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The Dynamics of Architypes: Study on a New Approach to the Application of Archetypes in Dramatic Characterization

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Abstract

While archetypes are a fundamental tool for dramatic characterization, writers tend to apply them intuitively rather than systematically, often without connecting them to established psychological models. This paper bridges that gap, introducing a new hybrid model that equips screenwriters to create psychologically deep and dynamic characters. This model uses a qualitative, descriptive-analytical approach to systematically map the archetypes discussed by Jean Shinoda Bolen onto the measurable aspects of the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality. This mapping turns abstract archetypes into practical tools for crafting characters with significant psychological depth and specificity. Applying this model to key case studies from dramatic media demonstrates its practical utility. This analysis shows how external plot pressures interact with a character's defined FFM-mapped profile to create a logical and believable impetus for change. We classify this dynamic process of transformation into three distinct character arcs. This hybrid model proves to be a robust and systematic tool. By exploring underlying psychological processes, this model grounds narrative intuition in established principles and thus offers a clear, psychologically derived framework.

Keywords: Archetypes, Five-Factor Model (FFM), Characterization, Hybrid Model, Character Arcs