Exploring Cultural Representation and Archetypal Themes in Rick Riordan's

Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief

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Certificate

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Exploring Cultural Representation and Archetypal Themes in Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*** is a bona fide record of sincere work done by Devika M.J, Register Number: 210021000950, Bharata Mata College, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature under the Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, during the year

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Declaration

I, hereby declare that the presentation dissertation **Exploring Cultural Representation and Archetypal Themes in Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*** is based on the research I did on under the supervision and guidance of Dr. Thara Gangadharan, Head of the Department, Research Centre and Postgraduate Department of English, Bharata Mata College, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature under the Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam. This is a report by my hands based on the research done on the selected topic and it is my original work and interpretations drawn therein are based on materials collected by myself. It has not been previously formed the basis for award of any degree, diploma or fellowship or any other similar title or recognition.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

"*Myth is a type of speech*" (Barthes 109).Roland Barthes, a French theorist, philosopher, and semiotician, stated in his most influential work *Mythologies* that myth is a type of speech chosen by history; it cannot possibly evolve from the 'nature' of things, unless nature is taken in its historical sense, as a concept in process, in mobility in differentiation. The word myth comes from the ancient Greek word *mythos* which can mean story or narrative. Over the times *mythos* evolved to include tales and legends that conveyed cultural, religious, or moral beliefs. In the book, *The Power of Myth* by Joseph Campbell, he discusses a wide range of themes and motifs in hero myths and cosmogonic myths. According to Morris and Powell (2014), myths can be divided into three types which are myth, legend, and folklore. When it comes to mythologies in, the western continent, prominent among them being the Greek, Roman and Celtic mythologies. Homer's *Iliad and Odyssey* are considered as classic epics and were an integral part of the ancient Greek academics. Ovid's *Metamorphosis* and Virgil's *Aeneid* are said to be the roman equivalent of Homer's epic poetries. Determining the most influential mythology in the world is a rather subjective topic. It can vary depending on several variables, including geographic distribution, historical significance, and cultural background. However, the Greek mythology's enduring influence across philosophy, art, and culture, coupled with its iconic pantheon of deities and heroes, unparalleled literary masterpieces, philosophical underpinnings, and global dissemination cements its status as the most influential among ancient mythologies.

Within contemporary society, a plethora of entertainment options are available ranging from traditional forms such as novels and movies to interactive platforms like video games. We learn that all of these are adapted from the age-old myths and legends that have been transformed

over time, being reimagined in each new era and culture that adopted them. Greek mythology

has had a profound influence on American society across various aspects including literature, art,

philosophy, and pop culture leaving an indelible mark on American society, contributing to its

cultural and identity and collective imagination in profound ways. Influence is never unilateral.

The influence of Greek mythology in American society is a dynamic and reciprocal process,

characterized by ongoing interaction and exchange between ancient stories and contemporary

culture contributing to the shaping of beliefs, values and identities, reflecting the enduring

relevance of Greek myths in the modern world. American literature and media experienced a

significant growth in the 20th century, particularly post- Second World War. This period saw a

surge in the production of novels, films, TV shows and other forms of media that incorporated

Greek myths and themes leading to an explosion of adaptations and reimaginings in the early 21st

century. One notable example of this is Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson* series.

     Percy Jackson is a popular young adult fantasy series written by the acclaimed American

author Rick Riordan that has bagged numerous prizes. It consists of five main books, known as

Percy Jackson and the Olympians series, published between 2005 and 2009. The first two books

of the series have been adapted into films, namely *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* (2010)

followed by *Percy Jackson and the Sea of Monsters* (2013). In Percy Jackson, Rick Riordan has

interwoven elements of Greek mythology and modern American society. Through an analysis of

the first book of the series, this research endeavors to illuminate the reciprocal influence between

Greek mythological traditions and American cultural contexts. By looking through the lens of

cultural studies, we analyze societal values, norms, and literature in media, we gain a deeper

understanding of how ancient myths can be adapted and retold in context of changing times

serves as a dynamic cultural phenomenon, wherein ancient narratives are reinterpreted to reflect

evolving societal values, technological advancements, and contemporary existential inquiries. By analyzing myth theory to this book's narrative, offers a rich avenue for psychological analysis, uncovering layers of symbolism, archetypes, and psychological depth, thus gaining an understanding on how myths are working in the human psyche and how they are projected through such literary works.

Some of the reasons for choosing *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief,* as my research material is because it is particularly suited for young adults and that it is widely regarded as one of the best works adapted from Greek myths hence provides a rich and multifaceted subject for analysis through the lens of historical contextual theory providing the researcher to uncover the ways in which cultural texts both reflect and shape the historical dynamics and processes of cultural production, reception and interpretation. In the article published by American Library Association, Rick Riordan said that he got the ideas for *Percy Jackson* from his son Haley, a clinically diagnosed dyslexic teen, and his middle school students. Riordan answered that he wanted to make the tedious Greek mythology into something fun for the young kids. It is widely acknowledged that young adults represent one of the largest consumer demographics within the realm of entertainment media, with their preference and consumption habits exerting considerable influence on trends and success of various forms of cultural expression. They are central to culture due to their receptivity to innovative ideas, extensive media consumption, social influence, cultural production, and possession of cultural capital hence media caters to them the most. Rick Riordan through adaptation expands Greek myths and changes them to fit in the modern era which makes them relatable to the contemporary readers. Leighton in his article "Rediscovering Mythology: Adaptation and Appropriation in the *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* Saga" discusses how Riordan uses his series to introduce Greek mythology to a new

age by masterfully adapting unfamiliar classical works and makes them accessible to contemporary audience. Claudia Nelson and Anne Morey, in their article, "A God Buys Us Cheeseburgers": Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson Series and America's Culture War" explains that Riordan retells Greek myths while connecting them to American values, that he makes modern improvements in the old concepts blending classical Greek values with American modernity.

Both the book and film adaptations of *Percy Jackson and the lightning Thief* follow the extraordinary adventure of Percy Jackson, a teenage boy, and his friends set in the United States, primarily in New York, against the backdrop of 21st century. The novel begins with Percy struggling with undiagnosed dyslexia and ADHD and facing various challenges at school and home. However, his life takes a dramatic turn when he learns about his true heritage, of him being a demigod, after a series of supernatural incidents reveal his powers. Percy discovers that he is accused of stealing Zeus' master bolt, that sparked a war among the Olympian Gods. To save his mother from the underworld, who is under the clutches of Hades, and to clear his name and prevent a catastrophic conflict between the Gods, Percy sets on a quest to retrieve the stolen bolt before the Summer Solstice. Accompanied by his friends Grover, a satyr, and Annabeth, daughter of Athena, Percy embarks on a perilous journey across the United States. Along the way, they encounter various mythological characters and mythical creatures as well as other demigods. As they navigate through the challenges and obstacles of their quest, Percy, and his Golden Trio uncover more about their powers, destiny, and their identity.

Researchers have conducted many studies on the Percy Jackson series book version in which they discuss the modern representation of Greek mythology in it using the generally known critical theories such as structuralism postcolonial criticism, reader-response theory etc. In this research, I am conducting a cultural study of the first book of the series through the

application of theory of collective unconscious. While engaging with broader cultural discourses, we get an analysis on how works like *Percy Jackson* serves as powerful conduits through which cultural ideas from both the past and present converge and amalgamate, the research delving into the narrative of *Percy Jackson,* offers a scholarly exploration into the rich tapestry of themes and symbolisms present within the work. This research can dissect Percy's journey as a hero quest, tracing the path through archetypal stages, unveiling the timeless relevance of mythological storytelling that resonates with readers across cultures and generations. Concurrently, the research provides a framework for understanding the underlying psychological dynamics at play in Percy's world, delving into the deeper psychological dimensions of the work.

Chapter 2

Unveiling the Mythic framework: Theory and Methodology

This chapter outlines the theory and research methodology applied in conducting this study encompassing various essential components. Primarily, it elucidates the research design chosen to explore the subject matter. Secondly, it delineates the object of the study. Furthermore, it elucidates the type of data collected. Moreover, it expounds upon the meticulous procedures employed for data collection. Lastly, it discusses the systematic approach of data analysis. Through this comprehensive methodology, the study aims to provide a robust framework for understanding and interpreting its findings within the realm of qualitative enquiry.

"Culture is a whole way of life, and arts are part of a social organization which economic change clearly radically affects. Culture is ordinary: that is the first fact. Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, its own meanings. Every human society expresses these, in institutions, and in arts and learning" (Williams). The mentioned quote is adapted from Raymond William's 1958 academic paper "Culture is Ordinary". Culture is an umbrella term which encompasses the institutions, behavior, and norms found in human societies as well as the knowledge, beliefs, laws, customs, arts, capabilities, and habits of individuals in these groups. Culture mostly originated from or attributed to a specific region or location. Culture studies is interdisciplinary in terms of their metatheory and methodology. It thus subverts existing academic boundaries by combining social theory, cultural analysis, and critique.

In Dr. B. Kathiresan's academic work "New Historicism and Cultural Studies" he states that New Historicism is a mode of critical interpretation that privileges power relations as the most important context for all kinds of texts. He discusses how New Historicists look at literature in a wider historical context, examining both how the writer's timeline and culture affected their work and how the work reflects the writer's times and culture. It aims to explore the dynamic relation between literature and history. Chapter 3 involves the analysis of *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief,* through the application of culture studies involved an examination of cultural elements, and how these representations intersect with broader cultural contexts. The elements being Greek mythology and culture that was reimagined to incorporate in the book, themes of heroism, inclusivity, and representation in the narrative, the power dynamic and social commentary explored in the work, adaptation, and intertextuality, and fan culture and community. By situating the book within its cultural context, research gained a deeper understanding of the book's significance and cultural resonance.

According to the academic work published by Smart Moves Journal IJELLH called "Introduction of Various Modern Theories", culture and myth are deeply intertwined. Hence, many writers are found to re-present myths of the past and retelling tales from the present perspective. A myth is a tale which claims to preserve primary truth about individuals in a society. There are some ancient and modern theories of myth which have been used by researchers and writers to analyze different myths. The first most important theory about the origin of myth had been given by *Euhemerus,* followed by some modern philosophers like Friedrich Max Muller, Sir Edward Burnett Tylor, Carl Jung, Sigmund Freud, Malinowski, Frazer, Strauss etc. For Jung and Freud, myth should be read symbolically. There are three fundamental theories of myth. Them being, rational myth theory, structural myth theory, and

psychological myth theory. The psychological myth theory explains that myths are related to human emotions and appear from the human subconscious. All around the world, cultures have similar questions, wishes and fears which are quite complicated to explain. That is why psychological myths are made. Archetypes are universal forms and characters used by all cultures. They are examples of how people think alike. Archetype according to Carl Jung is, "An image of a probable sequence of events, a habitual current of psychic energy. To this extent it can be equated with the biological pattern of behavior." (Walker 5). Jung's concept of archetypal of the collective unconsciousness to the world of mythology is very deep and complex. Unconscious is only an assembling place of repressed or forgotten contents. This superficial layer of the unconscious is called personal consciousness. But this unconscious rests upon a deeper layer that is inherited or inborn and is termed as collective consciousness. This part of the unconscious is universal and has that form of behavior that is same in every individual and represents an ordinary psychic. The presence of this psychic existence can be recognized only by the contents and these contents are capable of consciousness. The contents in the personal unconscious are known as feeling toned complexes and the contents of the collective unconscious is known as archetypes.

Collective unconscious archetypes are primordial, symbols representing significant trends or global themes familiar to a human experience in the unconscious. Such abstract representations occur beyond space and time, such as anima, darkness, an innocent boy, a wise old man etc. Nature's archetypes, including flames, river, forest etc. can also appear. Archetypal research, also referred to as myth critiques, is a form of study that strengthens human's vital images and scenarios that indicate recurring mankind circumstances. Jung stated that there are three primary features of archetypes. They are primordial, universal, and recurrent. The image is

called primordial when it has an ancient character primordial is the very beginning shape of beliefs and symbols which are present in our unconscious mind. Universal archetypes are timeless and are not influenced by society or history. They are beliefs that have been passed on for ages. In the third critical feature of archetypes, studies have shown that the variations that occur are primarily due to local adaptations, meaning, the collective unconsciousness happens not only from one generation but also in genetic legacy of symbols and beliefs. The character archetypes or character trope is a when a character represents certain actions, characteristics, and nuances. These characters have well known qualities that shape their narratives. Jung identified four major archetypes but also believed that there was no limit to this number. The major archetypes are the shadow, the anima/animus, the shadow, and the self. Jung acknowledged that the four main archetypes can intermingle and there emerges the 12 archetypal figures which are: ruler, creator, sage, innocent, explorer, hero, wizard, jester, everyman, lover, caregiver. e Further information on this topic is given in the book, *The Hero and the Outlaw: Building Extraordinary Brands* by Margaret Mark and Carol S. Pearson. By analyzing *Percy Jackson* by using the theory of collective unconscious, we can attain an understanding of the universal themes in the work, attain insights into the human psyche, cultural significance of the book and an understanding of how the themes and symbols of collective unconscious resonate with different the contemporary audience.

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive method. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research is a means to explore and grasp the meaning individuals or groups attribute to social or human problems. As narrative research, it inherently employs a qualitative approach, focusing on the qualitative nature of the data, which predominantly is in the form of words. The descriptive method employed here facilitates the clear depiction of the research findings,

ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under investigation. The object of

this research is the study of the novel focusing on the representation of Greek myth within the

plot of *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* using the theory of culture studies. The researcher

used a documentary method to collect data. A close reading of the original novel and some

references such as essays, journals, books that were related to the research. After reading the

data, came the identification of quotations or paragraphs necessary for the research. Finally, the

collected data was interpreted to support the analysis. The final procedure, being data analysis,

was done through a step-by-step process, the first process being the close reading of the novel

Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief. In this process, the researcher tried to understand the

story of the novel, as plot becomes the main interest of narratologist, according to Foster. The

principles and objectives of the applied theories as a methodological approach to analyze the text

were explained. The cultural elements present in the book such as mythology, heroism, identity,

and representation were identified. The analysis was contextualized by reviewing existing books

or journals on culture studies, mythologies, and the original novel. To enrich the analysis,

insights from various disciplines were incorporated. Consideration was given to how the text was

received and interpreted by the contemporary audience. Critical reflection was given on the

implications of the research's findings. The researcher drew conclusions based on the results of

the analysis.

Chapter 3

Modern Myth: Exploring Modern Representation of Greek myths

Through adaptation Riordan expands on Greek myths and changes them to fit the modern world in a way that his readers can relate to. In Alexander Leighton's "Re-discovering Mythology: Adaptation and Appropriation in *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* Saga" he discusses how Riordan uses his series to introduce certain Greek myths to a new generation.

At the core of *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*, the narrative is imbued with a profound reverence for timeless ancient Greek myths, subtly manifesting through various elements within the story's fabric. Foremost among these manifestations are the naming conventions employed, wherein characters bear appellations that evoke the grandeur of Greek legends. For instance, the protagonist Percy Jackson, whose name serves as an abbreviated homage to the legendary Greek hero Perseus. In juxtaposition to the classical hero Perseus, Percy emerges as a contemporary protagonist grappling with complexities of dyslexia and ADHD, imbuing his character with a depth and complexity reflective of modern-day realities. But here, his ADHD is explained as battle reflex and his dyslexia is caused due to his brain being hard-wired to read ancient Greek. His disabilities are taken as a positive source making them his assets. In addition to this, he has the ability to breathe underwater. Grover Underwood, Percy's closest friend, is seen walking with crutches. However, this is due to his status as a satyr, whose lower half of the body resembles that of a goat. Percy's history teacher who is seen in a wheelchair is revealed as Chiron, the centaur, a legendary Greek mythic character. In the adaptation to modern storytelling, these characters, along with the others undergo transformations to align with contemporary perceptions of reality.

Percy's revelation of his divine lineage as the son of Poseidon, coupled with the subsequent discovery of his paternity's ramifications, serves as a pivotal turning point in his journey. The revelation that Zeus accuses Percy of theft of the lightning bolt, ignites a perilous quest, compelling him to embark on a mission to retrieve the stolen lightning bolt before the Summer Solstice. Percy ends up in Camp Half-blood, after he and Sally were attacked by a minotaur, where young demigods hone their skills, learn about their heritage, and prepare for the perils that await them beyond its borders. He is then claimed by Poseidon. There is also the ominous prophesy which states that a child of the three Elder Gods will either be the salvation or the damnation of Mount Olympus.

Accompanied by his companions, Grover and Annabeth, daughter of Athena, Percy ventures into the realm of Underworld, where his mother is under the clutches of Hades, and to return the bolt back to Zeus. Once in the Underworld, the trio realizes that they have been deceived by the true preparator, who was not Hades, but rather Ares, operating in collusion with a secret ally from the camp, Luke, son of Hermes. Faced with this revelation, they are compelled to leave Percy's mother in the Underworld, to return the lightning bolt to Zeus. Percy then engages in a formidable battle with the God of War, ultimately persuading the Gods to spare him for his perceived threat. Having successfully returned the lightning bolt to its rightful place and averted the imminent conflict among the Gods, Percy appears to have achieved a moment of triumph. However, this semblance of security proves fleeting, as Luke resurfaces one final time in the narrative, elucidating his deep-seated animosity towards the divine pantheon and disclosed his intentions to overthrow them. This denouncement serves as a prelude for the sequels.

In the book Chiron tells Percy that in the present the Gods are in the United States which has now become the center of Western Civilization. All mythical heroes have embarked on

adventurous quests. It was inevitable that this trio would embark upon an extraordinary adventure. The distinction between the mythical demigod journey with this lies primarily in their respective settings. Riordan maps the ancient Greek mythological locations into modern America. In easing his readers into the mythological narrative, he adeptly integrates the abode of the Gods into settings familiar to the audience. Riordan maps the ancient Greek mythological locations into modern America. The whole book is set in the backdrop of the USA. Camp Half-Blood is depicted being situated in an inconspicuous forest in New York Manhattan where young boys and girls wear orange T-shirts with 'Camp Half-Blood' written on them. Mount Olympus is now in the six-hundredth floor of the Empire State Building, a well-known American landmark. Leighton states, "this movement brings the events of the narrative closer to the audience's frame of reference in temporal, geographical and cultural terms" (Leighton 63).

Another significant departure lies in the adaptation of mythical beings within the narrative. In the olden myths, Zeus is described wearing a white Greek tunic and a wreath of olive leaves. But in Riordan's book, Zeus is shown wearing a suite, adopting the look of a powerful businessman, that is considered powerful in the contemporary age. He is the manifestation of the contemporary ideas of power. Another such example is Ares, the God of War. His desire for power and the advantages that come with it are not a foreign concept to us. He is depicted in the book sporting a black leather jacket, riding a motorcycle. Despite his modernized appearance, his essence of lethality hasn't dissipated, instead it accentuated his aura. Poseidon is the god with the most connection to Percy as he is his father. Unlike in mythologies, Poseidon here appears much more humane. His Hawaiian shirt and sunglasses give him a warm and approachable aura, unlike the mythical version of him, who is regal, intimidating, and otherworldly. Throughout the novel he is seen communicating with Percy through various

aquatic mediums. We see him guiding Percy and showing fatherly concerns for him. Percy, when in Poseidon's domain, is seen protected and healed. In the duel with Ares, Percy was able to win through just his own prowess, but by channeling his father's powers bestowed upon him. When Percy visits Mount Olympus, Poseidon's emotional interaction with him was very similar to how a commoner father interacts with his child, unlike a God with their mortal son like in the ancient myths. "Riordan's appropriation of mythological stories and hero tales re-create a new mythology...he thus reveals not only the ideologies of a time in the past, but also the ideologies of the present in which the adaptation was written" (Leighton 65)

Percy's journey to the underworld is a re-presentation of many olden myths. First is, there are multiple myths that have heroes going into the Underworld. Hercules, to capture Cerberus, Thesus, to abduct Persephone, and Orpheus, to retrieve his wife Eurydice. Comparing Percy's personal motivations for his journey to the Underworld with the mythological narrative of Orpheus reveals a striking parallelism rooted in love and sacrifice. For this myth, Percy does not find the same entrance to the Underworld as those from the ancient myths. "The entrance to the Underworld is in Los Angeles" (Riordan 147). Such details have been changed to represent the 21st century world. Percy and his friends had faced another deadly situation set in a Gnome emporium. It was here where Percy and his friends had first encountered a mythical monster, Medusa. According to most popular legend, Medusa was turned into a monster by Athena for breaking her vow of celibacy with Poseidon. The ancient hero known for slaying Medusa is Perseus, son of Zeus, by using the reflection from a polished shield to behead her. The narrative of Percy slaying Medusa bears striking parallels to the mythological tale of Perseus, his mythical namesake. Even the deaths of both versions of Medusa were the same. Here, Riordan is adapting

the myth into contemporary times. Doing this shows that while these myths have gone through continuous reimaginations, the core value of the myth does not change.

Riordan's utilization of the Lotus-eaters myth in the form of a contemporary hotel and casino on the Las Vegas trip underscores his adeptness at merging ancient mythology with modern settings and themes. By reimagining the Lotus-eaters as a place of entertainment and indulgence, Riordan taps into the timeless human desire for escapism and pleasure seeking, while also drawing parallels to the Lotus-eaters encountered by Odysseus in 'The Odyssey'. The Lotus-eaters myth itself is relatively sparse in classical literature, primarily appearing in the context of Odysseus' journey in Homer's epic. However, Riordan breathes a new life into this ancient tale by transplanting it into a contemporary context and imbuing it with elements of modern society and culture. "Riordan is clearly offering not a retelling of the traditional myths in modern language but an effort to continue with today's world representation by ancient tales" (Morey and Nelson 235). "The Lotus-eaters ensnare their victims in ways most believe harmless, by having people lose their sense of self and the desire to live. The Lotus Hotel and Casino is used to represent the distractions of life that we experience and that we can be lost in its haze if we do not keep in mind the values that matter, things we hold dear.

In conclusion, Rick Riordan's modern representation of Greek mythology in *Percy Jackson* not only revitalizes ancient tales but also offers a fresh perspective on timeless themes that resonate with the contemporary audience. Through Percy Jackson's adventures, readers are not only entertained but also challenged to reconsider their understanding of mythology and its enduring impact on the human experience.

Chapter 4

An Archetypal Analysis of the Characters

Archetypes are a collective heritage of common, abstract forms that organize individual acquisition of unique concrete materials. Jung claimed in the presence of a mutual unconsciousness that is essential to the entire human race and includes abstract archetypes (Carter 2006). Carl Jung stated that there are three primary features of archetypes. They are primordial, universal and recurrent. There have been 12 different archetypes from which seven tropes have been identified by Pearson and Mark. They are innocent, hero, caregiver, explorer, sage, outlaw and ruler. Character archetypes are figures that embody specific actions, traits, and subtleties, also referred to as character tropes. These personas possess widely recognized qualities that influence the narratives they inhabit. The hero's journey, often depicted as the central theme in myths by numerous authors, serves as a foundational narrative structure. Various plotlines, such as the hero's quest, adventure, fantasy, hunts, escape, discovery, roaming, and love story, typify the hero's narrative trajectory. Archetypal figures like heroes and villains derive their identities from formative experiences. The words they speak hold varying significance, contributing to their imagery in mythology and literature.

In Jungian psychology, the archetype of lover is a fundamental aspect of the human psyche representing the capacity for deep connection, passion and intimacy. The lover archetype, according to Marc and Pearson, encompasses a wide array of qualities and roles, including those of harmonizers, partners, pals, and matchmakers. By embodying the lover archetype, individuals can cultivate their emotional and sexual abilities, becoming more appealing to others in the process. The innocent archetype embodies qualities reminiscent of both a charming young child and a wise mystique. It exudes a sense of wow and wonder towards the world. This archetype

represents a perspective characterized by purity, optimism, and a longing for an idealized existence. According to Mark and Pearson, the hero (typically shown as warrior) accepts a significant personal risk to vanquish bad forces in order to defend society or holy ideals. Many legends depict the hero defeating something bad to safeguard something great. The hero is recognized by various names including superhero, slayer, warrior, and rescuer.

The explorers are driven by a profound desire to experience everything the world has to offer. They harbor a persistent sense of dissatisfaction and restlessness, always feeling as though they are searching for something elusive, yet unable to find it. This perpetual feeling of discontent fuels the explorer's relentless quest for new experiences and answers, propelling them to keep moving forward and seeking out the unknown. According to Pearson and Mark, the sage archetype aids individuals in cultivating the awareness required to fully utilize their freedom and resources. In addition to being known as the sage, characters embodying this archetype may also be referred to by various other titles, including thinker, evaluator, expert, planner, professional, mentor, teacher, advisor, and scholar.

Individuals who align with the outlaw archetype may resort to unethical or illegal means to achieve their goals, particularly if they feel disillusioned with conventional avenues of success. While the outlaw may not adhere to traditional morals; they often seek power and control. Unlike the hero archetype, which seeks admiration, the outlaw seeks to instill fear in others. Terms such as villain, adversary, revolutionary, iconoclast, and rebel are commonly used to describe characters embodying the outlaw archetype. The caregiver archetype is more emotionally sensitive. They are more concerned about others than about themselves. They are characterized as an altruist, helper, supporter, and carer. The ruler archetype is characterized by

its ability to take command over everything. This archetype is responsible for maintaining order. The Ruler archetype may be referred to as leader, manager, father, or even aristocracy.

Percy Jackson, the protagonist of the book, epitomizes the Hero archetype through his journey of self-discovery, bravery, and triumph over adversity. From the moment Percy learns of his demigod heritage, he embraces his destiny as a hero. Throughout the book, Percy faces challenges that test his courage, resilience, and moral character. His heroic qualities, such as bravery, selflessness, and a sense of justice, shine through as he willingly puts himself in harm's way to protect his loved ones. His journey of transformation and growth is central to his role as a hero, as he matures from a reluctant and unsure teenager to a confident leader. At the end of the book, Percy emerges victorious from his epic quest of retrieving the lightning bolt, playing a pivotal role in defeating Ares and saving the world, solidifying his status as a legendary hero. In addition to embodying the hero archetype, Percy also exhibits qualities of the innocent archetype in the book. Despite the dangers he faces, he maintains a sense of childlike wonder and curiosity about the world of Greek mythology. He approaches new experiences with optimism and trust. His unwavering belief in the power of love, friendship and loyalty is attributed to the Innocent archetype.

Annabeth Chase, daughter of Athena, represents the explorer archetype through her insatiable curiosity to explore the outside world. From the outset of the book, Annabeth demonstrates a keen interest in uncovering the secrets of the world around her. She eagerly embarks on the quest with Percy and Grover. Annabeth's thirst for knowledge and discovery drives her to seek out new experiences and push the boundaries of what is known, making her a quintessential explorer archetype. Annabeth also exhibits the qualities of the sage archetype, particularly her intelligence, wisdom, and strategic thinking. As the daughter of Athena, the

goddess of wisdom, Annabeth possesses a sharp intellect and a knack for problem solving. She serves as the group's resident advisor and guide. Annabeth's wisdom and expertise in subjects, including ancient history and mythology, make her a valuable asset to the quest party. Her role as a mentor and guide to the group further underscores her embodiment of the sage archetype.

Grover Underwood, a satyr, embodies the innocent archetype through his unwavering optimism, trusting nature, and childlike wonder about the world. From the beginning of the book, Grover's innocence is evident in his genuine belief in goodness in people around him. He is also the character who makes the book lighthearted with his humor. In addition to the Innocent archetype, Grover also demonstrates remarkable bravery and selflessness. Making him a dynamic and beloved character.

Chiron, the wise centaur, is the director of Camp Half-Blood and also the teacher of Percy. Chiron symbolizes the sage archetype through his profound wisdom. Serving as Percy's mentor and guide, he offers practical guidance on combat training, monster identification, and survival skills, preparing Percy for the dangers that lie ahead. He was also the one who imparted Percy the knowledge about his divine parent. His patient and compassionate demeanor make him a trusted confider and mentor to Percy. On the other hand, Poseidon, Percy's divine father and the god of sea, embodies the sage archetype from a more surreal yet influential perspective. As one of the Elder Olympian Gods, he possesses divine wisdom and knowledge that transcend mortal understanding. Throughout Percy's journey, Poseidon provides spiritual guidance through aquatic mediums. Poseidon's guidance was crucial for Percy to embrace his destiny as a hero.

Luke Castellan, son of Hermes, is initially introduced as a friend and mentor figure to Percy in the first book. Gradually, he reveals himself as the embodiment of the outlaw archetype. His disillusionment with the gods and resentment towards their treatment of demigods drive him

to rebel against the established order. He wanted to overthrow the Olympian Gods. Luke's defiance of authority and his ambition and desire for power and revenge lead him down a path of betrayal, as he manipulates others and sacrifices morality in pursuit of his goals. Despite his initial charm and charisma, Luke's villainy underscores his status as an Outlaw, willing to break rules and defy conventions in pursuit of his own ambitions. Similarly, Ares, the god of war, embodies the outlaw archetype through his rebellious and unpredictable nature, as well as his disregard for authority and societal norms. As the god of war, he represents the chaotic and destructive forces of conflict, challenging the established order of Olympus with his reckless behavior and penchant for violence. His defiance to Zeus and the other Olympian gods is evident in his actions throughout the book. He also exhibits the characteristics of a trickster just like Luke, particularly in his manipulative and cunning nature. His involvement in the theft of Zeus' lightning bolt serves as a prime example of his trickster-like behavior, as he orchestrates a series of events to frame Percy for the crime and undermine the stability of Olympus. He further manipulates Percy into believing that Hades is the lightning thief. Ares' association with Luke and Kronos underscores his status as an outlaw archetype.

Sally Jackson symbolizes the archetype of caregiver through her nurturing and protective nature towards Percy, her son. Sally prioritizes Percy's wellbeing above all else. Her devotion to Percy is evident throughout the book, as she sacrifices her own happiness and safety. Her nurturing and selfless nature further solidifies her as a character belonging to the caregiver archetype.

Zeus represents the ruler archetype through his position as the supreme ruler of Olympus. As the most powerful of the Olympian gods, Zeus wields authority and control over the mortal world and the affairs of the gods. He, the epitome of the Ruler archetype, enforced the strict rule

prohibiting the Gods from having direct contact with their mortal offspring to maintain order in the world. However, when his lightning bolt went missing, his sense of authority was challenged. His wrath caused the two realms to be in utter chaos until Percy retrieved his lightning bolt.

In conclusion, the archetypal roles in *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* add depth to and richness to the characters and themes of the book. From Percy's journey as the hero archetype to the mentorship of figures like Chiron and the rebellion of Luke, these archetypes provide a framework for understanding the complex dynamics of the mythological world created by Riordan. Through their archetypal roles, these characters resonate with readers, offering insights into universal themes of courage, loyalty, and eternal struggle between order and chaos.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Percy Jackson and the Olympians is an excellent example of adaptation in young adult literature. Rick Riordan did an absolute brilliant job with how he had seamlessly blended ancient Greek myths with his modern ideas. He employed positive aspects of adaptation and culture studies to immerse his readers into texts they previously had no knowledge of and did it in a way that is enticing and thrilling. Myth is a continuation of culture and understanding of what our society wants to believe in itself. In the end, we choose what myths we like and then pass them on. We, as 21st century readers, like the fantastical aspects that myths give us. They are there for our entertainment and learning just like how they were for the ancient Greeks. By the time the myths have gotten to the present, there have been various alterations done to them. But they are still loved. Ultimately what matters is what is taken away from the myths and what has been added to it that makes it count. As for contemporary writers, they search for what they want in a myth and how it will help in their own story telling. They are writing to their contemporary readers and not to the people in the past. Myths are about the people they are written for. Then ancient Greeks wrote for their people. They were not concerned with how other cultures would one day adapt these myths according to their values. We now enjoy these myths because there has been an amalgamation of the old and the new. Since Rick Riordan knows about the old tales, he was able to create his own version of these myths.

But there is a trick here. Human values have changed. Greek mythology is still very influential in this contemporary age due to its Universality and timelessness. The ancient Greeks gave utmost importance to certain values like bravery, excellence, honor, morality, etc. which are still very much relevant, their perceptions have changed in these years. One could say that the

Iliad is about is about how humans treat each other, it is also about how Gods interacted or interfered with humans' lives. In these ancient works, the Gods were often depicted as powerful invincible beings that are capricious and tyrannical. They wielded authority over mortals and were known to intervene in human affairs for their own amusement and selfish motifs. Such behaviors would be considered questionable by contemporary standards. But in Rick Riordan's fantasy world, the Gods are more humane and has their fare shares of flaws.

Ancient Greek mythic heroes are often depicted, possessing extraordinary abilities and are seen facing challenges beyond mortal comprehension. This puts them in a kind of divine pedestal. Making it difficult for people to relate to them. But Rick Riordan's protagonist Percy Jackson stands out as a different kind of hero compared to the traditional ancient heroes of Greek mythology because of his relatable humanity and contemporary values and his struggles with dyslexia and ADHD, and family dynamics make him more relatable to contemporary readers, who can see themselves reflected in him. His moral compass, sense of empathy, and willingness to stand up for his loved ones also align with modern heroism. Percy's friendships and alliances play a central role in his adventures, highlighting the significance of teamwork and cooperation in overcoming obstacles. He also possesses a witty and sarcastic sense of humor. His strongest forts are his resilience in the face of adversity and his strong sense of justice. These factors combine to make Percy beloved by readers around the world. Each character in the book, from the protagonist to the supporting characters, has their own motivations, strengths, weakness, and personal arcs that contribute to the overall narrative. This is another positive feature that modern interpretations of mythology have.

The analysis of character archetypes in this book yields valuable insights into the universal themes and underlying psychological dynamics at play within the narrative. Through

the exploration of archetypal figures such as the hero, the mentor, and the trickster, readers can discern recurring patterns and motifs that resonate with human experiences across cultures and time periods. For instance, Percy himself embodies the archetype of hero's journey, embarking on a quest for self-discovery and face trials that parallel those of mythic heroes like Jason and Hercules. His transformation from an insecure teenager to a legendary demigod reflects the timeless archetype of the hero's evolution and growth through adversity.

After conducting an analysis of Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief novel, suggestion for the readers is to learn more about Greek Mythology and conduct studies on it. They can also study further about the concept of collective unconscious developed by Carl Jung. Also, the next researcher can continue this research by studying the other volumes of this series. Hopefully, this research can be a reference to them. Furthermore, the presence of Chiron the centaur, and Poseidon, Percy's father, underscores the importance of guidance and wisdom in the hero's life. These mentor figures serve as sources of knowledge, support, and encouragement for Percy and his companions, embodying the archetype of the wise old mentor who imparts crucial lessons and aids the hero on their quest. Through their guidance, Percy learns valuable lessons about courage, loyalty, and the nature of destiny, echoing the timeless archetype of the mentor-student relationship found in myths and legends throughout history. The presence of the jester figure, mischievous satyr Grover, makes the narrative lighthearted, and Annabeth's Explorer archetype makes the book more interesting and livelier. The character Luke Castellan, belonging to the archetype of outlaw, plays a crucial role in shaping the narrative and influencing the development of the protagonist. Luke's rebellion against the Gods challenges Percy's beliefs and motivations, forcing him to confront difficult truths and ultimately grows as a character. His presence adds depth and complexity to the plot.

What is fascinating is that these characters exhibited qualities that aligned with multiple archetypes, contributing to their depth and complexities. Percy himself embodied not only the Hero archetype but also elements of the Innocent archetype, particularly in his unwavering belief in goodness of others and his sense of wonder at the world around him. Similarly, Annabeth embodied both Explorer and Sage archetypes. By embodying multiple archetypes, these characters become more dynamic and relatable, reflecting the complexity of human nature and the various roles individuals may play in their lives.

As *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* draws heavily from Greek Mythology, a rich cultural heritage that is familiar to many readers, by incorporating familiar Gods, monsters, and heroes, from ancient myths, the book taps into shared cultural reservoir of knowledge, allowing readers to connect with the story on a deeper level. As it has been mentioned before, the themes explored in the book, such as friendship, loyalty, courage, and self-discovery, are universal and resonate with readers from diverse backgrounds. These timeless themes speak to fundamental aspects of human experience, fostering a sense of empathy and understanding among readers. The characters are relatable and multidimensional, embodying traits and experiences that readers can identify with. The book being set in a modern-day American society that reflects contemporary concerns, issues and trends, making it relevant to readers' lives. It also bridges the gap between the past and the present, offering readers a familiar context in which they can explore timeless themes and ideas. The book features a diverse cast of characters from diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, and identities. This inclusivity allows the readers to see themselves reflected in the story and fosters a sense of representation and belonging. Alongside its entertaining storytelling, the book introduces readers to Greek mythology in an accessible way adding depth to the reading experience. The success of this book has been amplified by media

adaptations such as films (2010) and live series (2024), leaving a lasting legacy in the contemporary literary world, inspiring a new generation of artists, and storytellers.

The embedded collective consciousness within *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* contributes to its resonance with the contemporary readers, tapping into universal symbols, themes, and narratives that evoke a strong sense of connection, and identification with the story and its characters. Through the exploration of archetypal characters, mythological resonance, symbolism, cultural representation, and emotional engagement, the novel speaks to the collective unconscious of human experience, drawing readers into its world and making it a timeless classic in the annals of young adult literature. The live adaptation of *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thie*f was generally embraced by the audience, garnering positive reviews and was successful at the box office. It could be said that compared to its book version, the movie was mediocre. Rick Riordan himself felt the movie script was terrible. Despite these differences in opinion, Percy Jackson will forever remain our favorite.

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