

PORTRAYAL OF JUNGIAN ARCHETYPES IN ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY'S THE LITTLE PRINCE

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ABSTRACT

Antoine de Saint- Exupéry's *The Little Prince* is considered as a form of children literature with its simple words, phrases, characters and plot. Despite its style as a children's book, *The Little Prince* makes observations about life and human nature (Gopnik, 2014). By utilizing textual analysis, this paper seeks to investigate the concept of Jungian archetypes as portrayed in the novella. Carl Jung is a Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist who founded analytic psychology, where he proposed and developed the concepts of the extraverted and the introverted personality, archetypes, and the collective unconscious. According to APA Dictionary of Psychology, archetypes are universal, inborn models of people, behaviours, or personalities that play a role in influencing human behavior. It is also suggested that these archetypes were archaic forms of innate human knowledge passed down from our ancestors (Cherry, 2020). In *The Little Prince*, the four major Jungian archetypes which are the persona, the shadow, the anima or animus and the Self are being depicted in the plot.

Keywords: Jungian Archetypes, Saint- Exupéry's *The Little Prince*, Personalities

INTRODUCTION

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (29 June 1900 - 31 July 1944) was a French writer and aviator and is most famous for his novella, *The Little Prince* which published in 1943. He was a real life hero who looked at adventure and danger with a poet's eyes - sometimes from the viewpoint of a child. *The Little Prince* tells the story of an aviator crash landing in the desert which inspired by the author's own experience crash landing in the Libyan desert in 1935, who later encounters a strange young prince, fallen to earth from a tiny asteroid where he lived alone with a single rose. The rose has made him so disconsolate, that he has taken advantage of a flock of birds in order to escape to other planets. Even though its style as a children's book, *The Little Prince* makes observations about life and human nature. As Barry James in The New York Times wrote: "A children's fable for adults, *The Little Prince* was in fact an allegory of Saint-Exupéry's own life—his search for childhood certainties and interior peace, his mysticism, his belief in human courage and brotherhood, and his deep love for his wife Consuelo but also an allusion to the tortured nature of their relationship" (1993).

The Little Prince became Saint-Exupéry's most successful work, with an estimated 140 million copies sold worldwide, making it one of the best-selling and most widely translated books of all time. It has been translated into 301 dialects and languages. *The Little Prince* has been adapted into a variety of art forms and media, including audio recordings, radio plays, live stage performances, film, television, ballet, and an animated film (Shattuck, 2005).

Due to the popularity of this novella and together with the themes it carries, there are many forms of interpretation and analysis that have been conducted either on the characterizations, themes, symbolisms or plots. This paper seeks to investigate the portrayal

of Jungian Archetypes in *The Little Prince* by examining symbolism and characterization available in this novella.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Carl Jung is a Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist who founded analytic psychology, where he proposed and developed the concepts of the extraverted and the introverted personality, archetypes, and the collective unconscious. According to APA Dictionary of Psychology, archetypes are universal, inborn models of people, behaviours, or personalities that play a role in influencing human behavior. It is also suggested that these archetypes were archaic forms of innate human knowledge passed down from our ancestors (Cherry, 2020).

In Jungian psychology, archetypes represent universal patterns and images from the collective unconscious. Jung believed that we inherited these archetypes in the same way that we inherited instinctive behavioural patterns. The human psyche, according to Jung, is made up of three parts: the ego, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious. The ego is the conscious mind's representative, whereas the personal unconscious contains suppressed memories. The collective unconscious is distinct in that Jung believed it served as a form of psychological inheritance. It contained all of the knowledge and experiences that humans as a species share. To answer the question of where these archetypes come from, Jung explained that they exist in the collective unconscious. He proposed that these models are innate, universal, and heritable. Archetypes are unlearned concepts that serve to organise how we perceive certain things (Cherry, 2020).

Jung agreed that each archetype played a role in personality, but he believed that the majority of people were dominated by a single archetype. The actual way an archetype is expressed or realised, according to Jung, is determined by a variety of factors, including an individual's cultural influences and distinctive personal experiences.

Jung identified four major archetypes but convinced there was no limit to the number of archetypes that could exist. The existence of these archetypes cannot be directly observed, but can be derived from religion, dreams, art, and literature. The four major archetypes described by Jung, as well as a few others that are frequently identified, are as follow: the persona, shadow, anima, or the self (Jung, 2014). According to Jung coming to terms with the four archetypes of the shadow, the anima or animus, the persona and the self is necessary for the process of individuation or “becoming a whole, individual person” in order to “to achieve psychic health” (Snider, 2009, p. 4).

METHODOLOGY

Textual analysis is the research methodology selected for this paper. This variety of analysis is the method researchers use to describe and interpret the characteristics of a recorded or visual message. The purpose of textual analysis is to describe the content, structure, and functions of the messages contained in texts. Content analysis is one of the approaches under textual analysis where the occurrence of specific messages embedded in texts are analysed (Frey, Botan and Kreps, 1999).

Antoine de Saint- Exupéry's *The Little Prince* which published in 1943 is the text chosen to interpret a theoretical concept called Jungian Archetypes introduced by Carl Jung a Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist who founded analytic psychology, where he proposed and developed the concepts of the extraverted and the introverted personality, archetypes, and the collective unconscious. This paper will explain on the four archetypes; the persona, the shadow, the anima or animus and the self and how they are portrayed in the novella.

JUNGIAN ARCHETYPES

PERSONA

The persona is the outward face we present to the world. It conceals our real self and Jung describes it as the “conformity” archetype. Jung explained persona as “a kind of mask, designed on the one hand to make a definite impression upon others, and on the other to conceal the true nature of the individual.” (Jung, 2014, p. 23). This is the public face or role a person presents to others as someone different to who we really are.

The persona represents all of the different social masks that we wear among various groups and situations. It acts to shield the ego from negative images. According to Jung, the persona may appear in dreams and take different forms. Over the course of development, children learn that they must behave in certain ways in order to fit in with society's expectations and norms. The persona develops as a social mask to contain all of the primitive urges, impulses, and emotions that are not considered socially acceptable.

The concept of persona as in wearing mask in order to make good impression upon others can be perceived in *The Little Prince*. In the beginning of the novella when the Aviator (narrator of the story) was a child, he was interested in drawing. However after some negative feedbacks from others (especially the adults) around him, he stopped drawing all together. In Chapter I he explained that he “gave up a wonderful career as a painter” and he “had to choose a different career” which led him to learn how to fly aeroplane. In the same chapter as well, the Aviator emphasizes that even as an adult he had to constantly behave according to people around him in order to fit in with others’ expectations and norms.

“...I would not talk to that person about boa constrictors, or virgin forests, or stars. I would place myself on their level. I would talk about bridge and golf, about politics and neckties.” (Saint-Exupéry, 1995, p. 7)

The persona archetype allows people to adapt to the world around them and fit in with the society in which they live. However, becoming too closely identified with this archetype can lead people to lose sight of their true selves. This apparently to be true in the case of the Aviator. His persona in adapting to others around him makes him feel lonely and isolated. In a way he is losing the sight of his true self. Instead of conversing about his own interests such as paintings, adventures and natures, he has to change the topics based on his audience. This was revealed in the first sentence of Chapter II:

“So I kept my own company, without anyone whom I could really talk to, until six years ago...” (p. 7)

Another portrayal of persona can be observed in Chapter IV. The Aviator is making assumption on the origin of the Little Prince. He believed that the Little Prince came from asteroid known as B 612. According to the Aviator, this asteroid was discovered by a Turkish astronomer in 1909. However when this astronomer made his presentation on the discovery of B 612, his discovery was rejected as no one believe him. According to the Aviator, his presentation was not taken seriously because he was wearing Turkish national costume. A few years later the same astronomer delivered the same presentation on the discovery of asteroid B 612. However this time he was instructed to wear “European dress” and because of his elegant evening dress his proofs were accepted. The incident with this Turkish astronomer portrays the archetype persona; the concept of wearing mask designed to make a definite impression upon others however simultaneously conceal the true nature of the individual.

SHADOW

The shadow is an unconscious component of the personality that the conscious ego does not recognise in itself, or the entirety of the unconscious. In a nutshell, the shadow represents the unknown side. The shadow is made up of repressed beliefs, vulnerabilities, wants, impulses, and flaws, and it exists as part of the unconscious mind. Our attempts to conform to cultural standards and expectations give rise to the shadow. This archetype comprises all of the things that are not only against society's morals and values, but also against one's own personal morals and values. Envy, greed, prejudice, hatred, and aggression for example, could be part of it (Cherry, 2020). In his article entitled *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, Jung stated that;

"The shadow personifies everything that the subject refuses to acknowledge about himself and represents a tight passage, a narrow door, whose painful constriction no one is spared who goes down to the deep well". (1996, p. 34)

In Saint- Exupéry's *The Little Prince*, there are three characters that fit under the depiction of the shadow. The first one is the King of Asteroid 325. He was the first adult the Little Prince encounters on his travels. He is tyrannical but he claims himself that he is fair, by promising to only make reasonable demands of his subjects. However his demands most of the time are absurd. These following excerpts are the demands made by the King regarding the Little Prince's yawning.

"It is contrary to etiquette to yawn in the presence of a king...I forbid you to yawn" (p. 35)

"I command you to yawn...Yawn are, to me, an object of curiosity. Hurry up! Yawn again. That is a command." (p. 35)

"In that case I.. I command you sometimes to yawn and at other times to..." (p. 35)

The King also feels that everything in the universe, including the stars, is one of his subjects and they must submit to his rule because "for not only was he an absolute monarch, he was a universal monarch" (p. 37). He refuses to acknowledge his illogical behaviours and belief. He emphasizes his ownership towards the universe and demands obedience from all his subjects. These behaviours are the depiction of the shadow archetype, where he refuses to acknowledge his greed and foolishness.

The second character which represents the shadow is the Conceited Man of Asteroid 326. The man lives alone. Nonetheless, he enjoys being admired, considers everyone else to be an admirer, and wears a special hat that he may raise in salute if someone praises him. The Conceited Man does not acknowledge his vanity. Even though his behaviour confuses the Little Prince however he refuses to explain or justify his action. The Little Prince's inquiries were left unanswered because "...the conceited man did not hear him. Conceited men only hear praise" (p. 40). His narcissism can be considered as against society's and individual's morals and values and because he refuses to concede this flaw, it conforms with the archetype the shadow.

The third and the last character that falls under this archetype is the Businessman, an arrogant and greedy man who lives on the fourth planet in the prince's voyage. He counts the stars on a regular basis, believing he owns them, and then writes down the number and deposits it in a bank. He considers himself to be extremely wealthy. The following excerpts represents his desires and flaws.

“When you find a diamond that belongs to nobody, it belongs to you. When you discover an island that belongs to nobody, it belongs to you...And the stars belong to me, because nobody before me ever thought of owning them.” (p. 46)

The shadow, according to Jung, is the undiscovered dark part of one's personality. The shadow is prone to psychological projection, in which a perceived personal weakness is recognised as a perceived moral flaw in someone else, due to its instinctual and irrational nature. These projections both protect and harm individuals by acting as a constantly thickening veil of illusion between the ego and the real world (Jung, 1996).

ANIMA AND ANIMUS

Jung defined the animus as a woman's unconscious masculine side and the anima as a man's unconscious feminine side, both transcending the personal psyche. According to Jung's theory, the anima represents the totality of a man's unconscious feminine psychological qualities, while the animus represents a woman's masculine ones. Jung claimed that a male's sensitivity is often diminished or suppressed, and thus regarded the anima as one of the most important autonomous complexes. Jung believed that the anima and animus appeared in dreams and influenced a person's attitudes and interactions with the opposite sex (Ewen, 2010).

These archetypal images are derived from both the collective and personal unconscious. The collective unconscious may hold ideas about how women should behave, whereas personal experience with wives, girlfriends, sisters, and mothers contributes to more personal images of women. However, in many cultures, men and women are encouraged to conform to traditional, and often rigid, gender roles. Jung proposed that discouraging men from exploring their feminine sides and women from exploring their masculine sides hindered psychological development (Jung, 2014).

Because this novella does not include female character, this paper only focuses on the archetype the anima. Anima is a Latin term that was originally used to describe concepts such as breath, soul, spirit, or vital force. In the early 1920s, Jung coined the phrase to characterise men's inner feminine nature. In *The Psychology of the Transference*, Jung defined Eve, Helen, Mary, and Sophia as the four stages of anima development. In general terms, anima development in a man entails the male subject opening up to emotionality, and thus a greater spirituality, through developing a new conscious paradigm that encompasses intuitive processes, creativity, and imagination (2013).

In *The Little Prince* the first stage of anima development is perceived through the Little Prince himself. Eve, which is named after Adam and Eve in Genesis is about the birth of a man's object of passion. The anima is inextricably linked to the female body as a source of nourishment, security, and love. At this anima level, a man cannot function effectively without a woman, and he is more likely to be manipulated by her or, more likely, by his own imagined version of her.

In Chapter VII and VIII, the Little Prince explained about his flower, a single rose that he dedicated his life to look after. The rose is a mysterious flower that blooms on the Little Prince's planet, Asteroid B 612. The flower, according to the Little Prince, is unique in the world and only grows on his planet. She is vain, proud, and demanding, but she also has a quiet

sweetness to her that enchants the Little Prince. The Little Prince depicts, Eve- the first stage of anima by considering the rose as an object of desire, and viewing himself as a provider of nourishment, security and love towards the rose.

“The little prince soon guessed that this flower was none too modest – but how thrilling she was!...And the little prince, all flustered, fetched a watering can of cool water and proceeded to wait upon the flower.” (p. 29)

“I am responsible for my rose...” the little price repeated, so as to remember. (p.72)

“What affects me so strongly about this sleeping prince is his loyalty to a flower, to the image of a rose, which shines inside him like a flame of a lamp, even as he sleeps...” (p.77)

The Little Prince’s treatment towards his flower represents the archetype anima, a man's unconscious feminine psychological qualities while the flower’s vanity and demanding nature emphasize that he is either more likely to be manipulated by her or, by his own imagined version of her.

THE SELF

The archetype of psychological fullness or wholeness is the Self. It is not identical to the ego, but it has positioned itself above or in the middle of ego-consciousness and unconsciousness. Carl Jung defined the Self as the unification of consciousness and unconsciousness in a person, as well as the psyche as a whole. It materialises as a result of individuation, which he defines as the process of integrating distinct components of one's identity (Jung, 2014).

In dreams, myths, and fairy tales, the Self emerges as a "higher personality," such as a monarch, hero, prophet, or saviour. “The Self, however, does not always take the form of a wise old man or wise old woman”. It may be personified as ‘something that is not entirely contained in time—something simultaneously young and old’ (Jung, 2014, p. 38). Based from this excerpt, the Little Prince is the portrayal of the Self in this novella. “The Self usually appears in dreams at crucial times in the dreamer’s life” (Jung, 2014, p. 38) like the Little Prince who meets the Aviator while he is trying to fix his plane.

Jung believed that each person is born with a sense of wholeness—of the Self—but that as they get older, a separate ego-consciousness solidifies out of that experience of unity (Jung, 1996). The Aviator highlights on how he had stopped drawing and to constantly behave according to people around him in order to fit in with others’ expectations and norms which archetype that Jung explained as persona "a kind of mask, designed on the one hand to make a definite impression upon others, and on the other to conceal the true nature of the individual" (Jung, 1996, p. 17). Because of the persona, the Aviator is losing sight of his true self. The Little Prince as the Self is encouraging the Aviator to start individuation, which Jung defines as the process of integrating distinct components of one's identity. He narrates his experience of visiting different asteroids and meeting various people and beings. Through his narration the Aviator realises of his own and others’ personalities. He is made aware of the existence of persona, shadow and anima.

Rediscovery of the Self also known as individuation is not easily achieved as remarked by the Little Prince;

“Where you come from... people grow five thousand roses in one garden – and still they do not find what they are looking for ”
(p. 79).

“But the eyes are blind. One must look with the heart” (p. 80).

Because the process of integrating distinct components of one's identity is challenging, the Aviator was terrified of losing the Little Prince (the Self). However the Little Prince explains that even when he was gone, the Aviator will always be happy to know him.

“At night, when you look up at the sky, since I shall be living on a star, for you it will be as if all the stars are laughing. You alone will have stars that can laugh!” (p.85).

In page 77, The Aviator has to carry the Little Prince because he felt asleep.

“I felt deeply moved. I felt that I was carrying a fragile treasure. I felt that nothing more fragile was to be found on this Earth...What I see here is but a shell. What is important is invisible.”

Based on the narration of this particular moment, the Little Prince's portrayal of the Self is viewed as delicate and precious by the Aviator. Rediscovery of the Self by integrating distinct components of one's identity is challenging because first and foremost the person has to differentiate each archetype that they have whether they fall under the conscious or the unconscious and acknowledge these archetypes together with the repressed beliefs, vulnerabilities, wants, impulses, and flaws they bring. Thus the Self and the process of individuation in *The Little Prince* is perceived as “fragile treasure”.

CONCLUSION

Archetypes are universal, innate models of people, behaviours, or personalities that influence human behaviour. Carl Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist, proposed that these archetypes were archaic forms of instinctive human knowledge passed down from our ancestors. For Jung, our primitive past serves as the foundation of the human psyche, directing and influencing present behaviour. Jung claimed to have identified a large number of archetypes, but he concentrated on four in particular. He labeled these archetypes the Persona, the Shadow, the Anima or Animus and the Self (Jung, 1996).

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince* is considered as a form of children literature with its simple words, phrases, characters and plot. Despite its style as a children's book, *The Little Prince* makes observations about life and human nature (Gopnik, 2014). Through textual analysis of this novella, it was discovered that it consists the portrayal of Jungian Archetypes. The Persona, different social masks that an individual have, is depicted by the Aviator, while the Shadow, the unconscious component of the personality which made of repressed beliefs, vulnerabilities, wants, impulses and flaws is represented by the three characters, the King, the Conceited Man and the Business Man, which the Little Prince encountered throughout his travels, while the Anima, a feminine image in the male psyche, and the Self, the unified unconsciousness and consciousness of an individual are being portrayed by the Little Prince himself.

On the surface, *The Little Prince* is a compelling story about a little interstellar wanderer in search of friendship and reality, and the man he befriends who has lost his way on the path to adulthood. The ways of friendship and affection can be learned, as well as how to compassionately see from the heart. On a deeper level, however, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry offers an adult allegory based on his own life experiences and the periods in which he lived. Through this novella, he looks at different facets of human existence, life and human nature.

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