

# Two Individuation Modes of Chinese Hero Myth in the Framework of the Heart of Psychology

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## ABSTRACT

In the approach of the Heart of Psychology, based on "the myth is a METAPHOR for workings of the archetype, this paper finds that the classic heroic mythology of Pan Ku (盘古) and Kua Fu (夸父) embodies the two aspects of the Chinese cultural individuation — natural development and trauma transformation: the former is the dynamic symbol of the development of psychic life, psychic noumenon develop from chaos (unconscious order, the primordial Self) produce the central Self (the deity of Pan Ku), and divided into two extremes of yin and yang simultaneously, to form a "split and orderly structure of the yang (heaven) — ego (the human form of Pan Ku) — yin (earth)", and then to the death of ego (the human form of the Pan Ku), and to reconstructing an integrated state of wholeness (conscious order) at last. It reveals the Chinese cultural development rule of "both opposite and complementary each other" (相反相成). The latter reveals that spiritual yin and yang, the opposites between two extremes, follow the "extreme-shift-moderate" path as per the rule of "Things always reverse themselves after reaching an extreme. (物极必反)" It includes the lopsided growth of the psychic "Yang" part, the compensatory growth of the psychic Yin part, the trauma due to imbalance between "Yin" and "Yang", and the transformation of two parts neutralized; a three-stage individuation pattern starting from yang (fire, conscious) to yin (water, unconscious) and then to "neutralization" (和) of the two elements, before obtaining the integral psyche.

**Keywords:** *the Heart of Psychology, archetypal image, Chinese hero myth, Self-archetype, individuation, Pan Ku, Kua Fu*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Self is the important archetype of Jungian analytical psychology, which is not only the whole psyche but also the center of all psychic-eternal spontaneous motivation for promoting "unity" and "totality" of the polarized parts of the psyche. The post-Jung scholar Fordham therefore divided it into the primordial Self and the central Self. The process of approaching the "wholeness" is called "individuation", which was originally proposed by Jung from the second half of man's life, and expanded into the whole process of life by post-Jung scholars. It is the process of differentiation and integration of psyche development and realization of the whole psyche, which, takes place on the ego-Self axis.

According to Henderson, archetypes exist in

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mythology and ritual, Self as archetypal, of course, is no exception. Its images are expressed in a variety of ways, especially in heroic mythology. "hero — a mythological motif that corresponds to man's unconscious Self" (Samuels, 1986). Therefore, we can use the national heroic mythology to explore a certain mode of the cultural individuation

Chinese early heroic mythology is short and simple. Compared with Greek heroic mythology, it has less plot and characters. Nevertheless, the heroes with both diety and humanity in Chinese mythology still accord with the following description: "The hero is a transitional being, a Mana Personality. His most approximate human form is the priest. From a psychological point of view, he represents the will and ability to seek and experience repeated transformations to pursue wholeness or meaning. Therefore at times he appears to be ego, and at other times, to be self. He is the EGO-SELF AXIS personified. The wholeness of a hero implies not only the ability to withstand but also to hold consciously the tremendous tension of opposites"

(Samuels, 1986). It can be said that, at the level of cultural unconsciousness, Chinese heroic mythology contains the Chinese cultural image of ego and Self, as well as the expression and symbol of the process of individuation.

We research two classical heroic myths — Pan Ku creation and Kua Fu, in the framework of the Heart of Psychology — Analytical psychology and Chinese culture. Prof. Heyong expands approach in Analytical Psychology, covering psychoanalysis and Chinese culture, named the Psychology of Heart. He grounds it in the foundation of the Chinese culture and develops an effective psychotherapeutic theory in a bid to attain Dao of the Chinese psyche. In this paper, we explored the mythical texts deeply with the abstract thinking of taking images from objects, and based on the hypothesis that text is the dynamic symbolic image of the development and change of psychic noumenon. Then we probe into the two Chinese cultural modes of individuation: natural development and trauma transformation.

## **II. THE INDIVIDUATION MODE OF NATURAL DEVELOPMENT: PAN KU MYTH**

### *A. Primitive whole Self — the opposites divide simultaneously — the split and orderly construction — reconstructing the integrity and unity Self*

San Wu Li Ji ("三五历纪"), (Xu Zheng, 222~280) recorded the two Pan Ku mythologies, which is the earliest and most complete Pan Ku mythology in existence at present: The world (includes heaven and earth) was as chaos as an egg. Pan Ku was born in it. About ten or eight thousand years, world separated to be heaven and earth. The lucid Yang ascends to form the heaven while the turbid Yin descends to constitute the earth. Pan Ku transformed during the process. He transformed nine times each day. His mind was more than heaven, his glory was more than earth. The heaven grew a Zhang each day (about 3.3 meter.) The earth grew one Zhang each day. Pan Ku grew as the same speed. Thus, they grew up another ten or eight thousand years. Now, the heaven was high extremely, the earth was deep extremely, and Pan Ku was long extremely. After Pan Ku's death, his breath turned into wind and clouds, his voice into thunder, his left eye into the sun, his right eye into the moon, his limbs and body into the four poles and five mountains of the world, his blood into rivers, his veins into land lines, and his muscles into earth. Hair and beard become stars, skin hairs become plants, teeth and bones become minerals, bone marrow becomes precious jade, sweat becomes Rain Water, and parasites become human.

The creation of Pan Ku mythology is not only a metaphor for the development and change of the Physical world noumenon, but also a metaphor for the

development and change of the psychic noumenon as a whole system state and energy flow, from closure to openness, from chaos differentiation to reintegration; Pan Ku's demigods embody the characteristics of "ego" and "Self".

### *B. Image 1: the chaos like egg, inner pregnancy Pan Ku — primitive whole Self*

"The world (includes heaven and earth) was as chaos as an egg. Pan Ku was born in it." The first chapter of Dao Te Ching of Laozi, "nothing (无), the beginning of all things, being (有), the mother of all things," is similar to the Nortesian term "pleroma", quoted by Jung, which is both nihilistic and full of all things. Image 1 presents a primordial state of being from nothingness to psychic life. It has the characteristics of integrity, order and undifferentiation.

Jung holds a unitary view of the psyche. Chinese culture has always respected the unitary view and regarded all kinds of heterogeneity in the world as a whole. The Taoists called this "whole" by "one" (一). Zhuangzi's Qi Wu Theory said "heaven and earth are born with me, All things and I are one. "the egg image in Pan Ku mythology expresses the original whole image of heaven, earth and man as "one" (一).

Chaos is not muddledness, but order states that do not have periodicity and symmetry. They are ordered in disorder (Yue Guoan, 2005). As far as image 1 is concerned, the chaotic state is closed like an egg. Symbolism as the object of the psychic system is not perceptible for the time being, it can be regarded as an unconscious order.

In the thought of Yi (易), Taiji (太极) was a chaotic state at first, it already contained yin and yang, which were only undifferentiated, but intersected and mixed, and then , there was a distinction between yin and yang gradually.

Franz wrote in *The Process of Individuation*: in our psychological system, the center of the organization that has a restraining effect seems to be a "nuclear atom." We can also call it the creator, organizer, and source of dream imagery. Jung calls the center "Self", as a totality of the whole psyche, so as to distinguish it from the "ego", which is only a small part of the whole psyche. "Heaven" is yang, and "earth" is yin , the "middle"(中) quality of Pan Ku, is not only the "middle" of the spatial dimension, but also is neuter energy . Pan Ku is the embryonic form of the central Self that restricts the two extremes of Yin and Yang in the next stage. He is the "nuclear atom" used by Franz, has the nature of the creator.

*C. Image 2: separation of heaven and earth — two opposites dividing simultaneously (Psyche Noumenon) — Central Self (Pan Ku)*

"About ten or eight thousand years, world separated to be heaven and earth. The lucid Yang ascends to form the heaven while the turbid Yin descends to constitute the earth." Chaos disintegrated, closed into open, Yin and Yang opposite complementary, and differentiation. Jung pointed out that individuation is a "process of differentiation", differentiation is the first step to realize Self. This differentiation process the separation of parts from the whole and the separation of difference (includes opposites). In the first differentiation type, collectivity is the spiritual mother of the individual, as the individual is delivered from the collective, that is, "it is the development of the psychological individual as a being distinct from the general, collective psychology"(Jung, 2014). The second type of differentiation is the separation of two opposing attributes in the whole. Jung said, "I employ the concept of differentiation chiefly with respect to the psychological functions. So long as a function is still so fused with one or more other functions — thinking with feeling, feeling with sensation, etc." In this point, Jung used opposite psychological functions as one of examples. In Chinese culture, the two opposites are refer to yin and yang. Image 2 presents the movement of simultaneous separation of yin and yang .

The motive force of differentiation is the central divine Pan Ku — the central Self, which born from the primitive whole Self. Jung used Christ as one of the symbols of Self in the western cultural to highlight the divinity of Self. According to the inscription of San Chai Tu Hui ("三才图会") (Wanli of the Ming Dynasty) , Pan Ku is the image of the "dragon head and person body"-a symbol of divinity and humanity. The dragon head symbolizes divinity, and the Pan Ku with the dragon head can be regarded as the divine Self . Because dragon has qualities of divinity and authority in Chinese culture, and it is often regarded as the symbol of emperors. In folk culture, Pan Ku is called the pan emperor of Yin and Yang, which symbolizes the dynamic function of neutralization on the basis of differentiation of yin and yang.

*D. Image 3: the growing together of Heaven, Earth, man: ego-development and inflation (Pan Ku) — orderly structure of division (psychic noumenon)*

"Pan Ku transformed during the process. He transformed 9 times a day. His mind was more than heaven, his glory was more than earth. The heaven grew a Zhang each day (about 3.3 meter.) The earth grew a Zhang each day. Pan Ku was the same. Thus, they grew up another ten or eight thousand years. Now, the heaven was extremely high, the earth was extremely deep and Pan Ku was extremely long." With the

intensification of differentiation, psychic system appear the state: ego — inflation, the orderly division of extremes of heaven and earth, man .

As the Chinese old saying goes, there is Human Dao after the Dao of heaven and earth, which symbolizes the individual consciousness after the content of the psychic system has been differentiated. Compared with image 1, the psychic noumenon of image 3 becomes a more open whole, more closed system between heaven and earth, which has become easily sensed. That is, the field of consciousness of the expanding psyche, is like the psyche becoming more and more conscious state. Pan Ku is the center of this field of consciousness-the symbol of ego. In 1st step, it could be a change of body form or a change of spatial position. It can be understood as the expression of the adaptive function of ego. With the continuous growth of the human body of Pan Ku, how powerful its image is, the Chinese have always respected the idea that " true man is stand upright on one's two legs between heaven and earth". Although it has the positive significance of daring to take on the responsibility, but on the other hand, it is easy to fall into the inevitable inflation with the expansion of consciousness. At the same time, the wisdom and ability of Pan Ku have surpassed the world, that seems to fall into the power aspect of ego-complex.

At this stage, the psychic noumenon is completely divided into a kind of conscious three-pole tarctic structure, and the three-pole energy tends to be balanced. However, the heaven is at the very high place, the earth is at the very low place, although in the middle, Pan Ku is the connection of yin and yang, but not communion ,so the state is an split and orderly state of division.

*E. Image 4: the dead body rebirth to all things of world:ego-extinction (Pan Ku) — reconstruction of the integrated integrity of the Self (psychic noumenon)*

Pan Ku's body death means the deconstruction of ego, and all the contents of the body are transformed into natural objects, which are integrated into the open space of the three poles of heaven, earth and man, symbolizing a reconstructed whole Self with the characteristics of conscious order and integration.

Pan Ku's death means, first, to abandon the body ego, which carries external sensual desires, and second, to "abandon the power aspect of ego" in order to " Manifest plainness, embrace simplicity", restore and integrate into nature. Both Taoists and Confucianists in Chinese culture advocate abstinence of material desire and ingenuity. It is the human body that carries the sensual desire and intelligence. When the human form body of Pan Ku grows up, the desire, intelligence and tactic will be magnified, and there is a risk of losing the

Self. In this regard, Chuang Tzu's Qi Wu Theory ("齐物论") puts forward "Self lose ego (吾丧我)" as a solution. As Guo Xiangyun said, "I have forgotten about me; I have forgotten myself; what makes the world fully known!" "that is to say, the form in which human beings are lost is no different from all things. 'I' represents a state of consciousness attached to ego. In this context, '吾' refers to Self, '我' is to ego, '我' (ego) is to forgetfulness, throw away, give up, "lose (丧)" is to give up ego to get the whole Self.

Pan Ku came from the whole, and finally returned to the whole. The parts of the body were transformed into those distributed in the space of heaven, earth, man, the three poles, communicating yin and yang, leaving the split and orderly state of the image 3, and making the psychic noumenon become integrated and ordered conscious state.

### **III. THE INDIVIDUATION MODE OF TRAUMA TRANSFORMATION: KUA FU MYTH**

#### *A. The opposites develop successively — the trauma of unbalance of Yin and Yang — transformation in earth (±) — rebirthing to integrated Self*

In *Guideways through Shanhaijing* ("山海经") and *Liezi* ("列子"), Kua Fu Chases after the Sun are recorded in three versions, whose narratives are slightly different. Given the chronological order, we consider the first recorded version in *Shanhaijing* as the original myth, which only has statement but no evaluation, whereas the latter two versions have remarks that Kua Fu "overestimates himself", before arrival, he died of thirst on the way. The cane abandoned by Kua Fu, and soaked by fat and flesh, created peach orchard covering thousands of meters.

The first half of the story consists of three parts: three movements (chasing the sun, drinking for water); thirst and death. The second half consists of three parts: throwing away the cane, soaking and the peach trees.

#### *B. Image 1: the pursuit of the sun symbolizes vitality, showing the unbalanced development of "Yang"*

First of all, it is a running image, full of vitality pursuit. As the material of "Yang", the sun is located in the upper position of the Kua Fu. he constant chase and approach it, and its own energy system adds "Yang" energy, and reduces "Yin" energy. The original meaning of the word "chase" is to chase prey, and later also has the meaning of "driving or expelling". Whether he chases the sun as a good object or to drive away the sun as a bad object, it can be understood as an omnipotent narcissism—one of the self-complex orientations of the primitive thinking period.

With the development of cognition, omnipotent feels frustration. Only when a person finds that he is "limited" does he think he is "overvalued". That also means the feeling of inferiority experienced by the martyrs in front of the great powers. In Greek mythology, Phaeton (in Greek meaning "burning"), the human son of the sun god, proudly believed that he would surely drive the sun chariot like his father, and eventually only be burned to death. It also makes us realize that human beings cannot surpass the incompetence of flesh and blood. And in the positive aspect, even if the boasting God knows his limits, he also insists on the goal of surpassing his own ability, "doing what he knows is impossible", which reflects his perseverance and courage in promoting progress and development.

#### *C. Image 2: drinking and seeking water are compensatory development of "Yin"*

The human body is composed of the epitome of "Yin" and "Yang". Thirst is the inner feeling of the body, because excessive consumption of a person's internal "Yin" caused by the external pursuit of the sun, which needs to supplement / compensate and balance the opposite water / "Yin". As far as the "Yin" and "Yang", five elements in Chinese culture are concerned, the sun is the four iconic symbols. Kua Fu pursues the scaffold that falls into the element of fire, catch up with the sunset of western jade valley, is bigger "Yang", and fall into "metal" (金) element. The north where he was going was the great "Yin", which conquered the "fire" (火) in the form of "water" (水) elements. Considering the lack of water / "Yin", although drinking water in the river, he then went to the big "Yin" place to find more water. This is a measure of compensatory development of "Yin" to "Yang". Because chasing the sun, he was thirsty.

Apollo, the god of the sun, who craved for Daphne, daughter of the god of the river but his desire could not be satisfied. He chased her on the plain and shouted, "Oh, the river goddess... Stop!" Daphne panicked and continued to escape, and finally she became a laurel. as a result, attempts to conflate the fire and water of the two polarized energies failed.

#### *D. Image 3: death partly by looking for water to assume "Yin" and "Yang" imbalances as well as physical loss- trauma*

The death of Kua Fu represents not only the physical life — failure "objectively, but also the symbol of trauma — spiritual life subjectively. Because death is far from the end in this myth, it is the starting point of a new and higher state of spiritual life. He died in search of water, not the sun. Water is a symbol of unconsciousness, motherhood and "Yin". And the sun, contrary to water, is a symbol of consciousness,

fatherhood and "Yang". therefore, the "thirsty to be dead with seeking water" symbolizes too much fire/"Yang" energy, while water/"Yin" energy is too little. The imbalance between "Yin" and "Yang" led to the death.

*E. Image 4: reborn to peach trees is from "Yin" and "Yang" imbalance caused by the trauma state beyond the "Yin" and "Yang" neutralization state*

First, it's a non-physical form of resurrection. Demigod heroes are featured with archetypes of Self; which is proved by the fact that Kua Fu died and turned into peach tree. As an image of the spiritual subjective level, the peach trees are featured with the Self-archetype of integrity, opposite unity and transcendence (beyond opposites and supernatural divinity).

Peachwood has the function of exorcism and protecting offspring, and is often used to make weapons and witchcraft tools. Peach is symbol of spring and female. They are female and fall into the water element. The physical state and tool function of trees retain the quality of "Yang". Therefore, we can see that peach trees symbolizes the opposite "Yin" and "Yang". To become a peach trees is to change from positive to negative, the result is not a single state of "Yang" or "Yin", but a third product, the overall state of unity of opposites, intertwined, interdependent balance, neutralization and transcendence of "Yin" and "Yang".

The highlight of the myth lies in the fact that Kua Fu healed and regenerated from the trauma of "death". The transformation of the archetypal significance is "the term Jung chose to speak about the deployment of and its redistribution from one form to another in the course of development was transformation"; "the transformative image pulls the various disparate energies together and gives them an overall direction." (Murry Stein, 2004) Jung believes that "psychic energy is to be the subject of the law of conservation" in a relatively closed and independent psychic system, and that it can be diverted, changed and transferred. The direction of the energetic flow "is always transferred from the stronger party to the weaker". It corresponds to the myth in which the development of Kua Fu changed from lopsided "Yang" to compensatory "Yin" (Guo, Shen, Zhang, & Wu, 2018).

Both the "gender" and the "cane" of Kua Fu are masculine. When "Yang" thrives in chasing the sun, it turns to "Yin". As far as the pattern of change in Chinese culture is concerned, "extreme encounter" is mentioned in the Book of Changes: "the sun goes west at noon and the moon goes west at the full moon" (Feng, ䷋). Everything is impermanent, rising and falling over time, not to mention god, people or ghost! Here, the "change" (变化) emphasizes the switch between certain bipolar energies, for example. from "Yang" to

"Yin" and vice versa. The "transformation" (转化) emphasizes changes in bipolar states/relations, such as the state of "Yin" and "Yang" from imbalance to neutrality, and the relationship between "Yin" and "Yang" from conflict to unity, as shown in myth. the transformation/healing mechanism presented by mythology: the huge antagonistic relationship between the extremes of "Yin" and "Yang" is precisely the motivation to promote traumatic transformation. Furthermore, the key healing factor is hidden in "his discarded cane, soaked in fat and body." Considering the five elements of "Yin" and "Yang", the cane is male thing. "Discard cane" symbolizes Yang's abandonment / reduction of some energy. At the same time, sugar cane fell into wood elements. Fat and meat in the body fall into the water element in the form of "Yin". In the five elements, water promotes "wood" (木). This is a "Yin" supplement "Yang" image of wood in water, the cane soaked in meat and water to raise wood. All of these are based on the "earth" (土), which means both the female land on the objective level and the "earth" of the five elements.

The cane and the body take root on the earth, which is a container for the supply of new energy and renewable transformation for Kua Fu. In both Chinese and Western cultures, the earth has maternal characteristics of parenting and reproduction. Every time he was knocked down in Greek mythology, Antaeus collected energy by touching his Mother Earth Gaia. Kua Fu is the grandson of Houtu (后土) — the mother god of the Chinese earth.

He died and returned to earth. Even if not mentioned in the original text of the myth, we can imagine that with the decay of the body and the penetration of the sun and rain, the inanimate wooden staff soaked through the body of the Kua Fu and slowly created a vigorous peach trees.

In Jung's view, the energy flow and integration path in the self-actualization model seems to consist of four stages: the first stage develops the self, the center of consciousness; the second stage integrates the unconscious shadows suppressed, denied and suppressed by self; the third stage integrates "heterogeneity" in the unconscious-animation/animation, the opposite of consciousness; and the fourth stage psychology to the core of the whole person-self, reconstructing the orderly, complete and balanced self. This myth, as a continuous and dynamic overall image, follows the path of "changing from unbalanced" Yang "to" Yin "until the final neutralization of" Yin "and" Yang ", and "Yang" is the individuation of the flow of spiritual energy in three stages. "Yang" corresponds to "self" in Jung's model of individuation ;" Yin "corresponds to" heterogeneity "; and neutralization corresponds to self. His "shadow" of the Kua Fu is implied from the evaluation of "over-

evaluation of his own ability ", which shows that the Kua Fu has no concept of his own " limitness" — the shadow in unconscious.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

Looking back at the development of the heroic images of Pan Ku and Kwafu, they go through the process also: development of ego, death of ego, reincarnating into natural objects, and obtaining neutralization of the opposed energies, Realizing the transformation from ego to Self. "The opposed simultaneous development / differentiation "in the natural development mode give expression to the Chinese cultural view about opposed energies change, — "opposite and complementary to each other (相反相成)". The trauma transformation mode — the trauma is caused by unbalanced the development of opposites ,it reflects the other Chinese cultural view about opposed energies change, — "Things always reverse themselves after reaching an extreme" (物极必反).

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