

A Jungian Psychoanalytic Study of the Archetypal Journey and the Collective Unconscious in Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies*

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Abstract

This study explores the psychological depth of Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* through the lens of Jungian psychoanalysis and focuses on the archetypal journey and the workings of the collective unconscious. It investigates the ways Ghosh's characters embody universal patterns of human experience such as struggles for identity, transformation, and self-realization within a colonial and historical framework. Using a qualitative and interpretive approach, the research examines the unfolding of the persona, shadow, anima, and animus in key characters such as Deeti, Neel, and Zachary. Their voyage aboard the ship *Ibis* becomes not only a passage across the sea but also a symbolic journey into the depths of the human psyche. The study interprets Ghosh's narrative as a mirror of collective memory and the shared unconscious that binds humanity across time and culture. By linking Jung's psychological theory with Ghosh's postcolonial vision, the research reveals the interplay between inner and outer worlds; where trauma, displacement, and resilience shape both individual and communal identities. Ultimately, the paper argues that *Sea of Poppies* transcends its historical narrative to portray a universal quest for wholeness. It illustrates the enduring capacity of the human spirit to heal and evolve through self-awareness that integrates the conscious and unconscious mind into a unified sense of being.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis, Archetypal journey, Collective unconscious Anima, Animus

Introduction

A landmark work of postcolonial fiction, Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* (2008) intertwines themes of identity, displacement, and transformation during the

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height of British colonialism in India. Set against the historical backdrop of the opium trade and the voyage of the ship Ibis, the novel brings together a diverse cast of characters; each carrying their own burdens of history, trauma, and desire. The novel's layered narrative not only captures the socio-political realities of the nineteenth century but also delves deeply into the psychological dimensions of its characters. This psychological depth provides fertile ground for applying Carl Gustav Jung's psychoanalytic theory, particularly his concepts of the collective unconscious, archetypes, and individuation. Through a Jungian lens, *Sea of Poppies* can be understood as more than a historical fiction; it becomes a symbolic journey of the human psyche that explores the universal struggle toward self-realization and wholeness.

Carl Gustav Jung, the Swiss psychiatrist and founder of analytical psychology, proposed that the human mind is structured into three layers; the ego, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious (Jung, 1959). While the ego represents the conscious self and the personal unconscious stores individual memories and experiences, the collective unconscious contains inherited patterns and archetypes shared by all humanity. These archetypes manifest through recurring images, symbols, and themes in myths, dreams, and art, and shape the way individuals perceive and interact with the world (Cherry, 2024). In literary analysis, Jungian criticism investigates how these archetypal images emerge through characters, plots, and symbols, and reflects both personal and collective aspects of the psyche. When viewed through this theoretical framework, *Sea of Poppies* reveals how Ghosh's characters undergo inner psychological transformations that mirror universal archetypal journeys. Each character embarks on both a literal and symbolic voyage aboard the Ibis, confronting their fears, desires, and suppressed selves. This journey mirrors the Jungian process of individuation, wherein the conscious and unconscious aspects of the self, come into harmony. Deeti's evolution from a submissive wife to an independent, self-aware woman symbolizes her integration of the animus: the masculine energy of strength and autonomy within her psyche. Similarly, Zachary Reid, a mixed-race sailor is struggling with issues of race and identity, embodies the archetype of the persona, the mask one wears to adapt and survive in a judgmental society. Meanwhile, Neel Rattan Halder's fall from aristocracy and imprisonment forces him to confront his shadow; the repressed darkness of his privileged self and the moral blindness of his world. Collectively, their journeys illustrate how colonial and social oppression become metaphors for

inner psychological bondage, and how freedom, in Jungian terms, represents the awakening of the true self.

The novel's symbolic richness and psychological complexity align well with Jung's understanding of human consciousness as a dynamic interplay of archetypal forces. The *Ibis* itself functions as an archetypal space: a vessel of transformation akin to the mythic "ship of souls," where characters are stripped of their past identities and given the chance to reconstruct themselves. In this fluid world, Ghosh weaves together history and psyche, blending the outer realities with inner experiences, showing how the shared wounds of colonialism echo through the collective consciousness of humanity. The *Ibis* journey reflects not only a migration of bodies but also a journey of the soul toward individuation; a movement from fragmentation toward integration (Ghosh, 2008).

Jungian analysis allows us to explore how Ghosh's characters embody universal psychological patterns that transcend cultural boundaries. Deeti's confrontation with patriarchal oppression parallels the archetypal journey of the heroine who must face her shadow and reclaim her inner power. Kalua's compassionate courage reflects the anima archetype; a balance of strength and tenderness that defies rigid gender norms. Zachary's fragmented identity highlights the danger of over-identifying with the persona, while Neel's self-reflection and humility represent the first steps toward individuation. These character arcs demonstrate how Ghosh's fiction captures timeless human struggles within specific historical contexts.

Moreover, the colonial setting amplifies these archetypal tensions. The rigid hierarchies of class, race, and power that define the colonial order become external projections of the collective shadow; the repressed guilt, greed, and dehumanization underlying imperial domination. As Jung (1959) suggested, societies, like individuals, repress aspects of themselves they find unacceptable, only for these to return as destructive forces. The exploitation of the opium trade, the racial discrimination aboard the *Ibis*, and the violence of displacement all represent manifestations of this collective shadow. Ghosh's portrayal of these dynamics illustrates how personal and collective psychologies are intertwined, and how healing; both individual and societal requires confronting these hidden aspects of the self.

By bringing Jung's archetypal framework into dialogue with Ghosh's postcolonial narrative, this study explores how the novel represents both individual and collective journeys toward identity and freedom. The tension between repression and expression, self and society, and illusion and truth run through each character's experience. The Ibis, as a microcosm of the colonial world, becomes a testing ground for these inner conflicts. The ship's voyage mirrors humanity's timeless quest for meaning and a voyage through suffering, self-discovery, and eventual transformation.

The primary aim of this research is to apply Jungian psychoanalytic criticism to Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* in order to explore how the novel reflects universal patterns of the human psyche through its characters and narrative structure. Specifically, the study seeks to examine how Jung's archetypes: the persona, the shadow, the anima or animus, and the self; manifest within the novel's major characters and how their journeys represent processes of individuation and self-realization. The objectives include identifying how colonial oppression serves as a collective shadow within the text, how Ghosh's characters symbolize archetypal struggles for identity, and how the Ibis functions as a transformative space for psychological integration. Ultimately, the research aims to demonstrate that *Sea of Poppies* not only narrates the historical realities of displacement and empire but also delves into the timeless human journey of confronting one's inner self and achieving psychological wholeness.

Review of the Literature

The novel *Sea of Poppies* by Amitav Ghosh has been widely discussed in postcolonial and literary studies for its vivid portrayal of migration, empire, and cultural intersections. Many scholars have explored how the novel captures the realities of the nineteenth-century opium trade and its consequences for individuals caught within global systems of power (Thieme, 2008; Shivar, 2022). According to John Thieme (2008), *Sea of Poppies* functions as a historical tapestry that weaves together characters from various regions and backgrounds, and illustrates how colonialism shaped and disrupted lives. Other researchers such as Shivar (2022) emphasize Ghosh's attention to social hierarchies, linguistic diversity, and the struggles of those displaced by empire.

Despite this broad scholarship, relatively few critics have examined the novel from a psychological or archetypal perspective. Most readings focus on the external realities of colonial history, identity, and resistance rather than the inner worlds of the characters. BookerTalk (2023) comments that the novel's complexity lies in its wide cast of characters and overlapping stories, which reflect a sense of collective experience. However, beneath this collective surface, the narrative also reveals deep psychological struggles, dreams, and transformations that mirror universal human patterns described by Carl Jung.

Scholars have noted that Ghosh's narrative technique, which intertwines multiple perspectives and dialects, mirrors the complexity of the human psyche. According to Kakar (2012), Ghosh's use of language and memory "creates a psychic map of colonial consciousness," where individual stories become fragments of a shared human experience. Similarly, Mukherjee (2015) argues that *Sea of Poppies* transcends historical fiction and offers a "mythic retelling of displacement and rebirth" that resonates with Jung's idea of archetypal storytelling. The novel's recurring motifs of water, migration, and rebirth serve as symbols of transformation, and echoes Jung's association of water with the unconscious and the process of renewal.

Jung's theory of the collective unconscious offers a valuable framework for understanding these inner dimensions of *Sea of Poppies*. Jung (1959) proposed that the human psyche contains not only personal memories but also inherited images and symbols that connect all people through what he termed the collective unconscious. These recurring symbols, known as archetypes, express shared human experiences such as the hero's journey, the search for identity, and the confrontation with shadow aspects of the self. According to Cherry (2024), archetypes like the persona, the shadow, the anima or animus, and the self shape how people perceive themselves and others, and influence both behavior and creativity.

A Jungian analysis of Ghosh's novel allows for a new interpretation of the characters' journeys. The voyage on the ship *Ibis*, which brings together individuals of different castes, races, and social positions, can also be viewed as a symbolic journey into the collective unconscious. As each character faces personal loss, fear, and transformation, they engage in a process similar to what Jung called individuation, the integration of the conscious and unconscious self. Schaffner (2024) explains that Jungian archetypes represent recurring patterns of meaning that appear across

cultures, linking personal experience with universal psychological structures. Through this lens, the Ibis becomes a vessel not only of migration but also of self-discovery.

Scholars have already recognized the ship as a powerful metaphor in Ghosh's narrative. Lauret (2011) observes that *Sea of Poppies* remaps the Indian Ocean world by representing the ship as a space where colonial hierarchies are both reproduced and challenged. While Lauret focuses on cultural and geographical movement, a Jungian reading extends this by viewing the journey as both physical and psychological. The voyage becomes an inner passage through which characters confront their hidden selves, symbolic of the archetypal hero's quest toward wholeness.

The symbolism of the sea plays a central role in this psychological reading. Jung often associated water with the unconscious mind, describes it as a symbol of depth and transformation. In Ghosh's novel, the sea dissolves social and cultural boundaries, bringing together characters who would otherwise never meet. ShalzMojo (2019) notes that Deeti's recurring dreams of the Ibis reflect her spiritual connection to the ocean, which foreshadows her transformation. The sea thus becomes both a literal and metaphorical space of rebirth, where the characters confront the unknown within themselves.

The poppy, another recurring symbol, represents both economic exploitation and altered states of consciousness. While Shivar (2022) highlights the poppy's role in the colonial economy, it can also be seen as a metaphor for illusion, addiction, and the hidden forces that control human lives. In Jungian terms, it symbolizes the tension between creation and destruction, mirroring the dual nature of the psyche that must be reconciled through individuation.

Psychoanalytic critics often caution that Jungian interpretations risk universalizing human experience. However, Jung himself acknowledged that archetypes always manifest through culturally specific symbols (Samuels, 2005). In *Sea of Poppies*, these archetypes are inseparable from the realities of caste, gender, and colonial oppression. The characters' inner journeys do not erase history; instead, they deepen our understanding of how individuals internalize and resist external power structures. The novel thus becomes a meeting ground between psychology and history, the personal and the collective.

Although existing studies have explored Ghosh's narrative in terms of postcolonial displacement, linguistic hybridity, and cultural identity, the psychological dimension remains relatively underexamined. A Jungian approach fills this gap by revealing how archetypes guide the characters' transformations. The Ibis functions as a microcosm of the collective unconscious, where individuals confront their fears, masks, and repressed desires. Each passenger's journey mirrors humanity's broader struggle toward integration and authenticity.

In summary, while previous scholarship has focused on the political and historical aspects of *Sea of Poppies*, a Jungian reading uncovers the deeper emotional and symbolic dimensions of Ghosh's work. The characters' psychological transformations correspond to universal archetypal patterns of rebirth and self-discovery. The sea, the poppy, and the ship become powerful symbols of inner as well as outer journeys. By linking Ghosh's historical narrative with Jung's theory of archetypes, this study aims to demonstrate that the novel speaks not only to colonial history but also to the timeless processes of the human mind and spirit.

Methodology

This research is designed to explore the Jungian archetypal dimensions within Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies*. Using a qualitative and interpretive approach, the study focuses on analyzing the psychological and symbolic aspects of the novel rather than relying on quantitative data. The research interprets how Ghosh's characters reflect Jungian archetypes such as the persona, shadow, anima or animus, and the self. The primary source for this research is *Sea of Poppies*, while secondary sources include scholarly books, journal articles, and critical essays on Jungian theory and Ghosh's fiction.

The analytical and descriptive method allows for a detailed examination of the characters' psychological development and their connection to the collective unconscious. Through close reading, the study identifies how the experiences of characters like Deeti, Zachary, and Neel represent archetypal struggles for self-realization and transformation. The research also examines the symbolic significance of the ship Ibis as a reflection of the collective human psyche.

Overall, this methodology aims to connect literature and psychology by uncovering how Jung's theories of archetypes and the collective unconscious illuminate the deeper meaning of *Sea of Poppies*.

Analysis and Discussion

Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* (2008) is a multilayered narrative that reflects not only the historical realities of the colonial era but also the profound psychological and archetypal dimensions that shape human behavior and identity. Viewed through the lens of Carl Jung's psychoanalytic theory, the novel becomes more than a story about colonial exploitation and displacement; it becomes a reflection of the collective unconscious and the archetypal journey shared by all human beings. The characters' experiences aboard the *Ibis* and beyond represent a symbolic voyage into the depths of the human psyche, where the conscious self confronts its shadows, projections, and repressed desires. The following analysis explores how Ghosh's narrative captures Jung's archetypal ideas of the collective unconscious, persona, shadow, anima and animus, and individuation, revealing the universal psychological and cultural truths that underlie the novel's historical context.

The collective unconscious, according to Jung, is a shared psychological inheritance composed of archetypes, symbols, and memories common to all humanity (Jung, 1968). In *Sea of Poppies*, the collective unconscious manifests through the characters' intertwined fates, shared suffering, and mutual search for identity and belonging. The *Ibis*, the ship that carries indentured laborers from India to Mauritius, serves as a symbolic vessel of the collective psyche. It holds within it the convergence of diverse individuals from various castes, religions, and ethnicities, all united by a shared human struggle against oppression and displacement. Deeti's reflection on the ship captures this universality when she observes that all bound by a common fate (Ghosh, 2008). This imagery reflects Jung's idea that beneath social and cultural differences lies a universal human experience shaped by the unconscious forces of fear, hope, and transformation.

The characters' journeys on the *Ibis* symbolize archetypal patterns of rebirth and transformation. Each passenger undergoes a psychological voyage akin to the hero's journey that Jung and later Joseph Campbell described as a universal narrative of self-discovery. Deeti's character embodies this archetypal transformation. As Ghosh Narrates, "there was one respect in which [Deeti] stood out from the ordinary: she

had light grey eyes, a feature that was unusual in that part of the country” (Ghosh, 2008, p. 5). At the beginning of the novel, she is a submissive wife trapped in an oppressive marriage. Her act of escaping the pyre is both literal and symbolic, and marks her departure from societal confinement and her entry into the unknown realm of freedom. Her decision to escape from her home and join the voyage reflects a movement from dependence to self-awareness. This moment captures her confrontation with the shadow: the part of the psyche that holds repressed fears and desires; and this marks the beginning of her individuation process, where she integrates strength, courage, and autonomy into her consciousness.

Jungian analysis interprets this as the awakening of the animus, the inner masculine energy that represents assertiveness and strength. Her journey mirrors an inner struggle for autonomy and integration of her unconscious desires. Similarly, Kalua, who helps her escape, represents a balance between strength and compassion, and echoes the anima, or inner feminine principle, within Jungian psychology.

Zachary Reid’s psychological journey is also deeply tied to Jungian concepts, particularly those of the shadow and the persona. “Zachary Reid was of medium height [...] with skin the color of old ivory and a mass of curly, lacquer-black hair” (Ghosh, 2008, p. 7). As a biracial man, he navigates the racial hierarchies of the colonial world; Zachary constantly wears a social mask to gain acceptance. His persona, the public face he presents to others, reflects his desire to belong to the privileged European class. Yet beneath this mask lies his shadow, filled with insecurities and the internalized shame of his heritage. When his true origins are exposed, he faces an existential crisis that forces him to confront his hidden self. This moment of self-recognition parallels Jung’s notion that confronting the shadow is essential for psychological wholeness (Jung, 1959). Through Zachary’s character, Ghosh portrays how colonial identity structures produce fractured psyches, where individuals suppress parts of themselves to survive in oppressive systems.

Neel’s downfall and imprisonment also illustrate the shadow archetype, which represents the repressed and unacknowledged parts of the personality. Once a proud landowner, Neel is forced to confront his moral failures and the injustices of the colonial world. His journey aboard the *Ibis* allows him to face this shadow and move toward self-awareness. Similarly, Zachary Reid, a mixed-race sailor, wears a social mask to survive within the racial hierarchies of colonial society. His outward identity functions as a persona, a psychological façade that conceals his inner

insecurity. Through his gradual recognition of this false self, Zachary's story also reflects the Jungian struggle to balance the persona with the authentic self.

Neel Rattan Halder's journey mirrors the process of ego dissolution and rebirth that Jung associates with individuation. Once a proud landowner, Neel's downfall and imprisonment strip him of his social identity and forces him to face the void within. His narrative arc embodies the death of the old self and the creation of a new consciousness grounded in humility and empathy. This confession reveals his confrontation with the limitations of ego, a necessary step in achieving self-awareness. The journey of the Ibis thus becomes a collective initiation, a shared descent into the unconscious where each character must face their hidden fears, desires, and truths to emerge transformed.

The archetypes of the anima and animus are also deeply woven into the psychological fabric of *Sea of Poppies*. Jung described the anima as the feminine aspect within men and the animus as the masculine aspect within women (Jung, 1953). Deeti's inner evolution illustrates the integration of her animus. Her growing courage, assertiveness, and independence demonstrate how she internalizes traditionally masculine qualities without losing her nurturing essence. Similarly, Paulette Lambert embodies a Western woman's confrontation with the patriarchal norms of her society. Rejecting colonial expectations of female submission, Paulette chooses a life of autonomy, intellectual freedom, and moral courage. Her decision to board the Ibis is a symbolic act of animus integration, where she harmonizes reason and emotion, independence and empathy.

Kalua's character offers a subtle representation of the anima archetype within men. Despite his physical strength, he displays compassion, sensitivity, and emotional awareness, qualities that defy conventional masculine stereotypes. His relationship with Deeti transcends social boundaries and reveals a spiritual connection rooted in empathy and equality. Their bond illustrates what Jung described as the "coniunctio," the sacred union of opposites within the psyche (Jung, 1968). Through Deeti and Kalua, Ghosh portrays the psychological and emotional balance necessary for individuation, where both masculine and feminine principles coexist harmoniously.

The shadow archetype extends beyond individual characters to encompass the broader colonial context of the novel. The British Empire's dominance and

exploitation represents the collective shadow of humanity; the dark side of progress, civilization, and power. Ghosh exposes this shadow through vivid depictions of violence, greed, and hypocrisy. The opium trade, which underpins the colonial economy, symbolizes the addictive and destructive forces of imperialism. As one-character notes, The poppy had become their fate, growing in every field, consuming every life (Ghosh, 2008). This metaphor illustrates how the collective shadow of colonial ambition infiltrates every aspect of existence and corrupting individuals and societies alike. Jung argued that societies, like individuals, must confront their shadows to achieve collective healing. In this sense, Ghosh's narrative functions as both historical critique and psychological allegory, and urges recognition of the unconscious forces driving oppression.

Dreams and symbols play a significant role in reflecting the characters' unconscious states. Deeti's recurring visions of the river and the Ibis suggest her intuitive connection to the deeper currents of life and destiny. Water, a recurring motif in Jungian symbolism, represents the unconscious and the source of emotional renewal. When Deeti envisions the Ibis sailing on a sea of milk and light, it symbolizes purification and transcendence (Ghosh, 2008). Similarly, the sea itself functions as a liminal space between the known and the unknown, the conscious and the unconscious. The voyage becomes a metaphor for psychological transformation, where immersion in the depths leads to spiritual awakening.

The concept of individuation: Jung's term for the process of becoming whole; runs throughout *Sea of Poppies*. Each character undergoes a journey that integrates fragmented parts of the self. For Deeti, individuation means reconciling duty and desire, tradition and freedom. For Neel, it involves moving beyond pride and ego toward compassion and humility. For Zachary, it means accepting his mixed identity and finding authenticity beyond racial constructs. "He had to memorize a new shipboard vocabulary, which sounded a bit like English and not yet [...]" (Ghosh, Page no. 10) The Ibis becomes the crucible where these transformations occur, and serves as what Jung might call the "temenos," or sacred space for inner work. Within its confines, the characters face trials that strip away illusions, revealing the authentic self beneath social masks.

Ghosh's portrayal of community on the Ibis also reflects the idea of the collective individuation process. The characters' shared suffering and solidarity echo Jung's belief that individuation has a social dimension, where healing the self contributes

to the healing of the collective. The ship's microcosmic world demonstrates the possibility of unity amid diversity, and suggests that confronting collective trauma can lead to new forms of consciousness. This aligns with what Kendra Cherry (2024) describes as Jung's belief in the interconnectedness of all human experiences and the transformative power of confronting the unconscious.

Furthermore, Ghosh's narrative style embodies the fluidity of the unconscious. His use of multiple perspectives, languages, and cultural references mirrors the multiplicity of the human psyche. The mingling of Bhojpuri, English, Bengali, and pidgin speech in the text represents the coexistence of different psychic voices within the collective unconscious. As Lois Tyson (2014) explains, literature often functions as a manifestation of the unconscious, where symbols and archetypes communicate meanings beyond rational understanding. In *Sea of Poppies*, this linguistic hybridity reinforces the novel's psychological and cultural depth, blurring boundaries between individuals, societies, and inner worlds.

In the context of Jungian analysis, *Sea of Poppies* can be understood as a narrative of both personal and collective transformation. Ghosh's characters, driven by historical forces and inner conflicts, represent the universal human struggle to integrate the conscious and unconscious, the self and the other. The Ibis's voyage becomes an archetypal journey into the depths of the human soul, where the boundaries between the personal and the collective dissolve. As the novel closes with the characters sailing into uncertainty, it symbolizes the ongoing quest for wholeness; a journey without a fixed destination but rich with psychological and spiritual significance.

The analysis of *Sea of Poppies* through Jungian psychoanalytic criticism reveals how Ghosh transforms historical fiction into a profound psychological exploration of identity, transformation, and unity. By embedding archetypes such as the hero, shadow, anima, and self within a colonial narrative, Ghosh connects the personal struggles of his characters to the collective human condition. The novel thus transcends its historical setting to evoke timeless truths about the human psyche: that every journey toward freedom, whether individual or communal, begins with the courage to face the unconscious and embrace the unknown. As Jung (1968) observed, "Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate." Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* embodies this insight, offering readers not

only a vivid portrayal of colonial history but also a timeless meditation on the psychological and spiritual voyage toward self-realization.

Conclusion

Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* stands as a deeply human narrative that connects history, psychology, and the search for selfhood. When examined through the lens of Jungian psychoanalysis, especially the concepts of archetypes and the collective unconscious, the novel becomes more than a story of colonial voyages. It transforms into a reflection of humanity's collective journey toward understanding and inner balance. The characters in the novel carry within them the struggles, hopes, and transformations that Carl Jung identified as part of the universal human experience. Through their stories, Ghosh portrays how pain, displacement, and identity crises can awaken inner growth and bring individuals closer to a state of self-realization. The voyage of the *Ibis* is not simply a journey across seas. It is a symbolic movement through the layers of the unconscious mind. Jung explained that the collective unconscious holds within it the shared experiences and images of humankind, inherited from generations before us (Jung, 1968). In *Sea of Poppies*, the diverse passengers aboard the *Ibis* represent these shared archetypes. Deeti, Neel, Zachary, Kalua, and Paulette each embody different aspects of the psyche as they confront both inner and outer challenges. Their journeys reflect the process of individuation, where the human attempts to integrate opposing parts of the mind and soul to reach wholeness.

Deeti's transformation from a submissive widow to an independent woman shows her courage to confront social norms and personal fears. Her movement from oppression toward freedom parallels Jung's belief that the path to individuation often begins in suffering. Neel encounters compassion and modesty as a result of his descent from wealth and power to imprisonment, which compels him to confront the moral emptiness of his previous existence.

Zachary's identity conflict as a mixed-race sailor reflects the psychological struggle between one's true self and the social masks that society demands. Through these characters, Ghosh portrays how individuals grow by facing their shadows and reconciling the hidden aspects of their identity. Jung (1959) emphasized that individuation is not possible without acknowledging the shadow, as it is only through recognizing our darker parts that we achieve genuine wholeness.

The persona, another important Jungian archetype, plays a central role in Ghosh's narrative. The persona represents the mask or social face that people wear to adapt to different environments (Jung, 1953). Zachary embodies this idea when he presents himself as a confident and capable sailor to survive within a racially divided world. However, this mask hides his insecurities and fears. When his true racial identity is revealed, his false image begins to collapse, pushing him to rediscover authenticity. Similarly, Neel's pride as a zamindar functions as a persona that shields him from vulnerability. Once that mask is stripped away through loss and suffering, he begins to rebuild his identity on truth rather than social status. Ghosh uses these psychological struggles to demonstrate that the destruction of the false self can lead to the emergence of genuine humanity.

The concepts of the anima and animus are also significant in the novel. Jung described these archetypes as the inner feminine in men and the inner masculine in women, that represents the integration of balance within the psyche. Deeti's awakening reveals her connection with her animus, seen in her courage, rationality, and moral strength. Her escape from her oppressive home and her leadership aboard the Ibis show her evolving independence and inner harmony. Kalua, on the other hand, reflects the anima through his gentleness and compassion. Although society labels him as a brute, his actions display empathy and emotional depth. When he saves Deeti from her husband's funeral pyre, he expresses a balance between strength and sensitivity. Their union suggests that harmony within the self and with others is possible when one accepts both masculine and feminine energies within.

The colonial setting of the novel represents the collective shadow of human civilization. The British Empire's exploitation of Indian laborers and its control over the opium trade reveal the darker impulses of greed and dominance that Jung saw as manifestations of the shadow in collective consciousness. Ghosh does not merely document these historical realities but uses them as psychological metaphors for the corruption of human values. The Ibis becomes a symbolic space where individuals are forced to confront both personal and societal darkness. Jung (1968) suggested that societies, like individuals, must face their shadows in order to heal and progress. Ghosh's depiction of colonial injustice and human endurance reflects this truth, showing that growth often arises from confronting painful realities.

The sea, a recurring image throughout the novel, symbolizes the unconscious mind. It is vast, unpredictable, and full of hidden depths. The journey across the sea mirrors the characters' descent into their inner selves. In the process, they face fear, loss, and change, but also discover courage and renewal. The ship *Ibis* functions as a vessel of transformation, carrying its passengers not only to a new land but also toward a deeper understanding of who they are. Deeti's vision at the end of the novel, where she imagines the ship sailing into the light, reflects the timeless idea of spiritual awakening. When she declares that the journey has only just begun; it signifies the ongoing process of becoming that Jung associated with individuation.

Ghosh's narrative also resonates with the idea that personal transformation contributes to collective healing. Each character's awakening on the *Ibis* connects to a broader movement toward unity and empathy. The novel suggests that the path to self-realization is not isolated; it is shared across humanity through our capacity for love, resilience, and forgiveness. Jung (1959) believed that the growth of individual consciousness helps elevate the collective human spirit. By portraying the struggles of diverse characters, Ghosh illustrates that the human experience, though divided by race, class, or culture, is united by universal psychological patterns.

In essence, *Sea of Poppies* is not just a historical novel but a psychological and philosophical exploration of what it means to be human. Through the struggles and transformations of his characters, Ghosh mirrors Jung's central belief that understanding oneself leads to understanding humanity. The *Ibis* becomes more than a ship; it is a moving metaphor for the human soul that navigates history, memory, and self-awareness. The novel closes not with finality but with continuity, and reminds readers that identity and consciousness are not static states but ongoing journeys.

Ghosh's work shows that literature can awaken the deeper layers of our collective psyche. By weaving together history, culture, and psychology, he presents a world where individual suffering transforms into collective understanding. His portrayal of the human spirit echoes Jung's insight that "who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes" (Jung, 1968). Through the lens of Jungian archetypes, *Sea of Poppies* invites readers to look within themselves and recognize the universal patterns that connect all lives. It becomes a celebration of human resilience, and reminds us that despite the darkness of oppression or the uncertainty of change, there exists within

each person the power to evolve, to heal, and to find meaning through self-discovery.

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