Psychological Archetypes

Domina Petric ⓘ

University Hospital Center Split, Split, Croatia
Email: domina.petric@gmail.com

Abstract

Background: Psychological archetypes are according to Carl Jung universal, archaic patterns and images that are derived from the collective unconscious and are the psychic counterpart of an instinct. Besides fundamental Jungian archetypes (persona, shadow, anima, animus, great mother, wise old man, hero, self and self-realization), there may be plenty of other psychological archetypes, existence of which can be deduced indirectly through stories, art, myths, religions or dreams. **Purpose:** This review article is to discuss the myths of Medusa, Hades and Persephone, as well as psychological archetypes present in art and stories. **Methods:** Several famous psychological archetypes deducted from myths, art and culture, are presented in this article and discussed from medical, psychological and philosophical perspective. **Results:** Interpretation of psychological archetypes deduced from here presented myths and works of art are posttraumatic embitterment disorder (Medusa), arranged marriage (Hades and Persephone), duality of human nature (Jekyll and Hyde), shared psychosis (Harley Quinn and Joker), fear, phobias, child abuse and childhood traumas (It), instinctive fear of clinical and psychic/emotional vampirism (vampires), the mystery of time (Langoliers). **Conclusion:** Psychological archetypes represent the powerful source of artistic and scientific inspiration originating from collective unconscious. Research, discovery and understanding of psychological archetypes may be of great value as these reveal universal human thoughts, fears, desires, tendencies, and problems being present throughout the history of humankind. Investigation of psychological archetypes may significantly improve our knowledge of human psychology.

1. Introduction

Carl Jung understood archetypes as universal, archaic patterns and images that

derive from the collective unconscious and are the psychic counterpart of an instinct. The collective unconscious includes those elements that have never been experienced individually, but have come down from our ancestors. Archetypes are those elements of the collective unconscious that are highly developed. The most inclusive archetype is the notion of self-realization, which can be achieved by attaining a balance between various opposing forces of personality: introversion-extroversion, rational-irrational, male-female and conscious-unconscious. According to Jung, the side of personality that people show to the world is designated as persona, with which we must not identify too closely because that would block us from attaining self-realization. The shadow is the archetype of darkness and repression, referring to those qualities we do not wish to acknowledge, but attempt to hide from both ourselves and others. Jung considered that the first test of courage is to continually strive to know the shadow, which is important for being whole. Even more difficult is to become acquainted with the anima, which is the feminine side of men being present in the collective unconscious as an archetype. The anima is extremely resistant to consciousness and only few men become well acquainted with it. The animus is the masculine archetype in women, which is symbolic of thinking and reasoning. Jung believed that the animus is responsible for thinking and opinion in women and that the anima produces feelings and moods in men. Both men and women possess a great mother archetype, which is associated with both positive and negative feelings and represents two opposing forces: fertility and nourishment on the one hand, but also power and destruction on the other. The wise old man is the archetype of wisdom and meaning, it symbolizes humans' preexisting knowledge of the mysteries of life. The hero archetype symbolizes a powerful person, who fights against great odds to conquer or vanquish evil, but it also has a vulnerable spot (Achilles tendon). The hero is symbolically overcoming the darkness of prehuman unconsciousness. And finally, the most comprehensive of all archetypes is the self because it pulls together other archetypes uniting them in the process of self-realization. It possesses conscious and personal unconscious components, but it is mostly formed by collective unconscious images [1].

Besides the above-mentioned fundamental Jungian archetypes, there may be plenty of other psychological archetypes, existence of which can be deduced indirectly through stories, art, myths, religions or dreams. Some of these archetypes, present in myths, art and culture, will be discussed in this article.

2. The Myth of Medusa

Medusa was one of three Gorgons, daughters of the sea gods Phorcys and Ceto. All of Medusa's siblings were monsters by birth and Medusa was the only mortal among them. She had beautiful face and astonishing hair. The sea god Poseidon, who was admired by her beauty, raped Medusa while she served the goddess Athena in her temple. Enraged, the virgin goddess transformed Medusa's enchanting hair into a coil of serpents, turning the youngest Gorgon into a monster. Poets described Medusa with a great boar-like tusk and tongue lolling between

her fanged teeth. Her face was so hideous and her gaze so piercing that the mere sight of her was sufficient to turn a man to stone. Perseus, using the reflection in Athena's bronze shield as a guide, managed to cut off Medusa's head with his sickle not looking directly into her eyes [2].

Medusa may be understood as a psychological archetype of a young and beautiful woman being abused by a powerful man. God Poseidon represents a lustful man who is abusing his position of power. Goddess Athena might represent the envious and furious woman who secondly victimizes Medusa, turning her into a monster. Instead of punishing Poseidon, Athena turns her rage against Medusa, on the one hand, because she might not be able to punish the powerful Poseidon, and on the other hand because she might be envious of Medusa's beauty. Medusa's new hideous appearance is a consequence of both sexual abuse and envious rage of Athena (secondary victimization). Medusa attacks all men she encounters turning them into stone, which might represent wrong generalization (all men deserve to be punished). Snakes instead of beautiful hair might represent the knots of negative emotions, feelings and thoughts (mind knots) formed as a consequence of sexual abuse and secondary victimization. The sad story of Medusa might also represent posttraumatic embitterment disorder (PTED), which is defined as a pathological reaction to drastic life events that has no tendency to stop. The trigger might be an extraordinary negative life event that causes severe and long lasting embitterment. This disorder is distinguished not by the content of the triggering event but by the temporal connection to the critical incident [3] [4]. Results of a pilot study aimed to investigate the effects of psychotherapy for PTED (characterized by long lasting embitterment and impairment of mood, somatoform complaints, reduction in drive, withdrawal from social contacts, and even suicide and murder suicide), showed that wisdom psychology (the ability to make sound decisions, to find the right answers to difficult and important life questions) and wisdom psychotherapy (cognitive restructuring, cognitive reframing, reattribution, increase of activities, rebuilding of social contacts, promotion of self-effectiveness, changing perspectives, empathy, perception and acceptance of emotions, emotional balance, sense of humor, contextualism, long-term orientation, value relativism, tolerance of uncertainty, self-distance, self-relativization) offers a promising approach in the treatment of this disorder [5] [6].

The myth of Medusa may be useful in raising awareness about detrimental consequences of violence against women that should be recognized as a violation of human rights and a public health problem. Victimization (including revictimization by the abuser and secondary victimization, defined as negative social reaction that further violates legitimate rights of the victim) of women after the experience of abuse and sexual violence is associated with an increased risk of mental disorder [7].

3. Hades and Persephone

In Greek mythology, Persephone is the daughter of Zeus (king of the gods) and

Demeter (goddess of the harvest and agriculture). She becomes the queen of the underworld through her abduction by and subsequent marriage to Hades, the god of the underworld. Zeus permitted Hades to abduct Persephone as her mother Demeter was not likely to allow her daughter to go down to Hades. Persephone was released by Hermes, who had been sent to retrieve her, but because she had tasted food in the underworld (pomegranate seeds given to her by Hades, symbolism of death and fertility), she was obliged to spend a third of each year (the winter months) there, and the remaining part of the year with the gods above [8]. As a psychological archetype, the myth about Hades and Persephone might be understood as a metaphor for an arranged marriage without love, a marriage between old powerful man (Hades, the winter of life) and young woman (Persephone, the spring of life) whose father (powerful Zeus) agrees with the marriage in order to preserve an alliance between two powerful men.

Results of a study aimed to investigate the impact of marriages resulting from bride kidnapping on infant birth weight using survey data from the Central Asian nation of Kyrgyzstan, showed that children born to mothers in kidnap-based marriages have lower birth weight compared with children born to other mothers [9]. In another study, in-depth qualitative interviews took place with 20 intact triads of newly married women, their husbands and their mothers-in-law, in one district of Nepal in 2017. Many marriages remain arranged, but couples often talk or meet before marriage and feel that they are able to build a foundation of love before marrying. Access to technology facilitates this practice, although some couples are reluctant to admit their communication, suggesting stigma about this practice. Husbands have growing ambivalence about dowry, leading to confusion and negatively impacting relationships post-marriage. Authors concluded that clash of traditional and modern ideas and practices that are occurring in Nepal might potentially impact relationship quality and women's health: better quality relationships between women and their husbands, and also their in-laws, could help improve women's decision-making power (agency), improve maternal and child health, and improve women's overall quality of life and happiness [10].

4. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is a gothic novella by Scottish author Robert Louis Stevenson, first published in 1886. The work is also known as *The Strange Case of Jekyll Hyde*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, or simply *Jekyll & Hyde*. It is about a London legal practitioner named Gabriel John Utterson who investigates strange occurrences between his old friend, Dr. Henry Jekyll, and the evil Edward Hyde. The novella's impact is such that it has become a part of the language, with the phrase "Jekyll and Hyde" entering the vernacular to refer to people with an unpredictably dual nature: usually very good, but sometimes shockingly evil [11]. As a psychological archetype this novel explains the duality of human nature. We all have both good and evil as a part of our human nature,

but some of us successfully suppress the evil, whilst others successfully suppress the good. The story about Jekyll and Hyde may also symbolize white collar crime, which is a crime committed by a person of respectability and high social status in the course of their occupation. It is usually a nonviolent crime characterized by deceit or concealment to obtain or avoid losing money or property, or to gain a personal or business advantage [12]. Jekyll is an intelligent doctor and a good man, but he sometimes becomes a violent and evil Mr. Hyde. This duality is much alike when someone with respectful and legal job becomes corrupted. Duality cannot last forever; either good or evil will eventually take control over the person. In the novel, Jekyll tries to suppress the evil Hyde with the serum, but at the end Hyde becomes so powerful that he takes control over the good doctor Jekyll. The struggle between life and death, love and hate, Eros and Thanatos, has always existed in humankind. Most of us hope to find the wisdom to regulate our human nature and seek more ways to go on building and finding fulfillment [13].

5. Harley Quinn and Joker

Harley Quinn is a complex fictional character that originates from the 1994 graphic novel *The Batman Adventures: Mad Love*, written and drawn by Dini and Timm. Doctor Harleen Frances Quinzel, a psychiatrist at Gotham City's Arkham Asylum, had a very dysfunctional family and pursued psychiatry to understand her own problems. She was assigned to treat the Joker, infamous villain, but she fell hopelessly in love with him. She becomes his lover and accomplice in crime known as Harley Quinn. Although Joker frequently insults, ignores, hurts and even tries to kill Harley, she always comes back to him [14] [15]. The fictional relationship of Harley Quinn and Joker might be understood as a psychological archetype symbolizing *folie à deux*, or shared psychosis defined as a psychiatric syndrome in which symptoms of a delusional belief and sometimes hallucinations are transmitted from one individual to another [16] [17]. Their relationship is a combination of *folie imposée* (Joker is a dominant person at the beginning) and *folie simultanée* (Harley Quinn becomes equally crazy as Joker, if not crazier, and they mutually trigger psychotic symptoms in each other). *Folie imposée* happens where a dominant person (known as the primary, inducer or principal) initially forms a delusional belief during a psychotic episode and imposes it on another person or persons (known as the secondary, acceptor or associate) with the assumption that the secondary person might not have become deluded if left to his or her own devices. If the parties are admitted to hospital separately, then the delusions in the person with the induced beliefs usually resolve without the need of medication. *Folie simultanée* describes either the situation where two people considered suffering independently from psychosis influence the content of each other's delusions so they become identical or strikingly similar, or one in which two people *morbidly predisposed* to delusional psychosis mutually trigger symptoms in each other [18].

There are four main types of delusions that may be passed on from an inducer to a secondary person: bizarre delusions (clearly implausible and not understood by peers within the same culture, even those with psychological disorders), non-bizarre delusions (common among those with personality disorders and are understood by people within the same culture), mood-congruent delusions (correspond to a person's emotions at the time, usually during an episode of mania or depression) and mood-neutral delusions (unaffected by mood, can be bizarre or non-bizarre) [19].

It might be hypothesized that in most cases of psychiatric illnesses, two hits are necessary for the development of clinically significant psychiatric disorder. For example, the first hit might be a genetic predisposition and the second hit might be psychological trauma. The two-hit hypothesis of schizophrenia suggests that a combination of genetic susceptibility coupled with a distinct developmental insult can prime an individual for a later event that ultimately leads to onset of the full clinical syndrome [20]. In the case of Harley Quinn, the first hit might be dysfunctional family, and the second hit is the strong influence of the psychotic Joker. After these two hits, she becomes psychotic. The concept of preventive psychology and psychiatry is to detect individuals that suffered the first hit, such as psychiatric illnesses in family history or traumatic experience in the past, and to help them using various psychotherapeutic approaches, including the knot psychotherapy, before the second hit happens, in order to prevent the development of severe psychiatric illness. The goals of preventive psychiatry in young people include integration of universal and targeted frameworks; advancement of multivariable, transdiagnostic, multi-endpoint epidemiological knowledge; synergical prevention of common and infrequent mental disorders; prevention of physical and mental health burden together; implementation of stratified/personalized prognosis; establishment of evidence-based preventive interventions; development of an ethical framework; improvement of prevention through education and training; consolidation of the cost-effectiveness of preventive psychiatry; and decreasing inequalities. These goals can be achieved through an urgent individual, societal, and global level response, which promotes collaboration across scientific, health care, societal and governmental sectors [21].

6. It

It is a 1986 horror novel by American author Stephen King. The story follows the experiences of seven children as they are terrorized by an evil entity that exploits the fears and phobias of its victims to disguise itself while hunting its prey [22] [23]. *It* can be understood as a complex psychological archetype representing demonic entity, child abuse, childhood traumas and fear. *It* is usually represented as a dancing clown Pennywise symbolizing something funny, that attracts children, and lures them with candies, balloons (Pennywise has red balloons), and dancing. Pennywise eats the lured child, what symbolizes child abuse (physical, verbal, emotional, sexual) and psychological trauma (child is physically eaten by

the clown in the novel, and in the reality, child abuse causes psychological mutilation with emotional and cognitive impairment). The protagonists killed the clown after overcoming their fears and becoming aware of their trauma. They disentangled their mind knots, felt love and mutual trust, and these positive emotions gave them the courage to confront and defeat the abuser.

Psychological trauma is a type of damage to the mind that occurs as a result of a distressing event. Trauma is often the result of an overwhelming amount of stress that exceeds one's ability to cope, or integrate the emotions involved with that experience [24]. Trauma differs between individuals, according to their subjective experiences, and therefore, people react to similar traumatic events differently. Not all people who experience a potentially traumatic event will actually become psychologically traumatized [25]. Childhood trauma can increase one's risk for mental disorders including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and substance abuse [26]. Childhood adversities are associated with neuroticism during adulthood [27]. Parts of the brain in a growing child are developing in a sequential and hierarchical order, from least complex to most complex. The brain's neurons change in response to the constant external signals and stimulation, receiving and storing new information, which allows the brain to continually respond to its surroundings and promote survival. The five traditional signals (sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch) contribute to the developing brain structure and its function [28]. Infants and children begin to create internal representations of their external environment, and in particular, key attachment relationships, shortly after birth. Violent and victimizing attachment figures impact infants' and young children's internal representations [29]. The more frequently a specific pattern of brain neurons is activated, the more permanent the internal representation associated with the pattern becomes [30]. Childhood abuse tends to have the most severe complications with long-term effects out of all forms of trauma because it occurs during the most sensitive and critical stages of psychological development [31]. Psychological trauma consists of cognitive (such as traumatic amnesia) and emotional trauma (consequences of which may be pathological anxiety, depression). Younger the child is in the moment of trauma, the deeper is the trauma and the higher is the risk for the development of more severe psychiatric problem in adulthood. In Stephen King's novel *It* all of the children that are being abused by Pennywise are considering themselves as losers (inferiority complex), and are also being abused by their peers (bullying). In the second part of the book, the seven children are adults and they are revictimized by Pennywise, but this time they manage to kill *It*. This represents successful battle against the abuser and healing of the trauma. During their second encounter with Pennywise as adults they re-experience the trauma mentally and physically, with flashbacks and nightmares, which is typical for unsolved psychological trauma. Re-experience of the trauma is usually associated with triggers and cues that act as reminders of the trauma. When the psychological trauma is healed, there are no re-experiences and symptoms associated with it. That means

that triggers and cues do not act as reminders of the trauma anymore. Children who experienced traumatic event usually forget and repress the trauma, but that does not mean the trauma is gone, *au contraire*, the worst traumas are those that stay in subconscious as subconscious mind knots. An important factor in the treatment of psychological trauma is to become aware of the traumatic event, which can cause the re-experience of trauma and suffering (the paradox of liberating pain).

It might also represent pathological anxiety and phobias, which are associated with psychological trauma. In the King's novel the demonic entity *It* is shape-shifting and takes the form of whatever the children fear the most. Some phobias might be associated with traumatic experiences. For example, a patient with hydrophobia (fear of water) might have experienced drowning or watched someone else drown or being injured in the water, or this can even be a trans-generational phobia, if someone of the ancestors had some kind of water-related traumatic experience. Some phobias can originate from intrauterine life if mother experienced a traumatic event with a strong sense of dread.

It might also symbolize child sexual abuse as toward the end of the novel, King wrote a scene where the girl Beverly, who was abused by her father at home, decides to have sex with each boy protagonist. Child sexual abuse can result in both short-term and long-term harm, including psychopathology in later life. Indicators and effects include depression, anxiety, eating disorders, poor self-esteem, somatization, sleep disturbances, dissociative and anxiety disorders including PTSD [32]-[41]. While children may exhibit regressive behaviors such as thumb sucking or bed-wetting, the strongest indicator of sexual abuse is sexual acting out, and inappropriate sexual knowledge and interest. Victims may withdraw from school and social activities, and exhibit various learning and behavioral problems including cruelty to animals, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder, and oppositional defiant disorder [42] [43] [44] [45] [46]. Teenage pregnancy and risky sexual behaviors may appear in adolescence [47]. Child sexual abuse victims report almost four times as many incidences of self-inflicted harm [48].

7. Vampires

A vampire is a fictional creature said to feed off the life force of other living creatures. It is a psychological archetype and people are instinctively afraid of vampirism. In reality, vampirism can be clinical, psychic and emotional. Clinical vampirism (Renfield syndrome) is an obsession with drinking blood. It can be defined as the act of drawing blood from an object, (usually a love object) and receiving resultant sexual excitement and pleasure. The sucking or drinking of the blood from the wound is often an important part of the act but not an essential one [49]. In 2018, in United Kingdom, devil worshipers slaughtered four people in satanic rituals believing human sacrifices would give them with mystic powers, money and control over women. The three killers drank a victim's blood

during macabre rituals, beheaded a teen and decorated a satanic alter with a man's skull [50]. The term psychic (energy) vampire is used to describe a person who gets increased energy around other people, but leaves those other people exhausted or drained of energy. Although the term energy vampire is not a clinical term or diagnosis currently, some psychiatrists believe that energy vampire characteristics do tend to map to cluster B personality disorders, which includes people with antisocial, borderline and narcissistic personality disorders [51]. American author Albert Bernstein uses the phrase emotional vampire to describe people with various personality disorders who are often considered to drain emotional energy from others [52]. Therese Borchard described five types of emotional vampires: the narcissist (grandiose, self-important, attention hogging, hungry for admiration), the victim (constantly demands from other people to be rescued), the controller (has an opinion about everything, knows what is best for others, has a rigid sense of right and wrong, has a need to dominate), the criticizer (feels qualified to judge and belittle others, and bolster one's own ego by making others feel small and ashamed) and the splitter (plays the hot-cold behavior, one day is friendly and another day is hostile, a threatening rageaholic who revels in keeping others on an emotional roller coaster) [53]. Psychiatrist Judith Orloff described somewhat different five types of emotional vampires: first three are similar to those described by Borchard (the narcissist, the victim, the controller), followed by the constant talker (a person that is not interested in other people's feelings, instead talks a lot about oneself and one's own needs) and the drama queen (acts very dramatic even in insignificant situations and can be very abusive) [54]. I would like to propose additional three types of emotional vampires: the gaslighter, the interrogator and the Casanova. The gaslighter uses gaslighting (form of psychological manipulation that focuses on causing doubt in a targeted individual or in members of a targeted group, making them question their own memory, perception and sanity) and hot-cold behavior (similar to the splitter). The interrogator emotionally exhausts the victim with a myriad of questions about victim's private and/or professional life, and at the same time does not speak much about one's own life or tells lies about oneself. The Casanova likes to sexually and emotionally exhaust the victim. If a victim falls in love, the Casanova uses that emotional capacity to bolster one's own ego. This type of emotional vampire is usually very egotistic and may have narcissistic personality traits. I would also like to propose the term psychological (psychic) anergy, which can be defined as a lack of psychological (psychic) energy that might be caused by psychological trauma or toxic relationship with a psychic (energy) or emotional vampire. Psychological (psychic) energy is defined as the energy by which the work of the personality is performed [55]. The concept of mental energies moving or displacing between various adjoined, conscious and unconscious mental systems, was developed in Sigmund Freud's 1923 *The Ego and the Id* [56]. According to Carl Jung, psychic energy cannot be measured quantitatively in terms of formulae as forms of physical energy can be. Psychic energy expresses itself in

the form either of actual or of potential forces which perform psychological work. Perceiving, remembering, thinking, feeling, wishing, willing, attending, and striving are psychological activities just as breathing, digesting, and perspiring are physiological activities. Potential forces of the personality are such things as predispositions, latent tendencies, which may be activated at any time [57]. Psychological anergy is manifested as psychological fatigue (fatigue that cannot be explained with any physiological cause), lack of interest for others and for work, inability to perform psychological and social activities, pathological sadness and/or anxiety. Individuals suffering from psychic anergy may be constantly distressed, sometimes very irritable, and cannot perform activities they used to. Psychic and emotional vampirism may be associated with the sense of increasing psychological energy of the abuser, whilst the abused individual may experience psychological anergy.

8. The Langoliers

The Langoliers is one of the novellas in the collection of novellas *Four Past Midnight* written by Stephen King. Langoliers are fictional monsters whose purpose is to clean up what is left of the past by eating it. The main antagonist Craig Toomey who had very ambitious and abusive father, and was obsessed with the past and his deceased father's ambitions, being not able to develop his own identity, ambitions, wishes and goals, was eaten by Langoliers [58], which may be understood as a psychological archetype representing people who are slowly eaten by their past traumas, with which they are not able to cope, and therefore, are not able to continue with their lives and cannot live in the present moment. Body always lives in the present moment, but mind can *travel* through the time. We are able to think about past, present and future. This ability gives us power to broaden our perception beyond the present moment. We are able to think and understand what happened in the past and how that past affected the present moment. We are also able to make future plans and to imagine what might happen in the future, we can think about possible consequences of the present actions on the future what may affect our decisions. People with untreated and unsolved traumas might tend to *live* in the past and be obsessed with it. On the other hand, perfectionists obsessed with control usually make too many and sometimes pointless plans and have obsessive thoughts about the future. Such an urge may be associated with low self-confidence and fear of what might happen in the future. Obsessive thinking about the future cannot actually help the person to be better prepared for future events, *au contraire*, the best way to be prepared for the future is to live in the present moment the best way possible. Two main dimensions of perfectionism are perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns (including exaggerated concerns about the future), which may be associated with various forms of psychopathology and its consequences, including depression, anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder, eating disorders, deliberate self-harm, suicidal ideation and general distress [59].

9. Discussion

Embitterment is a complex negative emotion of gnawing pain, frustration, dissatisfaction, anger and sadness. It may be considered as a normal reaction to negative and stressful events in life, but when it lasts longer than it normally should (no more than six months after a major stressful event in life), it becomes pathological. The myth of Medusa may be considered as a psychological archetype representing post-traumatic embitterment disorder caused by sexual abuse and secondary victimization. Snakes instead of beautiful hair may be understood as mind knots that disturb mind homeostasis after a traumatic experience in life with which a victim cannot cope (inability to forgive, inability to feel love, hope, joy and other positive emotions).

The myth of Hades and Persephone might be understood as a psychological archetype representing an arranged marriage without love. Some studies have shown that forced and arranged marriages have significant impact on women's health, overall quality of life and happiness, as well as on the maternal and child health, therefore, changing practices towards more love marriages may be an important strategy of promoting and improving women's and children's health and life satisfaction.

Famous novella about good doctor Jekyll and evil mister Hyde represents the duality of human nature (good-evil, life-death, love-hatred, Eros-Thanatos) that has been present from the very beginning of humankind. All of us have both good and evil as part of our human nature, but it is the power of will and wisdom that decides which part will prevail. Some people may be at the same time surprisingly good and shockingly evil, but this duality cannot last forever, because at one point either good or evil must win out.

The popular story about Harley Quinn and Joker may be understood as a psychological archetype symbolizing *folie à deux* (shared psychosis) that starts as *folie imposée* (Joker is a dominant person at the beginning), but continues as *folie simultanée* (Harley Quinn becomes equally crazy as Joker, if not crazier, and they mutually trigger psychotic symptoms in each other). The complex character of Harley Quinn depicts the psychiatric two hit hypothesis in which (at least) two hits are necessary for the development of severe mental illness. First hit for doctor Harleen Quinzel is her dysfunctional family and second hit is her love affair with psychotic Joker. In the context of two hit hypothesis, the role of preventive psychology and preventive psychiatry would be, among other, to help people who already experienced the first hit (such as mental illness in family/known genetic susceptibility, traumatic life event, previous episode of anxiety or depression) before the second hit happens that could cause the development of severe mental health issue.

Stephen King's dark character *It* from the same name novel may be understood as a psychological archetype representing demonic entity, child abuse, including sexual child abuse, childhood traumas and fear. *It* usually represents itself as a dancing clown Pennywise, but it also shape-shifts to represent the child's

deepest fears and phobias. *It* comes back in cycles, every 27 years, to terrorize its victims, which may symbolize the cycle of re-experiencing the traumatic event with flashbacks during stressful periods of life or in the case of revictimization. These cycles stop when protagonists kill the clown, what may symbolize the healing from the trauma and disentanglement of mind knots.

Vampires are a psychological archetype representing the instinctive fear of real vampirism that can be clinical, psychic and emotional (the latter two terms are sometimes indistinguishable). Types of emotional vampires may be the narcissist, the victim, the controller, the criticizer, the splitter, the constant talker, the drama queen, the gaslighter, the interrogator and the Casanova. Every frustrating relationship in which one individual psychologically/emotionally exhausts the other with the consequent feeling of increasing own psychological energy, while the victim becomes psychologically anergic, can be considered as a type of psychic/emotional vampirism. An individual that is experiencing a state of psychological anergy might seek compensation in excessive consummation of food and/or alcohol. Sometimes victims of psychic/emotional vampirism may develop dependence on this unhealthy relationship under the strong influence of false positive image about the abuser (pink glasses).

The Langoliers, fictional monsters from Stephen King's novella, might be understood as a psychological archetype representing people who are slowly eaten by their past traumas, with which they are not able to cope, and therefore, are not able to continue with their lives and cannot live in the present moment. Despite our ability to think about the past and future, it is very important to be focused on the present moment most of the time. Traumatized people tend to be stuck in their traumas, whilst perfectionists obsessed with control tend to be focused on their future plans and overly concerned about the future, which may be associated with various forms of psychopathology, including depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, eating disorders and even suicidal ideation.

10. Conclusion

Psychological archetypes are universal, archaic patterns and images derived from the collective unconscious and are considered to be highly developed elements. Psychological archetypes may be deduced indirectly through stories, art, myths, religions or dreams, and represent a powerful source of artistic and even scientific inspiration. Research, discovery and understanding of psychological archetypes may be of great value as these reveal universal human thoughts, fears, desires, tendencies, and problems that are present throughout the history of humankind. Exploring art, culture, dreams, religion, myths and stories might help us to better understand human psychology using interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

[1] Feist, J. and Feist, G.J. (2008) Theories of Personality. McGraw-Hill, New York, 104-111.

[2] The Editors of GreekMythology (2021) Medusa: The Real Story of the Snake-Haired Gorgon. https://www.greekmythology.com/Myths/Creatures/Medusa/medusa.html

[3] Linden, M. (2017) Verbitterung und Posttraumatische Verbitterungsstörung. Fortschritte der Psychotherapie [Bitterness and Post-Traumatic Bitterness Disorder. Advances in Psychotherapy]. Hogrefe Verlag GmbH & Co., Göttingen. https://doi.org/10.1026/02822-000

[4] Linden, M., Rotter, M., Baumann, K. and Lieberei, B. (2007) Posttraumatic Embitterment Disorder: Definition, Evidence, Diagnosis, Treatment. Hogrefe & Huber Publishers, Cambridge, MA.

[5] Linden, M., Baumann, K., Lieberei, B., Lorenz, C. and Rotter, M. (2011) Treatment of Posttraumatic Embitterment Disorder with Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Based on Wisdom Psychology and Hedonia Strategies. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*, **80**, 199-205. https://doi.org/10.1159/000321580

[6] Baumann, K. and Linden, M. (2008) Weisheitstherapie [Wisdom Psychotherapy]. In: Linden, M. and Hautzinger, M., Eds., *Verhaltenstherapiemanual* [*Behavior Therapy Manual*], Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg, 416–422.

[7] Oram, D.S., Khalifeh, H. and Howard, P.L.M. (2017) Violence against Women and Mental Health. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, **4**, 159-170. https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(16)30261-9

[8] Nilsson, M.P. (1967) Geschichte der Griechische Religion [History of Greek Religion]. Beck, München, 474-480.

[9] Becker, C.M., Mirkasimov, B. and Steiner, S. (2017) Forced Marriage and Birth Outcomes. *Demography*, **54**, 1401-1423. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-017-0591-1

[10] Diamond-Smith, N.G., Dahal, M., Puri, M. and Weiser, S.D. (2020) Semi-Arranged Marriages and Dowry Ambivalence: Tensions in the Changing Landscape of Marriage Formation in South Asia. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, **22**, 971-986. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2019.1646318

[11] Saposnik, I.S. (1971) The Anatomy of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. *Studies in English Literature*, **11**, 715-731. https://doi.org/10.2307/449833

[12] Hayes, A. (2022) What Is White-Collar Crime? Meaning, Types and Examples. https://www.investopedia.com/terms/w/white-collar-crime.asp

[13] Benezra, E.E. (1969) Duality of Human Nature. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, **125**, 1456-1457. https://doi.org/10.1176/ajp.125.10.1456-b

[14] Dini, P., Murakami, G., Timm, B., Taylor, R., Harkins, T. and Peterson, S. (1994) Mad Love: The Batman Adventures. DC Comics, New York.

[15] Dini, P., Lopez, D., March, G., Morey, T., Wands, S. and DiDeo, D. (2009) Holiday Story: Gotham City Sirens. DC Comics, New York City.

[16] Berrios, G.E. and Marková, I.S. (2014) Shared Pathologies. In: Bhugra, D. and Malhi, G.S., Eds., *Troublesome Disguises: Managing Challenging Disorders in Psychiatry*, John Wiley & Sons, London, 3-15. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118799574.ch1

[17] Arnone, D., Patel, A. and Tan, G.M. (2006) The Nosological Significance of Folie à Deux: A Review of the Literature. *Annals of General Psychiatry*, **5**, Article No. 11. https://doi.org/10.1186/1744-859X-5-11

[18] Dewhurst, K. and Todd, J. (1956) The Psychosis of a Association—Folie à deux. *The*

Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, **124**, 451-459.
https://doi.org/10.1097/00005053-195611000-00003

[19] Mandal, A. (2019) Delusion Types.
https://www.news-medical.net/health/Delusion-Types.aspx

[20] Bayer, T.A., Falkai, P. and Maier, W. (1999) Genetic and Non-Genetic Vulnerability Factors in Schizophrenia: The Basis of the "Two Hit Hypothesis". *Journal of Psychiatric Research*, **33**, 543-548. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-3956(99)00039-4

[21] Fusar-Poli, P., Correll, C.U., Arango, C., Berk, M., Patel, V. and Ioannidis, J. (2021) Preventive Psychiatry: A Blueprint for Improving the Mental Health of Young People. *World Psychiatry: Official Journal of the World Psychiatric Association (WPA)*, **20**, 200-221. https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.20869

[22] King, S. (1986) It. Viking, New York, NY.

[23] Lehmann-Haupt, C. (1986) Books of the Times. The New York Times.
https://www.nytimes.com/1986/01/27/books/books-of-the-times-350786.html

[24] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2022) Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services. Part 3: A Review of the Literature. (Online Only)
https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma14-4816_litreview.pdf

[25] Storr, C.L., Ialongo, N.S., Anthony, J.C. and Breslau, N. (2007) Childhood Antecedents of Exposure to Traumatic Events and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, **164**, 119-125. https://doi.org/10.1176/ajp.2007.164.1.119

[26] Ramos, S. and Boyle, G.J. (2000) Ritual and Medical Circumcision among Filipino Boys. In: Denniston, G.C., Hodges, F.M. and Milos, M.F., Eds., *Understanding Circumcision*, Springer, Boston, MA, 253-270.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4757-3351-8_14

[27] Jeronimus, B.F., Ormel, J., Aleman, A., Penninx, B.W. and Riese, H. (2013) Negative and Positive Life Events Are Associated with Small but Lasting Change in Neuroticism. *Psychological Medicine*, **43**, 2403-2415.
https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291713000159

[28] Perry, B.D. (2003) Effects of Traumatic Events on Children. The Child Trauma Academy. http://www.fa-sett.no/filer/perry-handout-effects-of-trauma.pdf

[29] Schechter, D.S., Zygmunt, A., Coates, S.W., Davies, M., Trabka, K., McCaw, J., Kolodji, A. and Robinson, J. (2007) Caregiver Traumatization Adversely Impacts Young Children's Mental Representations on the MacArthur Story Stem Battery. *Attachment & Human Development*, **9**, 187-205.
https://doi.org/10.1080/14616730701453762

[30] Al-Krenawi, A., Graham, J.R. and Kanat-Maymon, Y. (2009) Analysis of Trauma Exposure, Symptomatology and Functioning in Jewish Israeli and Palestinian Adolescents. *The British Journal of Psychiatry: The Journal of Mental Science*, **195**, 427-432. https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.bp.108.050393

[31] Wingo, A.P., Ressler, K.J. and Bradley, B. (2014) Resilience Characteristics Mitigate Tendency for Harmful Alcohol and Illicit Drug Use in Adults with a History of Childhood Abuse: A Cross-Sectional Study of 2024 Inner-City Men and Women. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*, **51**, 93-99.
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2014.01.007

[32] Dinwiddie, S., Heath, A.C., Dunne, M.P., Bucholz, K.K., Madden, P.A., Slutske, W.S., Bierut, L.J., Statham, D.B. and Martin, N.G. (2000) Early Sexual Abuse and Lifetime Psychopathology: A Co-Twin-Control Study. *Psychological Medicine*, **30**, 41-52. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291799001373

[33] Nelson, E.C., Heath, A.C., Madden, P.A., Cooper, M.L., Dinwiddie, S.H., Bucholz,

K.K., Glowinski, A., McLaughlin, T., Dunne, M.P., Statham, D.J. and Martin, N.G. (2002) Association between Self-Reported Childhood Sexual Abuse and Adverse Psychosocial Outcomes: Results from a Twin Study. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, **59**, 139-145. https://doi.org/10.1001/archpsyc.59.2.139

[34] Roosa, M.W., Reinholtz, C. and Angelini, P.J. (1999) The Relation of Child Sexual Abuse and Depression in Young Women: Comparisons across Four Ethnic Groups. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, **27**, 65-76.

[35] Widom, C.S., DuMont, K. and Czaja, S.J. (2007) A Prospective Investigation of Major Depressive Disorder and Comorbidity in Abused and Neglected Children Grown up. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, **64**, 49-56. https://doi.org/10.1001/archpsyc.64.1.49

[36] Arnow, B.A. (2004) Relationships between Childhood Maltreatment, Adult Health and Psychiatric Outcomes and Medical Utilization. *The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, **65**, 10-15.

[37] Levitan, R.D., Rector, N.A., Sheldon, T. and Goering, P. (2003) Childhood Adversities Associated with Major Depression and/or Anxiety Disorders in a Community Sample of Ontario: Issues of Co-Morbidity and Specificity. *Depression and Anxiety*, **17**, 34-42. https://doi.org/10.1002/da.10077

[38] Noll, J.G., Trickett, P.K., Susman, E.J. and Putnam, F.W. (2006) Sleep Disturbances and Childhood Sexual Abuse. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, **31**, 469-480. https://doi.org/10.1093/jpepsy/jsj040

[39] Steine, I.M., Krystal, J.H., Nordhus, I.H., Bjorvatn, B., Harvey, A.G., Eid, J., Grønli, J., Milde, A.M. and Pallesen, S. (2012) Insomnia, Nightmare Frequency, and Nightmare Distress in Victims of Sexual Abuse: The Role of Perceived Social Support and Abuse Characteristics. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, **27**, 1827-1843. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260511430385

[40] Widom, C.S. (1999) Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Abused and Neglected Children Grown up. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, **156**, 1223-1229. https://doi.org/10.1176/ajp.156.8.1223

[41] Arehart-Treichel, J. (2005) Dissociation Often Precedes PTSD in Sexually Abused Children. *Psychiatric News*. https://doi.org/10.1176/pn.40.15.00400034a

[42] Faller, K.C. (1993) Child Sexual Abuse: Intervention and Treatment Issues. The User Manual Series. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED366162.pdf

[43] Ascione, F.R., Friedrich, W.N., Heath, J. and Hayashi, K. (2003) Cruelty to Animals in Normative, Sexually Abused, and Outpatient Psychiatric Samples of 6-to 12-Year-Old Children: Relations to Maltreatment and Exposure to Domestic Violence. *Anthrozoös: A Multidisciplinary Journal of the Interactions of People and Animals*, **16**, 194-212. https://doi.org/10.2752/089279303786992116

[44] Ascione, F.R. (2005) Children and Animals: Exploring the Roots of Kindness and Cruelty. Purdue University Press, Princeton, NJ.

[45] McClellan, J., Adams, J., Douglas, D., McCurry, C. and Storck, M. (1995) Clinical Characteristics Related to Severity of Sexual Abuse: A Study of Seriously Mentally Ill Youth. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, **19**, 1245-1254. https://doi.org/10.1016/0145-2134(95)00087-O

[46] Friedrich, W.N., Urquiza, A.J. and Beilke, R.L. (1986) Behavior Problems in Sexually Abused Young Children. *Journal of Pediatric Psychology*, **11**, 47-57. https://doi.org/10.1093/jpepsy/11.1.47

[47] Tyler, K.A. (2002) Social and Emotional Outcomes of Childhood Sexual Abuse: A Review of Recent Research. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, **7**, 567-589.

https://doi.org/10.1016/S1359-1789(01)00047-7

[48] Noll, J.G., Horowitz, L.A., Bonanno, G.A., Trickett, P.K. and Putnam, F.W. (2003) Revictimization and Self-Harm in Females Who Experienced Childhood Sexual Abuse: Results from a Prospective Study. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, **18**, 1452-1471. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260503258035

[49] Bergh, R.L.V. and Kelly, J.F. (1964) Vampirism: A Review with New Observations. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, **11**, 543-547.
https://doi.org/10.1001/archpsyc.1964.01720290085012

[50] Coelho, J.T. (2018) Devil Worshipers Drink Girl's Blood and Decorate "Satanic Altar" with Man's Skull after Slaughtering Four. World News-Mirror Online.

[51] DiGiulio, S. (2018) How to Spot (and Deal with) an Energy Vampire.
https://www.nbcnews.com/better/health/how-spot-deal-energy-vampire-ncna896251

[52] Bernstein, A.J. (2000) Emotional Vampires. McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.

[53] Borchard, T. (2009) 5 Emotional Vampires & How to Combat Them.
https://www.explorewhatsnext.com/therese-borchard-on-5-emotional-vampires-how-to-combat-them/

[54] Orloff, J. (2011) The 5 Types of Emotional Vampires in Your Life. The 5 Kinds of Emotional Vampires You Could Encounter. Psychology Today.

[55] Hall, C.S. and Nordby, V.J. (1999) A Primer of Jungian Psychology. Plume (Penguin Group), New York, NY.

[56] Freud, S. (1923) The Ego and the Id. International Psycho-Analytischer Verlag, Vienna, W.W. Norton & Company, New York.

[57] Jung, C.G. (1947) On the Nature of the Psyche. Collected Works. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

[58] King, S. (2016) Four Past Midnight. Scribner, New York, NY.

[59] Limburg, K., Watson, H.J., Hagger, M.S. and Egan, S.J. (2017) The Relationship between Perfectionism and Psychopathology: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, **73**, 1301-1326. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.22435