

Archetypal Instability in Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice*



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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

I hereby declare that this thesis is the student's own work and effort. All sources of information incorporated here have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted with my approval.


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DECLARATION

This thesis is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.



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Dedication (optional)

I dedicate this study to all the passionate readers of fantasy.

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Abstract

This study investigates the psychological frameworks of the characters in Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice* by incorporating Carl Jung's theory of archetypes, as elucidated in *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. As opposed to offering a symbolic representation of archetypes in *Assassin's Apprentice*, this study approaches them as dynamic structuring forces that shape and dominate identity. Furthermore, this study seeks to underscore how the domination of one archetype imbalances, destabilizes, and marginalizes other archetypes; thereby obstructing each other's individuation process. Through a close textual analysis, this study examines how archetypal patterns, particularly the Orphan, the Hero, the Shadow, the King, and the Trickster, shape character development. The analysis is organized around three interrelated psychological processes: archetypal identity, shadow integration, and the failure of individuation — a psychological process of integrating the conscious and unconscious contents of the psyche that aims at achieving psychological wholeness. Using these processes within the arcs of major characters, this research seeks to demonstrate how the characters fail to achieve psychological wholeness. This approach realigns the emphasis from archetypes as narrative motifs towards archetypes as dynamic forces that modulate identity. This paper argues that *Assassin's Apprentice* portrays character development as a process of imbalance among archetypes and failed individuation and thereby establishing fantasy narrative as a fertile ground for possible Jungian psychoanalytic interpretation.

Keywords: fantasy literature, archetypes, individuation, Robin Hobb, Carl Jung, psychoanalysis

Chapter 1

Introduction

In the realm of literature, fantasy is often debated and stereotyped as trivial fiction. Despite growing scholarship and burgeoning interest in the genre, fantasy remains a nascent field for psychoanalytical inquiry and further theoretical incorporation. Furthermore, fantasy has evolved into an extensively acknowledged, rich, and multifaceted genre that functions as a promising area for psychoanalytic inquiry and a fertile site for further theoretical incorporations. Fantasy narrative is primarily set in an alternate world that typically incorporates magical elements and highlights psychic conflict through symbolic figures and kingdoms. In addition, its narrative, analogous to fairy tales, involves heroic journeys where heroes embark on quests to combat and eliminate evil forces and dismantle oppressive structures. While the intended audience of fairy tales, written in a linear and simplified structure, are children and young readers, fantasy literature is directed towards adults and mature audiences. In this trajectory, character development in fantasy literature demonstrates intricate psychological processes that demand investigation through analytical psychology. Carl Jung's theory of archetypes provides a foundational lens for investigating such complex characters' psychic structures.

Assassin's Apprentice, a fantasy novel written by the American author Robin Hobb, provides a fertile ground for Jungian archetypal analysis. Archetypal patterns are recurrently employed in fantasy literature and are critically analysed by scholars. This study approaches Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice* through Jungian analytical psychology and establishes that the major characters' identities are not merely story wise constructed but governed by archetypal patterns. Furthermore, Jung's analytical framework helps to establish the fragmentation of the

Hero's identity and coexistence of archetypes as a result of archetypal imbalance, rather than a narrative climax.

In existing scholarship, critical discussions on the archetypes employed in fantasy literature examine traditional and modern heroic archetypes and transformation of archetypes. However, there are no established papers that comprehensively address the archetypes in Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice*. Therefore, the research gap highlights the absence of a comprehensive Jungian analysis of Hobb's characters. Furthermore, the significant dearth of research validates the examination on imbalance among Jungian archetypes that culminates to psychic disintegration and coexistence of two archetypal forces in a single character of *Assassin's Apprentice*.

The primary objectives of this research are to identify how archetypal patterns—Orphan, Hero, King, Trickster, and Shadow—are manifested in the major characters and analyse how these patterns govern each other's identity. Carl Jung's theoretical framework of archetypes will be incorporated to analyse the major characters of Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice*: Fitz, Shrewd, and the Fool. The study will pay attention to how the Hero's identity gets fragmented and reconstructed through the King and Trickster archetypes. In addition, the study seeks to underscore how the domination of one archetype imbalances, destabilizes, and marginalizes surrounding archetypes; thereby obstructing each other's individuation process.

This research seeks to answer the central question: "How do Jungian archetypal patterns govern identity formation of major characters in *Assassin's Apprentice*, and how does archetypal imbalance lead to failure of individuation?" This question is unequivocally associated with the objective of this study and will, therefore, be answered through implementation of Carl Jung's theoretical framework in the major characters of Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice*. Hence, at

the heart of this research, lies the central argument that archetypal patterns, in *Assassin's Apprentice*, operate as dynamic governors of identity formation. This approach realigns the emphasis from archetypes as narrative motifs towards archetypes as dynamic forces that modulate identity. Additionally, by demonstrating the dominance of one archetype that creates an imbalance among other archetypes and destabilizes them, the study investigates the failure of the individuation process. Therefore, the research offers a nuanced understanding of character development in Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice*.

In addition, this research contributes to both fantasy scholarship and Jungian psychoanalytic criticism, and would enable general readers to distinguish recurring archetypal patterns that influence character development within fantasy narrative. It would thus challenge simplified readings of fantasy characters and foreground the psychological complexity embedded within the narrative. Furthermore, it will establish that archetypal instability leads to psychic fragmentation, that further culminates to coexistence of two archetypes in one character who instantiate split personality. Finally, by validating fantasy literature as a fertile ground for psychoanalytic inquiry, this research seeks to operate as an epitome for further psychoanalytic investigations of under-researched and nascent fantasy literature.

Chapter 2

Methodology

This research conducts a qualitative textual analysis as it examines how Jungian archetypes, particularly the Orphan, Hero, King, Trickster, and Shadow, govern identity formation of the major characters — Fitz, Shrewd, and the Fool — in Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice*. The primary theoretical framework for the research is derived from *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Volume 9 (Part 1): Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (1969), distinctly focusing on his concept of archetypal patterns, originating from the collective unconscious, which refers to pre-existent forms that can only attain consciousness secondarily. Primary data is drawn from the internal monologue, narrative events, and interactions surrounding the three major characters in *Assassin's Apprentice*. In this research, pertinent scholarly articles surrounding archetypes and fantasy literature are reviewed and assimilated. Furthermore, Jung's additional concepts, encompassing analytical psychology, from *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Volume 6: Psychological Types*, are incorporated to examine how the characters' psychic dissonance occur due to archetypal instability. This research, additionally, assimilates pertinent theoretical terms from *The Handbook of Jungian Psychology* — a handbook, edited by Renos K. Papadopoulos, of Jungian psychological terms. As opposed to offering a symbolic reading of archetypes in *Assassin's Apprentice*, this study approaches them as dynamic structuring forces that shape and dominate identity.

In addition, this study demonstrates how the archetypal domination creates imbalance among archetypes and marginalizes the psyche that culminates to failure of individuation — a process, termed by Jung, which underscores integration of conscious and unconscious psychic

contents. The process aims at achieving the self, which represents psychic wholeness. By incorporating Jungian theory with pertinent scholarly articles, this research, furthermore, offers an examination of how this archetypal imbalance obstructs individuation and fragments the psyche of the Hero, ultimately culminating in coexistence of two archetypes.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

Contemporary fantasy literature often depicts characters that assimilate Jungian archetypes and their psychology are shaped by internal conflict, abandonment, rejection, and fragmentation, culminating in the failure of individuation — a process, termed by C. G. Jung, of integrating the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche that aims at achieving psychic wholeness (Jung 164). Although extensive scholarship subsists on the representation of Jungian archetypal patterns and psychic fragmentation of characters in traditional and children's fantasy literature and fairy tales, there is a significant dearth of research on imbalance among Jungian archetypes that culminates to psychic disintegration and coexistence of two archetypal forces in a single character across contemporary fantasy, particularly in Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice*. The current research seeks to address the existing research gap, particularly a Jungian psychoanalytic criticism of Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice*. Furthermore, the research aims to examine how one or more archetypes dominate the psyche of major characters and culminate to unsuccessful individuation and coexistence of archetypes in a single character. The secondary sources reviewed in this chapter shall contribute to critically analyze characters' confrontation with their unconscious, the disruption of individuation, the internal psychic division, and, furthermore, fortify the theoretical lens of this research.

To begin with, Butchart's article "“What Man Am I?” The Hero's Journey, the Beginning of Individuation, and *Taran Wanderer*" examines the hero's journey, where the individuation process initiates. It demonstrates the protagonist's journey is a symbolic and lifelong process

toward self-integration through which the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche confront archetypal forces. The assessment analyses how the protagonist's personal unconscious remains fragmented despite plot progression by emphasizing the failure of individuation (Butchart 214). The author concludes the Hero archetype undergoes a journey influenced by internal conflict, rejection, and mentorship. Although this article does not approach Hobb's work primarily, it is pertinent to the research as it effectively examines how fantasy protagonists confront archetypal struggles that mirror their failure of individuation, rather than a successful self-integration. Furthermore, the article's attention on the hero's failure to achieve psychic wholeness meticulously aligns with the examination of the hero's individuation process of this research. Therefore, by incorporating Butchart's analysis to the dissertation, this research fills a gap in psychoanalytic criticism of Hobb's work and demonstrates how *Assassin's Apprentice* offers the failure of individuation and archetypal imbalance.

Similarly, Lima's article "The Once and Future Hero: Understanding the Hero in Quest Fantasy" investigates heroic figures, whose identities are socially sanctioned, and the new view of the Hero, transitioning from traditional fantasy heroes to psychologically fragmented protagonists in contemporary fantasy. Similar to the characters examined in the article, the major characters of *Assassin's Apprentice* are marked by psychic fracture, illegitimacy, repression, moral ambiguity and social expectation, and they have quests of their own. Furthermore, the author's reconfiguration of heroism is pertinent to the research question, which investigates how archetypal patterns govern identity formation and individuation. The analysis on the process of becoming a hero aligns with the young protagonist of *Assassin's Apprentice* and mirrors Jungian concept of achieving psychic wholeness (Lima 12). Therefore, the incorporation of Lima's work fortifies the understanding of Fitz's exhibition as a Shadow-Hero — the coexistence of the

Shadow and the Hero in one figure. Furthermore, Eduardo Lima's contribution to this study reveals the need for a Jungian analysis that emphasizes archetypal imbalance and failed individuation in *Assassin's Apprentice*.

On the other hand, the authors of "Transcending Heroic Archetypes Beyond Sword and Shield in Brandon Sanderson's *The Stormlight Archive Series*" discuss collective masculinity by cross-examining traditional heroic archetypes with the archetypal imbalance prevalent in contemporary fantasy. It primarily employs Carl Jung's theory of the archetype and the collective unconscious. Their study effectively argues that contemporary fantasy heroes subvert traditional heroic ideals, such as chivalry, honour, and sacrifice. Similarly, the characters of Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice* embody conflict and confront archetypal struggles, thereby failing in achieving psychic wholeness (Devasika and Raju 9). The major limitation of this study is the absence of approaching Hobb's primary works, and thereby this research fills that gap. However, this article is significantly relevant for cross-examining archetypal patterns with the failed heroic ideals and for drawing parallels to Fitz's repression of vulnerability, internal split, shadow confrontation, and unsuccessful individuation in *Assassin's Apprentice*. As such, the authors' assessment enriches the dissertation and the discussion on archetypal imbalance; thereby, it offers a constructive examination of identity formation and individuation process.

Assessing from a contrasting outlook, Rothenberg's article "The Orphan Archetype" provides a rigorous Jungian framework for understanding Orphan archetype in narrative. It also underscores the psychic conditions and predicaments that culminate in a fragmented psyche, which particularly aligns with the disruption of the Hero's individuation in *Assassin's Apprentice*. Drawing on Carl Jung's theory of the archetypes and collective unconscious, Rothenberg examines how the orphan's identity is shaped by isolation, homelessness, loss of

paternal figures, sense of survival, and vulnerability (106). Therefore, Rothenberg's rigorous conceptual pertinence of the Orphan archetype strengthens the discussion on how the Hero's identity, in *Assassin's Apprentice*, is shaped by abandonment, displacement, and isolation. Furthermore, Rothenberg extends on Jung's theory of archetype by foregrounding the Child archetype as the beginning of the Hero's journey. Hence, by incorporating Rothenberg's discussion on the Hero's failure to integrate shadow components due to an early parental separation and displacement, this dissertation examines Hobb's Hero as the Orphan archetype, at the initial stage, whose ego-consciousness fails to integrate the shadow. Accordingly, Rothenberg's article fortifies the current study's discussion on the failure to achieve psychic wholeness.

On the contrary, Ursula K. Le Guin, in her seminal paper "The Child and the Shadow," draws explicitly from Carl Jung's theory of archetypes and examines how fantasy literature operates as a symbolic space where the conscious speaks to the unconscious through symbols and archetypes (141). While her work effectively demonstrates that fantasy and myths are symbolic sites where the repressed aspects of the psyche are externalized into narrative, the assessment, furthermore, emphasizes that fantasy foregrounds the struggle between conscious and the unconscious and its repressed components (Le Guin 147). Le Guin urges on the need to understand one's shadow and emphasizes that when the shadow is not consciously confronted or acknowledged, it disrupts the individuation process. Additionally, her work concludes that the shadow is a compulsory psychic component which must be integrated by protagonists to achieve wholeness (Le Guin 144). Furthermore, her work puts emphasis on the dangers of self-erasure and destructive instincts that arise when the shadow is approached with punishments without acknowledgement and integration. Although Le Guin's assessment does not approach Hobb's

work primarily, her analysis on shadow integration and fragmented psyche aligns rigorously with the research. Therefore, Le Guin's article is both theoretically foundational and thematically pertinent to the research.

Additionally, Arthur's "Above All Shadows Rides the Sun: Gollum as Hero," explores the subversion of traditional heroic models. Although the author does not explicitly offer a Jungian reading of Hobb's characters, her argument prudently aligns with the internal split and individuation process of the Hero in *Assassin's Apprentice*. The article emphasizes that internal split demonstrates an archetypal imbalance, where the character exhibits the coexistence of both the constructive and destructive impulses within a single psyche, and fails to integrate the components (Arthur 27). This analysis mirrors Fitz's internal conflict between heroic morals and violence. However, the article only explores the archetypal imbalance and psychological fragmentation of Tolkien's character and it does not provide a systemic examination of the individuation process. Nevertheless, Arthur's contribution to this study fortifies and validates the discussion on the internal division and fragmentation of the Hero. Therefore, incorporating Arthur's analysis strengthens the analysis on the coexistence of archetypes, by providing a systematic examination of their archetypal imbalance that result in failure of individuation.

Similarly, the authors of "Transformation of the Archetype: A Return to Fairy Tale" discuss how fantasy narratives externalize psychological processes through archetypal patterns. It offers an effective Jungian framework for understanding the mechanism of psychological development, where the archetypal patterns get projected onto characters in fantasy narratives and children's fairy tales. This framework is pertinent to the research and aligns with the examination of character's confrontation with shadow. The transformation of archetype is the dynamic process where universal, unconscious, and innate patterns evolve and integrate toward a

significantly balanced and integrated self (Zhanysbekova et al. 4803). While their article effectively argues that the transformation of archetypes enables the individuation process, it also emphasizes that archetypes are not stagnant patterns. They undergo a dynamic process that may lead either to a successful individuation or to a fragmentation and psychological collapse—failure in achieving psychic wholeness. Therefore, the integration of this article strengthens the dissertation's Jungian approach, by emphasizing how archetypal patterns are interrogated to their limits and are transformed.

Supporting Jung's framework, Clinton's chapter "The Trickster: Various Motifs," from *Archetypes and Motifs in Folklore and Literature*, provides a comprehensive discussion on the Trickster archetype across folklore and literature. It effectively puts emphasis on the role of Trickster archetype as a figure who is defined by ambiguity and who disrupts identity through creative, disruptive, prophetic, and deceptive attributes (Clinton 473). The chapter's analysis of the Trickster as a symbolically inverted and destabilizing force aligns with the Fool's ambiguity in *Assassin's Apprentice*. The Fool's consistent propensity to disrupt the growing ego by encumbering the Hero with paradoxes, rather than meaningful resolutions, epitomizes the Trickster archetype. Furthermore, this research demonstrates how the Trickster archetype's influence on the developing ego of the Hero results in archetypal imbalance and obstructs the integration of the conscious and unconscious components of the psyche. Therefore, the incorporation of Clinton's assessment on the Trickster's propensity to disrupt ego stability strengthens this study's discussion on the failure of individuation and archetypal imbalance in the analytical chapters.

On the contrary, Robinson's article "Good and Evil in Popular Children's Fantasy Fiction: How Archetypes Become Stereotypes that Cultivate the Next Generation of Sun," offers

an understanding of the distortion of archetypes in fantasy narratives. Robinson demonstrates that popular fantasy fiction enfeebls Jungian archetypes into rigid stereotypes and moral binaries like good and evil, instead of offering moral and psychological complexity where dynamic archetypal patterns confront conflict and the conscious and unconscious psychic aspects go through individuation process (34). Although the article does not approach Hobb's work primarily, Robinson's emphasis on the hazards of archetypal rigidity aligns with the dissertation's analytical framework. As such, *Assassin's Apprentice* destabilizes archetypal rigidity and provides a narrative with psychic fragmentation, where the Hero and the Shadow coexists in one figure. Therefore, Robinson's contribution fortifies the legitimacy of a psychoanalytic criticism of *Assassin's Apprentice*, where archetypes are unstable and imbalanced. Furthermore, this article corroborates the theoretical necessity for a Jungian reading of Hobb's work. By extending on Robinson's study, this research demonstrates how archetypal imbalance leads to failure of psychic integration.

Finally, this research paper looks at Băicuș' article "Fantasy Archetypes and Literature," which demonstrates the legitimacy of psychoanalytic criticism in fantasy genre and gradually examines how archetypal patterns are manifested in fantasy literature (Băicuș 156). While the study fails to offer a psychoanalytic criticism within Hobb's work, primarily through Jungian archetypes, it effectively legitimizes fantasy and encapsulates archetypal patterns within the genre. The study concludes that fantasy operates as an evolved genre by perpetuating archetypal patterns. Although Băicuș' assessment of the legitimacy of archetypal patterns in fantasy operates as a theoretically foundational resource to the research, the absence of a Jungian reading of Hobb's work leaves room for further examination. Therefore, by incorporating Băicuș' assessment of legitimacy of archetypal criticism within fantasy narratives, this research fills a

gap in archetypal criticism within fantasy narratives. Furthermore, this research extensively draws on the potential of the fantasy genre by applying Carl Jung's theory of archetypes in Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice* and provides a nuanced examination of identity formation and demonstrates prospective failure of individuation.

The scholarship reviewed in this thesis has thus explored multiple approaches of disruption in the individuation process, archetypal tensions, and the internal psychic division of Hero in fantasy narratives. The existing scholarship has provided a foundation for examining the major characters of *Assassin's Apprentice* by incorporating Carl Jung's theory of the archetypes. Furthermore, it demonstrates the absence of psychoanalytic discussion on Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice*. Hence, this research bridges the gap and contributes to the growing field of psychoanalytic literary criticism. Therefore, this chapter establishes the theoretical necessity for *Assassin's Apprentice*.

Chapter 4.1

The Orphan-Hero and the Problem with Balance

In order to comprehend how Jungian archetypal patterns govern identity and how an archetypal imbalance obstructs individuation process in *Assassin's Apprentice*, it is imperative to underscore some fundamental concepts encompassing Carl Jung's theory of the archetypes and the collective unconscious. Jung propounds the structure of the psyche consisting of the conscious and unconscious components of the mind. In *Psychological Types*, he describes the ego as the centre of consciousness and distinguishes the unconscious as comprising two separate psychic domains: the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious (Jung 590). Whereas, in *Psychological Types*, Jung asserts that the personal unconscious fundamentally encompasses personal experiences, forgotten and repressed memories, the components of the collective unconscious are inherited (Jung 668). Furthermore, Jung describes the collective unconscious as a deeper layer of the psyche where the personal unconscious rests (3). Moreover, by using the term "collective," Jung refers to the part of the unconscious that is universal in nature (3), and its contents encompass archetypal patterns and behavioural tendencies that are ubiquitous and identical in all individuals (4). In that respect, the Hero archetype embodies courage and charismatic leadership, the King archetype exemplifies order and stability, and the Trickster archetype manifests mischief and deceit. However, a Jungian archetypal reading of *Assassin's Apprentice* indicates a contrasting exposition.

Jung demonstrates that archetypes are primordial psychic contents that have not gone through conscious interpretation and, therefore, archetypes are "immediate datum of psychic

experiences” (5). This theoretical framework of Jung can be applied in *Assassin’s Apprentice* to analyse how the major characters’ identities are imposed by the archetypal forces, originating from the collective unconscious. *Assassin’s Apprentice* offers a world with a medieval setting, where a boy navigates a world of politics, duty, and despondent isolation. The story follows protagonist Fitz, a six-year old boy, abandoned at the gates of a royal castle named Buckkeep — the residing place of his paternal figures. He is the illegitimate son, entitled as a “royal bastard” (Hobb 12), of the venerated prince and king-in-waiting, Chivalry. His existence provokes a scandal among the kingdom, and due to that tumult, his father abdicates the throne and leaves him orphaned. King Shrewd employs him as an assassin in exchange for granting him food, education, and shelter. He grows into adulthood in a court where he accompanies the royal jester, the Fool. Since Jung asserts that archetypes are pre-existent forms that can only attain consciousness secondarily, which allows these forms to have psychic contents (Papadopoulos 67), one can externalize archetypal patterns — such as the Orphan, Hero, and King — through the narrative. This chapter examines how these pre-existent forms shape the identity of Fitz as a psychologically fragmented Hero, and how the authority of the King archetype imbalances the archetypal stability and obstructs his individuation, by situating Fitz first as the Orphan archetype and, then, as the Hero archetype, Chivalry as the absent Father archetype, and Shrewd as the King archetype.

Jung argues that archetypes are dynamic entities and living organisms, which exist as a centre in the central nervous system and are “living, empirical entities, charged with meaningfulness and feelings” (Papadopoulos 80). Therefore, this framework justifies the gradual growth, development, and transformation of the Orphan archetype into the Hero archetype. The transformation of archetype is the dynamic process where universal patterns evolve and integrate

toward a significantly balanced and integrated self (Zhanysbekova et al. 4803). Fitz's identity is organized first as the Orphan archetype, at the initial stage, and then as the Hero archetype, as he gradually matures and becomes the protector of the kingdom. Ultimately, his identity is governed by the King archetype. The initial catastrophic experiences of the Orphan archetype are set around segregation, abandonment, and exclusion; furthermore, he "undergoes a psychic loss of parents and experiences the subsequent feelings of loneliness and isolation" (Rothenberg 105–106). While Fitz's ego develops with feelings of illegitimacy, segregation, loneliness, and exclusion, his introduction as the abandoned illegitimate child at Buckkeep castle immediately situates him within the Orphan archetypal pattern. It can be stated that the subsequent predicaments and vulnerability of the orphan also constructs a sense of existential deficiency on the ego-consciousness that later gets transferred into personal unconscious as repressed memories and feelings of guilt and self-condemnation. Fitz develops friendship with homeless teenagers during his adolescence and also reflects on his existence with remorse and guilt for stirring events at the Buckkeep palace. This demonstrates his yearning for human connection and the burden of his existence which is reflected in his self-condemning feelings. He is fed, clothed, and gradually trained in swordsmanship and horse riding. In *Psychological Types*, the self is elaborated as the goal of the individuation process through which self-division is healed and it represents psychic wholeness (Jung 636). As such, being the narrator of his life story, Fitz looks back at his life with this feeling of self-condemnation and recounts, "I grew up fatherless and motherless in a court where all recognized me as a catalyst. And a catalyst I became" (Hobb 20). This feeling of self-condemnation — the repressed content of the personal unconscious of Fitz — highlights how guilt encumbers his psyche into split-off fragments, which develops due to the absence of paternal archetypes. Throughout the novel, his self-condemning feelings drive him

into isolation and divide the self, which does not integrate. The archetypal absence, furthermore, creates imbalance by disrupting the archetypal stability, which obstructs the integration of the fragmented psyche of Fitz in the individuation process. On account of Fitz's appearance, his father leaves the castle and the subsequent sentiments of shame, secrecy, and isolation construct him as the Orphan archetype. Thus, Fitz internalizes shame and rejection at the primary stage of his ego development. The absence of the mother and father archetypes further consolidates Fitz as the unstable Orphan archetype.

When the news of Chivalry's demise reaches Fitz the death of the Father archetype creates an archetypal void that can never be filled. It, furthermore, demonstrates that even the absence of certain archetypes shape the identity of Fitz as an orphan deprived of moral guidance and prone to vulnerability. Additionally, the absence of the mother and father archetypal patterns can be observed as a driving force of instability, which is obstructing his individuation — a process through which one can achieve psychological wholeness and become a whole individual, elaborated in *Psychological Types* (Jung 620). Alongside his training, Fitz is designated as the protector of the kingdom and he gradually gets assigned to eliminate external threats to the kingdom. Fitz initially struggles to internalize the heroic role that is imposed upon him by the King archetype. "My world turned over. A cold horror shook me as all the pieces suddenly fell into place. All the lessons and careful instructions and this is what they led to" (Hobb 117). Fitz's internal monologue unveils his vulnerability and struggle even after becoming a swashbuckler and achieving precision in swordsmanship. Furthermore, it can be stated that Fitz's heroic role, while he matures into adulthood and gains experience with weapons, is imposed by the King archetype, who governs his identity and imbalances the Hero archetype with further psychic conflicts — igniting the Hero's self-condemning feelings.

Jung argues that the child's submission to authority justifies the "distinct willingness to bow down" before anyone resonating the father image (214). This situates Fitz as the vulnerable and submissive Orphan-Hero. Fitz seeks attachment and internalizes external authority of the King archetype, similar to what Jung propounded — the King archetype closely resembles the father figure (Papadopoulos 124). The King archetype is not merely a decisive leader; he becomes the symbolic father figure who reconfigures Fitz's identity in his heroic journey. Firstly, the King archetype's nurture reconfigures Fitz's orphanhood and, within this circumstance, situates the King archetype as Fitz's only paternal attachment (Hobb 73). Fitz's accommodation, education, health, and training are ensured by the King archetype. It becomes evident, when King Shrewd says, "You need not eat any man's leavings. I will keep you, and I will keep you well" (Hobb 51). Jung, furthermore, notes that archetypes manifest interpersonally (Papadopoulos 32). Fitz's relationship with the King archetype exemplifies this process. The absence of the parental archetypes creates a void, and the King archetype enters this void. Fitz swears loyalty to his King and this loyalty is archetypal; thereby it can be said that the King archetype's recognition of Fitz becomes formative for his identity. Subsequently, Fitz acquires chivalrous skills from training, arranged by the King archetype, to fight for his King and protect the kingdom from external threats (Hobb 115–117). Despite protecting the kingdom, Fitz develops the impression of working "as the King's tool," through his trainer (Hobb 103). All his works are done in secrecy. Thereafter, the Hero archetype takes assassination missions, passed onto him by the King archetype through a chain of command, to protect the kingdom from threats, but under the condition of secrecy and keeping assassinations invisible to the public eye. Fitz's responsibility of protecting the kingdom, later, turns into onerous tasks as he has to be clandestine, which causes the fragmentation of his heroic identity.

Fitz receives frequent orders of eliminating threats and duality manifests gradually within him. He is known to everyone as the illegitimate royal son and, to the king and his trainer, as the clandestine protector of the kingdom. While Fitz reflects on his duties, remorse burdens his ego-consciousness as the assassination missions gradually required to kill people he had known since a six year old boy: "I had known this man; killing him killed a part of my own life" (Hobb 382). It reflects the emotional toll of killing and foregrounds the Hero archetype's imbalance. Fitz's personal unconscious remains fragmented despite plot progression. Despite realizing he is the King's tool, Fitz continues to kill in secrecy for the King archetype, and later spends days in isolation with guilt and the burden of his dual identity. The King archetype reminds Fitz of the secrecy in his clandestine killings: "You understand what your duties will be? I trust to your discretion" (Hobb 323). Therefore, it can be stated that the King archetype has reshaped Fitz's identity as a Hero and a protector of the kingdom; however, denied his public identification as a Hero, which situates him as a fragmented Hero. Under this circumstance and the King archetype's governance, the Hero archetype's psyche oscillates between determination of protecting the kingdom and living in secrecy with remorse, which further complicates the Hero archetype with instability. In *Psychological Types*, Jung argues that the "self" expresses the unity of the personality as a whole (636). Therefore, achieving the self is the goal of the individuation process. However, the heroic fragmentation of Fitz, arising as a result of the imbalance invigorated by the King archetype, obstructs him to achieve a heroic self.

In addition, Jung posits that the individuation process requires the integration of both the unconscious and conscious contents to achieve psychic wholeness (40). Whereas, the King archetype imposes roles without coherence and integration, disrupts the stability of the Hero archetype, and exacerbates the tension, which culminates in Fitz's failure of individuation with

the goal to achieve a heroic self. Furthermore, Jung argues that the identification of a Hero requires a ritual, where an assembled crowd pays homage and witnesses the proclamation for the Hero (128). Therefore, it can be concluded that the absence of paternal archetypes, the King archetype's governance, and his disinclination to offer a public declaration imbalances the Hero archetype by constructing Fitz as a fragmented Hero, who performs valorous actions yet spends days in isolation regretting them.

In conclusion, it can be observed that the King archetype is expected to restore and sustain balance among other archetypes; however, in *Assassin's Apprentice*, King Shrewd disrupts the stability and his manipulation causes Fitz's psychic dissonance and the emergence of the Hero's Shadow side, which will be analysed in Chapter 3. Hence, Fitz's heroic killings, done in secrecy, become part of his unconscious dark trait which he fails to integrate with his consciousness and achieve the heroic self.

Chapter 4.2

The Tyrant King and the Prophetic Trickster

The previous chapter established that archetypes shape the identity of Fitz as a fragmented Hero and demonstrated how archetypal imbalance culminated in the failure of heroic individuation. This chapter examines how the King archetype further disrupts the archetypal balance, by embodying King Shrewd as the King archetype and the Fool as the Trickster archetype. Firstly, this chapter examines how the King archetype's domination over the two archetypes constructs the identity of King Shrewd as the Tyrant King. Secondly, this chapter examines the Fool's obstructed individuation process, as a result of an existing archetypal imbalance, and his identity as a prophetic figure.

Assassin's Apprentice constructs King Shrewd as an instantiation of a Jungian King archetype. Jung discusses that archetypes, as the pre-existent psychic forms, construct behaviour and patterns of perception (66). Within this framework, a King archetype is expected to symbolize sovereignty, law, restoration and sustenance of order. As a Jungian archetype collectively embodies "the general characteristics of a thing rather than its specific peculiarities" (Papadopoulos 79), the King archetype is expected to promote and maintain balance. However, the King archetype in *Assassin's Apprentice* fails to accommodate these characteristics. This aspect reinforces the premise of instability within the archetype. King Shrewd's initial words after meeting Fitz unveil his dominating nature and intentions of utilizing and weaponizing Fitz for diplomacy: "What will you make of him? A tool? A weapon? A comrade? An enemy? Or will you leave him lying about, for someone else to take up and use against you?" (Hobb 49).

Here, the King is talking with his youngest son about Fitz's identity and unveiling his intentions to shape Fitz's role. Similarly the King meticulously plots for Fitz's prospective role and identity as he articulates, "shape him, and a decade hence you will command his loyalty" (Hobb 49). It can be observed that King Shrewd's unconscious shadow corrupts the King archetype as Fitz is used as a tool for gaining diplomatic alliances and eliminating existential threats to the kingdom. The shadow, emerging from the unconscious, is like a darkness that clings to every personality (Jung 123). Consequently, the King archetype imposes a heroic role to Fitz without a coherent public recognition. Fitz is expected to eliminate threats and protect the kingdom secretly; therefore, this command not only obstructs Fitz to achieve his heroic self but also constructs King Shrewd as a tyrant. The King archetype administers Fitz's education, training, and all other basic necessities, while operating and filling the void of a parental archetype. However, the King's manipulation over Fitz, influenced by his shadow, constructs the archetypal relationship conditional by constructing a Hero without a heroic individuation and by instilling moral ambiguities of heroic deeds in Fitz. Therefore, the King archetype augments the Hero archetype's internal conflict and marginalizes the Hero; thereby it constructs him as a Tyrant King who fails to integrate his shadow in the individuation process.

Given the circumstance of an absent Father archetype, the King archetype strives to maintain balance with his role as a King and a father, but this archetypal trajectory intensifies the existing archetypes with imbalance. Therefore, it can be concluded that, in addition to the existing instability among archetypes, the King archetype falls short on integrating the shadow, through the individuation process, and achieving the self in kingship. Thus, the imbalance of archetypes and the shadow constructs King Shrewd as a Tyrant King.

On the other hand, the Fool is the royal jester, who instantiates the Trickster archetype. The Fool frequently unsettles the Hero by questioning his destiny, teasing with elusiveness, and imposing paradoxical prophetic riddles. According to Jung the Trickster archetype is a godlike figure and a divine being; Trickster is “both subhuman and superhuman” and the unconscious mostly dominates the psyche of the Trickster archetype (263–264). As such, without providing the true motive behind his confrontation with the Hero, the Fool imposes prophetic paradoxes and departs elusively that organizes his identity as a prophet. The Fool prophesies how Fitz will save the life of a dog by saying “Fitz fixes feists fits. Fatz suffices” (Hobb 126). Furthermore, the Fool’s propensity to deliberately impose riddles on the Hero archetype in secrecy embodies the Fool as the Trickster archetype. The Fool evades the Hero by answering, “I am a fool, not an interpreter of dreams. Good day” (Hobb 126). Through this riddle, the Fool is prophesying how Fitz will save the life of a dog with butter extracts (Hobb 151), but evading Fitz’s question about the meaning behind this riddle. The Trickster instantiates psychological plurality: his role as an elusive prophet and the King archetype’s personal jester. While oscillating between these two roles — governed by the King and Hero archetypes — the Trickster archetype’s psychological division becomes conspicuous. Throughout the novel, he plays the role of a prophet who only talks with Fitz and prophesies him. Additionally, he plays the role of a jester who obeys and entertains only the King. However, the Trickster archetype holds an imbalance within its role and the King archetype further intensifies the Trickster’s individuation.

In addition to the imbalance embedded within the archetype, the Trickster’s individuation is destabilized by the attraction of surrounding archetypes — the Hero and the King archetypes. As such, the Trickster archetype is consistently positioned as a catalyst and posits riddles that prophesy the Hero archetype, and it becomes evident when he imposes his prophetic riddle. The

Trickster's confrontation with the Hero is marked by self-concealment. Fool prophesies the Hero's future actions while withholding a coherent self-expression and the full scope of his motives. The Trickster archetype is defined by ambiguity and his enigmatic, deceptive, and prophetic attributes both construct and disrupt identity (Clinton 473). This exemplifies the Fool's archetypal relation with the Hero and legitimizes his identity as a prophetic figure; however, the King archetype's control disrupts the balance.

The King archetype owns the Trickster and controls his every presence. Additionally, the King archetype's domination over the Trickster becomes evident when the narrative exposes the possession: "...the Fool is his. Bought and paid for" (Hobb 205). This archetypal domination exacerbates the archetypal tension, nullifies the Trickster archetype's autonomy, and further destabilizes the balance. Throughout the narrative, the Trickster, deprived of autonomy, remains under the King's possession and continues to indirectly help the Hero by imposing prophetic riddles in secrecy. This archetypal domination disrupts the stability of the Trickster archetype that obstructs his individuation. Furthermore, the Trickster's confinement within the King's court obstructs the Trickster's integration and autonomous emergence of the self.

In conclusion, this chapter has demonstrated that archetypes do not merely symbolize character traits and behavioural patterns, but they also govern identity formation. Archetypes have to be consciously integrated and when the domination of archetypal forces destabilizes balance, the individuation process fails and the self becomes unattainable (Jung 278–279). Consequently, the archetypal imbalance leads to failure of individuation of both King Shrewd and the Fool. King Shrewd, as the King archetype, exemplifies the Tyrant King who imposes a Heroic role without a public recognition that fragments the Hero archetype's psyche and marginalizes the Hero's autonomy. The Fool, as the Trickster archetype, epitomizes the

prophetic figure who prophesies the Hero's actions, but his autonomy is denied by the King archetype.

Chapter 4.3

Shadow-Hero and Internal Split

The preceding chapters have demonstrated how imbalance among archetypes culminates in unsuccessful individuation. Furthermore, Chapter 4.1 concluded that archetypal pattern, the King archetype's domination in particular, constructs Fitz as a fragmented Hero. This chapter puts forth a central finding of the dissertation, by arguing that Fitz emerges as a Shadow-Hero, which results in split personalities, whose identity emanates through psychological division provoked by the King archetype.

Jung discusses the possibility of the coexistence of two archetypes and argues how this coexistence transpires to be one of the central conflicts of the psyche, by foregrounding that individuals may align with a single archetype yet they may be influenced by others that simultaneously leads to a contrasting secret life (167). Proceeding in that manner, Fitz's psychic integration gets obstructed by the external authority of the King archetype. Consequently, due to an imposition of a heroic role that represses a heroic ritual (Jung 128), Fitz's psychic division is archetypal. Therefore, Fitz's assassin-self becomes his secret identity. Fitz's internal monologue reveals that he is reticent even to her love interest and tries to hide his identity: "I feared that if I asked her, I might reveal myself" (Hobb 189). Fitz's internal conflict arises from the urge of not revealing his secret profession to anyone. This demonstrates how Fitz's ego-consciousness considers his assassin-self unacceptable and the killing missions as an immoral duty that becomes his repressed content of his personal unconscious.

Fitz's internal monologue, further, unveils his reluctance of being a killer, and due to the absence of an official declaration of his heroic identity, his sense of heroism and antagonism gets blurred. Nevertheless, killing becomes a part of his responsibility, which he continues throughout

the end of the narrative, and his repressed assassin-self culminates as his Shadow. Jung argues that the Shadow, emerging from the unconscious, is like a darkness that clings to every personality (123). Accordingly, Fitz exhibits the characteristics of both the Hero and Shadow archetypes: the loyalty to his King and the pledge to protect the kingdom, the violent and feral instincts of killing and practicing the Wit — a prohibited magical power that allows telepathic communications with animals.

Fitz exhibits personalities that both construct him as a saviour of lives and taker of lives. Contrasting to his heroic attributes, Fitz laments about his role as a secret protector of the kingdom; furthermore, he struggles with his violent instincts and hones the Wit magic in secrecy. Fitz narrates, “I was taught by a man who was a murderer, a man who would try to kill me if he suspected I had the Wit” (Hobb 226). Here, Fitz reveals that even a slight awareness of his ability to use magic would result in a death sentence. Public awareness of his practice of the forbidden magic would also forthwith result in his exile. This exemplifies Fitz as a Shadow archetype as he embodies the hidden side of the kingdom. According to Jung, the “shadow coincides with the personal unconscious” and it is everything that a person is not (Papadopoulos 66). Jung identifies split personality, in *Psychological Types*, as a phenomenon that emerges from alteration of personality in a character whose character-splitting occurs from changing one milieu to the other (641). Furthermore, contrasting to his loyal, valorous, and sacrificing characteristics, his feral and violent instincts become parts of his Shadow side, which he hides. As a result, due to these overlaps, Fitz exhibits traits of both the Hero and the Shadow. To be identified as a whole individual Hero, one must confront the Shadow, hidden in the unconscious and integrate it (Jung 40). However, Fitz, with an obstructed integration of the unconscious and

conscious contents, transpires to embody personalities that situate him both as the Hero and Shadow archetypes.

Fitz's personality splits between functioning as a Hero and struggling with his hidden side, while both the Hero and Shadow archetypes are embodied within him. In *Psychological Types*, Jung underscores the split personality phenomenon with “angel abroad, devil at home” formulation and emphasises that the longer these two personalities coexist, the more habitual it becomes (641). Fitz's virtuous qualities construct him as a loyal protector of the kingdom, while, correspondingly, his surreptitious reliability on the forbidden magic constructs him as the Shadow. Proceeding in that respect, Fitz's coexistence of the two personalities—a loyal protector and a feral practitioner of magic—increasingly becomes habitual throughout the end of the narrative, as he navigates between his heroic identity and his hidden side that hones the forbidden magic, which embodies the Shadow archetype. The book ends as Fitz reflects on his past and narrates his duality—a despised magician and a Hero living in secrecy. As such, it underscores the coexistence of Shadow and Hero archetypes that culminated as a result of failed individuation.

Thus, this research has established Fitz as a character who embodies both the Hero and Shadow archetypes, while constructive and destructive personalities coexist within his psyche, as opposed to an integrated self. His character development is a result of imbalance within archetypes and internalization of external authority of the King archetype. Consequently, Fitz's split personality emerges; thereby this research foregrounds fantasy literature as a fertile site for Jungian psychoanalytic inquiry.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

To conclude, this research paper has rigorously examined how Jungian archetypal patterns govern the identities of the major characters in *Assassin's Apprentice*. Additionally, this research paper has demonstrated character development as a result of archetypal imbalance and established the Shadow-Hero — a coexistence of two archetypes and psychic contents, that exhibits both constructive and destructive personalities. By primarily incorporating Carl Jung's theory of archetypes into the major characters of Robin Hobb's *Assassin's Apprentice*, this thesis has analysed the individuation process and concluded that identity formation within the novel is not an autonomous process, but a process of governance and domination. Pertinent scholarly articles have also reinforced a definition of fragmented Hero, whose psyche remains fragmented despite plot progression. By examining Fitz as the Shadow-Hero, Shrewd as the Tyrant King, and the Fool as the Prophetic Trickster, this study has thus scrutinized how archetypal forces interact and how the dominance of an archetype can disrupt the balance of surrounding archetypes, eventually leading to the Shadow-Hero and split psyche. Furthermore, this research paper delved into the core concepts of analytical psychology and offered a nuanced interpretation of character development.

Carl Jung's core concepts of archetypes and analytical psychology have effectively helped identify the superficial portrayal of Fitz as a coming-of-age Hero. As such, by challenging the stereotypical representation of the Hero, Jung's concepts further provided insight on the intricacies of a Shadow-Hero, whose internalization of external archetypal authority heralded the dawn of archetypal imbalance that culminated in split psyche. These findings helped establish

archetypes not merely as universal patterns and images that are ubiquitous in all individuals, but also as psychic organizers whose unremitting governance may lead to instability of surrounding archetypes or imbalance other archetypes through imposing external roles and marginalizing their self-determination autonomy. In addition, this research paper operates as a testament that Robin Hobb's characters are distinct from oversimplified traditional fantasy characters and their psychological dissection unveils the psychological complexity embedded with the narrative.

By corroborating the core arguments and established findings posited through this study, this research paper can be reinforced in further psychoanalytic theoretical readings of *Assassin's Apprentice*. Furthermore, this research paper convenes further archetypal interpretations and incorporations of analytical psychology in contemporary fantasy literature. Ultimately, by contributing to both fantasy scholarship and psychoanalytic literary criticism, this research paper underscores the presence of archetypal instability in contemporary fantasy literature.

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