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## **ARCHETYPICAL PLOTS IN ENGLISH FOLK TALES: FEMALE ARCHETYPES OF THE MOTHER AND STEPMOTHER**

*This article discusses the female archetypes presented in the characters of the stepmother and mother in English folk tales as the embodiment of the image of one of the most significant literary archetypal images «Mother».*

*The purpose of this article is to analyze the archetypes of the stepmother and mother, which are a manifestation of the light or dark side of one archetype of the «Mother» on the material of some magical and everyday English folk tales. The work presents excerpts and examples from such folk tales as «The rose tree», «The Well Of The World's End», «Kate Crackernuts», «The House in The Lake», «Fate of the Children of Lir», «Jack and His Golden Snuff-Box», «The Red Ettin» «Lazy Jack».*

*In addition, an attempt is being made to present variants of the classifications of female archetype images, which today is ambiguous and not always specific. The archetype «Mother» is not necessarily the mother of the hero, it can in fact be any woman of the older generation who has a psychological influence on the hero, on his life and worldview and is not in a relationship with him*

*The authors come to the conclusion that the female archetypal image can become a source of strength for the hero, endowing him with the ability to survive and stand against trials. However, in a negative aspect, it dooms the hero to powerlessness in the face of difficulties, weakens, makes dependent.*

*Keywords: folk tale, English fairy tale, female archetypes, archetypal plots, linguocultureme.*

## **Introduction**

Fairy tale symbols are important not only for studying the national spirit of a certain people, but also for understanding the mechanisms of psychological resolution of crisis situations adopted in a particular culture.

A fairy tale is a unique cultural phenomenon that contains a description of personal transformation that is accessible to any representative of a particular culture. That is why many researchers discover the connection of fairy tales with ritual activities that accompanied the life cycles of our ancestors, along with myths and legends. Therefore, fairy tale motifs cannot lose their attractiveness and relevance, especially since they often retain a reflection of the primary archetypes of culture, and therefore remain emotionally close to many dozens of generations of people of a certain culture.

## **Materials and methods**

The method of theoretical analysis of scientific literature on the research problem was applied in the work, as well as methods of comparative, stylistic, descriptive, definitional, contextual-situational, etymological analysis.

The object of the study of this article were several dozens of English folk tales (more than 30) in which we were looking for female archetypal images for analysis, namely a stepmother, mother and stepdaughter.

## **Results and discussions**

If we turn to theory, then A. I. Nikiforov defines a fairy tale as «... oral stories that exist among the people for the purpose of entertainment...» [1, p. 20]. V. P. Anikin emphasizes that fairy tales are «traditionally preserved by the people» narratives, drawing attention to the historical nature of these legends [2, p. 46]. In the dictionary of S. I. Ozhegov, one can find the following definition of a fairy tale: «a fairy tale is a narrative, usually folk-poetic work about fictitious persons and events, mainly with the participation of magical, fantastic forces» [3, p. 968]. According to V. Ya. Propp, a fairy tale is a narrative genre with an oral form of existence. The purpose of a fairy tale is entertainment and edification [4]. The fairy tale is based on an unusual (fantastic, wonderful or worldly) event.

The term archetype became famous thanks to C. Jung and his work «Archetype and Symbol», in which he explains the essence of this concept as follows: at the same time, they are autochthonous individual products of unconscious origin. The prototype or archetype is the formulated result of the vast technical experience of countless ancestors. It is, so to speak, the psychic residue of innumerable experiences of the same type. [5, p. 175].

Jung's definitions of an archetype vary widely throughout his books. But in general, they can be defined as some kind of structural schemes, structural prerequisites for images (existing in the sphere of the collective-unconscious and,

possibly, biologically inherited) as a concentrated expression of psychic energy, actualized by the object.

As a product of the direct realization of archetypes, Jung and his followers (J. Campbell, E. Neumann and others) considered the mythology of the peoples of the world.

Jung singled out the most important mythological archetypes or archetypal mythologems - the archetypes of «mother», «child», «shadow», «animus» («anima»), «wise old man» («wise old woman»). For example, «Mother» expresses the eternal and immortal unconscious element, and «Child» symbolizes the beginning of the awakening of individual consciousness from the elements of the collective unconscious. The «Shadow» is the unconscious part of the personality that remains beyond the threshold of consciousness, which can also look like a demonic double. «Anima» for men, as well as «animus» for women embody the unconscious beginning of the personality, expressed in the image of the opposite sex, and the «wise old man» («old woman») is the highest spiritual synthesis that harmonizes the conscious and unconscious spheres of the soul in old age. Both Jung and the other theorists mentioned above, speaking of archetypes, have in mind, first of all, not plots, but a set of key figures or objects-symbols that give rise to certain motives.

The currently existing methods for studying archetypes can be divided into several groups: the genetic method (their task is to study the origin of archetypal images and symbols of culture); the historical and retrospective method (investigating the development of archetypal images and symbols in time); philological (based on the study of the original meaning of signs and symbols expressing significant archetypes of culture) and philosophical (involving a synthesis of the above-named approaches). There are also the hermeneutic method, structural analysis, comparative typological approach, etc.

A major researcher of archetypes in fairy tales M.-L. von Franz notes that after analyzing a large number of European, Japanese, Chinese and African fairy tales, we can conclude that the structure of fairy tales is almost the same (they always contain a sorcerer, a prince or a king, a witch and animal helpers), but here are the plot features or life situations depend on the culture of the people: «If you compare European fairy tales with Japanese ones, you will see the same characters, but in a completely different environment» [6, p. 116] Therefore, by exploring the archetypes of folk tales, the researcher can get direct access to the collective unconscious within the framework of a particular cultural tradition.

Moving from the general to the particular, we note that not only the plot of the fairy tale itself was endowed by researchers with archetypal properties, but also the fairy-tale hero, his magical assistants, other characters, inanimate objects of the fairy tale, etc.

Female archetypal images in literary works are extremely significant. Since archetypes embody the collective experience of mankind, it is natural that images reflecting gender roles and their interaction are often key in the work, representing the oppositional relationship of «female» and «male». In literary criticism, the understanding of female images-archetypes today is ambiguous and not always specific, there are several options for classifying these archetypes. The most famous and ancient classification can be considered the triad Young Woman-Woman (Mother)-Old Woman, formed on the basis of obvious physiological changes and stages of a woman's life. «Young Woman» embodies young spontaneity, lack of life experience, a special romanticized view of the world, trust in people, moral purity. Woman (Mother), as an element of the triad, embodies the age and social state in which motherhood and marriage are possible. A distinctive feature of this stage is the responsibility for decisions that affect not only the fate of the woman herself, but also the prospects for her family: husband, children. A woman has a more visible social status, more rights, more significance. The image of the Old Woman is associated with age-related changes, during which a woman grows old, acquires special qualities: wisdom, insight, the ability to use and transfer accumulated experience, and significant social influence.

However, this classification is not the only one. Both in psychology and in literary studies, attempts have been repeatedly made to consider female archetypes based on the images of mythical female characters. As a rule, images of ancient Greek goddesses act as a mythological base; in particular, Jean Bolen proposes to single out seven female archetypes (Demeter, Aphrodite, Persephone, Artemis, Athena, Hera, Hestia); in the classification of G. B. Bednenko, the eighth type, Hecate, joins the indicated seven types. At the same time, the characteristics of the archetypes are naturally based on the plots of the myths of Ancient Greece: Demeter embodies the combined features of the image of the mother, Aphrodite - the beloved, Persephone - the daughter, Artemis - the sisters, Hera - the wife, Athena - the wise strategist, Hestia - the keeper of the hearth, Hecate - the matchmaker, witch. The researchers also point to the age sequence of the manifestation of archetypes in a woman's personality, as well as the possibility of the influence of one or another archetype on a woman's behavior at any age.

Another classification is the use of the terminology of closely related ties in the names of archetypes, since these lexemes reflect the basic concepts of human life in the conditions of a tribal system, and it was during this period that stable images of the collective unconscious were formed, recorded in myths and folklore. Thus, it is proposed to single out four archetypes: mother, wife (bride), sister, daughter. It is important to understand that these terms (mother, sister, wife, daughter), emphasizing the relationship of the female archetypal image with the hero, do not limit the description of the archetype to formal kinship.

Mother in a positive aspect helps the hero, gives him vitality, helps to overcome difficulties, blesses. However, in a negative aspect, on the contrary, she can create difficulties for the hero and make him weak.

A sister is a woman of about the same age as the hero, but existing independently of him. In a positive manifestation - a colleague, girlfriend, comrade-in-arms; in the negative – a rival, competitor.

The bride (wife) is a woman who contributes to the moral transformation of the male hero, changing his status from a young man to a husband, and changing his inner world, relations with the surrounding reality and other people.

A daughter is a woman of the younger generation who needs guidance, guardianship, and protection. Depending on how these values are assimilated and what consequences this leads to, the archetype of the daughter appears in the text from a positive or negative (shadow) side.

We would like to note that, according to analytical psychology, the manifestation of the light or dark side of the Mother is associated with the appearance in a myth or fairy tale of the archetype «Child» (which is a symbolic reflection of the fairy-tale protagonist). The child, as a symbol of individual consciousness, becomes that element, the appearance of which sets the archetype of the Great Mother in motion, and from the primary source of life and prosperity, the Mother suddenly reincarnates into images of chaos, fate, evil fate: it is «... wild nature, a sorceress, blood, death; the flight from the mother and resistance to her begins» [7, p. 6].

Like any other archetype, the mother archetype reveals an almost limitless variety in its manifestations. The first in importance are the mother, grandmother, stepmother, mother-in-law (mother-in-law); next comes any woman with whom the person is in some kind of relationship, such as a nanny, governess, or distant ancestor. Then come the women who we call mothers in a figurative sense of the word. Goddesses also belong to this category. Mythology gives many variations of the mother archetype.

In Jung's works, we can find a generalized description of the mother archetype, according to him, maternal traits are associated with it: showing attention and sympathy; wisdom and elation that extends beyond formal logic; any useful instinct or impulse; all that is called kindness; everything that gives care and support promotes development and fertility. Of the negative aspects of the maternal archetype, we can note everything secret, hidden, dark; the world of the dead; everything that causes horror and is inevitable, like fate itself.

The archetype of the mother is closely associated with that part of the psyche that remains completely in the power of nature: that is why we often use the expression Mother Nature. The opposite pole must be the Spirit-Father. The archetypes of father and mother represent the two main principles of being. They

can exist together, forming a harmonious whole, or they can oppose each other. The father embodies an active, creative principle; mother – receptivity and caring. Although, the negative impact of the maternal principle can be so strong that it turns into an obstacle to the spiritual aspirations of a person.

«With the image of the Great Mother, various witches of fairy tales and folklore stories and the fairy-tale stepmother, who is also often endowed with the features of a witch, are probably genetically related. At the same time, as a mother in the proper sense, as the mother of a god or a hero up to the «Madonna», she acquires a purely positive coverage. In any case, the primordial deep ambivalence gives way to a distinct differentiation» [7, p. 47].

The Earthly Mother is embodied in fairy tales in the form of an elderly woman: a witch or a good fairy who lives in the forests or near water. Her characteristic feature is a close relationship with animals. This is a collective symbol, a generalized image, since human experience includes the conquest and spiritualization of nature. In fairy tales, nature is not dead, it is animated.

If in general to compile a list of the main female images of archetypes in English fairy tales, then it will look like this:

1) mother, embodied in the image of a good mother, a poor widow, or an evil stepmother;

2) a daughter, embodied in the images of the poor daughter of the main character, or the daughter of a king, duke, etc., who is given in marriage;

3) witches, fairies, sorceresses, the embodiment of mythological, mystical ideas of the people.

The Mother archetype is found in almost all cultures and, in fact, like all female archetypes, is twofold. On the one hand, it plays an important role, as it is primarily associated with the source of life, love and care. On the other hand, in many cultures, the image of the mother often has opposite features. In many fairy tales, the image of an evil stepmother appears, who seeks to harm or embroil other characters. The mother archetype has various incarnations - mother, godmother (good), stepmother (evil). For example, the stepmother archetype is the opposite, negative side of the mother archetype. According to E. Meletinsky: «A stepmother is an analogue of a witch within the family, a representative of an alien family» [7, p. 23].

In the tales of the evil stepmother, there is a sharp conflict between the figures of mother and daughter, and it often goes so far that the stepmother even tries to take the life of her stepdaughter. Not every fairy tale gives us a clear idea why the stepmother turns out to be so evil. For example, it could be jealousy. Jealousy is the other side of love. She gives love bitterness and puts obstacles in its path. However, when a terrible, evil stepmother experiences jealousy, one must look for new values that can resist this feeling, which excites all the worst that is in a person.

One of the archetypal plots in fairy tales is the conflict between stepmother and stepdaughter. Persecuted daughters usually become queens at the end of fairy tales, which means that they are destined by fate to be at the pinnacle of power, and also find happiness. But they succeed, having endured many hardships at the beginning of the tale, they almost always have to go through various trials.

One of the typical characteristics of the stepmother archetype is the *direction / command to perform some action that should harm the protagonist*. More often than not, these tasks should result in the death or suffering of the stepdaughter. Here are examples of this characteristic of the archetype:

1) «Child,» said the stepmother one day, «*go to the grocer's shop and buy me a pound of candles.*» («The Rose Tree») [8, p. 16];

2) At last, one day, the stepmother thought to get rid of her altogether; so she handed her a sieve and said to her: «*Go, fill it at the Well of the World's End and bring it home to me full, or woe betide you.*» («The Well Of The World's End») [8, p. 134];

3) So next morning early, the queen (stepmother) said to Anne, «*Go, my dear, to the hen-wife in the glen, and ask her for some eggs.*» («Kate Crackernuts») [8, p. 124];

With the image of a stepmother, the verb «*hate*» «*envy*» is almost always used, she hates / envies his stepdaughter, mainly for her beauty and kindness.

1) And her stepmother *hated* her because she was more beautiful than herself, and she was very cruel to her («The Well Of The World's End») [8, p. 134];

2) Her brother loved her dearly, but her wicked stepmother *hated* her («The Rose Tree») [8, p. 16];

3) The queen was *jealous* of the king's daughter being bonnier than her own, and cast about to spoil her beauty («Kate Crackernuts») [8, p. 124].

Quite often, the stepmother is associated with *witchcraft and the forces of evil*:

1) That same night the queen, *who was a noted witch*, stole down to a lonely dungeon wherein she did her magic and with spells three times three, and with passes nine times nine she cast Princess Margaret under her spell («The Laidly Worm Of Spindleston Heugh») [8, p. 115];

2) *By the magic arts of my cruel stepmother* I was changed into a trout, and cast into this lake a year and a day before the evening when you restored me to the waters the second time («The House In The Lake») [10, p. 22];

3) Bad was our stepmother with us,  
*She played her magic on us,*

Sending us north on the sea

In the shapes of magical swans («Fate of the Children of Lir») [9, p.7].

Summarizing, the composition of the plot «Stepmother and Stepdaughter» corresponds to the passage of four stages:

1 The life of the heroine in the space of Love with her parents, a loving mother.

2 The death of the mother and the appearance of the stepmother (mistress, mother-in-law).

3 The life of the heroine in the absence of Love with her stepmother, her daughter (or daughters); viability test period.

4 The appearance of the heroine of a new Love (groom).

The plot of the tale presupposes the physical death of the mother, in life it is completely optional. The death of the mother in this case symbolizes the end of an important period in the life of the heroine. The end of the old and the beginning of the new. The loss in this context helps in the development of the heroine, evidence of her readiness for the test of vitality and independence. Also, it symbolizes the first stage of female initiation, female initiation. At this moment, a woman realizes her own autonomy, uniqueness, natural strength.

Not a single fairytale stepdaughter fights with her stepmother, arranges verbal and physical fights with her, does not look for allies to fight the offender. Of course, one could say that the model of female obedience is shown in fairy tales. But this would not be entirely correct in relation to ancient knowledge. The stepdaughter derives benefit from any task for herself.

In fairy tales, the image of the stepmother is presented much brighter, but the mother is present in almost every fairy tale, but often plays an insignificant role in the plot.

In a positive way, this archetype is associated with «maternal care and sympathy, the magical power of a woman, wisdom and spiritual perfection, any sublime impulse or useful instinct – in a word, everything that is associated with kindness, caring or support and contributes to growth and fertility. Mother dominates where magical transformations and resurrection take place, as well as in the underworld

The archetypal role of the Mother involves constant creation, the transformation of one into another. Simple ingredients: flour, yeast, water, eggs turn into dough and then into a delicious cake. Ordinary words are filled with Love and turn into amazing lullabies for a child. Simple threads and pieces of matter turn into a dress. The maternal principle will manifest itself in everything that a woman does.

The main task of a mother in a fairy tale is to *help the main character to realize his potential, to strengthen his positive qualities*, often to give a blessing

and education, an incentive to do something. Any female character that gives the hero wisdom and support can become the mother archetype.

1) The old woman begins by saying to her son before leaving, «Well, well, my poor boy, if you want to go, it's better for you to go, and *God be with you.*» («Jack and His Golden Snuff-Box») [8, p. 52];

2) So his cake was very small; yet small as it was, his mother asked him if he was willing to take the half of it *with her blessing*, telling him that, if he chose rather to take the whole, he would only get it with her curse. («The Red Ettin») [8, p. 83];

3) His mother could not get him to do anything for her, and at last told him, one Monday, that if he did not begin to work for his porridge *she would turn him out to get his living as he could.* («Lazy Jack») [8, p. 97].

### Conclusion

Thus, the study showed that fairy tales are a vivid example of the embodiment of the cultural and national characteristics of the people, their ideas, but, despite this fact, common characteristics can be found in the tales of different peoples.

The Mother archetype is found in almost all cultures and, in fact, like all female archetypes, is twofold. On the one hand, it plays an important role, as it is primarily associated with the source of life, love and care. On the other hand, in many cultures, the image of the mother often has opposite features.

The analysis of the presented English fairy tales proved the importance of female archetypes for the plot of the fairy tale, presented in the role of mother, stepmother – the main characters, and as secondary ones – daughter, wife, witch, etc.

Positive aspect associated with this archetype are maternal care and sympathy, the magical power of a woman, wisdom and spiritual perfection, everything that is associated with kindness, caring or support and promotes growth and fertility.»

In a negative way, it is the conflict between the stepmother and stepdaughter. The test that the stepdaughter has to go through: the tasks of the stepmother, exile, the fight against the forces of evil – everything, in the end, leads her to happiness and the achievement of her goals. Stepmother's tasks can serve as a kind of «initiation» rite for a young girl.

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## АҒЫЛШЫН ХАЛЫҚ ЕРТЕҢДЕРІНДЕГІ АРХЕТИПТІК ӘҢГІМЕЛЕР: АНА МЕН ӨГЕЙ АНА АРХЕТИПТЕРІ

Бұл мақалада ағылшын халық ертегілеріндегі өгей ана мен ананың кейіпкерлеріндегі әйел архетиптері маңызды әдеби архетиптік образдардың бірі «Ана» бейнесінің іске асуы ретінде қарастырылады.

Бұл мақаланың мақсаты – кейбір сиқырлы және күнделікті ағылшын халық ертегілерінің материалы бойынша «Ананың» бір архетипінің жарық немесе күңгірт жағының көрінісі болып табылатын өгей иеше мен ана архетиптерін талдау. Жұмыста «*The rose tree*», «*The Well Of The World's End*», «*Kate Crackernuts*», «*The House in The Lake*», «*Fate of the Children of Lir*», «*Jack and His Golden Snuff-Box*», «*The Red Ettin*» «*Lazy Jack*» сияқты халық ертегілерінен үзінділер мен мысалдар келтірілген.

Сонымен қатар, әйелдер архетипі бейнелерінің классификациясының нұсқаларын ұсыну әрекеті жасалуда, олар бүгінде екіұшты және әрқашан нақты емес. «Ана» архетипі міндетті түрде батырдың анасы емес, ол шын мәнінде кейіпкерге, оның өмірі мен дүниетанымына психологиялық әсер ететін және онымен қарым-қатынаста болмаған аға ұрпақтың кез келген әйелі болуы мүмкін.

Авторлар әйел архетиптік бейнесі кейіпкерге күш-қуаттың қайнар көзі бола алады, оған аман қалу және сынақтарға төтеп беру қабілетін береді деген қорытындыға келеді. Бірақ жағымсыз жағынан ол кейіпкерді қиындықтарға қарсы белсіздікке ұшыратады, әлсіретеді, тәуелді етеді.

Кілтті сөздер: халық ертегісі, ағылшын ертегі, әйел архетиптері, архетиптік сюжеттер, лингвокультура.

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## АРХЕТИПИЧЕСКИЕ СЮЖЕТЫ В АНГЛИЙСКИХ НАРОДНЫХ СКАЗКАХ: ЖЕНСКИЕ АРХЕТИПЫ МАТЕРИ И МАЧЕХИ

*В данной статье рассмотрены женские архетипы, представленные в героях мачехи и родной матери в английских народных сказках как воплощение образа одного из наиболее значимых литературных архетипических образов «Мать».*

*Цель данной статьи – анализ архетипов мачехи и родной матери, которые являются проявлением светлой или тёмной стороны одного архетипа «Матери» на материале некоторых волшебных и бытовых английских народных сказок. В работе представлены отрывки и примеры из таких народных сказок, как «The rose tree», «The Well Of The World's End», «Kate Crackernuts», «The House in The Lake», «Fate of the Children of Lir», «Jack and His Golden Snuff-Box», «The Red Ettin» «Lazy Jack».*

*Кроме того, проводится попытка представить варианты классификаций женских образов-архетипов, что на сегодняшний день неоднозначно и не всегда конкретно. Архетип «Мать» – это не обязательно родная мать героя, это по сути может быть любая женщина старшего поколения, имеющая психологическое влияние на героя, на его жизнь и мировоззрение и не состоящая с ним в отношениях*

*Авторы приходят к выводу о том, что женский архетипический образ может стать источником силы для героя, наделяющей его способностью выживать, противостоять испытаниям. Но в негативном аспекте она обрекает героя на бессилие перед трудностями, ослабляет, делает зависимым.*

*Ключевые слова: народная сказка, английская сказка, женские архетипы, архетипические сюжеты, лингвокультура.*

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