

**THE STUDY OF ARCHETYPES IN THE 20TH CENTURY ENGLISH CHILDREN'S
LITERATURE**

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Annotation. This article discusses the importance of character archetypes in 20th century English children's literature and highlights their role in engaging young readers. In revealing the importance of archetypes, scholars such as Marjorie Jean McCormick, YAO Dai-yi and CHEN Qian-qian, Shobha Ramaswamy, Dana Brooke Thurmond, and others will look at the archetype and provide evidence.

Keywords: Character archetypes, English children's literature, mother figure, hero archetype, hero's adventure archetype, and shadow archetype.

Introduction. The 20th century marked an important stage in English children's literature, reflecting social, cultural, and psychological changes. During this period, many works were created based on archetypes. In this context, character archetypes became a distinct subject of research. Character archetypes play a significant role in shaping stories and influencing young readers. These archetypes often serve as effective tools that help children understand the world and foster empathy by imparting moral lessons. The main character archetypes specific to the 20th century English children's literature and their impact on readers have been studied by many researchers using various approaches.

Main part. Marjorie Jean McCormick attempts to explore the image of the Mother in English literature in her scholarly work titled "Mothers in the English Novel: From Stereotype to Archetype." She particularly substantiates the interpretation of mother figures from the 20th century as archetypes, analyzing how, by this time, the image of the mother had evolved into the Mother Archetype.

According to Marjorie Jean McCormick, the mother figure in English novels is portrayed based on well-established traditions. In almost every instance, the uniqueness of the mother character is closely tied to her dramatic function within the story. By the early 20th century, the role of the mother figure began to gain more significance, eventually becoming central to the narrative. An analysis of English novels reveals that the mother figure reflects the mythology of motherhood as a fundamental creative force of humanity. However, this power is not portrayed as wholly positive. Most mother figures of this century display two opposing forces inherent in the maternal character: one being the loving and nurturing nature of the mother, and the other being a flawed force capable of destruction.

While anthropologists have seen this duality as a characteristic of ancient mother goddesses, folklorists emphasize that some myths and fairy tales depict these two sides of motherhood as separate characters, one harmful and the other benign. Over the nearly three-hundred-year history of English novels, the mother figure has undergone a gradual yet extensive evolution. In the 19th century, this figure was described as a stereotype, often portrayed as a suffering character. Mothers in earlier novels typically served as intentional obstacles to the protagonist's happiness, functioning as reflections of ancient traditions that existed long before the emergence of the novel as a form. In contrast, 20th century mothers were no longer confined to stereotypical or purely traditional roles. Marjorie Jean McCormick describes this transformation as follows: "The

powerful feelings they evoke remain, however; the difference is that modern novelists confront and even celebrate the power of the mother in their fictions, implicitly or explicitly acknowledging both the Good and Terrible aspects of the ancient mother goddess imago.”

The discussion of mothers in English novels may, at first glance, seem disconnected from the ancient mother myth. However, the characters of Mrs. Nickleby by Dickens and Egyptian Isis (one of the oldest female deities) may indeed be based on the primordial mother archetype. According to Erich Neumann, this archetype has three forms: “the good, the terrible, and the good-bad mother.”

YAO Dai-yi and CHEN Qian-qian examine the Hero Archetype, the Hero’s Adventure Archetype, and the Shadow Archetype in their interpretation of Harry Potter. In the magical adventures of Harry Potter, one can see the reflection of heroic virtues. From a young age, Harry leaves the world of wizards, accepts the call to adventure, and through self-improvement and success in becoming more perfect, he brings peace and happiness to the wizarding world. As depicted in the book, the Journey Archetype is primarily divided into three stages: departure, initiation, and return.

Shobha Ramaswamy analyzes the archetypes in the works of 20th century English children’s literature representatives J.R.Tolkien and J.K.Rowling. This is seen in her scholarly work titled “Archetypes in Fantasy Fiction: A Study of J.R.R.Tolkien and J.K.Rowling.” Based on her research, it can be emphasized that British writer Tolkien established the foundational rules of modern fantasy in the middle of the 20th century. His three-part novel The Lord of the Rings is classified as a significant stage in the history of fantasy. It tells the story of the destruction of the One Ring, originally belonging to the evil Sauron. This task is entrusted to Frodo, a member of the “little people” known as Hobbits. After great hardships and sacrifices, in the final confrontation between the forces of good and evil, the ring is destroyed, and Sauron is defeated.

Shobha Ramaswamy also notes that the Scottish author of Harry Potter, J.K.Rowling, is widely recognized for reviving the habit of reading books among children. The seven-part Harry Potter series tells the story of Harry, a wizard boy studying at the magical school called Hogwarts, as he strives to defeat the evil wizard Voldemort. From these reflections, it can be inferred that there is a shared, deeply ingrained factor common to both writers: Tolkien and Rowling. Despite their differences in time, tone, and purpose, their works share an unexpected, broad, and enduring appeal, with a common distinctive feature in the hero archetypes found in their stories. As Shobha Ramaswamy herself writes: “Since fantasy involves the visionary mode of creation, the scholar felt that it was logical to look for the presence of archetypes in the works of these two writers.”

In the second chapter of Shobha Ramaswamy’s research, it is emphasized that fantasy heroes often align with several common forms. In some works, “The Hero Archetype” is frequently depicted as an orphan in the forms of the “Wounded Child”, “Lost Prince”, or “Hidden Monarch” archetype. Shobha Ramaswamy also describes this archetype as “He is the ‘Chosen One,’ destined to greatness, even if he is essentially an ‘Everyman’ or ‘the little man’ of folklore.” These archetypes are exemplified in the heroic figures of Frodo, Aragorn, and Harry, created by Tolkien and Rowling. Furthermore, both writers also draw from the “Arthurian legend” to create their heroes.

In her scholarly work, Shobha Ramaswamy also analyzes other archetypes, including the journey (quest) archetype and its stages, which are outlined as “three main stages – Departure, Initiation, and Return.”

Additionally, the evil representatives in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, such as Sauron and the One Ring, as well as the evil character Voldemort in Rowling's *Harry Potter*, are examined as examples of the "Villain" archetype. This archetype can appear in forms such as "Fallen Angel, Dark Father, Shadow, Vampire, Snake, Tempter, Psychic Possessor."

In the chapter titled "Fantasy's Gallery of Archetypes", it is discussed that the hero archetype is not isolated in its quest but is supported by the "Wise Old Man" archetype, who serves as a trusted companion. In the chapter titled *Other Archetypal Motifs and Symbols*, the use of archetypes as symbols and motifs is explored. The chapter discusses recurring archetypal motifs such as dreams, revelations, prophecies, riddles, puzzles, and other symbols that enhance the appeal of fantasy works. Archetypal symbols such as *The Wasteland*, the Sanctuary, forests, animals, mirrors, mazes, metals, colors, and numbers are analyzed.

Dana Brook Thurmond, in her scholarly work *The Influence of Carl Jung's Archetype of the Shadow on Early 20th Century Literature*, analyzes the impact of Jung's archetype theory on 20th century literature, particularly the Shadow archetype. She emphasizes that it is difficult to understand the collective unconscious without physical properties or symbols that allow access to the inner world of society, and she notes that Jung believed there was a group of symbols or archetypes that reflect universal human unconsciousness, stating: "Jung believed that there is a group of symbols, or archetypes, that are manifestations of the universal unconscious."

Archetypes are found across all cultures in fairy tales, legends, and artistic representations. Among the most famous of these is the "Shadow" archetype. The shadow represents aspects of ourselves that are in opposition to our personal values and are often hidden or ignored. Jung argued that we must confront our shadows as part of a process called individuation, which helps us understand our true selves. Writers of the time, such as the Irish Bram Stoker, the American Henry James, and the Scottish Robert Louis Stevenson, used the concept of the shadow in their works. The ideas of humanity's dark side can be found in their literature. Dana Brook Thurmond studies the novels of these authors, compares their ideas with Jung's, and explores how the shadow archetype in works from the early 20th century aligns with the literature of the time. Her research also examines how the shadow archetype is consistently denied through societal norms. She emphasizes that it is difficult to fully express our will because we are surrounded by the idea that we must be cautious and not reveal our true nature. Looking at early 20th century literature, we can see that the messages sent by society often contradict what might be beneficial for our psyche.

The authors discussed in this study not only write about Jung's "Shadow" archetype but also examine the hidden causes behind it and the influence of society on their characters. The search for their shadows by these heroes reflects a commentary on the society they lived in at the turn of the 20th century, as we can understand from the following statement: "In searching for their Shadows, these characters are all making a statement about the early 20th century society in which they lived." Additionally, this scholarly research also mentions the poetry of T.S.Eliot, one of the most prominent representatives of Modernism. Specifically, in his work *The Hollow Men*, which is considered an outstanding example of early 20th century poetry, we can observe a direct reference to the Shadow archetype. Dana Brook Thurmond's research is significant in that it reveals the following aspects to the reader: "the Jungian aspects of early 20th century literature, especially the Shadow archetype and how it plays a direct role in the process of individuation, or becoming a whole Self." The works of the authors and poets discussed in this research have, overall, contributed significantly to society's perspective on the Shadow archetype.

The Cambridge school of comparative anthropology, famous for scholars like Jane Harrison, Gilbert Murray, and Andrew Lang, was inspired by Frazer's work. Jessie Weston's book *From Ritual to Romance* had a significant impact on Eliot. Later, archetype critics such as Maud Bodkin, G. Wilson Knight, Robert Graves, and Richard Chase also utilized anthropology and Jungian psychology, or a combination of both, to study universal forms – archetypes.

Conclusion. In conclusion, it can be said that the character archetypes found in 20th century English children's literature serve as an important tool to engage young readers. These archetypes, embodying various traits and experiences, provide valuable lessons on courage, friendship, resilience, and self-understanding for children. Analyzing these figures allows for a better understanding of cultural narratives in children's literature and their enduring influence on young minds. As literature continues to evolve, the relevance of these archetypes will shape future generations through inspiring and educational stories.

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