The Future of Jung in Asia

The Future of Jung in Asia is a complex and fascinating topic and no one can accurately predict what will come. But there are clear trends from which one may make several guesses. As someone who is interested in history, I would like to begin with the early developments of Jungian psychology in Asia. I have found that the early developments continue over many years unconsciously even though it can look very different on the surface. Jung was the first major depth psychologist who introduced Asian thought to the West. He was heavily influenced by the religious philosophies of Taoism, Buddhism, and Zen. His best known connection was with Richard Wilhelm with whom Jung had a deep collegial and personal relationship; sadly, it came to an early end with Wilhelm’s death in 1930. At Wilhelm’s memorial Jung stated that he learned more from him than any other individual in his life. Wilhelm introduced Jung to the *Secret of the Golden Flower*, the ancient Chinese alchemical text which brought Jung out of a long isolation. Jung had been unsure of his insights about the nature of the psyche that came as a result of his experiences of the unconscious that led to the Red Book. He writes that the alchemical text gave him confidence in his work with the meaning of the *Self* as expressed in mandala symbolism and it launched his intense study of Western alchemy. Some years later Jung was asked to write an introduction to D.T. Suzuki’s book on an Introduction to Zen Buddhism. Jung never visited China, Japan, or Korea, but he did visit India in 1937; however, we shall be discussing the Far East and India will not enter into the discussion.

Although there has long been an interest in Eastern thought among Jungians, a lively exchange of ideas between Asian Jungian analysts and the rest of the Jungian world has only really blossomed in the past 20 years. Jung had warned Westerners not to get completely caught up by Eastern thought
From Korea, Dr. Bou Yong Rhi, professor of psychiatry at Seoul National University, and from Japan, Dr. Kawao Kawai, who later became the nation’s Minister of Culture, both trained as Jungian analysts in Zurich in the late 1960’s. Both developed strong professional groups in their respective countries, encouraging their students to study Analytical Psychology in Zurich, as they had done. They kept very strong ties to Zurich but limited their group’s communication with the worldwide Jungian community until the recent explosion of interest from both directions, East and West. Both the Korean and the Japanese societies have developed their training programs.

My own connections with Asian Jungians go back to 1994, while I was president of the IAAP, the International Association for Analytical Psychology. I was invited to participate in a congress in Seoul Korea, held by The International General Medical Society of Psychotherapy, the same professional group of which Jung was president during the 1930’s. It was the first Congress this society had held outside of Europe. Along with this invitation I received a very warm welcome from Professor Rhi and his group of students, a group of 40 to 45 people including many psychiatrists who were in various stages of analysis and training. Rather than begin a Korean training society, Dr Rhi had encouraged his students to study Analytical Psychology in Zurich, as he had done. The following year in Zurich, as a part of the informal arrangement for certification of individual members, I had the great pleasure of examining and recommending as a Jungian analyst one fine member of his group, Oh-suh Han, MD and PhD.

On our way to Korea, Jean and I had visited China. This part of this trip had been arranged by Murray Stein, who was then Honorary Secretary of the IAAP, who had met Professor Heyong Shen in Illinois, where he was studying on a Fulbright scholarship. Along with Murray Stein, his wife Jan and his granddaughter Sara, we visited Professor Shen at his university, the South China Normal University in Guangzhou, where we also met his wife, Gao Lan. We went on to Beijing to meet with psychiatrists and psychologists in several hospitals and universities. Arrangements at that time were complicated to make, but we did lecture and meet with many interested professionals. It was a small beginning and little did we anticipate its consequences!

Recognizing the desire and the need among Chinese and Korean students for more intensive study of analytical psychology, Jean went back to San Francisco with the idea of starting a program there. She wanted to make it possible for interested professionals whose countries offered no formal
Jungian training to come to San Francisco for some part of their Jungian training. Dong Hyuck Suh, MD of Korea became San Francisco’s first International Student, soon followed by Professor Heyong Shen. At the present time, Wen-Yu Cheng of Taiwan is beginning his third year of study in San Francisco. International students from the rest of the world have also selected.

Who could have anticipated the phenomenal energy of Heyong Shen and his wife Gao Lan! Beginning in about the year 2000 they began to arrange conferences in China in conjunction with the IAAP, a series of congresses around the theme, “Jungian Psychology and Chinese Culture”. These conferences have been held every three years, and have brought Chinese scholars in contact with Jungian analysts. Their proceedings have been published by Professor Shen. At the same time many students from Asia began to attend the Jung Institute in Zurich, mainly from Japan, but also from Taiwan and China. The next major development occurred when Steve and Jenny Chang unexpectedly visited San Francisco with Heyong Shen in July of 2006. Out of this meeting came an invitation for Jean and me to come to Taiwan in October 2007 to give a series of workshops for the students and professionals connected with the Taiwan Institute for Psychotherapy, a non-profit organization founded by Jenny Chang. TIP had invited many representatives of all the schools of psychotherapy to lecture to their students. Representing Jungians and the International Sandplay Society, Martin Kalff and Dr. Kazuhiko Higuchi of Japan had come from Japan, to give workshops on Sand Play, but I believe that Jean and I were the first Western Jungian analysts to teach in Taiwan. Both Jean and I were greatly impressed by the clinical and intellectual sophistication of the professionals and students we met, and we immediately fell in love with the people and place. Since then we have come back on an almost yearly basis, and this is our second visit this year. In 2007 we also visited with the developing group in Hong Kong and gave workshops for the students of Professor Shen in Guangzhou. We also flew to Shanghai and met with a growing group of interested students there.

On the basis of that one trip Jean and I had glimpsed a strong interest in and enthusiasm for Jung’s psychology. As several Chinese people have expressed it, Jung really had a much better grasp of the Chinese culture and psyche than Freud, and so they turned to Jung when they wanted to study Depth Psychology. In the years since 1994 many analyst members of the IAAP have invested an enormous amount of time, energy and devotion to the personal and professional needs of the people comprising these developing groups. They include among them analysts from many counties. Several
deserve special mention: Liza Ravitz, John Beebe, Brian Feldman, Joe Cambray, and Linda Carter from the USA, Murray Stein and Alan Guggenbuhl of Zurich, Toshio Kawai of Japan, and Marta Tibaldi, Eva Pattis, and Angela Connolly of Italy.

Where are we now? Toshio Kawai has become an important figure in the Jungian world and is now a vice-president of the IAAP; our next international meeting will be in Kyoto, Japan. Now there are IAAP sponsored Developing Groups in Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Taiwan, Macao, Shanghai, , , and perhaps soon to come, new groups in Singapore and Beijing. This means that each group has a Liaison person with the IAAP as well as a designated analyst. The Liaison person may not also do personal analysis. Currently, Liza Ravitz a Jungian analyst from San Francisco, is in residence in Taipei for her second year where she practices Jungian analysis, and teaches at the Catholic university. This is an ideal arrangement, for she is able to communicate the principles of Analytical Psychology most effectively with her lectures and workshops and provides the experience that is central to becoming a Jungian analyst, an intensive, consistent, face-to-face analytic relationship. Liza’s represents a unique situation. Most typically in other Developing Groups, individuals have to rely on visiting analysts or they must travel to receive their personal analysis. Many of these individuals in the Developing Groups have the desire to become Jungian analysts, and in order to do so have become what the IAAP designates as “routers”. These are individuals who are examined by IAAP members to see if they are suitable to become “routers” and thus train to become individual members of the IAAP.

The picture in Asia at the present time looks like this: we have two long established Jungian professional training societies in Korea and Japan, and a number of Developing Groups in the Chinese speaking communities, with many “routers” in each of the Developing Groups. To form a professional society for Analytical Psychology requires the cooperation and industry of 6 certified analysts. A minimum of ten analysts in that society are required to apply to the IAAP as a Training Society. The Chinese speaking Developing Groups represent different political entities with differing recent histories, which will require careful sorting out and working through in the process of maturation the various potential societies in China and Taiwan. Who is to know what the future will bring? That is a large question which lies behind the current situation for Analytical Psychology in the
Far East. On the basis of these rapid developments in the past 19 years, I anticipate that within ten years each of the Developing Groups will have its own professional society. As each of them develops into a professional Jungian society, will each remain autonomous like the different Jungian societies in the USA? Or will they form a national society with satellite groups, as has happened in most other countries? Since in China most things are quite centralized, one might expect the same to happen to the various groups that comprise analytical psychology.

From my perspective I think that Taiwan will develop the most quickly. The backing of the Taiwan Institute of Psychotherapy for clinical training, the presence of a Jungian analyst in residence, the fact that Taiwanese students are currently studying in Zurich, and one is in San Francisco all combine to put Taipei in a very strong position. Jenny and Steve Chang have been totally supportive of the efforts of many individuals to further their Jungian training. My point of view is heavily biased because I have so much more familiarity with the Taiwan group than with any other. I think that the other groups in China will also develop quickly, but the previous psychological education provided in the Taiwanese university and extended by the Taiwan Institute for Psychotherapy put the Taiwanese began a step ahead of the other groups.

Globally, the Jungian community has formed separate theoretical and practical strands, such as the classical, the developmental, and the archetypal schools of Analytical Psychology. Will that happen in the Chinese speaking groups? We already know that in Korea and Japan the leaders of those groups went to Zurich for their training and have a classical Jungian bias. However, we have seen that change in many places where the actual clinical situation requires other theories to supplement the classical Jungian model. What I have noted in the Chinese Developing Groups is that speakers from all spectrums of the Jungian paradigm have been invited to lecture, supervise and give workshops. Speakers representing the developmental model teach about infant observation, alongside those who present the Sand Play model. There seems to be interest in a wide spectrum of Jungian approaches to the psyche. Sand Play is very popular in Asia, perhaps because the image communicates across language barriers. My concern here is that the image receives too much emphasis and the other factors which account for successful psychotherapy and analysis — attention to transference, general psychodynamic factors, and verbal communication, for example -- get relegated to the background. In
other words the sandplay image in itself is not enough. I see Sand Play work as a valuable and integral element in the practice of Jungian analysis and believe that it must not become separated from the central field of Analytical Psychology in Asia, as it has become in some Western countries.

In the Jungian world of today analytical psychology is most vibrant in Asia. The executive branch of the IAAP realizes how important this development is for the future of analytical psychology and for the future of the organization itself. Joe Cambray, the immediate past president of the IAAP, has been designated to oversee the development of analytical psychology in Asia, and there could not be a better person to undertake this responsibility. He lived in Japan in an earlier phase of his life, and in his recent years as president of IAAP he thoroughly acquainted himself with all the happenings in the Far East. It should be an exciting future as the emergent enthusiasm for Jung’s ideas consolidates and begins to generate an Asian vision of the psyche, to join the American, the European, the African, the Central and South American, the Indian, the Russian, and the Australian!

When I let my imagination fantasize into the future I see the Asian point of view having a very specific relationship to Jung’s thinking. Jung himself was so influenced by Taoism, Buddhism, and poets like Lao Tze, that I can imagine a coming together of the Asian psyche with Jung’s idea and presenting a whole new look to Analytical Psychology.