his psychological commentary on *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, Jung extensively discusses what he believes to be the major significant divisions between Eastern and Western mentalities. In Jung's view, the East had developed the introverted aspect of the psyche, associated with the control of the inner world, whereas the West had developed the psychological qualities of introversion, associated with rational understanding and control of the external world. Jung considers the distinction between introverted aspect of the East and the extraverted aspect of the West as the discovery of a complementary aspect of the human personality. However, it seems that Jung's emphasis on the difference between the introverted East and the extraverted West is overly simplistic and he fails to see that there is also the possibility of an extraverted tendency in the East and an introverted one in the West. Jung's idea that the extraverted type includes the whole Western world and that it is opposed to an introverted attitude type which covers all kinds of Eastern religions was based on a stereotyped view of both the Eastern world and the Western world. Because of this stereotyped view of Eastern religions, Jung discouraged Europeans from practising Eastern meditation. Coward (1985) states,

The impasse of East-West religious differences is based on the model of the total psyche balanced by unconscious and conscious attitudes and is further supported by Jung's idea of the natural development of religion. The real lesson to be learned from the contemporary encounter of world religions is that the total psyche possesses all capabilities and specifically an introverted tendency which has been neglected in the European and American developments in science.

(Coward, 1985: 88)

In his study of Eastern spiritual practices such as yoga and meditation, Jung did not recommend that Europeans inattentively imitate such practices. Jung's warning against the European's adoption of yoga and Buddhist meditation is based on his general view of cultural identity and differences between the Orient and Occident. Jung insisted that the Eastern mentality is fundamentally different from the Western one, because it is the product of a different history and culture. Due to these differences, Jung warns Westerners away from trying to practise Eastern forms of meditation, since he believed that Europeans lacked the cultural basis for practising Eastern disciplines (CW 11: 876). Thus Jung believes that Eastern religious ideas and

concepts in the East are unknowable to Westerners. Jung believed it would be a mistake to discard one's own history and simply to transplant ideas and practices from one tradition to another. Jung suggested, therefore, that the West must develop methods from its own history and culture.

Odajnyk asserts that Jung's warnings about the uncritical adaptation of Eastern spiritual thought and practices by Westerners appear at times overstated. He suspects that,

sometimes... the warnings were meant more for [Jung] himself than for anyone else, for he probably feared being intellectually and emotionally subsumed by the more evolved and sophisticated Eastern conceptions, which turned out to be so close to his own personal psychological experiences and discoveries.

(Odajnyk, 1993: 114)

Cleary argues it would be a useful warning not to encourage blind imitation of techniques, and not to be overtaken by the wrong motivations and attitudes. However he asserts, "it is not necessary to believe... that all Westerners will inevitably behave in this manner toward Eastern teachings" (Cleary, 1991: 135). Cleary points out that it would have been a stronger caution if Jung had been able to distinguish authentic spiritual practice from cultic behaviour, which inhibits the efficiency of spiritual practice. Today many Westerners have more opportunities to engage with Eastern teachings and with psychological studies of cultism than in Jung's days. There are probably as many Easterners as Westerners for whom the adaptation of yoga is inappropriate. But there are also Westerners no longer contained by Western religions. Cleary claims that if Eastern meditation is rightly understood and correctly practised, "it does not have the dangers Jung attributed to it because it does not submit to the fascination of what he referred to as unconscious contents of mind" (Cleary 1991: 142). Odajnyk argues, "Jung might have been surprised by the number of Westerners who have actually acculturated themselves to Hinduism and Buddhism and practise these religions not just in a superficial, imitative way" (Op. Cit. 115).

In his dialogue with oriental religion Jung's strong opinions demonstrate an awareness of its strangeness and alienness. As a result, in spite of all his enthusiasm, Jung kept his distance from Eastern thought. In his encounter with the Indian tradition, Jung was comfortable with its alien mentality and culture. Clarke argues, "A distinct feeling of ambivalence towards the East becomes noticeable, and his normal hermeneutical openness to the 'other' gives way at times to bafflement and to a tendency to retreat into his European enclave" (Clarke, 1994: 62). According to

Clarke, enclavism is the view that cultures, societies, and nations are relatively encapsulated entities with a specific identity of their own. If it is extreme, each culture is locked within its own conceptual boundaries, meanings cannot be conveyed from one to the other, and there is no possible communication between cultures (Clarke, 1994: 152). According to Gadamer's hermeneutics, our prejudices and prejudgements represent an essential component of all meaningful exchange. In Jung's case, however, Jung's sceptical attitude towards yoga and Buddhist meditation seems to suggest that Jung ties ideas so closely to his own cultural territory, and that he fails to allow the Eastern religious tradition to speak for itself. Thus Jung constantly warns Europeans not to imitate Eastern spiritual practice and claims that the Western men must build their own ground with their own methods. In his study of Eastern religion Jung frequently dismissed its cultural and traditional settings. Clarke asserts that, however, in Jung's own approach to the East it becomes an unreal object controlled and manipulated for his own purposes, an imagination which is effectively blind to the real East, deaf to its real voice (Clarke, 1994: 165).

It is noticeable, for example, that in his approach to the Tantric mandala Jung was mainly concerned with psychological utilisation of the mandala for the purpose of the treatment of his patients. The significance of the mandala for Jung is the self-healing aspect and the archetype of the self, which is an important concept of Analytical Psychology and represents the totality of the psyche between the conscious and the unconscious. By contrast, the Tantric Buddhist mandala is an object of meditation to transform one's ordinary perception into a pure perception of the Buddha-nature, and is used only for religious and ritual purposes under the strict guidance and instruction of a lama. The problem with Jung's method is that he fails to understand the significance of Tibetan Tantric mandalas within their own cultural context and thus they are moulded to fit into his own model of psychological development.

Chapter Five examined Jung's relation to Zen Buddhism. Despite all the disagreements between Jung's and the Buddhist position, which has been discussed thus far, in his understanding of Zen Buddhism Jung became closer to a Zen Buddhist standpoint. In his foreword to Suzuki's *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (1939), Jung wrote his view on the *satori* experience. Jung understood in the *satori* experience the ego becomes itself the object of an another subject, the self. This view is very close to Jung's idea of the individuation process in which there is a shift

of the centre of gravity from the ego to the self. Furthermore, Jung's claim of the objectification of the ego is similar to the concept of the path to emptiness, or Hakuin's concept of 'great death,' in which one has to objectify one's ego and to abandon any intentional standpoint at all and thus create empty consciousness. It is also noticeable that both Jung's individuation process and the path to the *satori* enlightenment are involved with personal transformation to a certain extent. For Jung the individuation process involves the development of personality through a realisation of our whole being, that is, both parts of the total psyche, conscious and unconscious, are linked together. In Zen Buddhism, the way to the *satori* enlightenment is seen as an experience of awakening of the True Self, and it is as if one has to cut his ordinary self away and be reborn as a new self in a different dimension.

Nevertheless, the goal of Zen Buddhism fundamentally differs from that of Jung's individuation process. In the individuation process one strives for a psychic wholeness, which Jung calls the self. In Zen enlightenment the student can experience the True Self, which is identical with one's own essential nature, in other words, it is called no mind, emptiness or *sunyata*. As has been discussed in Chapter Three, there is an ontological difference between the concept of *sunyata* in Zen Buddhism and Jung's understanding of it. Jung interpreted *sunyata* as the unconscious in terms of ontology, assuming that *sunyata* is a substance-like-thing. Zen Buddhist no-mind refers to the non-substantiality of the self and is fully awakened to itself. This sharply contrasts with Jung's concept of the self, which is an ontological concept, involving both the conscious and the unconscious, and thus is not fully known to the ego-consciousness, as it is partly unconscious.

Suffering was a central issue for Jung's psychological theory. Jung was attached to the Buddhist position concerning the notion of suffering. In some places, Jung's statements concerning the Buddhist concept of suffering seem to imply that he was in agreement with the Buddhist position in which one can transcend suffering. However, Jung also claims that one cannot get rid of suffering completely but "the only way to overcome it is to endure it" (Letters I: 236). It would seem, therefore, that there is an inconsistency in Jung's understanding of suffering: on the one hand, in his earlier quote, Jung showed his positive attitude towards the Buddhist treatment of the problem of suffering; on the other hand, he showed a negative attitude towards the Buddhist teaching of the termination of suffering and rejected its possibility. What

Jung emphasises here is that through therapeutic assistance, one can modify and transform his or her attitude towards the problem of suffering. It seems, therefore, that Analytical Psychology does not provide the method of the termination of suffering, but rather that of the transformation of suffering, namely, the way in which we see the suffering is transformed from the objective level to the subjective one. This does not seem to be so much different from what Zen Buddhism aims to offer regarding the notion of suffering.

## 6.2 Implications

This thesis has discussed Jung's hermeneutical engagement with Buddhism, particularly with the Tibetan and Zen Buddhist traditions. Jung's efforts to build a hermeneutical bridge with Buddhism revealed a number of limitations and problems. There is, however, something we can learn from Jung's engagement with Buddhism. Jung's own achievement lay in the fact that he seriously attempted to illustrate psychological discussions through a detailed comparison with religious and philosophical ideas of the East in his own creative manner. In his early career Jung was warned by Freud that if he pursued his comparative studies in occult spiritualism, mythology and world religions he was in danger of being dismissed as a mystic. However, Jung took up this challenge in moving outside the European tradition and publicly exploring Eastern ideas which were an important European interest at the time but also tended to be ignored in psychoanalytical circles. After the break with Freud, Jung needed to establish his own reputation as a psychologist, and he attempted to study Buddhism, Hinduism and Chinese philosophy scientifically and phenomenologically. J. Borelli argues that Jung, "wanted to be as scientific as possible and to maintain the respect of his colleagues" (Borelli, 1985: 82). Clarke argues that Jung's interest in the historical materials such as the wisdom of Oriental religion and philosophy was motivated by his concern for the present, that is, "the construction of a new sense of meaning, a new path of self-discovery, one compatible with a modern outlook" (Clarke, 1994: 180). For instance, in his study of *I Ching*, Jung attempted to link Chinese cosmological ideas with modern physics by means of the concept of synchronicity.

Jung should be regarded as a pioneer in the field of research addressing the relationship between psychology and Buddhism and his writings had a major impact on later studies of the various traditions of Buddhism and meditation in relation to

Western psychology and its therapeutic techniques. Jung's influence on later studies of the relationship between Buddhism and Western psychology seems to suggest that his engagement with Buddhism does create an opportunity to open up the dialogue between East and West. B. Ulanov asserts that, "Jung's explorations of Eastern thought and religion, strong, unquenchable, alternately sober and gleeful, have stirred responses almost as far-ranging and full of feeling as his psychological investigations" (Ulanov, 1992: 46). Jung is frequently referred to within religious and anthropological studies, even though his specific views and writings are not often examined in detail. Scholars who have engaged with Jung's ideas in this field in one way or another would include names such as Arnold Toynbee, Mary Douglas, Rodney Needham, Paul Tillich, R.C. Zaehner, Ninian Smart, Mircea Eliade, Joseph Campbell, and Alan Watts (Clarke, 1994: 182).

Despite his achievement, however, the major theme of this thesis is a critical assessment of Jung's engagement with Buddhist thought. The thesis has argued that, on balance, Jung's understanding of Buddhism was faulty and highly problematic. Namely, Jung's inconsistent position on science and metaphysics; his tendency to psychological reductionism; his selective reading of Buddhist texts; the problematic proposition of an introverted East and extraverted West; his blanket warning against the application of yoga and meditation by Westerners; his ambivalence towards Buddhist thought; and a failure to come to a mutual-understanding between his psychology and Zen Buddhism show that Jung at times misunderstood and misrepresented Eastern thought. Jung's method of understanding Buddhism displays elements of hermeneutics, as opposed to his claim that his approach is scientific and phenomenological. As I mentioned earlier, there is the issue about the inconsistency inherent in Jung's phenomenological approach. Jung, on the one hand, admits scepticism concerning Eastern metaphysical beliefs. However, on the other hand, Jung claims that these beliefs are 'really' psychological in nature and are regarded as the archetype. Thus Jung himself has a tendency to make metaphysical claims. The problem here is that Jung does not seem to acknowledge his metaphysical position and merely insists on being a scientist. As discussed in Chapter Two, Jung's usage of phenomenology lacks the essential phenomenological method, *epoché*. Therefore, Jung brought his own psychological assumptions into his interpretation of Buddhism, and failed to understand the significance of Buddhism within its own traditions.

These limitations and misuses of the phenomenological method may suggest that Jung should be characterised as a hermeneut, a thinker and an interpreter of the East.

In his study of Buddhism, Jung believed that he discovered a number of analogies between Buddhist thought and his psychological theory. The Buddhist ideas which Jung paid attention to became a confirmation in the formation of his Analytical Psychology. However, it is important to note that Jung's interpretation of Buddhism often represents a distorted view of Buddhism. A question that emerges at this point can be expressed as follows: Why is Jung's 'misinterpretation' of the Eastern religions an issue? Why does it matter that Jung interpreted Buddhism in terms of Analytical Psychology, given that he does not claim to be an Orientalist and constantly reaffirms his role as psychologist and healer of Western ills? To answer this, I will focus my attention on the issue of Jung's ambiguous relationship with the Orient: on the one hand, Jung demonstrates his sympathetic attitude towards Buddhist concepts; on the other hand, he provides us with a mis-representation of Buddhism.

In his psychological commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (1929), Jung confesses that, "we do not understand the utter unworldliness of a text like this [*the Secret of the Golden Flower*] – that actually we do not want to understand it" (CW 13: 6). Yet, Jung attempted to explore in what way Europeans are able to relate to such alien elements within themselves. Jung believes the Western psyche is different from the Eastern psyche because of a different history and tradition. "The spirit of the East has grown out of the yellow earth, and our spirit can, and should, grow out of our own earth" (CW 13: 73). Thus Jung claims, "denial of our historical foundations would be sheer folly," and, "only by standing firmly on our own soil can we assimilate the spirit of the East" (CW 13: 72). It has been discussed earlier that, in dealing with Oriental texts, Jung had no intention of understanding metaphysical concepts involved with these texts (CW 13: 73). For Jung, metaphysics is of no practical use and therefore in order to understand it we must do so only from a psychological perspective (CW 13: 74). Jung asserts, "my aim is simply to bring ideas which are alien to our way of thinking within reach of Western psychological experience" (CW 11: 788). Jung writes,

The purpose of my commentary is to attempt to build a bridge of psychological understanding between East and West... it seems to me important above all to emphasize the agreement between the psychic states and symbolisms of East and West. These analogies open a way to the inner chambers of the Eastern



mind, a way that does not require the sacrifice of our own nature and does not confront us with the threat of being torn from our roots.

(CW 13: 83)

It would seem, therefore, that it is not Jung's aim to introduce the teachings of the Eastern religions, but to interpret them within his own psychological thinking and use them as a 'confirmation' of his psychological theories. Jung employed the method of making analogies in his interpretation of Buddhism, which demonstrates a distinctive feature of the hermeneutical approach.<sup>1</sup> Jung amplified the meaning of *satori* in Zen Buddhism and equated it with the individuation process. The Buddha and the Tibetan Tantric mandala are both compared with Jung's concept of the archetype of the self. This seems to be a part of Jung's strategy to establish religion as a way of psychic healing for the West. In this way Buddhism seems to offer a confirmation for Jung's psychological theory. Jung says, "religions are systems of healing for psychic illness. This is especially true of the two greatest religions of humanity, Christianity and Buddhism" (CW 11: 531).

There is, however, certainly an issue concerning Jung's ambiguous and somewhat unclear attitude in this regard. Indeed, Jung sometimes speaks as if he has some kind of intellectual authority over Asian religions, that his psychological interpretation is the 'correct' one, and that religions are indeed nothing but systems of psychic healing. Jung states, "what is ordinarily called 'religion' is a substitute to such an amazing degree that I ask myself seriously whether this kind of 'religion,' which I prefer to call a creed, may not after all have an important function in human society" (CW 11: 75). Religion in Jung's sense plays an important role in the individuation process and thus there is a significant "relation between psychotherapy and religion in its practical aspects" (Letters II: 566). He provides us with an example of religion as a cure for neurosis.

As a neurosis starts from a fragmentary state of human consciousness, it can only be cured by an approximative totality of the human being. Religious ideas and convictions from the beginning of history had the aspect of the mental *pharmakon*. They represent the world of wholeness in which fragments can be gathered and put together again. Such a cure cannot be effected by pills and injections.

(Letters II: 625)

It must be stressed here that Jung seems to suggest to the reader that what Analytical Psychology is doing with Buddhism is in fact Buddhism in Western form. For

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter Two.

instance, Jung claims that the Buddha figure is the same as the archetype of the self, as it represents a psychic totality, i.e., uniting a symbol of conscious and unconscious (CW 9i: 248, 9ii: 304, 10: 779, Letters I: 66, Letters II: 84, 275, 267, and 305). Jung compared the Buddhist concept of the middle way with a function of mediation between the opposites: rational consciousness and irrational unconscious (CW 6: 326, and 11: 797). The teaching of the Buddha is likened to psychological transformation which occurs in the individuation process (CW 10: 1002-6). Furthermore, Jung equated the individuation process with Taoism and Zen Buddhism (CW 9i: 602, 9ii: 260, and 14: 771). Jung writes, “the phases and aspects of my patient’s inner process of development can therefore express themselves easily in the language of the I Ching, because it too is based on the psychology of the individuation process that forms one of the main interests of Taoism and of Zen Buddhism” (CW 9i: 602). Elsewhere Jung also claimed that the individuation process takes the form of “a *satori* experience in Zen (‘show me your original face’), or psychological process of development in which the original propensity to wholeness becomes a conscious happening” (CW 9ii: 260). Jung says, “the secret passion which keeps Zen and other spiritual techniques alive through the centuries is connected with an original experience of wholeness – perhaps the most important and unique of all spiritual experiences” (Letters II: 602). Jung believes that the similarity between individuation and the *satori* lays in the fact that both share the same goal towards which “the method of psychic ‘healing’ – i.e., ‘making whole’ is striving” (CW 11: 905). It seems, therefore, that through making these analogies Buddhism became a confirmation for Jung’s Analytical Psychology.

The question can be put as follows: is Analytical Psychology really the same as Buddhism in Western form as Jung claimed? The question is crucial in this thesis. This thesis has extensively examined and compared Buddhist thought and Jung’s understanding of it. It reveals that there is a chasm between Jung and Buddhism, since Jung unfortunately failed to understand Buddhist concepts within the traditional and cultural context, and thus provided a misrepresentation of Buddhism. This could be called an ‘exploitation’ and ‘appropriation’ of Buddhist thought. Gomez argues, “The Asian practice is reconceived and appropriated through the lens of a reconception and appropriation of Jungian ideas” (Gomez, 1995: 223). Jung’s privileged way of looking at Eastern religions and his appropriation of them would eventually be adopted by many of his followers seeking a way of constructing a

spiritual crisis of the West from Eastern religions.<sup>2</sup> For example, Radmia Moacanin's *Jung's Psychology and Tibetan Buddhism: Western and Eastern Paths to the Heart* (1986) is an example of the utilisation of Jung's supposed authority and questionable interpretation of Tibetan Buddhism. She not only applies Jung's view to the interpretation of Oriental materials but also speaks as if she had an authoritative voice regarding Tibetan Buddhism. Moacanin asserts,

Tibetan Buddhists *urge* Westerners not to abandon the values of their own culture. In fact a proper understanding of one's own culture and being deeply rooted in it – *they would say* - is a prerequisite for venturing into and benefiting from practices of a foreign tradition. There is also always the danger of grasping the literal rather than the intrinsic meaning of symbols and rituals, and thereby going astray and getting lost in one's practices.

(Moacanin cited by Gomez, 1995: 224)

She suggest that the solution for the Western psychic crisis in the twentieth century is some kind of self-liberation. She wrote,

*According to Jung* – and this is the same idea that Tibetan Buddhists *are proposing* - the change must begin with individuals, in their own psyche, their greatest instrument. To Jung that implies self-knowledge, knowing the dark side of the psyche, the unconscious as well as its conscious aspects, and to reconcile the polarities... 'Action comes from right thinking, and... there is no cure and no improving of the world that does not begin with the individual himself,' *says Jung*. The right action and right thinking, is that not what Buddha *taught* 2500 years ago?

(Moacanin cited by Gomez, 1995: 224-5)

Gomez argues that Moacanin's statements above "advocate a particular interpretation of Jung as a normative standard for Buddhist orthodoxy and orthopraxis" (Gomez, 1995: 225). Moacanin's example suggests that Jung's Analytical Psychology provides the authority for appropriating Eastern Asian religious ideas. This may be justified from a hermeneutical point of view, namely, a text is no longer read in its contexts and its interpretation continuously opens up. Gadarmarian methodology would suggest that interpretations of Buddhist texts and traditions are never-ended. Jung himself adopted a relativistic position, in which the hermeneutical circle can never be closed, and thus there is no absolute, single correct interpretation of the text. Clarke argues, however, "the trouble here is that the drawing of analogies is a notoriously inexact science which, at its worst, is capable of delivering any desired

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<sup>2</sup> Odajnik (1993) also follows Jung's interpretation of Asian religions in relation to meditation and active imagination.

conclusion whatsoever... anything can be compared with anything, and analogies can be drawn almost at will between any pair of terms” (Clarke, 1994: 168).

A question that emerges is whether there is a ‘correct’ interpretation of Buddhism which Jung failed to grasp but which we now have. Once again, it is important to focus on the Buddhist concept of *sunyata*, which Jung often discussed in his psychological writings, in order to show there is a correct interpretation of *sunyata* in the Buddhist community. Jung’s ontological and annihilistic account of *sunyata* which allowed him to interpret the unconscious within the framework of his idea of psychic structure sharply contrasts with *sunyata* in the Buddhist perspective which is not a substance-like-thing or nothingness, but refers to reality as incapable of ultimately being given a clear detail of its concept. T.R.V. Murti (1987) clarifies the definition of *sunyata* from the perspective of the Madhyamika philosophy, and asserts, “Correctly understood, Sunyata is not annihilation, but the negation of negation; it is the conscious correction of an initial unconscious falsification of the real” (Murti, 1998: 271). Murti also argues that *sunyata* is “the contention of the Madhyamikas that the final release is possible only through Sunyata” (Murti, 1998: 269). In other words, to become aware of one’s essential emptiness (*sunyata*) is to achieve liberation (*nirvana*) from the cycle of rebirth (*samsara*). The definition of *sunyata* in the Buddhist position is not the same as Jung’s ontological interpretation of *sunyata* as void or nothingness, in which there is no ego as a cognising subject, there is no consciousness, and thus it is merely the unconscious. It needs to be noted, therefore, that Jung’s hermeneutical understanding of Buddhism ignored the crucial issue that the ‘right’ understanding is pivotal in any Buddhist traditions.

In conclusion, having critically examined Jung’s relation to Buddhism, this thesis attempted to demonstrate that Jung’s hermeneutical approach has a number of limitations and shortcomings for his understanding of Buddhism. It also revealed that there is a chasm between the standpoint of Jung’s Analytical Psychology and that of the Buddhist religious traditions. From the perspective of a theory of phenomenology of religion, Jung failed to realise the significance of Buddhist teachings within their own contexts. Jung failed to understand that the ‘right’ understanding of Buddhist teachings and meditation practice is essential for the Buddhist community, the practitioner must be guided under the strict instruction of a religious guru, lama or roshi, who helps to prevent him/her from misunderstanding. Jung dismissed the metaphysical aspect of Buddhist teachings and brought his own psychological

assumptions into his account of the phenomenal experience of Buddhists. Furthermore, because of the influence of Orientalist bias and a colonial frame of mind, Jung provided a distorted view of Buddhist thought. It is a very important issue in this thesis, therefore, to understand Jung's 'misinterpretation' of Buddhism, because many Jungians blindly followed his understanding of Buddhism without critical reflection, not being aware of the crucial fact that Jung's use of certain Buddhist concepts sharply contrasts with their vernacular Buddhist usage. Consequently they may be misled by his distorted view of Buddhism.

## Appendix

Figure 3.1  
Schumann, 1973: 155

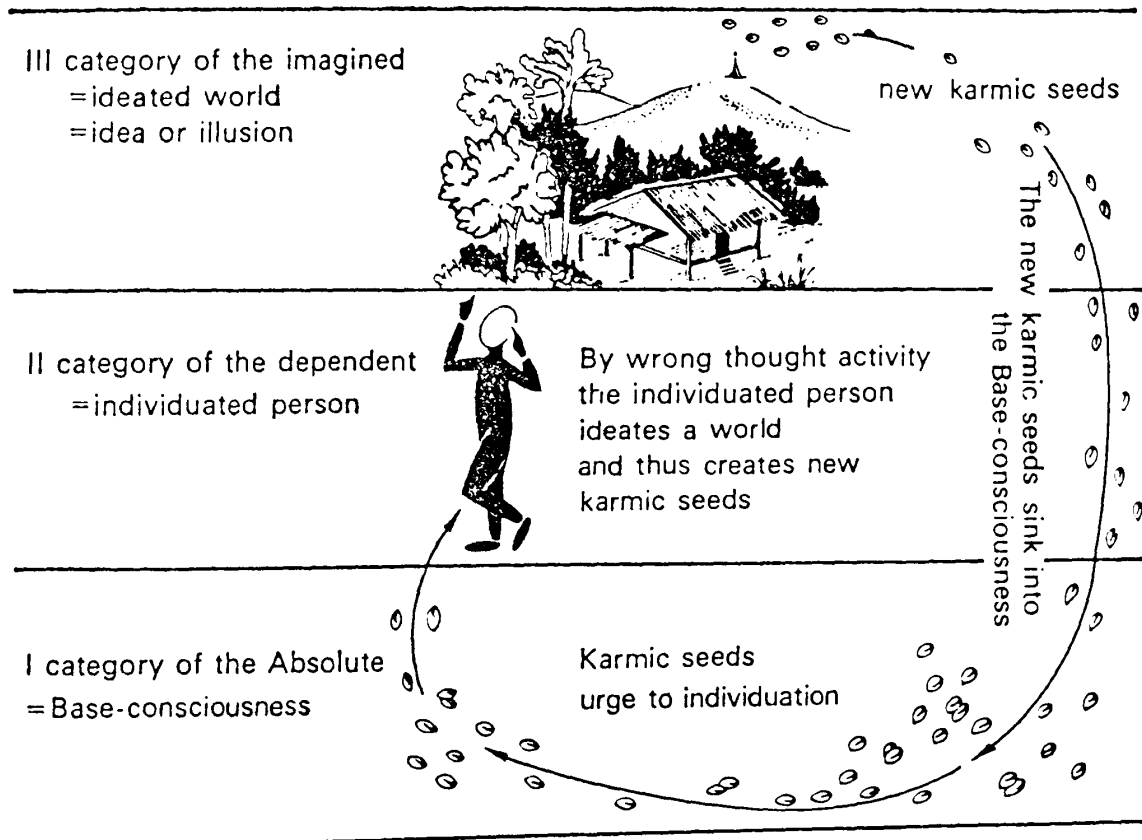


Table 3.1  
States developed on the basis of Calm meditation  
Harvey, 1990: 251

<i>States arising from Calm alone</i>		<i>When combined with Insight</i>
THE FORMLESS REALM		
<i>States present</i> : one-pointedness, equanimity		
8	The sphere of neither-cognition-nor-non-cognition	→→→ ATTAINMENT OF CESSATION
7	The sphere of nothingness	
6	The sphere of infinite consciousness	
5	The sphere of infinite space	
THE REALM OF PURE FORM		
	<i>States present</i>	
4	Fourth <i>jhāna</i> — One-pointedness equanimity	→→→ THE SIX HIGHER KNOWLEDGES Psychic powers Clairaudience Mind-reading Memory of previous lives Clairvoyance <i>Nibbāna</i>
3	Third <i>jhāna</i> — One-pointedness, happiness, equanimity	
2	Second <i>jhāna</i> — One-pointedness, happiness, joy	
1	First <i>jhāna</i> — One-pointedness, happiness, joy, examination, applied thought	
THE SENSE-DESIRE REALM		
iii	Access concentration, based on 'counterpart sign'.	
ii	Work on 'acquired sign', so as to suspend the hindrances.	
i	Work on 'preliminary sign' (e.g. the breath or a <i>kasiṇa-maṇḍala</i> )	

Figure 4.1  
Vairocanabhisambodhi-mandala  
Tanaka, 1996: i





Figure 4.2  
Vajradhatu-mandala  
Tanaka, 1992: 85



Figure 4.3  
 Kalacakra-mandala  
 Tanaka, 1992: 88

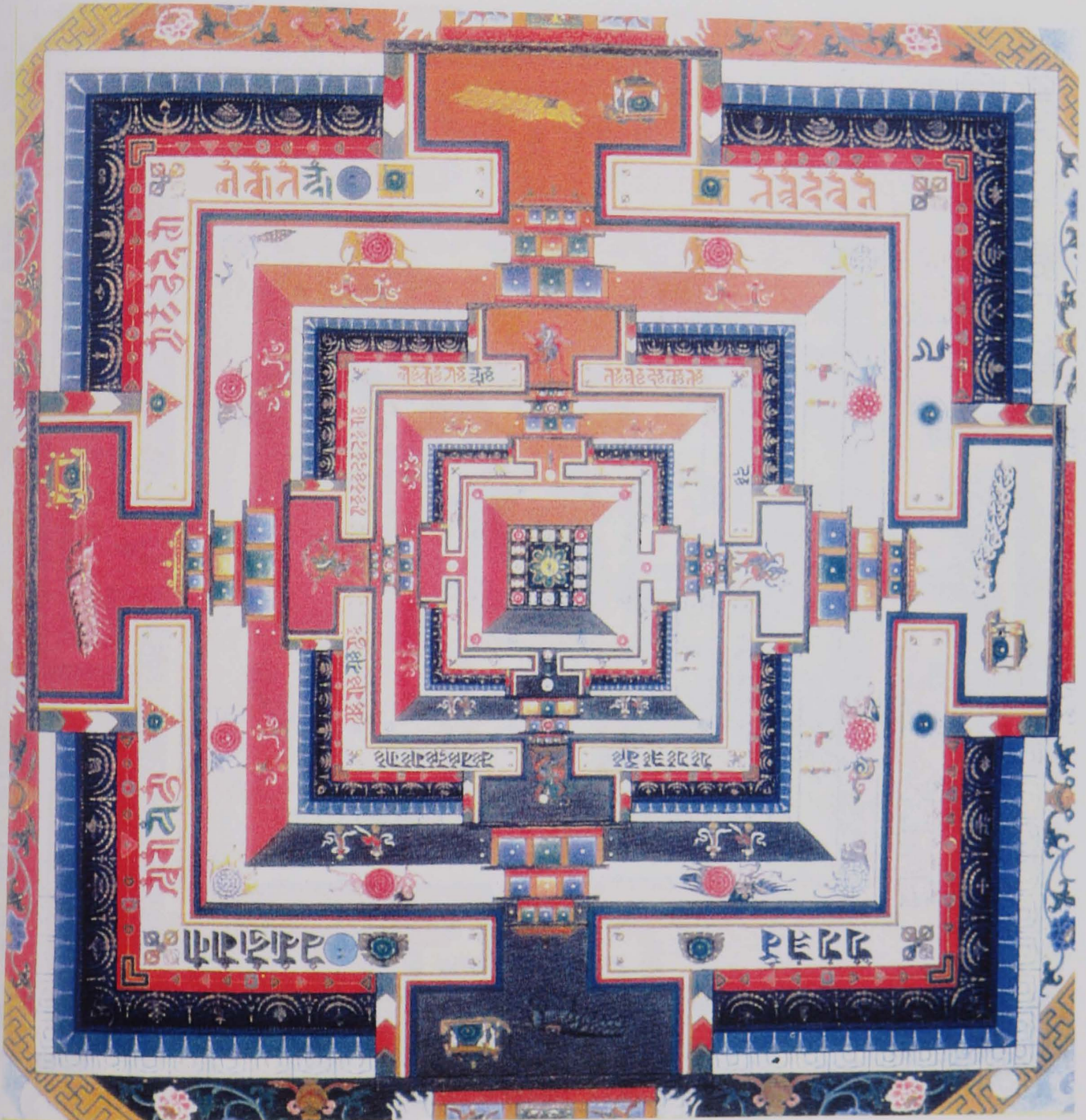


Figure 4.4  
Tibetan Mandala drawn by sand  
Tanaka, 1992: 81



Figure 4.5  
The Tibetan Wheel of Life  
Blofeld, 1970: 121



Figure 4.6  
Tibetan *mandala* discussed by Jung  
CW 9i: fig. 1 and CW 12: p. 100

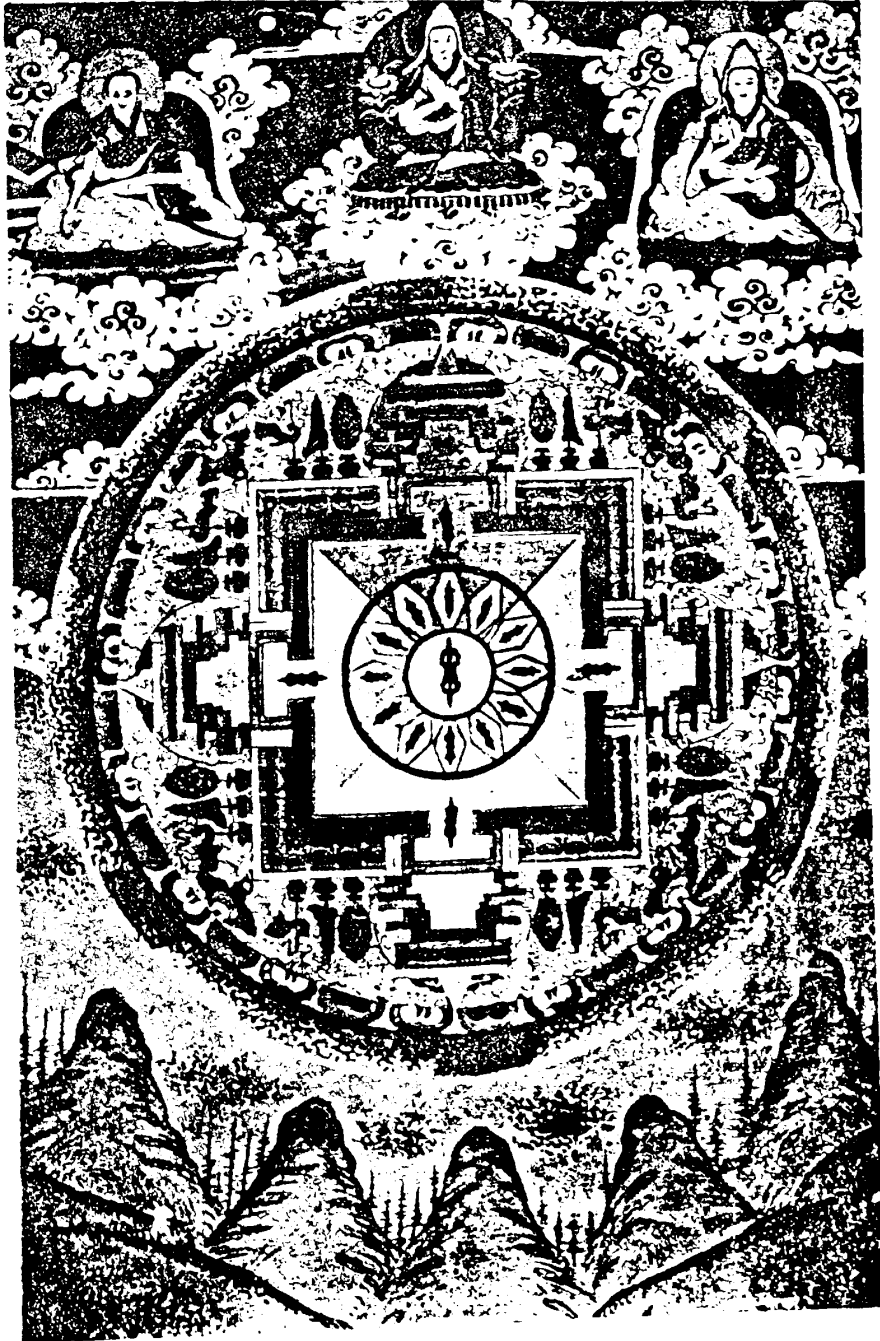


Figure 4.7  
Tibetan World Wheel (*sidpe-korlo*)  
CW 9i: fig. 3 and CW 12: p. 97



Figure 4.8  
'Mandala of a Modern Man' painted by Jung in 1916  
CW 9i: frontispiece

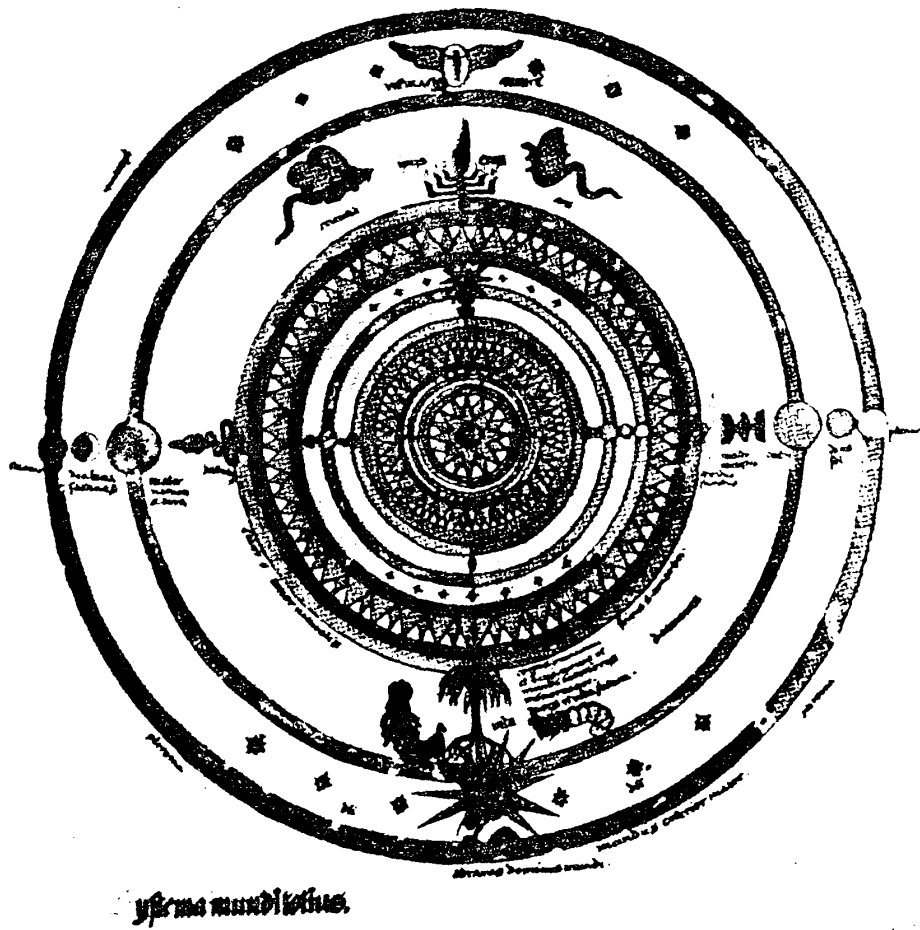


Figure 4.9  
Mandala painted by Jung  
CW 9i: fig. 6, CW 13: A6, and MDR: p. 224

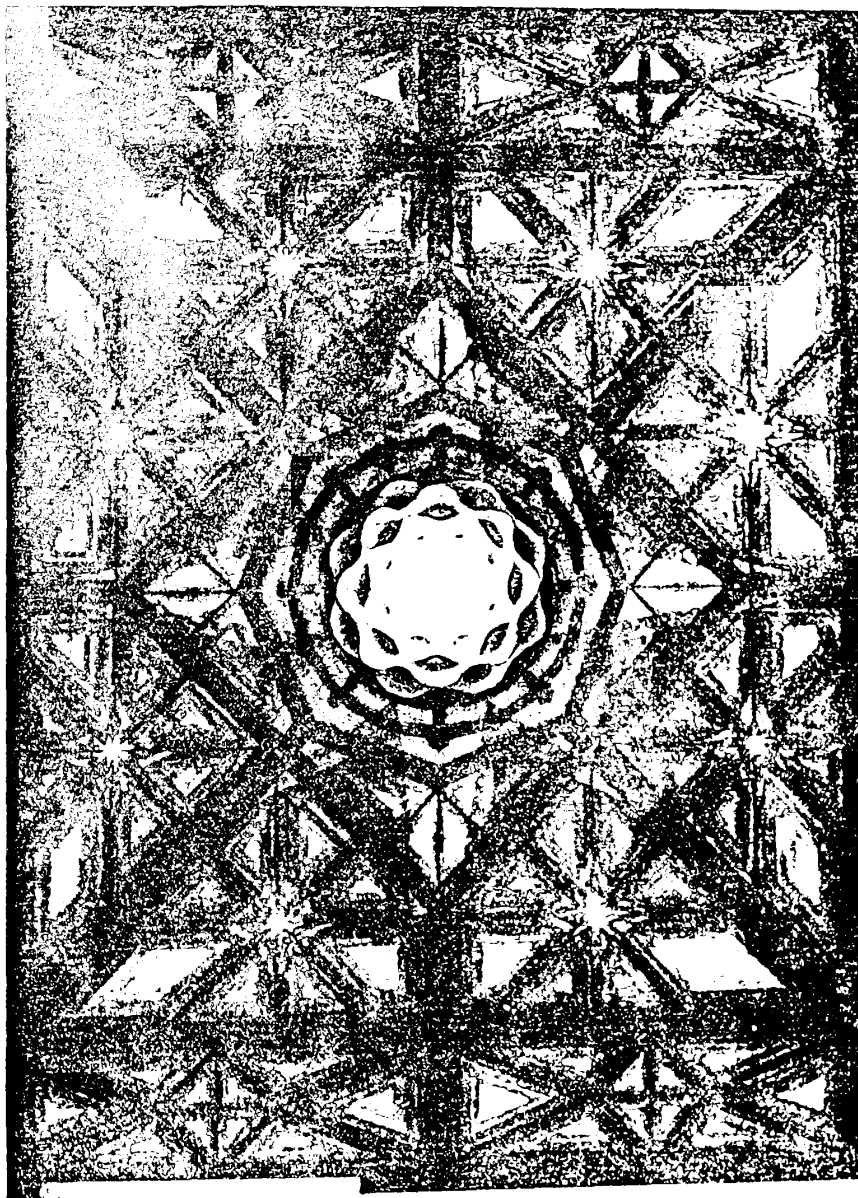




Figure 4.10  
Mandala painted by Jung  
CW 9i: fig. 36, CW 13 A10



Figure 4.11  
Mandala painted by Jung  
CW 9i: fig. 28, and CW 13: A6

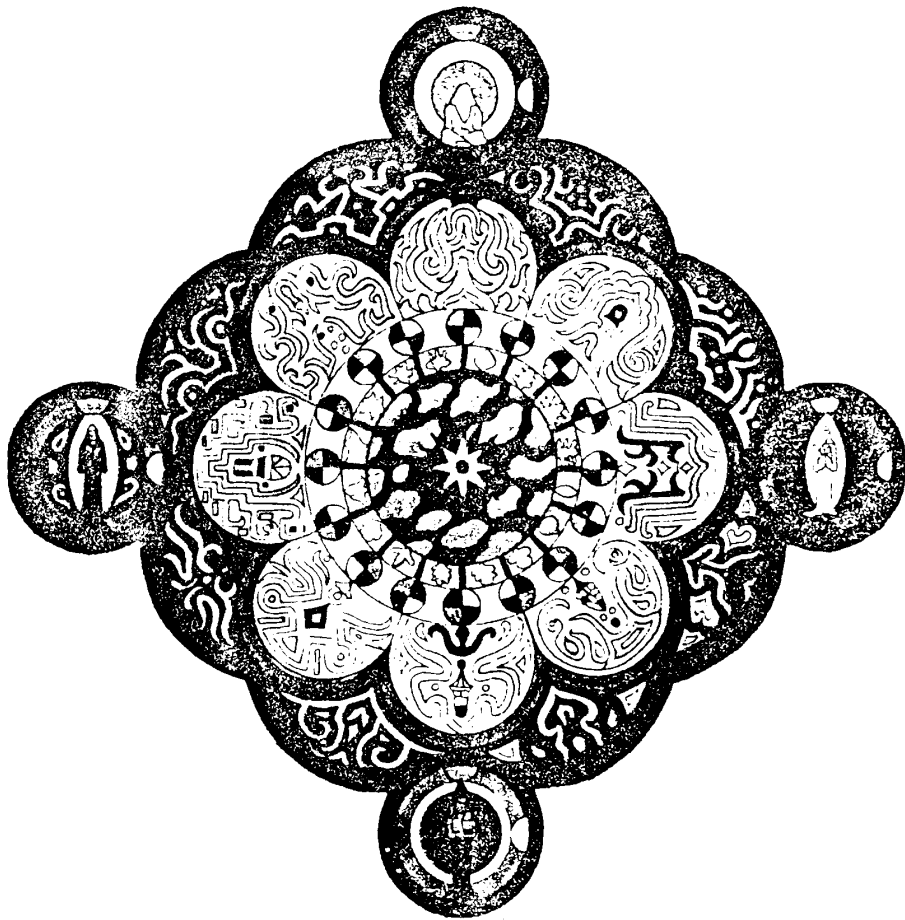


Figure 4.12  
Mandala painted by Jung  
CW : 9i: fig. 29

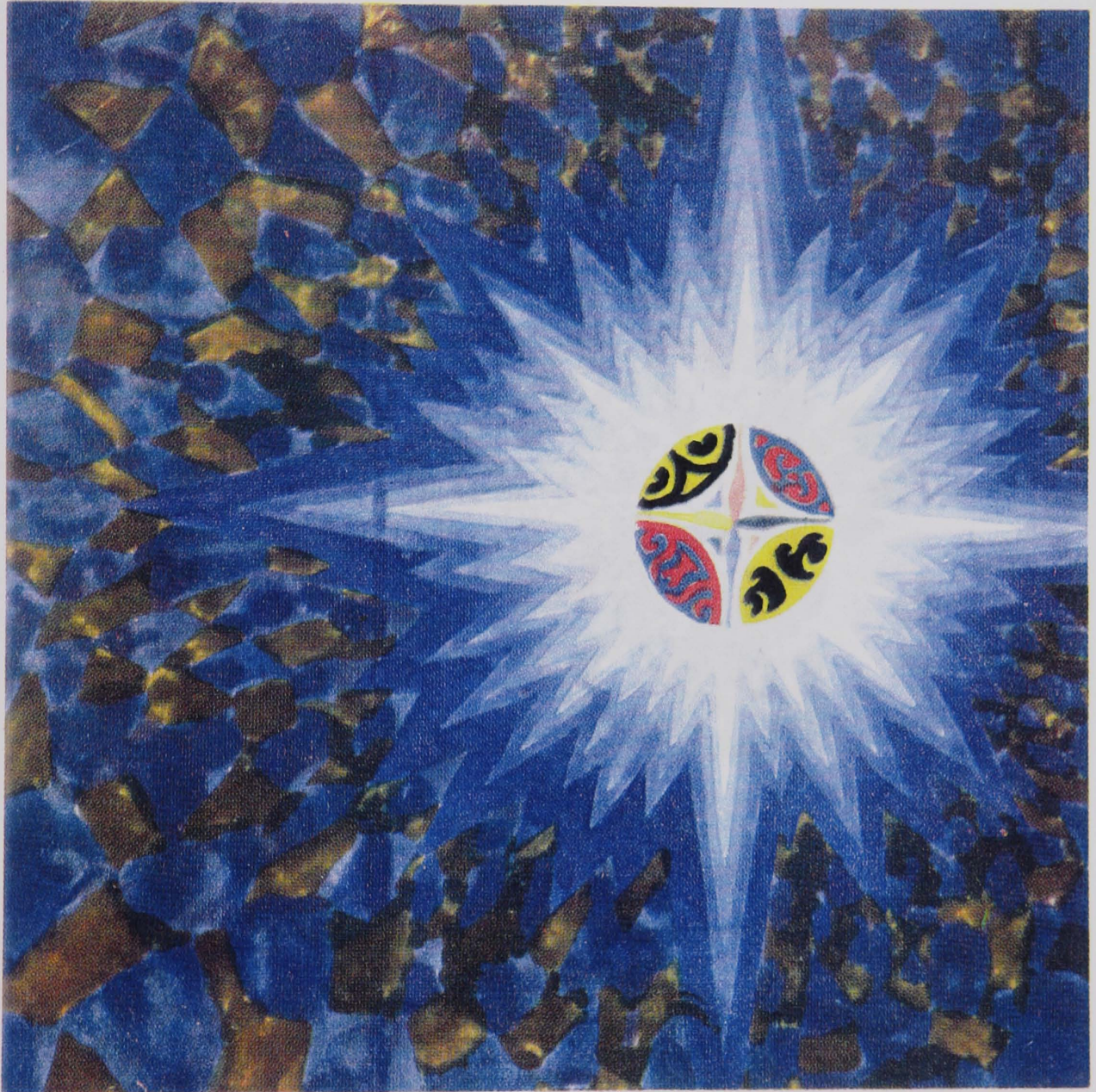


Figure 4.13  
Mandala painted by Jung's patient  
CW 9i: fig. 9, and CW 13: A1



Figure 4.14  
Mandala painted by Jung's patient  
CW 9i: fig. 25 and CW 13: A5



Figure 4.15  
Mandala painted by Jung's patient  
CW 9i: fig. 38 and CW 13: A7

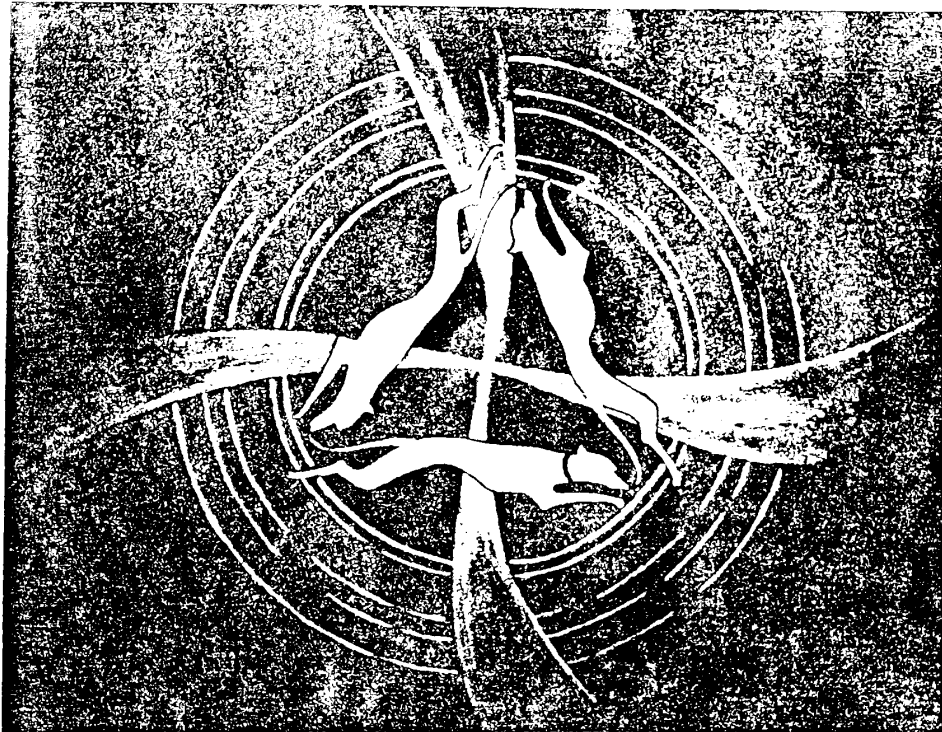


Figure 4.16  
Mandala painted by Jung's patient  
CW 9i: fig. 37 and CW 13: A8



Figure 4.17  
Mandala painted by Jung's patient  
CW 9i: fig. 26 and CW 13: A9

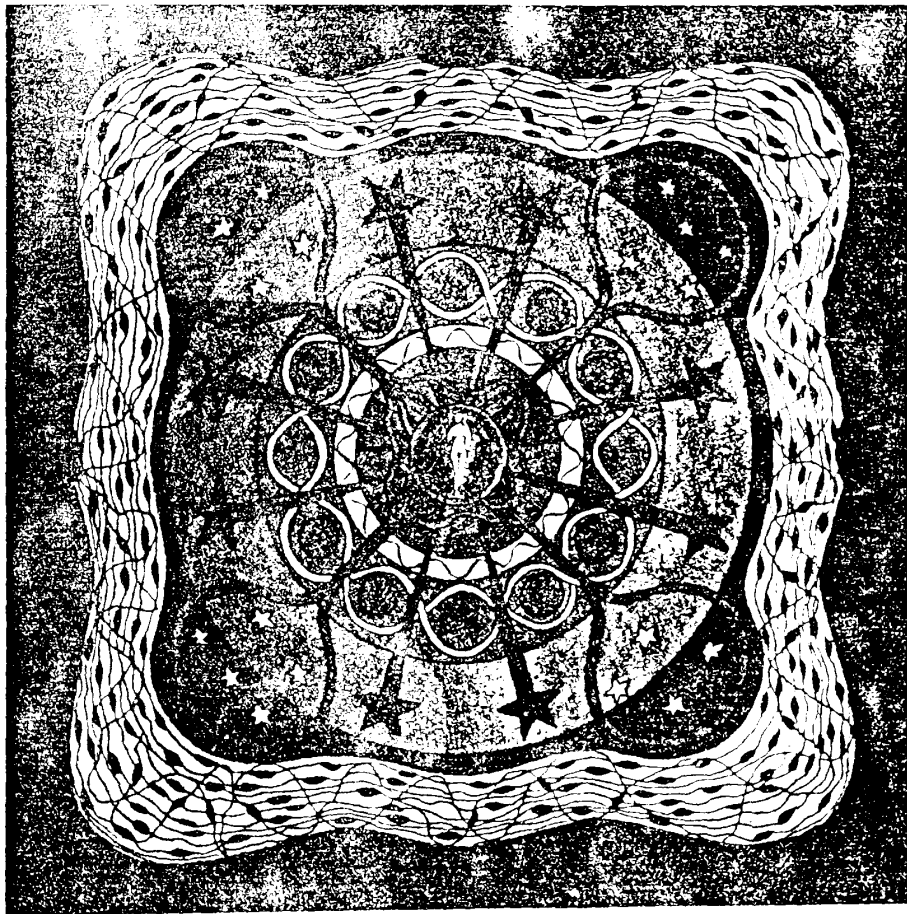




Diagram 4.1

The lotus or *mandala* of the five *Dhyani*-Buddhas with their female aspects, qualities and symbols, according to the teachings of the *Bardo Thödol*

Govinda, 1990: 121

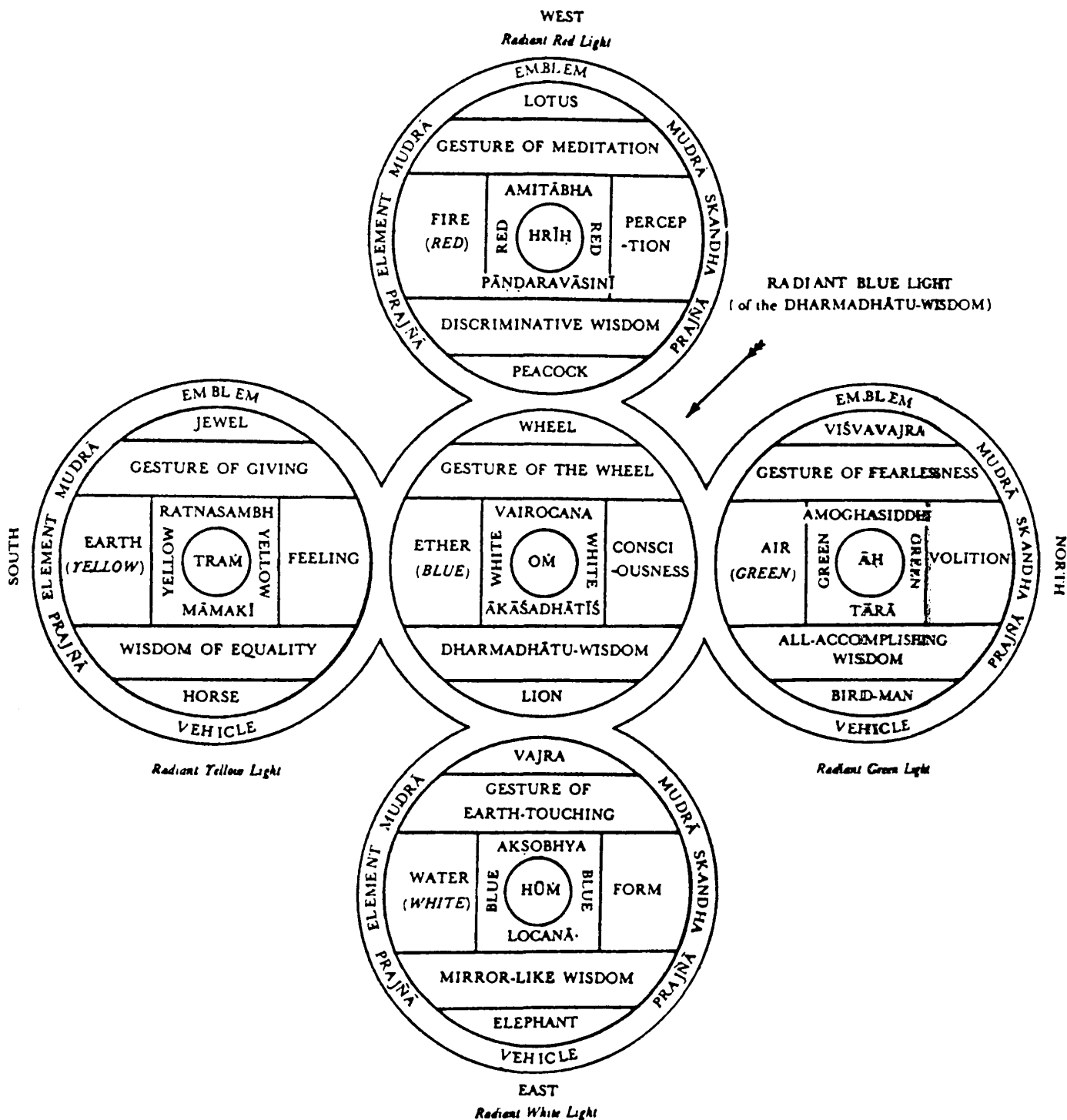
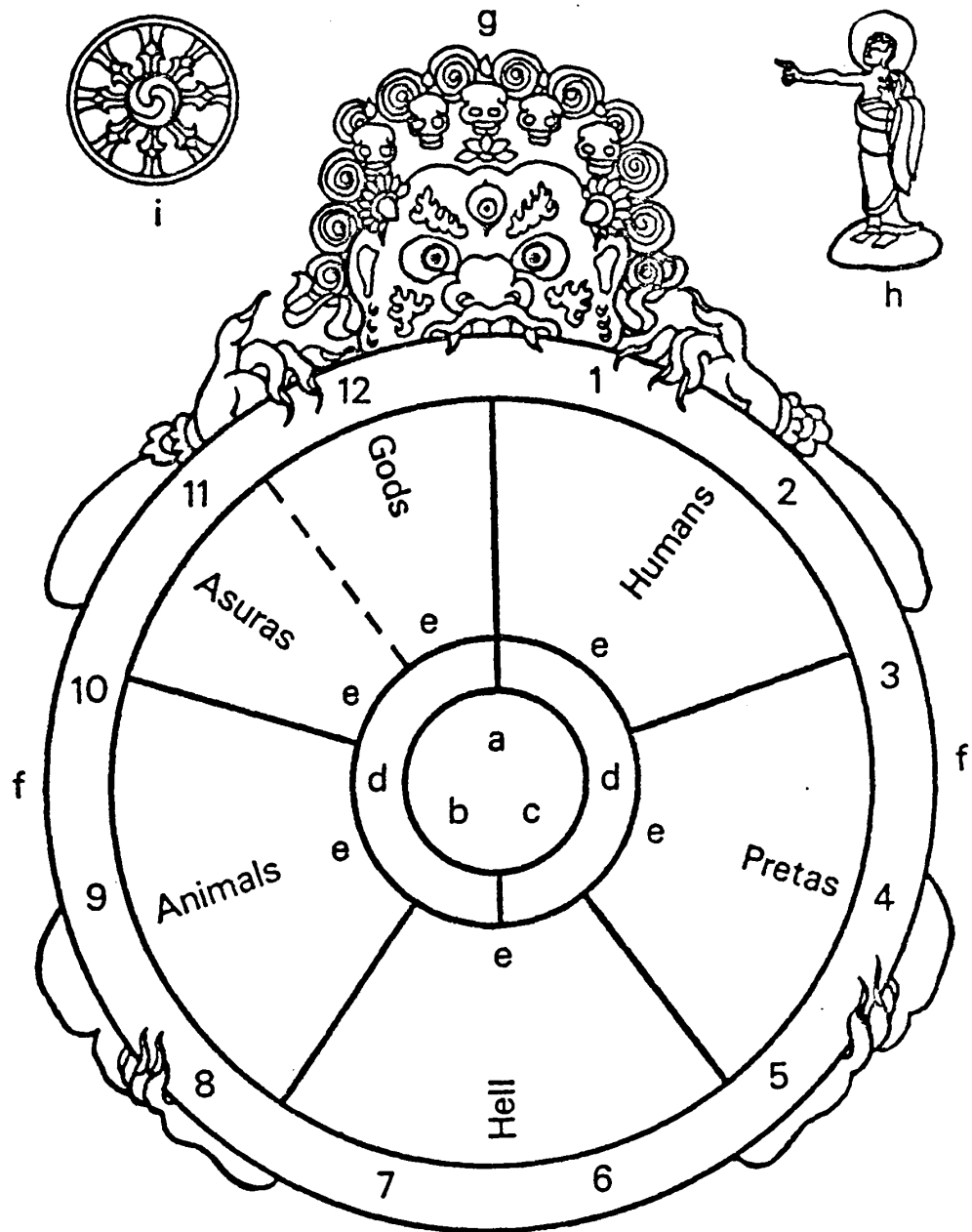


Diagram 4.2  
Key to the symbolism of the Wheel of Life  
Blofeld, 1970: 120



Figures 5.1  
Looking for the Cow  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Kaku-an Shien (Ch. Kuo-an)  
(D.T. Suzuki, 1926: Plate I)



Figures 5.2  
Seeing the Traces of the Cow  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Kaku-an Shien (Ch. Kuo-an)  
(D.T. Suzuki, 1926: Plate II)



Figures 5.3  
Seeing the Cow  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Kaku-an Shien (Ch. Kuo-an)  
(D.T. Suzuki, 1926: Plate III)



Figures 5.4  
Catching the Cow  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Kaku-an Shien (Ch. Kuo-an)  
(D.T. Suzuki, 1926: Plate IV)



Figures 5.5  
Herding the Cow  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Kaku-an Shien (Ch. Kuo-an)  
(D.T. Suzuki, 1926: Plate V)



Figures 5.6  
Coming Home on the Cow's Back  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Kaku-an Shien (Ch. Kuo-an)  
(D.T. Suzuki, 1926: Plate VI)

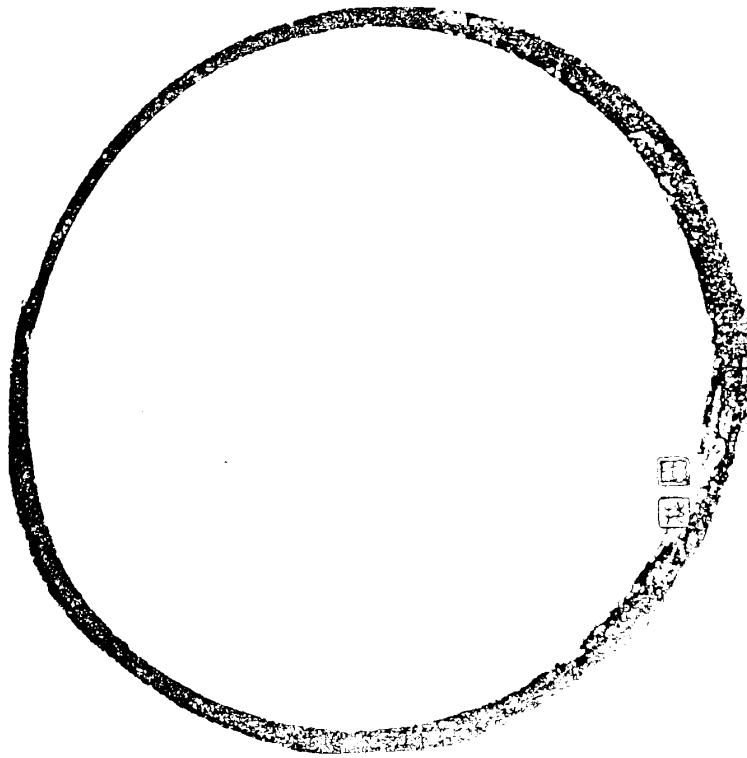




Figures 5.7  
The Cow Forgotten, Leaving the Man Alone  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Kaku-an Shien (Ch. Kuo-an)  
(D.T. Suzuki, 1926: Plate VII)



Figures 5.8  
The Cow and the Man Both Gone Out of Sight  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Kaku-an Shien (Ch. Kuo-an)  
(D.T. Suzuki, 1926: Plate VIII)



Figures 5.9  
Returning to the Origin, Back to the Source  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Kaku-an Shien (Ch. Kuo-an)  
(D.T. Suzuki, 1926: Plate IX)



Figures 5.10  
Entering the City with Bliss-bestowing Hands  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Kaku-an Shien (Ch. Kuo-an)  
(D.T. Suzuki, 1926: Plate X)



Figures 5.11  
Undisciplined  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Seikyo (Ch. Pu-ming)  
(Spiegelman and Miyuki, 1985: 104)



Figures 5.12  
Discipline Begun  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Seikyo (Ch. Pu-ming)  
(Spiegelman and Miyuki, 1985: 104)



## Figures 5.13

## In Harness

The ten ox-herding pictures by Seikyo (Ch. Pu-ming)  
(Spiegelman and Miyuki, 1985: 105)



Figures 5.14  
Faced Round  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Seikyo (Ch. Pu-ming)  
(Spiegelman and Miyuki, 1985: 105)





Figures 5.15  
Tamed  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Seikyo (Ch. Pu-ming)  
(Spiegelman and Miyuki, 1985: 106)



Figures 5.16  
Unimpeded  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Seikyo (Ch. Pu-ming)  
(Spiegelman and Miyuki, 1985: 106)



Figures 5.17  
Laissez Faire  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Seikyo (Ch. Pu-ming)  
(Spiegelman and Miyuki, 1985: 107)



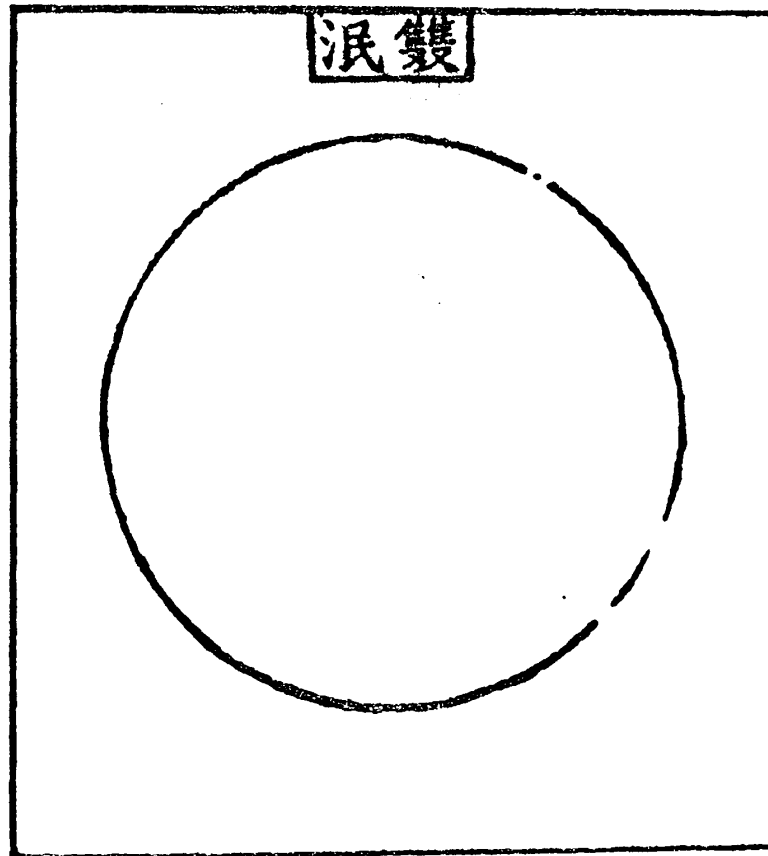
Figures 5.18  
All Forgotten  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Seikyo (Ch. Pu-ming)  
(Spiegelman and Miyuki, 1985: 107)



Figures 5.19  
The Solitary Moon  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Seikyo (Ch. Pu-ming)  
(Spiegelman and Miyuki, 1985: 108)



Figures 5.20  
Both Vanished  
The ten ox-herding pictures by Seikyo (Ch. Pu-ming)  
(Spiegelman and Miyuki, 1985: 108)



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