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Sixteen Years Later: Revisiting *Cultural Complexes* and the Roots of *Archetypal Thematic Analysis* (ATA)[1]

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Abstract

Written as a letter to my 28-year-old self, this paper explores the development of my engagement with *cultural complexes*. On August 18, 2009, I finished a chapter applying cultural complexes to a history of China, complete with elaborate charts that seemed to confirm a process by which cultural complexes are formed, and how China's then recent actions during the Beijing Olympic Games (i.e., utilising 7-year-old Yang Peiyi's vocals yet refusing to allow her to perform at the opening ceremony, opting instead for the lip-syncing of 9-year-old Lin Miaoke and the initial cover-up of classical dancer Liu Yan's accident during rehearsals) seemed to confirm the constellation of emotional and behavioural patterns that could be usefully assembled under the concept. While this paper is an opportunity to reflect on my critical assessment of cultural complexes, it is equally an example of autoethnographic study and a meditation on personal archival practices within a post- and neo-Jungian framework. Crucially, an autoethnographic approach has facilitated an understanding of how the development of *archetypal thematic analysis* (ATA) (in collaboration with Ann Yeoman) stems from my thinking around, and appraisal of, cultural complexes. ATA is offered as a complement to cultural complex theory (CCT) in the hopes that a mobilisation of both can produce a methodological expression of a 'third way' or what Paul Preciado calls a *mutant psychoanalysis*.

Keywords: archetypal thematic analysis (ATA), Asia as method, autoethnography, cultural complexes, mutant psychoanalysis, performance studies, personal archives

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Dear Kevin,

A message arrived in your Inbox in August 2024, inviting you to participate in the *Journal of Analytical Psychology's* 70th anniversary conference, contributing to the final panel on cultural complexes and phantom narratives. You sat on this for a while but finally agreed given the Journal's importance in forwarding clinical excellence and research in the field, and despite having archived your debate with Tom Singer (Lu, 2013a; Singer, 2013; Lu, 2013b) into the annals of your own professional history. Some have agreed with your critique, which included challenging the originality of the concept, pointing to the methodological conflation of individual and group levels of analysis, emphasising the theory's cursory engagement with the discipline of history and the potentially deterministic and tyrannical narratives that result, effectively removing human agency from the historical equation. Barbara Cerminara (2020), for instance, published her pivotal paper on the Jewish complex largely in support of your initial findings, arguing that a more holistic and relational approach must be integrated to deepen analyses mobilising a theory of cultural complexes. Others, meanwhile, have disagreed with you. Several have quietly agreed, thanking you for articulating concerns they also shared but, for various reasons, could never voice publicly.

Life has moved on since your initial engagement with *cultural complex theory* (CCT) in *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*. In 2023, you made the difficult choice of leaving the University of Essex, the proverbial 'home' of Jungian and post-Jungian Studies. After 17 years—progressing from a PhD candidate to tenure-track lecturer leading the MA Jungian and Post-Jungian Studies at the age of 28, to full Professor and Head of Department—you walked away from the theoretical and practical 'home' most closely aligned with your thinking and research. From there, you entered The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London, with a Professorial Chair and responsibility as Head of the Department of Practice. There are days when you suddenly look back, struck by a wave of nostalgia and the poignant sting of what you left behind. In those moments, you remind yourself of why you felt you had to leave. You yearned for something more than what you perceived, at times, to be an echo chamber of insularity, speaking amongst the converted, the impact and value added of your work limited within the boundaries of a discipline situated at the margins (rightly or wrongly so).

You say this now not as an indulgent reflection on a career trajectory, but precisely because of your deep respect for history, contextual analysis and honouring the subjective position from which you are currently writing. Memories of the past do not exist in a silo; all remembering takes place in the present (Schacter, 1996), and it would be disingenuous to leave your current relationship to post-Jungian (and neo-Jungian [Carpani, 2021]) thought out of the equation. It is from this perspective of having been sitting slightly outside the discipline that you felt sufficiently prepared to enter this

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discussion once more, but expressing your thoughts in a way that invigorates you, an attempt to recapture the creativity you felt you had lost.

After reflecting on how to approach the invitation, you decided to frame your contribution as a letter to your 28-year-old self. The epistolary approach taken here constitutes a methodological intervention. The modality of the letter is inherently relational and allows you to capture the doubt, emotion, and 'messiness' of intellectual creativity that simply would not fit in a more formal methodology section of an academic paper. While this letter is deeply personal, it is also a disciplined act, as you navigate the 'I' of your personal archive to explore theoretical concepts. Indeed, the letter—utilised as a temporal map charting the evolution of ideas over sixteen years—allows for a more accurate snapshot of the several terrains you have traversed: from analytical psychology to decolonial thought, autoethnography, geopolitics and performance studies.[2] You are mindful of the dangers presented by multidisciplinary explorations, as each discipline has its own resistances, loyalties, and habits of reading. You are also aware that performance studies has not always welcomed psychoanalysis with open arms. Alan Read (2001) captures the sentiment by noting the risk that psychoanalysis, applied as a lens, may colonise performance. If treating performance as a symptom or text to be decoded—thereby pathologising it—we privilege psychoanalysis as a metanarrative that ultimately divests performance of its unique agency and social specificity. The contemporary suspicion also pertains to a perception—rightly or wrongly—that psychoanalysis still leans towards universalising narratives that smack of both gendered and colonial legacies (Khanna, 2003; Said, 2003; Fanon, 1952/2008). Audience reactions to Paul Preciado's speech delivered to the École de la Cause Freudienne in 2019—published as *Can the Monster Speak?* (2021)—is an uncomfortable example of the inability of some psychoanalytic thinkers and practitioners to account for changes in the way sexuality and gender identity are experienced, debated and understood. Preciado, however, does not dismiss psychoanalysis entirely, but calls for a "mutation of psychoanalysis" (p. 77)—a "mutant psychoanalysis" (ibid) that, you argue, is embodied in the ethos of both post- and neo-Jungian Studies (Samuels, 1985; Carpani, 2021). Your epistolary mode is therefore an intentional strategy, a desire to capture the complexity of human experience behind the research, a snapshot of your own mutation, both as an individual and thinker.

August 18, 2009 – "Cultural Complexes, Shame, and the History of China"

Not many know that your "broadside attack on the 'good ship' cultural complex" (Singer, 2013) started with an excluded chapter of your PhD that

[2] I am grateful to Mark Hunter and James Rowson for supporting an entry into the field of performance studies.

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applied and supported the theory. Although you had your reservations from the start (largely around the desire to differentiate cultural complexes from national identity and character [Singer and Kimbles, 2004]), you produced a 40,000-word chapter on cultural complexes and a history of China, complete with historical charts that seemed to confirm a process by which cultural complexes are formed. China's then recent actions—such as utilising 7-year-old Yang Peiyi's voice but replacing her image with that of 9-year-old Lin Miaoke and the cover-up of dancer Liu Yan's opening ceremony injury—exemplified the constellation of emotional and behavioural patterns central to this concept.

Your primary argument was that China's collective psyche and its aggressive, nationalistic behaviour were best understood through the lens of CCT and collective shame (Jacoby, 1994). You posit that China suffers from unresolved cultural complexes originating in a series of historical traumas (in particular, the 'century of humiliation', *bainian guochi*, a constructed period beginning with the first Opium War [1839] and ending with the Chinese Communist Party's 'triumph' in the Chinese Civil War [1949] [Callahan, 2004]). Such traumas led to a fear of an "annihilation of the group spirit" and the subsequent "emergence of an avenging protector/persecutor defence of the collective spirit". Borrowing from Singer and Kimbles' extension of Donald Kalsched's (1996) notion of *archetypal defenses of the personal spirit* to group life, you organised China's history into a pattern of *trauma, turning point, daimonic protector/persecutor*, and *archetypal defenses*.

Predominant cultural complexes began to form, you suggest, with a series of devastating wounds that attacked and/or brought into question China's national character. A succession of historical crises—the fall of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the foreign rule of the Manchu Qing Dynasty (1644-1912), defeat in the two Opium Wars (1839-1842; 1856-1860) (Brook, 1998; Brook and Wakabayashi, 2000), and Western and Japanese encroachment at the end of the Republican Era—perpetuated deep feelings of betrayal and humiliation (Cohen, 2003).

A significant moment in the psychological development of the modern Chinese psyche is identified as the Nanking Atrocity (1937-38),[3] which entrenched a profound sense of shame. Often referred to as the Rape of Nanking (Chang, 1997), the symbolic pain, suffering, and penetration of the land this nomenclature suggests is correlated to the physical rape and desecration of bodies, signalling a loss of power, esteem and autonomy.

[3] How the event is referred to reflects the perspective adopted when assessing the event. A more victim-centred narrative—epitomised by the work of Iris Chang (1997)—would refer to Japanese encroachment as the Rape of Nanking. A more academic and balanced perspective—adopted by such historians as Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi—refers to the event as the Nanking Atrocity. Japanese revisionists seeking to minimise the event's magnitude refer to it as the Nanking 'incident'. For a further discussion, see Wakabayashi (Ed.), (2007).

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The rise of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1949 is interpreted as the emergence of a daimonic protector/persecutor. This defense system was mobilised to preserve the group spirit by shielding Chinese identity from further re-traumatisation while forging a yearning to avenge past humiliating losses. The CCP's actions to protect a fragile group psyche manifests core archetypal defenses, where violence is turned both outward (i.e., protector) in the form of anti-foreignism and inward (persecutor), as evidenced by internal purges, re-education campaigns and culminating in the violent suppression of student protests in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Crucially, the shame experienced by China is rooted in the gap between a perceived historical "grandiose self-ideal" (i.e., China as the 'Middle Kingdom' and therefore the centre of the world) and the reality of subsequent humiliation at the hands of foreign powers (in particular, the West [Britain] and Japan). It is precisely this traumatic repetition that fuelled China's struggle to return to international prominence, the opportunity for which came with the Beijing Olympics in 2008. Given, however, an interpretation of two events—the replacement of Yang Peiyi's face with that of Lin Miaoke's and the cover-up of Liu Yan's accident that left her paralysed—through the lens of *synchronicity*, the spectacle "devolved into the preservation of a *persona* that is not the true face of China". This over-identification with a strong and 'perfect' persona is likened to an individual neurosis which, if left unexamined, leads to psychological imbalance and a potential, violent unconscious compensation. The path to healing, you argue, requires China to transform its defense mechanisms, moving beyond a political agenda dependent on "shame and self-torture", to recognising the 'true face' hiding behind the mask—a vulnerable, yet not entirely helpless, national identity. Until such time, collective wounds and the subsequent aggressive, archetypal defenses to which it gives rise will continue to influence China's approach to international relations and politics.

October 30, 2025 – Reflections from the present

I was struck by the singularity with which you, and perhaps many in the field, understand as the function, role and utility of the *persona*. In your 2009 chapter, you critique China for being overly obsessed with the notion of 'face' and 'saving face'; it is this deep desire to maintain respectability that drives cultural complexes to energise archetypal defenses of the group spirit. Yet in your research and analysis, you neglected to delve further into the concept of 'face', and what it might mean historically and sociologically. You allowed your drive to advocate for CCT's veracity to shape an interpretation that is ultimately biased and, perhaps more alarmingly, colonial in scope. Is the static nature of your analysis a consequence of a 'typical' approach with which you engaged the topic, or perhaps something inherent in CCT and its largely

unexamined positionality as a theory stemming from the Global North? David Yau-fai Ho (1976) writes that the concept of face is "abstract and intangible" but is yet "the most delicate standard by which Chinese social intercourse is regulated" (p. 867). Erving Goffman defines face as the "positive social value a person effectively claims for [themselves] by the line others assume [they have] taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self [that is] delineated in terms of approved social attributes" (Goffman quoted in Ho, 1976, p. 868).

The concept of 'face' in Chinese culture falls into two distinct categories: *mien-tzu* and *lien*. Mien-tzu denotes one's reputation that is earned through personal achievements and career successes (Hu, 1944, p. 45). Mien-tzu, from an analytical psychological perspective, possesses synergies with Jung's description of the first half of life (Jung, 1989). Lien, on the other hand, signifies the respect bestowed by the group onto an individual of outstanding moral character. A person who possesses lien is one who fulfils their obligations and shows themselves to be a decent human being (Hu, 1944). One may lose both mien-tzu and lien, but the loss of mien-tzu does not preclude the possibility of mitigating against these losses and re-establishing one's status (Ho, 1976). The loss of lien, by far, is the worst of the two. To possess lien is to have the confidence of society in the integrity of one's moral character and loss of this position invites social exclusion and expulsion; it indicates a definitive failure to uphold the responsibilities and communal standards expected of those in high standing. From a psychological perspective, a loss of lien—the ultimate disgrace—is directly linked to the development of shame (Ho, 1974). Lien is therefore both a social and internalised sanction that enforces moral standards, regulating individual conduct and managing the order of society (ibid., 1974). The fear of losing lien points to the interconnectedness between oneself and the larger group (Hu, 1944), and the significance of relationality and societal harmony at the heart of Chinese culture and Confucian values. It is even possible that one loses lien not due to something one has done but perpetrated by those with whom one is affiliated (Ho, 1974; Ho, 1976). The loss of one's reputation also extends to one's family (Ho, 1976), who may in turn experience shame and humiliation even though they have not committed the act that has led to a loss of lien.

The concern for 'face', then, seems to be inherently psycho-social and relational, sharing similarities with Jung's concept of the *persona*. What strikes me here, however, is that what might be negatively framed within analytical psychology as persona-driven pursuits actually define decorum and respectability in East Asian cultures. In later years, you yourself have tried to recuperate the place of the persona to a greater level of importance, arguing along the lines of both Robert Hopcke (1995) and Alane Sauder MacGuire (2017). The relational turn in analytical psychology (Brown and Saban [Eds.], 2026) positions individuation as an inherently relational process, one

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for which Jung himself seemed to advocate. He reminds us that "individuation is an at-one-ment with oneself and at the same time with humanity since oneself is part of humanity" (Jung, 1946, p. 108). He further writes:

> Individuation is a process of differentiation, having for its goal the development of the individual personality […] Since the individual is not only a single entity, but also, by [their] very existence, presupposes a collective relationship, the process of individuation does not lead to isolation, but to an intenser and more universal collective solidarity (Jung, 1971, p. 448).

If one accepts that individuation is inherently relational, then the persona—being, in your estimation, a significant archetype regulating relational activity given its role as the psychic mechanism through which the ego engages with the external world—is not a hindrance to individuation as Jung would claim (Jung, 1916), but an integral aspect of, and psychological piece to, one's self-realisation. The persona becomes meaningful precisely when considered in relation to another within a social network. It may not be the central image of our fullest potential, but it is still an important part of who we are and is fundamental to comprehending how we function as a collective. We should be consciously aiming to build, as Hopcke (1995) rightly argues, a persona that aligns with the values of the inner Self. In this way, the persona is not different from the Self but rather, a particular image of the Self. Although it would be detrimental to identify with the persona, we equally do not survive without it; the goal is to build a more authentic persona that does not violate who we truly are, and through which we can journey towards individuation, which entails both an engagement with our inner and outer worlds. Stated succinctly, the persona does not have to hinder individuation as Jung (1916) suggests; rather, it is one vessel that carries us towards greater wholeness.

In your 2009 chapter, you failed to analyse the concept of 'face' from multiple perspectives, holding them in productive tension. 'Face' in Chinese culture is not just about upholding prestige and a standard of behaviour, it is a question of one's dignity and honour as an individual (Ho, 1976); maintaining 'face' is an essential—perhaps even sacred—act that addresses the psyche-social balance at the core of many East Asian cultures. If an emphasis is placed on realising and nurturing a relational understanding of individuation—one that is equally an individual and collective endeavour (Jung, 1916)—then issues of decorum and fulfilling social obligations (*lien*) are the bedrock of building social trust and instilling moral integrity. By making an unexamined leap from individual to collective, suggesting that China's concern for 'saving face' on an international stage is a pathological defense against humiliation and a refusal to individuate on Western terms, you have discarded the centrality of a culturally sensitive and historical approach. You have neglected to appreciate that striving for *mien-tzu* (prestige and success) and the maintenance of *lien*

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(moral character) can be, in the Chinese context, expressions of psychological health and social competence.

Most concerning is your failure to acknowledge the ways in which diverse approaches to understanding 'face' might add depth and complexity to how Jung's notion of persona is constructed and conceived. There was a missed opportunity here to learn from another culture; to value the emphasis it places on 'face' as a psycho-social mechanism of decorum, respect and appropriate action that upholds the fabric of society. What aspect of your ethnicity and upbringing have you neglected in preference for another mask or 'face', which is equally yours to own and honour as a cross-cultural kid (Pollock, Van Reken, and Pollock, 2001; Henderson, 2016),[4] an ethnic Chinese born to parents who fled Vietnam after the fall of Saigon and raised in the relative safety of Toronto, Canada? Have you narrowly focused on supporting a psychological theory to 'heal' the ills and maladies of China rather than appreciating how Global Majority cultures might challenge, and thereby deepen, theories and practices through its own ideas and experiences? In other words, can your former self fathom the possibility that the Global South might have something to offer and teach the Global North?

Shame and the 'Century of Humiliation'

Reflecting on your analysis of the psychological import of the 'century of humiliation' and its crucial role in shaping cultural complexes in China, I was struck by your hasty acceptance of the negative reception of the 'century' and its deleterious impact on the Chinese psyche. Your current self is asking whether scholarship available at the time you were writing might have provided a different perspective of the 'century' and if so, what that might say about how psychological frameworks and practices produced in the Global North can impose static interpretations that fail to capture the underlying complexity of historical moments. Granted, the 'century of humiliation' undoubtedly shaped China's national discourse and identity, producing a deliberate national memory—commemorated in textbooks, novels, museums, songs, parks and national days of remembrance (Callahan, 2004)—of

[4] A distinction is made between a cross-cultural kid (CCK) and a third culture kid (TCK), although both share similar experiences based on their cross-cultural upbringing. A CCK is a "person who is living/has lived in—or meaningfully interacted with—two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during the first eighteen years of life" (Pollock, Van Reken and Pollock, 2001, p. 43). A key difference between CCKs and TCKs is that the former is "not dependent on the question of where [they] grow up, such as outside the passport culture or overseas" (ibid., p. 46). Rather, a CCK experience centres "on the multiple and varied layering of cultural environments that are impacting a child's life rather than the actual place where the events occur" (ibid.).

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insecurity based on a potentially traumatic succession of events: territorial shrinkage starting in the 1840s that forced China into a semi-colonial position, independence movements in Tibet and Mongolia, internal uprisings that were in part motivated by the Qing Dynasty's perceived ineptitude and failure to resist 'barbarian' invaders, the collapse of the imperial system (the fall of the Qing Dynasty) in 1912, Japanese depredations in the form of the 21-Demands, and civil war that would engulf the country over the next thirty-five years (Kaufman, 2010). Yet there are other ways of understanding the impact of the 'century'.

Alison Adcock Kaufman (2010) contends that while the international system has not changed significantly since the nineteenth century—that the world is composed of strong and weak nation-states vying for dominance on a global stage—opinions differ on whether this situation is permanent and what China's role will be moving into the future. In relation to the 'century' narrative, there were at least three competing views among Chinese officials and intellectuals at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century regarding how this pivotal period should be leveraged in society:

1) The West still aims to subjugate and humiliate weaker nations and that China's experiences during the 'century' should provide a cautionary tale. Such a position could be equated with being 'stuck' in the past.
2) The current system is much more balanced and equitable now that China is perceived as an equal player. China's period of humiliation is over, and it should seek to ensure the stability of the international system by working within the existing, competitive system while making small changes to structures and practices. The focus here is on remaining proactive in the present.
3) China is uniquely placed to fundamentally reshape the international system *because* of its experiences of shame and subjugation. These ordeals have given China an alternative vision of how international relations should and could be conducted (Kaufman, 2010). Such an approach would be embedded in distinctly Confucian values, crucially, the maintenance of harmony in interpersonal relations (Ho, 1974). The prevailing orientation, then, appears to be fundamentally prospective.

Even at the time you were finalising your PhD submission and contemplating the inclusion of the CCT chapter, there were alternative views of *how* the 'century' was understood and being used. The approach you took only perpetuated a singular perspective rather than promoting plurality, driven by a compulsion to demonstrate the explanatory force of CCT. By 2010, there is evidence that China itself did not endorse a purely negative view of the century that led to the preservation of a pathological core, the neglect of which resulted in moments of 'acting out' on the world stage as per your original claim. On the contrary, China was being conceived as a key player

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with the potential to influence how international relations could be conducted because of, and not *despite*, its experiences of shame and humiliation.

In light of China's emerging global stature, is the 'revenge' narrative you suggested in 2009 still tenable, or is it better understood as an ideological construction and psychoanalytic fantasy fuelled by unequal structures and persisting colonial discourses? Those who posit a 'China threat', Callahan (2004) reflects, believe that China would naturally avenge its humiliation via expansion. The limitation of this perspective is that it tends to build up a deterministic notion of history and identity that easily falls into orientalist stereotypes. There does not exist a universal "humiliation-to-vengeance calculus" (ibid., p. 207) that can predict responses to defeats, a critique which is relevant to the 'script' provided by CCT that scaffolds a depth psychological understanding of group dynamics. Along similar lines, Paul A. Cohen adds further complexity to the politics of remembering the 'century' in China, arguing that remembering can easily turn into its opposite, forgetting (Cohen, 2003).

Anniversaries like the 'century' may be ritualistically and publicly observed, but one might question the genuine emotion invested in such events. They can become formulaic and stagnant performances, hollowed-out memories that neither hold nor contain the fervent devotion central to ritual practice.[5] Memory of the 21 Demands, for instance, in which China effectively forfeited its sovereignty to Japan, is weakened by a process of routinisation or repetition overload. The act of remembering can actually deaden the sentiment that drives commemoration (ibid.). People become cynical, alienated, and ambivalent when faced with a barrage of forced and scripted remembrance events mobilised to serve certain political positions. What a more rigorous contextual and historical analysis shows is that memory is anything but simple and that in China, we witness a double movement that oscillates between a simultaneous superficiality and depth of nationalist feelings. Callahan (2004) articulates a contradiction between a national obsession with humiliation on the one hand and a tendency to forget it on the other. Columnists reflecting on the decline of Chinese resistance in response to the 21 Demands, for instance, comment on the country's political apathy and poor memory. The Chinese seem to have a "serious problem [...] with remembering [...] as soon as things [get] a little better, [they] erase from their minds the humiliating experiences they had just been through" (p. 155). Callahan further underscores the impossibility of deriving definitive conclusions regarding how the 'century' is remembered and commemorated.

[5] Cohen (2003) provides intriguing examples of normalising the 'century' that gave rise to indifference and apathy, including advertisements for patriotic cigarettes, 'National Humiliation Towels', stamps, wall posters, stationery, newspaper ads, playbills and school texts.

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It "did not have the same significance or salience in every period. Nor, at any given juncture, was it uniformly prevalent among all segments of the population, or [an] equally [energised] event within a given segment at all times. 'Obsession' may be too crude and imprecise a term to describe it" (ibid., p. 171). Ultimately, a one size fits all model of psychologising memory and stage managing its outbursts in the international arena does not do justice to the lived reality.

Your assessment that China is pathologically 'acting out' a pre-determined, psychological script is unfair and a consequence of applying CCT in an uncritical manner which, in your subsequent reading and research is, unfortunately, sometimes still the case.[6] By putting an entire nation proverbially 'on the couch', we are judging a nation's actions based on Eurocentric criteria that prescribes Eurocentric 'cures'. In pathologising nations, we are inadvertently supporting a system of control and discipline that co-ordinates and subdues 'unruly' bodies (Desmond [Ed.], 1997; Schneider, 1997). By characterising China as unstable and untrustworthy, your analysis adopts a paternalistic tone that infantilises an entire nation. In framing its actions as 'unbecoming' relative to Global North expectations, you effectively stigmatise its sovereignty to justify a narrative of intervention and restraint. Such a perspective subjects China specifically and the Global South more generally to a new wave of intellectual colonialism that precludes the possibility of more robust and potentially meaningful conversations—those based on mutuality, respect and collective responsibility.

Kaufman's work shows that even in 2010, China was aiming to transform its experiences of shame and humiliation, thereby offering alternative narratives that do not succumb to pathologisation. From a Jungian perspective, the 'century' is not something that necessarily hinders, obstructs and halts individuation; rather, how the impact of the 'century' is comprehended provides an opportunity to embrace a more complex story of movement, development, relationship and potential mutuality.

A Dramaturgy of Cultural Complexes

Your current position at Central, which has afforded an opportunity to learn from colleagues specialising in drama, theatre and performance studies, provides a unique perspective from which to assess your application of CCT. Erving Goffman (1959) defines performance as "all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the

[6] See, for instance, Singer's (2021) edited volume, *Cultural Complexes in China, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan*, where East Asian nations are, whether consciously or unconsciously, infantilised and pathologised.

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other participants" (p. 15). What Goffman argues for is the mobilisation of a dramaturgical approach to analysing social interaction; "[t]he issues dealt with by stagecraft and stage management", he writes, "are sometimes trivial but quite general; they seem to occur everywhere in social life, providing a clear-cut dimension for formal sociological analysis" (ibid., p. 16). Theatre director and academic Richard Schechner (2002) similarly suggests that performance transcends 'theatre', and encompasses a broad spectrum of human actions, including scripted art, sporting events, sacred rituals and daily interactions.

Building on Schechner's assertion and pertinent to a discussion of the impact of China's 'century', scholars have looked to different national performance practices to examine how cultural perceptions of the past can be analysed not only through texts and material objects, but also through what Diana Taylor (2003) calls *choreographies of meaning*. She draws attention to the transmission and transformation of cultural memory via "gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing—in short, all those acts usually thought of as ephemeral, nonreproducible knowledge", and argues that performance can function as an embodied archive through which historical narratives are communicated via physical performance practices and co-presence (2003, p. 19). The continuing influence of Schechner also finds expression in the work of Rebecca Schneider (2011), who includes commemorative practices and reenactments as vital modes of performative behaviour. While Schechner's understanding of performance studies is not without its detractors (McKenzie 2006; Reinelt, 2007; Raznovich et al., 2007), seeing a multiplicity of events and situations as 'performance' can elucidate their performative nature and the repetitive behaviours that define them; they may be scripted and learned, and we are either encouraged or pressured to reproduce them to achieve a sense of belonging and social cohesion.

Schechner's (2002) formulation of *restored behaviour* posits that performance is founded upon repeating either previously learned or existing actions. Restored behaviour is composed of sequences of physical, verbal, and mental acts and interventions that can be stored, transmitted and repeated. Similar to Jung's own struggle to say something both general and particular about the human condition—encapsulated in his distinction between *archetypes* and *archetypal images* (Jung, 1954)—Schechner notices a parallel tension at the heart of performance. While based on fixed elements and repeatable behaviours, each performance is inherently unique due to the shifting circumstances in which performances occur. My focus here is on the repeatability of these acts—how they are refashioned in the moment while strictly conforming to a previously established pattern. A 'script' is instituted as canonical, outlining the main movements and boundaries within which the performance takes place. With this design established, others are invited to perform, collaborate and create within the specifications of the prescribed structure while being given the agency to make something that arises from their own creativity and inspired by their positionality.

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Crucially, Schechner (2002) distinguishes between *performance 'is'* and *performance 'as'*. The former refers to the activities that are culturally and historically recognised as performances, for instance, a concert, play, or sporting event. *Performance 'as'* alludes to an analytic and critical methodology that entails taking cultural artefacts, social practices, events, and objects, and applying the concepts and theories derived from the performing arts to other domains of knowledge, practice and research. "What the 'as' says", Schechner writes, "is that the object of study will be regarded 'from the perspective of', 'in terms of', 'interrogated by' a particular discipline of study" (p. 42).

My suggestion is that CCT, when applied to explain a psychology of diverse cultures and histories, can be productively viewed through the lens of *performance 'as'*, interrogated as elaborate performances based on a script. The theory's reproduction through publications, edited volumes, conferences, media, substacks, podcasts, and discussion forums are, essentially, instances of restored behaviour. CCT itself is not neutral and actively produces and performs a particular interpretation of the world. Its application to, and projection onto, diverse cultural histories can powerfully shape perception in both productive and unproductive ways, especially during the current historical moment that is plagued by global division, uncertainty and heightened emotions. It is, therefore, essential that the theory itself is sufficiently and genuinely nuanced to contain, hold and tolerate a multiplicity of perspectives. As things currently stand, the repeated performance and circulation of CCT have concretised into a monopoly of how the inherently social focus of Jung's psychology (Progoff, 1953) can be articulated within post- and neo-Jungian Studies. The script must be followed, and to deviate from it—to question it and be critical—runs the risk of being scapegoated and excommunicated from Jungian communities. The performers and directors have donned the role and persona of *daimonic protectors*.

In the charts you created for your chapter on cultural complexes and a history of China, you understood the main elements of the script, performing faithfully the plot structure that had to be followed and reproduced. You dutifully cast the roles of persecutors and daimonic protectors, noting how every action gave rise to an equal and opposed reaction. As author, you mapped your own narrative within a pre-existing world, creating an episode in a series whose seasons promise more of the same – the comfort of regularity and consistency without disrupting the status quo. What you are now arguing is that CCT is structured and staged as a performance, providing a reinforced framework of practice and scholarship within Jungian enterprises. Specific stagings of the theory are then rehearsed, populated with new cast from across the globe, and the core message re-introduced—with minimal changes—for consumption and approval. The elegance and simplicity of the narrative is what draws audiences in, promising depth psychological interpretations of difficult and seemingly incomprehensible

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moments. An act and gesture of 'knowing'—even if contentious—may provide a cathartic release through the aesthetic pleasure generated by *any* explanation that alleviates uncertainty. The behaviour expected of audiences is nothing short of compliance and adulation for the efforts of the production's director, script writers, actors, producers and the entire backstage crew. What you are offering now is a challenge to the mechanical reproduction of CCT through the lens of performance studies and a possible 'third way'—a mutant psychoanalysis—with the development of archetypal thematic analysis (ATA) and its integration with CCT as a more comprehensive neo-Jungian lens through which cultural and geopolitical analyses may be conducted. The complex moments in which we live, driven by fragmentation and defined by instability, are messy, and they will remain so. As a community of practitioners and researchers, we need to reflect upon the reproduction of a theory that guarantees straightforward answers. We need to explore whether such remakes are not actually doing violence to the performers themselves, seduced by the allure of conventional and derivative insights into cultural trauma and some of the world's most intractable problems.

Framing CCT as an elaborate, staged performance does not make it meaningless. In this regard, your intention is no different than it was in 2013. You are neither dismissing CCT as a lens nor excusing it, but holding it to its own highest aspirations. Your intention is to urge CCT's audiences to be *critical* audiences, to dig deeper and ask the necessary, difficult questions about our discipline's underlying assumptions; to deepen the diversity of our approaches to shaping, understanding and engaging with the world around us. We need to model—in an authentic manner—what dialogue and productive challenge actually mean and what this entails. We need to acknowledge how difficult these aspirations are to achieve and yet never shy away from the attempt. It is based on your experiences of, and reflections on, the debate surrounding CCT that you are now offering, both conceptually and theoretically, the possibility of an alternative path; one that is situated between the more problematic aspects of an uncritical application of CCT and its initial impetus to challenge and overcome the reticence of Jungian communities to engage in social and political discourses (Singer and Kimbles [Ed.], 2004).

Possible Futures

If CCT, through the lens of performance studies, may be framed as a sometimes-overconfident production that keeps casting whole nations into prescribed roles based on a pre-written script, ATA can be understood, in its current development, as more of a rehearsal process with clear dramaturgical tools, where the director must justify every interpretive move and where alternative stagings are not only possible, but expected. ATA, which has already gained some traction amongst scholarly communities (Dillon

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[Ed.], 2025), is offered in the spirit of collaboration as an adjacent or supplementary practice, an approach that can complement and speak to some of CCT's current limitations.

ATA—devised in collaboration between yourself and Dr Ann Yeoman—is both a method and methodology (Penna, 2004; Aguiar, 2024) (still in need of development and constructive criticism) that may be utilised to enhance qualitative research in the field of psycho-social studies, as well as other disciplines. ATA constitutes what you and Yeoman hope is a rigorous approach to research which uses thematic analysis as its starting point, together with the inner- and outer-world focus of Jung's psychology, and Jung's archetypal hypothesis; it uses Jung's description of specific archetypal imagery (imagery that points to the activation of the *child* archetype, the archetype of the *hero* or *shadow*, etc.) to establish an *a priori* code manual in order to test, validate or refute the proposition that an archetype has been constellated in real world events as presented in a particular dataset. You argue that ATA may be used productively not only for the selection of data and in codifying practices but to enrich the interpretation of datasets (Lu and Yeoman, 2024). You anticipate that ATA will support the development of code manuals and the analysis of datasets in a holistic and robust practice that utilises all of the 'functions' of consciousness that Jung identified in his typology (thinking, feeling [valuing], intuition and sensation)—and their *introverted* or *extroverted* direction—to reinforce and realise a truly psycho-social intervention. In the context of and relationship to CCT, you do not see the respective approaches as mutually exclusive, but working in tandem to become a methodological expression of a 'third way' and mutant psychoanalysis: neither deterministic nor naively pluralistic, but rigorously situated and symbolically alive.

Conclusion

As this letter approaches its conclusion, I would like to reflect on the mode and avenue through which your current self has chosen to express his present thinking and the opportunity afforded to review your prior engagement with CCT. First and foremost, I return to the emphasis placed on noting one's own subjectivity. In many ways, the approach taken is simultaneously an example of Jungian autoethnography and a meditation on the complexities of personal archiving practices, a response to the conundrum of 'what do we do with our own personal archives?'

Autoethnography—defined by Ken Plummer (2001) as a form of "life story work" that refers both "to the ethnography of one's own group or to […] autobiographical writing that has an ethnographic interest" (34-35)—prioritises "narratives of the self" to acknowledge that the researcher cannot be divorced from the research. While noting its strength as a methodology

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that highlights how knowledge is socially constructed and ultimately subjective, it has been accused of being "unacceptable to the more formal scientific academic community because it highlights both speaking of personal experience alongside narrative prose as a way of knowing" (ibid). In the context of this letter, a Jungian (and psychologically aware) autoethnographic approach is mobilised as an ethical mode of working with your own archive. You start from the position that the personal archive *is* theory, a poetics of the Self. The self is not a diversion from this reflexive and scholarly project—it is its precondition. Crucially, autoethnography at its best uses personal experience to illustrate and confront wider cultural, political and social issues. In many ways, this letter is not only addressed to your younger self, but is a letter to the wider field.

Serendipity plays a significant part in what gets published and what does not; some things you may feel passionate about, but they may never see the light of day; some ideas may come in a 'flash' and, perhaps due to the urgency of the moment, are prioritised and found to be important by others. We all have those loose pieces of paper and post-it notes with thoughts jotted down, comments made in the margins of word documents, annotations in books that formulate a structure for a paper, and electronic files saved on obsolete software and hardware. These fragments are put aside—perhaps with care or perhaps haphazardly—and a false sense of security that the medium itself might provide a semblance of permanence. These ephemera are fleeting memory traces of who we are and an account of how we grow across a lifespan devoted to writing, scholarship, practice and research. We promise ourselves we will return to them someday and feel safe that the ideas have been 'put down' somewhere, although we ignore that even technology disintegrates and becomes antiquated; what is thought to be a reliable, alchemical retort in which to incubate our ideas can and will fail us. The homunculus withers and a part of us is lost.

Yet even if these ideas are preserved in form, with the passing of time, other priorities emerge, and what may have once seemed compelling loses its psychic urgency and intensity. Returning to these moments and ideas is, in many ways, a return to oneself, a commitment to exploring the self and all the intricacies of our development; the successes and failures, the ups and downs, the said and the unsaid, all of which are crucial to the individuation process.

I think the main question being posed to you—my 28-year-old self—and the wider field, is whether cultural complex theory truly illuminates a psychological present, or perhaps unconsciously excuses it as an inevitable repetition of the past? What I am offering, through this letter, is a chance to reconsider the applicability of CCT to non-Western trauma narratives; in reviewing your unpublished 2009 chapter and, indeed, your 2013 exchange with Singer (Lu, 2013a; Singer, 2013; Lu, 2013b) the concern is that the theory, by its nature, tends to draw causal links between defeat, humiliation and revenge, whether real or psychological.

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My critical offering to you, Kevin, is that CCT, in the way that you applied it and in the way it continues to be applied to elucidate a collective psychology of diverse cultures, creates a potentially static and deterministic understanding of group identity and how this, in turn, interacts with political life. By framing China's then present actions as an inevitable outcome of the traumatic 'century', you failed to account for the immense political, economic and social dynamism of which China is also capable. Your psychological narrative perpetuates the stereotype of the 'Sick Man of Asia', as if this mantle of shame becomes a perpetual, all-encompassing, immutable destiny. Yet in witnessing how other scholars, clinicians and researchers from the Global South have also fallen foul in the application of CCT, I am asking whether the issue is also a structural one; the problem does not solely lie in how individuals are applying the theory but may be a consequence of the uncontested assumptions at the core of CCT itself. Put simply, there may exist a structural constraint in the theory's very architecture.

I have drawn a distinction between the monologue I see unfolding and the dialogue for which I desperately wish to advocate as the standard of practice in Jungian applications specifically and applied psychoanalysis more generally. CCT, when mobilised without rigorous self-reflection, becomes a monologue where a psychological lens birthed in the Global North speaks *about* the Global South rather than engaging with its own structures of meaning. Instead of approaching an interdisciplinary conversation with the openness of being transformed by other perspectives—a position that Jung himself espoused (Jung, 1931)—we witness an application of CCT to diverse cultures and histories that may only repeat the very trauma and (intellectual) violence to which these varied histories attest. Western theories deployed without criticality and an appreciation for the diversity of other perspectives—what these might add and how theory can be fruitfully expanded as a result—runs the risk of oversimplification at best and intellectual colonialism at worst.

What can the cultural and therapeutic practices of various traditions tell us about CCT? Do they point to potential gaps in the theory and perhaps locate the areas that might be deepened by practices from the Global South? In that interaction, might the theory be productively transformed through a sustained commitment to dialogue, mutuality, and a real belief that Global Majority perspectives can truly contribute to how good therapy, practice and research may be conducted? This inquiry is no longer confined to a Jungian application. This is about what Kuan-Hsing Chen lucidly frames as 'Asia as method'. "[O]nly by multiplying the objects of identification", Chen writes, "and constructing alternative frames of reference can we undo the politics of resentment, which are too often expressed in the limited form of identity politics" (Chen, 2010, p. 2). Chen offers the approach "as a critical proposition to transform the existing knowledge structure and at the same time to transform ourselves" (ibid., p. 212). And it does not stop at Asia. This is about South America as method. Indigenous knowledge and wisdom as

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method. Africa as method. My point is this: a formulaic application of psychological theory—even if based on clinical knowledge derived from practices stemming from the Global North—risks reducing complex, adaptive civilisations to a predictable analytical psychological script due to the uncontested power relationships at the very heart of the enterprise itself.

What I am articulating here—through critiquing the work you produced in 2009—is the need to develop a 'third way'; a methodology and method that mobilises psychological concepts (be it complexes, archetypes, etc.) to account for affective energies and seemingly irrational dynamics while simultaneously resisting deterministic, linear narratives that can result if we remain unaware and closed to challenges that may diversify and enrich our collective approach as a community of scholars, researchers, therapists and practitioners. You are offering the possibility of CCT and ATA working side by side and in collaboration, fuelled by a collective desire to understand what moves people and groups emotionally and symbolically.

I end this letter with an invitation to explore synergies and to co-construct what a re-contextualised, "mutated" (Preciado, 2021) version of CCT might look like. Perhaps this ending raises more questions than answers, but in the spirit of the epistolary approach adopted, our quest for knowledge is never finished, but always in a state of flux and becoming. It is one that requires a more equal examination of the architectures of both theory and the s/Self.

Conflict of Interest statement

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no conflicts of interest to declare.

Data Availability Statement

Data sharing not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.

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Translations of Abstract

Cet article, rédigé sous la forme d'une lettre adressée à moi-même alors âgé de 28 ans, explore l'évolution de ma réflexion au sujet des *complexes culturels*. Le 18 août 2009, j'ai achevé un chapitre appliquant la théorie des complexes culturels à l'histoire de la Chine, accompagné de tableaux détaillés qui semblaient confirmer un processus de formation de complexes culturels, tout comme les actions alors récentes de la Chine lors des Jeux olympiques de Pékin (à savoir l'utilisation de la voix de Yang Peiyi, âgée de 7 ans, tout en lui refusant de se produire lors de la cérémonie d'ouverture, le choix de faire chanter en play-back Lin Miaoke, âgée de 9 ans, et la dissimulation initiale de l'accident de la danseuse classique Liu Yan lors des répétitions) semblaient confirmer la constellation de schémas émotionnels et comportementaux qu'il était utile de regrouper sous ce concept. Si cet article est l'occasion de réfléchir à mon évaluation critique des complexes culturels, il constitue également un exemple d'étude autoethnographique et une méditation sur les pratiques d'archivage personnel dans un contexte post- et néo-jungien. C'est une approche autoethnographique qui m'a permis de façon décisive de comprendre comment le développement de *l'analyse thématique archétypique* (ATA) (en collaboration avec Ann Yeoman) est né de ma réflexion, et de mon expertise, au sujet des complexes culturels. L'ATA est proposée en complément de la théorie des complexes culturels (TCC), dans l'espoir que l'utilisation conjointe de

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ces deux approches puisse générer l'expression méthodologique d'une « troisième voie » ou ce que Paul Preciado appelle une *psychanalyse mutante*.

Mots clés: complexes culturels, analyse thématique archétypique (ATA), autoethnographie, archives personnelles, l'Asie comme méthode, études de performance, psychanalyse mutante

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Dieser Text, verfaßt als Brief an mein 28-jähriges Ich, beleuchtet die Entwicklung meiner Auseinandersetzung mit kulturellen Komplexen. Am 18. August 2009 Schloß ich ein Kapitel ab, in dem ich kulturelle Komplexe auf die Geschichte Chinas anwandte. Es enthielt detaillierte Schaubilder, die einen Prozeß der Entstehung solcher Komplexe zu bestätigen schienen. Zudem schienen Chinas damalige Handlungen während der Olympischen Spiele in Peking – etwa der Einsatz der Stimme der siebenjährigen Yang Peiyi bei gleichzeitigem Verbot ihres Auftritts bei der Eröffnungsfeier zugunsten des Lippensynchronauftritts der neunjährigen Lin Miaoke sowie die anfängliche Vertuschung des Unfalls der klassischen Tänzerin Liu Yan bei den Proben – jene Konstellation aus emotionalen und verhaltensbezogenen Mustern zu bestätigen, die sich unter diesem Begriff sinnvoll zusammenfassen läßt. Während dieser Beitrag Gelegenheit bietet, über meine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit kulturellen Komplexen zu reflektieren, stellt er zugleich ein Beispiel für eine autoethnografische Studie sowie eine Reflexion über persönliche Archivierungspraktiken im Rahmen post- und neo-jungianischer Ansätze dar. Entscheidend ist, daß ein autoethnographischer Ansatz das Verständnis dafür ermöglicht hat, wie die Entwicklung der *archetypischen thematischen Analyse* (ATA) (in Zusammenarbeit mit Ann Yeoman) aus meiner Auseinandersetzung mit und meiner Einschätzung von kulturellen Komplexen hervorgegangen ist. Die ATA wird als Ergänzung zur Theorie der kulturellen Komplexe (TKK) angeboten, in der Hoffnung, daß die Mobilisierung beider Ansätze einen methodischen Ausdruck eines "dritten Weges" – oder dessen, was Paul Preciado als *mutante Psychoanalyse* bezeichnet – hervorbringen kann.

Schlüsselwörter: kulturelle Komplexe, archetypische thematische Analyse (ATA), Autoethnografie, persönliche Archive, Asien als Methode, Performance Studies/ Leistungsstudien, mutierte Psychoanalyse

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Scritto sotto forma di lettera al mio me stesso ventottenne, questo articolo esplora lo sviluppo del mio interesse per i complessi culturali. Il 18 agosto 2009 terminai la stesura di un capitolo che esplorava i complessi culturali nella storia della Cina, corredato da elaborati diagrammi che sembravano confermare il processo di formazione dei complessi culturali stessi. Inoltre, in quel periodo, durante i Giochi Olimpici di Pechino, fu utilizzata la voce di una bambina di sette anni, Yang Peiyi, alla quale fu negato poi di esibirsi nella cerimonia di apertura, optando invece l'utilizzo della sua voce in playback su una bambina di nove anni, Lin Miaoke. Parallelamente vi fu anche un tentativo di insabbiamento dell'incidente occorso alla ballerina classica Liu Yan durante le prove — tutto questo sembrava confermare la costellazione di modelli affettivi e comportamentali che potevano essere ricondotti a un concetto di

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perfezione. Se da un lato questo lavoro offre l'opportunità di riflettere sulla mia esposizione critica sui complessi culturali, dall'altro rappresenta un esempio di studio autoetnografico e una riflessione sulle dinamiche di archiviazione personale all'interno di una cornice post- e neo-junghiana. Fondamentalmente, l'approccio autoetnografico ha facilitato la comprensione di come lo sviluppo dell'analisi tematica archetipica (ATA, *archetypal thematic analysis*) (in collaborazione con Ann Yeoman) derivi dalle mie riflessioni e dalla mia valutazione dei complessi culturali. L'ATA viene proposta come complemento alla teoria dei complessi culturali (CCT, *cultural complex theory*), nella speranza che l'utilizzo di entrambe possa produrre una "terza via" o quella che Paul Preciado definisce una *psicoanalisi mutante*.

Parole chiave: complessi culturali, analisi tematica archetipica (ATA), autoetnografia, archivi personali, Asia come metodo, studi sulle performance, psicoanalisi mutante

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Эта статья написана в форме письма автора самому себе в 28-летнем возрасте и посвящена истории моего интереса к культурным комплексам. 18 августа 2009 года я закончил главу о культурных комплексах в применении к истории Китая, дополнив ее подробными диаграммами, которые, по моему мнению, иллюстрируют процесс формирования культурных комплексов и то, как недавние действия Китая во время Олимпийских игр в Пекине (например, использование записи голоса 7-летней Ян Пэйи, которой было отказано в выступлении на церемонии открытия и вместо которой выступила 9-летняя Лин Мяоке, открывавшая рот под фонограмму, а также первоначальное замалчивание несчастного случая с классической танцовщицей Лю Янь во время репетиций) продемонстрировали совокупность эмоциональных и поведенческих паттернов, которые можно с пользой объединить в рамках этой концепции. Эта статья не только стала для меня возможностью порефлексировать над моей критической оценкой культурных комплексов; она в равной степени является примером автоэтнографического исследования и медитацией о личных архивных практиках в рамках пост- и нео-юнгианства. Важно отметить, что автоэтнографический подход способствовал пониманию того, что разработанный мною в сотрудничестве с Энн Йомен *архетипический тематический анализ* (АТА) проистекает из моих размышлений о культурных комплексах и их оценки. АТА представляет собой дополнение к теории культурных комплексов (ТКК), и я надеюсь, что в совокупности они будут способствовать методологическому воплощению «третьего пути», или того, что Пол Пресиадо называет *мутирующего психоанализа*.

Ключевые слова: культурные комплексы, архетипический тематический анализ (АТА), автоэтнография, личные архивы, Азия как метод, перформанс-исследования, мутирующий психоанализ

Escrito en forma de carta a mi self de 28 años, este artículo explora el desarrollo de mi involucración con los complejos culturales. El 18 de agosto de 2009, terminé un capítulo en el que aplicaba los complejos culturales a la historia de China,

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acompañado de elaborados gráficos que parecían confirmar un proceso mediante el cual se forman dichos complejos, y cómo las acciones entonces recientes de China durante los Juegos Olímpicos de Pekín (es decir, el uso de la voz de Yang Peiyi, de 7 años, pero negándole la oportunidad de presentarse en la ceremonia de apertura, optando en su lugar por el playback de Lin Miaoke, de 9 años, y el encubrimiento inicial del accidente de la bailarina clásica Liu Yan durante los ensayos) parecían confirmar la constelación de patrones emocionales y conductuales que podían agruparse bajo ese concepto. Si bien este artículo es una oportunidad para reflexionar sobre mi evaluación crítica de los complejos culturales, es igualmente un ejemplo de estudio auto-etnográfico y una meditación sobre prácticas de mi archivo personal dentro de un marco post-Junguiano y neo-Junguiano. Es fundamental señalar que un enfoque auto-etnográfico ha facilitado la comprensión de cómo el desarrollo del *análisis temático arquetipal* (ATA) (en colaboración con Ann Yeoman) surge de mi reflexión y valoración de los complejos culturales. El ATA se propone como complemento de la teoría de los complejos culturales (CCT), con la esperanza de que la movilización de ambos pueda dar lugar a una expresión metodológica de una "tercera vía" o de lo que Paul Preciado denomina un psicoanálisis mutante.

Palabras clave: complejos culturales, análisis temático arquetipal (ATA), auto-etnografía, archivos personales, Asia como método, estudios de performance, psicoanálisis mutante

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本文的形式是一封写给28岁的自己的一封信， 探讨了我与文化情结之间学术关联的发展历程。2009年8月18日，我完成了一章将文化情结应用于中国历史的内容，其中配有精心制作的图表，这些图表看似证实了文化情结得以形成的过程，以及中国当时在北京奥运会期间的一系列行为——例如使用7岁女孩杨沛宜的歌声却拒绝让她在开幕式上表演，转而选择让9岁的林妙可对口型假唱，以及古典舞者刘岩在排练中发生意外后最初的掩盖行为——似乎证实了某些情感与行为模式的聚集， 而这些模式可以有效地被统摄于"文化情结"这一概念之下。撰写本文给我一个机会来反思我对文化情结之批判性评估，同时它也是自我民族志研究的实例，以及一个在后荣格与新荣格框架内进行个人档案实践的冥想。至关重要的是， 自我民族志的方法帮助我理解了原型主题分析(ATA)的发展(与 Ann Yeoman 合作)正是源自于我对文化情结的反复思考与评估。ATA 的提出是作为文化情结理论 (CCT)的补充， 期望二者的结合运用能够产生一种方法论意义上的"第三条道路"，或者说 Paul Preciado 所称的"。异精神分析"。

关键词: 文化情结, 原型主题分析 (ATA), 自我民族志, 个人档案, 作为方法的亚洲, 表演研究, 。异精神分析

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