

# I Ching and Analytical Psychology

## Case Study on I Ching Reading and Dream Analysis

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*The I Ching does not offer itself with proofs and results; it does not vaunt itself, nor is it easy to approach. Like a part of nature, it waits until it is discovered.*

C. G. Jung, "Foreword to the I Ching" (1950/1969, CW 11, ¶1018)

We, a European analytical psychologist and a Chinese I Ching expert, respond to Jung's call to explore and discover the extensive resource that is the I Ching. We hope to shape a common story that inspires future practice through a collaborative study of Jungian analytical psychology and the Chinese I Ching. Thus, we set ourselves the following project: to compare the approach, setting, content, and outcome of an I Ching reading session with an analytical psychology dream session. In our experience the practice of analytical psychology and I Ching consultations both support the individuation process, in which our sense of purpose is revealed through the realization and integration of unconscious compensation. According to Jung, "This phenomenon is a kind of development process in the personality itself" (1957/1969, CW 8, ¶550), "a process not of dissolution but of construction, in which thesis and antithesis both play their part" (1921/1971, CW 6, ¶827).

*Yin* and *Yang*, evolved from the metaphors receptive/creative, are, within I Ching's sixty-four hexagrams, a rich and resourceful manifestation of the energy change dynamics found in nature and in human life. Each *hexagram* (built from six *yin* and *yang* lines) is an opposite binding symbol with a transforming potential. The hexagram's presentation of the opposites, and their potential union in forming a new symbol, enables *confrontation* and *reconciliation*, effects that are comparable to dream analysis in assisting the individuation process.

The concept of *Tao* pervades the philosophical thinking of China, which is both composed and derived from the I Ching. Jung quotes Chuang-tzu to explain its meaning: "Chuang-tzu . . . says of psychological premises on which Tao is based: 'the state in which the ego and non-ego are no longer opposed is called the pivot of Tao'" (Jung 1952/1969, CW 8, ¶923).<sup>1</sup> Jung had contact with Chinese philosophy at an early stage in his life: "I was already fairly familiar with the I Ching when I first met Wilhelm in the early nineteen twenties" (Jung 1950/1969, CW 11, ¶966). However Jung was clearly inspired further by the I Ching when

formulating his theory on synchronicity. In considering synchronicity, Jung noted that within I Ching philosophy “whatever happens in a given moment possesses inevitably the quality peculiar to that moment” (¶970). In other words, the I Ching considers what *likes* to happen at the same time in an attempt to be *in Tao*. “Even to the most biased eye it is obvious that this book represents one long admonition to careful scrutiny of one’s own character, attitude, and motives” (¶1001). And further on, “The intelligent individual realizes his own thoughts” (¶1017).

The individuated individual is referred to in the I Ching as *superior man*. Roderick Main (2007) explains, “*Superior man* refers to the diviner who is attempting, through the oracle, to harmonize his or her actions with the Tao. Such a person’s presence is implied in all responses from the I Ching” (2007, 158). For analytical psychologists the I Ching can highlight the networks of correspondences, the order underlying a situation—or the unconscious background of a situation—which allows a significantly broader perspective. “The result, when the oracular procedure is successful, is that one’s blocked energy (the impasse that caused one to turn to the oracle) is released” (179).

In the ensuing text, we attend to the case study, discuss the ingredients of the comparison, and show tentative conclusions.

## Case Study

The setting included the following:

- (1) A ninety-minute session, via Skype, with ongoing dialogue and exchange of images and texts.
- (2) Subsequent to the session, written impressions were shared in created documents via email.
- (3) A follow-up sixty-minute session, via Skype, in which the first and second steps were reviewed.

The I Ching consultation session was composed of a Chinese I Ching expert (one of the present authors), designated as “analyst” in the following sections, and a European inquirer (who has generously given permission to use her material), designated as “analysand” in the text. The dialogue is based on five I Ching hexagrams—hexagrams generated using the I Ching’s rendering of moving lines. The analytical psychology session was conducted by a European analytical psychologist (one of the present authors) and a Chinese analysand (who has generously given permission to use her material) and was based on three dreams, which the analysand compiled over a period of five months. We chose the pairings of Chinese and European for both examples because we felt the subtle interplay of the different backgrounds should be the same. More decisive was that in each of our separate practices at the time of this study, this pairing of Chinese and European had engaged our attention.

## I Ching Consultation

Following the instructions of the analyst, the analysand brought her quest to the beginning of the session, in a clearly formulated question.

**Analysand's quest:** *Should I, and how should I, complain (or inform) about a leader (L) to the higher-up leader (HL)?*

The analysand was asked to draw from a handful of small similarly shaped objects to come up with three numbers. The analyst used these three numbers to generate five interrelated hexagrams using the I Ching's rendering of moving lines. Five hexagrams serve as five lenses. Paraphrasing from the I Ching, the analyst explained, "The first hexagram represents your subjective view, the second the hidden issue, the third the potential result, the fourth the risk or opportunities, the fifth the objective view." After these initial steps analyst and analysand went into a deep reading of each hexagram. The following is the mostly verbatim session; the entire dialog is not included. The analysand wrote "summary notes" subsequent to the session.

### **Hexagram 1: Approach** 临

**Lens:** *The analysand's subjective view of the situation.*



**Image:** Earth above the lake

Outward yielding, inward joyous

**Analyst:** Let's look at the image of this hexagram: earth above the lake, approaching from top to lower position. The earth itself is boundless and wide, but it bonds and cares. What do you learn from your inner earth-like-sage to care for all people, excluding no one?

**Analysand:** Earth above lake, earth contains lake. Wide earth sustains and cares for all people. I can see the link to my question, *Should I, and how should I, complain (or inform) about a leader (L) to the higher-up leader (HL)?* It feels that if and when I speak to HL, I should not ask him to exclude L. Maybe I should not exclude L.

**Analyst:** The Approach (I Ching # 19 *Lin*) sign contains the wisdom of how to lead, especially from a higher to a lower position. The changing line occurs at line 5 (from bottom up). Looking into the detailed text of Line 5, it says: “Wise approach empowers others to nurture the wider influence.”<sup>2</sup> So we can ask, how to employ an approach that enables the best and most beneficial influence?

**Analysand:** I shall nurture others’ leadership and through the nurturing become more influential. In the process I can observe other options, readying them to be employed when the situation shifts.

## Hexagram 2: Return 复

**Lens:** *The hidden aspect/key issue of the situation.*



**Image:** Thunder below the earth

Inner movement, outwardly yielding

**Analyst:** The image of this hexagram (I Ching # 24 *Fu*) has one *yang* line at the bottom: sunrise, spontaneous arising, coming back. The time of darkness comes to a close. What light in yourself must return? And what attitude may prevent the light in its return?

**Analysand:** Light in myself must return to prepare the growth of the rising sun.

**Analyst:** The lower trigram is the thunder, indicating some obstacles shall be removed. What is hindering your return of the light that needs to be removed?

**Analysand:** What would hinder? I need to get rid of revenge. And keep to what is right for others, for the organization.

**Analyst:** Yes, just like the sunrise, it never fails to return. And it returns spontaneously; every darkness also has its dark ending. (The first *darkness* refers to the negative event; the second

*dark* refers to the negative event eventually fading into darkness, which will be the return of the light).

**Analysand:** Perhaps I just need to endure the darkness for some time.

**Analyst:** “Turn away from the outer confusion; turn back to one’s inner light, whereby, by being *in soul* one sees the divine, the one” (Wilhelm 1989, 505). What would be your inner light?

**Analysand:** Outer confusion and *out of control* need the invitation of turning toward the inner light. What is my mission? If I keep to that, then the revengeful and bitter emotions are all so trivial.

**Analyst:** Yes, speaking about that, “What is your duty?” Which is defined by serving others, something bigger than yourself. And “What is L’s and HL’s duty?”

**Analysand:** Oh, I am feeling already differently than at the beginning; it feels like something has shifted. My *new thoughts*: Do I have to complain? Inner light will return regardless. Actually, I really need to get rid of *the revenge*. And when I do complain, I should do so only if it is a part of my duty, the duty of connecting to the higher purpose.

### Hexagram 3: Limitation 节

**Lens:** *The possible outcome of the situation.*



**Image:** Water above lake

Outer danger, inner joyous

**Analyst:** To limit (I Ching # 60 *Jie*) means to set boundaries to stop what should not happen and to hold the bounds for what should happen. Water accumulates (limitless); lake sets the limit. Limits must be set as there is a possibility of over expenditure, just as the joints (thrift) in bamboo set limits to strengthen the bamboo.<sup>3</sup> (In Chinese, the character *Jie* carries a double

meaning—*limitation* and *integrity*). It's not a boundless loyalty. It's not disinterest. The limits must be set.

**Analysand:** (Laugh) This is exactly what I was trying to reach, to set the limits for L by bringing visibility to HL and the organization.

**Analyst:** I Ching teaches us that *voluntarily* chosen limits empower growth. Just like in nature, seasons shift, day and night switch; it happens naturally, voluntarily, and peacefully, which gives the things in life and the years their meaning.

**Analysand:** Perhaps I was intending to set limits, but didn't manage to do it *voluntarily* yet?

**Analyst:** Setting *limits* is like a double-edged sword: it can also be harmful if the limit is *imposed* either on one's own nature or on others; this will provoke rebellion. Just like the fifth line of the hexagram from the bottom says: "*Sweet* limitation brings success." The limitation must be carried out in the right way if it is to be effective. So how to make it *sweet*?

**Analysand:** Well, that is a very good question. I've been trying so far to bring *limitation* into the awareness of the organization/HL exactly because I can see that the lack of limits is harmful and will cause people damage, but I can also see that what I've done so far is not effective.

**Analyst:** Perhaps when it happened in the past, it was right/correct to set limits in a harder way, because there was no time and ground for *sweet* limitations. Now the question is whether the situation has changed, and whether it requires a different approach?

**Analysand:** Very much so, the situation is different. And certainly, this is exactly the question I need to think about now: *how to set limitations without imposing, how to do it voluntarily?*

**Analyst:** Just curious. Did you set the limits directly to L before you talked to HL?

**Analysand:** No, I didn't. Because I was worried such exposure could damage her. Additionally, in a prior meeting, she was untruthful in front of everyone. I just couldn't bear it, but I didn't speak up.

**Analyst:** Well, this is just one of the alternatives to consider when you contemplate the many approaches to set the "sweet or less hurtful limitations." The key point is, by not doing that, what kind of galling limits are you imposing on yourself (your inner nature), which causes suffering as well? I can tell you were hurt, weren't you?

**Analysand:** Oh yes, I was very hurt. That's so true, I didn't speak up when perhaps I should have, and the consequence of that is I have accumulated a lot of inner anger; whereas even now when she retires, it seems that I still couldn't let that go. My *new thoughts*: To voluntarily keep to the larger issue (duty), not guided by trivial/petty annoyance. Learning from the image of

bamboo, the limits must be chosen; the voluntary application of limits empowers one's growth. "Sweet limitation leads to success." How to find the *sweet* approach? I think here enters my duty. The biggest duty: to further the harmony of the spheres. There is no harmony when the sphere is not motivated by love.

### *Hexagram 4: Retreat* 遯

**Lens:** *The potential opportunities or the caution for risks.*



**Image:** Mountain under heaven

Outward creative, inward keeping still

**Analyst:** Mountain under heaven (I Ching # 33 *Dun*). The superior keeps the inferior at a distance. In the Chinese context, often when the world is dark, the wise capable person will become a hermit in the mountains. Hence the mountain and heaven sign for retreat. The retreat was done by choice, not angrily, but with reserve. It also means withdrawing and disengaging. As the base sign is a sign with more outer "fortune," this sign could be taken to make a reference and hence be a warning about potential risks.

**Analysand:** Okay, so I shall certainly consider *not* speaking up?

**Analyst:** Well, it cautions, in fact, the risk associated with the retreat, if it is not done properly or with the right timing.

**Analysand:** Aha, so it is still a big question whether or not *to retreat*.

**Analyst:** The power of the dark is ascending; light retreats to its security. Withdraw in order not to exhaust.

**Analysand:** HL once said to me, about this fight, "Don't exhaust your own health." So "withdraw, so as not to exhaust" is very apt.

*Analyst:* Retreat, however, is not to be confused with *fight* or *flight*, which is a reaction for self-preservation. Retreat is a *choice* of response, which is a sign of strength.

*Analysand:* Perhaps since the first happening one year ago, when I didn't chose retreat, and now looking at the upcoming event, this time it could be right to *retreat* and not speak up on the same matter again?

*Analyst:* Perhaps we could take a look at how nature works: such as ebb and flood and between the forces of light and dark. Wisdom lies not in *resisting*, but in *how to respond* appropriately. So to tell whether it is the moment to retreat or not, perhaps one should not follow the traditional concept of sequential timing, but rather, follow the intuitive feeling for whether one's inner world is *resisting/impulsively reacting*, or has the ability and the choice to *respond*, to further the duty one carries.

*Analysand:* That is very interesting: the concept of ebb and flood, and the different way of looking at *timing*. My *new thoughts*: The light goes for security—withdrawing in order not to become exhausted. Choosing to withdraw is strength. Timing? Right time: voluntary, cheerful retreat. Wrong time: disengagement and bitter. What do I resist? Do I resist lying and/or resist speaking up? On one hand, to set limits for the purpose of preventing harm; on the other hand, there is imposing harmful limits on one's own nature. Perhaps I could share my struggles with HL.

### *Hexagram 5: Contemplation 观*

**Lens:** *The objective view. To complete the analysand's subjective experience of the situation.*



**Image:** Tree/wind above the earth

Outward penetrating, inward yielding

*Analyst:* Tree above the earth, to be observed from a lower to a higher position (I Ching # 20 *Guan*). Consider setting an example. The reading can be digested as follows: From a lower position observe leader, which becomes a knowing through embodiment, a seeing through setting an example. From the lower position there is a limited view, so assessment and

judgment for action is by noting *the effect* on lives. “Contemplate the light of the kingdom (the influence one exercises) our embodiment counts much more than our words.” What is needed now is a readiness for self-examination. To see the effects, ask “What is it that I do?” “What is the effect?” “What example do I set by my behavior?”

***Analysand:*** So here, I also shall be mindful and shall observe HL. What attitude does he have and whether this speaks for giving a good example?

***Analyst:*** The lines working from bottom upward go gradually and progressively point to the different manners of contemplation: *Bottom line:* Child-like or inexperienced way of contemplation; content with shallow, thoughtless view of the prevailing force. *Second line:* Contemplating through cracks of the door. View is limited. One tends to relate everything to oneself and not to be in the others’ shoes to understand their motive. *Third line:* Contemplation of one’s own life—choice between advance and retreat. So only the effect that our life produces gives us the right to judge whether *what* we’ve done means progress or regression.

***Analysand:*** Do I understand HL’s motivation? What shall I contemplate about him? And while I am contemplating, am I seen?

***Analyst:*** Right, perhaps it’s like the *fifth line* that further says: “The man who others look up to must be ready for self-examination (an examination of the true effect he/she produces).” So here, who has the above position? It does not necessarily (only) refer to those who have the formal authority. In this case, authority could be HL, but also could be you, when you are looked up to for your honesty and fairness. What is important is that our embodiment counts much more than our words. And as the *sixth line* is also saying: “Stand outside of the affairs of the world, liberated from ego, and contemplate the law of life. This is the ultimate level of the contemplation.” If one hates untruth, combating it is one way, but embodying honesty is another way to exercise influence. The ego will engage us in trivial matters, but wisdom will point us back to *life duty* that we carry to serve the world.

***Analysand:*** I must embody what I stand for. Contemplating on the effect for life, not the ego position. The decision on how to tackle the problem is to embody my principle. My embodiment is sweetness, not bitterness.

***Analyst:*** Now take a distance and look at all five hexagrams and consider the unfolding narrative. What is your story?

### ***Analysand’s Summary Notes***

I could observe an emotionally fueled complex. And then I went to a different place and to different emotions. Not anger, not bitterness. When that constellation *was asked*, it seemed to be activated and then to be replaced with acceptance and authentic contemplation. So then other questions came up; it would never have crossed my mind to ask: *am I lying?* There comes a widening of perspective while keeping the force of the emotions, not a further narrowing in.

With the discussion, by Hex #2, I felt there was a choice to embrace polarities and emotions and to not stick to compulsivity. My revenge comes from *I don't like it*, but I see now *to fight* or *to accept* the darkness is no longer polarized when I contemplate on *purpose*, my duty.

By Hex #3, I was surprised by contemplating *duty* in conjunction with limitation and limitless: limitless does not hold, nor stop the wrong; it can trigger extra hate. So to make sweet limitation in connection with my duty is the answer.

By Hex #4, with the positive use of retreat, so as not to be squeezed into a polarity or a caged ground. And with my connection to duty, I have permission to move in *Wu Wei*, non-action or non-intervention, the action-response that does not initiate action but follows. Which meant that I was to be *present with HL* and nothing more.

By Hex #5, I need to consider the story under the lens of nature's law and become connected to the bigger whole. Move into contemplation that is embodied, therefore, has sweetness and not bitterness.

**Analyst:** Looking at the five signs together created a new story (which was importantly not addressing one complex by evoking another, nor that of strengthening the complex<sup>4</sup>): there is a pattern that can be embodied, a moving in and out, a bundling and releasing, reinforcing personal awareness and situational awareness.

## Analytical Psychology Session on a Dream Series

The dreams in this section are in chronological order (presented as in the session). Each dream is followed by the mostly verbatim dialogue; not all of the dialog is included. The analysand's new thoughts were shared during the session. Additionally, after the session the analysand wrote "summary notes."

### *First Dream*

*I run a race with a group of people; we need first to pick up our costume. We start at the gunshot. I am slower than the others and end as one of the last. I reflected, for such a race, the start defines the end. I realize I started after the others due to having reacted off of them (pegging on others' movement), not having synchronized with the gunshot.*

**Analyst:** In the dream, "first to pick up our costume" and "pegging on others' movement": do you have a sense of adjusting to the group?

**Analysand:** Yes, I do. I wonder what this means? Taking my cue from other people is an extroverted orientation. Maybe it would be better if I changed my outward orientation toward the outer world (others' movements) to my inner world (intuition)? When I have an inner focus (introverted), I can have quicker, more fitting, information.

**Analyst:** It seems in the dream you are learning, and you can consult yourself.

*Analysand:* Maybe what I am learning in and from the dream is to use my ego-self axis, imagining it now to be sensation and intuition. Then in terms of developing my complete functioning, I would tune into my intuition, because it seems I can get lost in my extroverted orientation.

*Analyst:* Where is your focus? Is there direct access?

*Analysand:* Perhaps the dream is pointing to the “body knowledge.” I seem not to access it directly (the pre-knowledge before the head takes over). It does ask for attention and development. The *new thoughts:* Overly focusing on the external sensing (my shadow) without connecting to inner intuition (my strength) will just lead to frustration. My intuition will be much sharper if I am able to connect to my “bodily knowledge” and trust that intuition and sensation will serve each other.

## ***Second Dream***

*A fast-driving train, like a roller coaster, flying in the air: I am on the train with a whole team to go on an outing. Sometimes the train is flying so fast it feels almost out of control and off the track, but it is, in fact, driving very firmly on the invisible track. The train drives into a dark long tunnel; we get off and pair up. I am paired with a farmer-like guy. We walk through what seems an ancient cave museum. I remember seeing some objects left from our ancestors (treasures?). Then we get on a moving walkway. Suddenly people exclaim with amazement. There are soft clouds floating in the air, moving closer and closer, coming from the opposite side of the tunnel entrance, slowly, orderly, each of them with a wonderful color (each cloud a different color). It is like a miracle, as if the clouds have life.*

*Analyst:* “Firmly on an invisible track”: what should we think about that? The orientation is larger than the personal ego. Is there a uniting of the opposites, with going through the tunnel, paired up, ancestors, to then experience a blessing? Using the imagination with these symbols may be the way to work it.

*Analysand:* I have an invisible track. The opposites are out of control and, in fact, firm and safe, the intellectual and the down to earth in the pair, the danger and the blessing. Something about the ancestors that is also that track. It’s in the landscape. Such a flying train makes me think of the flying dragon.

*Analyst:* The idea of participating is to actually be creating your environment.

*Analysand:* The *new thought:* I am participating by my commitment to work on uniting my opposites (I am paired up with the farmer-guy, definitely my opposite). And the blessing and the miracle experienced in the tunnel mirrors the union I inwardly felt.

*Analyst:* The sense of correctness. Something archetypal? A moving walkway can be like the life force. Then meeting the clouds (pure, remarkably peaceful), like the breath of the god’s mouth.

Experienced as a blessing. Seeing the face of god (the conjunction of the opposites?), seeing the landscape.

*Analysand:* The god's breath has taken my breath away. Meeting the god when the opposites unite.

### ***Third Dream***

*I went to the bank to pick up the money my husband ordered. The bank lady gave me an over-full envelope with money. The envelope is almost exploding. I hold it in my arms, trying to cover the cash in order for it not to be visible. I am walking in an old city, while craving a typical pancake (a Dutch treat sold by street vendors) that I saw in the morning market. But I am on an unfamiliar street, with steep stairs up to an old city wall. I go up and see a statue there with a beautiful background. I take out my phone to make a picture, then I realize that the statue has something alive in its belly. I can see on the phone it's a fetus of a panda. Then I realize the statue is a giant panda. But the panda is stone, a lifeless statue? How can the small panda be alive in the belly?*

*Analyst:* There appears much back and forth movement. Possibly a pregnant time in life, as can be seen in the full to bursting envelope, money ordered by your husband, carried in your arms, and then China/panda is pregnant.

Maybe there is the needed distinction of what is communal, what is singular (those are also opposites). We, indeed, need to move well in our communal and in our singular life, which will have something to do with each other. Maybe there is an ongoing process of living both, in order to understand how we become attached, to steer clear of the mass psychosis that also has an ecstatic feeling. Then we don't see borders; we are one with everything. Should you take *union* with you while you focus on different attachments?

*Analysand:* We shall know our separateness, our individuality, while understanding the attachment at the individual level, family level, and the community level. How does it work in me? Knowing the attachment?

*Analyst:* A religious experience creates contact with everything through awe. But we need to find our way through the attachments that we form (such as attachments that are instinctual, as in a craving for a pancake). Natural impulses drive our attachments (appetite, aggression, sexuality—there are so many motivations). When experiencing the face of god, we use all of the functions (feeling, thinking, sensing, intuition are all taken into the symbol). But for further individuation, consider the notion “do not stay there.” That is, you can be attached to the experience of the face of god, but at the same time, recognize other attachments. That is, numinous experience can define us, but life does not end there. It is all too easy to become fixated by instinct as well as by “awe.”

**Analysand:** So I can take the experience of the union with me while remaining open to examine my attachments? What about the panda fetus that is alive?

**Analyst:** The statue of the panda is something of a god image. But it's not a god image until you imbue it with life (the fetus). That is, seeing the miracle of a living fetus. So now, the panda is China, an attachment on the level of community.

**Analysand:** Also an animal in danger of extinction. So then comes the questions, "Where do I invest my energy (money)?" and "What attention shall I give?" The *new thoughts*: am I able, after experiencing the god (union), to *still* go fully into experiencing life's new challenges (the fetus), and not make the god a statue to worship, but a living experience, which I shall stay *awakened to*?

### ***Analysand's Summary Notes***

Exploring a dream sequence has been a powerful experience, which may be the unfolding story of my personal development. In the unfolding process, those individual dreams were timely, making *tangible* the message for the next step in development. It seems I used Jung's typology for orientation.

The first dream is about working with the opposites of introverted intuition/extroverted sensing, plus thinking and feeling.

The second dream of the miracle tunnel holds the experience of unity, the connection with the ancestor, the feeling of *facing the god*.

The third dream serves as the call to take union with me, needed after experiencing the god (union); instead of dwelling there, go fully into experiencing life's new challenges. The exchange during the session seemed to guide me to recognize and work with attachments on different levels: individual, family, and community attachments. That would be for me to navigate well in both my individual and communal life, so as to carry with me the previous union while being wary about the new attachment, all the while staying open to discovering new oppositions.

## **I Ching Consultation and Dream Analysis Support the Process of Individuation**

Jung describes the individuation process as the sense of purpose revealed in the realization and integration of unconscious compensation:

This phenomenon is a kind of development process in the personality itself. At first it seems that each compensation is a momentary adjustment of one-sidedness or an equalization of disturbed balance. But with deeper insight and experience, these apparently separate acts of compensation arrange themselves into a kind of plan. They seem to hang together and in the deepest sense to be subordinated to a common goal, so that a long dream-series no longer appears as a senseless string of incoherent and isolated happenings, but resembles the successive steps in a planned and orderly

process of development. I have called this unconscious process spontaneously expressing itself in the symbolism of a long dream-series the individuation process. (Jung 1957/1969, CW 8, ¶550)

When working with symbols in a dream series, there comes a realization of the “mid-point” of the personality, a symbolic orientation in which the opposites work together:

This something is the desired “mid-point” of the personality, that ineffable something betwixt the opposites, or else that which unites them, or the result of conflict, or the product of energetic tension: the coming to birth of personality, a profoundly individual step forward, the next stage. (Jung 1921/1971, CW 6, ¶382)

In the process of individuation a larger, more inclusive story of events is told. The goal of a more inclusive story is the goal for an I Ching consultation, as Master Lao-tzu has stated: “When things come to us, we must understand them from the ground up” (Wilhelm and Jung 1931/1972, 51). Analytical psychology has a similar understanding of meeting what appears in the dream. In working with a dream we ask similar questions: What motivates? What are the building blocks of this situation? The work during either an analytical psychology dream session or an I Ching consultation involves getting the complete-enough story told, whereby our own participation is included and positioned in a new story with greater symbolic richness.

*Getting the story told* is facilitated through a dialogical process between the analyst and the analysand; during the dialogical process there is a moving together toward fertile “moments” (see BCPSG 2010<sup>5</sup>). In terms of archetype and complex, the juxtaposition of the archetypal text with the personal complex text offers a chance to experience a shared resonance. The complex is addressed, and access to the adversarial element, which the archetypal text includes, can be built. Jung assigned the term *transcendent function* to this opposition-binding function associated with a living symbol. Through working with the different instruments (a dream series and I Ching hexagrams), we have found that both approaches share similarities in how they function to facilitate, what we call, an inner alchemical process of opening up the complex and uniting the divisions. We will elaborate on these three aspects—the dialogical process, resonance, and the transcendent function—in more detail in this section.

### ***The Dialogical Process***

In the I Ching consultation and the dream session, consonant responses are recognized together by analyst and analysand. In the dialogue the therapist-patient pair build upon each other’s move while working with the imagery offered by the hexagram or with the dream imagery. And through this, the dialogue becomes a co-creation process. The Boston Change Process Study Group (BCPSG 2010), in considering the dialogical process, sees the states in which the therapist-patient pair live as a dynamic system; their core concept of “moments of meeting” helps us to appreciate the impact of the dialogical process in the formation and creation of identity: “What we will call a ‘moment of meeting’ is the event that rearranges implicit relational knowing for patient and analyst alike” (BCPSG 2010, 6). “Such meetings involve linking between organism and context, inside and outside, giving rise to a state that is more inclusive than what either system alone can create ... the dyadic expansion of consciousness” (11). Through the

co-creation process, the arena for shared implicit knowing is enlarged. And, without using Jung's term of individuation, these authors explain:

Through certain kinds of exchange with others, you become more yourself . . . It happens when the dual goals of complementary fitted actions and inter-subjective recognition are suddenly realized. It requires something provisionally unique from each other. And such fittedness gives shared direction and helps determine the nature and qualities of the properties that emerge. (194)

### *The Resonances*

One way to explore resonance is through the concept and experience of synchronicity. The synchronistic experience is non-causal; there is a falling together of an inner reality with an outer reality, without any noticeable logic for them doing so. Jung gave a clinical example. A patient had dreamt of a scarab beetle, and at the moment in the analytic session when the dream scarab beetle was being discussed, a real scarab beetle outside tapped on the consulting room window. Roderick Main explores the clinical significance of synchronicity:

The very fact that an intimate non-causal connection can be experienced between the outer physical world and one's inner subjectivity implies that the separateness usually experienced between inner and outer, psychic and physical, or self and world can to a significant degree be dissolved . . . one could say that through revealing a profound paralleling between the psychic and physical events, synchronicity as it were adds a missing half to each, making the psychic events more embodied and the physical events more ensouled . . . Through establishing new relationships among psychic and physical events, synchronicity can effectively reorder both the general field of the psychophysical and the individual consciousness of the experiencer. (Main 2007, 75)

The synchronicity experience allows the existing resonance between outer events and inner happenings to be felt. The archetypal constellation of that moment, which resonates through-out events, is registered.

The I Ching reading guides attention to an individual's inner universe, while seeming to respond to the outer events. It uses the words *good fortune* or *misfortune* in its judgment of a situation or behavior. This has nothing to do with luck; instead, we read it more as *anything abiding by nature's law is fortunate and anything against nature's law invites misfortune*. In this way, the I Ching guides the individual back onto the track of following the law of nature that enables the highest resonance between the inner and outer universe.

Resonance can be built in the meeting ground of various texts: the analysand's initial story meets the dream text/I Ching text; the analysand's initial story together with the dream text/I Ching text meets the response of the analyst; the response of the analyst together with the analysand's response meets collective archetypal representations. To follow how this may happen, it can help to imagine the jazz musician who plans to join her fellow musicians in an improvisation. She brings her expectations built on earlier experiences and gauges her entry on what she hears the other musicians doing. She knows what is "right" from having resonated (successfully joined) more often. She can follow the patterns; hence she joins in a co-created "flow" that is beyond what she individually could do.

The various texts and their various responses are combined and woven together in the dialogical process to co-create a new meaning (hence the strong resonance), whereby the blocked energy is released and a new story is born, ready to be lived in the next step of life.

### *The Transcendent Function*

The new position, which transcends the opposites, is the new center of gravity for the whole personality. Jung describes the transcendent function's role as a process:

I have called this process in its totality the transcendent function, "function" being here understood not as a basic function but as a complex function made up of other functions, and "transcendent" not as denoting a metaphysical quality but merely the fact that this function facilitates a transition from one attitude to another. (Jung 1921/1971, CW 6, ¶828)

The symbol is integral to the process:

The raw material shaped by thesis and antithesis, and in the shaping of which the opposites are united, is the living symbol. Its profundity of meaning is inherent in the raw material itself, the very stuff of the psyche, transcending time and dissolution: and its configuration by the opposites ensures its sovereign power over all the psychic functions. (Jung 1921/1971, CW 6, ¶828)

Both the dream analysis and the I Ching consultation identify and clarify the complex to be addressed. The analytical psychologist keeps in mind an understanding of archetypal patterns and instinct, together with the formation and consequences of complexes, in order to respond appropriately to the creativity and/or compulsivity exhibited in the dialogue. An I Ching consultation uses the language of *superior* and *inferior* in the hexagram reading, where the inferior can be interpreted as the complex in action, whereas the superior is one's inner creative source, the compensation from the unconscious.

Sharing poetic language and associations brings inherent meaning to life, whereby analyst and analysand participate together in the emergence of a living symbol. The symbol binds inner truth and outer phenomena. The symbol, by pointing to an inner alchemical process, can start the reflective dialogue for the individuation process.

In the dream session the symbols from the dream are the vehicles that provide a *peek* into the needed unconscious compensation, providing for a conscious process of interaction with the outer events. Attending to the resonance between inner and outer phenomena creates a bridge between the conscious and unconscious to further the individuation process.

In the I Ching consultation walking through a set of correlated hexagrams that are felt to correspond to the analysand's situation, the practitioner experiences looking at his own situation from inside, outside, up and down, front and back, therefore gaining a significantly broadened perspective and a deeper understanding of the *essence* of the matter that is very much anchored in his own psyche. Due to the nature of the I Ching, all hexagrams are built upon the interaction of *Yin* and *Yang*, the two most original opposites and yet inseparable elementals, which are metaphors for the energy of life. Hence the wisdom and metaphors contained in all hexagrams are powerful opposite-binding instruments. They work constantly to facilitate the union of the *divided* experience and help the human psyche work toward *wholeness*.

## Conclusion

In comparing the expressed experience and conclusions drawn from the dream analysis and I Ching consultation, we found strong resonance between these two methodologies in how they function to further individuation. Both the dream analysis and I Ching consultation provide a nurturing container that allows access to the unconscious to support individuation. When dealing with a fixed pattern of response—a complex—both dream and I Ching sessions direct attention away from judging what is right or wrong to the *relationship* between the opposing ideologies. Both explore the complex that the analysand is experiencing in the present situation from various and different perspectives (opposing, complementing, inside out, outside in) so the view is broadened and the *middle way* of choice instead of compulsion can then emerge.

From our work we believe there is a resonance on four levels: analysand, analyst, place, and constellation:

- (1) Analysand's inner and outer experience resonate.
- (2) Analyst resonates with analysand's experience.
- (3) Both resonate with *place*, that is, culture, ocean in which the analysand is swimming, the earth on which she stands together with her family, complex.
- (4) All three resonate with *constellation*, that is, a particular star, phase of the moon, season, the ocean, archetype.

The extended resonance of the analyst to place and constellation is a necessary element in the participation and resonance that creates the new story.

Using the symbolic expression of nature and human relationships, we can explore the unconscious message without intellectually being caught by the old complex. By connecting outer world experiences that correspond to the symbols and patterns shown in the dream or from the metaphors contained in the hexagrams, a strong resonance is created that can feel like a synchronicity. This powerful energy field opens the creative source and facilitates the building of further connections that in turn work on the complex. Mindful of the relationship, keeping both opposites available, an awareness grows of the inner ebb and flood, a cyclic movement.

Both dream analysis and I Ching consultation invite us to *get the story told* and co-create a new unfolding one. It is important, however, to emphasize (in both approaches) that it is not about replacing one story with another, which may contain by itself the *rejection* rather than the *integration*. Instead, it serves to question earlier development and adjustment to the outer world as well as to the inner world: does the attitude adequately answer the reality we are living in? It can be like taking the seed from the old story and then planting it where it can grow and blossom in the new story that is still connected to the old one, but is much fuller and ready to serve the next cycle of renewal. And when that cycle is lived, a new seed will be planted that will blossom into another new story of growth that serves the next reality we shall experience.

Is an I Ching reading and dream analysis effective for stimulating individuation in just anyone, or indeed, when done by just anyone? An analyst immersed in Chinese symbolism may function with greater resonance during an I Ching reading, just as the analytical psychologist

immersed in mythology resonates more readily with the archetypal patterns revealed in dreams. In our experience, I Ching readings and dream analysis work best with those clients who bring curiosity and a desire to work with the imagination into the session.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Chuang-tzu, in Chinese called 庄周, Zhuang Zhou; or 庄子, Zhuangzi (“Master Zhuang”), was an influential Chinese philosopher who lived around the fourth century BCE during the Warring States period.
2. The analyst is paraphrasing from Richard Wilhelm’s translation (1989) of the I Ching in this and similar quotes throughout.
3. Bamboo is one of the four noble plants in China. The characteristics of bamboo have been personified as the spiritual and cultural symbols of purity, modesty, restraint, and integrity, which Chinese gentlemen should have.
4. We are keeping closely to what a complex is—an aggregation of feeling-tone with an archetypal core. With the new story the archetypal pattern of this complex has been “worked in.” Such working in or integration has taken into account how one complex *can* trigger another, which would then add to the strength of the complex, that is, by adding the next “feeling-tone” event to the original complex.
5. The Boston Change Process Study Group was composed in 2010 of the analysts Alexander Morgan, Jeremy Nahum, Louis Sander, Daniel Stern, and Alexandra Harrison, the developmental researchers Karlen Lyons-Ruth and Edward Tronick, and the child psychiatrist Nadia Bruschiweiler-Stern.

#### NOTE

References to *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* are cited in the text as CW, volume number, and paragraph number. *The Collected Works* are published in English by Routledge (UK) and Princeton University Press (USA).

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#### ABSTRACT

C. G. Jung credits Chinese philosophy with having similarities to his psychology, which the authors explore in this article. The concept of *Tao* in Chinese philosophy, also simply called the *Way*, expresses the archetypal process of individuation, hence the project: they compare the approach, the setting, the content, and the outcome of an I Ching reading session and an analytical psychology dream session. The authors' tentative conclusion for their common root is in their methodology that exposes life's patterns. In their view, the practice of analytical psychology and I Ching consultations support the process of individuation.

#### KEY WORDS

analytical psychology, I Ching, individuation, synchronicity, Tao, transcendent function