Chapter II

The Archetypal Hero

Fantasy has always been hero-centric and the ideal of heroism has been the source of inspiration and motivation for the human race. Noble virtues such as courage, wisdom, patriotism, generosity, kindness and willingness for self-sacrifice are universally admired qualities in a hero. Heroes and heroic ideals also reflect the nature of the cultures from which they spring. The hero of the classical age was a male warrior or soldier such as Achilles whose aim was the achievement of honour and greatness. Spiritual qualities were added later on, as in Spenser’s medieval romance, *The Faerie Queene*. The protection of the weak was central to the age of chivalry. Later, Milton gave importance to the Christian virtues of humility, obedience and moral strength. The twentieth century saw the emergence of the common man as hero and the concept of the anti-hero with negative traits.

The heroes of fantasy fit into several common patterns. The ‘Hero as Orphan’ is common to fairy tales such as Snow White and Cinderella. The archetypal orphan’s parents may be dead or perhaps lost. Search for parents could be included in the hero’s journey (Myss). The orphan may be an abandoned child like Oedipus. Moses of the Old Testament is cast into the waters of the Nile. Fairy-tale characters like Snow White and Cinderella lose at lease one parent. Indeed, the archetype’s most pertinent manifestation can be traced to King Arthur who was brought up by foster-parents.
The 'Orphan' may also fit into the 'Lost Prince' or 'Hidden Monarch' archetype. The 'Hidden Monarch' is brought up secretly to escape from the persecution of a tyrant. Krishna was secreted from Mathura to Gokul and brought up there in relative obscurity among the cowherds until the time came for the destruction of the wicked Kamsa. In the Old Testament, Moses is brought up far from his Hebrew heritage. In the New Testament, the infant Jesus is hidden from the cruel Herod, who, Kamsa-like orders the killing of the innocents to protect himself from a possible rival. As has been earlier seen, Arthur's story is similar. Joseph Campbell states that once the hero is destined for greatness, he must undergo a difficult childhood during which his status as a hero is either forgotten, unknown, or ignored (321-334).

Heroes of myth, like Odysseus, are often scarred by marks of distinction, reminders of brave battles fought and these give special identity to the bearer. The Orphan often has psychological scars. Examples are David Copperfield in Dickens's novel of the name and Colin Craven in The Secret Garden. The Hero as the 'Wounded Child' is an archetype which is frequently come across in children's fiction. Northrop Frye, when writing about the analogous world of romance, says that among the human figures, children are prominent, since chastity as a virtue is associated with childhood (AC 151).

The typical mission of the hero of fantasy is to save the world, or at least the community to which he belongs, from the impact of evil, embodied in a satanic villain. The hero is often marked out from birth as a 'Chosen One' by a prophecy which is revealed to him at the appropriate time. In the words of
Burrows et al., “The hero is often seen in saviour terms as one who conquers evil and thus frees his people from destruction and death” (225).

**Tolkien’s Heroes**

In *The Lord of the Rings*, J.R.R. Tolkien provides the reader with several models of heroism – Frodo the humble *hobbit*-hero, Aragorn the traditional knightly quest hero, Gandalf the wise warrior, and Sam, whose heroism lies in selfless devotion. However, Tolkien’s focus is mainly on Frodo and Aragorn. The two contrasting characters resemble the two heroic types that W.H. Auden writes about in his essay, “The Quest Hero”: The first type “resembles the hero of the epics, a man of hidden powers.” The second is “one who owes his success, not to his powers, but to external forces” (31). Aragorn falls into the first category and Frodo into the second. Aragorn is shown as flawless but Frodo is endowed with endearingly human attributes and this makes him a very modern hero. Verlyn Flieger says, “He is a little man, both literally and figuratively, and we recognize ourselves in him” (124).

**Frodo, the Hobbit Hero:** Frodo Baggins is a typical *hobbit*, who knows nothing of the world outside. In Old English, “fród” means “wise by experience” (Carpenter, *Letters* 168). He is an archetypal ‘Innocent’ who progresses towards, or rather “falls” into knowledge like Ádam or Everyman.

Frodo is a plump and jolly *hobbit*, who eats heartily. This is implied by his name, *Baggins*, which is a derivative of *bagging*, or eating between meals (“Frodo”). Frodo is essentially child-like and pure-hearted. Stratford Caldecott writes, “In the Catholic tradition, the spirit of childlikeness and innocence is
associated particularly with the Blessed Virgin Mary” ("Hidden Presence" 178). This aspect is reflected in the Elf-Lady Galadriel’s special concern for him.

Aragorn is a traditional hero of romance, larger than life, a leader, fighter, lover and healer. However, Frodo is closer to the central character of fairy-tales and to Frye’s conception of the low mimetic hero (Flieger 124). Nevertheless, Tolkien makes it clear that his chief protagonist is Frodo Baggins by allowing the reader to observe him more fully from within. It is Frodo who is introduced first to the reader as the one who inherits the Ring and is then revealed to be the one elected to end its power. Aragorn is enlisted by Gandalf to assist him and is able to assume kingship only after the destruction of the Ring, whereupon he pays homage to the hobbits.

Frodo, like many fairy-tale heroes, is an orphan. He is brought up in the household of Bilbo, a rather eccentric cousin whom he regards as an uncle. Bilbo teaches him Elvish and imparts knowledge that is rare for a hobbit to acquire. This recalls Tolkien's upbringing under the care of Father Francis Morgan after being orphaned. Bilbo leaves him the Ring under persuasion from Gandalf. Frodo becomes the target of a tyrant because of his inheritance and thus has to go into hiding under an assumed name. Few others know the actual value of his legacy. Thus, he falls under the archetype of the ‘Prince in Hiding.’

Frodo’s task is to destroy the Ring of Power and this makes him the hero of an anti-quest. Frodo, unlike the traditional quest hero, is unsure of himself. His hesitation causes Flieger to remark that he is “a low mimetic hero thrown
by circumstances not of his making into high mimetic action” (124). Not very willing at the outset to proceed on his task, Frodo protests, “I am not made for perilous quests,” and childishly exclaims, “I wish I had never seen the Ring! Why did it come to me? Why was I chosen?” The Gandalf the Wizard’s retort implies the action of the Divine Will: “Such questions cannot be answered,” said Gandalf. “You may be sure that it was not for any merit that others do not possess: not for power or wisdom, at any rate. But you have been chosen and you must therefore use such strength and heart and will as you have” (LOTR 60). Gandalf’s relationship to Frodo is that of the ‘Wise Old Man’ or ‘Mentor’ who comes to the aid of the hero when “the times are out of joint” (Jung, “Psychology” 187).

In spite of his apparent ordinariness Frodo is called upon to play the role of the ‘Chosen One.’ Elrond the Elf-Lord says, “I think that this task is appointed for you, Frodo; and that if you do not find a way, no one will” (LOTR 264). Frodo is the subject of a prophetic dream which comes to Boromir. He is the halfling who is expected to bring about the fall of Sauron. That Frodo has hidden depths, unknown even to him, is evidenced by his cries in the Elvish tongue when in danger, and his own visionary dream in the house of Tom Bombadil. Later, on the way up Orodurin, he sees a wheel of fire. These reveal his innate spiritual qualities, the hallmark of the archetypal hero endowed with insight.

Frodo thus becomes an archetypal Christian hero with the mission of bringing about the end of evil. Frodo’s reluctance is not cowardice but
humility, based on his realistic assessment of himself and his circumstances. Frodo feels that while the enemy is strong and terrible, he is very small, uprooted and desperate (Edwards 61). Yet, he keeps on going with a fortitude reminiscent of Christian in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. If the Ring is symbolic of Original Sin, then Frodo can be viewed as an Adam who seeks to be rid of it. Since the benefit would accrue to the entire world of Middle-earth, he can be considered a Christ-figure who undertakes upon himself the salvation of his fellow-beings.

Frodo attains self-confidence after his initiation period, when he crosses into Bree and then into Rivendell, facing difficulties and dangers on the way. Frodo’s offer at the Council of Elrond to bear the Ring is a sacrifice. "I will take the Ring, though I do not know the way," he declares, ready for the quest (*LOTR* 264). Auden writes, "Once he has chosen, Frodo is absolutely committed" (55). Frodo’s offer, made of his own free will, brings him close to divinity in virtue. Patricia Spacks says, "Frodo’s virtue is more significant because it operates in the context of total free will: his is not the creature of choice and fate in the same way as Beowulf" (56). Tolkien’s stress on Frodo’s innate purity has Arthurian connotations. While Bilbo who is attached to the Ring may be seen as the equivalent of Lancelot, Frodo, who is ready to sacrifice the Ring and tries his best to resist its terrible temptation, may be compared to the pure-hearted Galahad.

Tom Shippey seeks to identify the religious element mentioned by Tolkien in his *Letters* and sees Frodo as the key (White). Frodo’s obedience as
well as his mercy and pity for Gollum make him a Christian hero. Frodo spares Gollum’s life and also saves him when he ventures into the Forbidden Pool.

This merciful deed providentially acts in his favour when he falters in his final task. By making Frodo succumb to temptation at the Cracks of Doom, Tolkien deliberately renders him human; an Adam figure, and not a Christ archetype. As a staunch Catholic, the author asserts through this eucatastrophic end that only divine providence and no human act can give freedom from original sin, reinforcing the belief in powers greater than man.

Nevertheless, Frodo’s tale recalls the temptation and suffering of Christ. Edmund Fuller, after remarking that both Gandalf and Frodo appear to be “partial anticipations of the Christ,” draws a parallel between “Ring-bearer” and “Cross-bearer” (29). The Ring, which frequently urges Frodo to put it on, has a terrible impact on him. True to his archetype as Adam, he is not immune to temptation; he does wear it time and again, though each instance brings about danger to his life and soul. Frodo’s terrible ascent to Mount Doom resembles that of Christ’s ascent of Calvary. It is only with the help of Sam that he is able to reach the crater of the volcano where the Ring was forged.

Frodo is thus a ‘Wounded Child’ archetype. He is tortured by Orcs and by the growing weight of the Ring. “He bears three wounds – the knife-wound of Weathertop for folly; the sting of Shelob for over-confidence; and the finger torn away with the Ring, for pride” (Bradley 84). Blood being an archetypal symbol of life, Frodo’s wounds can be deemed ritualistic and therefore part of his role as a life-giver and redeemer of Middle-earth. As a sacrificial hero, he is
given up for dead twice. The first is in Moria, when he falls down under the attack of the Orcs, but is saved by the mithril coat given by Bilbo. The second is when he falls into coma when stung by Shelob. Like Gandalf, he is brought back to life to complete his task. Thus, he follows the pattern of the resurrected god returning from the underworld, in the footsteps of Tummuz of Babylonian and Adonis of Egyptian mythology as well as Jesus Christ.

Frodo’s loss of his finger to Gollum can also be viewed as ritualistic. Frye brings up the act of mutilation as a common ingredient in the quest-romance and says that “it is often the price of unusual wisdom or power” (AC 193). Long before this incident, Sauron loses a hand in pursuit of unlimited power. Keenan talks about the mutilation as a “symbolic castration.” Frodo loses his sexuality, and this “represents the death of the body, a further step towards his androgyny” (69-70).

Frodo himself undergoes a transformation after the destruction of the Ring. On his return to the Shire, he speaks to the intruders in the quiet, confident tones of a knightly hero. He shows Christian mercy to Saruman, telling his followers after the latter’s attack on him, “Do not kill him even now for he has not hurt me” (LOTR 996). Sam notes the new luminescence that Frodo’s face acquires through his suffering. Once the mood-swings caused by the Ring are gone, Frodo becomes more like his old self. Yet he is too marked by his wounds to lead a normal life. He completes his sacrifice as world benefactor by isolating himself from his community, leaving the Shire for the Grey Havens. He speaks words appropriate for the ‘Sacrificial Hero’ or the
‘Hero as Scapegoat’: “I tried to save the Shire, and it has been saved, but not for me. It must often be so, Sam, when things are in danger, someone has to give them up, lose them so that others may keep them” (LOTR 1006).

Frodo’s parting from Sam and his departure by ship to the Grey Havens in the company of Gandalf and the High Elves, signalling the end of the Third Age of Middle-earth, is distinctly Arthurian. King Arthur’s leave-taking of Bedeviere and his departure in a boat to the Island Valley of Avalon in the company of the queens is paralleled in Tolkien’s work.

Though Frodo starts off as a humble hobbit, he slowly acquires wisdom and a nobility comparable to Aragom. Patrick Grant remarks, “As the tale ends, Frodo has achieved a heroic sanctity verging on the unworldly” (174). In Ready’s words, he is “no more for this world – he has transcended hobbitry” (56).

**Aragorn, the Man Born to be King:** Aragorn of *The Lord of the Rings* is close to being the traditional hero of knightly romance. He is also an example of the Christ archetype. In Patrick Grant’s opinion, “Aragorn is a king in exile, preserver of a noble lineage, who passes through the paths of the dead, fights a crucial turn in the epic battle, and proclaims a new dispensation” (173).

Tolkien’s Aragorn is tall, stately, chivalrous, kind, patient and wise; a formidable warrior and an inspiring leader, strong both in body and in mind. He has, in fact, hardly any shortcomings, and this makes it difficult for the reader to identify with him. He is the ideal hero, as opposed to the human and more accessible hobbits. Tolkien, like Milton, believing in the Christian
concept of humility and obedience as the hallmarks of true heroism, keeps his primary focus on Frodo, an archetypal Everyman, while retaining the traditional quest hero of romance in the form of Aragorn. Verlyn Flieger remarks, “In *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien has written a medieval story and given it both kinds of hero, the extraordinary man to give the epic sweep of great events, and the common man who has the immediate poignant appeal of someone with whom the reader can identify” (124). However, Tolkien does not portray Aragorn from within, as he does Frodo. He is a person to be admired, but from a distance, a hero of medieval times whom the *hobbits* meet in the course of their exotic adventures.

From the Jungian viewpoint, Aragorn may be considered a manifestation of the ‘Animus’ archetype, one who represents the male in the female mind. This justifies his union with the Elf-maid, Arwen, an ‘Anima’ or ideal female figure. This divine wedding of the ‘Anima’ and the ‘Animus,’ called ‘Syzygy,’ brings about a reconciliation of the opposites.

Aragorn appears an archetypal knight, displaying his chivalry through his willingness to serve. “I am Aragorn son of Arathorn and if by life or death I can save you, I will,” he tells the *hobbits* (*LOTR* 168). In taking the pledge of obedience and service, Aragorn makes a sacrifice, risking his life and renouncing glory. As a leader, he never orders; he only suggests. He gives up his chance to go to Gondor for the sake of Merry and Pippin. Again, in the spirit of sacrifice, he leads his thin forces to the Black Gates of Mordor to mislead Sauron and enable Frodo to destroy the Ring.
Aragorn represents many archetypes of the hero. As Chief of the Rangers, he is in charge of protecting the Shire from the onslaught of the Enemy. Like a knight-at-arms, he wanders through the countryside under the name of Strider. Heir of Isildur and Elendil, he may be considered a ‘Prince in Hiding,’ ‘Hidden Monarch,’ or ‘King in Exile.’ He does not reveal his royal descent until the time comes, but roams the land in the guise of the dishevelled Ranger, Strider. His hidden identity is hinted at by Gandalf in his letter to the hobbits in which he writes, “All that is gold does not glitter; all who wander are not lost.” (LOTR 167).

In the pattern of a typical quest hero whose aim is to reclaim his inheritance as King of Gondor and to wed his beloved, Arwen Evenstar, Aragorn is an orphan. He is brought up in the house of Elrond the Elf-Lord. When Elrond discovers his love for his daughter, he sends the young man, called Elessar or Elfstone by the Elves, on a journey of discovery. This is a period of initiation for Aragorn, a time when he learns about the world and hones his skills as a warrior. He takes direction from Gandalf the Wise, thus forging an Arthur-Merlin nexus. Aragorn is the subject of a prophecy involving his sword, Narsil, “the blade that was broken.” When it is re-forged and renamed Andúril, Flame of the West, Aragorn begins to come into his own. The sword is symbolic of his initiation into manhood and reminds the reader of the Sword in the Stone and Excalibur of Arthurian legend.

Spenser’s Arthur is a combination of secular and religious excellence, and so is Tolkien’s Aragorn. As a true king, he embodies the Divine Right of
ordained monarchs. He represents the aspect of 'Christ as King.' Though possessing the Christian qualities of humility and obedience, which he displays to a praiseworthy extent through his championship of the hobbits, he proves himself a commander of men, both dead and alive. He resists temptation strongly. Neither the Ring nor the Palantir has any effect on him. He is able to frighten Sauron through the use of the Seeing Stone. His immunity to temptation is indeed Christ-like.

Jung suggests that the symbol of the hand lies in its power to produce and create (qtd. in Garai 39). Men endowed with certain spiritual gifts ordained and consecrated priests, judges and magistrates by the "laying on" of hands. Aragorn performs the archetypal role of 'King as Healer,' recalling the "laying of hands" by Jesus, a tradition by which monarchs in England and France touched people to cure them of scrofula. He knows the qualities of many healing herbs and plants such as the athelas leaves or kingsfoil, which he uses to give relief to Frodo after the attack by the Witch-king and also more effectively in the Houses of Healing, when he revives Faramir, Merry and Éowyn. The latter incident is evocative of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. Nikakis says that Aragorn does something characteristic of a shamanic spirit journey by "calling" the unconscious sufferers back to life, and that, like a typical shaman whose spirit battles with demonic powers, the struggle leaves him weakened. He risks his life for the sake of the suffering. Aragorn, through the act of kissing the sick, seems to share his breath and bodily essences with his patients. Jung says, "To breathe or spit upon something conveys a 'magical'
effect, as, for instance, when Christ used spittle to cure the blind, or where a son inhales his dying father’s last breath in order to take over the father’s soul” (Man 70).

Another instance of Aragorn’s spiritual qualities is the raising of the ghostly army in the Paths of the Dead. Aragorn is able to release the dead soldiers from the curse placed on them for perjury by his forefathers, making him a redeemer. This great achievement proclaims the return of the king to the people of Gondor, words again evocative of the Second Coming. Aragorn is thus a symbol of hope. Dan Graves says, “Aragorn has titles reminiscent of Christ, a bride to gain and a kingdom to enter.”

Aragorn’s life follows a cyclic course, exemplified by the re-forging of his sword. He is close to being a vegetation deity, one whose welfare is tied up with the fertility of the land. In his absence, Gondor is a wasteland, its people devoid of peace and purposeful living. In the Court of the Fountain, the White Tree of Gondor lies withered and barren. Following Gandalf’s instructions, Aragorn finds a sapling on a stony slope and replants it there, signifying the return of fertility. According to Nikakis, “The coming of the rightful king is mirrored powerfully in the literal and metaphorical flowering of the landscape.” His midsummer wedding with Arwen further reinforces his duty as a king whose life is linked with the land. While the death of the old king of Rohan, Théoden, and the fall of Sauron herald the end of winter, Aragorn’s ascent to the throne and his wedding mark the advent of summer. Aragorn is thus Northrop Frye’s hero of romance, one who belongs to the “Mythos of
Summer" as described in *The Anatomy of Criticism*. The manner of Aragorn’s death, mentioned in the Appendices, is significant. He dies on March 1st, his birthday, signifying the completion of a circle, one which is not hollow like the Ring, but filled with noble deeds.

Further, he chooses to die before becoming old and feeble and passes on the throne to his youthful son. In doing so, he follows the conventions related to kings and priests described by Frazer in *The Golden Bough* and Jessie Weston in *From Ritual to Romance*. Aragorn, by the act of voluntarily giving up his life, adds weight to the argument in favour of his classification under of the Messianic archetype.

In *The Hobbit*, Tolkien projects two heroes, Bilbo Baggins, the central figure of the quest, and Bard, who slays the dragon Smaug. In *The Lord of the Rings* too, Tolkien shows his penchant for splitting the hero. “Frodo and Aragorn represent different aspects of the [archetypal] hero – Frodo his childlikeness, Aragorn his nobility and power, and each must support and learn from the other” (P. Grant 170).

**Harry, Rowling’s Universal Hero**

Joseph Campbell, after studying the myths of various cultures, concluded in his book, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, that they were one single *Monomyth* and it was the same hero who featured in all of them, with suitable adaptations according to the psyche of each culture. The hero had certain distinct features and his fortunes followed definable patterns. The hero of fantasy conquers underestimation by superiors, raises his self-respect by
overcoming obstacles and earns distinction through his accomplishments. The hero may not be extraordinarily gifted. He is acceptably normal, but due to his innate sense of justice is helped along the way by higher forces. His appeal lies in the sense of identification that he instills in the reader.

J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter is shaped on the lines of the archetypal British hero. In him are found overtones of King Arthur. Kerrie Le Lievre points out that Harry's name has historical associations with royalty, especially with Henry V. On a more contemporary note, he is symbolized as England struggling against Hitler's imperialism. At the simpler level, he is the archetypal British school boy. Harry is not extraordinarily brilliant except in Quidditch, an immensely popular wizarding adaptation of polo. Alleen Nilsen's remark, "Orphans must be Seekers and Warriors," evokes Harry's position as Seeker in the Gryffindor Quidditch team.

In British schoolboy fashion, Harry underplays his intelligence and is frightened of acquiring a scholarly image. He is neither aggressive nor domineering. Still, he does not hesitate to take up the reins of leadership when the situation arises. Harry never moralizes, but follows an unspoken ethical code which emphasizes fair-play and the championship of the underdog. According to Ruth Morse, "Harry's passionate sense of justice quickly leads him to recognize wrongs where he or his friends are involved, such as prejudice against half-human characters, or the children who do not come from 'pure-blood' wizarding families" (Hindu 4-3).
Harry Potter does not fit into the conception of the hero as a god-like form of man. He has human strengths and weaknesses, being created on the lines of Adam and Everyman. Aurora Sartori says, “Harry’s struggles in school, his relationships with his friends, and his less-than-perfect home life away from Hogwarts all contribute to Harry’s ‘Everyman’ status.” Harry is certainly not a giant in size or strength, being puny. He has dark, unruly hair, green eyes behind large glasses and a scar on his forehead. Yet, his is the story of the Ugly Duckling which grows up into a swan. From the unwanted orphan at the beginning of the first book, he is gradually transformed into a competent leader and future general who can oppose the villain and his cohorts.

Harry is characterized by a lightening-shaped scar on his forehead. This marks him as an archetypal ‘Wounded Child,’ indicates the presence of indwelling evil, and at the same time symbolizes the triumph of the forces of ‘good.’ Like Odysseus’ scar, Harry’s mark is an insignia of courage, a reminder of survival in a fight and a foreteller of more such encounters in the future. Grynbaum comments on Harry’s scar:

The thunderbolt, mythically symbolic of the spark of life and enlightenment was hurled by Zeus down to earth as a dramatic symbol of that god’s dual capacity for creation and destruction. Harry’s wound was the first evidence of a shamanic calling as well as the battleground between enormous conflicting forces within his young body and psyche.
The scar forces Harry into the open, while the Invisibility Cloak allows him to disappear. The Invisibility Cloak is a symbol of his father’s love and protection, an inheritance from his paternal ancestor, Ignatius Peverell. The scar represents his mother’s love and sacrifice which protects Harry till the end of his battle with evil. Harry also bears the psychological scars of rejection, neglect and uncertainty. He requires the motherly affection of Mrs. Weasley and the attachment and support extended by his mentor, Dumbledore and the friendship of Ron and Hermione, to overcome his early trauma.

Like the epic heroes, Harry is, in times of need, equipped with special weapons and means of transportation such as his magic wand, the Cloak of Invisibility, the Sword of Gryffindor and flying brooms of the latest model like the Nimbus 2000 and the unparalleled Firebolt. However, Rowling does not fail to remind the reader that “his intrinsic goodness is his most momentous weapon” (Nikolajeva, “Return”128).

Rowling’s Harry Potter, like Tolkien’s Frodo and Aragorn, is parentless. Accounting for the number of orphans who figure prominently in children’s fiction, Alleen Nilsen points out:

A higher percentage of orphans exist in children’s literature than in real life because many authors do what Betsy Byars has confessed to. . . . the first thing she does is figure out some way to get rid of the parents so that the children can be free to make decisions and get credit for their actions.
Says Rowling along the same lines: “Harry’s status as an orphan gives him a freedom other children can only dream about (guiltily, of course). The orphan in literature is freed from the obligation to satisfy his / her parents, and from the inevitable realization that his / her parents are flawed beings” (“Of Magic”).

The Dursleys are so suspicious of Harry’s magical background that they try their best to suppress him. He is made to live in a cupboard-like room under the stairs, has only cast-off clothes to wear, does endless chores in Cinderella fashion for his Aunt Petunia and has practically no company. Writing about the archetypal interpretation of the phenomenon of the hidden hero, Marie-Louise Von Franz says, “The new God of our time is always to be found in the ignored and deeply unconscious corner of the psyche” (viii). Harry is hidden away when the family has visitors and is painted as a delinquent to the outside world. This is reminiscent of David Copperfield and Oliver Twist who are dubbed unmanageable children and treated most cruelly. Jane Eyre too, is labelled a wicked child and sent away by her aunt to an orphanage. Prince Caspian, C.S. Lewis’s eponymous hero is an orphan who escapes from the clutches of his cruel Uncle Miraz. Harry bears the lightening-shaped scar caused by Voldemort’s attempt on his life.

Moses, Jesus, Oedipus, Arthur, Krishna and Harry were unaware of their celebrity status until they attained the pre-ordained age. Harry thus falls under the archetype of the ‘Prince in Hiding,’ one who has to wait to come into his inheritance. Nikolajeva writes about this recurring pattern: “A child deprived of
his or her birthright is one of the most common mythical and folklore motifs, occurring in stories as diverse as Cinderella and the Bible” (“Secrets” 229).

Harry may be identified as the archetype of the ‘Child Redeemer,’ a young version of the Messianic archetype. He is a symbol of hope to the wizarding world. Even as a baby, he delivers the magical people from Voldemort at the height of power. From the beginning, Harry’s mission is the final defeat of the resurrected villain. He is a boy of destiny, ‘The Chosen One.’ Campbell writes, “Herohood is predestined, rather than simply achieved” (35).

Harry and his friends fit into the Knight Archetype which is primarily associated with chivalry, courtly romance and the protection of the weak. The Knight archetype has spiritual overtones. Loyalty and self-sacrifice are the Knight’s virtues, along with a natural ability to accomplish difficult tasks. On a more contemporary note, Harry can be viewed as a symbol of England’s resistance to Hitler’s reign of terror. So, Harry and his comrades are not only like the Knights of the Round Table, but also like the Royal Air Force, which was filled with enthusiastic youth.

The fascination of the Inklings with the Arthurian legends no doubt had its influence on Rowling. In giving shape to Harry as a typical modern British hero, Rowling incorporates many of the stories surrounding the legendary king and bestows several of his traits on her protagonist. Milton considered writing an epic about King Arthur before settling upon a theme more suitable to the breadth of his inner vision. Rowling, in her delineation of the villain, chooses
Satan as her prototype, while she envisages Harry as a modern Arthur. Arthur’s royal birth, his separation from his parents and upbringing in obscurity, his acknowledgement as king at an appropriate age, all under the auspices of Merlin, anticipate the career of Rowling’s hero.

Harry Potter, the son of powerful and popular magical parents, is taken away by his future mentor, the great wizard Dumbledore, to live with the Dursleys, just as Arthur is taken away by Merlin, the unparalleled wizard to live with Sir Ector’s family. Arthur’s foster brother, Sir Kay, acts unfairly by claiming that it was he who removed the sword from the stone. Dudley bullies Harry mercilessly. Arthur travels from his country home to London to claim his true inheritance. Later he settles in Camelot. Harry travels from the suburban residence of the Dursleys to London, from where he proceeds to Hogwarts and his heritage. After his recognition as the true king, Arthur is given the extensive training that was a mandatory part of the medieval knight’s education. Harry is systematically trained in subjects like *Herbology*, *Potions*, *History of Magic*, *Care of Magical Creatures* and *Defence Against the Dark Arts*.

Like Arthur and Lancelot, Harry and Ron are close friends. The name of Harry’s sweetheart, Ginny, is undoubtedly derived from *Guinevere*, Arthur’s queen. The wise Lady of the Lake, Nimue, becomes the scholarly Hermione, who, in accordance with the times, is a lady knight taking active part in most of Harry’s adventures. It is Ginny who plays the role of the damsel in distress who needs knightly protection. If the knights of yore had fiery chargers, Harry and his friends have flying broomsticks. The wizard’s ball-game, *Quidditch*,
substitutes for medieval jousts. Early Arthurian legends mentioned fights with dragons and other such mythological beasts. In Rowling, fantastic beasts abound.

Merlin helps Arthur secure Excalibur, the adamantine sword with the bejewelled hilt and wondrous sheath. Likewise, it is Dumbledore’s pet phoenix which brings the Sorting Hat to Harry, from which he is able to extract the Sword of Gryffindor. This hoary sword too has a hilt which is embellished with rubies of extraordinary size. Merlin leaves Arthur at a crucial point in his reign because he is imprisoned by a temptress. Dumbledore is separated by death from Harry before the task of defeating Voldemort is done.

Arthur’s court housed the Round Table, around which one hundred and fifty valiant knights, including Lancelot, Gawain, Kay, Mordred, Galahad and Percival sat. This resembles the secret society, Dumbledore’s Army, headed by Harry. The Order of the Phoenix is another medieval-sounding organization like the Knights Templar. The various strange rules and regulations of Hogwarts give the story a definite medieval atmosphere. The Castle is lit by torches and is unmarred by modern mechanisms. As a magical place, a sanctuary protected by the most powerful charms, it is Harry’s Camelot in microcosm. Boys like Draco Malfoy are rival knights and opposing houses like Gryffindor and Slytherin are banners of warring nations.

One of the most important legends related to King Arthur was the Quest for the Holy Grail. Colbert remarks, “The Goblet of Fire is more than a little similar to another powerful goblet that has launched tournaments and battles;
the Holy Grail” (99). In Harry's world, the final task of the Triwizard Tournament is also to literally find a Grail, in this case the Triwizard Cup, and to win it for Hogwarts. Just as the Grail in Arthurian legend is found by Galahad, son of Lancelot, because his soul is completely pure, Harry and Cedric Diggory succeed in reaching the Cup through strength of character as much as by wizarding skill. The Triwizard Tournament is a Rite of Passage for the Young Harry, since it exposes him to the experience of death.

Sacrifice of the self for the welfare of others runs like a golden thread through the Harry Potter series. This notion of sacrifice has deep and lasting significance in myth and religion. Frazer writes in The Golden Bough of the ‘Scapegoat Archetype.’ Through the killing of the scapegoat, the tribe could achieve the cleansing and atonement necessary for natural and spiritual rebirth” (Guerin et al. 169). Harry Potter exists because of the power of sacrifice. “The Boy who Lived,” the only person to survive a killing curse, is able to do so because his mother, Lily Potter, casts her life as a shield between her baby and the villain, Lord Voldemort. Harry closely resembles his father physically but is nearer to his mother by temperament. Rowling indicates this by highlighting the fact that Harry’s eyes are similar to that of Lily. This resemblance is realized by Professor Snape before his death. Harry inherits his mother’s selflessness and therefore responds positively when he is called upon to make the climactic act of sacrifice. Harry’s willingness to lay down his life is contrasted with Voldemort’s desire for immortality. Karen Schaafsma writes, “The defeat of evil is never accomplished without sacrifice. The hero of fantasy
is always called upon to relinquish the very thing the antagonist is unwilling to give" (61). Again, Harry's sacrifice is marked by choice. In choosing to die, he follows the accepted pattern of the mythic hero. Jung, writing about sacrifice, says that "the death of the hero could be taken as signifying a turning-point in life in which the ego has to relinquish the seat of power, and acknowledge its dependence upon something or someone greater than itself" (qtd. in Storr 84).

This justifies Dumbledore's plan of making Harry let Voldemort try to kill him. The trial set by his mentor helps Harry realize his spiritual goal of attaining serenity and harmony in life, "the goal of the individual's psychological development" (Storr 87).

Rowling lays down the fairy-tale-like condition that while Harry lives, Voldemort cannot die. Harry understands the intricacy with which his life is linked to Voldemort and accepts the necessity of his death. He bows to Dumbledore's superior wisdom and, true to his archetype as a knight and also as a Christ figure, never seeks to shirk his responsibilities. Following his mentor's plans, he walks, alone and unarmed, into Voldemort's camp. There, after facing the jeers of the Death Eaters in a scene reminiscent of the taunting of Jesus Christ by the mob and of the sacrifice of C.S. Lewis's Aslan in The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe, he lets Voldemort hit him once again with a killing curse. Northrop Frye writes, "The hero has to die and if his quest is completed the final stage of it is, cyclically, rebirth, and dialectically, resurrection" (AC 192). Harry, like Gandalf, goes through a near-death experience and then returns to life. He encounters Voldemort once again, and
the wizard, who is unaware that Harry is the true master of the Elder Wand, is killed with the rebound of his own curse. After his death, the world once more becomes a free and fair one for both magical people and muggles. Harry and the other Hogwarts students grow up and in their turn send their children back to their alma mater.

Harry’s final encounter with Voldemort is an encapsulated form of the four stages of the quest romance traced out by Northrop Frye – Agon or conflict, Pathos or death, the disappearance of the hero and then the reappearance and recognition of the hero (AC 192). The various Harry-Voldemort encounters can be considered as examples of the ‘Junex vs the Senex’ conflict elucidated by Alleen Nilsen who writes, “In the process of making their life-journey, children sometimes view adults as standing in their way.” Voldemort belongs to a previous generation and survives by artificially enhancing his longevity. Cold and utterly devoid of humanity, he is the very embodiment of winter and sterility. In contrast, Harry, the good-hearted boy hero, born in the month of July, is symbolic of the young year, ushering in an era of fruitfulness. The youthful members of Dumbledore’s Army can be equated to the Maruts, the armed band of youths accompanying the Vedic god Indra, mentioned by Jessie Weston in From Ritual to Romance. It is noteworthy that in the past, the festival of Indra, a nature god, was celebrated in the spring season.

The hero of fantasy, whether he is an Everyman archetype like Frodo, a knight like Aragorn, or a combination of both in modern attire like Harry,
wakes into awareness when the time is ripe and aligns himself with the forces of 'good.' Whether or not he is overtly religious, he follows the mode of sacrifice to restore his world to a state of peace and prosperity, achieving self-realization in the process.