A Jungian Archetypal Study of Main Characters in the TV Series
Bridgerton Season 1

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Abstract: This study investigates the psychological development of the two main characters in Bridgerton Season 1—Daphne Bridgerton and Simon Basset—through the lens of Carl Gustav Jung's archetype theory. The research is motivated by the need to understand how archetypal structures shape emotional growth, internal conflicts, and relational dynamics within popular screen narratives. The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach within the framework of literary criticism. Selected dialogues and narrative events were analyzed to identify the presence and function of five primary Jungian archetypes: Persona, Shadow, Anima/Animus, Hero, and Self. The analysis reveals that Daphne undergoes a transformation from conformity to societal expectations toward the assertion of a more authentic self. In contrast, Simon confronts his fragmented emotional identity by reconciling with his past, ultimately achieving greater psychological integration. These archetypal patterns illuminate each character's individuation process and their evolving relationship dynamics. The findings suggest that Jungian archetypes not only serve as effective analytical tools for understanding character development in television narratives but also function as symbolic frameworks that resonate with audiences. By highlighting the interplay between psychological archetypes and narrative construction, this study contributes to broader discussions of how media representations provide insight into human emotional experiences.

Keywords: *Jungian archetypes, character development, individuation, psychological analysis, literary criticism*

INTRODUCTION

Literature has long functioned as a reflection of human existence, serving not only as a record of external events but also as a medium that reveals the complexities of the human psyche.

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Characters in literary and media narratives often embody profound emotional, psychological, and philosophical dimensions, providing readers and viewers with insight into both individual consciousness and broader social realities. In this sense, literary characters operate as symbolic vessels that articulate internal conflicts, social tensions, and moral dilemmas, positioning literature as more than a mere mirror of society. Rather, it becomes a critical instrument for interrogating cultural norms and power structures.

Within the diverse array of critical approaches to character analysis, psychoanalysis—and in particular the theoretical framework of Carl Gustav Jung—offers a deeply influential and enduring perspective. Jung's conception of the collective unconscious posits that humanity inherits a reservoir of primordial images and symbolic patterns that manifest universally across myths, dreams, and narratives (Jung, 1969). These archetypes, far from being simple literary motifs, function as foundational psychological structures that shape perception, guide behavior, and inform identity formation. Consequently, Jungian theory provides a powerful interpretive lens through which to examine the psychological undercurrents that inform character development and narrative construction.

Basically Jungs theory is psychology theory, but Jung's also influences other studies such as in" Psychedelic Drugs and Jungian Therapy Greg". This study was a review the history of and recent research on the psychotherapeutic efficacy of psychedelic drugs. The psychological effects of psychedelic drugs are reviewed from the perspective of Jungian theory.(Mahr & Sweigart, 2020). Jungian's theory mostly employed in psychological practice such as in "Contemporary Psychotherapy Research, Psychodynamic Psychotherapy". This article gives an overview of the evidence found for Psychodynamic Therapy in general and for Jungian Psychotherapy, on the background of the state of the art in psychotherapy research.(Roesler, 2020).

Jungs analytical psychology identifies several core archetypes that frequently appear in literature: the Persona (social mask), Shadow (repressed fears and instincts), Anima/Animus (internal feminine/masculine aspects), Hero (the transformative seeker), and Self (the ideal of wholeness). These archetypes serve as internal forces that guide the psyche toward individuation a lifelong process of integrating the conscious and unconscious mind (Feist & Feist, 2008). Through this framework, literary characters are not simply fictional constructs but psychological representations of human development and struggle. Applying Jungian archetypes in literary criticism allows scholars to uncover hidden psychological dimensions in texts, moving beyond surface-level plot to interpret characters as manifestations of universal psychic patterns. Transformations within characters often mirror the inner journey toward self-realization, conflict resolution, or existential meaning. This approach is particularly useful in modern visual storytelling, where television and film increasingly prioritize psychological realism and layered character arcs.

This study applies Jungian theory to Bridgerton, a contemporary television series created by Chris Van Dusen and produced by Shonda Rhimes. Adapted from Julia Quinns bestselling novels, Bridgerton premiered on Netflix in December 2020 and is set in Regency-era London. It follows the Bridgerton family's romantic and societal lives, receiving critical acclaim for its visual appeal, diverse casting, and emotionally resonant storytelling.

The researcher found that many recent studies have used Jungian theory to analyze characters in modern films and animations. For example, Fatihah and Mustofa (2022) studied the character Estella in Cruella (2021). They showed how Estella's journey reflects the struggle between her public image (persona) and hidden emotions (shadow), which leads her toward self-understanding. Bostan (2022) also used Jungian ideas to study the film Turning Red. She explained how the main character's

changes show archetypes like the inner child, the mother, and the shadow.

The researcher also found a study by Bahri et al. (2023), who looked at the character Otto in the film A Man Called Otto. They showed how his behavior fits into different Jungian archetypes such as ego, shadow, and self, especially as he moves from sadness to healing. Another study by Danylova (2020) looked at the idea of beauty in society using the "Kore" archetype, showing how it affects women's mental health. In addition, Goodwyn (2023) explained archetypes in a new way—he said they are not just cultural, but also part of our biology.

Even though these studies are useful, the researcher noticed that most of them talk about movies or theory, not TV series. So far, there is very little research that uses Jungian archetypes to study romantic-period shows like Bridgerton. This research tries to fill that gap by looking at how characters in Bridgerton change in ways that match Jung's ideas about psychological growth.

The analysis centers on two primary characters from Season One: Daphne Bridgerton and Simon Basset, Duke of Hastings. Daphne begins as the archetypal Personaan ideal debutante, graceful and obedientwhile Simon initially embodies the Shadow, emotionally distant and shaped by childhood trauma. As their relationship unfolds, both characters confront internal and interpersonal tensions that reflect the archetypal journey toward individuation. Their transformation invites a deeper understanding of how Jungian psychology can be mapped onto modern narratives. This research is guided by two central questions: What archetypal patterns, based on Jungian theory, are evident in the characters of Daphne and Simon? How do these archetypes inform their psychological development and narrative function within the series?

Through qualitative textual analysis of key scenes, dialogue, and character interactions, this study seeks to demonstrate how archetypal dynamics enhance emotional resonance, narrative cohesion, and character depth. Moreover, it affirms the relevance of Jungian psychoanalysis in analyzing contemporary media, offering a bridge between classical literary theory and modern visual storytelling. Ultimately, this study shows that archetypes are not static templates but dynamic forces that shape how stories speak to universal human experience.

Characters

In literary studies, character is a central element in narrative construction, serving as the medium through which stories unfold and themes are conveyed. According to Boggs (2001:115), a character is defined as "a fictional representation of a person usually a psychologically realistic depiction," which emphasizes the complexity of human behavior as portrayed through various expressive elements such as actions, reactions, physical appearance, speech, gestures, and expressions. These elements collectively shape a believable and relatable figure within the story.

Further elaborating on this, Boggs (1991:56) identifies five primary techniques used to reveal character traits: (1) appearance, where visual description suggests personality; (2) dialogue, which unveils motivations, beliefs, and relationships; (3) external action, reflecting moral choices and decision-making; (4) internal action, showing thoughts and emotions; and (5) reactions of other characters, which mirror how a character is perceived within the narrative. Roberts (2014:20) reinforces this by stating that characters are persons in dramatic or narrative works who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with the moral and dispositional qualities that are expressed through what they say in dialogue and what they do in action. This view places emphasis on the interpretive role of the reader in discerning character depth based on textual cues.

Importantly, characters are not limited to human forms. They may be supernatural, mythical, divine, animalistic, or symbolic personifications, each functioning metaphorically or thematically within a story. Regardless of their form, characters are

constructed through a combination of narrative exposition, dialogue, action, and authorial commentary, which collectively build their psychological and emotional dimensions.

In modern narratives, particularly in screenwriting and television, characters are expected to exhibit psychological realism and dynamic development. This realism enables audiences to emotionally invest in their journeys, conflicts, and resolutions. As such, character analysis becomes a crucial tool in literary criticism, helping to decode deeper meanings, cultural reflections, and psychological dimensions within a narrative text.

Kinds of Character

Characters can be categorized based on their narrative function, psychological depth, and role in the story. These distinctions help in understanding how characters contribute to both plot and theme.

Major Character

Major Characters are central to the story. As Orson (2010) explains, these characters drive the plot and capture the audience's empathy. Their motivations—often tied to love, fear, or loss—anchor the emotional weight of the narrative. Wright (2004) emphasizes that such motivations are key to making characters relatable and impactful. Griffith (2011) distinguishes between protagonists (who pursue goals) and antagonists (who obstruct them).

a. Minor Characters

Minor Characters may not be central to the plot, but they play vital roles. They offer support, conflict, context, or contrast. According to Card (2010), minor characters can act as catalysts, pushing the story forward without demanding deep emotional investment from the audience.

b. Round Character

Round Characters are multidimensional and psychologically realistic. Griffith (2011) describes them as evolving figures shaped by internal conflict. They mirror the emotional complexity of real people and are ideal subjects for psychological analysis.

c. Flat Character

Flat Characters, by contrast, represent a single trait or idea. As Kirszner and Mandell (2000) note, they do not evolve much, if at all, and often function as symbolic figures. Despite their simplicity, flat characters can still serve to reinforce themes or highlight contrasts.
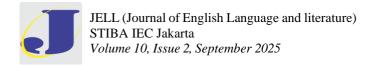
Jungian Criticism

Carl Gustav Jung (18751961), a Swiss psychiatrist, developed the theory of analytical psychology as a distinct branch of Freud's psychoanalysis. Although both recognized the existence of conscious and unconscious levels in the human psyche, Jung placed much greater emphasis on the concept of the collective unconscious, which is the deepest layer of the human psyche that derives from humanity's ancestral psychological heritage, not just personal experience.

Conscious

According to Jung, as cited in Feist and Feist (2008), consciousness is centered on the ego, which is the part of the self that is aware of current experiences. However, the ego is not the true core of personality. The ego is only a starting point that must then be completed by the true self, which is the true center of personality and is largely unconscious. Jung emphasized that overemphasizing consciousness can lead to psychological imbalance. Healthy individuals are those who are able to live a conscious life, while remaining connected to and accepting the unconscious aspects of themselves-a process called individuation.

Personal Unconscious

Schultz (2005) explains that the personal unconscious includes an individual's forgotten, repressed, or subliminally unconscious experiences. This includes painful memories, abandoned experiences, or unconscious events that influence behavior. Although similar to Freud's concept of the unconscious and pre-conscious, Jung considered the personal unconscious to be a unique region that only

each individual possesses based on his or her own life experiences.

Collective Unconscious

Jung's most original and controversial concept is the collective unconscious. Unlike the personal unconscious, the collective unconscious is the deepest layer of the human psyche that is inherited and passed down from generation to generation as psychic potential. This unconscious contains universal ideas (archetypal images) that are not learned through direct experience, but rather passed down from our earliest ancestors. Examples are the ideas of "mother", "water", "hero", or "God" - concepts that consistently appear in various cultures and mythologies. Jung believed that these cross-cultural symbolic similarities reflect the same psychological structure in all humans.

These three psychic structures- consciousness, personal unconscious, and collective unconscious- interact to form the basis of individual conflict, development, and transformation. In the context of literary works and narratives, these structures are often manifested through symbols, characters, and the psychological journey of the protagonist. The Jungian critical approach is therefore particularly relevant for analyzing character, as it explores not only what characters do or say, but also what they symbolize and represent unconsciously.

Archetypes

Carl Gustav Jung (18751961) defined archetypes as patterns that repeat themselves in the collective unconscious of human beings, manifesting in dreams, myths, art, literature, and religious imagery across different cultures and historical periods. These archetypes are not learned but inherited as innate psychic structures. They emerge spontaneously in the human psyche when personal experiences resonate with these primordial images, often appearing through symbols, fantasies, visions, or literary representations. Archetypes serve not only as templates for thought and behavior but also as frameworks for narrative and character construction.

Jung identified several fundamental archetypes that are especially relevant in literary and psychological analysis:

1) Persona

The Persona represents the social mask that individuals wear to conform to external expectations and roles. It is the aspect of the self that is shown to others, shaped by culture, occupation, and social norms. While it is essential for functioning in society, over-identification with the persona may lead to a loss of authentic self and psychological imbalance. In literature, characters heavily influenced by their persona often struggle with inner conflict or crises when their public identity no longer aligns with their private self.

2) Shadow

The Shadow embodies the repressed or denied aspects of the psyche traits, desires, or impulses that are considered socially or morally unacceptable. It is often associated with darkness, fear, or taboo, yet also contains creative and transformative potential. Jung emphasized that integrating the shadow is vital for psychological growth and individuation. In narrative terms, the shadow may be externalized as an antagonist, inner turmoil, or moral dilemma that the protagonist must confront.

3) Anima

The Anima is the unconscious feminine dimension within the male psyche. It originates from a man's early experiences with significant female figures (e.g., mother, sister, lover) and influences his emotional life, creativity, and capacity for intimacy. The anima often appears in dreams or literature as a mysterious woman, muse, or spiritual guide. Confronting the anima leads to greater emotional balance and deeper self-awareness.

4) Animus

Conversely, the Animus is the masculine aspect within the unconscious of women. It symbolizes rationality, strength, and intellectual authority. Formed through interactions with

male figures, the animus may shape a woman's inner voice, reasoning, and belief systems. In narratives, the animus may manifest as a wise teacher, critic, or hero figure. When integrated, it allows for the development of assertiveness and autonomy in female characters.

5) Hero

The Hero archetype represents the egos quest for identity, purpose, and triumph over adversity. Typically depicted in mythology and literature as a character who overcomes trials, slays monsters, or brings transformation to others, the hero embodies courage, sacrifice, and self-realization. This motif reflects the psychological journey from unconsciousness to consciousness, and from fragmentation to unity. The hero must often face their shadow, endure isolation, and undergo symbolic death and rebirth.

6) Self

The Self is the most comprehensive archetype, symbolizing unity, wholeness, and the integration of all parts of the psyche. It represents the goal of individuation the lifelong process of becoming a psychologically complete individual. The Self harmonizes the opposites within the psyche (e.g., conscious/unconscious, masculine/feminine, good/evil). In literature, the Self may be symbolized through the mandala, a sacred circle representing order and wholeness, or through narrative resolution, healing, and transformation.

Jungs archetypal theory underscores the dynamic structure of the human psyche and its natural drive toward integration. This framework makes Jungian criticism particularly effective in analyzing character development, as it illuminates how symbolic roles, inner conflicts, and transformations reflect universal psychological patterns. Characters are thus not only narrative agents but also embodiments of timeless human experiences embedded in the collective unconscious.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method grounded in literary and psychological criticism, particularly Carl Gustav Jung's theory of archetypes. This method is appropriate because it allows the researcher to interpret symbolic character behavior, inner conflicts, and psychological transformation through textual analysis of visual media. The researcher conducts a close reading of selected scenes,

dialogues, and character interactions in Bridgerton Season 1 to identify recurring archetypes such as the Persona, Shadow, Anima/Animus, Hero, and Self. The analysis is interpretive and descriptive, aiming to reveal how these archetypes function in the development of Daphne and Simon, and how their transformation mirrors Jung's concept of individuation. The method combines literary theory with psychological insight, making it suitable for uncovering deeper narrative meaning and character complexity in visual storytelling.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Part A: Identification of Jungian Archetypes

In Jungian psychology, archetypes are symbolic structures embedded in the unconscious and frequently emerge in literature and media. In Bridgerton Season 1, Daphne Bridgerton and Simon Basset reflect archetypal patterns of transformation, repression, and eventual psychological integration. This section identifies five dominant Jungian archetypes as they manifest in these characters through scenes and dialogue.
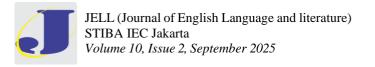
1. *The Persona*

The Persona is the social identity an individual projects to meet external expectations. Daphne begins the series as the diamond of the season, praised for her elegance and manners. This image is sharply emphasized in:

Queen Charlotte: *Flawless, my dear.* (Season 1, Episode 1: "Diamond of the First Water", ~00:05:42)

Despite public admiration, Daphne suppresses self-doubt. When she confronts her brother for scaring off suitors, she reveals the burden of her role:

Daphne: *I have done everything expected of me. And yet still, it is not enough.* (Season 1, Episode 1, ~00:32:10)

Simons Persona is one of calculated distance and control. He appears indifferent, almost cold, especially during social functions:

> Simon: *I am only here to close my father's affairs. I've no interest in the social scene.* (Season 1, Episode 1, ~00:14:16)

He wears this Persona to fend off vulnerability and protect himself from emotional exposure.

2. *The Shadow*

The Shadow houses repressed fears, anger, and shame. Daphnes polite façade cracks when she feels powerless:

> Daphne: *If I fail to find a match, I shall be invisible. A burden. Nothing.* (Season 1, Episode 1, ~00:32:18)

This statement shows internalized societal fear the dread of worthlessness without marriage. Her suppressed anger at being controlled by others begins to emerge later when she accuses her brother of ruining her chances. Simons Shadow is darker, rooted in childhood trauma. A flashback reveals him stuttering as a child while his father calls him an imbecile, leading to lifelong resentment:

> Young Simons Father: *You are an embarrassment. You are not my son.* (Season 1, Episode 2: "Shock and Delight", flashback, ~00:20:40)

This results in Simon's vow:

> Simon (at father's grave): *I will never sire an heir. The Hastings name ends with me.* (Season 1, Episode 2, ~00:56:42)

His Shadow drives him to sabotage love and legacy in revenge yet it also causes inner conflict as his relationship with Daphne deepens.

3. *Anima and Animus*

Jung's Anima and Animus are gendered inner opposites: the feminine side of a man (Anima) and the masculine side of a woman (Animus), shaping intuition, feeling, logic, and assertiveness.

Simons Anima awakens through Daphnes empathy and integrity. During their fake engagement, his protectiveness turns genuine:

> Simon: *You deserve someone who sees you for who you are... and admires you.* (Season 1, Episode 4: "An Affair of Honor", ~00:37:14)

This shift marks the rise of his inner emotional compass a balance to his typical guardedness.

Daphnes Animus surfaces during confrontations. After discovering Simon's deception regarding children, she boldly reclaims control:

> Daphne: *You made a vow. Not to me. To a dead man.* (Season 1, Episode 6: "Swish", ~00:46:00)

Here, she exhibits logic, will, and moral clarity no longer the passive ideal but a woman asserting emotional and intellectual autonomy.

4. *The Hero*

The Hero archetype embodies growth through struggle. Daphne begins as a social ornament but grows into someone who demands truth, respect, and genuine connection. After uncovering Simon's deception:

> Daphne: *I cannot live with half a marriage. I choose love, Simon. Do you?* (Season 1, Episode 7: "Oceans Apart", ~00:52:30)

Leaving Simon reflects her willingness to risk societal judgment to preserve self-worth. Simons Hero journey is internal. His emotional climax arises not from external action but from surrendering pride. During Daphnes childbirth scene:

> Simon (frantic): *Stay with me Please, stay with me. I cannot lose you.* (Season 1, Episode 8: "After the Rain", ~00:46:50)

This emotional plea signifies his vulnerability an act more heroic than any duel or challenge.

5. *The Self*

The Self is the integrated psyche the ultimate goal of Jungian individuation. While full integration takes time, by the seasons end, both characters show signs of healing. Daphne sheds her flawless image and embraces imperfection, compassion, and wisdom. When Simon holds their newborn:

> Daphne: *This child will never question if they are loved. Because you, Simon, are not your father.* (Season 1, Episode 8, ~00:50:15)

Simon accepts his emotional lineage and consciously chooses a new legacy:

> Simon (voice-over): *Though I swore never to be a father I am glad. Glad to be a father.* (Season 1, Episode 8, closing narration)

This choice shows reconciliation between his Persona, Shadow, and true Self closing the Heros arc with inner unity.

How Archetypes Support Character Development

In literary and psychological analysis, character development is the process by which a character changes psychologically, emotionally, or morally through their experiences. Jungian archetypes are not static

categories but active psychological forces that influence how characters grow. In Bridgerton Season 1, Daphne Bridgerton and Simon Basset are not merely romantic leads; they are characters undergoing profound psychological shifts catalyzed by archetypal tension. Their Personas, Shadows, and Anima/Animus dynamics shape their inner struggles and eventual transformation. This section explains how these archetypes support their development as complex protagonists.

1. **Daphne Bridgerton**: From Idealized Innocence to Emotional Maturity

Daphnes early arc is shaped by the Persona the perfect debutante. She is socially adored but lacks agency. Her conflict begins when her Shadow repressed frustration and fear of inadequacy emerges. This internal tension deepens her realism, moving her away from a symbolic figure of perfection to a psychologically grounded woman. For example, her confrontation with Simon regarding his deception about children is a major turning point:

Daphne: *You chose to lie to me. To manipulate me.* (Season 1, Episode 6, 00:40:20)

This moment marks the clash between Daphnes Persona (naïve romantic) and Shadow (wounded, angry, assertive self). Through this confrontation, she accesses her Animus expressing logic, autonomy, and emotional clarity. Her decision to separate from Simon shows individuation: she prioritizes truth and emotional integrity over mere social success.

By the end of the season, Daphne reaches a more integrated Self. She neither idealizes love nor rejects it blindly. She understands its fragility and power. Her development reflects a movement from dependence to self-possession a full character arc aligned with Jungs idea of the conscious individual negotiating the unconscious.

2. **Simon Basset**: From Defensive Isolation to Emotional Integration

Simon begins his narrative arc as a Hero in exile emotionally distant and committed to a life of isolation. His Shadow, rooted in childhood rejection, governs his actions, especially in his vow never to have children. As a result, his Persona is rigid, emotionally cold, and seemingly in control. However, the deeper truth is repression and unresolved grief.

His relationship with Daphne challenges this Persona. Her kindness activates his Anima, slowly opening him to emotional depth. His Heros challenge is not external but psychological: he must choose between clinging to the past or allowing himself to heal. The seasons climactic moment his breakdown during Daphnes labor exposes the dissolution of his defenses:

Simon: *I love you. I cannot lose you. (*Season 1, Episode 8)

In choosing love and embracing fatherhood, Simon performs what Jung might describe as an integration of opposites a key step toward the Self. He accepts vulnerability without seeing it as weakness. He reclaims his identity from the Shadow of his father and becomes whole.

3. **Archetypal Tension as Narrative Motor**

The tension between Persona and Shadow, between Anima/Animus and ego, is what drives both characters forward. Rather than being static embodiments of romance tropes, Daphne and Simon evolve because their psychological archetypes are in conflict. These conflicts give the story emotional stakes and psychological realism. Their romance works not merely as attraction, but as mutual healing each character helping the other face and reconcile parts of themselves.

4. **Toward Individuation: The Journey Continues**

Though the season ends with resolution, the characters development suggests individuation is a continuing journey. Daphne still faces social expectations, while Simon must consistently choose love over pride. Yet, they have taken meaningful steps: Daphne now speaks and chooses for herself; Simon breaks

the cycle of generational trauma. Their development is not just narrative it is archetypal, embodying Jungs belief that true transformation comes from within.

The researcher observes that Bridgerton Season 1 offers more than just a romantic narrative—it presents a story of emotional transformation shaped by powerful psychological forces. By applying Jungian archetypes, the researcher uncovers how Daphne Bridgerton and Simon Basset are not merely characters within a love story, but individuals undergoing profound internal journeys. Their actions, conflicts, and growth are deeply influenced by archetypal energies such as the Persona, Shadow, Anima/Animus, and ultimately, the Self.

At the beginning of the series, both Daphne and Simon operate under strong Personas—social masks shaped by expectation and tradition. Daphne is celebrated as the "diamond of the season," while Simon appears emotionally distant and self-assured. However, as the researcher points out, these roles are carefully constructed defenses. Beneath Daphne's grace lies uncertainty, and behind Simon's stoicism is unresolved pain. Their external images begin to fracture as they are challenged by personal conflict and connection.

This is where the Shadow archetype emerges most clearly. The researcher notes that Daphne's fear of becoming a social burden reflects a deeper anxiety about her worth beyond marriage. Simon's Shadow is even more intense, shaped by childhood trauma and rejection. His vow never to father children is not just a decision—it is a defense mechanism rooted in deep emotional wounds. These shadows add complexity to the characters, helping the audience understand their emotional walls and inner contradictions.

As the story progresses, the interaction between Daphne and Simon activates their Anima and Animus—the unconscious gendered aspects within the psyche. The researcher highlights how Daphne becomes more assertive and rational when confronting Simon's betrayal, signaling her growth beyond the passive role expected of her. In contrast, Simon begins to show emotional openness and tenderness in response to Daphne's presence, reflecting the awakening of his Anima. These shifts are not immediate but emerge through conflict, connection, and vulnerability.

Their development follows the path of the Hero archetype—not in the traditional sense of heroic action, but in the courage it takes to face one's inner world. Daphne's heroism is seen in her willingness to speak her truth and walk away from half-hearted love. Simon's growth is most visible in moments where he allows himself to be seen—especially during Daphne's childbirth, where he finally surrenders pride in favor of love. The researcher interprets these moments as crucial steps toward individuation, where each character begins to integrate the parts of themselves they once rejected or hid.

By the season's end, both Daphne and Simon begin to approach the Self—Jung's symbol of psychological wholeness. Daphne learns to let go of perfection and embrace emotional honesty. Simon, by choosing fatherhood and emotional connection, breaks free from the shadow of his own upbringing. While their journeys are not complete, the researcher sees these developments as significant progress toward integration and healing.

What makes these transformations compelling is the tension between archetypes. The conflict between their Personas and Shadows, between their rational choices and unconscious drives, creates the emotional depth of the narrative. The researcher emphasizes that their relationship works not simply because of attraction, but because they become catalysts for each other's growth. Each character holds up a mirror to the other, revealing what needs to be faced, confronted, and ultimately, embraced.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the psychological development of Daphne Bridgerton and Simon

Basset in Bridgerton Season 1 through the lens of Carl Gustav Jungs archetypal theory. The analysis reveals that both characters embody key Jungian archetypes Persona, Shadow, Anima/Animus, Hero, and Self which serve as symbolic structures underlying their emotional conflicts and personal transformations. Daphnes journey from idealized societal innocence to a more grounded emotional maturity illustrates the integration of her outward persona with her emerging sense of inner autonomy. In contrast, Simons progression from emotional isolation to vulnerability and acceptance highlights the confrontation and eventual reconciliation with his repressed Shadow.

The interplay between these archetypal forces not only drives individual character arcs but also functions as a narrative mechanism that intensifies the romantic and psychological dimensions of the series. The evolving relationship between Daphne and Simon becomes a dynamic space for the emergence of unconscious material, allowing both characters to confront and transcend cycles of fear, repression, and the constraints of inherited identity.

Through the application of Jungian criticism to a contemporary television narrative, this research demonstrates the enduring relevance of archetypal theory in uncovering the symbolic and psychological depth of fictional characters. The findings affirm that modern visual storytelling continues to engage with universal patterns of human experience. Future studies might expand this framework to explore additional characters or subsequent seasons of Bridgerton, or apply similar analytical approaches to other contemporary media texts that foreground psychological realism and character-driven narratives

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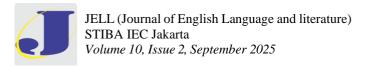RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi, (28), 541–552.

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