

Jung and *The Secret of The Golden Flower*

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I. INTRODUCTION

In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung confesses that *The Secret of the Golden Flower* is decisive in his study of the unconscious.¹⁾ But, contrary to Jung's confession, the critical role of *The Golden Flower* in the process of Jung's psychological investigation has been ignored among Jungian scholars.²⁾ Only a handful of them have paid limited attention to *The Golden Flower*. Most biographers mention only a few lines, or simply cite a sentence from Jung's works about the book.³⁾

The Golden Flower made Jung turned his study around toward new direction.⁴⁾ In his maturity, Vincent Brome says, "Jung attempts a

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(The following abbreviations are in use in this paper. **LI**: C. G. Jung, *Letters 1: 1906-1950* **L2**: C. G. Jung, *Letters 2: 1951-1961* **ME**: C. G. Jung, "In Memory of Richard Wilhelm," *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, 138-49; **MD**: C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* **SG**: Richard Wilhelm, trans. *The Secret of the Golden Flower*.)

1) See MD, 197.

2) From now on, *The Golden Flower* stands for the full name of *The Secret of the Golden Flower*.

3) For instance, see Gerhard Wehr, *Jung: A Biography*, 256.

4) As an example, see L2, 427. In his letter to *Cottie A. Burland* (7, April 1958), Jung

marriage of Eastern and Western philosophy. Jung's sources began in 1914 when he discovered Gnosticism and claimed that the Gnostics were pioneers in the exploration of the unconscious."⁵) But, his study on Gnosticism fell into a labyrinth. Jung could not clarify his concept of the unconscious without escaping from the maze. It was 1929. Jung met *The Golden Flower*, and it gave him a light to get out of difficulties. Jung wrote to Pastor Hans Wegmann that "I am glad you have taken up *The Secret of the Golden Flower* again. The East often knows the answer to questions which appear insoluble to us Christians."⁶) In fact, *The Golden Flower* solves Jung's insoluble problem. In *The Golden Flower*, Jung discovered "identities between Chinese symbols and those thrown up in his patients' dreams and fantasies, finally developing a link with Christian and alchemical symbols."⁷)

This article attempts to get an overall understanding of the relation between Jung and *The Golden Flower*. This theme could not be performed without considering Richard Wilhelm's contribution. Therefore, at first, the relationship between Jung and Richard Wilhelm will be dealt with. Secondly, general understanding of *The Golden Flower* will be presented. Thirdly, the influence of *The Golden Flower* upon

says that "The underlying scheme, the psychological equation of primordial dynamics with gods and their mythology, time and space, is a psychological problem of the first order. I have tried to deal with it many a time and particularly in my book *Aion*. The first steps in this direction you will find in *The Secret of the Golden Flower*. It is a difficult subject, I admit, but it is the basic phenomenon in many religions."

5) Vincent Brome, *Jung*, 288. Also, see *Ibid.*, 287. "Over the years Jung's interests gradually transferred from psychiatry through psychoanalysis to analytical psychology, from the theory of archetypes to the psychology of religions motifs and Eastern-Western philosophy."

6) L2, 340.

7) Vincent Brome, *Jung*, 289.

Jung's psychology will be reviewed. Fourthly, a critique of the Jung's commentary will be attempted. Finally, Jung's understanding of the I Ching will be evaluated, in order to make Jung's perspective on *The Golden Flower* clear.

II. JUNG AND RICHARD WILHELM

It was Richard Wilhelm who introduced *The Secret of the Golden Flower* to Jung in 1928.⁸⁾ According to Jung's memory, he met Wilhelm in the early twenties.⁹⁾ It was a destined encounter not only between a physician and a Sinologue, but also "two piers which support the bridge between East and West, in a field of humanity which begins beyond academic boundary posts."¹⁰⁾ After their meeting, they remained close friends with a special kind of understanding for many years.¹¹⁾ For Jung, Wilhelm comes to represent the East, especially China, as much as Zimmer represents India.¹²⁾ Jung calls Wilhelm "the messenger from China,"¹³⁾ and "the peerless teacher."¹⁴⁾

Wilhelm went to China as a Christian missionary, and stayed there

8) MD, 197; 204.

9) MD, 373. According to David Rosen, "Jung first met Richard Wilhelm in 1922 at the School of Wisdom in Darmstadt, Germany." See David Rosen, *The Tao of Jung*, 97.

10) See L1, 66. Letter to *Richard Wilhelm* (25, May 1929). And, ME, 138.

11) Vincent Brome, *Jung*, 193. In his letter to *Richard Wilhelm* (26, April 1929), Jung says, "You are too important to our Western world. I must keep on telling you this. You mustn't melt away or otherwise disappear, or get ill, but wicked desires should pin you to the earth so your work can go on." See L1, 63.

12) Refer to letter to *Henri Flournoy* (29, March 1949) in L1, 525. Also, see Gerhard Wehr, *Jung: A Biography*, 198.

13) ME, 147.

14) Cited from Paul J. Stern, C. G. *Jung: The Haunted Prophet*, 200.

for twenty-five years.¹⁵⁾ While serving for his duties, he devoted himself to the study of the Chinese language at first.¹⁶⁾ Wilhelm describes what he learned and experienced in China in the book, *The Soul of China*. At first, Wilhelm recognized that “the East is not a uniform entity,”¹⁷⁾ and was fascinated with Chinese culture. For Wilhelm, Chinese culture reveals “an ideal essentially bent upon harmony and closely tied to reasonableness in the organization of the cosmos and society.”¹⁸⁾ Wilhelm came to be an indicator on the European attitude towards Chinese culture. He points out that “the West came to China in a particularly unsympathetic form, which was bound to cause revolt: it came with mere violence and a desire for exploitation without any moral superiority or beauty.”¹⁹⁾ Wilhelm had a premonition of the decline of supremacy of Europe in terms of “the cultural labour of humanity.”²⁰⁾ As a conclusion, Wilhelm envisioned a harmonious co-existence of East and West:

In the process of severing itself from the ties of time and space, humanity needs two things: the profound penetration into own subconsciousness until from those depths upwards, the road to all that is vital, which is experienced intuitively in a mystic and unified vision, has become liberated. This is the possession of the East. On the other hand, it needs the ultimate intensification of the autonomous individual until it has acquired the power to match the whole pressure of the external world. This is the possession of the West. Upon this ground, East and West meet as mutually indispensable brothers.²¹⁾

15) Refer to his “Preface” of the book, *The Soul of China*.

16) Refer to Richard Wilhelm, *The Soul of China*, 13.

17) *Ibid.*, 353.

18) *Ibid.*, 360.

19) *Ibid.*, 365.

20) *Ibid.*, 370.

Jung undergirds Wilhelm's position. After talking a great deal about Chinese philosophy and religion with Wilhelm, Jung evaluates Wilhelm's work as a bridge between East and West.²²⁾ Through Wilhelm, Jung discovered that, in the Chinese philosophical tradition, there are parallels with the results of his investigations of the unconscious. At this point, Jung claims that "What he told me clarified some of the most difficult problems that the European unconscious had posed for me."²³⁾

Jung admires Wilhelm's feminine mind. Frank Mclynn explains that "Wilhelm was for Jung the epitome of the feminine intellect."²⁴⁾ In his memorial tribute, Jung, indeed, lamented that Wilhelm bears "the stamp of the feminine; to it is given a receptive and fruitful womb which can reshape what is strange into a familiar form. Wilhelm possessed in the highest degree the rare charisma of spiritual motherhood."²⁵⁾ Wilhelm's fatal illness was caused by his feminine sensitivity, and Jung was touched with it. At this point, Jung blamed the European attitude against Wilhelm and his work, on the one hand,²⁶⁾ and, Jung points out Wilhelm's dangerous process of "a reassimilation to the West," on the other hand. Jung claims that, upon his arrival in Europe, Wilhelm seemed to feel the pressure of the European spirit. Christian views and forms of thought moved steadily into the foreground."²⁷⁾

21) *Ibid.*, 373.

22) Refer to ME, 138.

23) Refer to MD, 375.

24) Frank Mclynn, *Carl Gustav Jung: A Biography*, 320.

25) ME, 139.

26) Refer to ME, 148.

27) MD, 376. See MD, 375. "Wilhelm was a truly religious spirit, with an unclouded and farsighted view of things... "Influenced" of Chinese thought had overwhelmed and assimilated him. His Christian views receded into the background, but did not vanish entirely; they formed a kind of mental reservation, a moral proviso that was later

When Wilhelm came down with an attack of amoebic dysentery by which he had had twenty years, through the interpretation on Wilhelm's dreams, Jung diagnosed Wilhelm's physical illness as a mental or spiritual crisis.²⁸⁾ According to Jung, it was "a conflict between consciousness and the unconscious, which in his case took the form of a clash between West and East."²⁹⁾ It was an insoluble conflict for Wilhelm. A few weeks before Wilhelm's death, Jung had a dream that he described as a vision, and knew what it signified. Wilhelm died on March 1, 1930.³⁰⁾

Vincent Brome says that Wilhelm's death was a great loss to Jung.³¹⁾ Jung lost not only his one of the most respectable friends, but also the credible way to the China. Jung had critically depended on Wilhelm to understand the Chinese philosophy and religion.³²⁾ Furthermore, Jung used to solve his tangled thread through Wilhelm. Therefore, with his whole heart, Jung confesses that:

Wilhelm's life-work is of such great value to me because it explained and confirmed so much of what I had been seeking in order to meet the

to have fateful consequences."

28) See MD, 376. Wilhelm's dreams reflect his situation that "The China Wilhelm had left behind had been blocked for him by the West, but he had been unable to find a solution." Also, see ME, 148. "His dreams were filled with Chinese memories, but the pictures hovering before him were always sad and dismal, a clear proof that the Chinese contents had become negative."

29) MD, 377. See Frank McLynn, *Carl Gustav Jung: A Biography*, 320. "Jung's idea was that Wilhelm was being torn apart because he would not acknowledge the endemic unconscious conflict between East and West."

30) Refer to SG, vii. Also, see Paul J. Stern, *C. G. Jung: The Haunted Prophet*, 202.

31) Vincent Brome, *Jung*, 193.

32) For instance, Jung confesses that "Nor have I seen the China that first shaped and later continued to engross him; moreover, I am not familiar with its language, the living spiritual expression of the Chinese East." See ME, 138.

psychic suffering of Europe. It was a tremendous experience for me to hear through him, in clear language, the things that had been dimly shadowed forth to me from out of the confusion of the European unconscious.³³⁾

III. ON *THE SECRET OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER*

Chinese philosophy, Fung Yu-lan says, has delved deeply into “the methods of self-cultivation, that is, what it calls the method of conducting study.”³⁴⁾ Taoism is one of main trends in that Chinese philosophy. The origin of Taoism as a philosophy is traced to Lao-tzu and the book known as the *Tao Te Ching*.³⁵⁾ But, the roots of Taoism reach back to the shamanistic rituals of ancient China, which, later, influenced Taoists models of techniques of longevity. In fact, Taoism in China has developed as two branches: philosophical Taoism and religious Taoism.³⁶⁾ Both trends of Taoism equally emphasize on cultivating both mind and body simultaneously. The fundamental idea of religious Taoism lies in that “health involves balance and circulation of energy in the body.”³⁷⁾ It is the very aim of what *The Golden Flower* says as a lay manual for clarifying the mind.

33) ME, 149.

34) Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.I. 3.

35) Refer to Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, 93.

36) Refer to Max Kaltenmark, *Lao Tzu and Taoism*, 107. “At first sight, philosophical Taoism and magico-religious Taoism appear to have little in common. There are worlds between the thought of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu and what Chavannes has called the ‘hodgepodge of coarse-grained superstitions’ that sprang up in the second century A.D., and indeed all the historians distinguish between the philosophical school of the Tao (*tao chia*) and the Taoist religion (*tao chiao*).”

37) Li Ying-chang, *Lao-tzu's Treatise on the Response of the Tao*, xvi.

A. The Roots of *The Secret of the Golden Flower*

The Golden Flower is one of 1,600 Taoist texts derived from the religious Taoist schools. Taoist sects can be divided into five major schools.³⁸⁾ Among them, *The Golden Flower* belongs to Internal Alchemical Taoism school.³⁹⁾ The northern branch of the Complete Reality School of Taoism, which Thomas Cleary points out that *The Golden Flower* is included, is a sect of Internal Alchemical Taoism.⁴⁰⁾

Jung understands *The Golden Flower* not only as a Taoist text of Chinese yoga but also as an alchemical tract.⁴¹⁾ According to Wilhelm, *The Golden Flower* originates from “an esoteric circle in China.”⁴²⁾ It was, for a long time, transmitted orally from the T’ang dynasty in the eighth century, and was printed as a book during Ch’ing dynasty in the eighteenth century. *The Golden Flower* means the Golden Elixir

38) According to Sean Dennison, the five major schools of Taoism: Action and Karma School, Ceremonial School, Internal Alchemical School, The Talismanic School, and Divinational School. See Li Yang-chang, *Lao-tzu’s Treatise on the Response of the Tao*, xix-xxv. For more information about the five major schools of Taoism, see Eva Wong, *The Shambhala Guide to Taoism*, 99-195.

39) See Li Yang-chang, *Lao-tzu’s Treatise on the Response of the Tao*, xxi. “Internal Alchemical Taoism typifies the Higher Vehicle. Taoist internal alchemy seeks to give its practitioners the benefits of mental and physical health and longevity rather than the more transient benefit of material wealth. Body and mind come together in the crucible of Taoist internal alchemy.” According to Eva Wong, Internal Alchemical Taoism is “the way of transformation.” See Eva Wong, *The Shambhala Guide to Taoism*, 172.

40) See Thomas Cleary, trans. *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, 73; 84; 89. According to Sean Dennison, “Internal Alchemical School include the Lungmen (Dragon-gate) sect, representing the northern branch of Complete Reality Taoism, and the Tzu-yang sect, representing the southern branch of Complete Reality Taoism, the Huashan sect and its branch the Hsien T’ien Wu-chi sect, and the Wu-tang Shan sect.” See Li Yang-chang, *Lao-tzu’s Treatise on the Response of the Tao*, xxii.

41) SG, xiv.

42) SG, 3.

of Life on which Internal Alchemical Taoism focuses. This sect of the Golden Elixir of Life was founded by Lü Tung-pin (LüYen, Born circa A.D. 796, counted later by folklore as one of the eight immortals of Taoism.)⁴³⁾ However, even though it is generally considered to be influenced by the Complete Reality School of Taoism, the text of *The Golden Flower* is controversial among practitioners of Taoist internal alchemy.⁴⁴⁾

The Golden Flower contains the strong influence of Mahayana Buddhism, that is, Ch'an Buddhism. It proves that *The Golden Flower* does not precede the rise of Ch'an school.⁴⁵⁾ *The Golden Flower* not only cites Buddhist sutras, but also adopts Buddhist concepts and practice of meditation abundantly. It shows how Taoist school was stimulated by Buddhism. Besides the Buddhist influence, Confucianism is

43) Refer to SG, 6. "Whence did Lüget his esoteric, secret lore? He himself attributes its origin to Kuan Yin-hsi, the Master Yin-hsi of the Pass, for whom, according to tradition, Lao-tzu wrote down his *Tao Te Ching*. As a matter of fact, there are to be found in the system a great many thoughts taken from the esoteric, veiled, mystical teaching in the *Tao Te Ching*. But while Taoism degenerated more and more in the Han period into an external wizardry, owing to the fact that the Taoist court magicians were seeking to find by alchemy the golden pill (the philosopher's stone), which would create gold out of the baser metals and lend men physical immortality, Lü Yen's movement represented a reform. The alchemistic signs became symbols of psychological processes. In this respect there was a close approach to the original ideas of Lao-tzu." And, see Li Yang-chang, *Lao-tzu's Treatise on the Response of the Tao*, xxii. "LüTung-pin's disciple was Wang Chung-yang. During the Southern Sung dynasty, Wang Chung-yang's disciple, Chiu Ch'ang-ch'un, found the Lungmen sect and started the Northern branch of Complete Reality Taoism. The Northern branch taught "singular" or celibate methods while the Southern branch included both celibate and sexual yogic techniques."

44) Refer to Eva Wong, *The Shambhala Guide to Taoism*, 189.

45) See SG, 45. The text says that "My school differs from the Buddhist yoga school (Chan-tsung). Refer to Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.II, 386-93. Even though the origin of the Ch'an school goes back to Tao-sheng (ca. 360-434), the Ch'an school comes to blossom from Hui-neng (638-713).

also introduced. Especially, the basic trigrams of the I Ching are used as symbols for certain inner processes.⁴⁶⁾ At this point, *The Golden Flower* is “the common property of all Chinese philosophical trends.”⁴⁷⁾ This kind of syncretic trend is a common phenomenon in Chinese philosophical tradition. *The Golden Flower* says, “all three religions agree in the one proposition, the finding of the spiritual Elixir in order to pass from death to life.”⁴⁸⁾ In other words, *The Golden Flower* demonstrates that all of Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, indeed, share the common premise of that “The cosmos and man obey the same law; that man is a microcosm and is not separated from the macrocosm by any fixed barriers. The psyche and the cosmos are to each other like the inner world and the outer world. Therefore man participates by nature in all cosmic events, and is inwardly as well as outwardly interwoven with them.”⁴⁹⁾ *The Book of Balance and Harmony*, which belongs to the Complete Reality School of Taoism to which *The Golden Flower* belongs, clearly demonstrates “the underlying unity of Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism.”⁵⁰⁾

B. The Teachings of *The Secret of the Golden Flower*

The Golden Flower is concerned with the means of cultivating life. It teaches how to attain an eternal life through the way to *the Golden*

46) Refer to SG, 8.

47) SG, 10. And, refer to SG, 34.

48) SG, 59.

49) SG, 10. Also see SG, 22. According to Max Kaltenmark, “In internal alchemy, the human body is considered to be a tripod endowed by Heaven and Earth with the two life-constituents Yin and Yang. The alchemist’s crucible and the human body are microcosms: the first is said to be like an egg composed of two halves (Heaven and Earth).” See Max Kaltenmark, *Lao Tzu and Taoism*, 133-4.

50) See Thomas Cleary, trans. *The Book of Balance and Harmony*, 40-53.

Flower. The method *The Golden Flower* suggests is what the *Tao Te Ching* teaches as *we-wei*.⁵¹⁾ The book says that “the secret of the magic of life consists in using action in order to attain non-action,”⁵²⁾ and that “the sequence of the great Way in the true method of producing an eternally living and immortal spirit and holy man.”⁵³⁾ Wilhelm summarizes the teaching of *The Golden Flower* as follows:

Neither are they immortal any more than heaven and earth are eternal. The Golden Flower alone, which grows out of inner detachment from all entanglement with things, is eternal. A man who reaches this stage transposes his ego; he is no longer limited to the monad, but penetrates the magic circle of the polar duality of all phenomena and returns to the undivided One, the Tao.⁵⁴⁾

The Golden Flower is “the light as the true energy of the transcendent great One (Tao),” and “the Elixir of Life.”⁵⁵⁾ The germ of the Tao is the heavenly heart, that is, the heavenly consciousness. All changes of spiritual consciousness depend upon the heart.⁵⁶⁾ Our spirit consists in the primal spirit (the original spirit) and the conscious spirit.⁵⁷⁾ This idea of two aspects of spirit is found in the *Tao Te*

51) See Ellen M. Chen, trans. *The Tao Te Ching*, 3.3. “Act by no-action (*wu-wei*). Then, nothing is not in order.” Also, see SG, 53-4.

52) SG, 21.

53) SG, 30.

54) SG, 17.

55) SG, 21; 23. Mark Kaltenmark explains that “the immortal soul produced by internal alchemy is called *the Golden Flower*, which blossoms out once the individual has freed himself of all external attachments.” See Mark Kaltenmark, *Lao Tzu and Taoism*, 135-6.

56) SG, 23.

57) See SG, 25. “When men are set free from the womb, the primal spirit dwells in the square inch (between the eyes), but the conscious spirit dwells below in the heart.”

Ching. Between them, the primal spirit only overcomes time and space, and transforms itself in the dwelling of life into the true energy.⁵⁸⁾ The way of *the Golden Flower* depends wholly on “the backward-flowing method” through contemplation and quietness.⁵⁹⁾ It is said that “nothing is possible without contemplation (fan-chao, reflection).”⁶⁰⁾ The “fixating contemplation” is especially emphasized.⁶¹⁾ The way to attain the state of quietness is a gradual process. As a method of contemplation, breathing is indispensable.⁶²⁾ “The bath” is also important to make the heart empty.⁶³⁾ According to *The*

58) SG, 24; 30.

59) SG, 31; 32.

60) SG, 34.

61) About the method of the fixation contemplation, see SG, 35. “One looks with both eyes at the tip of the nose, sits upright and in a comfortable position, and holds the heart to the centre in the midst of conditions. In Taoism it is called the yellow middle, in Buddhism the centre of the midst of conditions. The two are the same.” Also see SG, 36. “Fixating contemplation is indispensable; it ensures the making fast of the enlightenment. Contemplation without fixation is light without circulation.” Following this guidance, while meditating, one could avoid the wrong paths, and enters the space of energy instead of the cave of fantasy. Refer to SG, 48. According to the general teaching of Taoist alchemy, this fixating contemplation method is “the best way to get rid of all thoughts at the start when preparing the elixir of immortality.” See Lu K’uan Yü, *Taoist Yoga: Alchemy and Immortality*, 1-8.

62) Refer to SG, 40. “Breathing comes from the heart. Breath-energy is originally transformed activity of the heart.” SG, 41. “The great holy ones who knew how the heart and breath-energy mutually influence one another have thought out an easier procedure in order to help posterity.” SG, 43. “While sitting, one must therefore always keep the heart quiet and the energy concentrated. Only the heart must be conscious of the flowing in and out of the breath; it must not be heard with the ears.” SG, 44. “The most important thing for achieving the circulation of the light is rhythmical breathing.” Max Kaltenmark claims that “*Nei tan* is a variant of embryonic respiration, a variant in which the processes are described in an esoteric terminology borrowed from alchemy. When practicing embryonic respiration, the adept returned to the state of the infant in its mother’s womb.” See, *Lao Tzu and Taoism*, 134.

63) Refer to SG, 59. At this point, *The Golden Flower* argues about “the threefold Buddhist contemplation of emptiness, delusion, and the centre.” It is said that “Emptiness comes as the first of the three contemplations. Then follows delusion. Being on the way

Book of Balance and Harmony, bathing is “washing the mind, cleaning out thoughts.”⁶⁴) In order to attain the quiet state in which heart and energy are co-ordinated, “the right conditions and the right apace must be provided.”⁶⁵) This does not mean that the book recommends abandoning ordinary life. On the contrary, the book suggests that one must not give up one’s ordinary occupation in doing practice of contemplation.⁶⁶) One, who attains the way of conservation of the true life-energy through “the backward-flowing” process, may reach “the stage of *the Golden Flower*, which then frees the ego from the conflict of the opposites, and it again becomes part of the Tao, the undivided, great One.”⁶⁷) When the Elixir of Life is completed, “spirit and energy are pure and clear; the heart is empty, human nature (hsing) manifest, and the light of consciousness transforms itself into the light of human nature.”⁶⁸)

C. The Eight Attributions of the Meditation

The method of Internal Alchemical Taoism is one of most rigorous paths of both physical and mental training. This school suggests three steps in the alchemical process of transformation. First is the lower stages: building the foundations, second is the middle stages: transforming internal energy, and the final stages is completing the alchem-

of the centre, one also creates images of the emptiness; they are not called empty, but are called central.”

64) Thomas Cleary, trans. *The Book of Balance and Harmony*, 69.

65) SG, 45.

66) Refer to SG, 51. “When in ordinary life one has the ability always to react to things by reflexes only, without any admixture of a thought of others or of oneself, that is a circulation of the light arising out of circumstances. This is the first secret.”

67) SG, 65.

68) SG, 63.

ical work.⁶⁹⁾ Following this process of transformation, *The Golden Flower* presents a brief outline of a meditation discipline known as the “eight attributions,” which is designed to facilitate “perception of essence” through the process of elimination.⁷⁰⁾ The eight attributions are defined as follows:

1. Light is attributable to the sun.
2. Dark is attributable to the dark moon.
3. Transmission is attributable to doors and windows.
4. Obstruction is attributable to walls.
5. Objects are attributable to discrimination.
6. Blank openness is attributable to space.
7. Congestion is attributable to sense data.
8. Clear light is attributable to clarity.⁷¹⁾

Through the gradual process of eliminating the contents of consciousness, the meditator cleans the mind, and ultimately reaches perfect attainment.

IV. JUNG AND *THE SECRET OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER*

It was Jung who said that “*The Golden Flower* gives us a new intuition of life and meaning, as a relief from the tension of arbitrary will and arrogance.”⁷²⁾ Above all, for Jung, *The Golden Flower* seemed

69) See Eva Wong, *The Shambhala Guide to Taoism*, 178-83.

70) Refer to Thomas Cleary, trans. *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, 121.

71) *Ibid.*, 122.

72) ME, 147.

to be “the secret of the powers of growth latent in the psyche.”⁷³⁾ *The Golden Flower* offered Jung a conclusive proof of his fifteen-years investigation into the processes of the collective unconscious. When Wilhelm sent Jung *The Golden Flower*, Jung had reached a conclusion that it is impossible to make use of the Gnostic material for his study. It was a critical time for Jung’s work. Jung argues that “My results, based on fifteen years to effort, seemed inconclusive, because no possible comparison offered itself. I knew of no realm of human experience with which I might have backed up my findings with some degree of assurance. The only analogies I found scattered through the reports of heresiologists.”⁷⁴⁾ *The Golden Flower* helped Jung out of this embarrassment. Jung, through *The Golden Flower*, comes to grasp not only the nature of the collective unconscious as “an omnipresent continuum, an unextended everywhere,”⁷⁵⁾ but also the proof that “mandala symbolism was indicative of the Self.”⁷⁶⁾

A. Mandala and *The Secret of the Golden Flower*

After the separation from Freud, Jung faced up to confrontation with the unconscious. For Jung, it was “a period of inner uncertainty,” or “a state of disorientation.”⁷⁷⁾ While pursuing his inner images,

73) SG, ix. In his *Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious*, Jung claims that “It is twenty-eight years of psychological and psychiatric experience that I am trying to sum up in my commentary to *The Secret of the Golden Flower*. 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.” Cited from Violet de Laszlo, ed. *The Basic Writings of C. G. Jung*, 109.

74) SG, xiii.

75) LI, 58.

76) Frank McLynn, *Carl Gustav Jung: A Biography*, 320.

Jung came to draw mandala.⁷⁸⁾ It was an exploration into “the uncertain path that leads into the depths of the unconscious.”⁷⁹⁾ Jung claims that “Unpopular, ambiguous, and dangerous, it is a voyage of discovery to the other pole of the world.”⁸⁰⁾ Those days, according to Jung, were “the most important in his life--in them everything essential was decided.” Jung says, “it was the *prima materia* for a lifetime’s work.”⁸¹⁾ For Jung, mandala drawings are the process of the unconscious. The mandala is not only the self, the wholeness of the personality, but also the center, that is, the exponent of all paths to the center, to individuation.⁸²⁾ In other words, Jung explains that “The mandala is an archetypal image whose occurrence is attested throughout the ages. It signified the *wholeness of the self*. This circular image represents the wholeness of the psychic ground or, to put it in mythic terms, the divinity incarnate in man.”⁸³⁾ Through the process of drawing mandala, Jung began to understand that “the goal of psychic development is the self.”⁸⁴⁾ Jung’s mandala, painted in 1927, presents his ideas about the center and the self. A year later, Jung painted a mandala with a golden castle at the center. Puzzled by its Chinese am-

77) MD, 170

78) Refer to MD, 195. “I began to understand mandala drawings. This happened in 1918-19. I had painter the first mandala in 1916 after writing the *Septem Sermones*; naturally I had not, then, understood it.”

79) MD, 188.

80) MD, 189.

81) MD, 199.

82) Refer to MD, 195-6. “My mandalas were cryptograms concerning the state of the self which werepresented to me anew each day... The self, I thought, was like the monad which I am, and which is my world. The mandala represents this monad, and corresponds to the microcosmic nature of the psyche.”

83) MD, 335. About Jung’s general understanding of mandalas, refer to C. G. Jung, *Mandala Symbolism*, 3-5.

84) MD, 196. Jung claims that “there is only a circumambulation of the self.”

bianche, Jung suddenly received a copy of *The Golden Flower* from Wilhelm.⁸⁵⁾ *The Golden Flower* gave Jung “undreamed-of confirmation of my ideas about mandala and the circumambulation of the center.”⁸⁶⁾ It was, also, an example of “synchronicity” for Jung.⁸⁷⁾ Jung thought that the mandala symbolism is “the presence of an apparently universal symbol of a similar type.”⁸⁸⁾ At this point, Jung wrote Wilhelm that “the mandalas complement one another and by their variety give an excellent picture of the efforts of the European unconscious to grasp the eschatology of the East.”⁸⁹⁾ Soon after he devoured *The Golden Flower*, Jung had a dream, and quit to draw mandalas.⁹⁰⁾ For Jung thought that he no more needed the proof for his investigation of the collective unconscious.

B. Alchemy and *The Secret of the Golden Flower*

According to Jung, alchemy describes “a process of chemical transformation and gives numberless directions for its accomplishment.”⁹¹⁾ Jung’s major concern about alchemy lies not in the science of alchemy

85) Refer to MD, 197.

86) MD, 197.

87) MD, 197. “In remembrance of this coincidence, this synchronicity, I wrote underneath the picture which had made so Chinese an impression upon me: In 1928, when I was painting this picture, showing the golden, well-fortified castle, Richard Wilhelm in Frankfurt sent me the thousand-year-old Chinese tent on the yellow castle, the germ of the immortal body.” However, refer to Vincent Brome, *Jung*, 193. “The precise dates of Jung’s recovery from his breakdown are considerably confused by his comments about the Taoist-alchemical treatise entitled *The Secret of the Golden Flower*.”

88) MD, 334.

89) L1, 71. Letter to *Richard Wilhelm* (28, October 1929)

90) Refer to MD, 199.

91) C. G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy*, The Collected Works of C. G. Jung. vol.12, 228.

but in its psychic processes.⁹²⁾ Only in alchemy, Jung finds no differences of the synchronicity principle between the Western attitude and the Chinese. Jung claims that “that is why alchemy developed along parallel lines in East and West.”⁹³⁾ Jung hoped to get a clue to prove his idea of the unconscious in the psychic processes of alchemy. When Jung was embarked on the confrontation with the contents of the unconscious, he, at first, investigated to find evidence with the personal basis. It was for Jung that the historical prefiguration of his inner experiences. Later, through encountering with alchemy, Jung came to explore the historical basis of the unconscious. At this point, Jung claims that:

I had very soon seen that analytical psychology coincided in a most curious way with alchemy... I had stumbled upon the historical counterpart of my psychology of the unconscious. The possibility of a comparison with alchemy, and the uninterrupted intellectual chain back to Gnosticism, gave substance to my psychology... I now began to understand what these psychic contents meant when seen in historical perspective... The primordial images and the nature of the archetype took a central place in my researches, and it became clear to me that without history there can be no psychology, and certainly no psychology of the unconscious.⁹⁴⁾

92) Refer to *ibid.*, 242. “The alchemical *opus* deals in the main not just with chemical experiments as such, but with something resembling psychic processes expressed in pseudochemical language. The ancients knew more or less what chemical processes were; therefore they must have known that the thing they practiced was, to say the least of it, no ordinary chemistry.”

93) C. G. Jung, *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. vol.8, para.916.

94) MD, 205.

Jung, between 1918-1926, had seriously studied the Gnostic writers,⁹⁵⁾ and reached a conclusion that alchemy seemed to represent the historical link between Gnosticism and the contemporary world, that is, a continuity between past and present.⁹⁶⁾ As a result, Jung claims that “grounded in the natural philosophy of the Middle Ages, alchemy formed the bridge on the one hand into the past, the Gnosticism, and on the other into the future, to the modern psychology of the unconscious.”⁹⁷⁾ This concept of the nature of alchemy was taken through reading *The Golden Flower*.⁹⁸⁾ Through *The Golden Flower*, Jung confirms that “Chinese alchemy produced the same idea, that the goal of the *opus magnum* is the creation of the ‘diamond body.’”⁹⁹⁾ Through comparing the alchemical symbolic world with the dream symbolism of his contemporaries, Jung gained insights into the important matters of the individual process as the phenomenon of the transference.¹⁰⁰⁾ Jung gained an acquaintance with *The Golden Flower*

95) See MD, 200.

96) Refer to MD, 201. Robert A. Segal stresses the continuity between Gnosticism and alchemy. See Robert A. Segal, *The Gnostic Jung*, 137.

97) MD, 201.

98) MD, 204. About Jung’s explanation of alchemy and *The Golden Flower* in China, refer to L1, 317. “In China, alchemy was allied with Taoism and in the first centuries was pressed back by Confucianism along with Taoism and its ancient sources. But in keeping with the greater tolerance in China, alchemy resumed its philosophical flights perhaps in the eighth century, and put forth blossoms such as *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, which Richard Wilhelm brought out with my collaboration. Confucianism could in a sense be compared with the Aristotelianism of the Church.” Paul J. Stern points out that “through his work on *The Golden Flower*, Jung’s eyes were opened to medieval European alchemy.” See Paul J. Stern, *C. G. Jung: The Haunted Prophet*, 190.

99) C. G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, vol.11, 102.

100) See MD, 209. “I had very soon seen that analytical psychology coincided in a most curious way with alchemy... I had stumbled upon the historical counterpart of my psychology of the unconscious. The possibility of a comparison with alchemy, and

along with the dreams that point toward alchemy, and was able to uncover, in Western alchemy, the material which he needed for psychological investigations.¹⁰¹⁾ At this point, Jung argues that “it was the text of *The Secret of the Golden Flower* that first put me in the direction of the right track.”¹⁰²⁾

V. ON JUNG’S COMMENTARY

Jung wrote his commentary, when he reached the central point in his thinking and in his researches.¹⁰³⁾ On the contrary, David Rosen suggests an interesting point that writing the commentary on *The Golden Flower* served a healing function for Jung’s late-life crisis.¹⁰⁴⁾ However, Jung’s commentary is not a commentary on the text itself. Jung knew his lack of overall knowledge about Taoist alchemy, and never intended to write a literal commentary. Jung wrote his commentary in terms of psychological concern about the collective unconscious: “the psyche possesses a common substratum transcending all differences in culture and consciousness.”¹⁰⁵⁾ Jung thought that his commentary on *The Golden Flower* represents a European reaction to the wisdom of the East.¹⁰⁶⁾ Jung wrote Pastor Ernst Jahn that “What

the uninterrupted intellectual chain back to Gnosticism, gave substance to my psychology... I now began to understand what these psychic contents meant when seen in historical perspective... The primordial images and the nature of the archetype took a central place in my researches, and it became clear to me that without history there can be no psychology, and certainly no psychology of the unconscious.”

101) Refer to Gerhard Wehr, *Jung: A Biography*, 254-6.

102) SG, xiv.

103) MD, 208.

104) See David Rosen, *The Tao of Jung*, 92; 99.

105) SG, 87.

I described in *the Golden Flower* are simply the results of individual developments which closely resemble those arrived at through Eastern practices.”¹⁰⁷⁾ As a psychoanalyst, in his commentary, Jung explains “the symbols and psychic states in some detail, exclusively of course from the psychological standpoint, and at the same time drawn parallels with European psychology.”¹⁰⁸⁾ Jung attempts to describe “a sort of integration process and emancipation of consciousness: The assimilated unconscious apparently disappears in consciousness without trace, but it has the effect of detaching consciousness from its ties to the object.”¹⁰⁹⁾ In this respect, Cary Baynes claims that “in the commentary, Jung has shown the profound psychological development resulting from the right relationship to the forces within the psyche.”¹¹⁰⁾

A. Jung’s Understanding of the Text

Jung is concerned with the particularity of the Eastern thoughts in the text. Jung focuses on the distinction between the primal spirit (the original spirit) and the conscious spirit. The primal spirit is universal and unconditional, and the conscious spirit is conditioned. This distinction is one of the most important ideas in Taoist alchemy. Jung has an insight into this distinction. For Jung, there are parallels between the primal spirit and the collective unconscious. Jung points out that, unlike the Western mind, the Eastern mind basically embraces the paradoxes and the polarity inherent in what is alive. Jung argues that “The opposites always balanced one another--a sign of

106) See L1, 67. Letter to *Richard Wilhelm* (10, September 1929)

107) L1, 169.

108) L1, 67.

109) L1, 240.

110) SG, ix.

high culture. One-sidedness is a mark of barbarism.”¹¹¹) For Jung, yin and yang theory represents both-sidedness of the Eastern thought. In terms of yin and yang relation, the psychic process is able to be described that “the more powerful and independent consciousness, and with it the conscious will, become, the more the unconscious is forced into the background.”¹¹²) Jung pays attention to “the art of letting things happen, action through non-action (we wei), letting go of oneself” as the key concept to understand the text.¹¹³) Jung interprets that the Tao is the unity of consciousness (human nature, hsing) and life (ming). Consciousness coincides with intensity, and symbolizes the yang principle. Life coincides with extensity, and symbolizes the yin principle.¹¹⁴) For Jung, the Tao seems to be a symbol which connotes that yin embraces yang.¹¹⁵) This reflects Jung’s idea of the unconscious as the symbol. Jung claims that “the unconscious can be reached and expressed only by symbols, which is the reason why the process of individuation can never do without the symbol.”¹¹⁶)

Jung understands the purpose of the instructions of the text as the detachment of consciousness (the egress) from the object.¹¹⁷) Through attaining the detachment, “consciousness is no longer preoccupied with compulsive intentions but turns into contemplative vision.” From his practice, Jung knows that the detachment of consciousness is “the therapeutic effect par excellence.”¹¹⁸) However, *The Golden Flower*

111) SG, 85.

112) SG, 88.

113) SG, 93.

114) Refer to SG, 101-3.

115) About yin and yang relation, see *The Tao Te Ching*, ch.28.

116) SG, 107.

117) About the detachment of consciousness (the egress), see Lu K’uan Yü, *Taoist Yoga: Alchemy and Immortality*, 160-73.

118) SG, 123.

practice is not primarily a therapeutic method for psychic patients. It is a method of spiritual development for ordinary people. The essential practice of *the Golden Flower* lies not in the psychological therapy or in the particular religious ritual, but in the course of daily life.

For Jung, *The Golden Flower* is a Eastern depository of what he calls “synchronistic phenomena.”¹¹⁹⁾ It presents the parallels of the result in the Western psychological observation of the unconscious. From this conviction, Jung claims that “it seems to me important above all to emphasize the agreement between the psychic states and symbolisms of East and West.”¹²⁰⁾ Jung demonstrates ten European mandalas, as an example, to illustrate “the parallelism between Eastern philosophy and the unconscious mental processes in the West.”¹²¹⁾ It is the central purpose of Jung’s commentary. Through his commentary, Jung envisions to build a bridge of psychological understanding between East and West.¹²²⁾

B. On the Text and Its Translation

Jung was greatly indebted to Wilhelm for exploring the Eastern spiritual world. When Jung wrote the commentary on *The Golden Flower*, Jung was not able to decipher Chinese characters. Jung inevitably came to depend on the Wilhelm’s rendering. The original Chinese text of *The Golden Flower* which Wilhelm used for his translation is an incomplete text. It exposes some flaws. Wilhelm himself had

119) Refer to LI, 177. Jung coined the term “synchronicity” to characterize “the simultaneous occurrence of a certain psychic state with one or more external events which appear as meaningful parallels to the momentary subjective state.”

120) SG, 136.

121) SG, 137.

122) SG, 136.

the suspicion about a completeness of the Chinese manuscript he used.¹²³⁾ Thomas Cleary points out that the Chinese version of *The Golden Flower* Wilhelm used is the corrupted one.¹²⁴⁾

However, it is not easy even for the Chinese, with the Chinese text, to understand what *The Golden Flower* instructs. For it uses Taoist alchemical terms mixed with those of diverse types of Buddhism and Confucianism. Wilhelm knew that, and had a lot of difficulties to translate those terms into the German. Wilhelm chose some Western philosophical and psychological terms to translate key terms of the text: eros, logos, intuition, anima, animus, and etc.

According to the text, the way to *the Golden Flower* (the Elixir of Life) knows as “supreme magic seed-water, spirit-fire, and thought-earth: these three.” Wilhelm translates them as “eros, logos, and intuition.”¹²⁵⁾ Wilhelm also translates a p’o soul as anima, and a hun soul as animus.¹²⁶⁾ Wilhelm explains that, between in the primal spirit and the conscious spirit, the primal spirit only overcomes time and space, and transforms itself in the dwelling of life into the true energy.¹²⁷⁾ According to the text, intuition belongs to the primal spirit, and intellect belongs to the conscious spirit. But, Wilhelm does not proceed here to present the essential point of the principle of Taoist alchemy that is to refine the conscious spirit to reunite it with the primal spirit. However, most of Wilhelm’s terms are not only inadequate to present the original concepts of the text, but also practically dysfunctional. Jung seemed to know this problem. Jung partly disagrees with Wilhelm’s translation. Jung claims that “Although

123) See, SG, 7.

124) GF, 136.

125) See SG, 25-6; 118.

126) Refer to SG, 64-5; 115. Also, see SG, 28.

127) SG, 24; 30.

Wilhelm's translation of *hun* as *animus* seems justified to me, none the less I had important reasons for choosing *logos* for a man's spirit, for masculine clarity of consciousness are reason. I prefer to translate *hun* by *logos*. Wilhelm uses *logos* for the Chinese concept *hsing*."¹²⁸⁾ However, Jung's trust in Wilhelm made Jung concede on the whole that the problems of Wilhelm's rendering originate from cultural differences between two worlds. Using Wilhelm's translation, Jung proceeded to extremes in transmuting the major concepts of the text.

VI. JUNG AND THE *I CHING*

In any case, there is no doubt that the *I Ching* has been regarded as a basic text by Taoists since ancient times.¹²⁹⁾ The Terminology of the *I Ching* has been widely used in Taoist alchemy. The *I Ching* is indeed one of the major materials for *The Golden Flower*. The trigrams of the *I Ching* are used to explain the process and the phenomena of *the Golden Flower*.¹³⁰⁾ Therefore, without preunderstanding of *I Ching*, one cannot attain profound understanding of *The Golden Flower*. In this respect, Jung's understanding of the *I Ching* could offer an evaluating point about Jung's understanding of *The Golden Flower*.

Jung met Wilhelm in the early twenties. Even before meeting Wilhelm, around 1920 Jung had begun experimenting with the *I Ching*.¹³¹⁾ It was the James Legge's translation in English.¹³²⁾ At first,

128) SG, 117.

129) Refer to Thomas Cleary, trans. *The Book of Balance and Harmony*, xiii.

130) See SG, 49; 54; 58; 59; 64.

131) MD, 373. "I was met Richard Wilhelm in the early twenties. In 1923 we invited him to Zürich and he spoke on the *I Ching*."

Jung began to experiment with the divination method described in the *I Ching*.¹³³⁾ In other words, Jung was interested in “the practical application of the *I Ching*.”¹³⁴⁾ Jung argues that “Time and again I encountered amazing coincidences which seemed to suggest the idea of an causal parallelism (a synchronicity, as I later called it).”¹³⁵⁾ Shortly after Jung’s first experiments, Wilhelm published a translation of the *I Ching* with a commentary.¹³⁶⁾ At that time, Jung was unsatisfactory with Legge’s inadequate rendering.¹³⁷⁾ Jung welcomed Wilhelm’s translation, in which he confirmed that “Wilhelm took much the same view of the meaningful connections as I had.”¹³⁸⁾ Therefore, Jung says, later, that “To me the greatest of Wilhelm’s achievements is the translation of, and commentary on, the *I Ching*.”¹³⁹⁾ Jung determined to invite Wilhelm to Zürich. In 1923, Wilhelm spoke on the *I Ching* at the Psychological Club in Zürich.¹⁴⁰⁾ There, Jung

132) James Legge published his English translation of the *I Ching* in 1882. Refer to William McGuire, *Bolligen: An Adventure in Collecting the Past*, 19.

133) According to Fung Yu-lan, “the *I Ching* was first of all a book of divination. Its original corpus is made up of the famous eight trigrams.” See Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, vol.I. 389.

134) SG, 86.

135) MD, 374. See Gerhard Wehr, *Jung: A Biography*, 235. “Jung later customarily termed ‘synchronicity,’ referring to the simultaneity of two meaningfully but not causally connected events or situations.”

136) Wilhelm wrote another short introduction about the *I Ching* in the relation with the Confucian School in his book, *Confucius and Confucianism*. See Richard Wilhelm, *Confucius and Confucianism*, 124-7.

137) See ME, 140. James Legge’s rendering is included in the book, *Ancient China, The Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East*, vol.XI. 201-45.

138) MD, 374. See Richard Wilhelm, trans. *The I Ching*, xxii. Jung argues that “I was already fairly familiar with the *I Ching* when I first met Wilhelm in the early nineteen twenties; he confirmed for me then what I already know, and taught me many things more.”

139) ME, 139.

140) Refer to MD, 373.

request Wilhelm “to demonstrate the method of consulting the *I Ching* and, at the same time, to make a prognosis which was fulfilled to the letter and with unmistakable clearness.” And, Jung claims that “this fact could be further confirmed by many parallel experiences.”¹⁴¹⁾ Jung was fascinated to the divinatory power of the *I Ching* as the method of exploring the unconscious.¹⁴²⁾ In fact, Jung customarily consulted the *I Ching* on his life’s important decisions.¹⁴³⁾ For instance, Jung consulted the *I Ching* shortly before beginning his journey.¹⁴⁴⁾ Once, Jung wrote Rev. W. P. Witcutt that “since 1924 I have done much work with the *I Ching*.”¹⁴⁵⁾ Here, “much work” Jung did may be related with consulting the *I Ching*.

For Jung, the *I Ching* represents “the spirit of Chinese culture.”¹⁴⁶⁾ The *I Ching* demonstrates the principle of the Chinese science which is different from the European scientific principle. Jung claims that “the science of the *I Ching* is not based on the causality principle, but on the synchronistic principle.”¹⁴⁷⁾ Through the *I Ching*, Jung discovered “psychic parallelisms which cannot be related to each other causally, but which must stand in another sort of connectedness.”¹⁴⁸⁾

141) ME, 142.

142) Refer to ME, 140. See Richard Wilhelm, trans. *The I Ching*, xxii. Jung says that “I am greatly indebted to Wilhelm for the light he has thrown upon the complicated problem of the *I Ching*, and for insight as regards its practical application as well. For more than thirty years I have interested myself in this oracle technique, or method of exploring the unconscious, for it has seemed to me of uncommon significance.”

143) Gerhard Wehr, *Jung: A Biography*, 234.

144) *Ibid.*, 235. Jung gained hexagram number 53: *Chien* (Development) which stands for ‘gradual progress.’

145) L2, 584. Letter to the Rev. W. P. Witcutt (24, August 1960)

146) ME, 140.

147) ME, 141. See ME, 143. Jung claims that “the type of thought built on the synchronistic principle, which reached its apex in the *I Ching*, is the purest expression of Chinese thinking in general.” Also, see IC, xxii. “Our science is based upon the principle of causality, and causality is considered to be an axiomatic truth.”

Jung relates the synchronistic principle of the *I Ching* to his interpretation of dreams. Jung is concerned with the symbolic figure of the *I Ching*'s hexagrams which seem to present a parallel with his archetypes. In the principle of synchronicity of the *I Ching*, a definite archetype is postulated as a noncasual ordering factor. At this point, Jung argues that "the *I Ching* consists of readable archetypes, and it very often presents not only a picture of the actual situation but also of the future, exactly like dreams... I quite agree that the *I Ching* symbolism can be interpreted like that of dreams."¹⁴⁹⁾

Jung wrote the foreword to Wilhelm's translation of the *I Ching* in 1949 with the memory of his late friend.¹⁵⁰⁾ In his Foreword, Jung attempts to elucidate "the psychological phenomenology of the *I Ching*."¹⁵¹⁾ Jung explains that "the Chinese mind seems to be exclusively preoccupied with the chance aspect of events."¹⁵²⁾ For Jung, the method of the *I Ching* as "the chance aspect of events" presents the hidden individual quality in things and human beings.¹⁵³⁾ At this point, Jung relates the method of the *I Ching* with the unconscious.¹⁵⁴⁾

In the mid-thirties, Jung met the Chinese philosopher Hu Shih, and asked him his opinion of the *I Ching*. Hu Shih replied that "Oh, that's nothing but an old collection of magic spells, without significance."¹⁵⁵⁾

148) ME, 141.

149) L2, 584.

150) See Richard Wilhelm, trans. *The I Ching*, xxi-xxxix. Also, see C. G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, vol.11. 589-608.

151) *Ibid.*, xxxix.

152) *Ibid.*, xxii.

153) *Ibid.*, xxviii.

154) According to the *I Ching*, "divination means to go to the utmost of the natural course of events in order to know the future." See Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 266.

155) MD, 374.

It is uncertain why Hu Shih replied like that. But, it is certain that Jung was embarrassed with Hu Shih's reply, and wrote that "He had had no experience with it--or so he said. The subject obviously made him uncomfortable."¹⁵⁶) In fact, Jung didn't know how the Eastern philosophers deal with the *I Ching*. Following Jung's ignorance about the Eastern philosophy, one of Jung's biographers, Gerhard Wehr, even denigrates Hu Shih as "one of the innumerable intellectuals who dismissed his country's spiritual tradition as useless nonsense."¹⁵⁷) From Wehr's point of view, Hu Shih must be an example of what Jung warns: "traditional religious notions can perish from the lack of understanding of their guardians."¹⁵⁸) However, it is difficult to imagine that a Chinese philosopher does not know about the importance and the role of the *I Ching* in the Chinese philosophical history. The *I Ching* grew out of the ancient practice of divination. Its text simply consists in hexagrams from which no definite philosophical conclusion can be drawn. However, its commentaries (Ten Wings), which have been ascribed to Confucius, present "a clear outline of a rational approach to a well-ordered and dynamic universe."¹⁵⁹) Because of its commentaries, throughout the history, the *I Ching* has been the seedbed of the Chinese philosophy as the book which connotes the principle of cosmic changes in the symbolic figures of the hexagrams. The profundity of the *I Ching* is symbolized as the Tao

156) MD, 374. Hu Shih, as a philosopher, was Chinese ambassador to the United States from 1938 to 1942.

157) Gerhard Wehr, *Jung: A Biography*, 535.

158) *Ibid.*, 461. Jung pointed out the danger as follows: "The same thing could happen to us as in China, where for example a Chinese philosopher like Hu-shih is ashamed to know anything about the *I Ching*, and where the profound significance of the concept of the Tao has been lost, and in its place people worship electric locomotives and airplanes."

159) Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 262.

which can be taken at the final stage of philosophical study. In this respect, one can understand the meaning of Confucius's saying that "if a man in the morning hear the right way, he may die in the evening without regret."¹⁶⁰) At the end of his life, Confucius hoped to have more time to study the *I Ching*.¹⁶¹) The ultimate purpose of studying the *I Ching* presents a paradox. It means that the Eastern philosophers have not attempted to consult the *I Ching*, but envisioned the way to be identified with the cosmic change through investigate the *I Ching*. In other words, the primary concern about the *I Ching* lies in attaining full humanity.¹⁶²) The divination method grounded on the principle of synchronicity is not the main object of investigation to the *I Ching*. It might be the philosophical reason why Hu Shih hesitated to mention about the *I Ching* oracle to Jung. According to the *I Ching*, it can be said that there is no synchronicity without the casualty, and casualty without the synchronicity. The principle of synchronicity is not unknowable, but destined to be based on not-yet-known casualty.¹⁶³) The purpose of the *I Ching* lies in being identified with the Tao that embraces both synchronicity and casualty in the cosmic order of the changeless change.

It is certain that Jung's interpretation is a rare pool of insights to

160) *Confucian Analects*, IV.8.

161) See *Confucian Analects*, VII.16. "If some years were added to my life, I would give fifty to the study of the *I Ching*, and then I might come to be without great faults."

162) The *I Ching* says, "The successive movement of yin and yang constitutes the Tao. What issues from the Tao is good, and that which realizes it is the individual nature. The man of humanity sees it and calls it humanity. The man of wisdom sees it and calls it wisdom." Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 266.

163) Jung presents his understanding of the Tao as follows: "When God or the Tao is termed as impulse of the soul, or a state of the soul, something has been said about the knowable only, but nothing about the unknowable, about which nothing can be determined." See SG, 135.

understand the *I Ching*. But, it does not mean that Jung presents an adequate interpretation on what the *I Ching* tells. Jung's psychological point of view seems to let Jung bypass the careful interpretation of the *I Ching* which goes beyond not only dichotomy of the principle of synchronicity and the casualty principle, but also the ultimate aim of studying the *I Ching*. In sum, Jung was interested in the cryptic aspect of the *I Ching*. And, it is the same to *The Golden Flower*.

VII. CONCLUSION

Jung misunderstood descriptions of *The Golden Flower* partly, because of Wilhelm's imperfect translation and his psychological premise. However, Jung's goal of understanding *The Golden Flower* in terms of psychology is an approach that make the Eastern thoughts more accessible to the Western mind. From his point of view, Jung deals not with the method of *The Golden Flower*, but with the Western psychological attitude toward the Eastern Taoist alchemy. Although Jung was concerned with *The Golden Flower* with having clarified his concept of the collective unconscious, he maintained rigid reservations about the practice of *the Golden Flower*.

Jung recognized the need of the Western mentality to be supplemented. Jung believed that, even though both have been at variance with each other, East and West are complements. But, his attitude toward the East is very careful. First, Jung points out the essential difference between the West and the East. Jung perceived cultural incompatibility between them. In his commentary on *The Golden Flower*, Jung stresses an essential difference between the Western and the Eastern mentality.¹⁶⁴ Jung claims that, in consequence of such

difference, the West has to avoid directly taking over the Eastern philosophy and methods without comparing with those of the West. Second, Jung suggests to the West overcoming of the prevailing prejudice or an anti-Chinese bias, and demands an openness beyond Christian resentment. Jung explains that, for instance, the principle of synchronicity, or parallelism in time, of Chinese science is naturally regarded by the West as superstition.¹⁶⁵⁾ Last, Jung warns the West to keep their spiritual heritage firmly in order to dialogue with the East. Jung knew that the relation of the West to Eastern thought is a highly paradoxical and confusing one. Jung warns the West away from trying to practice the methods of *The Golden Flower*, professing psychological equivalent of the concepts in *The Golden Flower*. For, Europeans lack the cultural background for practicing Eastern disciplines. Jung claims that “in the Pauline Christ symbol the deepest religious experiences of the West and of the East confront each other.”¹⁶⁶⁾ Through Wilhelm’s case, Jung experienced the risk of “the endemic unconscious conflict between East and West.”¹⁶⁷⁾ Jung recognized that, on the shaking foundation, encountering others could not be instructive. Jung recommends to the West to dig into their own traditions. Jung’s commentary on *The Golden Flower* presents that Jung himself never forgot who he is, and who his readers are. Jung claims that “only by standing firmly on our own soil can we assimilate

164) Refer to L1, 159.

165) Refer to L1, 178. See L2, 613-4. About the Eastern magic method, Jung wrote to Ronald W. Weddell: “Just as we, in the West, are separated too much from the unconscious, the East is apt to be too much identical with it. Therefore most of the Eastern methods are invented to fetter and suppress the unconscious powers, which are too strong for them. What you have read in *The Secret of the Golden Flower* gives you a glimpse of such methods.”

166) SG, 133.

167) Frank Melynn, *Carl Gustav Jung: A Biography*, 320.

the spirit of the East.”¹⁶⁸⁾ For instance, on the one hand, Jung criticizes the Western concept of science, on the other hand, he still convinces science as “a superior and indispensable one that works harm only when taken as an end in itself.” In this regard, Jung claims that “science is the tool of the Western mind and with it more doors can be opened than with bare hands.”¹⁶⁹⁾ Jung declares to the Western society that the East cannot be substitute, but be complement.

The *Tao Te Ching* says, “returning is the movement of Tao.”¹⁷⁰⁾ The *I Ching* hexagram 24, Fu, embodies this returning movement. According to the *I Ching*, the idea of return is based on the course of nature. The returning movement is natural, arising spontaneously.¹⁷¹⁾ This idea of returning is one of the main theses of Taoism and also that of the *I Ching*. When one moves to extreme, a reversal to the other extreme takes place from oneself. However, it was Jung who used to warn the mental lethargy of Western civilization. Jung knew that the wane of Western spirit has begun at the zenith the Western civilization. It is the natural way of returning movement. Through encountering with the Eastern spiritual world, Jung envisions a world which is not dominated by an overwhelming power Jung believed that The West should accept the East as a co-partner for the future.

As a man with superior insight, Jung, in the Retrospect of Memories, Dreams, Reflections, feels companionate with Lao-tzu, who says: “All are clear, I alone am clouded.”¹⁷²⁾ In this poetics, Lao-tzu sings the state of being with and in the Tao. It must be a

168) SG, 128.

169) SG, 82.

170) *The Tao Te Ching*, ch.40.

171) Richard Wilhelm, trans. *The I Ching*, 97-8.

172) See MD, 359. Jung cites this sentence from the *Tao Te Ching*, ch.20.

song that Jung wants to sing. Jung says that “the archetype of the old man who has seen enough is eternally true.”¹⁷³⁾ It seems to allude to Jung’s final achievement through his life-time psychological investigation. Beyond boundaries between the West and the East, Jung became an archetype of pursuing the eternal truth. Jung, as a careful pioneer, demonstrates a successful encounter between West and East in terms of mentality, with his understanding of *The Secret of the Golden Flower*.

• **Key Words**

C. G. Jung, unconsciousness, Eastern philosophy, *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, Richard Wilhelm, meditation, Taoism, Alchemy, I Ching, mandala, psychology, encounter between East and West

173) MD, 359.

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