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Identity and Individuation in *A Smile of Fortune* by Joseph Conrad

Abstract
The paper sets out to analyse Conrad's novella *A Smile of Fortune* and its narrator-protagonist's crisis of identity in terms of the Jungian concept of individuation. The dynamic process of constructing the narrative identity, as defined by Ricoeur, finds its psychological equivalent in the concept of individuation which involves recognizing and assimilating the opposites that reside within the unconscious and aims at transforming the psyche into the Self or *coincidentia oppositorum*. The paper focuses on the narrator's interaction with Jacobus and Alice as the stages of the individuation process which include a confrontation with the shadow and the anima, the archetypes of the unconscious.

Joseph Conrad, Jung, narrative identity, individuation, archetypes

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The plot in Joseph Conrad's novella *A Smile of Fortune* is constructed as a tangle of erotic fascination and commercial activity that gives rise to contradictory interpretations either foregrounding the theme of unrequited love or the narrator-protagonist's egoistic and cynical attitude. In the critical practice, *A Smile of Fortune* has earned the label of Romance. However, some critics refine this recognition of the novella's generic status and discuss it as a combination of romance and realism (Graver 1969: 162)[1]. Others approach it in terms of comedy which testifies to Conrad's so far unappreciated talent for infusing his stories with humour (Billy 1997: 80) or propose postmodernist reinterpretations as a text both complying with and subverting the Romance convention (Erdinast-Vulcan 1999: 135, 139, 140). What accounts for the novella's unclear generic affiliation is the baffling juxtaposition of two plot lines involving a commercial transaction and the narrator's infatuation with his business partner's daughter[2]. The alternating plotlines raise the question of how Conrad conceptualizes the captain's dilemmas and inconsistencies which underlie his motivation to interact with Jacobus and to flirt with Alice, his initial surrender to her charm, a subsequent loss of interest, and finally a withdrawal from any commitment. If Graver considered Conrad's poor handling of the love theme indisputable (Graver 1969: 159–60), in later interpretations critics draw attention to the novella's psychological insights and intricacies of love and sexuality discourse[3]. The captain's contradictory impulses to achieve material success and to indulge in an erotic fascination are addressed not only from the ethical perspective as a loss of moral bearings, egoism, gratification of lowly greed and a negligence of professional duties (Billy 1997: 88–90), but also as an emotional quandary that calls for psychological explanations

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1 Graver dismisses the novella as an inferior piece of writing (Graver 1969: 159). Yet, many critics find the text intriguing and intricate in its design. Moser, who criticized Conrad for the melodramatic way he handled the theme of love, appreciates *A Smile of Fortune* as „a first-rate story of female sexuality and male impotence" (Moser 1957: 98).

2 Erdinast-Vulcan interprets this conflict of love and commerce as a clash of generic conventions which results in deconstructing the generic unity of the text (Erdinast-Vulcan 1999: 140, 142).

3 Schwarz discusses the narrator's fascination with Alice in terms of voyeurism and sexual repression (Schwarz 1982: 15,16,18), whereas Hawthorn points to the sadistic and masochistic component of the captain's sexual obsession and places it within the framework of modernity, which links the expression of sexuality with violence as well as the dialectics of subordination and dominance (Hawthorn 2007: 79, 85).

involving the narrator's fluid representation of the self (Schwarz 1982: 15), discrepancy between his expectations and reality (Billy 1997: 88) as well as an erosion of the ideal self (Schwarz 1982: 11, 14).

The very act of telling the story signals the narrator's intention to understand himself as the subject responding to the events that took place on the island. While spinning his tale, the narrator struggles to gain insight into his contradictory impulses of attraction and repugnance that Alice evokes. He seeks to unravel the nexus of commercial interests and erotic fascination, and to create a stable representation of the self by reliving the baffling events and placing them within the ordered structure of the narrative. In his studies of narration concepts Ricoeur offers a useful model clarifying the relations between identity and the narrative. In order to justify the concept of narrative identity, Ricoeur makes the assumption that "the person, understood as a character in a story, is not an entity distinct from his or her 'experiences'" (Ricoeur 1992: 147). He takes the idea further by drawing a parallel between character and plot as well as between the story of the character's transformation and the construction of narrative identity (Ricoeur 1992: 143, 145, 147–48)[4]. Ricoeur argues that narrative identity is established by the clash between two basic components of the plot, concordance that sustains plot continuity and discordances that disrupt it and emphasizes its dynamic nature as "the unstable structure of discordant concordance characteristic of the plot" (Ricoeur 1992: 142). Hence, the process of constructing narrative identity unfolds as the dialectics of concordance and discordance (Ricoeur 1992: 141–43). This dynamic interaction underlying narrative identity finds its psychological equivalent in the individuation process which involves recognizing and coming to terms with the "opposites" that reside within the unconscious (Huskinson 2004: 42). Thus, individuation, which Jung posited as a central concept of his psychoanalytical system, aims at transforming the psyche into the integrated Self. On the narrative level, it is represented as a process of constructing narrative identity which relies on the plot development.

In *A Smile of Fortune* the story that the narrator-protagonist unravels dramatizes the process of constructing narrative identity that follows the stages of individuation as delineated by Jung. In Jung's version of psychoanalysis, in order to become the individuated self the ego has to confront personal and collective archetypes that emerge from the unconscious. Huskinson interprets individuation in terms of a dynamic process which makes tension between opposites resolve in the unity of consciousness and the unconscious. Instead of a conflict, these two domains of the psyche are engaged in the interaction that relies on complementing and compensating the opposites. Jung uses the term "Self" to denote this plenitude of being which integrates the opposites into a perfectly balanced structure. As a result, the ego overcomes one-sidedness by recognizing one's responsibility for the negative, inferior and unacceptable content repressed in the unconscious and by acknowledging its significance, which means bringing the archetypes of the shadow and the anima/animus to consciousness (Huskinson 2004: 42, 44, 47). The transformation process begins when the persona, a façade or a mask assumed in the interaction with others and defined as "a socially fabricated form of identity" (Smith 1990: 68), dominates the conscious attitude of the subject and prevents them from synthesizing opposites into the self. This one-sidedness of the persona which produces a sense of exile and a loss of meaning can be overcome in the encounter with archetypes

[4] According to Ricoeur „characters [...] are themselves plots" (Ricoeur 1992: 143).

that culminates in the emergence of the self, the unifying centre of the psyche referred to as *coincidentia oppositorum*.

The captain narrator's introductory description of the island as a revelation of beauty and light anticipates his hope to relive its memory as an encounter with the centre that might stabilize his inner chaos of contradictory impulses. The island where the narrator arrives to do business functions as archetypal space, which is announced by its very name, "the *Pearl of the Ocean*" (Conrad 1947: 3), immediately evoking symbolic associations. A pearl, which starts as a grain of sand and grows into a precious gem, exemplifies the transformation of base matter into the object of supreme perfection and, hence, it comes to represent the soul and its spiritual excellence as exemplified in the parables of the Gospels or the teachings of the ancient Gnostics. Approaching the land, the narrator perceives the island not as a real place but as an optical illusion which immediately shifts the main scene of the events to the domain of imagination:

> I became entranced by this blue, pinnacled apparition, almost transparent against the light of the sky, a mere emanation, the astral body of an island risen to greet me from afar. [...] And I wondered half seriously whether it was a good omen, whether what would meet me in that island would be as luckily exceptional as this beautiful, dreamlike vision so very few seamen have been privileged to behold. (Conrad 1947: 3)

The narrator's discourse includes phrases "pinnacled apparition," "dreamlike vision," "emanation" and "astral body" which situate the island in the realm of imagination, where it comes into contact with the archetypal contents of the unconscious[5]. Similarly, when the narrator, ready to leave the island, recalls his first view of the "Pearl," he frames it in terms of "vision," "unsubstantial, clear marvel," "fair dreams," "the art of a beautiful and pure magic" (Conrad 1947: 74). The dominant semantics is associated with lustre. Moreover, it also relies on the vocabulary of disembodiment such as "diaphanous," "unsubstantial," "vaporous" (Conrad 1947: 74) which convey the experience of transcending the empirical. These references to imagination, dreams, and the visionary construe the narrator's arrival at the "Pearl" as an entry to the domain of the archetypal which promises him a redeeming epiphany and a recovery from the crisis caused by the failure to perceive his life as meaningful. Nevertheless, by qualifying the trust in "a good omen" with the phrase "half seriously" he gives his expectation of imposing a coherent structure on his inner experience a jocular, even ironic, overtone which cancels any certainty about how to interpret himself and his situation.

The arrival at the island coincides with the captain protagonist's recognition of inner disintegration that takes the form of the split between the "real" and the "ideal" selves and, thus, catalyses the individuation process[6]. Being pressurized by the ship-owners into making profit, the narrator oscillates between the ambition to meet their expectations in order to prove his worth and a sense of powerlessness when faced with the overwhelming reality of "material

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5 In Jung's theory and therapeutic practice, active imagination, besides dreams and trance-like experience, plays a crucial role of stimulating the individuation process by bringing to consciousness what is hidden in the unconscious and providing images or forms that mediate the unconscious content so that consciousness can grasp them (Jung 1959a: 49; Jung 1966: 126–28).

6 Billy translates the rift between the ideal and the real self into the opposition of „the narrator's positive self-concept" and "selfishness" (Billy 1997: 79) and Schwarz juxtaposes his "romantic conceptions of himself as rescuer, courtly lover" against his tendency to indulge in voyeurism and narcissism (Schwarz 1982: 18).

interests." To highlight this experience of irreconcilable oppositions, he hyperbolizes external reality by comparing it to a stage which expands to take on the size of the whole world. At the same time, he emphasizes the insignificance of his own ego represented by his "abilities [...] no bigger than a pinhead" (Conrad 1947: 4). The narrator contrasts his wish to live "the finest life under the sun" (Conrad 1947: 6) in "an enchanted nook of the earth" (7) with the necessity to face the world which seems to him "more or less homicidal and desperately mercantile" (6) and with the urge to pursue "commercial interests" (6). However, the "horrid thoughts of business" (3) as well as distort the lofty image of the sea by making it an arena for both "trade — and for war" (6). This grim vision echoes in the account of approaching the port when the world of harmony pictured in the introductory scene turns into the landscape of exile filled with darkness, the howl of wind and "snarling sounds" (Conrad 1947: 5) of "agitated water" (4). The metaphor linking wind with "the wail of a forsaken soul" (Conrad 1947: 5) frames the narrator's inner disintegration as the struggle of the elements. These dark images of despair and alienation appear immediately after Burns, chief mate in charge of the ship the narrator commands, comments on the captain's bad luck and, in this way, forces him to acknowledge the worrying aspects of his crisis. Burns's criticism induces the narrator to discern the hegemony of the persona and its inflated expectations which clash with his inability to adapt, to fulfil his duties and to meet the demands of life.

The rational one-sidedness of the persona comes to the fore during the funeral of one of the fellow captains' child, when the narrator adopts an attitude of cool indifference in the face of the father's suffering. The narrator, unable to fend off the sense of meaninglessness and stagnation, debases the "winged" and "inspiring" words that he used to perceive as a link with transcendence but now he seems to follow their downward movement as they "fall wearily into the little grave" (Conrad 1947: 16). By highlighting the parallel between the corpse buried in the grave and the words, the metaphor turns them into mute objects and inscribes them within the pattern of decline and transience. At the funeral, the captain encounters an example of a psychic paradox, a sea wolf known as "the terror of sailors" who is deeply moved by the child's death and who openly, without any inhibition, expresses his sympathy by "dropping tears" (Conrad 1947: 15). The narrator draws attention to the seaman's contradictory features of hardness and gentleness. This coexistence of contradictions in the psyche anticipates the narrator's dilemma of how to cope with inner disintegration.

The narrator-protagonist's crisis of identity which accounts for his failure to resolve contradictions in terms of individuation, manifests itself as an encounter with the shadow, the first archetype of the unconscious, which the subject faces on the path of individuation towards the self. The confrontation with the shadow, always personified by the person of the same sex, obliges the ego to cope with a challenge to its idealized image and to undertake a quest for self-knowledge. As Jung explains, "To become conscious of [the shadow] involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real" (1959b: 24). Thus, the shadow represents all that the ego denies, despises, deems to be detestable, all the "inferior traits of character and other incompatible tendencies" (Jung 1959a: 285) that the ego represses as a source of shame and self-contempt. However, Jung points out that the shadow cannot be reduced to personifying only negative aspects and discards its construal in terms of absolute evil. The encounter with the shadow confronts the ego with the necessity to recognize and assimilate its unconscious inferior aspects, which initiates the process of integrating opposites into a unity (Huskinson 2004: 45).

The encounter with Alfred Jacobus, a ship-chandler, unleashes the narrator's anxiety, suspicions and resentment that he finds difficult to substantiate in a rational way. His premonition, articulated in the words: "it would be impossible to get rid of" Jacobus (Conrad 1947: 12), suggests that Alice's father represents the shadow which "coincides with the 'personal' unconscious" (Jung 1959a: 284) and which has to be confronted and recognized as part of one's psyche if the individuation process is to be completed successfully[7]. Initially, the narrator perceives Jacobus as a phlegmatic person; the way "he smiled in a musing, dreamy fashion" and "managed to look rather more sleepy than before" (Conrad 1947: 11) renders him lifeless in the narrator's eyes. By the same token, the depiction of his features, a "pale face" and "whiskers [...] of a faded nondescript colour," accompanied by the formula summing up Jacobus as a "heavy, tranquil man" (Conrad 1947: 7), translates the unobtrusive appearance into the expectation of an inefficient, irresolute person. Despite the impression of gentleness that Jacobus evokes, the narrator grows hostile and accuses him of fraud in business claiming that he "had the sense of having been circumvented" (Conrad 1947: 12). In the following interaction, the narrator develops such a strong dislike of Jacobus that he discerns a hint of menace even in his calm comportment, dismisses him as "that pertinacious ship-chandler" (Conrad 1947: 16) and interprets his drowsiness as camouflage for cunning and a proclivity to manipulation[8]; he insists that Jacobus feigns apathy to hide his true self: "Wide awake under his sleepy, broad mask [...] he understood at once [...]" (Conrad 1947: 40). What is more, the protagonist ascribes to Jacobus responsibility for his own failure to resolve the conflict between his aspiration to achieve pecuniary success and a disapproval of being ensnared by materialism. The narrator admits to being obsessed with "restless, shamefaced" thoughts about business that are marked by "a callous, abominable almost revolting, pertinacity" (Conrad 1947: 16). He blames Jacobus for inspiring these disturbing thoughts, which enhances his sense of inner disintegration and even depersonalization. Thus, while commenting on the despicable human nature, the narrator makes an implicit comparison of himself to "a monkey" and confesses that he "was disgusted with [his] thoughts" (Conrad 1947: 16). The closest that the narrator comes to accept the merchant as his shadow-like double is the moment when he speaks of their complicity in a dirty venture: "A sort of shady, intimate understanding seemed to have been established between us" (Conrad 1947: 51). Yet, he soon suppresses the budding recognition of his affinity with Jacobus and chooses to withdraw from the confrontation at the cost of concluding the potato transaction, once again reverting to the deprecatory mode of describing the ship-chandler's attitude, his "calculating gaze," his "accent of grim menace," "the rapacious suggestion" (Conrad 1947: 74) that he makes. All these groundless speculations reveal the mechanism of projecting the shadow onto the other person. When consciousness cannot assimilate the shadow, a projection appears as a form of a defence mechanism that shifts the unassimilated content from the unconscious to external reality (Gray 1996: 62). The projection mechanism accounts for attributing hostile intentions, repulsive features and unacceptable tendencies to Jacobus. The narrator's inner conflict

7 This function of Jacobus as a figure personifying the shadow is highlighted by his name which, as Bonney points out, denotes the Old Pretender (Bonney 1980: 72). Jung discussed the figure of the devil as a personification of the shadow in his *Answer to Job*.

8 Erdinast-Vulcan gives a postmodernist interpretation of the duality of Jacobus whose unstable identity as "the lover or the trickster, [...] the devoted father magician or the cunning procurer" (Erdinast-Vulcan 1999: 137) stems from the subversion of generic conventions of Romance.

between his ambition to excel in his profession and a desire to live an idyllic life makes him particularly sensitive to Jacobus's entrepreneurial activity that he interprets as a display of greed eventually leading to the potato transaction and exacerbating his sense of inadequacy in the capacity as a seaman-trader. The narrator, unable to disentangle himself from the power of projections, expresses his contempt for Jacobus's unhappy love affair with a circus lady-rider[9] mocking its romantic aspect and redefining the affection as weakness and a loss of control over passion: "He had not the strength of mind to shake himself free..." (Conrad 1947: 36). In this way, the narrator singles out Jacobus as an object which represents all that he detests about himself and, furthermore, which distracts him from contemplating the erotic bondage that his relationship with Alice threatens to become.

What intensifies the presence of the shadow is Jacobus's double, his brother Ernest, an influential and wealthy businessman who, however, on a closer acquaintance projects an image of an aggressive bully[10]. The two brothers quarrelled over Alfred's scandalous love affair and have not been on speaking terms ever since. The description of Ernest is dominated by the metaphors which emphasize his brutality in the eyes of the narrator, thus implying that he represents another shadow figure. The shadow always compels the ego to recognize its affinity with the marginal, the inferior and the imperfect. Ernest's office, located "in shabby surroundings, [...] amongst a lot of hovels" (Conrad 1947: 25), evokes an image of spatial marginalization subverting the other Jacobus's outstanding position and respect which he apparently enjoys in the community. The office itself is "the den of some unknown wild beast" and Ernest is given a derogatory label of "the human brute" (Conrad 1947: 26). Animal figures are typical personifications of the shadow which embodies the undifferentiated and, therefore, deemed to be primitive, psyche[11]. Metaphors that refer to animals point to Ernest's violence and his inability to restrain destructive inclinations. The narrator underlines his aggressive gestures and facial expressions describing him as a "giant tomcat" who manifests the will to attack: "grinning at me with savage cynicism," "He snarled," "growling," "spitting," "he glared [...] round-eyed and fierce" (Conrad 1947: 27). The ensuing argument makes the narrator eager to vent his fury and encourage the "mulatto youth" (Conrad 1947: 25), Ernest's illegitimate son, to take revenge on his father: "I had intended to say: 'Crack this brute's head for him'" (Conrad 1947: 29). Thus, the encounter with Alfred and Ernest Jacobus shatters the narrator's assumed mask of a polite gentleman and offers him a chance of bringing to consciousness the lowly and reprehensible facets of his personality within the individuation process.

Besides the shadow, consciousness should assimilate the archetype of the anima/animus in order to overcome the one-sidedness of the persona and to complete the process of unifying the opposites (Huskinson 2004: 46). Jung posits the existence of the contra-sexual archetype within both the male and the female unconscious (Samuels 1985: 172). The anima as a personification of the feminine belongs in the male unconscious whereas the animus, personification of the masculine, resides in the female unconscious. Jung draws a clear-cut distinction between the feminine Eros, a principle of unity, mediation, wholeness, homogene-

[9] Hawthorn argues that the narrator, fascinated with Alice, re-enacts Jacobus's erotic obsession (Hawthorn 2007: 88).

[10] As Edinger points out, the shadow often takes the form of "primitive or uncouth figures who are attempting to break into a house" (Edinger 1995a: 35).

[11] Hillman claims that insistence on rationality as a distinctive human feature pushes the animals down the hierarchy of beings as non-rational creatures (Hillman 2008: 126).

ity, and the masculine Logos, a principle of differentiation, division, classification, hierarchy (Huskinson 2004: 45, 46)[12]. However, he insists on unifying these two principles, which is crucial to the creation of psychic wholeness conceived of as a conjunction of consciousness and the unconscious (Jung 1959a: 175). For Jung the dynamic of the individuation process involves a prior incorporation of the shadow into consciousness as a prerequisite for assimilating the anima: "I should like to emphasize that the integration of the shadow, or the realization of the personal unconscious, marks the first stage in the analytic process, and that without it a recognition of anima and animus is impossible" (Jung 1959b: 42). Jung places the anima in a complementary relationship with the persona, which accounts for conceptualizing it as a repository of "all those common human qualities which the conscious attitude lacks" (Jung 1971: 646). The critics of Jungian psychoanalysis object to the anima/animus and Eros/Logos distinctions. They point out that the concept of the anima, which defines women in terms of the lack of rationality, reflects the patriarchal essentialist conceptualizations of the feminine and embodies all that the patriarchal discourse marginalizes and insists on excluding or repressing as inferior and unacceptable (Hauke 2000: 120–25). In response to the criticism of Jung's misogynist perspective, post-Jungians redefine the archetype of the anima/animus in order to avoid its reductive identification with gender stereotypes. Instead they construe it as a concept referring to these aspects of the unconscious that are intrinsic to any subject, male and female alike (Samuels 1985: 168, 171–72). Samuels argues that such a redefinition establishes the anima/animus archetype as a representation of otherness, of all that subverts the dominant paradigm (1985: 172, 173).

The narrator-protagonist's inner crisis grows acute when Jacobus introduces him to his daughter, Alice, ostracized by society due to her illegitimate status and spending her time in an enclosed garden[13]. Alice, who first appears to the narrator as a nymph imprisoned in a labyrinth, a "maze of bed-flowers" with "a basin of dark water" (Conrad 1947: 42) occupying the centre, represents the anima, an archetype that initiates him to the realm of love, beauty and mystery[14]. Jung points to the anima's "'occult' connections with 'mysteries,' with the world of darkness in general" which give it "a religious tinge" (Jung 1959a: 199). He insists on its power to evoke the inscrutable that cannot be translated into discursive terms, thus inviting the interpretation of this archetype as an equivalent of the Kantian *noumenon*. The encounter with the anima radically changes the perception of reality, producing a defamiliarizing effect, challenging our practical, rational approach as well as revealing the potential of the ordinary to engender fascination: "Everything the anima touches becomes numinous–unconditional, dangerous, taboo, magical" (Jung 1959a: 28). Tracing the evolution of Eros from the fundamentally biological and instinctual to the most spiritual and pure, Marie-Louise von Franz distinguishes its four stages which are represented by the figures of Eve, Helen of Troy, Mary

12 Samuels sums up Jung's conceptualizations of Logos and Eros in the following terms: "Logos implies active, assertive, intellectual, penetrative, objective interest; Eros implies passive, submissive, emotional, receptive, psychic relatedness" (Samuels 1985: 171).

13 Bonney views Jacobus as a manipulator who invites the narrator to his home and arranges an encounter with Alice hoping that it will end in marriage (Bonney 1980: 73).

14 Analysing reasons for the narrator's obsession with Alice, critics argue that he seeks relief from the commercial necessities of his marine career (Bonney 1980: 72), emphasize the contradictions that the narrator fails to reconcile and that prompt him to turn to the girl for a kind of emotional consolation (Schwarz 1982: 11) or discern underlying sadism and masochism, a search both to dominate Alice and to relish her contempt (Hawthorn 2007: 86).

and Sophia or Sapientia (Franz 1964: 185). Edinger associates Helen, symbol of beauty and romantic infatuation, with the second stage of erotic development which involves both the polarity of the male and the matriarchal principles and a quest for unifying these opposites (1995b: 167). Helen evolves to reach the level of spiritualization in Sophia or Sapientia, the fourth stage in the development of Eros. At both levels Eros manifests itself either as a sexual union (Helen) or as a psychological one (Sophia) (1995b: 167–68). In his account of Alice's secluded life, the narrator provides clues implying that she combines the attributes of the anima personified by Helen of Troy and by Sophia who inspires man and acts as a guide to the unconscious[15]. The narrator highlights her status as a temptress, "a spell-bound creature with the forehead of a goddess" whose charm cannot be resisted and who exerts a hypnotic influence reducing him to the position of "the slave of some depraved habit" (Conrad 1947: 59). He is so helpless in the confrontation with the anima that he accepts and even relishes contradictory emotions that Alice evokes in him, both anger at being snubbed and pleasure that he derives from rejection: he wants to "taste perversely the flavour of contempt [...], drink in the provocation of her scornful looks, and listen to the curt, insolent remarks uttered in that harsh and seductive voice" (Conrad 1947: 65).

However, the protagonist does not only contemplate Alice's sensual beauty, "her long immobilites composed in the graceful lines of her body," "hair of a gipsy tramp" and "splendid black eyes" (Conrad 1947: 59) — an indispensable component enhancing fascination that the femme fatale exerts. He also draws attention to her "meditative pose" (Conrad 1947: 48), her immersion in a "reverie" (43) which establish a link with the unconscious and her "far-away stare" (48) that invokes the Platonic definition of sight as a tool of intellectual rather than sensual cognition and bespeaks her power to get an insight into the inner world. The girl's eyes "staring straight before her as if watching the vision of some pageant passing through the garden" (Conrad 1947: 43) reveal her function of an intermediary between the domains of consciousness and the unconscious, of "a psychopomp who points the way to the highest meaning, as we know from *Faust*" (Jung 1959a: 29). Alice, playing her role of a guide, directs the narrator's attention to what he denies and finds incomprehensible about himself. Although the narrator usurps the status of a mentor aspiring to make Alice aware of her miserable situation, at some point the girl reverses the roles and, by asking provocative questions, she induces him to reflect on his own motivation. Astonished by Alice's queries about the causes of his interest in her, the narrator admits that he cannot account for his fascination which persists despite her bizarre and unfriendly attitude. The anima functions in a compensatory relation to the narrator's persona which is represented by his professional ethos as a seaman. Therefore, the erotic obsession that Alice, anima figure, fuels thwarts the narrator's ambitions and, by arousing "an abject dread of going to sea" (Conrad 1947: 65), subverts a rigorous compliance with duties that the employers assign to him. The captain's temporary surrender to the anima prompts him to reject conventions and, consequently, to rebel against the persona representing the attitudes dominant in consciousness: the thought of Alice "was enough to make me break all my good resolutions" (Conrad 1947: 59).

[15] Many critics point to the fairy tale and mythological motifs that Conrad invokes to depict the relationship between the narrator and Alice such as the figures of prince Charming and Pygmalion. See Meyer 1967: 82; Schwarz 1982: 12, 13; Erdinast-Vulcan 1999: 139.

The narrator-protagonist tends to perceive Alice's idiosyncratic behaviour as a challenge to rationality and as a manifestation of otherness that provokes his loathing. Although the encounter with Alice introduces the narrator to the domain of emotions, he evaluates the experience from a logocentric perspective identifying his inability to resist irrational impulses with moral corruption and comparing his addiction to Alice to "a secret vice," "the habit of some drug or other which ruins [...] its slave" (Conrad 1947: 62) as well as "folly," something "unworthy" (59). On the one hand, the narrator prides himself on mastering his desire which is "irrealizable," because he "kept [his] head — quite" (Conrad 1947: 59); on the other, he deprecates himself for succumbing to Alice's charm and dismisses his fascination with the anima as a loss of self-control and a failure to obey reason: "How weak, irrational, and absurd we are! How easily carried away whenever our awakened imagination brings us the irritating hint of a desire!" (Conrad 1947: 56). His sobriety and capacity to make a cool objective judgement and to exercise mastery over his passion indicate the domination of the rationalistically oriented persona which, as it always happens, places itself in opposition to the anima.

In the interaction with Alice the narrator's alternating perspectives of idealization and degradation reflects the bipolar nature of the anima who "can therefore appear positive one moment and negative the next; [...] now a good fairy, now a witch; now a saint, now a whore" (Jung 1959a: 199). Tracing the stages of his relationship with Alice, the protagonist portrays her as an object evoking both fascination and contempt or even repulsion. The ideal of beauty, which seduced him at the outset, is exposed to ridicule by highlighting an incongruity of the exotic, the banal and the lowly: "Those long, Egyptian eyes [...] she had found in the sawdust of the circus [...]" (Conrad 1947: 71). This implicit reference to Alice's origin and her father's unhappy love for a circus acrobat links her with the worthless and the inferior,[16] subverting her status of an enchanting temptress and a guide to the mysteries of the unconscious who makes the protagonist ready to accept his enslavement. The narrator reduces her power to conjure up a vision and connect to the unconscious to nothing more than a narcissistic contemplation of "her own lonely image, in some far-off mirror" (Conrad 1947: 63) and turns his negative opinion of Alice[17] into an emphatically unquestionable statement: "her remarks [...] were of the most appalling inanity" (Conrad 1947: 59–60). Once again he underlines her lack of education and ignorance by repeating "nothing" several times: "The girl had learned nothing, [...] she knew nothing, she had heard of nothing" (Conrad 1947: 60). In a mocking tone of condescension, he comments on her narrow reading range limited to newspapers, of which she understands little and on which she depends to form an entirely mistaken view of reality. Despite his initial fascination, he sustains the perspective of the

16 Commenting on the myth of Demeter, Jung associates the Kore with the anima and indicates that she frequently manifests her presence as "the *dancer*" whose classical mythological versions are "the *corybant*, *maenad*, or *nymph*" (Jung 1959a: 184). Indeed, Alice's mother was not merely a circus lady-rider, but she was truly a maenad who persisted in living a life free of any social constraints, who refused to renounce her freedom for the sake of Jacobus's love, and instead demonstrated her fury and an almost savage drive to destroy Jacobus. Alice replicates her mother's attitude when she refuses to talk with the captain, withholds any communication with him, and ostentatiously ignores and disdains him.

17 Moser argues that the narrator's desire is a response to Alice's indifference which threatens his male ego, shatters his self-confidence and, thus, provokes him to "prove his manhood" (Moser 1957: 98). Schwarz interprets the narrator's growing attraction to the girl who suffers social ostracism because of her illegitimacy by the fact that, in this way, the narrator longs to assert his dominant position and a sense of superiority (Schwarz 1982: 12, 18).

rationalist persona by referring to "a childish and violent shape" (Conrad 1947: 67) of her emotions which accounts for her lack of self-control and an inability to formulate objective assessments. In this way, the narrator refuses to acknowledge her significance as the anima — a guide in the world of archetypes who initiates and leads the way to the centre of the labyrinth. A depreciatory comment on Alice's disproportionate facial features and her "low forehead of a stupid goddess" (Conrad 1947: 71) conveys a subtle allusion to degeneration which, as Lombroso's popular theory had it, could be diagnosed by studying one's physiognomy[18] and indicates that she no longer captivates the narrator sexually. As "a stupid goddess" whose empty gaze is "void of all consciousness whatever" (Conrad 1947: 68) she embodies an inversion of Sophia, one of the four types of the anima, who offers access to the numinous. On the first encounter, the protagonist endows Alice with the characteristics of a "startled wild animal," ready to flee, with her "supple body drawn together tensely [...] as if crouching for a spring" (Conrad 1947: 44). He doubts her ability to communicate and comprehend speech, in this way calling into question her identification as a human being. Animalistic imagery reveals Alice's proximity to the domain of the unconscious and her opposition to the rational, which confirms her status of the Other in the narrator's eyes.

In his relationship with Alice, the narrator complies with the principle of Logos, which acts through division, differentiation and dominance instead of unity. The captain reacts to the girl's demonstrations of indifference by trying to bring her out of her silence, which reflects his logocentric desire to make her part of the discursive community and overcome her stubborn wilfulness by teaching her strategies of reasonable self-conduct. To describe his relationship with Alice, he employs the metaphor of cognition as a gesture of grasping which equates the search for knowledge with the recourse to violence: "She exasperated me [...] by something elusive and defiant in her very form which I wanted to seize" (Conrad 1947: 63–64). Refusing to recognize and accept the anima as part of his psyche, the narrator tends to view her as the inferior and irrational Other that should be mastered even with a recourse to violence: "I felt as if I could have [...] shaken her, beaten her maybe" (Conrad 1947: 54). His desire to subjugate Alice is camouflaged as erotic lust; hence he embraces Alice "as if she were my mortal enemy" (Conrad 1947: 70) and draws a parallel between his "vicious" kiss and "a bite" (69). Freeing herself from his embrace, Alice turns into a serpent-like creature,[19] which upholds the narrator's perception of the anima as the Other and, hence, fosters his alienation from the archetype: "with a downward, undulating, serpentine motion [...] she got away from me smoothly" (Conrad 1947: 70). To prevent what he calls "an open scandal" (Conrad 1947: 74) and escape the vague situation without suffering any consequences, the captain finally agrees to Jacobus's proposal and purchases a large quantity of potatoes, without any prospect of selling them at a profit. This decision transforms his relationship with Alice into a carefully calculated exchange of services which undercuts any possibility of responding to the lure of the anima. Thus, the captain's failure to assimilate the archetypal content is sig-

[18] Conrad was acquainted with Lombroso's theory and made an explicit reference to it in *The Secret Agent* (Watts 1993: 92).

[19] Jung links animals such snakes, but also cats, bears as well as "some black monster of the underworld like the crocodile, or other salamander-like, saurian creatures" with Kore, Demeter's daughter and the personification of the anima (Jung 1959a: 184). He compares the anima to a "serpent in the paradise of the harmless man with good resolutions and still better intentions" (Jung 1959a: 28).

nalled by his account of unsuccessful seduction in terms of "some rather complicated deal" (Conrad 1947: 68) which translates erotic fascination into a commercial enterprise.

The narrator's alienation from the archetypes correlates with the transformation of the garden, an image of fertile nature, into barren wasteland, "the hot, weary earth, the abode of obscure desires, of extravagant hopes, of unimaginable terrors" (Conrad 1947: 66). It seems "a cemetery of flowers buried in the darkness" (53), where scent is compared to "wandering, fragrant souls" (53) and the extinction of light and colour parallels the ego's struggle with the undifferentiated content of the unconscious in the form of the shadow. At that moment, the island which initially seemed an archetypal paradise to the narrator, becomes a place where "commercial interests" prevail and all the relationships are subject to commodification. The narrator's perception of the island as a "remembered vision" and "marvel," which changes "into a thing of horrors" (Conrad 1947: 74), enhances the effect of a growing alienation from the archetypes that connect the ego to the regenerative energy of the unconscious. The promise of rebirth and integration of the opposites into the unity of the self becomes an experience of reducing all human interactions to the relations based on economic exchange. Self-blame for abandoning the girl continues to pervade the memory of the romance[20] and to torment the protagonist with the haunting image of Alice-anima, a bitter reminder of his tendency to deny otherness. In this way, he re-establishes the dominant status of the persona that relies on the ideal image of the self as a rational subject in control. Unwilling to enter the realm of archetypes, the narrator longs to immerse himself in oblivion without having to cope with the interference from the unconscious in the form of meaningful dreams or disturbing memories. He refuses to resort to the healing power of dreams[21] and imagination which sustain the interaction with the unconscious and stimulate the process of individuation. In fact, the narrator dreams only one dream at that time, focusing on a stack of gold coins, a symbol of avarice. Instead of putting him in touch with archetypes, the dream renders him immune to the torture of musing over his unfair treatment of Alice and his decision to exchange her for what turned out to be a profitable business: "That night I dreamt of a pile of gold in the form of a grave in which a girl was buried, and woke up callous with greed" (Conrad 1947: 84). This nocturnal reverie that might clarify the source of the crisis to the narrator merely fuels his obsession with making a fortune. It certainly does not prevent his surrender to the one-sided attitude of the persona committed to commercial success and eager to celebrate conventions which prevail over emotions, imagination and intuition[22].

However, the narrator is unable to maintain the illusion of the autonomous rational self that enjoys mastery over the external world and establishes its authority by suppressing its

[20] As Hawthorn argues, the narrator abandons Alice the moment she shows her autonomy and proves to be his equal by taking the initiative in the erotic game. Therefore, she no longer inspires his fascination when he cannot perceive her as an object of his sadistic and masochistic fantasies (Hawthorn 2007: 90–93). Schwarz points out that the narrator's inability to make a commitment gives rise to the sense of guilt that haunts him a long time after severing all the personal and commercial ties with Jacobus (1982: 16, 17).

[21] Huskinson comments on the significance of dreams for analysing the dynamic between consciousness and the unconscious as well as for restoring their balance:

> Jung maintains that the attitude of the unconscious, and also its compensatory function, is discovered through the interpretation of the conscious recollection of the dream. [...] For Jung, the dream brings to consciousness an image of the psychological state that has been neglected and made unconscious [...]. (2004: 36)

[22] Billy delineates the narrator's evolution from a naive optimist and a pursuer of financial profit to a cynic and "a disillusioned pessimist" (Billy 1997: 81, 88, 91).

irrational aspects. Instead of unravelling as continuous stories, the dreams that oppress the narrator at the time of his material success appear in the fragmentary form of "snatches" (Conrad 1947: 85) suggesting that he cannot draw upon the archetypal images of the unconscious to create a coherent representation of the self. Moreover, the central image of these dreams, "castaways starving on a desert island covered with flowers" (Conrad 1947: 85), signals the threat to the process of individuation. The image of juxtaposing flowers, a symbol of full growth and the complete self[23] with hungry castaways, a symbol of sterility and a failure to nourish the psyche, reveals the protagonist's separation from the source of plenitude. His decision to give up on the command of the ship in order to avoid returning to the island and facing a possible scandal exacerbates inner disintegration and the crisis of identity that the narrator faces: "it was as if I were plucking out my very heart [...]" (Conrad 1947: 87). Comparing his gesture of posting a letter of resignation and a subsequent renunciation of all that makes up the very core of his life to the loss of heart, the narrator articulates a split between emotion and the mask of social conformity. Since the persona has no access to the energy of emotions that are concentrated in the anima, it no longer offers him refuge from the sense of isolation in the middle of the crowd and cannot counteract its overwhelming impact: "I had never felt more isolated from the rest of mankind as when I walked that day its crowded pavement, [...] feeling already vanquished" (Conrad 1947: 86). The unsuccessful attempt to integrate the shadow and the anima in the individuation process accounts for the narrator's scepticism and disenchantment bordering on nihilistic negation,[24] which he describes as "a sudden and weary conviction of the emptiness of all things under Heaven" (Conrad 1947: 78–79).

Unable to gain sufficient self-knowledge in order to assert his own perspective,[25] the narrator cedes the privilege of uttering the final lines of the novella to Burns. In contrast to the captain narrator, the first mate insists on the positive meaning of the phrase "a smile of fortune" which also makes the title of story and, thus, both anticipates and sums up the central dilemma of the story. By highlighting the discrepancy between his own and Burns's interpretation of the phrase, the narrator refuses to provide closure to his story and admits his inability to turn the account into a narrative construction of identity. The ambiguous ending leaves open the question of interpreting the key events of the story. It reflects the narrator's failure to construe the sequence of events in teleological terms as a process organizing his experience into a development of individuality[26]. The narrator's comment on meaningless real-

[23] Jung interprets flowers as a symbol of the self (Jung 1959b: 226) and of the individuation process: "The tree stands for the development and phases of the transformation process, and its fruits or flowers signify the consummation of the work" (Jung 1959b: 235).

[24] Bonney traces the source of the narrator's nihilistic vision to his recognition of the misleading role of rhetoric that veils the ugly realities of "material interests" and couches them in romantic terms. When the narrator discerns the rhetorical confusion of the romantic and the commercial, he discards the romantic mode of interpreting his experiences (Bonney 1980: 75–77).

[25] Critics diverge over the question whether the narrator of *A Smile of Fortune* achieves self-knowledge. Billy insists that the narrator's disenchantment proves a certain degree of self-knowledge (Billy 1997: 92). In contrast, Schwarz maintains that he remains blind to the nature of his obsession (Schwarz 1982: 14, 18). Moreover, Schwarz argues that the narrator tends to justify and rationalize his behaviour towards Alice and, thus, he shirks the obligation to understand his reprehensible attitude (Schwarz 1982: 14).

[26] Billy argues that the narrator does manage to get an insight even though the events leave him disenchanted (Billy 1997: 92), whereas Schwarz indicates that the narrator he refuses to admit his guilt even in retrospect and remains unable to fully grasp the motives behind his decisions (Schwarz 1982: 10, 14).

ity points to Conrad's scepticism which goes beyond the articulation of disillusionment and offers a response to Descartes' and Hume's philosophies. Within this framework, Conrad's scepticism can be defined as a subversion of the Cartesian cogito conceived of as an autonomous subject, the sole unquestionably real entity (Wollaeger 1990: xiv–vi)[27]. In *A Smile of Fortune* the narrator has not succeeded in completing the individuation process and creating a coherent representation of the self since he cannot disentangle himself from the projections, refuses to confront the contradictory impulses and fails to incorporate them into consciousness. Thus, the ending of the novella highlights the narrator's divided self[28] whose exile from the paradise-like reality of the centre and a failure to construct a stable identity establishes him as a figure of modern fragmentation.

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[27] Wollaeger relates Conrad's scepticism to Bakhtin's dialogic which dismantles the hegemony of any discourse in the novel (1990: xvii).

[28] Nietzsche came up with the concept of the dividuum to challenge the metaphysical construct of individuum which relied on identifying the self as essence and promoted the existence of the self-subject as a stable, coherent psychic entity (Siemens 2006: 450–51).

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