

**ASTRAL PROJECTION AND BLURRING OF
BOUNDARIES BETWEEN REAL AND
UNREAL: A STUDY OF ARCHETYPES IN
BEHIND HER EYES AND *STRANGER WITH
MY FACE***

By

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**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES,
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ABSTRACT

Title: Astral Projection and the Blurring of Boundaries between Real and the Unreal: A Study of Archetypes in *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face*

This research examines Sarah Pinborough's *Behind Her Eyes* (2017) and Lois Duncan's *Stranger with My Face* (1982), focusing on how archetypal influences, rooted in the collective unconscious, drive the use of astral projection and consequently distort the characters' perception of reality. The study draws upon Carl Jung's theory of archetypes and Susan J. Blackmore's exploration of astral projection to investigate the ways in which deeply embedded archetypal symbols guide characters' behavior and psychological development. Archetypes, being a fundamental part of the collective unconscious, persist across generations and surface through individual psyches, shaping thoughts, emotions and actions. When characters engage with these unconscious forces, they cross into unknown territories where the boundaries between reality and illusion collapse, giving rise to liminal spaces that challenge their sense of self and the external world. It may also lead to identity confusion, behavioral transformation, and emotional disintegration. The study employs Catherine Belsey's model of textual analysis to conduct a detailed analysis of the selected texts, examining how astral projection becomes a tool through which archetypal forces manifest and disrupt ordinary life. The findings reveal that characters such as Rob, Adele, Lia, and Laurie are deeply influenced by archetypal patterns, particularly the Shadow and Trickster, which push them towards actions that distort reality. Their psychological disconcertment, identity crises, and behavioral shifts result directly from their interactions with the astral realm, where they experience a loss of control over their material existence. This research contributes to both literary and psychological studies by demonstrating how speculative fiction provides a meaningful space to explore the influence of unconscious archetypal drives on individual behavior and perception.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to myself because, well, I can, and not to seem as Narcissus Incarnate; I would also like to dedicate this thesis to my friends, especially Fatima Azeem, Nemmra Mumtaz, Rahima binte Kamran and Zainab Mushtaq who not always, but mostly tolerate my incessant whining; to my beloved mother who always prays for my success, but at the same time worries for me to get married in this lifetime; to my dear father who perhaps believes that the completion of this MPhil degree is taking so long because his daughter is failing classes; and to my dearest sister (late), Hira Tabassum, whose love and strength remain my eternal inspiration.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This research is carried out to study archetypes in Sarah Pinborough's *Behind Her Eyes* (2017) and Lois Duncan's *Stranger with My Face* (1982), and how the archetypal symbols enable actions such as astral projection leading to blurring of boundaries between the real and the unreal. The repeated use of three central archetypal patterns is examined in the selected texts. These are the anima/animus, the mother archetype, and the trickster archetype. Along with these major archetypes, certain other archetypes are also examined such as the hero's quest, Shadow, and the archetype of rebirth. These archetypes provide an insight into the characters' psyches, and lead to the rationalization of astral projection stemming from these very symbols.

The thesis further investigates the role of astral projection, shaped by Jungian archetypal symbols, in distorting reality and causing psychological disruption in the selected literary texts. The research seeks to understand how the characters' engagement with unconscious archetypes, particularly the Shadow and Trickster, influences their use of astral projection and leads to confusion, manipulation, and loss of personal identity. This inquiry is significant because it reveals the ways in which internal psychological forces can alter perceptions of reality and destabilize the characters' sense of self. The study employs Carl Gustav Jung's archetypal theory, Susan Blackmore's discussion on astral projection, and Catherine Belsey's method of textual analysis to construct a framework for examining the selected texts. By applying this interdisciplinary approach, the research aims to demonstrate that astral projection not only serves as a supernatural phenomenon but also as a psychological mechanism through which archetypal drives shape characters' behaviors, relationships, and mental states.

The exploration of astral projection in literature is not simply a study of supernatural elements, but a deeper reflection of the human psyche and its unconscious desires. By focusing on how Jungian archetypes such as the Shadow, Trickster, and Anima drive characters toward manipulation of reality, this study builds a connection between psychology and narrative framework. Understanding these psychological forces provides a richer interpretation of the characters' actions

and mental struggles. Therefore, before proceeding to the detailed analysis, it is important to discuss the theoretical background that frames this research.

1.1 Background

“The term archetype derives from the Greek *arkhytepos*, meaning first moulded as a pattern” (Cuddon, 15). Antecedents of archetypal theory include the anthropologist J. G. Frazer, the psychoanalyst Carl Jung and the literary critic Northrop Frye. Carl Jung describes archetypes as “primordial types...universal images that have existed since the remotest times” (Jung: 1969, 5). For Jung “archetypes are inherent in our collective unconscious: they are a kind of ready formed mythology or mental furniture which exists in the human brain as a consequence of past human experiences” (Gray, 33). Carl Jung gave the theory of “archetypes” and “the collective unconscious” and takes it forward to the notion of individuation. Jung believes that archetypes are universal patterns of human experience and they are deeply rooted in the collective unconscious.

His book *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* proposes the theory of archetypes and the collective unconscious. Jung’s major archetypes serve as the theoretical framework for this research. In literary criticism, the word ‘archetype’ is often used to refer to characters, plots, themes, and images that are recurring throughout the history of literature, in both oral and written forms (Cuddon, 15). According to Meyer Howard Abrams, the power of archetypal motifs is their universality. Such recurrent themes are the result of universal forms or patterns in the human psyche, whose effective manifestation in a literary work evokes a response from the affective reader, because the reader shares the archetypes expressed by the author (Abrams, 12). Therefore, readers respond psychologically to archetypal stimuli. It shows that when writers deploy archetypes in their works, they are appealing to the unconscious of the readers.

Jung’s theory of archetypes and the collective unconscious focuses on the analytical approach to exploring archetypes. According to this theory, human psyche has formless “structures” that serve as unconscious psychological analogues to the physical entities of the body. In Jung’s estimation, the entire human psyche rests upon the foundation of archetypes, which is closely linked to his theory of the collective unconscious as a universal and impersonal psychic system that is identical in all

individuals (Jung, the Concept of the Collective, 43). An exploration of archetypes in relation to astral projection lead to the understanding of the psyche of the protagonists in the texts, *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face*.

Archetypes and astral projection can be connected through the concept of the collective unconscious. Jung theorized that the collective unconscious is a universal reservoir of symbolic archetypes that related to their past, and form the foundation of an individual's psyche. This individual psyche manifests itself in an individual's behavior and actions. One such action is astral projection. Susan J. Blackmore in her book *Beyond the Body: An Investigation of Out-of-the-Body Experience* defines astral projection as "an experience in which a person seems to perceive the world from a location outside his physical body" (1). Another critic Robert Monroe in his book *Journeys Out of Body* explains astral projection as a "technique of leaving one's physical body temporarily and moving about in a non-material or "astral" body" (24). The word "astral" has dim origins in early mystical and occult events which involved witchcraft, sorcery and incantations etc. It is often associated with mystical experiences, lucid dreaming, and out-of-body experiences. Proponents of astral projection believe that the astral body is connected to the collective unconscious, and can access archetypal symbols. Therefore, it can be argued that archetypes and astral projections are connected through their link to the collective unconscious.

The archetypes that are present in the collective unconscious can manifest in an individual's dreams, visions, and astral projections. In this way, the symbols and images that are encountered during astral projection can reflect deep-seated human experiences that are represented by archetypes. Astral projection, in turn, can cause the blurring of boundaries between the real and the unreal, as it is the projection of one's consciousness or astral body beyond the physical body. This projection can create an experience that feels real and tangible, even though it is not physically observable or measurable. During an astral projection, individuals may encounter vivid and detailed environments and entities that can be difficult to distinguish from physical reality. This blurring of boundaries may cause an individual to struggle to determine whether the experience was a product of their imagination or if it had an objective reality. This ambiguity can be challenging to comprehend and can lead to re-evaluation of one's perceptions of reality.

One of the authors of the selected texts for this research, Lois Duncan was an American author known for her young adult suspense novels. Born in 1934, she began writing stories at a young age and published her first novel when she was just a teenager. Duncan's books often explore themes like identity, fear, the supernatural, and the challenges of adolescence. She became famous for her psychological thrillers such as *I Know What You Did Last Summer* and *Stranger with My Face*. Many of her stories include elements of mystery, suspense, and the unknown, often involving young characters facing unusual or dangerous situations. The other author, Sarah Pinborough is a contemporary British author known for writing across multiple genres, including psychological thrillers, horror, fantasy and young adult fiction. She is best known for her ability to blend speculative elements with real-world psychological and emotional themes. Pinborough gained widespread recognition with her novel *Behind Her Eyes* (2017), a psychological thriller that incorporates elements of astral projection and identity manipulation and was later adapted into a popular Netflix series. Her other notable works include *13 minutes* (2016) and *Dead to Her* (2020). Across her body of work, Pinborough consistently explores the darker aspects of the human psyche, often through female-centered narratives and morally complex characters.

The psychological thriller novels under consideration largely explore the archetypes or archetypal symbols, and how certain characters get involved in the phenomenon of astral projection owing to the life experiences embedded in their unconscious, either individual or collective. One of the novels, *Behind Her Eyes* is set in London and centers around three main characters namely Louise, David, and Adele. Louise begins to uncover a web of secrets and lies as she becomes more involved in David and Adele's lives including Adele's ability of astral projection. The other novel *Stranger with My Face* is set on the fictional island of Chevrier which has a history of mystical beliefs and practices. The novel follows the protagonist, Laurie Stratton who lives with her parents and starts to experience strange and disturbing occurrences, including dreams of a girl who looks exactly like her. Laurie has been seen by people in places where she has not been. She finds out that she has an identical twin sister, Lia, from whom she was separated at birth and who has been in Laurie's town via astral projection. Lia takes control of Laurie's body, leading Laurie to seek ways of regaining control of her body.

The rationale behind choosing these texts is that both of these novels engage with the phenomenon of astral projection. A careful study leads to the unveiling of various archetypes embedded in the plots. Both the selected texts focus on the complex and sometimes dark workings of the human mind. This focus on psyche of the characters is the main reason that makes the novels suitable for my research. Additionally, the novels blend psychological realism with speculative elements, allowing for an exploration of how archetypal patterns influence characters' perceptions of reality.

1.2 Situatedness of the Researcher

This research is situated within the interdisciplinary intersection of literary analysis and psychological theory. Trained in literary studies with a focused interest in psychological fiction, the inquiry is guided by a commitment to understanding how literature engages with deeper structures of the human psyche. The selection of Carl Jung's archetypal theory and Susan Blackmore's concept of astral projection reflects an academic aim to explore how unconscious patterns influence character behavior and narrative structure. The analytical position is shaped by a recognition of literature's capacity to represent and problematize internal psychological states, particularly through speculative elements. While the interpretive nature of literary analysis acknowledges the subjectivity of the researcher, this study adheres to scholarly standards by grounding interpretations in established theory and close textual reading.

This study also contributes to existing scholarship in both Pakistani and international academic contexts by offering a unique interdisciplinary approach that connects psychological theory with literary analysis. In Pakistan, where literary studies are often focused on postcolonial or socio-political themes, this research introduces a psychological lens that explores the inner lives of fictional characters through archetypes and supernatural elements like astral projection. By analyzing contemporary and speculative fiction, it expands the scope of local literary inquiry beyond traditional boundaries. Internationally, this study adds to ongoing discussions in literary and psychological scholarship by examining how unconscious drives and archetypal patterns influence perception and behavior in narrative structures. The findings may be helpful for researchers interested in psychological fiction, speculative literature, or interdisciplinary methods, offering a model for how psychological

frameworks can be used to analyze character development and reality distortion in fiction.

Although the primary texts analyzed in this research are Western, the researcher is situated within the academic and cultural context of Pakistan, where discussions of psychological phenomena are often filtered through religious or mystical interpretations. While global literature has begun to explore speculative concepts such as astral projection through psychological and narrative frameworks, such themes remain relatively underexplored within Pakistani academic discourse. This research aims to bridge that gap by offering a critical perspective rooted in psychological theory, particularly Jungian archetypes and unconscious processes. By foregrounding the role of the unconscious and its effects on the human psyche, this study challenges the prevalent tendency within certain cultural contexts to attribute psychological disturbances to supernatural causes such as djinn possession. Moreover, by analyzing how literature reflects internal psychological states through speculative elements, this research hopes to encourage more nuanced and theory-driven interpretations of similar themes in both local and global literary studies.

1.3 Delimitation

This research is delimited to a study of archetypes in Sarah Pinborough's *Behind Her Eyes* and Lois Duncan's *Stranger with My Face*; focusing on the astral projections and the blurring of boundaries between real and the unreal.

1.4 Thesis Statement

In *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face*, astral projection arguably is a result of archetypal symbols that are ingrained in the unconscious mind; consequently, leading to psychological disconcertment and in extension the identity and behavioral transformation of individuals.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What central archetypal symbols can be found in the selected texts?
2. How do Jungian archetypal symbols, being a part of collective unconscious enable astral projection in the selected texts?

3. In what ways do the selected texts explore the protagonists' psychological disconcertment stemming from astral projection and in extension the behavioral transformation of the characters?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research is significant because it amalgamates the concepts of archetypal symbols and astral projection to present contrasting ideas in togetherness. Moreover, the significance of archetypes (which makes up the major chunk of this research) lies in their ability to tap into deep-seated and universal human experiences and emotions, making them powerful symbols that resonate with people across cultures and time periods. This study provides a framework for understanding and exploring the human experience, both individually and collectively. Furthermore, the significance of this study also lies in the fact that the selected novels have hardly been made subject of scholarly enquiry through the theoretical approach that I have taken in this particular research.

1.7 Chapter Breakdown

This thesis includes six chapters and they all are coherently and logically arranged.

Chapter one offers a comprehensive overview of my research project; covering the background of the chosen theories and introducing the selected texts. It also presents the rationale behind choosing the primary texts, along with the thesis statement, research questions, delimitation, and the significance of the study.

Chapter two presents a critical and comparative review of previous works related to the key concepts of this thesis, setting the foundation for the study, and identifying the research gaps that my work attempts to address. This chapter is divided into five sections: the first section explores astral projection in theosophy, the second offers an overview of astral projection in literature and films, the third examines the representation of Jungian archetypes in literature, the fourth discusses the portrayal of archetypes in psychological fiction, and the fifth provides information about the selected texts. The chapter concludes with the identification of the research gap.

Chapter three outlines the theoretical framework and methodology used in analyzing the selected texts. This chapter delves into Carl Gustav Jung's archetypal

theory, Susan Blackmore's concept of astral projection, and Catherine Belsey's research method, providing a detailed explanation of how these theories and approaches are used to guide the analysis.

Chapter four and five comprise the critical textual analysis of the selected texts by using the theoretical framework and methodology outlined in the former chapter. These chapters address the problem statement, and provide answers to the research questions introduced in chapter one.

Chapter six serves as the final chapter of this thesis, presenting the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the selected texts. It also offers the researcher's recommendations for potential future studies.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into five different parts for a methodical review of the available literary scholarship and also for the sake of convenience. The reviews of articles, books, essays, and dissertations have been done in the following subdivisions:

1. Astral projection in Theosophy
2. Astral projection in Literature & Movies
3. Representation of Jungian Archetypes in literature
4. Psychological Fiction and Archetypes
5. Primary Texts

2.1 Astral projection

The word "astral" originates from the Latin term "astralis," which is derived from "astrum," meaning "star." The Latin term "astrum" itself comes from the Greek word "astron," also meaning "star." The term "projection" traces back to the Latin "projectio," which comes from "proicere," meaning "to throw forward." "Proicere" is a combination of "pro-" (meaning "forward") and "iacere" (meaning "to throw"). Therefore, "astral" pertains to the stars or celestial bodies, while "projection" involves the act of throwing or extending something forward (Merriam Webster). When combined as "astral projection", the term describes the practice of extending or projecting one's consciousness or spirit into the celestial or non-physical realms. It refers to the practice or experience where the spirit or soul separates from the physical body to journey through the astral plane. Often linked with out-of-body experiences, this phenomenon describes the capability to explore realms or dimensions beyond the physical world. Astral projection has long fascinated spiritual thinkers, mystics and even modern fiction writers. Its symbolic and psychological significance allows for unique literary exploration. By understanding its roots, a better psychoanalysis can be carried out of the characters' engagement with the phenomenon. In the subsequent paragraphs, I have discussed astral projection in detail, exploring its representation in theosophy, literature and movies. This comprehensive analysis highlights how astral projection has been depicted across various mediums and traditions.

2.1.1 Astral Projection in Theosophy

The belief that humans can exit their bodies while dreaming is an ancient one. In the Mediterranean world of antiquity, narratives of soul travels were prevalent, with philosophers like Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus contributing to the understanding of the soul as a separate entity from the body. Many individuals, ranging from New Age enthusiasts to shamans globally, hold that it is possible to connect with cosmic intelligence through visions and vivid dreams encountered during astral projection, also called out-of-body experiences. These ancient beliefs laid the foundation for later interpretations of astral projection and the nature of the soul. However, its most recent resurgence began during the spiritual boom of the 19th and early 20th centuries with the formation of the Theosophical society in 1875 by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, who significantly shaped views on astral projection.

“Blavatsky claimed to have travelled the world, studied with Tibetan gurus, contacted the dead, and learned to reach higher planes with Hindus and Buddhists” (Blackmore). Blavatsky's metaphysical teachings emphasized the existence of an invisible world and the interconnectedness of all beings and phenomena. She believed that the spirit of the dead could be separated from the physical body before death, leading to the concept of astral projection as a means of liberating the 'astral body' from its physical sheath. This separation was seen as a way for individuals to travel spatially and temporally beyond the constraints of the physical realm. This claim is also supported by Blackmore in her 2019 article, “Out-of-Body Experiences: Into the Astral”. Blavatsky's approach to astral projection is distinctive because it emphasizes on spiritual evolution and the interconnectedness of all life.

Blavatsky in her 1889 book, *The Key to Theosophy*, distinguished between the spirit of the dead and the soul, considering them as separate but interconnected components of the human being. She refers to it as the “double”, the “Linga-Sarira” or the doppelgänger that perishes with the death of the body (HPB, *The Theosophical Glossary* 37). According to Theosophical claims, all individuals have seven bodies from the lowest physical to the highest spiritual and mental bodies, the third of which is ‘the astral body’. The astral body appears in many different cultures throughout time and throughout the world. In ancient Egypt, KA corresponded to the conception of the astral body which may be understood not just as the Soul of man, but the

vehicle of the mind and the soul. (Muldoon & Carrington 222). Among various sacred and secular texts, the astral body appears in Hindu scripture, Taoist practice, and even Christianity (Miller n.p.). In his article regarding the afterlife, Woolger (2014) notes that “in such journeys in the world religions and innumerable tribal practices”, scholars have “described a common pattern of ‘ascent’, which is to say an ecstatic, mystical or out-of body experience, wherein the spiritual traveler leaves the physical body and travels in his/her subtle body into ‘higher’ realms” (n.p.).

Blavatsky's teachings on astral projection included a detailed exploration of the physiology of the astral body. She viewed the astral body as a natural part of human physiology, distinct from the physical body but intimately connected to it. Through astral projection, individuals could access the latent powers and inherent knowledge stored within the astral body, enabling them to transcend physical limitations and explore non-material dimensions. Blavatsky considered the practice of astral projection as a practice used to “gain the principles of knowledge” (175). Her approach to astral projection also encompassed soteriological elements, emphasizing the spiritual significance of the practice. While astral projection could be pursued for mundane purposes such as gaining knowledge of the present or past, Blavatsky highlighted its potential for spiritual growth and enlightenment. Blavatsky’s approach to astral projection would help me as the researcher to situate my study in the broader context of astral projection i.e., the spiritual and psychological aspect of the experience.

Astral projection may be a profound and spiritual experience, but the fundamental problem is that it is not backed by science. There is no way to scientifically measure whether or not a person’s spirit has “left” or “entered” the body. As there’s no scientific evidence that consciousness can exist outside of the brain hence astral projection is rejected by scientists. It is merely considered to be as fantasizing or dreaming and the evidence provided by the practitioners as anecdotal. Blavatsky (1877) says “There is a higher form of electricity than the physical one known to experimenters... as yet veiled to the eye of the modern physicist, and none can tell where ends its possibilities.”(620) Hence astral projection cannot be entirely disregarded. Numerous personal accounts and cultural references suggest that people have experienced what they believed to be astral travel. Study shows that the people who try astral projection have more or less similar experiences. Smith (2010) defines

Out-of-Body-Experiences as “the sensation of leaving and floating outside one’s body, often while seeing one’s body” (211). He goes on to explain that “this experience is presented as evidence for a nonmaterial and disembodied ‘astral’, ‘spirit’, or ‘soul’ capable of paranormal journeying through ‘astral projection’ or ‘spiritual travel’” (ibid. p.211). Xiong (2008) describes astral projection as a phenomenon in which “the out of body self can be seen by others” and “astral projection can be subdivided into spontaneous and voluntary” (204).

By contextualizing astral projection, I have analyzed the characters’ spiritual or psychological states during their astral experiences in the selected texts, also to determine whether the astral projections are portrayed as a means of gaining deeper understanding or merely as tools for manipulation and control. Moreover, this enables me to examine the ethical implications of the characters’ use of astral projection and the consequences of using astral projection for selfish or harmful purposes. It also provides an insight about the impact of astral projection on relationships, considering different theorist’s views on the ethical use of spiritual abilities.

2.1.2 Astral projection in Literature & Movies

Astral projection, the concept of the spirit leaving the body to explore other realms, has been a subject of scholarly inquiry for many years. This phenomenon appears frequently as a theme in novels and films as are discussed in subsequent paragraphs, captivating the imagination of readers with stories of characters who journey beyond their physical forms. Researchers have published numerous articles examining the potential and implications of astral projection, exploring its psychological, philosophical, and cultural dimensions. Additionally, there are a number of books dedicated to the concept, tracing its history and various interpretations across different societies and time periods. These works often delve into the origins of astral projection, its role in ancient and modern spiritual practices, and the personal experiences of those who claim to have undergone such journeys. The continued interest in astral projection underscores its significance in human curiosity and our desire to explore the unknown aspects of existence beyond the physical world.

Astral projection has fascinated writers and filmmakers alike for its ability to explore realms beyond the physical body. This phenomenon is a popular theme in

books as well as movies. *The Withered Arm and Other Stories* (1888) is a collection of short fiction by Thomas Hardy. "The Withered Arm" is a short story that has a portrayal of astral projection along with other themes. The story revolves around the character of Rhoda Brook who becomes obsessed with the new wife of her former lover. Rhoda builds up a vivid, imaginary portrait of Gertrude in her head, using the little information given by her son. There are several instances in the story that touch on the supernatural and the thin line between reality and the unknown. For instance, Rhoda dreams that Gertrude is sitting on her chest trying to suffocate her. She refers to the apparition of Gertrude as 'the incubus'. She fights the incubus by grabbing its left arm and throwing it aside. Rhoda meets Gertrude the following day, who shows Rhoda her arm which "...had a shrivelled look, and the outline of the four fingers appeared more distinct..." Upon seeing it, Gertrude tells Rhoda "my husband says it is as if some witch, or the devil himself, had taken hold of me there, and blasted the flesh" (Hardy 37). This inexplicable parallel between Rhoda's dream and Gertrude's physical injury blurs the line between dream and reality, suggesting a psychological or supernatural influence at play in the narrative.

Strange Conflict by Dennis Wheatley is a novel published in 1941 in which the protagonist uses astral projection to travel to the astral plane. The story of *Strange Conflict* is set during World War II, where Sir Pellinore Gwaine-Cust and Duc de Richleau uncover that the Nazis are using Black Magic to sink Allied ships. Duc de Richleau gathers his allies to combat these occult forces. A significant part of their strategy involves astral projection, allowing them to transcend their physical bodies and enter the astral plane, a mystical realm where they can uncover enemy plans and battle supernatural entities. The group's journey takes them to Haiti where they find and defeat a dark magician who is using astral projection and black magic to assist the Nazis. At one point in the story, de Richleau frees a zombie's soul, illustrating the impact and potential dangers of astral projection. *Strange Conflict* uses astral projection to gain knowledge/information about the opposing forces and to explore the duality between the physical and the spiritual, the real and the unreal. Moreover, it is mentioned alongside Black Magic, which is typically seen as the use of supernatural powers for malicious purposes.

Another work in which astral projection is depicted is Joyce McDonald's *Shades of Simon Gray* (2001). Simon Gray falls into a coma after crashing his car into

a tree while driving through a plague of frogs in his hometown. During his coma, Simon's consciousness separates from his physical body, and he experiences out-of-body interactions with the ghost of Jessup Wildmere, a hanged man from the town's history. Simon's experience is described as "... a sense of wonder, a sense of absolute freedom. He felt himself being lifted right into the air" (McDonald 13). Meanwhile, the town faces a series of supernatural plagues, and Simon's friends and family visit his hospital room while he observes them from a little above. The astral projection Simon Gray experiences is involuntary, with a car crash acting as the catalyst. The accident triggers his unexpected journeys into the astral plane. These projections allow him to uncover hidden truths about his friends, family, and the town itself, all while lying in his hospital bed.

In Gina Rosati's *Auracle* (2012), the protagonist uses her ability to astral project for fun and freedom, but when she gets trapped in her astral body, she uses it to navigate the crisis. Anna Rogan is a high school student who can astral project, allowing her spirit to leave her body and explore the unseen world. She is frequently "using her astral projection as a way of escape". However, problem arose when Taylor, the ex-girlfriend of Anna's best friend dies under mysterious circumstances and her spirit takes over Anna's vacant body. While trapped in the astral plane, Anna tries to find a way to reclaim her body and reveal the truth behind Taylor's death. As Anna navigates the astral plane, she discovers its dangers and limitations while desperately trying to communicate with the living world. With the help of Seth and her friends, she solves the mystery of Taylor's death and frees her own body from Taylor's control. *Auracle* uses the concept of astral projection to explore the emotional and psychological state of the protagonist, making the narrative an interplay between the physical and astral realms.

The ability to astral project by the protagonist is used to navigate crisis in *Afar* (2017) by Leila del Duca. It is a story that follows siblings Boetema and Inotu in a fantastical setting. Boetema discovers she can astral project to other planets while she sleeps. This ability creates problems for her when she accidentally causes harm to a man on a distant planet, and she has to find a way to return and save him. As Boetema traverses various planets and encounters vibrant cultures in her astral form, she learns to confront the consequences of her actions and learns to trust her brother. Boetema's

astral projections, which allow her to enter the minds of beings on other worlds, allows the readers to navigate with her between the physical and astral planes.

Marc Levy's novel *If Only it were True* (1999) and its film adaptation is another example in which astral projection is presented as a voluntary act of separating one's consciousness from the physical self. In the story, Lauren has a very serious car accident and ends up in a hospital with an irreversible grade-four coma. Six months after the accident, Lauren's consciousness becomes aware that she can exist in a kind of ghost form outside her comatose body, and can appear anywhere in the world just by thinking of that place. Hence, the novel explores the concept of human consciousness existing outside of the physical body. Lauren exists in astral form outside her body and she becomes visible to Arthur only, who communicates with her and helps her find a way back to her body. The theme of astral projection in this novel is used to explore relationship between individuals.

There are various films or visual narratives as well that portray the phenomenon of astral projection. *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* (2022) portrays the phenomenon of astral projection which involves separating the astral form from the physical body, allowing characters to explore different dimensions, communicate with others, and perform tasks that transcend physical limitations. Doctor Stephen Strange is the protagonist in the film, who is a master of mystic arts, and frequently uses astral projection apart from his magical abilities to perform maneuvers that are not possible in physical form, and also help in dealing with supernatural entities and threats. Wanda Maximoff, the antagonist, who has reality-warping abilities, "...is astral projecting herself into her other variants across the multiverse." (Kitson) Her misuse of her abilities leads to significant conflicts and moral dilemmas. Hence, astral projection is used to highlight the battle between good and evil in the film.

In the film *Insidious* (2011), astral projection is portrayed within the framework of horror genre. The protagonist, Dalton goes into a coma as a result of a mysterious incident that happens in the attic. Elise, a psychic, explains to Dalton's family that he "...has the ability of leaving his physical body and traveling in the astral world. He has traveled too far to the place inhabited by the tortured souls of the dead" (Kurniati and Hanidar 66). Astral projection is referred to as "the Further" in the film in which a character travels to a dark and eerie realm beyond the physical

world. The film explores the dangers and ethical concerns of astral projection, such as the risk of getting lost in the Further, encountering hostile entities, and the potential for one's body to be possessed by spirits while the astral body is in the astral plane. For some, the concept of astral projection in *Insidious* serves as a metaphor for exploring the hidden, often dark aspects of the psyche and confronting one's inner demons. It also serves as a vehicle for characters to explore deeper psychological dimensions. 'The Further' may be taken as not just to represent a supernatural realm, but also the subconscious mind where fears and traumas reside. The characters' journey in the Further can be interpreted as a form of inner exploration, confronting their past and unresolved emotional issues.

The article "Insidious: Astral Projection as Death and Dying Concept" is a study that explores the concept of astral projection as a form of death and dying in the context of postmodern fiction. Astral projection is the ability of individuals to separate their spirit or astral body from their physical body, and explore the astral world or spirit realm. This phenomenon blurs the boundaries between the physical and spiritual dimensions, presenting a unique perspective on existence and consciousness. The study explores how the characters in the movie, particularly Josh and Dalton, experience astral projection and its consequences. It is noted that astral projection is depicted as a phase of death, where the spirit separates from the body, leading to a state akin to being between life and death. The analysis also discusses the use of the superimposition strategy in postmodern fiction to present astral projection as a complex and mysterious phenomenon. This strategy involves the simultaneous presentation of two worlds, the real world and the unseen world, highlighting the coexistence of different realities and challenging conventional perceptions of reality. The perception of reality by the characters and their psychological states form the basis of my research as well.

In another film *Doctor Sleep* (2019), astral projection is presented as part of the broader spectrum of psychic abilities known as "the shining". Characters with this ability can project their consciousness out of their bodies to travel across distances and interact with others psychically. Abra Stone is a young girl with extraordinarily strong shining abilities and "... has been flexing her astral projection muscles for a very long time... she is very aware of the power she holds and just how to wield it" (Kristina). Abra uses astral projection to communicate with Dan and gather

information about an enemy group called the True knot, who feed on the essence of the children. Abra's projections allow her to deceive and mislead the group's leader, Rose. Hence, astral projection serves good as in the case of Abra, and it serves evil as in the case of Rose. The astral plane as depicted in the film can be seen as a mental landscape where characters confront their fears and conflicts.

Astral is a 2018 horror film in which astral projection is presented as the ability to voluntarily separate one's consciousness from the physical body to explore a parallel, spirit-filled dimension known as the astral plane. The protagonist, Alex Harmann, driven by grief and a desire for closure, tries to reconnect with his deceased mother by "...personally attempt[ing] 'astral projection'... a deliberate 'out-of-body experience' in which the spirit supposedly roams free of its physical container — and after reading a couple how-to's online, apparently succeeds." (Harvey) However, his experiments lead to unintended consequences, as malevolent entities from the astral plane begin to intrude the physical world, resulting in fear and paranoia. This portrayal of astral projection explores the dangers of meddling with the unnatural or unknown; highlighting the psychological toll it takes on the practitioner.

In the 2009 film *Enter the Void*, astral projection is depicted as an involuntary act of separating the consciousness from the physical body. The protagonist, Oscar, a drug dealer in Tokyo, is fatally shot and "...his consciousness becomes disembodied, and starts to travel on its own" (Lieberman 4). This astral journey allows Oscar to float above the city, and observe the lives of his friends and sisters from a detached, spectral perspective. The film portrays the astral plane as a visually intense and surreal realm, filled with neon lights, distorted imagery, and fluid movements, mirroring the hallucinogenic experiences induced by Oscar's drug use. The film uses astral projection to explore the idea of consciousness beyond the physical body, highlighting the physical, emotional and psychological impact of drug abuse. The selected texts for this study; *Behind Her Eyes* (2017) and *Stranger with My Face* (1982) also deal with the emotional, psychological and behavioral aspects of astral projection.

Mudgal et.al explored the notion of out-of-body experiences (OBEs) in "Astral Projection: A Strange Out-of-Body Experience in Dissociative Disorder" as hallucinatory visual experiences that involve seeing one's physical body placed in an external visual space. According to the authors, many altered psychological states are

associated with these phenomena. The authors linked out-of-body experiences with dissociative disorder which occurs due to an internal conflict between ego and self. It is when a person is unable to repress a traumatic experience, or when a repressed memory or experience comes out of a barrier, leading to an altered state of perception and self-experience (3). This research work is considerably related to my study as my research also delineates the conflict between ego and self, and traumatic experiences of the protagonists that lead to altered state of perception as well as altered behavioral mechanisms. My research also explores the phenomenon of astral projection but it would be done by rationalizing it as an outcome of archetypal symbols playing out in the protagonists' unconscious or conscious specifically in the selected texts.

2.2 Jungian Archetypes

‘The term archetype derives from the Greek *arkhytepos*, meaning first moulded as a pattern’ (Cuddon, 15). The concept of archetypes was first proposed by Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), a Swiss physician, psychiatrist, philosopher and psychologist, and the most famous pupil of Freud (Bressler 130). Jung formulated his own model of the human psyche which became his most important contribution to psychology and literary criticism. Jung’s model of the human psyche consists of three parts: the personal conscious, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious. “The collective unconscious is that part of the psyche that is more impersonal and universal... [It] houses the cumulative knowledge, experiences and images of the entire human species.” These experiences form memories which exist in the form of archetypes “...which are patterns... of repeated human experiences – such as birth, death, rebirth, the four season and motherhood...” (Bressler 131). These archetypes form an identical collective unconscious for all humankind. Moreover, these archetypes stir emotions and directly affect the way individuals respond to external stimuli. In the following paragraphs, I discuss Jungian archetypes in detail, focusing on their representation in literature and fiction.

2.2.1 Representation of Jungian Archetypes in literature

Archetypes have been explored in various fields of study, including psychology, psychoanalysis, and neuroscience. This concept provides a framework for understanding the nature of human behavior and personality. Archetypes are universal patterns of behavior and experience that are inherited from our ancestors.

They are not just psychological constructs but also have a biological basis, and are rooted in the structure and function of the brain. Archetypes are observed in all living creatures, and are not a question of inherited ideas but of inherited, instinctive impulses, and forms. Archetypes provide the basic patterns of behavior and experience, and a better understanding of archetypes provides insights into the workings of the brain and other complex systems.

David J. Leigh in “Carl Jung’s Archetypal Psychology, Literature, and Ultimate Meaning” explores the significance and worth of Carl Jung’s theories on archetypal psychology, particularly their relation to ultimate issues in literature and religious studies. Carl Jung’s theories on archetypal psychology, literature, and ultimate meaning are based on his exploration of the human mind and the collective unconscious. He believed that people strive for self-realization by integrating their conscious and unconscious parts, achieving a state of wholeness called individuation. This journey involves balancing different aspects within oneself, such as rational and irrational thoughts, masculine and feminine traits, and conscious and unconscious elements. Jung introduced the concept of archetypes, which are universal symbols and patterns shared across cultures that represent fundamental human experiences. These archetypes appear in dreams, myths, literature, and other creative expressions, offering a way to understand the deeper layers of the mind. In literature, Jungian criticism looks for these symbolic patterns in stories. For example, Christopher Booker identified seven basic plots common to most narratives, each reflecting a journey of transformation and self-discovery. Jung’s work also extended to analyzing religious symbols and experiences, which he saw as expressions of the collective unconscious, carrying deep psychological truths. Jung’s ideas provided a framework for understanding the connections between literature, psychology, and spirituality, highlighting universal themes and symbols that shape human experiences. As my research is fundamentally grounded in Carl Jung’s archetypal theory which serves as its foundational framework hence, this study is highly relevant to my research.

In “The Twelve Archetypes”, Carol S. Pearson highlights the characteristics, goals, fears, gifts/virtues, pitfalls, addictive qualities, and shadow sides of each archetype, most of which were proposed by Carl Jung. The archetypes mentioned in the article are The Innocent, The Orphan, The Warrior, The Caregiver, The Seeker, The Lover, The Destroyer, The Creator, The Ruler, The Magician, The Sage, The

Jester. The Innocent archetype seeks safety and fear abandonment. The Orphan archetype is the one that has suffered a great loss or has been abandoned. They seek to belong and fear being left out. The Warrior archetype is tough and courageous, and helps us overcome obstacles and persist in difficult times. The Caregiver archetype is nurturing and compassionate. They seek to help others and fear selfishness. The Seeker archetype is the one that seeks to find a deeper meaning in life. The Lover archetype governs all kinds of love, from parental love to spiritual love, but we know it best in romance. They seek the bliss of true love and fear both being alone and losing the love that they have gained. The Destroyer archetype is the one that seeks to break down the old and make way for the new. Their main danger is that they may become too destructive or too self-destructive. The Creator archetype fosters all imaginative endeavors. The Ruler archetype seeks to create order and stability. The Magician archetype searches out the fundamental laws of science and/or metaphysics to understand how to transform situations, influence people, and make visions into realities. The Sage archetype seeks the truths that set us free. The Jester archetype seeks to bring joy and laughter to the world. This article is closely related to the research at hand as this study also explores various archetypes in the selected texts in relation to astral projection. In *The Application of Jungian Archetypes to the Analysis of Character in Three Early Plays by W. B. Yeats*, Benjamin Fleer has explored the use of Jungian archetypes in the analysis of three early plays by W.B. Yeats: *The Countess Cathleen*, *The Land of Heart's Desire*, and *The Hour-Glass*. The author argues that Yeats' use of archetypes contributes to a deeper understanding of the human psyche and enhances our understanding of his characters. Jung's archetypes are universal and innate, and that they are part of the collective unconscious. These archetypes are not fixed, but rather are constantly evolving and changing. The author then applies Jungian archetypal theory to the analysis of Yeats' plays. In *The Countess Cathleen*, the author identifies the archetypes of the Great Mother, the Trickster, and the Hero. The Great Mother is represented by the Countess Cathleen, who sacrifices herself for the good of her people. The Trickster is represented by the Devil, who tempts the people with wealth and material possessions. The Hero is represented by Aleel, who fights against the Devil and ultimately saves the people. In *The Land of Heart's Desire*, the author identifies the archetypes of the Great Mother, the Wise Old Man, and the Shadow. The Great Mother is represented by the fairy queen, who offers the protagonist a life of ease and pleasure. The Wise Old Man is represented by the

old man who warns the protagonist of the dangers of the fairy world. The Shadow is represented by the protagonist's desire for the fairy queen, which ultimately leads to his downfall. In "The Hour Glass," the author identifies the archetypes of the Great Mother, the Trickster, and the Self. The Great Mother is represented by the mother figure who cares for the protagonist. The Trickster is represented by the protagonist's brother, who tempts him with worldly pleasures. The Self is represented by the protagonist's journey of self-discovery and his ultimate realization of his true identity. The archetypes explored in this study are significantly relevant to my research as the archetypes of the Trickster, the Self are investigated in the selected texts as well.

Dana Brook Thurmond in her thesis, *The Influence of Carl Jung's Archetype of the Shadow on Early 20th Century Literature* examines the fear of the Shadow within humanity, a part of the psyche capable of immense evil and violence but also a source of creative energy that has inspired significant ideas, movements, and inventions. According to Jung's concept of the collective unconscious, the risk of losing one's Self extends beyond individual concerns, impacting society as a whole. Suppressing this darker aspect of oneself can lead to dangerous neuroses, with the potential to escalate into psychosis (Thurmond 69). This study is related to my research as Jung's concept of collective unconscious forms the foundation of the theoretical framework of the present research. Thurmond's study does not investigate the phenomenon of astral projection. However, I not only study the psychological and behavioral changes that might occur due to an encounter with certain archetypes, but also link those experiences with out-of-body experience and how they originate from losing perception of one's Self. My research explores the phenomenon of astral projection in connection to archetypal symbols that are at play in the protagonists' psyche.

In *Jungian Archetypes in Samuel Beckett's Trilogy*, Hale Kizilcik analyzes the use of Jungian archetypes in Samuel Beckett's trilogy, examining their connection to the core themes of Beckett's work. It explores central archetypal patterns like the hero's quest, the return to paradise, and rebirth, emphasizing their importance in reinforcing Beckett's philosophical ideas. The thesis explores how Samuel Beckett employs Jungian archetypes in his trilogy, revealing that while Beckett shows an active interest in Jung and consistently uses archetypal patterns, his approach diverges significantly from Jung's. Beckett distorts these archetypes to emphasize his belief

that life is inherently meaningless and incomprehensible, contrasting Jung's view that individuals can find meaning by integrating unconscious elements. The analysis demonstrates that Beckett's protagonists, instead of progressing towards self-discovery, experience regression and disintegration, failing to assimilate archetypes of transformation and wisdom. Beckett's use of "return to paradise" and rebirth motifs further illustrates the protagonists' existential struggle, highlighting their inability to achieve peace or individuality (Kizilcik 78). The characters under investigation in my research also go through psychological transformation as a result of their archetypes but they are explored in relation with astral projection.

In *Archetypes as Action Patterns*, George Hogenson explores the relationship between mirror neurons and Jung's theory of archetypes. He proposes that archetypes may be viewed as elementary action patterns that are encoded in the brain and that mirror neurons play a crucial role in the development of these patterns. Hogenson begins by discussing the concept of mirror neurons. Hogenson then turns to Jung's theory of archetypes. Jung considered archetypal images as essential elements of the psyche, playing a crucial role in shaping human experiences. He defined these images as innate types, present in individuals from birth, which reflect instinctual drives that influence behavior (Hogenson 327). Jung stressed the importance of archetypal images in human perception and understanding, asserting that they shape how people interpret and interact with the world. Hogenson argues that these patterns are similar to the action patterns that are observed in mirror neurons and that they are the basis for the development of more complex behaviors and mental processes. This study is related to my research as my research also investigates the archetypes that form the basis of complex behaviors and mental processes of the characters in the selected texts.

The article "Qualitative Research as a Hero's Journey: Six Archetypes to Draw on" by Vanessa M. Villate explores the idea of the research process as a hero's journey, drawing parallels between the challenges faced by researchers and those encountered by mythical heroes. Villate suggests that researchers, like heroes, move through different phases and tap into various archetypes to navigate their research journey effectively. The six archetypes discussed in the article, as linked to the hero's journey by Pearson (1998), are: 'The central figure' who embarks on a quest, faces challenges, and ultimately achieves a goal. 'Magician' is responsible for actively

transforming their life or work by envisioning desired outcomes. ‘Warrior’ represents strength, determination, and the ability to confront challenges head-on. ‘Wanderer’ embodies the spirit of exploration and discovery. ‘Orphan’ symbolizes a sense of isolation or feeling alone during the research journey. ‘Altruist’ reflects the desire to contribute to the common good, help others, and share knowledge. The understanding of these archetypes helps me in laying the foundation for my research.

Lindsay Covington in “Applying Jung’s Archetypes and Theory of the Collective Unconscious to Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*”, Benjamin E. Fleer in “The Application of Jungian Archetypes to the Analysis of Character in Three Early Plays by W. B. Yeats”, Hale Kizilcik in “Jungian Archetypes in Samuel Beckett’s Trilogy” explore the concepts of Jung’s collective unconscious and archetypes in one way or the other. Covington has explored the archetypes of the Animus, the Mother, the Hero, the Child, the Trickster, and Rebirth through the myths from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. Fleer has examined the presence of archetypal symbols such as the Maiden, the Mother, the Anima, and the Trickster in Yeats’ drama, *The Countess Cathleen*. He then explores the images of the Maiden, the Wise Old Man, the Child, and the Trickster in *The Land of Heart’s Desire*. Kizilcik has also investigated the central archetypal patterns in her selected texts such as the hero’s quest, return to paradise and rebirth. These works are useful as far as my study is concerned as my research also aims to explore the archetypal symbols that are ingrained within the unconscious of an individual’s psyche such as the Mother, the Trickster, Shadow, and Rebirth in the novels that I have selected but I investigate these archetypal symbols in connection with astral projection as both are a part of and stem from the collective unconscious. Moreover, I examine the psychological and behavioral changes that might occur due to an encounter with archetypes and out-of-body experience.

2.2.2 Psychological Fiction and Archetypes

This research comes under the genre of psychological literature. Psychological fiction is a genre that delves into characters’ mental state and motivations to proceed the plotline of the story. All the action taking place in the story is a result of a character’s thoughts and feelings, or their inner ‘Self’ instead of any external forces. Meanwhile, Sigmund Freud’s and Carl Jung’s discoveries about the complexities of the human psyche coincided with the popularity of psychological fiction, leading to immense work in this genre.

Psychological thriller is a subgenre of psychological literature which has captured interest of people around the globe. Depending on a reader's perception while reading, archetypal symbols can be explored in the novels belonging to this genre. Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* (2012) explores a few archetypes as proposed by Carl Jung and reiterated by Edward F. Edinger. In the novel, the main characters i.e. Amy and Nick show their archetypes which are shadow and persona. They have been a couple for about five years and looking at them, people assume that they are a perfect couple but in reality, they have only put out the façade of a happy marriage. The characters' shadow manifests itself as the story progresses and the unconscious part of their personality becomes evident, which is a complete opposite of the ideal self they have been presenting to the world. For instance, Amy grew increasingly unhappy in her marriage hence she conspires against her husband. "Bearing similar traits to the features of a femme fatale, Amy Dunne traps her husband and utterly devastates him..." On the other hand, "Nick is depicted as the hero who will save the innocent child from the... femme fatale..." (Resti 139)

A.S.A Harrison's novel *The Silent Wife* (2013) also brings to light a few archetypes that can be deduced by close reading of the text. This novel is about a marriage in the throes of dissolution, a couple headed for destruction and promises that remain unfulfilled. In this novel too, the archetypes of shadow and persona are evident. The main characters Jodi and Todd have been in a relationship for twenty years but Todd's infidelity leads to the downfall of their relationship. At first, Jodi manages to ignore her husband's infidelity by putting up a persona in order to maintain the upscale lifestyle to which she has become accustomed. Later on, the shadow ingrained in her unconscious starts manifesting itself as she plots to have her husband murdered without her own self coming under fire.

Mary Kubica's *The Good Girl* (2014) is another psychological thriller that revolves around a character named Mia Dennett who gets kidnapped in the novel and the search for her drives the novel's plot. In the novel, Mia's journey can be seen as a manifestation of the Self archetype. Throughout the novel, Mia undergoes a transformative journey in which she faces her innermost fears and learns to integrate the different aspects of her psyche. Mia's journey towards self-discovery involves a process of integrating her ego with her unconscious desires. Mia's experience of being kidnapped and held captive represents a confrontation with her shadow

archetype. She is forced to face the repressed aspects of her psyche due to the trauma that she had to experience, leading her to acknowledge and integrate her shadow. Mia undergoes a journey of self-discovery and learns to trust her own instincts and to take control of her life, even in the face of danger.

The Girl on the Train (2015) by Paula Hawkins is a psychological thriller novel that gives narratives from three different women about relationship troubles. With reference to archetypes in the novel, Rachel represents the anima archetype in her relationships with Tom and Scott. She is objectified and idealized by both men, who project their own desires and fantasies onto her. Tom sees Rachel as the perfect wife and the mother, while Scott sees her as a symbol of his own inadequacy and failure. Another character, Megan represents the animus archetype in her relationship with Scott. She embodies traditionally masculine qualities such as strength, independence and sexual agency. Scott is drawn to her strength and confidence but at the same time, also feels intimidated by her.

Behind Closed Doors (2016) by B. A. Paris revolves around the character of Grace who is stuck in an abusive marriage. Behind the façade of a perfect English marriage, Grace is almost held prisoner by her husband. Jack is initially portrayed as the perfect husband and provider but as the novel progresses, it becomes clear that he is a sociopath who enjoys manipulating and torturing his wife. Hence, Jack's Shadow is characterized by his sadistic impulses and his desire for control over Grace. Grace initially presents herself as a confident and independent woman as part of her Persona but it all proves to be only a façade. It is here within the psychological literature of the 21st century both of the selected primary texts, *Behind Her Eyes* (2017) and *Stranger with My Face* (1982), can be located.

2.3 Primary Texts

The works that I have selected for this research, *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face*, have not been subjected to much scholarly inquiry. While there are numerous reviews available that offer critiques and summaries of these works, in-depth academic analyses remain scarce. The available reviews often focus on the narrative style, character development, and thematic elements, providing valuable insights for general readers. However, there are a few academic articles that analyze these works. The articles that do exist, which I have included in my literature review,

offer some critical insights but do not cover all aspects relevant to my study. This lack of detailed academic research shows there is a lot more to explore about these novels in the field of literature.

The thesis, titled *Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder of Rob Hoyle as The Male Character in Behind Her Eyes (2021) Novel Adaptation to Limited Series* by Steve Lightfoot explores the portrayal of obsessive-compulsive personality disorder in the male character, Rob Hoyle, in the novel adaptation *Behind Her Eyes*. The study focuses on analyzing the symptoms of the disorder exhibited by Rob Hoyle, such as detailed behavior, stubbornness, and organizational skills. The research utilizes psychoanalytic theory, including the id, ego, and superego by Sigmund Freud, as well as the theory of obsessive-compulsive personality disorder from DSM-V by the American Psychiatric Association. Additionally, the thesis explores how Rob Hoyle misuses his ability to astral project as a means to fulfill his hidden desires. This study is related to my research as I also investigate the psychological aspect of main characters in the selected texts. However, my focus is on the characters' psychological state in relation to the ability to astral project.

Neetu Vaid Sharma in the article "Reinventing Modern Love Triangle in Sarah Pinborough's *Behind Her Eyes*," explores the depths of human emotions and relationships in Pinborough's novel. Sharma notes that love is a major theme in the novel, but it is presented in many shades; including jealousy, fake friendship, and secrets. The novel also portrays the destructiveness of love, as the characters in the love triangle suffer greatly. Sharma notes that Pinborough reinvents the traditional love triangle by featuring two females vying for one male and two males chasing one female. Sharma notes that Pinborough uses occult science and drug addiction to explore the depths of human emotions and relationships. The author writes, "In this novel, love doesn't make rather it mars; love doesn't create rather it destroys" (2). The characters' actions have consequences that ripple throughout the plot. Sharma also discusses fake friendships in the novel. She notes that the characters are not always who they seem, the characters are constantly keeping secrets from each other and that their relationships are often built on lies and deceit. Human emotions explored in this article give insight into the characters' psychological state, making this study relevant to my research.

These two scholarly works support the foundation of my thesis by providing relevant psychological perspectives on *Behind Her Eyes*. The first thesis on Rob Hoyle's obsessive-compulsive personality disorder offers a close reading of his behavior and mental patterns, emphasizing how his psychological traits align with his misuse of astral projection to achieve hidden motives. Although it employs Freud's psychoanalytic framework and DSM-V criteria, the study complements my research by underlining the psychological consequences of astral projection, which I explore through Carl Jung's archetypes and Susan Blackmore's ideas. Similarly, Neetu Vaid Sharma's article analyzes the emotional and relational dynamics in the novel, focusing on jealousy, false friendships, and secrecy within the love triangle. Her discussion of how occult elements intersect with emotional instability provides a useful backdrop for my own investigation into psychological fragmentation. While my research centers on archetypal influences and the distortion of reality through astral projection, both of these studies contribute to a broader understanding of character psychology, reinforcing the significance of inner conflict in speculative fiction.

2.4 Research Gap

In this chapter, I have reviewed several works from the broad area of theosophy, astral projection in literature & movies, Jungian archetypes in literature & psychological fiction, which has allowed me to identify the gap in the existing research in this area and to situate my research. The review of literature has brought to light that this research project is different from the above-mentioned research works because the primary texts I've selected for my research have hardly been made subject of scholarly enquiry. The texts have been thematically analyzed but the phenomenon of astral projection in these texts has not been worked on as there are no academic articles available on the web that have explored astral projection within these literary texts to the best of my knowledge. Other than that there are a few books and articles available, but those works either talk about astral projection in general terms, or provide a guide to the experience of this projection or they are written as a part of the field of psychology. Although the phenomenon of astral projection has been depicted in various films, it has not yet been subjected to much scholarly enquiry. This research amalgamates the concepts of archetypal symbols and astral projection to present contrasting ideas in togetherness. Moreover, the significance of

archetypes (which makes up the major chunk of this research) lies in their ability to tap into deep-seated and universal human experiences and emotions, making them powerful symbols that resonate with people across cultures and time periods.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter, Literature Review, provides crucial insights into my theoretical framework, enabling me to articulate the theoretical lens in detail for exploring and analyzing the primary texts in this chapter. Alongside the theoretical discussion, this chapter also outlines the research methods and methodology employed in this study.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

This section discusses the theoretical positions that I employ as reading props for my primary texts. In order to support my research theoretically, I use the lens of “archetypes” and “astral projection”. The theory of archetypes is proposed by Carl Jung in his book *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* while the concept of astral projection is discussed by Susan J. Blackmore in her book *Beyond the Body: An Investigation of Out-of-the-Body Experience*. The theory of “collective unconscious” as proposed by Jung provides a backing for my theoretical framework. These concepts provide the lens to study the selected texts. The aim behind putting these ideas together is to rationalize that astral projection is a phenomenon that stems from the unconscious mind in which archetypal symbols are embedded. Hence, archetypes become a reason for an individual’s actions like astral projection. Astral projection in turn leads to blurring of boundaries between the material world and the astral world. These theoretical concepts are discussed in detail in the subsequent paragraphs.

3.2.1 Archetypal constructs in Theoretical Framework

Archetypes are the content of the collective unconscious that reveal themselves as images of the “primordial character” (Shirayev, 2017). They are universally pervasive images and can be identified in almost all genres of art. However, archetypal analysis is particularly useful in texts that are difficult to understand because studying archetypal content leads to the metaphysical level, asking the essential question of what is really happening in a given moment. Carl Gustav Jung categorically surveyed the idea of archetypes and archetypal image

projection in myth and literature. Jung investigated archetypes such as the Mother, the Trickster, the Shadow etc. through analytical and symbolic orientation. He employed a psychodynamic approach to the psyche.

Jung employed various terms when referring to archetypes, such as "archaic remnants," "pre-existing forms," "primordial images," and "representation collectives." Despite the different labels, they all denote the same fundamental idea: that within the human psyche there are formless "structures" that function as unconscious psychological counterparts to the physical components of the human body. Jung likened these archetypes to the body's organ system which drives and influences all conscious thought and experience. According to Jung, the entire human psyche is built upon the foundation of archetypes. He proposed that these primordial ideas of our primordial human experiences express our "instincts" and "physiological urges" that "manifest themselves in fantasies and often reveal their presence only by symbolic images" (Jung 1964). They represent "the unconscious image of the instincts themselves, in other words...they are *patterns of instinctual behaviour*." (Jung 1980:44: *italics in original*). They are present in an "immensely old psyche" that still forms the basis of our modern mind (Jung 1964). Jung's concept of archetypes is integral to his theory of the collective unconscious which he described as a "second psychic system of a collective, universal, and impersonal nature which is identical in all individuals" (Jung, *The Concept of the Collective*, 43). This impersonal layer in the human psyche is "inherited and shared" with other humans (Shirayev, 2017).

People envision archetypes in different ways. At times, archetypes surface during calm meditative states, while at other instances, they manifest in dreams with deep meaning or during intense "mystical" visions. Jung considered archetypes to be immensely powerful, asserting that they have the capacity to shape reality itself. They underlie and "create myths, religion, and philosophies that influence and characterize whole nations and epochs of history." (Jung 1964:76). To understand their impact, consider the archetype of good versus evil, which suggests a cosmic or evolutionary battle between these forces. This archetype may be personified by figures like Satan or Darth Vader or secularized as unconscious psychological or instinctual structures (Regardie 2004) such as Jung's Shadow and Animus or Freud's selfish id. When individuals internalize some version of this archetype, it significantly affects their

worldview, self-perception and behavior. By adopting the good versus evil archetype, people interpret events through the lens of evil at work. This perception then influences their actions towards others: those seen as “evil” are often met with rejection, disdain or even violence, while those considered “good” receive inclusion and support within the community. The power of this archetype lies in its ability to shape both individual behavior and societal norms.

Carl Jung proposed twelve archetypes but for my study, I have focused on five that are most relevant to my research. These five archetypes are particularly prominent in the selected texts and provide a robust framework for my analysis. First are the anima and animus which are key elements of the male and female unconscious, respectively. The anima represents the feminine aspect within a male unconscious, while the animus signifies the masculine aspect within a female unconscious (Edinger 6). In essence, every man has an inner anima, and every woman has an inner animus. Similar to other psychological archetypes, the animus has both positive and negative facets. Women outwardly exhibit femininity may also possess a stubborn strength through their animus. Psychologically, this can represent the "semiconscious, cold, destructive reflections that invade a woman in the small hours," resulting in violent wishes or actions against others (Jung, 1964). The danger arises when these unconscious masculine traits take over the conscious mind, leading to actions on the part of the woman. Ultimately, the animus in women, like the anima in men, serves as a bridge connecting the collective unconscious, the personal unconscious, and the conscious mind.

The "Mother Archetype" is derived from the religious and philosophical idea of the "Great Mother" (Jung, 1972). This archetype can manifest in countless ways and is commonly linked to fertility and protection. Like all archetypes it can have positive, negative, or neutral aspects (Jung, 1972). Positive attributes associated with the mother archetype include sympathy, wisdom, magic, spirituality, transcending reason, growth, sustenance, and rebirth (Jung, 1972). Negative traits, on the other hand, can include secrecy, darkness, the abyss, the world of the dead, seduction, and poison (Jung, 1972). Jung suggests that the mother-image evolves with the consciousness of the individual psyche (Jung, 1972). According to him, the impact of the individual mother on an individual's psyche may correspond to the traits that the mother appears to possess or her overall attitude (Jung, 1972).

Next, the presence of the hero in the myths of various cultures suggests the existence of a Hero Archetype within the collective unconscious (Jung, 1964). The hero's journey, which often includes a quest and a battle, symbolizes the struggle of early humans to attain consciousness (Jung, 1964; Jung, 1976). The process of “fulfilling the individual’s potential” by integrating the opposing unconscious and conscious self into a “harmonious whole” is individuation (Shiraev, 2017). During the process of individuation, the hero's quest for wholeness reflects the conflict between the ego and the shadow, which correspond to the conscious mind and the unconscious, and repressed traits or instincts (Shiraev, 2017). Consequently, the hero figure serves as a symbolic representation of the emerging ego overcoming the inertia of the unconscious to achieve consciousness, a theme represented by a universal symbol (Jung, 1964). A successful hero’s journey leads to self-realization, individuation, or some other psychological reward. An unsuccessful journey leads to psychological collapse, selfishness, or some other negative psychological or emotional outcome.

Jung (1972) posits that the trickster archetype symbolizes a regression of consciousness to an earlier, more primitive state. The trickster represents the human psyche in its barely evolved form and is associated with magic, shapeshifting, and mischief, reflecting a more primal level of consciousness. According to Jung, the trickster is also associated with divine or natural rules, though not always with malicious intent. The archetype originates from counter-tendencies within the unconscious, which Jung calls the “shadow.” Shadow is an archetype identified with the instinctual, primitive, and generally negative traits of the personality that are repressed into the unconscious (Jung, 1972). Also referred to as the “counter-tendencies in the unconscious” (Jung, 1959). The shadow is crucial for balancing the persona, or the “social mask” we present to the world, and it embodies the aspects of our personality that we find undesirable (Jung, 1959). The trickster highlights the conflict between civilized man and his primitive instincts, and demonstrates the human inclination to evolve, while remembering the past. Thus, the trickster is essential for understanding our shadow selves and the gradual progress towards consciousness (Jung, 1972).

Lastly, the rebirth archetype is the “process of fulfilling an individual’s potential by integrating opposites [Shadow and Ego, Unconscious and Conscious]

into a harmonious whole,” achievement of individuation is a rebirth as represented by the archetype (Shiraev, 2017). This process of individuation is seen as a form of rebirth, symbolizing the attainment of spiritual wholeness and the transformation of the self into something greater. The psyche and personality of an individual who has reached this state of harmony and wholeness differ significantly from their previous state, thus signifying a form of psychic rebirth (Jung, 1972). This concept is often depicted in myths and religious narratives. Jung distinguishes between forms of rebirth seen in myth and religion and the psychological experience of rebirth. One form is reincarnation, which involves passing through various bodily existences while maintaining relatively unchanged memories and personality (Jung, 1972).

In my research, I employ Carl Jung's archetypal theory alongside Susan Blackmore's concept of astral projection to conduct an in-depth analysis of *Behind Her Eyes* by Sarah Pinborough and *Stranger with My Face* by Lois Duncan. Jung's archetypal theory provides a framework for understanding the universal symbols and patterns that shape human experiences and narratives. By identifying and interpreting these archetypes within the novels, I aim to uncover the deeper psychological and symbolic meanings embedded in the characters' journeys and the overall narrative structures. Jung's concepts of the collective unconscious and individuation is particularly useful in examining how the protagonists confront and integrate their conscious and unconscious selves.

3.2.2 Astral Projection: A Theoretical Examination

Astral projection, according to Susan J. Blackmore (1992), “...to the uninitiated, is a term given to the technique of leaving one's physical body temporarily and moving about in a non-material or "astral" body” (24). Astral projection is a phenomenon closely related to the collective unconscious as it is one behavioral mechanism. Through Jung's theorization of “archetypes” and the “collective unconscious”, we know that if a bridge is formed between the personal or collective unconscious and the conscious, certain behavioral patterns such as astral projection begins manifesting themselves. For instance, the persona archetype which is a part of the unconscious, allows people to fit into the world around them. The shadow contains all the things unacceptable to society such as envy, greed, prejudice, hate and aggression. I argue in the proposed research that astral projection is one such behavioral mechanism that stems from the archetypes ingrained in the unconscious of

an individual. This process can lead to the blurring of boundaries between real and unreal.

Susan J. Blackmore in her book *Beyond the Body: An Investigation of Out-of-the-Body Experiences* explores the phenomenon of astral projection which can blur the boundaries between what is real and what is not. During this experience of astral projection, people often describe encountering vivid and lifelike situations of alternative realms and entities. Blackmore suggests that these experiences feel just as real as everyday life, challenging our understanding of what is truly real. According to Blackmore, “Most OBErs (Out-of-Body experiencers) are convinced by their illusion; they are sure that they are seeing the “real world”” (280). She delves into the intense sense of being present and fully immersed in these alternate realities. These encounters lead individuals to genuinely believe in the reality of other planes beyond our physical world. Blackmore's concept of astral projection offers a unique lens to explore the supernatural and metaphysical elements present in the selected novels. By employing Blackmore's concept, I analyze how the authors depict these experiences and what do they signify for the characters' psychological states and development. This includes examining the implications of astral projection on the characters' identities, relationships, and their understanding of reality.

By employing the frameworks of Jung's archetypal theory and Blackmore's concept of astral projection, I have conducted a detailed analysis of *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face*. This study examines the psychological and metaphysical themes within the selected texts and explores how these themes contribute to a deeper understanding of the characters' experiences and the narrative structures. This analysis not only enhances the understanding of these novels but also contribute to broader discussions on the intersection of psychology, spirituality, and literature.

The researcher follows these steps while analyzing the selected texts using the above-mentioned theoretical framework:

- a. The first step involves selecting a theory that aligns with the research topic and objectives. The chosen theories are relevant to the research questions and provide insights into the texts under analysis.

- b. After selecting the relevant theories, their key concepts, principles, and methodologies are used to build the research framework within which the analysis was conducted.
- c. The key concepts, ideas, and terms from the chosen theories serve as tools to explore, examine, and interpret the texts within the theoretical framework.
- d. Relevant excerpts or textual examples that demonstrate the presence or workings of these theoretical concepts in the texts are identified and discussed.
- e. I critically analyze the extracted passages and sentences in light of the selected theory.
- f. Finally, I conclude the analysis by reflecting on the findings and synthesizing the relationship between the selected texts and the employed theory.

3.3 Research Design

The proposed study has a qualitative design of inquiry with a textual analysis approach to explore the selected texts, *Behind Her Eyes* (2017) and *Stranger with My Face* (1982), for the impact of archetypal symbols ingrained in the unconscious part of the psyche of the protagonists on the process of astral projection as a behavioral mechanism. Moreover, how astral projection in the selected texts leads to further distortion of psyche of the protagonists in particular the perception of reality is also investigated, with special focus on the concepts proposed by Susan J. Blackmore and Carl Jung. Textual analysis of the selected texts is carried out to explore the archetypal symbols that can be found in the texts. Moreover, this analysis shows how the archetypal symbols lead towards the behavioral mechanism of astral projection. Further, textual analysis also helps explore the protagonists' psychological disconcertment and the possibility of blurring of boundaries between the real and the unreal is also examined. The research utilizes interdisciplinary approach for this investigation because the present attempt draws heavily from psychology as well as from literature. The study refers to the concepts of archetypes and astral projection, which have basically come from psychology and are integrated into literary studies.

3.3.1 Research Method: Textual Analysis

In this study, I utilize textual analysis as defined by Catherine Belsey to examine the selected texts, *Behind Her Eyes* (2017) and *Stranger with My Face* (1982). Textual analysis, according to Catherine Belsey in her essay "Textual

Analysis as a Research Method" (2013), "is a research method that involves a close encounter with the work itself, an examination of the details without bringing to them more suppositions than we can help" (160). Hence, it involves a close and detailed examination of texts to understand how they create meaning and impact its reader or interpreter. This method is particularly effective for interpreting the complex psychological and metaphysical themes present in the selected novels for this research. This method also emphasizes the importance of the reader's interpretation, acknowledging that different readers may derive varied meanings from the same text. By prioritizing the text and the reader's response, textual analysis enables a nuanced understanding of how narratives affect and engage audiences. While emphasizing the text itself, Belsey does not completely disregard the importance of knowledge/information beyond the text as she further notes that there is no such thing as 'pure' reading. Interpretation always involves extra-textual knowledge, some of it being general cultural knowledge, and some of it being derived from secondary sources. Interpretation of a text involves drawing on both textual knowledge and extra textual information derived from its context, which can guide new avenues of study (160).

Hence, textual analysis is a prevalent research approach in literary studies because of its capacity to uncover the subtleties and complexities within literary texts. The reason for choosing textual analysis as the research method in this study is twofold:

- a. It encourages a critical exploration of the text, enabling researchers to apply diverse literary theories to scrutinize various facets of the texts being studied.
- b. It facilitates rigorous examination of the text to substantiate claims and arguments, thereby allowing the researcher to present a strong and well-supported analysis of the chosen texts.

Therefore, textual analysis is an appropriate method for my current investigation. For the sake of clarity and convenience, I have followed the following steps for my textual analysis:

- i. Close reading of the texts.
- ii. Drawing upon different theoretical/conceptual positions.
- iii. Interpreting the texts with the support of secondary sources.
- iv. Identifying the untapped areas in the study.

- v. Evaluating the “intertexts, and reading them attentively too, to establish the specificity of the text in question” (Belsey 194).
- vi. Find possible answers to research questions.

In my study, I employ textual analysis to explore how archetypal symbols, as described by Carl Jung, influence the protagonists' experiences of astral projection in the selected novels. This involves identifying and examining recurring symbols and themes that resonate with Jung's theory of archetypes. By doing so, I uncover how these archetypal elements shape the characters' psychological journeys and contribute to their perceptions of reality. This approach supports the exploration of how the process of astral projection, as explained by Susan Blackmore, leads to the distortion of the protagonists' psyches and their perceptions of reality. By analyzing the texts using this method, I can examine how these psychological and metaphysical experiences are portrayed and what they reveal about the characters and their worlds. Textual analysis is particularly suited to my research, which seeks to uncover the intricate interplay between archetypal symbols, astral projection, and psychological distortion in *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face*.

The method involves a multi-step approach that begins with an in-depth analysis of both primary and secondary texts. This initial phase includes a thorough examination of the selected novels and relevant scholarly works. During this detailed study, I analyze the texts in detail to identify significant passages, themes, and character developments that illustrate the portrayal of archetypes embedded in the collective unconscious of the psyche and its impact on the psychological state of the characters. The next step involves collecting and analyzing evidence to support the research assertions. I conduct an extensive search for specific examples, quotes and instances within the primary and secondary texts to address the research questions. Finally, I establish connections between variables i.e., archetypes and astral projection by drawing upon the evidence gathered from the texts. This step involves identifying and articulating the key concepts and elements within the research context, linking them to the gathered evidence, and providing detailed explanations.

By using this method to explore the selected texts, a rigorous analysis is carried out that constructs a strong argument, which then develops a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between archetypal patterns, psychological states

and astral projection as behavioral mechanism of the characters within the selected novels.

3.4 Conclusion

In my current study, I employ exploratory research methodology utilizing textual analysis as the primary research method. This method allows for a comprehensive understanding, description, and interpretation of the selected texts, *Behind Her Eyes* (2017) and *Stranger with My Face* (1982). Drawing on Carl Jung's archetypal theory, I analyze these texts for the universal patterns of behavior embedded in the collective unconscious of individuals to understand and explore the human psychological experience, both individually and collectively. Additionally, it is extended and linked with Blackmore's concept of astral projection which is employed to explore the impact of those archetypes on the psychological state and behavioral mechanisms of the characters.

The theoretical framework and research methods are described in detail before conducting textual analysis of the primary texts in subsequent chapters. This approach is crucial for addressing the research questions and uncovering insights into the psychological dimensions and motivations explored in the novels.

CHAPTER 4

JOURNEYS THROUGH THE PSYCHE: EXPLORING ARCHETYPES IN *BEHIND HER EYES* AND *STRANGER WITH MY FACE*

In this chapter, I address the first theoretical question by exploring Carl Jung's archetypal symbols as they manifest in the selected texts, *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face*. Jung's theory of archetypes, which posits that certain universal symbols and motifs recur across cultures and literature, serves as a critical framework for this analysis. By examining the characters and their actions through the lens of Jungian archetypes, such as the mother, hero, rebirth, anima/animus, and shadow, I uncover deeper psychological and symbolic meanings within these narratives. This chapter explores how these archetypal symbols shape the characters' experiences and perceptions, offering a deeper understanding of the underlying psychological dynamics in these works.

4.1 Mother Archetype

Carl Jung's mother archetype represents the universal symbol of a life-giving figure who is nurturing, and protective. "The qualities associated with it are maternal solicitude and sympathy; the magic authority of the female; ... helpful instinct or impulse; all that is benign, all that cherishes and sustains, that fosters growth and fertility" (Jung 1972). Hence, this archetype is often embodied in literature through characters who provide care, support and unconditional love while also encompassing the darker aspect of possessiveness. Jung's mother archetype can be observed in Louise in *Behind Her Eyes* and Shelly Stratton in *Stranger with my Face*. Both the characters exemplify nurturing and protective qualities.

In *Behind Her Eyes*, Louise has a son whom she loves dearly, and her actions reflect her emotional bond, care and dedication towards his well-being. Louise's overwhelming feelings when she sees Adam, her son, can be linked to the mother archetype as it reflects a deep emotional connection and her sense of gratitude for having him in her life. In the novel, when Adam returns from France, he tells his mom that he missed her and he is glad he is home. Listening to this, Louise delineates her emotions, "My heart melts then... I love him with all my heart, and that love is pure

and clean and perfect” (177). Louise missed her son when he was away with his dad. She thinks the words cannot even begin to cover how she feels, how much she missed him. When Adam is with her, she feels like she has some good luck in the world (272). Her emotional responses underscore the significant influence the mother archetype has on her psyche, shaping her experiences as a parent.

Louise’s role as a mother is central to her identity, and she strives to provide a stable and loving environment for her child. This protective and nurturing aspect of her personality aligns with Jung’s concept of the mother archetype. She provides for Adam, feeds him, takes him to school each day, ensures he feels safe and loved by putting him to bed each night etc. She also takes Adam for outings where they enjoy their time together, and on their return home they are flushed with happiness. “It’s been a great day in the woods and then to the adventure playground and then a late lunch at the café, and both Adam and I are glowing from the fresh air... and I’m still smiling... I still know how to make my little boy laugh” (185). Louise’s happiness at making Adam laugh signify the deep emotional bond and fulfillment that comes from her role as a provider of joy and comfort, reinforcing her identity within this archetype. These small, consistent acts of care reflect her deep commitment to his well-being and highlight her nurturing nature as a mother.

Louise has recurring dreams and Adam appears in almost all her dreams, reflecting her intense protectiveness and deep emotional bond as a mother. During her “night terrors”, Louise often dreams that Adam is trapped in a building, calling out to her for help. In these distressing dreams, she desperately searches for him, trying everything possible to rescue him, only to wake up suddenly, overwhelmed with tears. This recurring nightmare highlights her maternal instinct to protect and care for her child. As Louise learns the art of lucid dreaming, Adam continues to feature prominently in her dreams. In these more controlled dream scenarios, they enjoy joyous moments together, resembling a happy family living their best lives. Louise feels equally overwhelmed with emotions in these dreams also. Once in her dream, she says about Adam, “I think of him, sleeping so close to me, and picturing him there back in his room makes my heart glow, and I want to see him and hug him until he can barely breathe. I feel it with a mother’s ferocity...” (178,179). Through these dreams, Louise not only seeks to alleviate her fears but also strives to fulfill her role

as a mother by doing her best to ensure her son's safety and well-being, even within the realm of her dreams.

In *Stranger with my Face*, Shelly Stratton is Laurie Stratton's adoptive mother and she underlines the qualities of the mother archetype as described by Jung. She displays unconditional love and care for Laurie, treating her with the same affection and concern she has for her biological children. Shelly's nurturing nature is evident in how she looks after Laurie's physical and emotional needs, always prioritizing her well-being. She spends generously on Laurie, ensuring she has everything she needs, from providing meals and managing her education to giving her thoughtful gifts during Christmas, just as she does for her other children. Shelly's actions reflect her deep commitment to Laurie's well-being, treating her no differently than her own. When Laurie had an accident in the Mermaids' Caverns and was rescued, it was Shelly who took care of her. She provided the comfort and support Laurie needed during her recovery, demonstrating her unwavering love and dedication as a mother. Laurie would call out to her mother and her mother would give her a pill, saying, "Sleep, honey; sleep and get better" (126). Shelly's nurturing presence ensured that Laurie felt safe and cared for during a difficult time.

Shelly's protective instincts come to the forefront when Laurie faces danger or uncertainty, and her constant vigilance and worry for Laurie's safety reflect the protective qualities of the mother archetype. Her actions align closely with the mother archetype when she accompanies Laurie to visit her friend Helen in the hospital after her accident. Her protectiveness and deep emotional bond with Laurie are evident as she sees Helen's condition and immediately worries about her own daughter. She says in a strangled voice, "Dear god, Laurie, what if it had been you? How could Dad and I have dealt with it?" (87). Shelly's instinctive concern and empathy showcase her maternal nature, reflecting her constant desire to protect and care for Laurie, even when faced with the pain and suffering of others.

Moreover, her overprotectiveness becomes evident when Laurie mentions her wish to search for her biological sister and to locate her roots. Fearing that Laurie might get hurt or overwhelmed by what she discovers, Shelly becomes anxious and worries about her daughter's emotional well-being. She says, "This is just what I was afraid of! It's the reason I didn't want you to know" (55). She struggles with the idea of Laurie connecting with a part of her past that Shelly cannot control as she says,

“But now she wants to throw out the people who’ve loved and raised her and go out hunting for perfect strangers!” (56). This highlights her deep-seated desire to shield Laurie from any potential harm or distress and keep her family whole.

Hence, both Louise and Shelly emphasize the mother archetype through their emotional bonds with their children. Louise's overwhelming feelings of love, responsibility, and commitment to Adam's well-being highlight the nurturing and protective aspects of this archetype. Similarly, Shelly's dedication to Laurie, such as taking care of her after her accident in the Mermaids' Caverns and worrying about her safety, shows her deep maternal instincts. Both women reflect the mother archetype's nature, encompassing the positive aspects of motherhood.

4.2 Hero Archetype

Jung's hero archetype represents the universal symbol of courage, strength, and the quest for self-discovery. Elizabeth Heiner (2019) notes that hero's actions usually are characterized by courage, voluntary action, and service and the person's motivation does not stem from the expectation of extrinsic gain. David is a psychiatrist in *Behind Her Eyes*, who embodies the qualities of a hero in many respects. His bravery and quick thinking are evident when he saves Adele, his wife from the fire in her parent's house, risking his own life to ensure her safety. This courageous act is a testament to his selflessness and a sense of responsibility towards others. His willingness to put himself in harm's way for Adele shows a profound level of care and dedication. By saving Adele, he shows not only physical courage but also emotional strength, by standing as a protector in her most vulnerable moment. Adele herself refers to David as “Her hero” (33), “The man who braved fire to rescue the girl he loved” (37).

Beyond this rescue, David is also involved in various forms of outreach, consistently working to help those in need. He tells Louise, “I’m thinking of doing voluntary outreach work on some weekends...” (29). Louise helps him mark places such as schools, surgeries, roughest pubs and the underpass in South London, on a local map where David could setup an outreach center for addiction issues. Whether it's through his professional role or personal initiatives, he extends his support and care to those who are struggling, demonstrating a strong commitment to making a positive impact in the lives of others. “Helping people is what he does” (224). David's

dedication to outreach highlights his compassionate nature and desire to contribute to the well-being of his community. This aspect of his character further solidifies his role as a hero, not just in moments of crisis but in the everyday acts of kindness and commitment to making the world a better place.

When David shares his life story with Louise, he reveals that his ambition to become a doctor was a dream from his childhood. He recounts how, from an early age, he aspired to pursue a career in medicine, driven by a desire to help others and make a meaningful impact. He mentions to Louise how he came into psychiatry. “My father...whenever he’d have an accident with the machinery I’d patch him up. I knew I wanted to be a doctor of some kind...” (97). This aspiration reflects his inherent heroic qualities, as his choice of profession and his dedication to healing others underscore his commitment to service and compassion.

David cares for Adele deeply through their time together, offering her protection and support. However, after they are married, as a psychiatrist David notices several sociopathic tendencies in her behavior. Despite this, he remains dedicated to helping her, providing support, prescribing medication for her mental health issues, and giving her multiple chances. David knows all along what his wife is capable of so he tries to protect other people from her malevolent actions. When he comes to know that Adele and Louise are friends, he tries to protect Louise also by warning her. He says to Louise, “Stay away from us. If you don’t want to end up hurt” (200). Louise takes this as a threat but it actually is a warning. Adele is aware of this as she says, “Louise heard his warning as a threat...” (204). She also knows about her husband’s protective nature as she thinks, “Protecting her from me. That’s David. Forever saving women” (264). This reflects David as a hero archetype who helps and protects those in need.

Characters embodying the hero archetype often face challenges that test their resolve, ultimately leading to personal growth and transformation. “The hero’s journey can be seen as a journey to self-actualization that strengthens the soul” (Franco et al. 2018). The hero’s journey reflects the struggle between good and evil, either externally or within oneself. David’s moral compass as the hero archetype can be understood through his handling of the secret surrounding the death of Rob, Adele’s friend. When Adele confesses to David that she panicked and pushed Rob’s body into the well after he died of an overdose, David is immediately torn between his

moral duty to report the truth and his desire to protect Adele. His innate sense of justice makes him try to convince Adele to go to the police, but Adele's pleas and his love for her compel him to keep the secret. As time passes, Adele's pleas turn into threats when David wants to walk out of their troubled marriage. She manipulates David by threatening to tell the police that he is involved in Rob's death, leveraging his fear of being framed as a murderer, especially since David's watch fell into the well with Rob's body. This intensifies David's internal conflict, as he grapples with the ethical dilemma of protecting himself and Adele versus coming out clean. Despite the immense burden this secret places on him, David's eventual determination to confess and reveal the truth showcases his personal growth and transformation.

Similarly, Jeff Rankin is a courageous character in *Stranger with My Face* who embodies the hero archetype through his actions and dedication to protecting Laurie Stratton. As Laurie's boyfriend, Jeff is a steadfast figure who confronts the evil threatening her. His bravery comes to the forefront when he faces Lia, Laurie's malevolent twin sister, whose astral form takes control of Laurie's physical body. Jeff fights to save Laurie, demonstrating his willingness to risk his own safety for her well-being. Jeff uses Helena's fetish to get rid of Lia which indicates that Lia is portrayed as an evil spirit in the novel.

He pulled the fetish from his pocket and held it high. Lia's eyes focused upon the thin silver chain with the bright blue bird in its center, and she drew back with a gasp.

“Get that thing away! I told you, I don't want it!”

Her hand whipped out and struck the chain from his fingers (185).

By confronting her with this object, Jeff battles against the malevolent force that Lia represents, showcasing his role as a protector against evil, supernatural elements. His use of the fetish to banish Lia showcases his protectiveness for those he cares about and restore balance. Jeff's actions highlight the qualities of a hero archetype: bravery, selflessness, and a commitment to fight against evil, all of which are evident from his efforts to save Laurie from Lia's evil plan.

Jeff Rankin and David both exemplify Jung's hero archetype through their journeys, each confronting personal and external challenges with a sense of duty and resilience. In *Stranger with My Face*, Jeff Rankin serves as a protector to Laurie Stratton, bravely confronting Lia when her astral body takes control of Laurie's

physical form. His determination to save Laurie, using Helena's fetish to banish Lia, demonstrates his courage and commitment to her well-being, embodying the hero's role as a selfless guardian. Similarly, in *Behind Her Eyes*, David's role as a psychiatrist reflects his commitment to helping others, even as he endures emotional manipulation from Adele. His protective instincts and dedication to Adele, despite the toll on his own well-being, showcase the hero's self-sacrificial nature. Both Jeff and David face obstacles that challenge their moral fortitude, yet they remain steadfast in their resolve to protect those they care about. Their actions highlight the hero's enduring spirit and capacity to overcome adversity, embodying the transformative qualities central to Jung's archetype.

4.3 Rebirth Archetype

Jung's rebirth archetype symbolizes transformation and renewal. The form of rebirth archetype that is best applicable to the novel is metempsychosis, “a transmigration of souls” (Jung 113). This type of rebirth, Jung explains, is when “life is prolonged in time by passing through different bodily existences” (ibid). One is born again several times and these births are part of the continuous existence of the individual (ibid). To clarify, metempsychosis means that one is actually reborn biologically and results in a rebirth in a completely new body; there is no continuity of appearance. The alteration that supplements metempsychosis is of the body, and sometimes of the mind; though the alteration of the mind is not guaranteed. In *Behind Her Eyes*, Rob's transformation through body-swapping can be linked to Jung's rebirth archetype. The rebirth archetype represents a fundamental change in the psyche or identity, often symbolizing a transition or transformation of the self. Rob experiences a form of rebirth by astral projecting and transferring his consciousness into different bodies. First, he takes over Adele's body, living her life and manipulating those around him to maintain control. “And then we swapped. Left our bodies, counted to three and went into each other's... Goodbye Rob, hello Adele” (283). Later, he repeats metempsychosis with Louise, using the same deceptive means to inhabit her body.

I went through the second door. I saw her outside. And here was the trickiest bit. Picking my time after she was empty to go into her... and her skin became mine... Louise there [on the bed], behind my eyes, looking at me in her body... I injected it [the rest of the syringe] between her/my toes.

Goodbye Adele, hello Louise (278, 279).

Each time Rob switches bodies, he undergoes a metaphorical rebirth, shedding his previous identity and adopting a new one, with the physicality of his new host. This continual cycle of death and rebirth allows Rob to pursue his desire of being with David, by hijacking others' lives. His actions underscore a transformation that is driven by selfish intent.

Similarly, in *Stranger with my Face*, Lia's actions can be understood through metempsychosis, where her astral form transfers from one body to another in a bid for a more desirable existence.

In my room, the body of a slender, dark-haired girl lay as I had left it. I moved toward it, anticipating the instant when the astral cord would whip me into possession. To my surprise, that moment did not come. Instead, I felt a resistance, as though someone had constructed an invisible barrier... [yet] the girl on the bed opened her eyes.

I stared at her, incredulous. Those were my eyes! How could they open unless I willed them to? (168)

Lia astral projects to leave her body and take over Laurie's body. Her action is driven by envy and greed so she occupies Laurie's body to gain access to Laurie's wealth, luxurious lifestyle, and inheritance. Metempsychosis in this case, is not a spiritual or moral journey; instead, it represents a corrupted desire to exploit another's life for personal gain.

Hence, Rob and Lia's rebirth through body-swapping and taking control of another body respectively reflects Jung's rebirth archetype. Their rebirths are marked by manipulation, greed, and a desire for control over others' lives. Rob's rebirth into Adele's and then Louise's body is driven by his obsession with David. Similarly, Lia's attempt to take over Laurie's body is fueled by envy and a desire for wealth, highlighting the negative aspects of rebirth. This distorted form of rebirth underscores how the archetype, when driven by selfish motives and unchecked emotions, transforms into a destructive force that undermines the moral integrity and psychological stability of the individual, ultimately revealing the darker side of what is traditionally considered a symbol of renewal and transformation.

Furthermore, "Carl Jung distinguished between five different forms of rebirth... Psychological rebirth was Jung's particular focus" (Sharp 68). Psychological rebirth often broadens an individual's personality. "Rebirth may be a renewal without any change of being, inasmuch as the personality which is renewed is

not changed in its essential nature, but only its functions, or part of the personality, are subjected to healing, strengthening or improvement” (Jung 118). In *Behind Her Eyes*, David’s decision to reveal the truth about Rob’s murder marks his psychological rebirth. David has hidden the truth for years, driven by his love and desire to protect Adele but then he eventually decides to confess, “I’m going to go and tell the police everything. The truth... I’m so tired of carrying the guilt around with me” (259). This marks a crucial moment in his psychological journey, showing his desire for redemption, healing and a return to his true self resulting in personal growth and transformation.

4.4 Shadow Archetype

Jung's shadow archetype represents the hidden, often darker aspects of the personality that individuals tend to reject or suppress. As Jung stated, a shadow is simply the dark side of someone’s personality, and one discovers his/her dark side through others, such as: friends, family, and fictitious characters (1969). It encompasses traits and desires that are socially unacceptable or contrary to one's self-image. In *Behind Her Eyes*, the shadow archetype plays a pivotal role in shaping the characters and their actions. By examining how the shadow manifests in different characters such as Adele, David, Rob and Louise, the psychological distortion of the characters can be highlighted. Adele carefully curates an image of a perfect life and marriage to show to everyone around her. However, their “pretence at glorious happiness” (37) is a persona, a mask that Adele wears to maintain the façade of a perfect life. Adele is charming and graceful, and everything she does is aimed at keeping up a perfect image. For instance, she says “Yesterday we went to the clinic, and I charmed the senior partner Dr Sykes, and the various other doctors and nurses we met” (23). She builds this image so well that it's almost impossible for anyone to see her shadow.

Adele exhibits narcissistic tendencies in her obsessive need for control and her manipulation of others to achieve her goals. “People respond to beauty... It’s only the luck of skin and bones... You don’t even have to say very much, but simply listen and smile, and people bend over backwards for you. I have enjoyed being beautiful...” (23). She enjoys being in control of others' lives and takes satisfaction in her influence. For instance, she extends a polite invitation to Louise, encouraging her to join the gym to lose some extra weight. Adele also subtly influences Louise's habits

by suggesting she switch from smoking to using an e-cigarette, while also guiding her towards healthier eating habits. She then takes great pride in these changes, viewing them as a testament to her ability to shape and direct those around her. She says, “Her body feels strong, firmer and tighter than we first met. I’ve *created* this new Louise” (174). This shows that she feels immense pride in her ability to subtly manipulate others.

Manipulation is another expression of the shadow archetype, representing the hidden, darker aspects of a person's psyche. When someone manipulates others, they are often acting from a place of insecurity, fear, or desire for control, which are elements that reside in the unconscious shadow. Adele manipulates everyone around her to serve her own interests and to maintain her control over the situation. At one instance, she attempts to acquire drugs but ends up with a bruise on her face. Rather than being deterred, she uses this injury to her advantage. When Anthony, one of David's patients, shows up at their doorstep, Adele employs a calculated, manipulative strategy to gain his sympathy. “‘You have to go away,’ I lean out and whisper, knowing full well that by tilting forward slightly I’m giving him a teasing glance of my breasts” (128). She plays the victim, leveraging her bruised appearance to evoke his compassion. She gives the impression of being afraid and makes it appear as if her husband has hit her. She says phrases like “This isn’t a good time”, “Please go”, “I think he’s coming” in a voice that has a hint of urgency (129). By doing so, she sets the stage to use Anthony as a means to obtain drugs in the future, demonstrating her cunning and manipulative nature.

Adele is manipulative to the extent that she uses astral projection to spy on David and control situations to get what she wants. Moreover, she uses her soft, shy, and charming persona to influence those around her, especially Louise. She presents herself as “vulnerable” and in need of help, which makes Louise feel protective of Adele. At one instance Louise says, “I feel like she needs me. She’s definitely lonely. That was coming off her in waves yesterday... I should be on Adele’s side in this” (65,66). She uses this tactic to subtly plant ideas and control Louise's actions. Adele manipulates Louise by innocently dropping hints or clues, knowing that Louise will piece together the puzzle laid out before her. She calls Louise her “little pretty puppet on a string” (184). Once, Adele mentions in a text that appears to be said in the passing, that she has looked in the study if David has a medical file on her but could

not find any. She actually wants Louise to check and get her medical record from the clinic. Louise starts thinking along those lines that if David does have a medical file on Adele, he would keep it in the clinic. She has the key so she breaks into the clinic after 11 at night, finds an A4 folder with Adele's name written on it, goes through all the notes and also tells Adele about them. She has acted exactly as Adele intended for her to do. Adele herself says about Louise, "She's my little wind-up doll, walking in whatever direction I point her" (205).

Adele, while maintaining her false friendship with Louise, often harbors negative thoughts about her. When she is alone, her thoughts about Louise are filled with negativity and resentment. She buys e-cigarette for Louise as a gift but at the same time while looking at the e-cigarette, she thinks, "... she'll try this. I know she will. She's a people pleaser. I feel another surge of bitterness. A *fat* little people pleaser" (92). She goes as far as calling her life as "sad little life" (92). She also calls her "duplicitous" (138). Often times than not, she "... want[s] to punch her in the face for her false sympathy (266). Adele is fully aware that Louise and David's relationship has escalated to a physical level which fills her with rage and envy and she contemplates killing her. The intense rage and hurt that Adele feels on Louise and David's affair manifest in these dark thoughts, showcasing the depth of her resentment. Similarly, her relationship with David is also fraught with these negative emotions. She says:

Last night, when David went to her grubby little flat straight after work, I was so hurt I wanted to kill her, even if she had done her pathetic best to defend me and send him home... and worse than that was David's choice to go straight to her instead of me... I could have ruined him, but he didn't take that into account (150).

At one instance, she fiercely thinks of "cutting out his [David's] ungrateful fucking heart" (204). Adele's ability to mask her true feelings while plotting against those close to her illustrates her manipulative nature. When she is with Louise, Adele keeps her true feelings hidden, maintaining a calm and friendly facade, ensuring that her friendship with Louise appears genuine. This calculated behavior is part of her larger plan. Through these manipulative tactics, Adele maintains her control and influence, skillfully navigating her interactions to serve her own agenda.

Lying is one of the traits of the shadow archetype which involves deceit and manipulation. Adele lies outright to the people around her. David, being the

psychiatrist, prescribes Adele certain pills for her anxiety and other ailments but she does not take them and lies to David about taking the pills. She says, “I tell him I’ve taken my pills to save him having to ask... he has to accept my lie as truth” (59). Moreover, she lies multiple times to Louise. Once, when Louise comes to Adele’s house, she tells Louise that the numerous packets of pills with her name and dosage instructions neatly printed on them, were prescribed by her husband for her “nerves” (172). She also tells her that she thinks David had an affair with Marianne, a woman who owned the little café, in Blackheath. At another instance, she tells Louise that she thinks David killed Rob because he was jealous of Rob. “He was suspicious that there was more than friendship going on” (210). She also mentions getting an abortion after getting married because David “... said he couldn’t be sure it was his” (211). All this is untrue. Telling this to Louise made Adele feels powerful, dominating and in control of people’s lives even. She says, “I want to giggle, and for a horrifying moment I think I will, so instead I cover my mouth and look away as if I’m fighting back tears” (173). This reflects her shadow which is fully on display with all the lies and deception.

Moving on, David's shadow is evident in his drinking habits, his affair with Louise, and his struggles with anger management. These aspects of his personality, which he often tries to suppress or deny, manifest in behaviors that conflict with his role as a responsible and caring individual. For instance, Louise says about him, “But then I doubt those doctors drink every night either. He’s a strange one” (108). At another occasion, Adele says, “Perhaps it’s him who needs all the medication, instead of spending his days drinking his brain to dullness” (125). His excessive drinking can be seen as a way of coping with the overwhelming guilt and stress he feels, especially given the dark secrets he harbors. The affair with Louise, while rooted in his desire for connection and escape from his troubled marriage, further complicates his moral standing, revealing a side of him that acts on impulse rather than principle. His inability to control his temper, demonstrate a deeper internal conflict where his suppressed emotions erupt in harmful ways. For instance, when David confronted Louise about her friendship with Adele, his anger was beyond control. His reaction was intense and disproportionate, showing the darker side of his personality. Louise depicts it as, “He’s shaking with rage as he stands in my sitting room...” (161). She also uses phrases such as “his eyes are all fire”, “his words are cold and clipped”,

“contained rage”, “his face is twisted and sour”, “his voice like ice” to describe his rage (163). This outburst is part of David's shadow, where his emotions, particularly his anger, are not managed well. This lack of control reveals the hidden, more volatile aspects of his character. Together, these elements of David's shadow highlight the tension between his outward persona and the darker, unresolved parts of his psyche, ultimately contributing to his psychological turmoil and moral ambiguity.

Louise's shadow is also evident from her excessive drinking, her affair with David, and her struggle with inferiority complex. Her drinking often serves as a coping mechanism, allowing her to escape from the pressures and dissatisfaction she feels in her life.

As soon as the door is closed behind him [Adam], our tiny flat feels too big and too empty. Like everyone's moved out and left me behind. I don't know what to do with myself. I prowls around the flat until I can no longer ignore the lure of the wine bottle... I open the wine, pour a large glass, and settle back... (82).

Sometimes, she needs the wine to sleep even. “I need the wine to sleep anyway... I go to the kitchen and top up my glass” (115). Furthermore, the affair with David despite knowing he is married, is another manifestation of her shadow, revealing her desire for excitement and validation, even though it involves betraying her values and morals. This relationship not only complicates her life but also reflects her issues with self-worth as she describes her feelings when she is with David in these words, “the awful feeling of victory that he's in my house...” (87). Moreover, Louise's inferiority comes to the forefront when she compares herself with her friends, Sophie and Adele. She says about Sophie,

Her life is different. Always surrounded by new and interesting people. Creative types who live more freely, drink until late, and live like teenagers. Being a single mum in London eking out a living as a psychiatrist's part-time secretary doesn't exactly give me a huge number of opportunities to throw caution to the wind and go out every night in the hope of meeting anyone... (16)

At another instance, upon seeing Adele, she compares herself with Adele also, “His beautiful wife. Elegant. Dark-haired and olive-skinned in an Angelina Jolie way. That kind of mystery about her. Exceptionally slim. The opposite of me” (17). Meanwhile, she also contemplates on how others view her, as she thinks when she is having lunch with Adele, “How does she see me? Am I a dumpy, scruffy blonde in her eyes, or am I something else?” (135). These aspects of her shadow highlight the conflict between

her public persona and her hidden insecurities, contributing to her psychological conflict and emotional turmoil.

Rob's shadow is revealed through his actions and desires, showcasing the darker aspects of his personality. He is envious and manipulative, traits that are evident when he becomes infatuated with David and decides he wants to be with him at any cost. Rob's jealousy of Adele and his longing to have the life she has with David lead him to exploit his knowledge of astral projection for selfish purposes. This manipulation takes a dark turn when he orchestrates a body swap with Adele, killing her and taking over her life. His willingness to kill and assume another's identity illustrates the depths of his shadow, where his desires and emotions drive him to commit morally reprehensible acts. Rob's actions are driven by his dissatisfaction with his own life, and his obsession with possessing what others have, reflecting a shadow filled with envy, manipulation, and a desire for control.

In *Behind Her Eyes*, the shadow archetype is represented through the darker, hidden aspects of the characters' personalities that they repress or deny. Adele's shadow is more overtly displayed through her manipulative and controlling behavior. Her use of astral projection to monitor and manipulate others, especially Louise, reflects the dark aspects of her psyche. Rob's shadow is exemplified by his obsessive love for David and his willingness to go to extreme lengths to be with him. His use of astral projection to swap bodies and ultimately kill Adele and Louise demonstrates his capacity for deception, betrayal, and violence. Rob's actions are driven by his hidden desires, revealing a shadow that is deeply manipulative and destructive. David's shadow is seen in his affair and his complicity in covering up Rob's death. Despite his moral compass, his decision to protect Adele and hide the truth reveals a darker side of his character. Louise's shadow is evident from her drinking habits and her affair with a married man.

In *Stranger with My Face*, Lia's shadow side is revealed through her jealousy, greed, and manipulative actions. She envies Laurie for having a more loving adoptive family, a comfortable lifestyle, and an inheritance that Lia covets. She says to Laurie, "I knew I would do anything to be in your place" (176). This jealousy drives Lia to use astral projection to take over Laurie's body, showing her willingness to cross moral boundaries for her own gains. Her shadow is characterized by a desire to have what Laurie has and a readiness to manipulate and control others to achieve her goals.

Lia's actions are fueled by her inner darkness, which includes feelings of resentment, and a longing for power and luxury. Her shadow emerges in her ruthless pursuit of Laurie's life, reflecting the darker aspects of her personality that pushes her to betray and harm her biological sister to satisfy her own desires.

The shadow archetype in the above-mentioned characters showcases how repressed jealousy, greed, complexes, guilt, and darker desires can impact behavior, leading to actions that distort reality and create psychological turmoil.

4.5 Trickster Archetype

Jung's trickster archetype represents the mischievous and disruptive aspects of the human psyche. He provides "all the wildness, wantonness, and irresponsibility of paganism" (Jung 162). Characters embodying this archetype often use deception and cunning to challenge norms and create chaos. In *Behind Her Eyes*, Rob Hoyle is a pivotal character, initially introduced as Adele's close friend from a psychiatric facility. He embodies Jung's trickster archetype, characterized by his cunning and deceptive nature. Rob's ability to manipulate situations and people around him is his defining trait. He also teaches Adele various ways to deceive others, showing her how to use lies and trickery to achieve her goals. This relationship introduces a darker element to Adele's character, as she begins to adopt some of Rob's manipulative tactics in her own life. His presence in Adele's life represents a destabilizing force. While in the psychiatric facility at Westlands, Adele often paints images of fire in the Art room, reflecting the trauma of her past. Rob teaches Adele to deceive the therapists and maintain a facade of recovery by suggesting that she paint images of water instead. Rob says to Adele:

Maybe you should paint water instead. It might be more therapeutic. You could tell them that the fire paintings represent your grief and what happened and the water paintings are you putting it all out. Washing it away... So they stop hassling you to open up... Give them something and they'll leave you alone (33).

By following Rob's advice, Adele creates an illusion of progress and stability. This strategic move is meant to manipulate the perceptions of those around her, hiding her true emotional state and struggles. Rob's influence over Adele and his role in guiding her actions underscore his embodiment of the trickster archetype.

Rob is a good friend in the beginning, but his actions soon reveal a darker, manipulative side. He is a drug addict and would mention drugs in such a way that it sounds like the most normal thing in the world. He also introduces Adele to drugs, further manipulating and destabilizing her life. Adele invites him to her estate after they leave Westlands so when he is going to Adele's place, he thinks of taking something with him. Hence, he steals his sister's dole money. Rob's act of stealing his sister's money showcases his cunning and deceitful nature. This behavior shows his willingness to betray even those close to him for personal gains. Moreover, when Rob becomes obsessed with the idea of being with David as his partner, he devises a plan to make it possible. While they were beside the well, Rob suggests to Adele that they astral project and swap bodies. After the swap, Rob's astral body inhabits Adele's physical body. He then injects Adele, now trapped in Rob's physical body, with drugs, causing her to die from overdose, and threw her body "... into the old dry well in the woods on the estate grounds" (253). To the outside world, it appears that Rob has died. Rob's use of body swapping demonstrates his manipulation of reality by blurring the line between truth and illusion. This reflects his cunning and deceitful nature. Murder highlights his violent and destructive nature.

Adele has trusted Rob, helped him in overcoming his night terrors, still it does not stop him from deceiving Adele. Adele helps Rob learn astral projection and he uses her teachings on her for his personal gains, and kills her. Hence, it was Rob all along who was plotting and planning while inhabiting Adele's body, and he repeats the same deceitful tactics with Louise. When Rob realizes that his marriage to David was beyond repair, he devises a plan to start anew. "It has to be fresh" (262). He allows David to fall in love with and trust Louise, carefully orchestrating situations so that he wouldn't have to ask Louise to swap bodies but could do it stealthily. Rob texts Louise, hinting at suicide. Louise comes to David's house to save her supposed friend, Adele for which she uses astral projection. There, Rob 's astral body picks his time "... after she was empty to go into her", and enters Louise's physical body (278). He then injects drugs into Adele's body, murdering her. To the world, it appears that Adele has died and Louise survives. In reality, both Adele and Louise have died, while Rob continues to live on in Louise's body. David marries Louise/Rob and Louise/Rob starts planning on eliminating possible threats to her marriage such as Ian, her ex-husband and Adam, her son.

Rob's actions are a quintessential example of Jung's trickster archetype. The trickster is often characterized by cunning, deceit, and a propensity to disrupt the status quo, embodying chaos. Rob's behavior exemplifies the trickster archetype in several ways. Firstly, his ability to deceive and manipulate both Adele and David, highlights the trickster's willingness for cunning and duplicity. The trickster thrives on deception, using lies and manipulation to achieve their goals. Rob's interactions with Louise and David, while in Adele's body, are filled with lies and half-truths, creating a web of deceit that traps them both. His betrayal of Adele, despite her trust in him, highlights the trickster's lack of moral constraints and readiness to exploit the vulnerabilities of others for personal gain. Thirdly, Rob's drastic action of body-swapping and murder to achieve his desires illustrates the trickster's disruptive nature, bringing chaos and transformation to the lives of those around him. The trickster is a catalyst for change, often through destructive means.

Similarly, in *Stranger with My Face*, Lia embodies the trickster archetype through her deceptive actions and cunning strategies. She also takes control of Laurie's body, showcasing her ability to manipulate and deceive. Lia's jealousy towards Laurie stems from Laurie having a more loving and supportive adoptive family, the wealth something Lia never experienced herself. She says, "You had it all! And I had nothing! Then I came and saw it – the island, the house, your parents! And I knew I would do anything to be in your place" (176). This envy drives her to manipulate Laurie into learning astral projection. Then use her own astral projection abilities to infiltrate Laurie's life, taking over her physical body when she has vacated it, to gain access to the privileges Laurie enjoys. Furthermore, Lia's greed is evident in her desire to obtain Laurie's inheritance, reflecting her willingness to cross moral boundaries for personal gain. She gets furious when she gets to know that Laurie's parents "are going to get Jeff's face fixed" (179). She says, "Without my permission, they're planning to hand away a part of my inheritance" (180). This reflects traits akin to trickster archetype allowing Lia to disrupt Laurie's life and manipulate situations to her advantage, highlighting the darker aspects of her character and the lengths she is willing to go to achieve her goals.

4.6 Anima Archetype

Jung's concepts of anima and animus refer to the unconscious feminine side in men (anima) and the unconscious masculine side in women (animus) (Jung 1964).

These archetypes represent the inner opposite gender qualities that influence an individual's behaviors, emotions, and perceptions. Rob's anima significantly influences his actions and desires in *Behind Her Eyes*. When he meets David at Adele's place, he falls so deeply in love with him that he forgets his previous feelings of love and protectiveness towards Adele. For Rob, "... It was love at first sight – a love that could never die. Adele and all her soft kindness paled in comparison. What I felt for her was simply dust on the wind. Gone in a second." (282). The intense love that overshadows Adele's genuine kindness reflects Rob's anima which becomes so strong that he plots to have him. "I knew then that I had to have him. I had to" (282). He envisions himself in a traditionally feminine role, such as that of a wife. He thinks of David all the time and says he is "someone I adored. I wanted to touch David's scars... I wanted to feel that passion. That love" (283). His desire to live out a feminine role because of his anima becomes a driving force behind his decision to swap bodies with Adele. Rob's actions, driven by his anima, lead him to manipulate and deceive those around him. His longing for intimacy and connection with David, coupled with his desire to embody a role traditionally associated with women, pushes him to make extreme choices. This reflects how his anima shapes his behavior.

CHAPTER 5

FRAGMENTED REALITIES: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF ASTRAL PROJECTION IN DISTORTING TRUTH AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS IN *BEHIND HER EYES* AND *STRANGER WITH MY FACE*

In this chapter, I address the second and third theoretical questions by exploring the role of astral projection in distorting the truth and its psychological effects on the characters in *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face*. Drawing on Susan J. Blackmore's exploration of astral projection, which examines the phenomenon of an out-of-body experience where the spirit or consciousness is believed to travel outside the physical body, this chapter investigates how astral projection influences the characters' perceptions of reality and contributes to their psychological distortion. By examining the role of astral projection in shaping the character's interactions, I uncover the ways in which this phenomenon blurs the boundaries between the physical and metaphysical, thereby impacting the protagonists' understanding of themselves and their surroundings. This exploration provides insight into the interplay between astral projection and the psychological complexities within these works, highlighting its significance in the characters' journeys. It is pertinent to mention here that I have not used the term "fragmented realities" in a post-humanist context here, rather it denotes the rise of various existences as a result of astral projection and the travel through the astral realm.

5.1 Blackmore's Requisites and the Psychological Framework of Astral Projection in Fiction

According to Blackmore (1992), out-of-body experiences (OBEs) usually happen under specific conditions that affect the mind and body. She explains that OBEs often occur when a person is in an altered state of consciousness, such as during sleep, deep meditation, or when using certain drugs. In these states, a person might feel disconnected from their physical body and have the sensation of observing themselves from outside their body. Blackmore also suggests that high stress levels, sensory deprivation, or lack of external stimuli can trigger OBEs. These experiences are often created by the brain using internal thoughts and feelings, rather than actual

external reality. Blackmore's research shows that OBEs are influenced by various mental, emotional, and physical factors, and are unique to each person's situation. She also suggests that "in the case of the OBE the following are necessary:

1. Vivid and detailed imagery
2. Low reality testing so that memories and images may seem 'real';
3. Sensory input from the body reduced or not attended to;
4. Awareness and logical thinking maintained" (244)

In the subsequent paragraphs, the analysis first establishes that astral projection is occurring in both *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face*. By examining the vivid and detailed imagery, low reality testing, reduced sensory input, and maintained awareness described by Blackmore, the texts are explored to show how these elements are present in the characters' experiences. The discussion then connects astral projection to Jungian archetypes, demonstrating how these universal symbols influence the characters' actions and perceptions. Finally, the focus shifts to how astral projection distorts reality for the characters, leading them to question what is real and impacting their psychological states.

In *Behind Her Eyes*, each character's use of astral projection distorts their psyche and reality, leading to significant confusion. Adele, one of the central characters in *Behind Her Eyes*, is initially presented as a beautiful, enigmatic, and wealthy woman married to David, a successful psychiatrist. She appears to be the perfect wife, living a life of luxury and refinement. However, beneath this facade, Adele's character is complex and deeply troubled, harboring secrets and a dark past. Her external charm masks a manipulative and obsessive nature. Adele is deeply involved in the practice of voluntary astral projection, a technique she uses to control her dreams and escape her night terrors. From a young age, Adele experiences horrific nightmares that disturb her sleep and mental peace. "Sleep is the release that has turned on her, a biting snake in the night" (33). To manage these night terrors, she learns to separate her consciousness from her physical body, exploring different places while her body rests. This ability becomes a crucial part of her life, as she uses it to exert control over her surroundings and manipulate those around her.

As Blackmore has explained that OBEs often occur when a person is in an altered state of consciousness, such as during sleep, Adele also experiences astral

projection during sleep. She does not sleep like normal people as she says, “Sleep is different for me” (36). In the beginning, she is unable to tell anyone about her ability to astral project. “And at the centre of it all is the thing she can never tell them about. They would lock her up forever if she did” (36). She had also undergone therapy for it. “Sleep keeps bringing her back to therapy” (36). For her, sleep is not just a time for rest, but a doorway to another realm where she can first control her dreams and then separate her consciousness from her physical self. Through voluntary astral projection, Adele navigates this realm with meticulous attention to detail, visiting places and observing her surroundings. This unique ability gives her a sense of power and mastery over her subconscious experiences, shaping her perception of both waking and dreaming life.

Furthermore, as Blackmore has described that vivid, detailed imagery and maintained awareness are prerequisites in the case of OBE, Adele devotes a significant amount of time visiting various places such as shops, bars, and restaurants, where she observes every minute detail to make her astral journeys precise and vivid. Her goal is to commit these details to memory, enabling her to recall them accurately later on. “Cognitive map” as mentioned by Blackmore, helps an astral projector navigate the astral plane (246). For instance, Adele goes to sign up at the local health club “...and then walked around ... [her] new chic area, absorbing it all. I like to lock locations in place. To be able to see them” (22). Hence, when she engages in astral projection from the comfort of her home, she can revisit these locations whenever she wants. “I walked for nearly two hours, mentally logging shops and bars and restaurants until I had them stored in my head, their images summonable at will” (22). This shows that Adele would later on recall images of places she visited, in her mind ‘at will’. Hence, when she astral projects, she accurately visits these places. This mental preparation and attention to detail is a deliberate strategy to ensure her astral journeys are as vivid and controlled as possible. This practice allows her to escape the limitations of her physical existence, giving her a sense of control over her life; “making [her] feel more comfortable. It helps [her] relax” (22).

Similarly, In *Stranger with My Face*, the importance of a cognitive map is subtly referenced through the experiences of astral projection. When Laurie astral project, she intuitively navigates to the hospital where her friend Helen is being treated, saying, “I knew where Helen was” (146). Similarly, Lia remarks that it was

easy for her to find Laurie because she was already familiar with Laurie's location. She says:

I knew where you were. Kathy had brought home a book from the library one day by a writer named James Stratton. There was a picture of him with his family on the back of the jacket, and the biography said they lived on an island off the New England coast. I recognized the name, and the black-haired girl... It had to be you! (175)

These instances reflect that both characters possess a cognitive map that guides them during their astral travels. Additionally, after astral projecting, the characters encounter vivid imagery, which aligns with Blackmore's explanation of the role of mental representations in shaping the experiences of astral projectors and how they navigate the astral realm. Furthermore, during her astral journey to Helen, Laurie is aware of everything happening in the surroundings. She could hear the nurses talking, see Helen lying on the bed, hear the conversation Helen's father has with her, realize that a part of Helen's memories have wiped out due to the accident, realize when it is time for her [Laurie] to get back to her Cliff House (139, 140). This corresponds with Blackmore's conception of "awareness and logical thinking maintained" during out-of-body-experiences (244).

5.2 The Shadow Within: Adele's Manipulation through Astral Projection

Moving back to *Behind Her Eyes*, Adele's shadow compels her to use astral projection to keep constant tabs on her husband, David. She often leaves her physical body to follow him, observing his actions and interactions to 'see' what he is doing. For instance:

He's probably just getting to the office now... I have time. I go up to our bedroom and lie on top of the covers. I'm not going to sleep. But I do close my eyes. I think about the clinic. David's office. That plush cream carpet. The polished mahogany of his desk. The tiny scratch on the corner. The two slim couches. Firm seats. The details. I take a deep breath (23).

Adele recalls all the minute details of David's office so she can visit it during her astral projections. She recalls the layout, furnishings, and even small objects, allowing her to navigate the space accurately when she leaves her body. This ability allows her to monitor his behavior without him knowing, giving her a sense of control and awareness over his movements and activities. Through astral projection, Adele tries to know any secrets David might be hiding. David can never deceive Adele, a fact that

Adele alluded to in the novel. She implies that she is fully aware of his actions because she monitors him through astral projection, suggesting that there is no point in him trying to lie or conceal the truth from her. She says, “Of course he doesn’t tell me the truth, although he should really know better by now” (166). David does not know what it is or how Adele does it but he suspects. He even directly asks Adele, “You always know things. How is that?” (204) This suggests Adele is fully conscious during her astral journeys, which she exploits for her selfish, manipulative purposes, driven by the influence of her shadow archetype.

Adele is highly manipulative and orchestrates situations to her advantage. Her shadow compels her to carefully create circumstances to become friends with Louise, starting with a seemingly innocent offer to do something together. After some discussion, they settled on going to the gym. Adele then took the initiative to offer Louise a ride, knowing it would give her an opportunity to get closer to her. When Adele went to pick Louise up, she didn't let Louise's awkwardness deter her. Instead, she insisted on a guided tour through Louise's flat, using the opportunity “to see inside”, to observe her surroundings closely because “the details are important when you need to see a place” (69). Here, Adele hints that in order to astral project to a specific location, she needs to memorize the details of that place.

I’ve closed my eyes too, mentally checking my catalogue of the rooms of her home. The sitting room; one TV, a cream sofa with a beige throw covering the old cushions, a small cigarette burn on the left arm. Blue carpet. Hard-wearing. Child-proof. The main bedroom. Small, but enough space for a double bed. Feature wallpaper behind the bed. White built-in wardrobe. White chest of drawers with a cluttered surface of make-up. A tangle of cheap jewellery overflowing from a small bag – the kind that probably came free with a face cream or in a gift set. A dressing gown hooked on the back of the door – once a fluffy white, now rough and tired from too many washes and with coffee or tea stains on the sleeves (69).

These are the levels of detail Adele notices in Louise's flat. She only pays attention to what Louise was saying when she was sure she had everything securely logged in her head (70). This indicates that Adele has her own motives for being at Louise's place and wasn't truly engaged in their conversation. Her shadow side is evident here, as she is focused on her own agenda rather than genuine interest. Later, she uses astral projection to monitor Louise, further demonstrating her manipulative tendencies.

Adele knows things she couldn't possibly know, including details that Louise has never shared with her. This suggests that Adele has been using her ability of astral

projection to keep tabs on Louise. Her knowledge of these intimate details indicates a deliberate and invasive use of her supernatural abilities to monitor and manipulate those around her. For instance, when Louise gets to know about Rob that he has been missing and Adele has not seen him since he visited her at her parent's estate. Adele suspected that David had killed Rob and from all that Louise knows about David, this suspicion could very well be true. Louise thinks she needed to do something about this so she writes a letter. "It's better than doing nothing... This is about Rob. This is about justice for him" (221). Louise does not tell Adele that she has written a letter addressed to Angus Wignall, who is a detective chief inspector at Perth Police Station. She does not tell her that she has written all her suspicions about David in the letter. Still Adele knows as she says, "I know she's feeling guilty about the letter she doesn't know I know she's sent" (226). Astral projection enables Adele to manipulate and plot against others, serving her grand plan that benefits only herself.

Initially, Adele uses an old notebook that contained the basic method of astral projection, which she diligently studied and practiced. She referred to it as "Instructions from another life" (61). This notebook was "the tricks of the trade as it were" (61). The instructions were:

Pinch myself and say I AM AWAKE once an hour.
Look at my hands. Count my fingers.
Look at clock (or watch), look away, look back.
Stay calm and focused.
Think of a door. (10)

Over time, Adele learned and experienced much more, expanding her understanding beyond the notebook's original content. She eventually gave the notebook to her friend Rob from Westlands. Rob began using the notebook as a journal, documenting his attempts at astral projection meanwhile also recording details of his daily routine. This notebook became an essential tool for both Adele and Rob, helping them refine their methods and keep a detailed record of the progress. This practice allowed Adele to explore astral projection privately. She valued the notebook's guidance and considered sharing its contents with Louise to introduce her to the practice. The notebook is Adele's secret, and David does not know about it. She keeps it at places "... where it won't be seen" (61). But Adele wanted to share it with Louise. "It's what Louise needs... She is my secret, and soon we'll have our secret" (61). Adele's act of giving the book on astral projection to others is a strategic move to maintain control

and further her manipulative plans. By encouraging others to learn astral projection, she ensures their involvement in her distorted reality, using the knowledge to manipulate and extend her influence.

Adele becomes friends with Louise and helps her with her night terrors by introducing her to the concept of lucid dreaming, showing her how to achieve control and awareness in her dreams. She tells her, “You need to learn to control your dreams” (79). She also shares her own experience of the night terrors and how she dealt with them. She says, “It’s what I did... it changed my life. Take the notebook. Read it. Trust me, if you put the effort in then no more night terrors and just amazingly vivid dreams *of your choosing*. Lucid dreaming” (79). It is when Louise gains the ability to lucid dream, she eventually discovers the second door, which enables her to astral project. By providing these techniques and offering her support, Adele deepens her connection with Louise. This helps Adele advance her manipulative plans.

Moving forward, in *Behind Her Eyes*, the real Adele's involvement in astral projection leads to her psychological distress. For instance, when at Westlands, the real Adele confides in Rob about a traumatic incident from her past. She reveals that when the fire broke out at her parents' house, she was engaged in astral projection. “I was doing it when my parents died... Just flying everywhere. Like I was the wind or something. Soaring out over nature” (280). Her parents died in the fire, but Adele survived because her room was situated away from the area where the fire started. David saved her before the flames reached her room. This traumatic event led Adele to stop sleeping, consumed by guilt and the belief that her astral projection was somehow responsible for her parents' deaths. She says to Rob, “It was my fault my parents died... if I’d been *there*, even if I’d been normally asleep, I would have woken up. I could have done something” (280). Consequently, Adele ends up in a psychiatry facility because “... she was so distraught. Wouldn’t sleep. It was like she was fading away” (252). Adele’s secretive use of astral projection to escape and explore, results in specific circumstances which adds layers of guilt and paranoia, complicating her psychological state. Although Adele could distinguish between reality and her astral experiences, the inability to act during the tragedy left her overwhelmed with guilt. This highlights how unchecked metaphysical practices can have damaging psychological consequences.

5.3 Conflicted Perception: Louise's Mother Archetype and Astral Awakening

In the novel *Behind Her Eyes*, two doors are mentioned that are quite significant in dreamscapes. The first door leads to lucid dreaming, allowing a person to control their dreams and be anywhere with anyone they desire. The second door leads to astral projection, enabling a person to leave their physical body and visit real places that they think about, rather than imaginary locations. When Louise encounters the second door for the first time, she finds it without a handle and is unable to open it. However, when the mother archetype comes into play and she is overwhelmed with emotions for Adam, wanting to see him, the second door reappears before her, now with a handle. This time, Louise is able to open the door and enter, finding herself in Adam's room, standing by Adam's bed.

I'm in his bedroom. I can hear him breathing, slow and steady... One arm is over his face... His duvet is half kicked off, and at some point he must have knocked his water over and it's spilled all over poor Paddington, who's fallen out of bed. I'm glad it's a dream... I bend over to pick the bear up, but my hand can't grasp it. More than that, I can't see my hands. I look at where they should be. I have no hands. There's nothing there... as if I'm not there at all, as if I'm a ghost and then... I feel an enormous tug from behind as I'm yanked backwards... and then – I wake up with a gasp... sucking in deep breaths of air. I feel jolted awake (179).

This was Louise's first experience of astral projection. At the time she does not realize what has happened. She thinks of it as the same; lucid dreaming. She feels "weirdly energised" and goes to kitchen to drink water. On her way back to bed, she pauses at Adam's door and look in and smile. When she is about to close the door, she sees Paddington on the floor, fallen out of bed and soaked. This time she is able to pick it up. She looks at Adam whose one arm is over the face and "... his legs are sticking out from the half kicked-off duvet" (180). Everything was exactly as she had seen in her dream or which she thinks of as a dream. She gets confused that how is it possible. She has always been able to do all the actions like eating, drinking while lucid dreaming but this time she was not able to pick up the bear, Paddington. Her invisibility, the fact that she did not have hands at the time confused her. It was her astral body that was connected via a cord to her physical body that is why she feels a tug from behind before waking up, which is returning to her body. She was immersed in the experience of astral projection at the time. Her confusion highlights the

distortion of reality she experiences, as she is unable to distinguish between what is real and what is not. This inability to accurately recall events or separate reality from illusion illustrates the impact astral projection has on her perception.

Adele knew all about the second door, having frequently summoned and entered it to astral project. When Louise shares with her the first time she sees the second door and asks if Adele has experienced it, Adele denies ever coming across it. On the inside, she is beyond ecstatic. However, she hides her excitement and denies knowing anything about it. Internally, she is extremely happy that Louise has found the door faster than expected. She even goes as far as calling Louise a “natural” at lucid dreaming and astral projection (184). Despite appearing to be Louise's good friend, Adele does not clarify her confusions or explain the second door and astral projection to her. Instead, she lets Louise fend for herself. Withholding this information is crucial for Adele's grand plan, allowing her to maintain control and manipulate the situation to her advantage. Adele ensures that Louise stays in a state of confusion, carefully manipulating events and offering just enough clarity to lead Louise into actions that ultimately align with her own manipulative plan of body-swapping.

To talk about Louise's experience, Louise is able to astral project when she is in a relaxing position, calmed down and tries to empty her thoughts by not thinking about the mess her life has become due to becoming stuck between David and Adele. This aligns with Blackmore's assertion that a lack of sensory stimulation is necessary for astral projection. According to her, when sensory input from the body is reduced or not attended to, it creates the conditions needed for an out-of-body experience. For instance, once, Louise is sitting on the sofa with her head resting against the back cushions. She is trying to calm herself down by breathing deeply and forcing her tense muscles to relax. She tries to empty her thoughts by not thinking about anything. She thinks:

I want to leave myself behind, just for a while. It happens so suddenly... The silvery edges of the second door appear in the darkness behind my eyes... and then, before I even see the shimmering watery surface, I'm through it and— — I'm standing over myself... I can see me sitting on the sofa, my head lolling back. My eyes are closed, my mouth half-open. The wine glass sits, empty on the table beside me... I panic and I feel a massive tug at the very core of me... and then my eyes open and I'm back on the sofa (202).

This leaves Louise confused. She does not understand what just happened and how did she see herself that way. At another instance, she had a headache so she goes to lie down for a bit. She does not sleep rather closes the curtains and lie in a darkened room, wishing the headache would subside. She feels the cool pillow under her head and breathes deeply. She tries to "... Let the tension out of ... [her] shoulders, hands, and feet..." (229). She says, "I empty my body of breath and empty my mind of more clutter with each exhalation" (229). This alleviates the pain a little in Louise's head. She wants 'to escape for a while'. At this very moment, it happened. The second door appears very quickly and she enters the door even faster. Louise describes the aftermath as:

—I'm looking down at myself. My mouth is half open. My eyes are closed. If I'm still taking deep breaths it doesn't show. I look dead. Empty. I am empty... I'm up here. That's just ... a body. A machine. My machine. But no one's at the controls. No one's home. I hover for a moment... I have no headache. I have no sense of any feeling; no arms, no legs, no tension, no breath... It's something... (229, 230).

This again corresponds with Blackmore's description when she says about astral projector, "He will be able to observe an image of himself sitting in the chair and at the same time seem to be himself up on the ceiling" (246). As Louise does not have background or basic knowledge about the phenomenon so she does not recognize that this is her experience of astral projection. Her astral body is out of her physical body and she is looking down at that body from above, calling it a mere machine with no controller. Louise's involvement with astral projection leaves her struggling to reconcile her physical experiences with the surreal, manipulated reality, resulting in deep psychological distress and confusion. For her, the thin line between reality and illusion becomes blurred whenever she astral projects, leaving her confused about what is truly happening.

5.4 The Feminized Trickster: Rob's Astral Intrusion and Anima-Driven Identity Shift

Furthermore, Rob, Adele's friend from the Westlands, has also learned astral projection with her assistance. Rob's mastery of astral projection plays a crucial role in his elaborate plan to be with David. When he meets David, Rob becomes infatuated and he starts desiring to be with David. This leads him to devise a plan involving astral projection and body-swapping. Rob suggests to Adele that they swap bodies

using astral projection. Once they have swapped, Rob, now in Adele's body, administers a lethal dose of drugs to Adele, who is trapped in Rob's body. In the eyes of the world, Rob is dead, while Adele, now inhabited by Rob's astral self, continues living. With Adele's identity now his own, Rob seamlessly integrates into her life, his true identity concealed. Years later, when David's relationship with "Adele" deteriorates beyond repair, Rob orchestrates and executes a new plan. He allows David and Louise's relationship to develop, and waits for the time to swap bodies with Louise. He then repeats the same with Louise by manipulating her into thinking that Adele is in danger. When Louise arrives, she astral projects into Adele's body, which is exactly what Rob has planned. Rob then takes over Louise's body and injects drugs into Adele's body, now inhabited by Louise, ensuring her death. In the aftermath, the world believes that Adele has died, and Louise has survived, which is not true. In reality, both Adele and Louise are dead, while Rob continues to live on in Louise's body.

This strategic use of astral projection allows Rob to manipulate and control those around him, achieving his ultimate goal of staying close to David and living the life he covets, all while evading justice. Rob, as a representation of the trickster archetype, is driven by his anima and shadow. He manipulates and deceives others to get what he wants, using astral projection and body-swapping to confuse reality. These actions show his clever but harmful nature, as he blurs the lines between what is real and what is false. Rob's behavior is fueled by his shadow which contains his darker impulses such as manipulation and deception, and his anima which reflects his desire of being with David. Together, these parts of his psyche push him to use astral projection and disrupt reality for his own gain. Astral projection and body-swapping significantly disrupts the sense of truth and identity for the other characters in the novel. It becomes almost impossible for the characters to distinguish what is real from what is false. For instance, when Rob takes over Adele's body and later swaps into Louise's body, it creates a deceptive environment where the other characters, David and Louise, are unable to perceive the truth. David, who is intimately connected to both Adele and Louise, can only see the physical appearance of the people he knows, leading him to believe he is interacting with Adele or Louise based on their physical form. Even when David senses that something is wrong with Adele, he struggles to identify what exactly is off because the face he sees is still Adele's. This inability to

see beyond physical appearances reinforces the confusion and the blurring of line between reality and illusion, trapping the characters in a web of deceit and manipulation. The confusion generated by Rob's actions distorts the characters' understanding of reality, and their perception of truth is constantly challenged, leading to deep psychological and emotional turmoil.

5.5 Astral Deception and Psychological Disarray: Lia's Identity

Usurpation as Shadow and Trickster Archetype

Similarly, in *Stranger with My Face*, Lia as a trickster archetype is driven by her shadow, which is filled with envy, greed, and manipulation. Her intense jealousy of Laurie's life, with its loving family and material comforts, fuels her need to take what Laurie has. Lia's shadow, representing her darker, repressed feelings, pushes her to cross moral boundaries and use deceitful tactics to achieve her goals. Lia manipulates and influences Laurie into learning astral projection, showing frustration on Laurie's failed attempts. Laurie describes Lia's anger on her failed attempt at astral projection in these words, "Lying on my bed with my eyes squeezed shut, I could feel the vibrations of her anger reaching to engulf me. They rolled over me like icy waves, and I shivered, unable to comprehend what lay behind them" (100). This manipulation is part of Lia's plan, as she intends to take over Laurie's body once Laurie is able to vacate it through astral projection. Lia's actions reveal a deliberate strategy to gain control, driven by her desire to assume Laurie's life. This leads her to take over Laurie's body through astral projection, allowing her to experience Laurie's life and possessions. Lia's actions show her willingness to manipulate reality for her personal gains, embodying the trickster's cunning nature. By taking over Laurie's body, Lia distorts reality for everyone around Laurie, including her parents and siblings, who only see Laurie's physical body and cannot tell that it is occupied by Lia's astral form. This manipulation allows Lia to live Laurie's life and escape her own less fortunate circumstances, highlighting how her shadow drives her actions.

Astral projection in *Stranger with My Face* creates a blurred reality, making it difficult for the characters to distinguish between what is real and what is not. When Lia astral projects and visits the island where Laurie lives, her presence confuses many of Laurie's family and friends. Due to the identical appearance of the twins, Laurie's father, sister, and friends mistake Lia for Laurie. As a result, they question

Laurie and mention seeing her in places where she has not been. For instance, Laurie has been unable to attend the end-of-summer party because she was unwell. However, the next day, when she meets her boyfriend Gordon, he accuses her of being on the beach during the party and demands to know who she was meeting there. He says, “I saw you on the beach” (11). Apart from Gordon, Laurie’s other friends are also convinced that they have seen her, to the point where they refuse to believe otherwise. Natalie, one of the friends, says, “We both saw you. There’s no way in the world it could have been anyone else” (12). Natalie goes as far as calling her a liar, “We know you’re lying” (13). This confusion arises because Gordon, like others, has mistaken Lia for Laurie due to their identical appearance, further distorting his perception of reality. The physical resemblance between Lia and Laurie leads to this confusion, as no one suspects that it is Lia’s astral form they have encountered. This overlap of identities, caused by astral projection, makes it challenging for the characters to perceive reality accurately, intensifying the overall distortion within the narrative.

Furthermore, Laurie’s immediate family is also unable to distinguish between reality and unreality. Her father and sister are repeatedly confused when they encounter Lia’s astral form, assuming she is Laurie due to their identical appearance. This causes them to question Laurie about her whereabouts. For instance, Neal, Laurie’s younger brother, gets confused when Laurie returns home from school and says, “How did you get there? I thought you were upstairs... Dad said you were upstairs. He said you didn’t go to school today” (20). Laurie tries to clear the confusion by giving reasonable justifications and telling Neal that they left the house together, she boarded the ferry alongside Neal and went to school. She also tells him that high school students do not get half-days that she could have come home in the middle. Nevertheless, Neal remains adamant and says, “He [Dad] said he saw you... He said he talked to you, and you didn’t answer” (ibid). Their inability to differentiate between the real Laurie and Lia’s astral double creates an atmosphere of confusion and distrust within the family, as they become increasingly convinced that Laurie is being dishonest. This blurring of reality and unreality highlights the impact of Lia’s astral projection on those closest to Laurie.

Similarly, when Laurie, upon her return from school, senses someone’s presence in her room without any visible evidence, she goes and asks her parents if someone has been in her room. To this, her father replies, “Just you” (23). Laurie tries

to tell him that he could not have seen her as she was not here and she has only just returned from school. This confuses her father, who thinks for a while and then takes it upon himself that he must be mistaken and he must have seen her yesterday. This reflects that Lia's astral projection creates an illusion so powerful that it distorts reality, making it difficult for anyone to perceive what is truly happening. At another instance, Laurie's younger sister Meg tells her that she has seen her 'looking in' her bedroom window to which Laurie replies that she would have to be standing on a ladder to look in the window. Meg also becomes perplexed and says, "That's why I couldn't understand... you were up so high. How did you get up there?" (36) Hence, Lia's use of astral projection warps reality to the extent that it becomes difficult for others to discern the truth of what is actually occurring, causing mental confusion.

Laurie herself experiences significant confusion and psychological distortion when Lia takes control of her physical body, leaving Laurie's astral body displaced and unable to re-enter. Laurie's astral form is left stranded at the Cliff House and on the island, forced to watch as Lia interacts with her family and assumes her life. Seeing someone else in her physical body, Laurie begins to question her own identity, asking, "*So you became Laurie. And what about me. Who, then, am I?*" (176). At another instance, she says, "And if she was Laurie Stratton—then who was I?" (170). This disconnect from her physical-self triggers a shift in her behavior and psyche. Laurie begins to undervalue herself, calling herself "stupid" for believing she was invulnerable and allowing Lia to easily take over her body. She says, "A shadow [Lia's astral form] could do nothing, unless it ceased to be a shadow. Unless it managed to claim a body left vacated and unguarded by someone stupid enough to believe herself invulnerable" (170,171). This self-criticism reflects her growing self-doubt and regret over her actions, contributing to her psychological distress. Laurie also becomes overly protective of her loved ones, desperately wanting to warn them about Lia's presence and tell them to 'be careful!', but her inability to communicate heightens her frustration and helplessness. This sense of powerlessness leads to a psychological and emotional transformation in Laurie.

In conclusion, astral projection in *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face* impacts each character, distorting their mental state and sense of reality. The characters' respective archetypes play a crucial role in their involvement and manipulation of astral projection. Rob's trickster archetype drives him to use body-

swapping to create confusion and manipulate others' perceptions of truth and identity. Lia's trickster archetype, driven by envy and greed, leads her to take over Laurie's body, distorting reality for those around her and hiding her true identity. Adele's secretive use of astral projection allows her to escape her life but ultimately leads to guilt and paranoia, further complicating her psychological well-being. Similarly, Louise's experience with astral projection causes her to struggle with distinguishing her real experiences from the altered reality, resulting in significant confusion and emotional distress.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In this concluding chapter, I synthesize the insights gained from analyzing the impact of astral projection on the characters in *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face*. The exploration has highlighted how the manipulation of reality through astral projection affects the characters' psychological states and sense of identity. The discussion has shown how Rob's trickster archetype, Adele's emotional turmoil, and Lia's cunning strategies contribute to a complex web of confusion and distorted perceptions. By examining these elements, I have elucidated the effects of astral projection on both individual psyches and relational dynamics, offering a comprehensive understanding of its role in shaping and distorting reality within the narratives.

Chapter 4 of the thesis dealt with my first research question. In the novels, *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face*, archetypal symbols play a crucial role in shaping the characters and their narratives. In *Behind Her Eyes*, the mother archetype is portrayed through Louise. Her deep emotional bond with her son, Adam, and her nurturing, protective behavior highlight the mother archetype's characteristics. Louise's actions, including her efforts to ensure Adam's safety and well-being, reflect the nurturing aspect of motherhood. David embodies the hero archetype through his role as a protector and healer. Despite facing significant manipulation and emotional challenges from Adele, he remains dedicated to his responsibilities, reflecting the hero's journey of overcoming both personal and external obstacles. The rebirth archetype is represented through characters' transformations and identity shifts hence, Rob's body-swapping symbolizes a form of rebirth, where he moves between different bodies, signifying a transformation of identity and reality. The trickster archetype is embodied by Rob, whose body-swapping and manipulative behavior creates confusion and deception. His actions disrupt the perception of reality and truth for others, reflecting the trickster's role in causing chaos and distress. David's shadow is characterized by his issues with anger, alcohol, and infidelity. These traits expose the darker aspects of his personality and their impact on his relationships and sense of self. Louise's shadow includes her struggles with alcohol, inferiority complex, and her affair with David, which shape

her actions and interactions with others, revealing her insecurities and conflicts. Rob demonstrates a pronounced animus through his desire to inhabit a different gender's role and experience life from another perspective. His body-swapping behavior, driven by his animus and shadow, leads to significant manipulation and deceit.

Likewise, in *Stranger with My Face*, Shelly Stratton illustrates the mother archetype through her care for Laurie, whom she treats as her own despite being the adopted child. Her protectiveness and emotional concern, evident in her hospital visits and worry for Laurie's safety, underscore her role as a nurturing mother figure. Jeff Rankin exemplifies the hero archetype by confronting Lia, who has taken over Laurie's body. His brave actions, including using Helena's fetish to fight against her control, demonstrate his commitment to saving Laurie. The rebirth archetype is represented through characters' transformations and identity shifts hence, Lia's takeover of Laurie's body reflects her desire to escape her own life and assume a new identity, representing a rebirth of sorts as she takes on Laurie's life and privileges. Furthermore, Lia also fits the trickster archetype through her takeover of Laurie's body. Her manipulation and jealousy drive her to deceive others and disrupt Laurie's life, illustrating the trickster's part in creating disorder and exploiting others' vulnerabilities. All these archetypal symbols are central to understanding the characters' motivations and the narrative structures within both texts, highlighting how deeply they influence the psychological dimensions of the characters.

Moving on, Chapter 5 of the thesis dealt with the rest of the two research questions. In answering the second research question about how Jungian archetypal symbols help enable astral projection in the selected texts, I found that these symbols are closely linked to the characters' ability to project their consciousness into the astral realm. In *Behind Her Eyes*, Rob's use of astral projection is influenced by his anima and shadow archetypes. His dark desires and a need to control others drive him to use astral projection to manipulate and deceive those around him. Similarly, in *Stranger with My Face*, Lia's trickster nature and shadow characterized by jealousy, greed, and manipulation lead her to take over Laurie's body. Lia's trickster archetype enables her to use astral projection to disrupt Laurie's life and achieve her own goals. These examples show that the characters' interactions with their archetypes influence their psyche negatively and enable them to project their consciousness and alter reality to achieve their selfish gains.

For the third research question, which looks at how astral projection affects the characters' psychological states and behavior, I saw significant impacts. In *Behind Her Eyes*, Louise finds it difficult to separate her real experiences from the altered ones she encounters through astral projection. This confusion causes her emotional distress and affects her behavior. Rob's use of astral projection causes a lot of confusion for the other characters. While they see what looks like one physical body, it's actually Rob's astral body controlling it. This makes it hard for them to understand what's really happening, as they are deceived by what appears to be the familiar appearance of their loved ones. Rob's actions lead to a distorted sense of reality, where the true identity of the person they are interacting with is hidden. Similarly, in *Stranger with My Face*, Lia's use of astral projection distorts the reality for those around her. To others, it seems like they are interacting with Laurie, but it is actually Lia's astral form controlling it. This deception makes it difficult for Laurie's family and friends to recognize that something is wrong, as they only see the physical appearance of Laurie. Lia's manipulation through astral projection leads to a blurred perception of reality, where the true identity of the person they interact with is concealed by Lia's influence. Laurie's interaction with astral projection causes her to question her own identity also. She starts doubting herself, calling herself "stupid" for thinking she was safe and for letting Lia take over her body. This self-criticism shows her regret and vulnerability. She wants to protect her loved ones but her astral body is unable to warn them about Lia's intentions. This sense of powerlessness reflects her psychological turmoil within the narrative.

6.1 Recommendations for Further Research

This research is primarily focused on exploring astral projection, driven by the archetypes, and its role in distorting reality. Future researchers may explore more texts that include this concept. While *Behind Her Eyes* and *Stranger with My Face* provide a strong foundation, including more novels such as Gina Rosati's *Auracle* (2012) and Leila Del Duca's *Afar* (2017), as well as films like *Astral* (2018), *Doctor Sleep* (2019) and *Doctor Strange* (2016), or even historical accounts where astral projection is featured, would broaden the scope of the research. This would allow for a comparison of how different authors and creators depict the psychological effects caused by astral projection. Future research could also benefit from an exploration of psychological theories that relate to astral projection. For example, integrating

Freudian or Lacanian psychoanalysis could provide a different lens to view the characters' experiences. Additionally, understanding how different cultures interpret and understand astral projection could also enrich the analysis. Exploring non-Western perspectives on astral projection might reveal different interpretations of how it distorts reality and impacts the psyche. Beyond astral projection, other paranormal experiences such as lucid dreaming, near-death experiences, or telepathy also challenge the boundaries of reality and can distort perception. Comparing these experiences with astral projection could offer new insights into how the human mind navigates altered states of consciousness. Such a study could also identify common themes or differences in how these experiences are portrayed in literature and their psychological impact on characters. Besides, the concept of astral projection may be investigated in other disciplines such as psychology, sociology and cultural studies. These recommendations aim to broaden the research on astral projection, offering new perspectives and areas for exploration. By expanding the scope of study and integrating different theories, future research can build on the findings of my thesis and contribute to a deeper understanding of how astral projection distorts reality.

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