

Post-Jungian perspectives on archetypes of individuation in Aldous Huxley's *Brave new world* and *Island*

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Abstract:

The archetypes of individuation, as proposed by C. G. Jung, have been challenged by post-Jungian writers. Persona, shadow, anima and self offer examples of these new approaches, and their use in the analysis of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and *Island* highlight some cultural aspects of the novels.

Keywords: archetypes, individuation, Jung, post-Jungian

C. G. Jung's classical view of the process of individuation sees it as a process of maturation of the personality "through which a person becomes a psychological 'individual,' that is, a separate, indivisible unity" (*Archetypes* 275). During this process, the individual is exposed to material stemming from the unconscious, including the persona, the shadow, the contrasexual archetype, the wise old man or the wise old woman, and the self. The task involves integrating each of these archetypes as far as possible. In the process of dealing with the material that comes from the unconscious and bringing it to light the individual gains consciousness, and the prize at the end of this process is individuation. The examination of the way that post-Jungian theorists have dealt with the shadow, the anima, and the self archetypes and some of the changes that they have proposed can illuminate certain aspects of *Brave New World* and *Island*.

The term *post-Jungian* was first used by Andrew Samuels "in preference to *Jungian* to indicate both connectedness and distance" from Jung (*Post-Jungians* 19). The expression presents a certain tension as to what exactly it means to be Jungian, and Samuels explains that this tension may derive from the very fact that for Jung there was only one Jungian – himself. With this comment, Jung was, on the one hand, trying to avoid "Freud's excesses of rabbinical authority" (2), and on the other, emphasizing the importance of each individual's coming to terms with his theories and deciding how far a Jungian he would like to be.

The new lines of work and thought developed by post-Jungians have influenced the way that the archetypes connected with the process of individuation are seen today. In general, there have been three post-Jungian approaches to archetypes,

namely, they have been basically ignored, expanded towards new and unexpected ways, or largely reformulated. The persona, the anima, and the self offer examples of these new approaches, and they can be used in the analysis of *Brave New World* and *Island*.

The persona is an archetype of adaptation, and the term is connected with the effort made by the individual towards adapting to the outside world and its demands. Persona is the face that you show to society, and it is but a mask that hides your true nature. The first task in the process of individuation is to have a clearer perception of this mask. This poses a challenge for the individual because of the danger of identifying with it so closely that the person loses sight of who he is as an individual and becomes the social mask that he wears to adapt to society. This danger is mentioned by George H. Jensen, who says that the persona's power "comes from its ability to erase the shortcomings of the self, at least temporarily, as the individual becomes absorbed into the social role" (12). During the process of individuation, it is necessary to become aware of the price that is being paid by the individual to feel safe within the social fold. This danger becomes clear when we analyse some the characteristics of *Brave New World* and *Island*.

The persona in *Brave New World* is wholly determined by the kind of society and the conditioning of its citizens that make each person feel happy about his or her physical appearance, tastes, desires, position, condition, and dreams. In *Island*, society plays a decisive role in determining what kind of person each inhabitant of Pala may aspire to be, but there is plenty of room for individual discovery and personal choices. When the two outsiders, John Savage and Will Farnaby, come to live amongst the local population, they have different experiences. In *Brave New World*, John is pushed towards giving up his idiosyncrasies and conforming, whereas in *Island* Will is encouraged to confront his mask and discover what lies behind it. London has a totalitarian and centralizing government that aims to control the lives of its citizens, whereas Pala is a democratic society whose every member has the right to find ways towards a happy and meaningful life. The social organization in both *Brave New World* and *Island* exerts a strong influence on their citizens towards conformism, although in Pala there is more room for self-expression than in London. This political link with the persona was raised by Jung himself and has been discussed by Jensen, but most post-Jungians have chosen to ignore it.

According to Jensen, there is a strong connection between ideology and the persona, since it is through the persona that "ideology is introjected into the individual" (13). Jung identifies the problem when he says that when the social group presents a certain conflict, a partial identification with the group eventually draws the personality into it. Thus, "the conflict is transferred into the person's own psyche" (Jensen 13), which means that ideology becomes so internalized that it is extremely difficult for the individual to become aware of it. In Jung's words, "Society is elevated to the rank of a supreme ethical principle" (*Undiscovered* 88), and it is almost impossible for the individual to see through the values that are being imposed on him.

In a society like the one shown in *Brave New World*, ideology is quite explicit. Everyone is conditioned to behave in certain ways, and those who rule and dictate define how this conditioning should be carried out. In *Island*, the ideology that permeates the whole society is powerful and the persona that is imposed on the

individuals has the face of the friendly citizen who does his best to contribute for the well-being of his peers. Therefore, the power of the social persona in London and of the perfectly affectionate persona in Pala makes it extremely difficult to understand how this mask has been imposed and what lies behind it.

This double aspect of the persona is absent from the discussions of post-Jungian critics and theorists, which might also be a sign of their political agenda. Jung's point of view that the "goal and meaning of individual life (which is the only *real* life) no longer lie in individual development, but in the policy of State" (*Undiscovered* 22), is seen as conservative. It may, however, explain why several theorists stay away from the discussion of the political implications of the persona and of how it is constructed by the individual with the aid of social pressure.

When the individual reflects on the persona and tries to discover what lies behind this mask, he meets those archetypes more closely associated with the process of individuation, such as the shadow, an element of the personal unconscious, and the anima, from the collective unconscious. In classical Jungian formulation, the shadow embodies those dark characteristics whose very existence you find so difficult to recognize in yourself, and the anima is the feminine counterpart of the masculine psyche. Post-Jungians tend to see shadow and animas closely linked, leading to a discussion of how these archetypes are connected with alterity.

The connection between anima and shadow is pointed out by the post-Jungians Christopher Hauke and Carol Schreier Rupprecht. Hauke writes that the anima is not necessarily the expression of the feminine in man, but is rather "Jung's term for the 'other' in ourselves which ego-consciousness tends to reject" (133). He also points out that in feminist discourse, "each gender has the other as just one part of each individual's shadow, but the genderised other, and its rejection is seen as a critical confrontation with which men and women would struggle in present times" (133). This idea emphasises that "what is kept for ego or [. . .] despised as other is not neutral or accidental but arises as a result of what culture will or will not support." The shadow here becomes conflated with the anima.

Both in *Brave New World* and in *Island*, it is possible to identify a character that seems to symbolise this combination of shadow and anima. In *Brave New World*, Linda represents the shadow in both London and Malpais. In the Reservation, she is the prostitute who has many sexual partners, an outcast, and in London she has been turned into a savage just by being John's mother, because she is "[h]aving young ones like an animal" (132). Linda also presents some characteristics in common with the anima, especially in its mother aspect. Despite being rejected in the Reservation, she has been able to preserve a sense of identity, and it is only when she goes back to London that, seeing that there is no going back to the past that she remembers, she disconnects with herself and gets lost in the dream-world of soma. As is often the case with shadow figures that have to be eliminated rather than dealt with, Linda's soma-holiday is encouraged, since it leaves her "most conveniently out of the way" (157).

In *Island*, the character that offers a combination of anima and shadow is the Rani of Pala. As an anima character, she offers a combination of the mother and the medium. As a medium, she has a strong connection with the "life of the Spirit" and has developed "all sorts of *sidhis*, all the psychic gifts and miraculous powers develop spontaneously" (57), and as a mother type, she exerts a strong influence on her son,

Murugan, heir to the throne of Pala. Both sides of her personality, however, are tinged with the darkness of the shadow archetype. Will Farnaby sees her as a "self-canonised world-saviour" and as a "clutching and devouring mother" (64), a description that recognises the presence of this strange, but not wholly unusual, mixture of shadow and anima aspects, a combination that is discussed by Rupprecht, who writes that "[t]he female depicted in Jung's *Collected Works* and *Letters* emerges less as contrasexual to the male than as the male's shadow" (281). Linda and the Rani seem to fit this description. Linda's lack of mental power stands out against the emphasis that some of the male characters, notably Helmholtz Watson and John Savage, place on their own intelligence, whereas the Rani's lust for money and power echoes Bahu's and Farnaby's materialism. The two female characters illustrate how the feminine can be portrayed as a negative Other.

Just as the concept of anima has been challenged by post-Jungians, the self has also been put to the test, leading to a sometimes-thorough revision of this archetype. Jung sees the self as a central archetype that encompasses the totality of the psyche and as the aim of the process of individuation. According to Andrew Samuels, one shift that several post-Jungians seem to have favoured moves the self away from the notion of totality and towards a "situationist, relativised and pluralistic self in which clusters of experiences carry the feeling of 'being myself' rather than that of feeling 'whole,'" since they believe that "[i]f the part-self or psychic fragment is lived fully, then wholeness will take care of itself" (110). *Part-self* is another post-Jungian concept and refers to each component of the self that leads to the experience of "feeling to be *myself*." Each part-self may be in conflict with other part-selves, but at the same time, each one carries meaning and relevance, representing how you see yourself in a different context. It allows at the same time for a multiplicity of experiences and for the lack of uniformity and coherence among the parts.

The multiple part-selves highlight the danger of seeing the self as a totalitarian centre that imposes meaning to the various experiences with which the ego is confronted throughout life. Samuels says that the self is "a barren and overvalued concept when used to deny the multiplicity and poliocentricity of the psyche" (106). Although Jung does talk about "a multiplicity of partial consciousnesses like stars or divine sparks" (Samuels 107), the self for him is the archetype that brings unity to all these manifestations. In contrast, some post-Jungian writers have tried to move away from the perception of self as the all-knowing locus of the psyche, towards the idea that integration of the different part-selves is not always possible and not necessarily desirable. J. Hillman, for example, "suggests we suspend our habitual thinking about unity, about stages, about psychological development, a *fantasy* of individuation" (107) and start thinking about "wholeness, in a truly psychological sense" as "seeing a phenomenon *as a whole*, as it presents itself" (108). He insists "upon the polycentrism of the psyche," since "[e]xclusive emphasis or resolution of chaos into pattern is simply not feasible, whether in infancy or throughout life" (109). This kind of approach seems to deflate the self archetype, emphasising that we should accentuate the importance of accepting the plurality of the psyche with its many nuclei of experience.

The development of the main male character in both *Island* and *Brave New World* illustrates the challenge posed by a relativised self. In *Brave New World*, John Savage moves from one nucleus of experience to another without too much discomfort, but he

seems striving for a kind of constancy that is more closely related to the traditional view of the self than with the concept proposed by the post-Jungians. His inner conflict is shown when he is not chosen to perform the religious ceremony in front of the people, since he would have done it gladly "[f]or the sake of the pueblo – to make the rain come and the corn grow" (123). These words seem to indicate that he sees himself as a full member of the community though he is not seen as one. His next defiant words, however, show that his reasons may go beyond that, when "his voice suddenly took on a new resonance, he turned with a proud squaring of the shoulder, a proud, defiant lifting of the chin, 'to show that I'm a man'" (123). If he had been accepted as a full adult member of the community, he might have brought together his conflicting part-selves, but this does not happen.

Another facet of John's self includes his relationship with Lenina Crowne. He cannot reconcile his own desire for Lenina Crowne with his dream of a pure and beautiful girl. When he has already moved to the lighthouse, Lenina comes to see him, and he gets furious. He hits her repeatedly with the whip, striking "at his own rebellious flesh, or at the plump incarnation of turpitude writhing in the heather at his feet" (254). The tumult of pain turns into an orgy, and when John wakes up the next morning, he remembers "his long-drawn frenzy of sensuality" (254), and he decides to take his life. John is unable to bear the conflict of his opposing feelings, as if his part-selves were at war with one another. The world that he wishes for, however, a world where people can be free, seems to be a symbol of the self archetype in its traditional form, which cannot handle what Hillman calls "a multiple field of shifting loci and complicated relations" (qtd in Samuels 107). The way that his dangling feet move "like two unhurried compass needles," turning "towards the right [and then] unhurriedly back towards the left" (*Brave* 255) indicates the multiplicity of paths that he could have trodden on his path towards individuation.

In *Island*, Will Farnaby presents a variety of part-selves, and initially his inner conflict at not being able to integrate them is quite clear. He is the hard-boiled reporter who travels around the world writing about the war and its evil consequences in different countries. He poses as totally unsentimental and goes to the cocktail party at the Rendang Foreign Office; yet, he is deeply touched by the "poor wretches" in the slums of Rendang, "more abandoned by God and man than even the homeless, hopeless thousands he had seen sleeping like corpses in the streets of Calcutta" (93). His bitterness, however, does not prevent him from admiring what has been achieved in Pala. The hard-boiled reporter decides to give up his lucrative business for the spiritual values that he has re-discovered among the Palanese. He has a glimpse of what individuation entails during the ceremony at the temple and in his own moksha-trip, when he finally sees the world and himself as a unified and meaningful whole, although the experience of totality is not permanent yet.

Considering the traditional concept of self, neither John nor Will is able to achieve individuation. John's aim for wholeness cannot be achieved because he is unable to integrate his conflicting feelings. Individuation in the post-Jungian sense also eludes him, as he does not manage to connect with the feeling of 'being himself' within each cluster of experience. Will Farnaby does not reach the Jungian self either, since he is unable to reconcile his old cynical self with his new ethical and compassionate one. In view of the post-Jungian self archetype, however, the reconciliation is not really

necessary. Will's past experience and contact with tycoons, generals and money-lenders, "the cyanide of the earth" (93), may actually turn out to be positive when Pala is invaded and Dr. McPhail assassinated, since it may help him deal with the new political order imposed on the island.

The use of post-Jungian formulations of the archetypes of individuation highlights some aspects that the Jungian approach may sometimes leave in the dark. The political relevance of the persona shows how ideology permeates our lives, whereas the conflation of shadow and anima indicates that the dark other that lives inside us includes aspects that are not only cultural but also gender-toned, posing difficulties on our path towards self-realisation. The new concept of part-self and the idea of multiple processes of individuation, however, suggest that even though a final and permanent state of feeling whole may elude us. Will Farnaby, in *Island*, knows that two opposing facts, "the fact of the ending of sorrow as well as the fact of sorrow" (335) live side by side, irreconcilable, maybe, so that individuation in the traditional sense is not achievable. Yet, the process that leads to the experience of "being yourself," however provisional, should nonetheless be pursued.

Resumo:

Os arquétipos de individuação, propostos por C. G. Jung, foram questionados e parcialmente reformulados por autores pós-junguianos. Persona, sombra, anima e self oferecem exemplos dessas novas abordagens, e seu uso na análise de *Admirável mundo novo* e *A ilha*, de Aldous Huxley, evidencia aspectos culturais desses romances.

Palavras-chave: arquétipos, individuação, Jung, pós-junguiano

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