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## BOOK REVIEW:

### *JUNG & FILM II: THE RETURN*

Edited with Introduction by Christopher Hauke and Luke Hockley. Pp. xviii, 344, London and New York: Routledge, 2011, £21.99.

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*Jung and Film II*, in many respects, reflects the growth in Jungian thinking on the moving image since 2001. Its predecessor, *Jung and Film* (2001), is widely acknowledged by Jungian and Post-Jungian scholars as a seminal publication adumbrating the extent to which analytical psychological concepts can be mobilized to deepen one's engagement with the larger field of film studies. There exists a tendency, however, in Jungian film analysis, to use concepts such as the *archetypes*, *animalanimus* and the *shadow* to interpret the psychological role or condition played out by certain characters. Accordingly, the exercise becomes nothing more than a game of assigning archetypes, spotting how many constellations the attentive viewer can creatively identify. What *Jung and Film II* clearly displays is a degree of self-reflexivity; the willingness of a community of scholars interested in a particular application (or, stated another way, a branch of 'applied psychoanalysis') to think critically about *what* is being interpreted, and to make more explicit the underlying methodology being employed. "Those of us who engage in this work", Don Fredericksen writes, "are at that point where we need to know better the nature and function of our criticism: we need a theory of Jungian film criticism, nested within a theory of film, its creation, and its exhibition" (2011: 99). Granted, a large part of the book is still dedicated to the interpretation of particular films or to the work of particular directors/artists (especially Parts I and III), but what I find refreshing about this collection is the direction towards which it is steering Jungian film studies specifically and Jungian and Post-Jungian studies more generally.

Don Fredericksen, for instance, questions whether Jungian film analysis should hope to find expressions of what Jung truly meant by his concepts in popular film alone. It may be

more instructive to shift focus and concentrate on film's other four modes: art cinema, the documentary, the personal film and animation (ibid., 100). This, in theory, is congruent with Jung's own thinking, especially if we consider the distinction he made between *psychological* and *visionary art* specifically and his disapproval of mass mindedness more generally. Fredericksen, however, is not advocating a complete abandonment of Jungian interpretations of popular film, but a more conscious engagement with, and reflexive understanding of, the very process and *zeitgeist* which allows certain films to penetrate into the mainstream, while others are relegated to the fringes (ibid., 101).

Luke Hockley, in turn, shifts focus away from what Fredericksen calls the danger of *archetypal literalism* (ibid., 102) by theorising the notion of the *third image*. The very act of watching a film blurs distinctions separating the personal from the collective. Arguably, a more complete understanding of the 'meaning' audiences create necessitates a consideration of both individual subjectivity and the impact of one's own historical and cultural context. To aid in this undertaking, Hockley – adapting Jung's notion of the *transcendent function* – suggests that the “cinematic experience can be understood in terms of three types of image [...]: the first is the image on the screen; the second concerns viewers' mostly conscious engagement with interpretive activity; the third emerges as a result of a spontaneous and unlooked for emotional response to film” (Hockley, 2011: 137). The way in which audiences interact with and interpret the moving image will oscillate between these three forms of perception, which correspond to one of the three types of images. The closer we move to the third image, the greater the degree of individual subjectivity. “Most academic textual interpretation of films”, for instance, can be categorized as arising from this second level of engagement. The ensuing insights are “closely related to the privileged viewer” who is “not content with just the collective meaning of the film”, but requires “a more personal insight” (ibid., 140-41). The third image, however, does not purely embody personal associations and connotations. Rather, it simultaneously possesses an archetypal quality. “The third image”, Hockley explains, “comes into being as a result of an individual's reaction to and relationship with the cinema screen. It exists neither on the screen, nor just in the mind of the viewer but somehow enters the space between the two” (ibid., 141). What the notion of the third image allows is both an alternative way of theorizing how viewers are pulled into the narrative of films and “another way of understanding [a] search for self-recognition and the need for wholeness” (ibid., 141). To expand upon the notion of the third image, Hockley provides a clinical vignette, which I found useful but not entirely unproblematic. Whether drawing an

analogy between what happens in the therapeutic dyad and a viewer's interaction in the cinema is appropriate is up for debate. It is here that the true methodological problem intrinsic to cross disciplinary work (especially amongst Post-Jungian applications) crystallizes – the epistemology and methodology of depth psychology is not the same as that employed in film studies, although both may share critical points of convergence. Simply stated, the pressing question is this: How does one justify the use of a theory of the individual to comment upon group processes or collective phenomena? What is to be applauded in Hockely's chapter is his willingness to tackle this methodological issue head on. Allowing room for, and acknowledging the role played by, the subjectivity of the observer in the film viewing experience, while not denigrating the influence of culturally contingent factors, allows us to appreciate the interaction between individual and collective, and how fluid these two realms of existence actually are. The classification of three images blurs the lines that would separate individual from collective, and precisely challenges the tendency amongst some Jungian scholars to sidestep the problem of methodology all together.

Catriona Miller's chapter continues this thread of methodological awareness by providing a useful discussion of how analytical psychological concepts can be mobilized to comment on group processes, collective experiences and culture. Stated simply, she provides a justification of how a theory of the individual can be used in analyses of the collective, and how Jung's thought was not solely directed towards the personal and archetypal. Yet as one of the stronger arguments in the collection, it is unfortunate that the notion of the *cultural complex* is introduced as an unproblematic concept that can bridge the divide between self and society. It seems that Miller is, at one point, aware of the concept's limitations (2011: 189), which is then overshadowed by its presentation as the Jungian link bringing the discipline of analytical psychology closer to discourse theory. "By describing the mechanism through which culture operates and circulates", she explains, "it is possible to see that the concepts of cultural complex and discourse are attempting to describe [...] the same observed phenomenon" (ibid.).

Culture (of which film is an expression) is complex, and as Miller notes, any one culture is neither a static entity nor homogenous. The notion of the cultural complex, however, assumes homogeneity, in order to theorize how groups react to collective trauma; it simplifies what is ultimately complex. Although what Miller finds useful in the theory of cultural complexes is its appreciation of how emotional energy can become invested in cultural combinations (which she likens to discourse strands), it remains problematic to

mobilize such a theory when its own epistemological assumptions have not been questioned. I would suggest that the concept is anything but unproblematic, as it seems caught in a sort of methodological identity crisis: it seeks to remain true to analytical psychology's epistemology, while seeking to establish greater credence by evoking history's epistemology and methodology. Evoking 'history', however, is not the same as 'doing history' as it is practiced by professional historians. Accordingly, the way in which some Jungian scholars have used the theory of cultural complexes – paying lip service to 'history' as the doorway to greater dialogue with academic fields concerned with the collective – does not do any favours for forwarding analytical psychology's potential contribution to any discipline, be it film studies specifically or the social sciences more generally. It does not help, further, when confusion arises regarding how the term cultural complex is to be defined. Miller tentatively compares what discourse analysts call a discursive knot to what "Jungians would be inclined to call a cultural complex or an archetypal image" (ibid., 195). Is a cultural complex the same as an archetypal image? If these two terms are interchangeable, then why is it necessary to introduce the newer term, cultural complex, to describe a phenomenon already elucidated by an existing term? What, then, is its intrinsic value?

Terrie Waddell's chapter stands out, in my opinion, as one of the most concise and compelling reads in this collection. In the spirit of Fredericksen's passionate plea to shift the Jungian gaze away from interpreting mainstream films, Waddell uses the extent to which Australian films have entered the mainstream as a springboard to critically assessing the Australian film industry and the practices of its main funding body, Screen Australia. Her use of Jung's theory of *typology* as a hermeneutic tool highlighting the introverted nature of Australian film is insightful, and is a good example of the potential benefits of utilising a Jungian lens. My concern remains, however, the appeal to the theory of cultural complexes. Waddell's argument is that although Australian cinema has produced crossover hits that have captivated international audiences, the industry remains introverted, "locked into a series of arguments, images, ideologies, perspectives, and funding requirements that are largely framed within a culturally domestic context" (2011: 291). Jung's notion of *introversion* provides a framework through which this tendency towards "navel gazing" can be understood (ibid., 285-86). Waddell further suggests that a Jungian perspective is able to reveal "how specific cultural complexes are archetypally projected" (ibid.). What Waddell means by this, in my opinion, is not made explicitly clear, and one is left wondering how the mention of

cultural complexes adds any weight to her argument, especially when Jung's concept of introversion seems to adequately frame the argument she is making.

In conclusion, I believe there are many merits to this collection, the major one being the attempt to engage with what has proverbially been a *shadow* of Jungian scholarship – the reluctance to tackle the problem of methodology. For this, the editors and relevant authors are to be applauded. There remain, however, several methodological problems that require attention if Jungian scholars are to make a real contribution to, and impact in, the fields to which they are applying an analytical psychological lens. What becomes clear is that the project of thinking about film studies, in all its complexity, from the perspective of analytical psychology is both timely and necessary. My impression is that this book is certainly a step in the right direction, and it will be interesting to see how the authors of this compilation will help evolve Jungian film studies; whether they will be able to establish, more firmly, the lens of analytical psychology as a viable tool to be used when considering the psychological dimensions of film, filmmaking and more broadly, the media.

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