

**Past-Future Connections: How Karma is at Work in David Mitchell's
Cloud Atlas**

Andre Ezekiel Ticoalu

Abstract

Human productions in their limitless number of forms are not created out of nowhere and based purely on nothing. According to Carl G. Jung, these creations are the manifestation of the basic images present universally in the human unconscious, or more specifically, of *archetypes* in the *collective unconscious*. This study examines the presence of the archetype of rebirth in the novel *Cloud Atlas* in accordance to Carl Jung's theory and more specifically to the religious teachings of Buddhism. However, this concern raises an issue regarding the concept of karma which is inseparable from the concept of rebirth. This issue comes from the significant difference of the forms of karma in the novel and in Buddhism faith, where karma takes a tangible form (gross) in the novel and intangible form (subtle) in Buddhism. To solve such problem, this study pays great attention to the role of the two forms of karma, seeking to find whether or not these two forms are actually based on the same basic idea. Through the mentioned endeavor, the study concludes that the karma in the novel is parallel to karma in Buddhism.

Keywords: Archetype, Buddhism, Connection, Karma, Reincarnation