JUNGIAN PSYCHOTHERAPY AND CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS

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FOCUS

- Guilt and Love - Filial Piety
- Woman’s identity
- Jungian Psychotherapy and Chinese Culture
GUILT AND LOVE
FILIAL PIETY A COMMON ISSUE IN OUR PRACTICE

- Alan
  - 48 yo, ex-tourist guide
  - Severe Eczema
  - Depressive disorder
  - Career vs care of mother
FILIAL PIETY - ANOTHER MALE PATIENT

- Brian
  - 38 yo, gay
  - Designer
  - Anxiety and depression
  - Father deceased, regretted for not taking good care of him
  - Gave up job to take care of mother
FILIAL PIETY - A FEMALE PATIENT

- Cathy
- 33 yo, clerk
- OCD and Depression
- Marriage vs family
- ‘Not good enough’ for whatever she does
- Dream image: saving of father; undo his being knocked down by car
FILIAL PIETY - THE MULTIPLE ROLE OF WOMEN

- Daisy
- 26 yo, kindergarten teacher
- OCD and Anxiety
- Broke down when preparing wedding
- ‘Betrayal to mother’; ‘not doing good as daughter, daughter-in-law and wife, and will not be good mother in the future’
- Dream: ‘get married so you can have a baby girl’
FILIAL PIETY

- ‘百善孝為先’ - basis of all virtues
- 24 famous filial piety stories
- ‘孝感動天’ - even the heaven will be moved
- Love or duty?
- Heavy duty on individuals, severe resultant guilt
FILIAL PIETY IN INFANT OBSERVATION

- Family is the most important orientation
- Parents as target of submission
- Filial piety reflected in name choosing
- Who to get close to defined
- Child trained to be obedient but Independent - ‘not to be carried too much’; not burdening parents
SEVERE GUILT & EXTREME SENSE OF WORTHLESSNESS

- Edward, 32 yo
- Multiple degrees
- Eating disorder, Depressive Disorder, drinking problem
- Mother casted a gua for his birth; ‘My existence is a mistake’; ‘like germ’, ‘nothing good to offer’
- Cannot love; a cross tattoo to remind him of his ‘sin’
AN IMAGE EDWARD PREOCCUPIED WITH

- A crippled man
- Veins on the forearms
- Association with his father
- ‘hard to fit-in’ to society
- Both father and he a victim
A DREAM OF EDWARD

- A museum
- Rusted farming utensils of ancestors
- Tree on top of the museum
- Cracking of the house
LIFE OF OUR ANCESTORS

- Hard life of agriculture
- Cow is part of the totem of dragon - the head
- Diligent and reliable
- Tolerance and endurance
- Duty and sacrifice
SEVERE GUILT & EXTREME SENSE OF WORTHLESSNESS - A FEMALE CASE

- Fanny, 49 yo, married, professional

- Chronic depression, long standing suicidal thought

- Parents authoritative and rejecting

- Panicky with mother; ‘no filial piety’

- See family as burden, cannot love and cannot feel loved
ACTIVE & PASSIVE ABANDONMENT

- Childhood memory: driven away at the door gate
- Repetitive childhood dream: losing maternal grandmother on boarding a ship
SELF IMAGE OF FANNY

- ‘What can I do so I will not be hated?’
- ‘Why am I not treated as nice as other dogs?’
DOG AS AN ARCHETYPE IN CHINA

- Loyalty, trustworthy, sacrifice, no rebel
- Slavery, inferiority
- Lack of dignity and autonomy
MOTHER SEEMS TO BE AN ISSUE

- Unresolved internal conflict of mother?
- What happens in the psyche of a woman when she gets pregnant?
A STUDY ON DREAMS OF PREGNANT WOMEN

- Aim to look into the unconscious psychic phenomenons of women in pregnancy
- 80 women
- 304 dreams
- Grouped mainly by images
DREAM SCENES GROUPED BY IMAGES

- Rejection by gender of baby
- Problem at delivery
- Baby gets hurt
- Trapped and no release
- Helpless in child care
DREAM SCENES GROUPED BY IMAGES

- Husband’s position changed
- Joyous at ex-boyfriend bringing her away
- Disfiguration of body
- Wants to keep the belonging of father
- Elderly women harmful and persecutory
- Relationship with mother ambivalent
Incompetence and rejection; guilt prominent

Loneliness, burden, entrapment; desire for escape

Relationship with husband or position in marriage changed

Lots of danger, persecution

Lack of control, inadequate support

Disfiguration of body
ATTACHMENT FAILURE IN A CASE OF JUNGIAN INFANT OBSERVATION

- Mother 30 yo, an air flight attendant
- Agreed to have child only because husband has strong will
- But felt severely trapped
- Unacknowledged recklessness in child care
- Threat of abandonment
THE REJECTION PROBABLY TRANS-GENERATIONAL

- Rejected closeness with the baby
- emphasized independence; wants the baby to be thin, same as her
- Maternal grandmother same attitude
- The baby develops severe Eczema; mother same problem since childhood
TRANS-GENERATIONAL PROBLEMS

- Feminine identity
- Duty of woman under collective value (collective consciousness)
- Submissive but independent - Model for Chinese woman
- Insecurity at transition from girlhood to motherhood
WOMAN IDENTITY ISSUES
REBEL OF THE TRADITION

- Grace, 53 yo, jade sales, daughter 22 yo
- Depression, alcohol abuse
- Youngest of 5 siblings; father alcoholic, mother submissive
- ‘beauty for me is a burden’, ‘no genuine love in it’
- Run away from home since teenage, ‘nobody loves me, I gonna go and find my own love’
SEARCH OF LOVE

- Prostitute; unfortunately gang raped when drunk
- married a rich man, husband treated her badly, felt trapped
- Husband killed himself by hanging
- severe guilt, abandonment, alcohol abuse
- represents many women who tried to rebel against ‘fate’
DREAM IMAGE OF GRACE

- Erotic relationship with a man in a bathroom
- The man is passive, weak, shot dead by intruders
- Fight alone
- Survives but gets lost
ANOTHER DREAM

- A party of exchange of sex partners
- A beautiful lady suggests exchange partner
- Fatherly boyfriend gets very angry at the lady
- *The patriarchal system angry at Grace’s searching and experimenting with sex and love*
SEX AND LOVE

- Not well differentiated
- Sex as the only entertainment in Old China, for having offspring
- Woman not supposed to enjoy sex
- Finding true love and enjoying sex not validated by the patriarchal culture
ARCHETYPES OF SNAKE AND FISH

- Part of the totem of dragon - the body (snake) and scales covering the body (fish)
- Snake represents sex
- Fish represents reproduction
- Reproduction on surface to cover the underlying obsession on sex
SEX & REPRODUCTION

- Nuwa represents reproductive power worship
- Woman serves husband with sex
- No master of own body
- Love is subordinate to sex
- (婦人事夫以色、情系於色、重色不重情)
COMPLICATED INTERPLAY OF SEX & VIOLENCE

- Helen, 50 yo, church worker before
- Atypical psychosis
- Father exhibitionist, mother traditional
- Father treated mother as sex object; tortured her if she refused to have sex with him
- Mother not divorce father because of traditional value, but fights him in covert way
SEX & VIOLENCE

- Youngest of 5 daughters, brother 2 years younger
- Son preferred
- Brother also committed sexual crime
- Father cruel and enslaving others; mother critical and dominant
SEX, VIOLENCE & POWER

- In her psyche, man is dangerous
- Intrusive images of sex and violence
- Horrid interplay of violence, sex, gender discrimination, dominance and submission
- Issue of power played out very negatively in a family
ARCHETYPE OF POWER

- Eagle’s paw as part of the totem of dragon represents power
- Bird totem in Shang Dynasty (1600BC-1046BC) - a big slavery empire
- Extreme admiration and fear of power in China
NEGATIVE MASCULINE PRINCIPLE & PATRIARCHAL SUPPRESSION

- Dream images: both legs cut at shin level like wood; attack by man with Kung Fu and Chinese hidden weapons (暗器)
- Intrusive image: squats under the chair of father like a slave; mother sitting in the same chair as queen declaring her sin
- Cut from the roots; dismembering and violent intrusion by the masculine principle
FEAR OF MARRIAGE

- Pain at perineum when attending wedding of others
- Marriage means sacrifice, submission of autonomy, slavery, torture and entrapment
- No feminine identity, hates herself as woman
JUNGIAN PSYCHOTHERAPY AND CHINESE CULTURE
JUNGIAN PSYCHOTHERAPY

- Attainment of individuation
- Differentiation and integration
- Collective consciousness and collective unconscious
- The shadow, anima and animus, Self
- Balanced development of four functions - thinking, feeling, sensation and intuition
- Self as centre of our psyche; Ego-Self axis
INDIVIDUATION JOURNEY

- Symbolically depicted in fairy tales
COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS

- Populated by instincts and archetypes (primordial images/pre-existing forms)
- Two ends of the spectrum
- Inherited presupposition
- An archaic ancestor maintaining its influence in the mind of present-day humans
- Lead all conscious processes back into the old paths (Jung, 1929)
CULTURAL UNCONSCIOUS

- Between personal unconscious and universal collective psyche
- A layer of energy and images shared by a given people or culture or tribe
- Certain archetypal forms hold special influence
- Have much to do with psychology of a given analysand (Philip T. Zabriskie, 1987)
- Promotes the process of development in individual human beings.’ (Joseph L. Henderson, 1988)
China formed by integration of different tribes with different totems

cow, pig, snake, fish, horse, deer, tortoise, sheep, eagle and dog

image of dragon formed as their hybrid - totem of dragon

‘offsprings of dragon’

Each animal has unique character and represents a way of survival; give clues to the collective instinctual unconscious of the people
DESPOTISM AS THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

- Since the first Emperor of Qin (259 BC - 210 BC)
- Firmly ingrained for thousands of years
- Suppression of individuation and autonomy
- Promotion of slavery character
- Dog archetype - extreme submission
- Eagle archetype - power
CONFUCIUS AND PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM

- 「夫孝，德之本也，教之所由生也。⋯⋯身體髮膚，受之父母，不敢毁傷，孝之始也。立身行道，揚名於後世，以顯父母，孝之終也。夫孝，始於事親，中於事君，終於立身。⋯無念爾祖，聿脩厥德。」(孝經，Classic of Filial Piety)

- Filial piety as root of all virtue; establishment of character by practice of it; make our name famous in future ages and thereby glorify our parents - end of filial piety

- Commences with service of parents, proceeds to the service of ruler, completed by establishment of character

- ‘Ever think of your ancestor, cultivating your virtue’
HEROES OF FILIAL PIETY AND LOYALTY AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ARCHETYPE

- Yue Fei - a military general in Southern Song Dynasty (1103-1142), national folk hero and epitome of loyalty

- Qu Yuan - (340-278 BC), minister and poet in Warring State period of ancient China, an icon for love and loyalty to the country
SENSE OF DUTY AND GUILT IN THE PLAY OUT OF THAT ARCHETYPE

- Liang Qichao

- Famous scholar at the transition of old and new China

- True happiness comes from fulfilment of duty

- China still a guilt-driven society?
PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY & POSITION OF WOMEN

- 「未嫁從父、出嫁從夫、夫死從子」- Before marriage, submit to father; married, submit to husband; when old, submit to son; women never have a time belonging to themselves

- 「女子無才便是德」- A woman who lacks talent is virtuous

- 「母憑子貴」 - the status of a woman elevated through her son
SUPPRESSION OF FEMININE PRINCIPLE

- Foot binding for one thousand years
- Can hardly walk, needs to lean on others
- Regarded as beautiful, elegant and sexual; an ideal image of woman
- Symbolic meaning important - suppression of women’s power
FAMOUS CHINESE LEGENDS/LOVE STORIES

- White snake legend
- Feminine captured in a tower by the monk master
- Represents the patriarchal standpoint which tends to see woman seeking love as evil and destructive, so has to be eradicated
- Rescued only by filial piety of her son
LOVE IS SUBORDINATE TO THE CONFUCIUS SOCIAL SYSTEM

- Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai (Butterfly lovers)
- Marriage is arranged by parents
- Lovers can stay together only when they die
PUNISHMENT

- Cowherd and the Weaving Maid
- ‘Illegal union’; or ‘not working hard after marriage’
- Punishment by Queen or King of the Heaven, so they can meet only once a year
FILIAL PIETY AS A CULTURAL VALUE IN MODERN CHINA

- Conscious or Unconscious?
- Transition between Old and New China - fall of dynasty, abandonment of old values, deeply ingrained values fall back to the unconscious?
- Violent breaking of Confucius values in Cultural Revolution, but emphasis seems renewed now for social stability
- How does it affect us now?
CULTURAL UNCONSCIOUS - WHAT DO OUR ANCESTORS WANT FROM US?

- Filial piety - personal development vs family/parents-centred
- Marriage and offsprings - meaning of marriage revisited
- Love and sex - romantic love as an independent ideal for pursuit; sex as part of love and under self agency

- Woman’s role - independence vs duty for stability of family and order of society
CULTURAL CLASH TURNS INTO INNER WAR IN PSYCHE

- Obsession and possession

- Ancestor haunting - ghosts in our dreams; madness; psychiatric symptoms; weak ego more susceptible

- How not just be submissive, but pay good respect, be conscious

- Understand the essence, negotiate for our stand

- May come to a new way to hold the balance; a third position
BRIDGING AND HEALING

- Dialogue - conscious and unconscious, use of dream images
- Respect to culture
- Openness as to follow what feels right at our core
- Egosyntonic position - peace of our ancestors; grounded to our root; less guilt and anxiety from internal conflict
WORKING THROUGH IN THERAPY

- How are we going to help Alan?

- Stay home and abandon pursuit of own development, or fight with the burden of filial piety?
WORKING THROUGH

- Exploration and inner dialogue - service to mother as his priority
- Inner peace; skin condition improved; feels in connection with his inner value
WORKING THROUGH

- How about Cathy? Should therapy go in the direction of empowering her separation with family and develops her life goal?
WORKING THROUGH

- Great ‘resistance’ in therapy until the cultural issue on filial piety brought forth through her dreams and associations.

- Accept the position to orientate around her family. Not blame herself for remaining single and with no career development.

- Felt less stuck; inner peace gained; has more open attitude to the here-and-now; feel more ‘normal’; plans to resume work soon
Edward’s exploration shifted from Western literature to Chinese love stories.

Conscious of the patriarchal suppression; more open to explore his cultural root (museum and the tree).

Revisit guilt and love at a deeper level; seeking a position which connects him with his Chinese origin and Western values he embraces.
HURT FROM REJECTION OF ORIGIN YET TO BE HEALED

- Fanny’s image of dog vs image of swallow family
- A famous Chinese poem of swallows on filial piety
- Dream images as the starting point, slowly includes other images on separation and security
- How she could feel more approved and connected with her origin will be the issue
WOMAN’S IDENTITY

- Grace saw more clearly of her struggle in feminine identity - courage and persistence in challenging ‘fate’

- felt validated from her origin, as she represents the inner strength and endurance of the feminine principle.

- felt her life as continuation of the struggle of her woman ancestors.
CONNECTION TO OTHER HEROINE ARCHETYPAL IMAGE

- Latest dream: Chinese Kung Fu master (黃飛雄) and his westernised female cousin
- Symbolises her negotiation of new feminine position in the culture while connecting with the animus in her psyche.
- Much less craving of alcohol; can enjoy life in the simplest way.
Daughter dreamt of her father - an image of union of three of them and father’s leaving to heaven

Release of entanglement which goes trans-generational
TRAUMA FOR WOMEN

- Helen’s breakthrough - attention to the life stories of her parents and siblings

- Mother’s expectation; dowry prepared; mother’s own struggles and as victim of the culture; but mother’s scapegoating also makes the daughter the substitute victim

- Connection to the trans-generational trauma of women
FIGHTING WITH FATE - COMB SISTERS

- Found echo in the experience of Comb sisters - fighting for woman’s independence

- Heroine of the time
FINDING OWN STAND AND POSITION

- Interested to know every dream and fantasy; open to accept her shadow and unacknowledged desire.
- Re-establish her identity through revisiting her experience since childhood and her origin
- More accepting of her feminine body and weakness; keen for more self understanding and change
OTHER RESOURCES FROM CHINESE CULTURE

- Archetypal images
- Taoism - ‘Daodejing’, ‘I Ching’
- Buddhism - ‘Ten Ox Diagram’
A young man with early psychosis, impulse of cutting himself into two enacting the scene of splitting of the society when old and new generation values clash.

Exploration of I Ching provided good containing effect; helpful archetypal images to hold the internal turmoil.
Hexagram 10 - ‘Conduct’

The father meeting the youngest daughter meeting; the highest meeting the lowest

‘Treading upon the tail of the tiger. It does not bit the man. Success’

Because humour is used
CONCLUSION

- Cultural unconscious is an important layer in our psyche
- Jungian Psychology provides methods to understand them
- Abundant archetypal images are available in our culture to help our clinical work
- Therapists should equip themselves to an extent as great as possible, and as deep as possible
THE END

THANK YOU