An Analysis of the Personality Changes of the Yellow Shirt from the Perspective of Jung's Prototype theory

Changlin Wu$^{1,a}$, Jiahong Xu$^{1,b}$

$^1$School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Nanchang, Jiangxi 330013, China;

$^a$420560545@qq.com, $^b$xjhwriter@163.com

Abstract. The image of the Yellow Shirt character serves as a tangible embodiment of the collective consciousness's yearning for the ideals of chivalry. Drawing upon Jung's theory of prototypes, the original personality mask of this character, rooted in the chivalrous spirit, undergoes a more intricate and varied transformation through the amalgamation of diverse temporal consciousness during the process of generational cumulative creation. Ultimately, it necessitates the attainment of its restored personality mask through the self-representation of the chivalrous core that accentuates its character prototype. Jung's prototype theory exhibits considerable flexibility and advantages in investigating the developmental trajectory of archetypal characters. It provides guidance in the exploration of the formation, development, and resurgence of diverse personality masks associated with numerous typical characters, including the Yellow Shirt.

Keywords: Jung's prototype theory; Personality mask; The Yellow Shirt; Generation accumulation creation.

1. Introduction

At present, many scholars have reached a consensus on the logic of the research on typical characters in the generation accumulation creation, starting from the development and extending to the richness of their characters' images, and have also made some achievements in the research on the evolution of specific characters or works. However, there is still a considerable theoretical space for the research track of typical character images, and the logic of the research on the evolution of typical character images in the past dynasties is not clear. Famous psychologist Jung founded the school of analytical psychology, one of the most constructive archetype theory, which regards the adaptation of archetypes by future generations as the integration of contemporary human consciousness. [1] This kind of theory, which focuses on the study of image and concept, can be used to explore the connection between characters and consciousness from the perspective of literary creation, to explore the relevant generation accumulation of creation, to find a new way to explore related issues, to explore the relationship and the flow track between typical characters, and to find a more logical and clear academic thought. It is a proposition of practical significance.

2. Origin: The mapping of the collective consciousness

At present, scholars generally agree that the initial image of typical characters in the generation accumulation creation is not out of thin air, but the crystallization of the author's conscious creation. Archetypes are the forms which give form to the innumerable types of experiences of our ancestors, and for future generations, they are the psychological vestiges of the innumerable experiences of the same type. [2] However, there are still different opinions on how to explain this phenomenon. By
trying to use Jung's collective unconscious theory, we can explain the emergence and significance of the original image of typical characters to a considerable extent.

The image of the yellow shirt guest originated from The Biography of Huo Xiaoyu in the Tang Dynasty, and appeared frequently in the later Yuan dramas, Qing Dynasty novels, modern Cantonese operas and films and television dramas. It is a typical model of the evolution of the typical character image in the research of accumulation. Due to the fact that the works of the Yellow Shirt from different dynasties and genres involve significant differences in their creations, they have been designated as the material for studying cumulative creation from generation to generation.

To explore the evolution of the personality mask of typical characters in the works of the past dynasties, the first thing to do is to trace the development process of the personality mask of the research object, find out the original image in the literary works of the past dynasties, and discover what kind of aesthetic consciousness and human emotion condensed into the personality mask of the original character. For example, to study the image of the yellow Shirt man, it is necessary to start from The Biography of Huo Xiaoyu in the Tang Dynasty. In this novel, the man dressed in yellow shirt is full of the chivalrous temperament of a high man in green forest, but also full of mysterious and legendary colors. He is strong and magnificent, and his appearance is extraordinary. The original text states that suddenly there is a rich man, who is lightly dressed in yellow dry clothes, carries bow bullets, the wind spirit is beautiful, and his clothes are beautiful.[3] Just look at his appearance and demeanor, people can know that he has spent many years in the society. When Li Yi abandoned Huo Xiaoyu, the Yellow Shirt came forward and escorted Li Yi to Huo Xiaoyu for apology. In this love tragedy, the Yellow Shirt is the embodiment of justice, which also conforms to the image of a courageous man in traditional culture. From the perspective of the plot development, the Yellow Shirt is also the moral force that makes Li Yi feel guilty. In The Biography of Huo Xiaoyu, which is a work with bright emotional color and moral direction, the success in shaping the image of the Yellow Shirt reflects the author's creative ideal and readers' expectation—the story of the beginning of chaos and the end of abandonment, the fate of the beautiful woman is a regrettable tragedy. Although it stimulates the readers' spiritual fluctuations in art, it cannot satisfy the readers' yearning for love and the maintenance of justice in consciousness. Therefore, in order to make up for this kind of defect, there should be a kind of spiritual satisfaction to make up for the regret in the story. The author created the image of the Yellow Shirt to express the public consciousness of the social group to maintain the good love and criticize the evil people, which also just proves that the creation of the Yellow Shirt is to satisfy the public psychology of chivalrously defending justice and promoting the happy ending of the story. He is the decisive force that turns tragedy into comedy. To sum up, the original personality mask of the Yellow Shirt object image is the chivalrous personality mask, and this personality mask is the story of the Yellow Shirt throughout the ages. The classic character image is not only a tool specially created by the writer for the literary and artistic works, but also a reflection of the collective concept and ideology of mankind consciously.

An effective prototype should be able to meet the need to renew the human spiritual desire. These archetypal features not only constitute the comprehensibility of literary works, but also reflect the collective desires and thinking of human beings. Huo Xiaoyu's story really exists in history, but the Yellow Shirt is a fictional image of novel, which reflects the collective consciousness of the masses in the Tang dynasty. The pursuit of beautiful emotions and the maintenance of social order are the noble qualities that the Han and Tang dynasties and even the entire history of Chinese civilization are most proud of. This method of output collective
consciousness into specific typical images of literary characters is exactly in line with the link of collective unconscious reflected in specific literary works in Jung's archetypal theory, which leads to the appearance of the characters in the Yellow Shirt for the first time in literary history holds the position of integrating the morality, wisdom, and courage of the ancestors. It is also the embodiment of Chinese ancient romantic thought, and the representative of people's resistance to evil forces and pursuit of individual freedom. From the foil character in Tang novels to the decisive force turned Li&Huo's marriage from sadness to happiness, the Yellow Shirt shows the traces of the arrogant personality that Confucianism respected. Even in the stories of the future generations, the image of the Yellow Shirt has changed, but its basic moral attributes and justice status are unshakable.

3. Evolution: The Progress of Personality Masks

3.1 The Enhancement of the Typical Personality

In the process of the evolution of typical character images, there is often such a phenomenon that later generations, when carrying out generation accumulation creation, tend to add the theme spirit of the era in which the author lives, mix the author's own views and attitudes, and then produce different understanding and creation of typical character images, which is for the enrichment of typical character images in generation accumulation creation. It is a phenomenon of multi-sided aesthetic consciousness based on typical character archetypes. For this literary phenomenon, there is a consensus that the enrichment of typical characters is an irreversible phenomenon due to the changes of the time and the creation of later generations. However, there is still room to explore whether the enrichment process of typical characters is just an increase in the plain sense, and what is the significance of this enrichment. To solve this problem, it can be further explained by Jung's prototype theory. It has been pointed out above that personality mask is a manifestation of collective unconsciousness embodied as an independent literary and artistic image, which is presented by the writer as a representative of the collective concept. However, in the process of creation, the writer inevitably mixes individual consciousness with collective unconsciousness. As a result, the original image of a typical character will be combined with other elements in the cumulative creation of the descendants, making the later personality mask quite different from the original personality mask, which is mainly manifested by the integration and floating development of personality mask. Through the explanation of integration and floating development, researchers can not only further clarify the process of the enrichment of typical characters, but also conduct a dialectical and detailed discussion on it.

3.2 The Reorganization of the Personality Masks

The reorganization of personality mask refers to the integration of the elements contained in the personality masks brought about by the change of typical characters in the generation accumulation creation. According to Jung's prototype theory, the overall trend of personality masks is constantly enriched and adapted to the time, and it will integrate with the correction caused by different times, different sects and other objective environments, so that the representativeness and functionality of typical characters are no longer single. The reorganization of personality masks is that with the changes of time and the continuous analysis, enhancement, destruction and alienation of typical characters by various creators, the human consciousness represented by typical character images will also increase or decrease at a certain level, and this phenomenon also avoids the typical
character images being stereotyped. For example, Guan Yu was originally a military general recorded in historical records, but with his inclusion in historical stories and romances, the spirit of loyalty, righteousness, and bravery represented by him became his personality mask, and he could even be granted titles such as strong general, god of wealth, immortal and idol. After the Ming and Qing dynasties, his personality mask was further deepened into Taoist immortal and martial saint, however, in modern times, negative personality masks such as pride and defeat have emerged, blending aesthetic values of contemporary dialectical thinking. Focus on the issues discussed in this research, the image of the Yellow Shirt initially appeared with the personality mask of the chivalrous and reckless, but in the later generations of operas and novels, he was added with elements such as wisdom and courage, love and sincerity to complement the heroic image.\[4\]

In the Tang Dynasty, people like the Yellow Shirt did exist in Chang'an City. Most of them were wandering among the people, disobeying laws and regulations, and breaking prohibitions by force. In private, they complied with social loyalty, hoping to bear the heavy responsibility of carrying out the law of justice with their own strength. Therefore, in *The Biography of Huo Xiaoyu*, the Yellow Shirt naturally plays the role of punishing evil, promoting good and dominating karma. In the Yuan drama *Purple Hairpin*, the Yellow Shirt further becomes the witness and enabler of the love and marriage between Li Yi and Huo Xiaoyu, and becomes the link throughout the whole drama. When Li Yi and Huo Xiaoyu met for the first time, the appearance of the yellow shirt guest brought a heroic air to the Lantern Festival. Liang Tingnan, a famous literary critic in the Qing Dynasty pointed out that the smoothest, most coincidental, and most exquisite part in *Purple Hairpin* is the coming on stage of the Yellow Shirt while watching the lamp.\[5\] In the tenth episode of *Purple Hairpin*, Li Yi and Huo Xiaoyu agreed on the wedding date, and it was the men sent by Yellow Shirt to make their wedding more smooth, which reflected the social status and influence of the Yellow Shirt from the side. In the forty-eighth episode, the Yellow Shirt hearded Bao Siniang talking about Li&Huo's injustice, he stood up, drew a knife to help and decide to fight the feudal evil Lu Taiwei. In the last few episodes, the Yellow Shirt relies on his extraordinary wisdom to work out strategies, overcome Lu Taiwei, and promote Li&Huo's love to reach a happy ending.\[6\] In the Yuan drama, the Yellow Shirt is the decisive force for Li&Huo's love tragedy to become a comedy. This is also the embodiment of Tang Xianzu's romantic thought, and the representative of people's resistance to evil forces and pursuit of individual freedom. The promotion of the Yellow Shirt from the foil character in the Tang novel to the decisive force of Li&Huo's marriage from sad to happy shows the depth of Tang Xianzu's efforts on him, and the traces of the Confucian respect for benevolence and justice and the maintenance of social order can be vaguely seen.\[7\] Of course, his character also reflects the limitations of Tang Xianzu's thought: after all, the Yellow Shirt solved the contradiction by the strength of the butler, not moving forward like a swordsman, which also shows that the image of the Yellow Shirt in this drama has a vague connection with the feudal system of the court. At this time, the personality mask of the Yellow Shirt was further sublimated, the concepts of bravery and scheming and sanctimonying in secret were mixed into the personality mask of the Yellow Shirt, so that the Yellow Shirt were not simply crazy warriors. All the above phenomena show that the personality mask of the Yellow Shirt has become richer with the changes of the time and the integration of various ideas, and the image of the chivalrarian has been differentiated into a multi-faceted man. It can even be said that there are various prototypes besides chivalrous swordsman or Chinese Xiake. This reflects the cumulative generation of creation has played a strengthening effect to the typical character image of the prototype character and personality mask.
3.3 The Chaos of the Personality Masks

The chaos of personality masks refers to the phenomenon that the typical character masks produce elements contrary to the prototype due to the excessively free or uncontrolled development of typical character images in the generation accumulation creation. Compared with the reorganization, the chaos of personality masks is more free and loose, lacking of restrictions, superficial and without gain. It is very easy to incorporate all kinds of irrelevant and even harmful consciousness into the typical figure. As mentioned above, the appearance of the typical image of the Yellow Shirt is the result of the author's conscious condenses the collective concept of the masses, and it is a process from consciousness to image. Then the richness and evolution of the Yellow Shirt’s personality mask is the continuous upgrading process of the Yellow Shirt based on the chivalry prototype in the process of generation accumulation creation, which is a process from one to many, from fixed to changed, there is a relationship between re-creation and new interpretation, which is the charm of generation accumulation creation. The formation and development of typical character personality mask is inevitable, because the essence of generation accumulation creation belongs to secondary creation, which will inevitably cause a certain degree of alteration due to the author's conscious adaptation and restatement. The enrichment and evolution of the typical character's personality mask is sometimes positive, which can make the typical character's image change from time to time and enrich the meaning, and sometimes it is negative, which will cause the influence of hybridity or excessive significance. Therefore, attention should be paid to screening when studying the change of the typical character's image. The accumulation of excessive ideas and elements will gradually cover the prototype of the typical character image, and finally it is necessary to analyze the humanities and reproduce the prototype in order to reaffirm the correct consciousness and solve the problem of the chaos of personality masks.

As a cumulative creation of generations, the Yellow Shirt's typical characters are bound to combine many unrelated elements to their archetypes. For example, in Purple Hairpin, the Yellow Shirt used the power of the imperial court to praise the holy spirit. There is a conflict about the personality mask of the Yellow Shirt in The Biography of Huo Xiaoyu, the new elements and concepts went against the original chivalrous archetype. It is inevitable that other creative consciousness or era elements such as these will be involved in the cumulative creation of the Yellow Shirt, and the integration process will inevitably be accompanied by complications. However, when the tolerance of various consciousness concepts of Yellow Shirts reaches the threshold, there will be confusion or imbalance in the personality of typical characters, which is easily reflected to the phenomenon of excessive connotations in literature. For example, in the contemporary Cantonese opera Purple Hairflowers, when the Yellow Shirt saw Huo Xiaoyu in the temple, who is wounded by love and has tears streaming down her face, he promptly expressed comfort with gentle words. [8] The Purple Hairpin written by Tang Disheng aims to firstly embody the theme of love. Therefore, the Yellow Shirt is no longer a traditional hero in this Cantonese opera, but is used as a tool to deal with problems in order to solve the problem between Li and Huo. In short, the Yellow Shirt has transformed from a character who participates in the plot to a story idol that drives the development of the story, which is a change in the function of the character image.

In the contemporary TV drama The Purple Hairpin and the Wonderful Fate, in order to cater to the hot market of contemporary love dramas, the Yellow Shirt was given the real name Nalan Dong by the playwright. In the story, he is no longer trying to maintain Li&Huo's love, but becomes the
role of mediation between the man and the woman. On the one hand, he is a friend of Li Yi, on the other hand, he has a secret affection for Huo Xiaoyu, and at the same time, he does not forget to fulfill the chivalrous deeds, he is a complex spiritual collection, proving that the three values of brotherhood, romantic love and chivalrous style are popular in modern times. However, this phenomenon is quite different from the original image of the Yellow Shirt in ancient time, and the name of Yellow Shirt seems to become a shell, which is filled with the emotion that the author wants to express, so it is inevitable to dominate the audience, dilute the personality mask of Yellow Shirt which work as the original chivalrous image, and even distort the character image of the Yellow Shirt.

To sum up, the typical character personality mask in the creation of the past generations has continuously presented the characteristics of richness, which not only integrates the excellent aesthetic factors and the consciousness of the time, but also inevitably mixes some dross, and distorts the character prototype to a certain extent. Therefore, how to use Jung's prototype theory to guide the correction of this negative literary phenomenon is a major proposition to be solved urgently.

3.4 The Disenchantment of Typical Characters

Through the above discussion on the reorganization and negative development of personality masks, it has been realized that the evolution process of personality masks of typical characters is an inevitable phenomenon in the cumulative creation of the time. The continuous change of personality masks leads to the enrichment of typical character images, which improves the artistry of the story of the Yellow Shirt. However, it will inevitably lead to the uncontrollable alienation of the personality mask, which deviates from the original intention of the personality mask, and there is supposed to be a considerable limiting force to prevent its pan-liberal enrichment and development. In this literary phenomenon, researchers can adopt the theory of self-nature archetype in Jung's theory to correct the personality mask of typical characters. However, this revision is not a return to the prototype in the simple sense, but to retain the excellent elements brought in the cumulative creation, as a supplement to the prototype.

The self-archetype is the core of collective unconsciousness and the archetype of spiritual integration. It draws all other prototypes around it, keeps all prototypes in a relatively stable and harmonious state, and is also the basis for the conscious self to maintain the unity of personality. [9] Self-characterization refers to the process of development in which a typical character eventually returns to its source and becomes itself that is integral, indivisible, yet distinct from other archetypes. The process of automatization of typical character archetypes is a dynamic development and spiraling process: At the beginning, the personality of a typical figure is a balanced whole. As it grows up, its personality mask develops in a diversified way, showing a state of independence, imbalance and conflict. Only after each part of the personality structure is fully developed and independent can it achieve self-identity and return to a state of balance and unity again. Only through the self-naturalization can the contradictory personality structure reach the harmonious and unified equilibrium state. The ultimate goal of all personality is the perfection and realization of full self. In other words, in order to realize the self-sexualization of typical characters, it is necessary to clear the impurity, return to the original source, stand firm in the prototype position and clarify and reaffirm the human consciousness represented by this character. Therefore, the writers of later generations will inevitably examine and revise the changed personality masks of typical characters in the past dynasties and start to dilute the other nonsignificant humanistic elements brought by the
literary works of later generations to the typical characters, and once again emphasize their fundamental personality masks. This is the process of self-naturalization of personality masks, or the return of personality masks.

In the previous novels, the image of the Yellow Shirt is the crystallization of the collective consciousness of the masses, and the generation and change of the image is a process in which the idea becomes a concrete image. However, with the continuous deepening of the series of stories of the Yellow Shirt, the image of the Yellow Shirt began to carry out a process of self-naturalization when the novel style was mature in the Qing Dynasty. In Chen Jitong's *Le Roman de l’Homme Jaune*, the Yellow Shirt no longer appears as a specific story character, but a metaphysical existence runs through the love story of Li&Huo. In *Le Roman de l’Homme Jaune*, the Yellow Shirt appears in a portrait treasured by the Huo family. He is an immortal in the family legend, a guardian of moral integrity and revered by his people. The patron saint of the Huo family appears five times in the text. This ghostly figure represents justice and righteousness, but is not frightening. When Li Yi, under the control of his mother, muddily married with Miss Lu, he saw in his hallucination that the Yellow Shirt with resentment shot an arrow at him; When Li Yi revisited Huo Xiaoyu's home, the Yellow Shirt was tracking in the dark; When Li Yi was sick and tortured, he dreamed that the the Yellow Shirt led Huo Xiaoyu to look at him and witnessed him go through pain to atone for his soul. The Yellow Shirt still retains the archetype of the chivalrous figure, and he becomes a guardian spirit, which adds the mysterious color of surrealism to the novel, and has an aesthetic effect of virtuality and reality. At this time, the image of the Yellow Shirt had become a kind of consciousness and spiritual force like Guan Yu, who had been deified as the god Jialan. The Chinese warrior spirit that the Yellow Shirt represented would form a huge oppression of all ugly attitudes and things. Chen Jitong recognizes the Yellow Shirt's chivalrous moral personality as his self-nature prototype, which is the fundamental spiritual core in the Yellow Shirt’s works of all ages. In the face of the rich Yellow Shirt image created by predecessors, people should peel the cocoons and find the core to make the Yellow Shirt become the true Yellow Shirt, return to nature, and abandon the alienated characteristics and distorted reading components of the Yellow Shirt image, using a simple consciousness to induce the Yellow Shirt as the first prototype of himself, comforting the creative enthusiasm and mass consciousness of literati throughout history, and completing the admiration for the Yellow Shirt’s integration of principles. In other words, the Yellow Shirt in the process of self-sexualization is no longer the same character image as in the previous works, but a spiritualized and conceptualized existence emphasizing the core of the prototype. After this stage of change, the Yellow Shirt character completed the flow from concept to image, and then to the spirit.

In the novel *Le Roman de l’Homme Jaune* in the Qing Dynasty, the Yellow Shirt is completely imaged and becomes the guardian and defender of justice. The writers of the past generations have expressed their criticism of the dark reality through a heroic man of fantasy, urging the conscience of society. In the process of generation accumulation, the image of Yellow shirt combines various consciousness concepts given by the outside world. In the face of this complex literary phenomenon, it is necessary to reproduce and emphasize the heroic core of his character archetypes by means of self-sexualization in Jung's theory, clear up the clouds and clouds, clarify the development process and logic of typical characters, and trace back to the archetypes they represent. This kind of clarification and tracing does not mean retro in the simple sense, and it is not necessary to reproduce the original character images from the perspective of literary creation, but to reaffirm and discuss the cultural connotation and collective concept of human beings embodied by typical character
images from the perspective of core concepts. Therefore, there is no need to rigor in the means of creation, and further innovative changes can be made. For example, Chen Jitong's creation transcends the description of characters in previous works and focuses on the depiction of spiritual symbols. But in the view of appreciation and creation theory, it is necessary to sort out and simplify the personality mask of the complicated typical characters. The process of self-sexualization is not spontaneous, not only requires the author to consciously simplify the concept and elements of the existence of typical characters, but also requires the reader to see the point like a torch. The typical figure will eventually become himself, reflecting the archetype that he represents forever, and all literary creation means are only ways to output and enrich the collective unconscious. Therefore, as for the evolution of typical character personality masks in generation accumulation creation, beneficial elements will be preserved in the end, and some bad ideas and invalid elements brought about by secondary creation will be abandoned. Therefore, the unlimited expansion of character image content caused by the integration and floating development of personality masks will be eventually contained. The aesthetic of typical characters will be carried out with a more rational sublation thinking, and the function of Jung's personality mask theory for the accumulation of generations of appreciation can also be seen.

To sum up, a method can be put forward to analyze the changing phenomenon of character images in cumulative generation creation by using Jung's Perspective theory: firstly, explore the first appearance of typical character images, then explore the enrichment process caused by cumulative generation creation, and finally discard the superfluous dross brought by successive generations to extract the essence of typical character images.

4. Summary

Based on Jung's theory of literature and art, this article undertakes an analysis of the impact of the prototype of the Yellow Shirt character image on the mapping of collective consciousness and the evolution of personality masks in generational cumulative creation. It explores the immutability of the core of its chivalrous image and the phenomenon of prototype transformation formed through successive creations. The study fully explores the importance of grasping the prototype image originating from the collective unconscious of human beings in shaping typical character shapes during generational cumulative creation. It advocates for cultivating a humanistic perspective in the study of related issues, avoiding excessive implications and interpretations of typical images. It aims to summarize and identify the conceptual core and evolutionary logic of typical character personalities as masks, exploring their essence as the crystallization of collective consciousness. Above all, it provides a clear and feasible approach for researching generational cumulative creation.

Fund Project Support: The 13th Five-Year Plan Social Science Fund Project of Jiangxi Province, China(20WX10). The 2022 Graduate Innovation Special Fund Project of Jiangxi Province, China(YC2022-S494). The 2023 Graduate Innovation Special Fund Project of Jiangxi Province, China(YC2023-S475).
References