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# Beyond the Unified Self: Individuation and Indigenous Consciousness in Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater*

**Anthonia Adanma Eguvwebere**[1]
Department of English and Literary Studies,
Delta State University, Abraka
Delta State Nigeria

## Abstract

*Akwaeke Emezi's Freshwater unsettles the assumption that a coherent person must possess one stable, governing self. This article reads Ada's plural consciousness through Carl Jung's account of individuation and Molefi Kete Asante's Afrocentricity. It does not treat the two theories as interchangeable. Jung supplies a language for psychic differentiation, conflict and the difficult relation between ego and unconscious life; Afrocentricity tests the cultural reach of that language by locating the ọgbanje within an Igbo spiritual order. Through close attention to the novel's collective narration, the emergence of Asụghara, the bodily marks of trauma, naming, ritual and Ada's eventual self-description, the article argues that Freshwater revises rather than simply rejects individuation. Ada achieves neither a recovered unitary ego nor an effortless celebration of plurality. She develops a precarious knowledge of the relations among her human, psychic and spiritual presences. The novel therefore turns wholeness from sameness into negotiated co-presence. This reading contributes to scholarship on Emezi by bringing psychological process into sustained conversation with indigenous ontology while refusing to translate either one completely into the terms of the other.*

**Keywords:** Afrocentricity; Akwaeke Emezi; *Freshwater*; identity; individuation; Igbo cosmology; ọgbanje

## Introduction

What counts as a self in a world where the visible and invisible continually enter each other? Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater* begins with this question before the human protagonist can speak. Its opening consciousness is a first-person plural: spirits remember their passage into flesh, the gates that should have closed behind them, and the body in which they now live. Ada is consequently introduced from outside the conventions of the autonomous individual. She is called "the Ada," a grammatical estrangement that makes the person sound at once intimate, inhabited and possessed. The novel's form thus announces its central problem. A single body does not guarantee a single speaker, and a name does not secure an indivisible identity.[2]

[1] eguvwebere.anthonia@delsu.edu.ng, ORCID: 0000-0003-2460-3394
2 Akwaeke Emezi, *Freshwater* (New York: Grove Press, 2018), 3-6.


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Much criticism has rightly approached this plurality through ọgbanje ontology, queer and transgender studies, trauma, migration, or decolonial thought. Yet the ease with which some accounts move between spirit possession, dissociation and metaphor can reproduce the very hierarchy the novel resists: Western psychology remains the literal explanation while Igbo spirituality becomes its colourful symbolic equivalent. The opposite move is also limiting. To invoke cosmology as a complete answer can understate the force of sexual violation, self-harm and psychic conflict in Ada's life. *Freshwater* holds these dimensions together without allowing one to cancel the other.

This article asks what becomes of Carl Jung's concept of individuation when it encounters a novel whose account of personhood is not founded on singularity. Jung is useful because individuation is frequently misunderstood as the ego's triumph or as the production of a socially adjusted personality. In Jung's account, it is a difficult differentiation of the person from collective expectations and a growing relation between consciousness and what it cannot master. Still, the Self remains an ordering figure of wholeness. *Freshwater* exposes the cultural pressure within that ideal. Ada's development does not culminate in the absorption of every voice into one sovereign ego.[3]

Molefi Kete Asante's Afrocentricity provides the necessary methodological check. Its central demand is one of location: African subjects and cultural systems must be interpreted as agents within their own histories, not merely as objects explained by categories developed elsewhere. Read from this position, the ọgbanje is not an exotic name for a clinical condition. It is part of an ontology in which spiritual agency, embodiment, kinship and return form a coherent field of meaning. Afrocentricity does not make psychology irrelevant; it prevents psychology from appointing itself the sole court of appeal.[4]

The argument is that *Freshwater* revises individuation as negotiated co-presence. Ada's movement is not from many selves to one, nor from illness to uncomplicated spiritual certainty. It is a movement from being narrated and acted upon toward a difficult recognition of the relations among the presences that constitute her. The distinction matters. Multiplicity in the novel can shelter Ada, wound her, seize her body and give her a language for survival. Its effects are ethically uneven. Wholeness therefore names neither fusion nor harmony, but an acquired capacity to acknowledge plurality without surrendering judgment.

The essay first places the argument within recent *Freshwater* scholarship and within the author's related work on identity, trauma and indigenous cultural paradigms. It then clarifies the deliberately asymmetrical use of Jung and Asante. The analysis follows four related sites: the opening "we" and the limits of psychic unity; trauma and Asụghara's protective violence; naming and the material-spiritual body; and Ada's late assumption of narrative voice. These

3 C. G. Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, 2nd ed., trans. R. F. C. Hull, Collected Works 7 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), paras. 266-69.
4 Molefi Kete Asante, The Afrocentric Idea, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 2-6.


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sites show that Emezi turns narrative technique into an argument about personhood.

### *Freshwater* Scholarship: From Diagnostic Division to Ontological Plurality

Scholarship on *Freshwater* has developed around a productive disagreement over how Ada's plurality should be named. Eugenia Ossana describes the novel as a palimpsest in which precolonial Igbo voices and Western accounts of trauma, identity and gender remain legible over one another. The value of the palimpsest is that it refuses a simple choice between an authentic African past and an alien Western present. Ada's life in Nigeria and the United States brings cosmological and biomedical vocabularies into contact, but the contact does not make them equivalent.[5]

Tina Magaqa and Rodwell Makombe locate the novel's radicalism in its deployment of the ọgbanje to unsettle colonial stories about gender and sexuality. They show how the spirit-child, as a figure that crosses categories and worlds, makes queer possibility thinkable from within an indigenous archive rather than as a Western import. Their intervention is important to the present study because it establishes plurality as culturally intelligible. Its main emphasis, however, is sexual and gendered identity. The psychic labour involved in living among irreducible presences requires further attention.[6]

Marta Sofía López develops this decolonial line through the idea of "border gnoseology." In her reading, *Freshwater* and Emezi's later memoir bring Anglo-American trans discourse into contact with African onto-epistemologies, the sacred python and Ala, producing an embodied subjectivity that exceeds the secular human. López's refusal of Eurocentric humanism is persuasive, especially because she treats the spiritual as knowledge rather than ornament. Saran Fina Sidime similarly argues that Emezi uses African earth spirituality and Igbo cosmology to resist Western psychoanalytic categorisation and gender normativity. These studies have made it increasingly difficult to read the gods as no more than symptoms.[7],[8]

Other critics retain the language of trauma and mental health while questioning its universality. Jessica Newgas reads the spirit child through diaspora and ancestral trauma, stressing the rupture that occurs when an African cosmological frame is translated into Euro-American space. Martin Wigand and

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5 Eugenia Ossana, "Precolonial Igbo Voices in Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater* (2018): A Palimpsestic Search for 'Home,'" Complutense Journal of English Studies 29 (2021): 81-92, https://doi.org/10.5209/cjes.66754.

6 Tina Magaqa and Rodwell Makombe, "Decolonizing Queer Sexualities: A Critical Reading of the Ogbanje Concept in Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater* (2018)," African Studies Quarterly 20, no. 3 (2021): 24-39.

7 Saran Fina Sidime, "All Water Is Connected: African Earth Spirituality and Queering Identity in Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater*," in Ecofeminist Perspectives from African Women Creative Writers, ed. E. S. Gudhlanga et al. (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2024), 239-50, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-48509-1_14.

8 Marta Sofía López, "Border Gnoseology: Akwaeke Emezi and the Decolonial Other-than-Human," Ecozon@ 13, no. 2 (2022): 77-91, https://doi.org/10.37536/ecozona.2022.13.2.4669.



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Julia Proell approach the novel from transcultural mental health, a perspective that can illuminate distress without assuming that one diagnostic tradition exhausts the meaning of the experience. The caution remains necessary: rape, self-injury and dissociation are not dissolved by calling Ada an ọgbanje. At the same time, the narrative repeatedly refuses the notion that spiritual explanation is an immature version of psychiatric truth.[9,10]

More recent narratological work helps connect ontology to form. Anke Sharma's study of we-narration and embodied selves directs attention to the grammar through which the novel makes a collective speaker experientially credible. This is a crucial advance. The question is not only what the narrators are, but what their control of pronouns, focalisation and access to the body permits them to do. The spirits' "we" creates collective intimacy, but it also excludes Ada. Polyphony is therefore not automatically liberating; voice is distributed unequally.[11]

The present article extends this conversation by treating individuation as a contested process rather than a ready-made diagnosis. No sustained study located for this revision places Jung's individuation in direct, methodologically controlled dialogue with Afrocentricity. The gap is not simply the absence of two theorists in the same essay. It concerns the conceptual problem produced when a theory oriented toward psychic wholeness meets an ontology that recognises plural spiritual agency. *Freshwater* tests whether wholeness must mean unity.

The author's earlier scholarship provides a related, though not text-specific, foundation. Eguvwebere and Akoni's study of imposed identity in Uzodinma Iweala's Speak No Evil shows how social and ideological naming can estrange a subject from lived selfhood. Anigala and Eguvwebere likewise read Nigerian literary identity through boundary-making and boundary-crossing rather than fixed gender categories. These arguments help clarify why naming in *Freshwater* is never innocent. Names can impose a legible social person, but they can also disclose a spiritual presence and redistribute power.[12,13]

Eguvwebere's work on objectification and post-traumatic stress is relevant in a narrower way: it insists that bodily violation has psychic consequences that criticism should not aestheticise. *Freshwater* demands the same ethical

9 Martin Wigand and Julia Proell, "Gods, Ghosts and the Python's Tail: A Transcultural Mental Health Perspective on Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater*," in Fluchtlinien der Sprache(n), ed. Petra M. Vogel et al. (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2023).
10 Jessica Newgas, "Life after Trauma: Spirit Children in Fictions of the African Diaspora, Part 1: Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater*," Leeds African Studies Bulletin 81 (2020).
11 Anke Sharma, "'She Is Not Ours, We Are Hers': We-Narration and Embodied Selves in Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater*," in Poetics of Disturbances: Narratives and Mental Health, ed. Britta A. M. Pelzer and Hanna Straß-Senol (Leiden: Brill, 2024), 263-82.
12 Ogochuku O. Anigala and Anthonia A. Eguvwebere, "Unmaking Boundaries: Gender and the Nigerian Literary Imagination," NIU Journal of Humanities 10, no. 1 (2025): 211-19.
13 Anthonia A. Eguvwebere and C. Akoni, "The Discourse of Imposed Identity in Uzodinma Iweala's Speak No Evil," Existentia: Concrescence Journal of Arts and Humanities 2, no. 1 (2024): 194-206.

discipline. Asụghara emerges as protection after sexual assault, but her protection entails control, appetite and further injury. Finally, Eguvwebere and Udumukwu's ecofeminist account of cultural paradigms offers a precedent for taking indigenous structures seriously while remaining alert to the unequal uses of culture. None of these publications predetermines the reading of Emezi. Together, they establish a scholarly concern with the pressure exerted on embodied subjects by social, cultural and psychological systems.[14,15]

This review also reveals what must be avoided. *Freshwater* should not be recruited to prove that African spirituality cures Western fragmentation, nor should its violence be treated as evidence that indigenous cosmology is pathological. The novel is more exacting. It shows a subject learning to live at the intersection of explanations that are each illuminating and incomplete.

**Theoretical Orientation: Individuation under an Afrocentric Check**

Jung distinguishes the ego, the centre of consciousness, from the Self, the more extensive totality of conscious and unconscious life. Individuation is the process through which a person becomes more fully differentiated while entering a less defensive relation with unconscious contents. It involves confrontation with disowned figures, affects and symbolic patterns; it is not mere individualism. Myth matters within this process because recurring images can give form to psychic realities that rational consciousness cannot contain.[16]

This vocabulary illuminates *Freshwater*'s staging of interior conflict. The marble room resembles an imaginal space in which presences withdraw, deliberate and return. Asụghara can be read alongside the shadow because she carries rage, sexuality and violence that Ada cannot initially bear. Yet a strict archetypal translation would be reductive. Asụghara identifies herself as a god, speaks with her own intentions and belongs to an ọgbanje order that precedes Ada's trauma. To call her only a shadow would convert ontology into psychic allegory.

Jung's theory also carries a universalising tendency. The collective unconscious proposes inherited structures common to humanity, but the move from recurring motifs to universal archetypes can detach images from the histories and communities that make them intelligible. A sacred python within an Ala-centred Igbo world is not exhausted by the cross-cultural symbol "snake." Likewise, the ọgbanje is not adequately understood as a generic image of rebirth. Its meanings arise from specific relations among family, spirit world, embodied return, death and obligation.[17]

14 Anthonia A. Eguvwebere and Onyemaechi Udumukwu, "Ecofeminism and the Revalidation of Cultural Paradigms against Women in Bayo Adebowale's Lonely Days," Gadua Journal of Arts and Humanities 4, no. 1 (2021): 1-8.
15 Anthonia A. Eguvwebere, "Objectification and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Nina Iphechukwu's Disowned," KIU Journal of Humanities 6, no. 1 (2021): 231-37.
16 Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, paras. 266-75.
17 Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi, Africa Wo/Man Palava: The Nigerian Novel by Women (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 239-55.


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Afrocentricity changes the order of interpretation. Asante defines cultural location and agency as indispensable to an account of African phenomena. Ama Mazama further presents Afrocentricity as an epistemological and ontological orientation in which the material and spiritual cannot be neatly separated. This does not require a timeless or uniform "African worldview." Such a claim would replace one universalism with another. It requires the critic to begin with the cultural logic the text activates and to remain attentive to internal difference, mobility and historical change.[18][19]

The two frameworks are therefore not blended into a seamless synthesis. Jung offers provisional terms for differentiation, psychic defence and the relation between ego and other-than-ego. Afrocentricity establishes the interpretive priority of Igbo cosmological meaning and exposes the point at which Jung's terms become appropriative. The method is asymmetrical: the culturally located account governs, while Jungian concepts are retained only where they clarify a process the novel itself sustains.

Methodologically, the study uses close reading of voice, pronoun, bodily imagery, naming, spatial imagery and the sequence of Ada's changing access to narration. It reads the Grove Press edition of *Freshwater* and treats the novel as literature, not as a clinical case history or transparent ethnography. Emezi's public account of being an ọgbanje offers valuable context, but author and protagonist are not collapsed. The primary evidence remains the language and structure of the novel.[20]

**The Opening 'We': Birth, Division and the Limits of Unity**

*Freshwater*'s first sentence, "We came from somewhere - everything does", places origin in a collective voice rather than in Ada's biography. The sentence sounds universal, but the narration quickly becomes culturally particular: spirit becomes flesh, gates fail to close, and the entrants understand themselves as children of Ala. The movement is not from undifferentiated unconsciousness into a mature ego. It is a crossing between orders of existence. Birth itself is described as the first madness because a god has been pressed into a "bag of skin." The body is not merely the container of an individual mind; it is an unstable threshold.[21]

Jungian language helps identify the insult that this beginning directs at ego sovereignty. Consciousness is neither first nor comprehensive. Ada arrives after forces that know more about her origin than she does. Yet the collective narrator cannot be equated with Jung's collective unconscious. The "we" has kinship, memory and a divine genealogy. Its knowledge is situated. An Afrocentric reading preserves this location and prevents the spirit children from becoming free-floating archetypes.

18 Ama Mazama, ed., The Afrocentric Paradigm (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2003), 3-34.
19 Asante, The Afrocentric Idea, 1-20.
20 Emezi, *Freshwater*.
21 Ibid., 3.


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The early village masquerade scene makes that location dramatic. The music speaks in an inherited language; masked brothers and sisters recognise the spirits within Ada and command them to wake. For a brief moment, body, village, masquerade and spirit world align. The scene supplies communal recognition that Ada will later lack in the United States. It also complicates the claim that her plurality is a private mental event. Other spiritual beings address it within ritual space.[22]

Still, recognition does not equal peace. The spirits repeatedly call the body theirs and refer to Ada in the third person. The definite article in "the Ada" diminishes her ownership of herself. Their narration makes her observable and grammatically secondary. The novel therefore refuses a romantic account in which indigenous plurality is automatically communal wholeness. Ada's consciousness is a contested territory, and the culturally intelligible spirits are capable of domination.

This is the first revision of individuation offered by the novel. Differentiation occurs, but not as the gradual discovery of components belonging to a prior totality. The speakers already possess their own histories. What develops is Ada's capacity to recognise their difference and to negotiate their claims. The task is relational before it is integrative.

**Trauma, Asụghara and the Ethics of Protective Multiplicity**

Ada's sexual assault marks a decisive alteration in the balance among the selves. Asụghara emerges to hold what Ada cannot bear and promises protection through hardness, desire and control. A Jungian reading may recognise shadow material here: aggression and sexuality take a voice precisely where the conscious personality is overwhelmed. The pattern also resembles a defensive division following trauma. But the narrative refuses to make the assault Asụghara's origin. It gives her an occasion and a role; it does not create the older spiritual order to which she belongs.

That temporal distinction prevents a crude diagnosis. Trauma intensifies and reorganises multiplicity rather than explaining it away. Asụghara's intervention initially permits survival. She takes the foreground when Ada retreats, translates pain into appetite and turns vulnerability into a performance of command. Such protection is morally ambiguous. It shields Ada from immediate exposure while drawing her into relationships, self-punishment and bodily practices that reproduce harm.

Eguvwebere's earlier analysis of objectification and traumatic stress is useful here because it keeps attention on what violence does to embodied agency. Ada's body after rape is not an abstract meeting place of theories. It carries fear, shame and altered desire. To celebrate Asụghara as fluidity without confronting these effects would repeat the conversion of female pain into critical spectacle.

22 Ibid., 44-48.



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Conversely, to reduce Asụghara to a symptom would erase the cosmological identity through which the novel makes that pain speak.[23]

The protective self also exposes the ethical inadequacy of equating multiplicity with liberation. Asụghara speaks brilliantly and forcefully, but she monopolises speech. Her confidence can silence Ada just as external violence does. The question becomes not whether the additional self is real, but what relation she establishes with the person whose body she uses. *Freshwater* measures psychic and spiritual arrangements by their consequences for consent, bodily safety and voice.

Jungian individuation usually requires the ego to confront rather than expel the shadow. *Freshwater* sharpens the point: confrontation must not become annexation. Ada cannot simply absorb Asụghara and declare her a useful part of one personality, because the narrative grants Asụghara resistant agency. Nor can Asụghara justly rule because she protected Ada. Development lies in the unstable middle ground where protection is acknowledged, violence is named and no single voice is allowed to define the whole body.

For this reason, the novel's fragmentation is neither illness alone nor freedom alone. It is a structure of survival whose costs become visible over time. Individuation here is an ethical labour of relation. Its measure is not the silence of competing voices, but Ada's growing ability to answer them.

**Naming, the Body and Indigenous Consciousness**

Names in *Freshwater* do not simply label pre-existing identities; they call presences into a more definite relation with the world. The narrators observe that to be named is to gain power. The claim explains Asụghara's consolidation and also the risk of every interpretive label. "Mad," "dissociative," "queer," "ọgbanje" and "archetype" each makes something visible while arranging power around the thing named.[24]

Eguvwebere and Akoni's concept of imposed identity clarifies the coercive side of naming: institutions and communities often assign identities that estrange subjects from their own experience. *Freshwater* adds a spiritual dimension. A name can be imposed from outside, chosen from within, or received through relation. Ada's struggle is not solved by escaping names altogether. She must learn which names disclose her and which ones confine her.[25]

The body is the testing ground. Puberty pushes the spirits into what they describe as a marked plane that is "too clear and too wrong." Later bodily alteration is represented not merely as conformity to a modern identity category but as an attempt to bring the vessel into a livable relation with its inhabitants. The python imagery joins bodily change to Ala and to shedding. This is precisely where an archetypal reading is most tempting and most

23 Eguvwebere, "Objectification and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder," 231-37.
24 Emezi, *Freshwater*, 154.
25 Eguvwebere and Akoni, "Discourse of Imposed Identity," 194-206.


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dangerous. The snake can signify renewal in Jungian symbolism, but Emezi's python is already located within an Igbo sacred genealogy. Its cultural specificity is the condition of the symbol's force, not a local example of a prior universal.[26]

Anigala and Eguvwebere's work on gender boundaries helps explain why the altered body cannot be reduced to a passage from one stable sex to another. In *Freshwater*, gendered embodiment is negotiated among human desire, social legibility and spiritual configuration. Boundary-crossing is not a fashionable addition to the ọgbanje; it is integral to a being whose existence troubles the partitions between spirit and human, male and female, home and diaspora.[27]

Afrocentricity is indispensable at this point because it restores agency to the cosmological vocabulary. Ada's body is not raw material upon which either Western diagnosis or African tradition writes a final truth. It is an active site where knowledge is felt, contested and revised. The spiritual and material are continuous, but continuity does not eliminate bodily pain. Indigenous consciousness in the novel is embodied knowledge: it is known through blood, scars, appetite, sleep, movement, ritual memory and voice.

This embodiment also modifies Jungian wholeness. The Self cannot remain an abstract psychic centre. Any adequate account of Ada's development must answer to the body's injuries and transformations. Co-presence becomes viable only when the various speakers acknowledge that they share consequences even if they do not share identical identities.

**From Being Narrated to Speaking: A Reconfigured Individuation**

The strongest evidence of Ada's development is formal. For much of the novel, others narrate her. The collective spirits and Asụghara interpret her feelings, occupy her body and explain her history. Ada's belated first-person speech therefore matters more than any declaration of singular identity. She does not finally prove that the spirits were unreal. She enters the narrative arrangement that has spoken around and through her.

Near the end, Ada describes herself as "a village full of faces and a compound full of bones, translucent thousands." The sentence gathers the novel's scales of personhood. "Village" and "compound" replace the isolated individual with social and ancestral space; "faces" preserve difference; "bones" anchor plurality in a material history. The phrase does not celebrate shapelessness. A village has relations, limits and obligations. It is many without being merely scattered.[28]

This is not classical integration. The spirits do not disappear into a superior ego, and Ada does not return to a self that existed before them. Yet it would be equally inaccurate to say that no individuation occurs. Ada differentiates her voice from those that dominate her, recognises the plurality that constitutes

26 Emezi, *Freshwater*, 123.
27 Anigala and Eguvwebere, "Unmaking Boundaries," 211-19.
28 Akwaeke Emezi, *Freshwater* (New York: Grove Press, 2018), 226.


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her, and begins to speak from within it. Her achievement is a form of authorship: she can name the compound without claiming to be its only inhabitant.

Jung's individuation is thus preserved at the level of process and revised at the level of destination. The movement toward a more conscious relation among previously dissociated or autonomous contents remains illuminating. The assumption that wholeness must be organised by one centre does not. *Freshwater* proposes distributed wholeness, a provisional order sustained by negotiation rather than sameness.

Afrocentricity makes that revision possible because it treats the village, ancestors, divinities and embodied person as relations within a meaningful world. It also prevents the article from congratulating Western theory for "discovering" an African plural self. Jung is the concept under examination as much as the novel is. *Freshwater* reveals where individuation travels well and where it must yield.

The ending does not remove danger. Ada's co-presence remains precarious, marked by trauma and unequal access to the body. That incompleteness is part of the novel's intellectual seriousness. A unified ending would contradict the life it represents. What changes is not the number of selves but the terms on which they can be known.

**Conclusion**

*Freshwater* challenges the assumption that psychic coherence requires a single governing voice. It does so through more than subject matter. Collective pronouns, shifting focalisation, the estranging phrase "the Ada," the emergence of named presences and Ada's delayed narration make form carry the argument. The novel's plural consciousness is at once cosmological, psychological, embodied and narrative.

Jung's account of individuation helps describe differentiation, defensive division and the movement toward a more conscious relation with what exceeds the ego. Its limit appears when the spirits are treated as contents that properly belong to one psychic centre. Afrocentricity checks that appropriation by locating the ọgbanje within an Igbo order of knowledge and by recognising spiritual agency as more than metaphor. The result is not a tidy synthesis of European psychology and African spirituality. It is a disciplined encounter in which each framework is made answerable to what the other cannot contain.

The article has therefore argued for negotiated co-presence. Ada's development does not restore an original unity or turn multiplicity into uncomplicated freedom. She gains a voice capable of acknowledging a village of presences, judging their effects and inhabiting a shared body with greater knowledge. Wholeness becomes relational rather than numerical: not one instead of many, but a livable ordering of difference.


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This reading contributes to Emezi scholarship by connecting the novel's indigenous ontology to the processual question often left to psychology: how does a person live, change and speak within plurality? It also revises literary uses of Jung by showing that individuation cannot be exported unchanged into every cosmology. When African knowledge is treated as thought rather than data, theory itself must become capable of transformation.


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