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A Global Community Approach to Indigenous Psychology



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ABSTRACT

In responding to the calling for genuine global psychology (Yang, 2012) and global community psychology (Marsella, 1998), this article proposed my epistemological strategy for the future development of indigenous psychologies. The strategy consists of two steps: First, constructing the universal models of *self* and *social interaction* to represent the operation of human minds at the level of global psychology; Second, using these two models as framework to analyze a give culture (here is pre-Qin Confucianism) so as to construct 'culture-inclusive theories' at the level of community psychology (Hwang, 2015a, b). Recently, the *Mandala* model of (small) self-has been integrated with Jung's psychology of (big) Self, so as to describe Self-nature (zixing, 自性) the nature of human being (Hwang, 2018b). I have successively used this strategy to analyze Confucianism and Chinses Buddhism (漢傳佛教). Because this approach is a new paradigm for the cultural psychology of religion (Hwang, 2018c), any one of you are encouraged to try this approach to analyze another cultural system.

INTRODUCTION

When I was preparing my keynote speech for receiving a lifetime contribution award from AAICP, I have been indulged in reflecting a crucial question: what is the contribution of my research works, which may help Asian countries to develop their indigenous psychologies?

Suddenly, I got a bad news that Prof. Kuo-shu Yang passed away in the morning of July 17, 2018. In my reply to Prof. Bond's inquiry about his death, I said,

Yes, we lost a real junzi (君子) in the academic community of this world.

You lost a colleague and collaborator.

But, he is someone more than that for me.

He is my mentor of life.

I am very sad about this bad news.



In our circulation of information, Louise Sundararajan said that Prof. Yang is a pioneer in the field of IP with a vision of global psychology that is to build on a different foundation than mainstream psychology.

I totally agree that his life-long effort is relevant to international scholarship on IP.

For the academic career of his eternal concern,

I just finished an article entitled "The past, present, and future of indigenous psychology"

《本土心理學的過去、現在與未來》

Unfortunately, it is still in Chinese now.

I will expand and publish it in near future.

I think I would like to begin my keynote speech from my exploration in the field of psychology and my experience of "cultural shock" when I studied abroad at the University of Hawaii. In those days when I worked for my master degree in Taiwan, psychology had been defined as "behavioral science". The most influential paradigm in psychology was Behaviorism. Personality was conceived as a "black box". The culture had no position at all in its formation.

I obtained a scholarship from East-West Center, which enabled me to work for my Ph.D. degree in University of Hawaii from 1972 to 1976. During that period, I experienced a "cultural shock" that urged me to reflect on the meaning of doing research in psychology. We had a famous professor Arthur W. Staats in UH who published a book entitled *Social Behaviorism* and tried to explain all social behaviors in terms of several principles of S-R psychology. But the textbook for our class of social psychology had a subtitle emphasizing that it adopts 'a cognitive approach' (Stotland & Canon, 1972). My academic advisor Anthony Marsella was interested in studying psychopathology in various cultures. We also had an eminent professor of philosophy L. Lauden (1978) who advocated for the psychology of pragmatism in our campus. The experience of multiple approaches in psychology enabled me to aware that a 'paradigm shift' was going on in the field of psychology, and various paradigms in Western psychology have their own philosophical grounds.

Face and Favor Model

My experience of studying abroad has the profound influence on my research orientation after I returned to Taiwan and began my academic career at National Taiwan University since 1976. Prof. Kuo-Shu Yang initiated an indigenization movement of psychology during early years of the 1980s (Yang & Wen, 1982), I soon realized that most Western theories of psychology had been constructed on the presumption of individualism, but most non-Western

cultures emphasize the importance of interpersonal relationship which had been relatively neglected by Western psychologists. Therefore, I constructed a *Face and Favor* model to describe the mechanism of dyad interaction between two parties of various relationships (Hwang, 1987). Then I used this model as a framework to analyze the content of Confucianism and published a book entitled *Confucianism and the Modernization of East Asia* (Hwang, 1988).

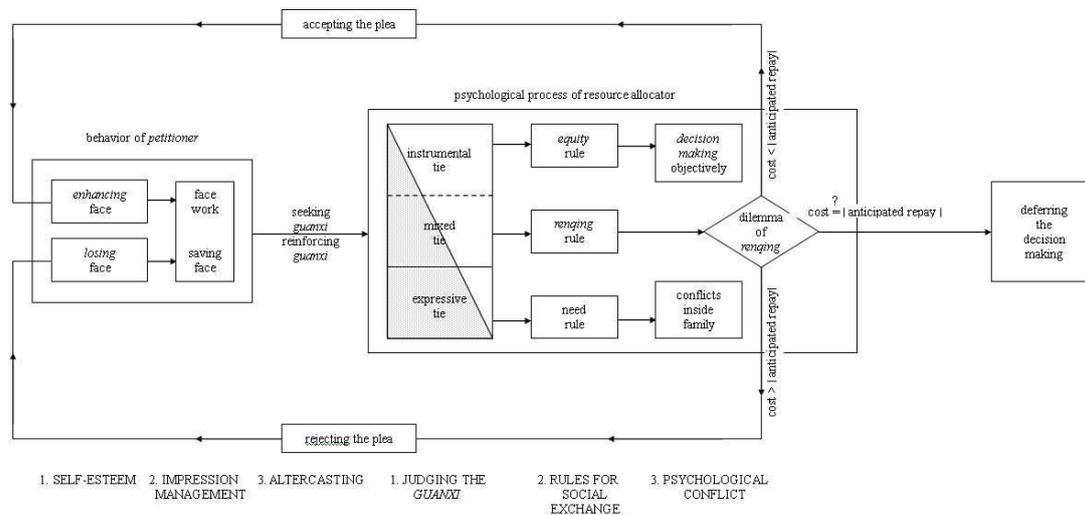


Figure 1: Face and Favor model (adopt from Hwang, 1987: p.948)

Philosophy of Science

Because my approach was very different from the 'typical' ones of doing psychological research, it had been strongly questioned by others within the camp of indigenous psychology in Taiwan. The experience of debating with others reminded me of the relationships between Western psychology and philosophy of science which I had learned in UH. Because the philosophy of science is a product of Western civilization, it is very hard for a Chinese scholar to understand the dialectical relationships among various paradigms of philosophy, so I decided to write a book by myself for the sake of helping other Chinese scholars to understand the meaning of my approach to promoting the progress of indigenous psychology.

I spent more than ten years writing the book *Logics of Social Science* (Hwang, 2001/2013/2018a), which addresses different perspectives on crucial issues of ontology, epistemology, and methodology proposed by eighteen Western philosophers since the beginning of 20th century. The first half of this book discussed the switch of philosophy for natural science from positivism to post-positivism. The second half expounded the philosophy of social science, including structuralism, hermetic and critical science.

Confucian Relationalism

It is one of my eternal beliefs that in order to overcome the difficulties encountered in the work of theoretical construction, non-Western Indigenous Psychologists have to understand not only their own cultural tradition but also the Western philosophy of science. Based on such a belief, since I was appointed as the principal investigator of the *Project in Search of Excellence for Research on Chinese Indigenous Psychology* at the beginning of 2000, I have constantly attempted to resolve difficulties of constructing culture-inclusive theories in psychology by using various paradigms in the Western philosophy of science.

When the project ended in 2008, I integrated findings from previous related research into a book entitled *Confucian Relationalism: Philosophical Reflection, Theoretical Construction, and Empirical Research* (Hwang, 2009), its English version was published with a new title, *Foundations of Chinese psychology: Confucian Social Relations* (Hwang, 2012).

Based on the principle of “one-mind, many mentalities” (Shweder et al., 1998), I advocated in this book that the epistemological goal of indigenous psychology is to construct a series of theories that represent not only the universal mind of human beings but also the particular mentality of people in a given society. The idea of universal mind is exactly the so-called “genuine, global human psychology” which had been advocated as the final goal of indigenous psychology by Prof. Yang (2012) in the last publication of his life (Fig.2).

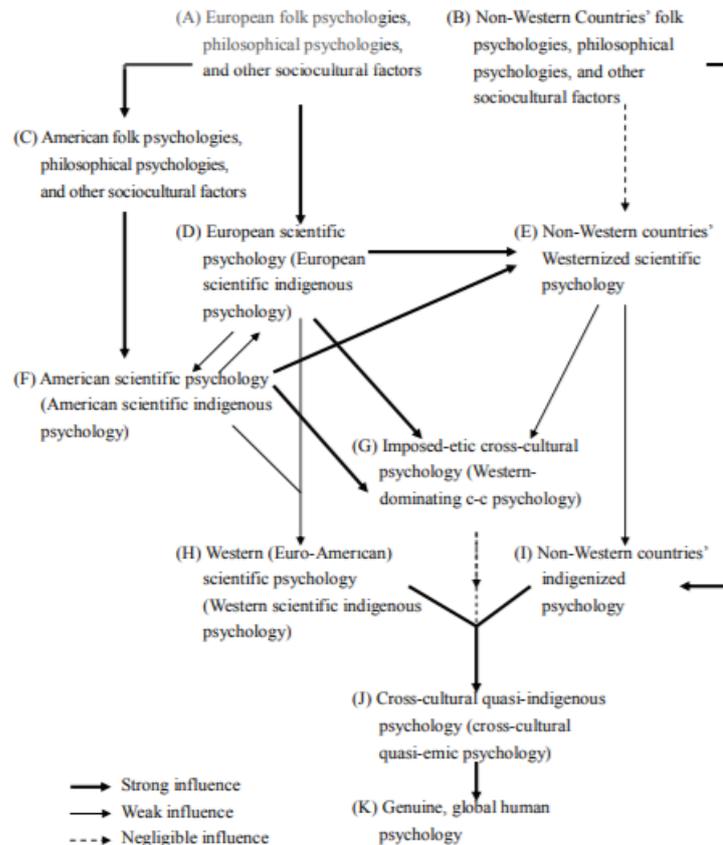


Figure 2: Historical Developmental Relations of Indigenous Psychology, Westernized Psychology, Indigenized Psychology, Imposed-etic, Cross-cultural Psychology, Cross-cultural Quasi-indigenous Psychology, and Genuine, Global Human Psychology (adopt from Yang, 2012: P.6)

Two Steps for Constructing Culture-inclusive Theories

There is a principle of wisdom in *I-Ching*: “Different roads lead to the same destination, one may arrive at the same end by different means.” Prof. Yang is one of the pathfinders in international psychology (Gabrenya & Sun, 2015). As it is shown in Fig. 2, he tried to figure out various means or paths of doing psychology for arriving the goal of global psychology, here I just want to present my own way to achieve this goal.

In chapter 4 of my book *Foundations of Chinese Psychology*, I explained how I constructed

the theoretical model of *Face and Favor* which was supposed to represent the universal mind for social interaction; In Chapter 5 of that book, I used it to analyze the inner structure of Confucianism and discussed its attributes in terms of Western ethics. In the remaining chapters of this book, I constructed a series of theories on the presumption of relationalism to integrate findings of previous empirical research on social exchange, the concept of face, achievement motivation, organizational behaviors, and conflict resolution in Confucian society.

Borobudur Temple

When I was preparing the manuscript of my book *Foundations of Chinese Psychology*, I had been indulged in contemplating the possibility of constructing a new model of *self*, which is supported to be universal for understanding one's decision-making in a particular social context. I was inspired by the structure of Borobuder Temple for the construction of such a model when I visited this model after the First international conference of AAICP in July 2010.

Borobudur Temple is located 40 kilometers northwest of Yogyakarta. The temple was built in the Sailendra dynasty, the ruler of Java in the 9th century A.D., and was the world's largest Buddhist building at the time. Then the temple sank because of volcanic eruption and laid hidden under dense jungle for almost one thousand years until the early 19th century. Now Borobudur, together with the Great Wall, the Pyramids and Angkor Wat, are known as the four wonders of ancient Orient.

Borobudur was built as a single large stupa. Its vertical main structure can be divided into three parts: base (or foot), body, and top. The foundation is a square with 123 meters on each side and 4 meters tall. The whole structure has nine platforms, the lower six are square and the upper three are circular. The body is composed of five square platforms each with

diminishing size. The first terrace is set back 7 meters from the edge of the base. The other terraces are set back by 2 meters, leaving a narrow corridor at each stage. The top part consists of three circular platforms, each surrounded by a row of perforated stupas arranged in concentric circles. The largest central stupa on the top platform was surrounded by a total number of seventy-two small stupas. Each bell-shaped stupa is pierced by numerous decorative openings. A statue of the Buddha sits inside each of the pierced enclosures (Soekmono, 1976).

The tour guide told us that according to the cosmology of Buddhism, the monument's three divisions symbolize the three stages of mental preparation towards the ultimate goal of life, namely Kamadhatu, Rupadhatu, and Arupadhatu. Kamadhatu is represented by the base, Rupadhatu is represented by the five square platforms (the body), and Arupadhatu by the three circular platforms with the largest stupa on the top. In 1885, a hidden structure of the base was accidentally discovered. The hidden base contains 160 reliefs which are narratives describing the real Kamadhatu. The beautiful murals and detailed decorations depicting Buddhist stories on the walls of Rupadhatu squares disappear into plain circular platforms in the Arupadhatu. This represents the phenomenal world where human beings are still attached to forms and names were transformed into the formless world (Soekmono, 1976). All of a sudden, I realized that the structure of Borobudur Temple is, in fact, three-dimensional Mandala!

Mandala

Mandala, a term from Tibetan Buddhism, is usually plotted in color as a symbol of Buddhist solemn world, representing compassion and wisdom. Its basic structure is a circle inside a square. Lamas may spend one or two weeks using colored sand to build *Mandala* during the festival of Tibetan Buddhism. There are strict rules for making a sand *Mandala*; the

production process itself is a training of meditation and wisdom. The finished *Mandala* is colorful, symmetrical, magnificent and solemn, with blessings to the festival and all of the participants.

At the end of the festival, lamas destroy the *Mandala* with their fingers. Colored sands are put into small bottles and distributed to the participants to take home for worship. The remaining is sprinkled on river or land. *Mandala* symbolizes the transformation of a Buddhist's life. The process from making a *Mandala* to its destruction represents the forming, staying, and emptying of one's life.

The attitude involved in making and handling a *Mandala* contains the highest wisdom of Buddhism: Do everything seriously without taking it seriously. Buddhists believe in karma, the principal cause. People have to bear their own success and failure, so it is important to do everything seriously. However, Buddhists also believe in subsidiary causation, since things change in themselves, it is unnecessary to take them seriously.

Ultimate Goal of Life

The wisdom contained in the process of building a *Mandala* includes almost all the major ideas of self-cultivation in Oriental culture. The structure of *Mandala* with a circle inside a square is a symbol of the self, representing the spiritual integrity to coordinate the relationship between human beings and the external world. In her article, *Symbolism in the Visual Arts*, published in a book entitled *Man and His Symbols* edited by Jung (1964), Aniela Jaffe indicated that alchemists played an important role around 1000 A.D. when various sects appeared in Europa. They sought for the integrity of mind and body and created many names and symbols.

Jaffe (1964) indicated that no matter where it is—in the sun worship of primitive people, in

myths or dreams, in the *Mandala* plotted by Tibetan lamas, in modern religion, or in the planar graph of secular and sacred architectures in every civilization, the symbol of the circle represents the most important aspect of life, the ultimate wholeness, whereas the square indicates secularity, flesh, and reality. Both symbols represent the most important aspects of one's life, and *Mandala* itself can be viewed as a symbol for the prototype, or the deep structure of one's self!

A person, Self, and Individual

With such an enlightenment, I proposed a *Mandala model of self* soon after my visit to the Borobudur Temple (Hwang, 2010). In this model, the *self* is situated in the center of two bi-directional arrows: The top of the vertical arrow points at *a person* and the bottom points at the *individual*. One end of the horizontal arrow points at *wisdom* or *knowledge*, while the other endpoints at *action* or *praxis*. All of the four concepts are located outside the circle but within the square. The arrangement of these five concepts indicates one's *self* is being pulled or dragged by several forces from one's lifeworld. All five concepts have special implications in cultural psychology, which should be elaborated in detail.

The distinction between a person, self, and the individual was proposed by Grace G. Harris (1989). With an intensive review of the previous anthropological literature, she indicated that the triple structure of personality can be found in most cultures of the world, but these three concepts have very different meanings in the Western academic tradition. As a biological concept. Individual regards each human being a member of the human species who is motivated to pursue some resources to satisfy their biological needs which might be no different from other creatures in the universe.

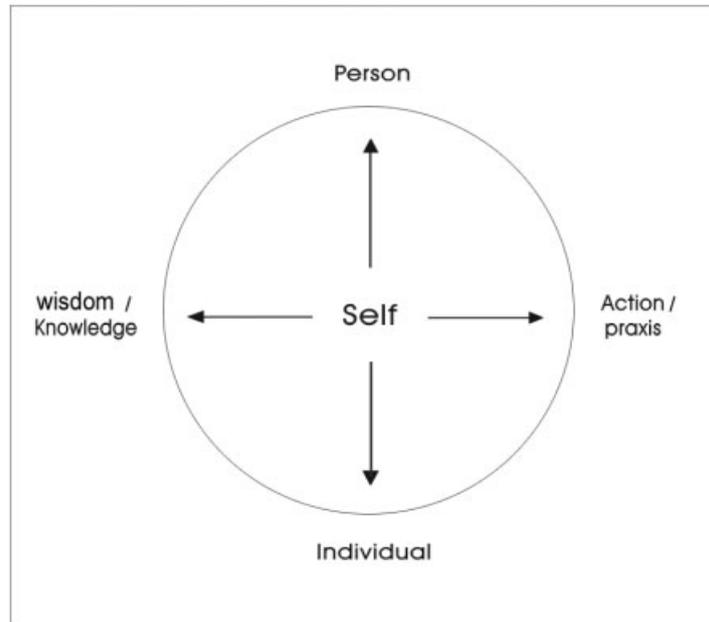


Figure 3. Mandala Model of Self (Adopted from Hwang, 2011: P.330)

A person is a sociological or cultural concept. A person is conceptualized as an agent-in-society who takes a certain standpoint in the social order and plans a series of actions to achieve a particular goal. Every culture has its own definitions of appropriate and permitted behaviors, which are endowed with specific meanings and values that can be passed on to an individual through various channels of socialization.

Self is a psychological concept. In the conceptual framework of Figure 3, the self is the locus of experience that is able to take various actions in different social contexts and is able to indulge in self-reflection when blocked from goal attainment.

According to Giddens' (1984, 1993) structuration theory, the self as the agency is endowed with two important capabilities, namely, reflexivity and knowledge ability. Knowledgeability means that the *self* is able to memorize, store, and organize various forms of *knowledge*, and make them a well-integrated system of *knowledge*. Reflexivity means that the self should have the *wisdom* to monitor his or her own *actions*, and is able to give reasons for *actions*.

The archetype of the Self

In Jung's psychology, the archetype itself is transcendent. It is empty and purely formal, just like a crystalline structure in the mother liquid. The real nature of the archetype cannot be understood by consciousness; it contains nothing and has no substantial existence of its own. But it has a possibility of being represented by a prior formal structure.

Jung studied various archetypes in the collective unconscious which had been manifested in Western literature, including persona, anima, animus, shadow, old wise man, grande-mere, etc. But, the most important one is that of the Self. It is the prototype of other archetypes. Once we have a picture about the archetype of the Self, other archetypes can be derived accordingly.

Because the Self in itself is transcendent, man can never know its wholeness by his limited wisdom. Every religion tries to describe it with concentric circles or squares of a Mandala, which is actually only a transcendental self. For Jung, the Self is the totality of personality; it is symbolized by circle, square, quaternary, or *Mandala*. The Mandala is a typical archetype of the Self. It is called quadrature circuli in alchemy, the square in the circle or the circle in the square. It is an age-old symbol that is found all over the world and goes back to the prehistory of humanity. In the last chapter of Jung's (1969) works *Aion* which had been accomplished in his old ages, he tried to depict the structure of the self by quaternity. Among many of the figures made by Jung, there was an ogdoad composed of two pyramids (see Fig. 4). I do believe that it can be used to denote the formal structure of the (big)Self more adequately.

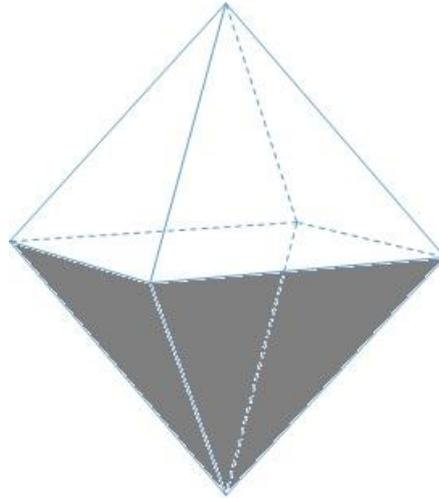


Figure 4. Ogdoad: The Formal Structure of Self-nature at the moment of birth.

Formal Structure of Self-nature

The formal structure of ogdoad is combined by two pyramids. The quaternity of their common base denotes the moment when a baby was given to the birth (Fig. 4). The *Mandala* model of self in Fig.3 It represents one's *punctual self* (Taylor, 1989) existing at a particular moment of one's life course which can be conceptualized as a tri-dimensional model like a Borobudur tower or the formal structure of a pyramid (Fig. 5).

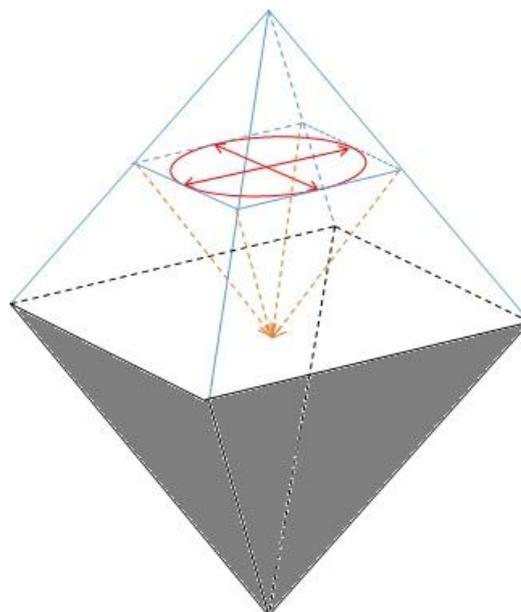


Figure 5. Ogdoad: Formal structure of Self-nature

In Chinese Buddhism (漢傳佛教), there is a very important core concept called the *nature of Self* or *Self-nature* (自性, zixing), which has been described as pure, changeless, free from birth and extinction by Huineng (惠能), the Sixth Patriarch of Ch'an Buddhism in *The Altar-Sutra* (壇經). All the principle of the universe could be created by the *Self-nature*, and the time-engaged self is differentiated from it. It seems to me that Fig.4 can be used to denote the formal structure of *Self-nature*, which Fig.5 can be used to tell the relationship between self and self-nature.

Thus, a complete psychodynamic model of *Self-nature* is composed of two pyramids: The upper one represents one's course of life, while the lower upside down pyramid represents one's *collective unconscious*. All one's previous experience will be stored in his/her *personal unconscious* in accompany with the passage of time after the date of his/her birth. Thus, the formal structure of ogdoad represents the psychological topography of conscious, personal unconscious and the collective unconscious.

Jung's Exploration of the Psyche

The distinctions between conscious, personal unconscious, and collective unconscious are so important theoretically that makes Jung's psychology different from Freud's psychoanalysis, which also made Jung decide to depart from Freud. In Volume V of Jung's (1961) autobiography, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, he mentioned his interpretation of a dream of his own that happened in his seven-week trip with Freud to the United States in 1909. They were together every day and analyzed each other's dreams.

In one dream, Jung found himself in the upper story of a strange two-story house. It was a kind of salon furnished with fine old pieces in Rococo style. A number of old paintings hung on the walls. Descending the stairs, he found that everything on the ground floor was much older, dated from about the fifteenth or sixteenth century. He decided to explore the whole

house; he opened a heavy door and discovered a stone stairway that led down to the cellar. Descending again, he found himself in a beautifully vaulted ancient room. Examining the walls, he knew that chips of brick in the mortar dated from the Roman times. He looked more closely at the floor and found a stairway of narrow stone steps leading down to the depth. He descended again and entered a low cave cut into the rock. Thick dust lay on the floor, bones, and pottery scattered in the dust including two human skulls, like remains of a primitive culture.

Collective unconscious

Freud urged Jung to find a wish in connection with these two skulls. His interpretation of this dream was dramatically different from Jung's own. Jung thought to himself: "what does he really expect of me?"

I did not feel up to quarreling with him, and I also feared that I might lose the friendship if I insisted on my own point of view. On the other hand, I wanted to know what he would make of my answer, and what his reaction would be if I deceived him by saying something that suited his theories. And so I told him a lie. (p.198)

Eventually, Jung submitted to Freud's intention and named his wife and his sister-in-law as someone whose death was worth wishing! Freud seemed greatly relieved by Jung's reply. Notwithstanding, Jung learned that he was completely helpless in dealing with certain kinds of dreams and had to take refuge in his doctrine.

It was plain to Jung that the house represented a kind of image of his then state of the psyche. *Conscious* was represented by the salon which had an inhabited atmosphere. The ground floor stood for the first level of *the unconscious*. The deeper he went down, the more alien and the darker the scene became. In the end, he discovered remains of a primitive world

within himself, i.e., a world of *collective unconscious* which can scarcely be reached by conscious. It borders on the life of the animal soul, just as the caves of prehistoric times usually inhabited by animals. The long inhabited ground floor in medieval style, the Roman cellar, and finally the prehistoric cave, signified cultural history and past stages of consciousness.

Self and Self-nature

The world of collective unconscious made Jung decide to depart from Freud, whose theory of psychoanalysis mainly deals with personal unconscious, but not collective unconscious. Jung's psychology of collective unconscious is also very important for the future development of indigenous psychology. As I indicated in the *Mandala* model of self (see Fig.3), the dynamic relationships among an *individual's* desires *self* and social request to behalf like a *person* with a consideration to *wisdom-related knowledge*, as well as the consequence of one's *action* or *praxis*, can best be depicted by the forces exerting on one's self in the psychological field of my *Mandala* model of self at the conscious level (see Fig.3).

Conceiving in the theoretical model of the ogdoad structure as shown in Fig.5, the *Mandala* model of self (ego) is just a slice of *punctual self* (Taylor, 1989) being cut from the tri-dimensional Borobudur tower or the upper pyramid. An appropriate figure of Self-nature is indeed a tri-dimensional Mandala of the Borobudur Temple from the Eastern perspective, while its complete picture can be depicted by the formal structure of an ogdoad which is a combination of two pyramids (see Fig.4 and 5).

Human beings had used symbols and metaphors to represent the things of their ultimate concern long before they could utilize modern language. As two of the four wonders of ancient Orient, Borobudur tower in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and the Pyramids in Egypt had been constructed without the aid of any modern technology. These two wonders of the world

may be symbolic of the Self—the most mysterious object for everyone to understand. Therefore, we may have a better understanding of yourself by the ogdoad (as shown in Fig.4 and 5) which is a symbolic combination of Borobudur tower and pyramids.

Existential Wisdom of Culture

Baltes and his research team devoted many years to study the wisdom of human beings at the Max Planck Institute in Berlin. They defined wisdom as a perfect state of Utopia which is a collective product of culture and argued that both culture and individual are carriers of wisdom (Baltes & Kunzmann, 2004). A distinction should be made between an individual's actual performance of wisdom and abstract existential wisdom of culture. In any cultural group, there are some "wise men" whose realization of wisdom in life are frequently mentioned, discussed or even imitated. Furthermore, there is much-crystallized intelligence in any cultural heritage which may help its members deal with major problems related to life planning, life management and life review (Baltes, Dittmann-Kohli & Dixon, 1984; Baltes & Smith, 1990).

An individual's performance of acts and ideas of wisdom in one's daily life are actually manifestations of abstract cultural ideas. Therefore, one has to learn wisdom-related knowledge and store it in one's personal stock of knowledge, which should be differentiated from the abstract culture ideas of existential wisdom stored in the social stock of knowledge, such as books, journals, movies, or other forms of publication that has been collected in libraries or stored in websites.

Language Game and Collective Unconscious

Conceiving in terms of Jung's psychology, one's personal stock of knowledge, especially the wisdom-related knowledge, might be stored in one's memory at his/her conscious level (see

Mandala model of self, Fig.3). It might be stored in one's personal conscious (from quaternary to punctual self, see Fig.5) as a consequence of previous experiences of interacting with significant others since one's birth. Furthermore, it might also be collected in the collective unconscious (the lower upside down pyramid in Fig.5) of a cultural group who share the similar experience of implicit cultural learning by using the same language.

Language is the most important carrier of culture. When an individual is learning a language game (Wittgenstein, 1945), s/he is simultaneously acquiring a style of life that might be a manifestation of various archetypes stored in one's collective unconscious.

As I mentioned before, Jung (1970) studied several major archetypes in Western culture, including great father, mother, child, devil, god, shadow, wise old man, wise old woman, etc., while the (big) Self is the most important one.

A careful examination over his examples of archetypical images, it is easy to find that they are mainly products of Western culture. In other words, the transcendental formal structure of Self-nature (in Fig 4 and 5) is the prototype of all archetypes with similar crystalline structures. They have inherited potentials which might be enriched and shaped by one's experience of interaction with the outer world. They may enter consciousness as images and manifest in once daily life. The autonomous and hidden forms of archetypes might be transformed once they enter consciousness and are given verbal expression by individuals in a particular culture, but all members of a cultural group using the same language may have similar archetypes in their collective unconscious.

CONCLUSION

I have two mentors of life in my academic career. Prof. Yang (2012) proposed that the goal of indigenous psychologist must be the genuine global psychology, and Prof. Marsella (1998)

advocated the idea of global-community Psychology. I have emphasized that the *Face and Favor* model (Hwang, 1987), *Mandala* model of self (Hwang, 2011) and the psychodynamic model of Self-nature (Hwang, 2018b) are all universal models which can be viewed as a kind of genuine global psychology. It seems to me that Prof. Marsella's idea of a global community is much more illuminating, but it must be dealt with separately. The global psychology can be defined by the aforementioned universal models, while community psychology is designated to study the cultural heritage and collective unconscious of a particular group.

In addition to Daoism and Buddhism, Confucianism has been the most important wisdom of traditional Chinese culture. The content of Confucian thoughts consists of three main parts, namely, discourse on the arrangement of interpersonal relationships (i.e., Confucian relationalism, 關係論), discourse on mind and nature (心性論), and concepts on the ways of Heaven (天道觀). The concepts on the ways of Heaven had been relatively neglected. Following the two steps of global community approach, I used the *Face and Favor* model (Fig.2) as a framework to analyze the classics of pre-Qin Confucianism and to construct a series of culture-inclusive theories of psychology (Hwang, 2012; 2015a, b). Recently, I used *the Mandala* model of self (Fig.3) and the psychodynamic model of *Self-nature* (Fig.5) to reinterpret quotations of Song and Ming Li-school (宋明理學的語錄) (Hwang, 2018b). The second step of this approach enables us to understand various aspects of psychology in communities of using the Chinese language; while the first step of constructing universal models of global psychology (Fig.2, Fig.3, and Fig.5) can be utilized by an indigenous psychologist to analyze any cultural system in a given community. It is expected that my global community approach may also contribute to the progress of indigenous psychologies in other culture.

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