

THE ARCHETYPE OF MOTHERHOOD REFLECTED IN THE CHARACTER OF MOTHER IN NIKI CARO'S *THE MOTHER* (2023)

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze: (1) the archetype of motherhood reflected in the character of mother and (2) the role of mother psychological perspective of the character of mother in Niki Caro's "*The Mother*" (2023). The study uses descriptive qualitative method. Data collection from this research method includes watching and reading, identifying, classifying, and selecting. Data analysis of this research method by displaying, explaining, and interpreting using the psychoanalysis theory of Carl Gustav Jung and the relevant approaches related to the archetype of motherhood. The result of the study: (1) the archetype of motherhood reflected in the character of mother in Niki Caro's "*The Mother*" (2023) is the representation of the archetype of motherhood about tenderness and affection.; (2) the role of mother psychological perspective of the character of mother is found in various archetypal types namely Persona, mothers often cover up reality in order to see the safety of their daughters; Shadow, the mother character is not only a loving woman but also full of ambition; Anima and Animus (syzygy), The mother character has another archetype namely animus, the mother is like a man, she is a strong woman and never fragile; Hero, The mother character also has the ability to be a hero because she always helps her coworkers and children; Self, The mother character also has a desire for herself.

Keywords: archetype, motherhood, *The Mother*, psychological perspective

Introduction

Every person has basic personality traits that can lead to personality problems. How a person interacts, interacts and reacts with others can also determine the characteristics that distinguish them. In the book "Kepribadian Sigmund Freud Theory" written by Ferdinand Zaviera in 2022, he says that modern psychology divides what is called personality into different aspects or elements, namely mental abilities, thought patterns, emotions, different behavior patterns, way interact with people. The environment, sociability, emotional stability, sensitivity, caution and much more. Each person has his own identity and role in life. One of the many roles that exist is motherhood (Zaviera, 2022:25).

The well-known psychologist and psychoanalyst Carl Jung had a unique and profound vision of motherhood. Motherhood was a subject that attracted the attention of Carl Jung in psychoanalysis and archetypes. Jung believed that the concept of "mother" is one of the most important archetypes contained in the collective human unconsciousness. Jung explained that the mother archetype symbolizes everything that nourishes, blocks, protects, holds; is magical, contains elements of magic and also contains danger (Jung, 1959). According to Jung, the concept of motherhood is one of the most powerful and fundamental archetypes in the human psyche.

One film about motherhood is *"The Mother"* (2023). Directed by Niki Caro, the film is about an army assassin who comes out of hiding to protect his unknown daughter from brutal gangsters seeking revenge. Jennifer Lopez plays the main character of the film, the mother. It became Netflix's biggest opening film of 2023 to date, clocking in at 1 hour and 57 minutes. The action thriller received 83.71 million viewing hours from 8-14. on May 1 and was number one in 82 countries with approximately 43 million views.

The researcher analysis of this study concentrated solely on the Niki Caro movie *"The Mother"* (2023). The Researcher applies the theory of psychoanalysis to examine this movie.

Literary Review

Jungian Theory

In his 1912 book, *Symbols of Transformation*, Jung described the archetype as the highest and most honorable form because it is the source of life itself in the sense that it is the source of life itself. It is a new creation and the creator and maintainer of the pleasant and pleasant pleasures of life (Jung, 1912: 188). This quote shows that Jung saw the archetype of motherhood as something sublime and noble. This archetype is not only related to physical birth, but also to creating and maintaining the joy of life. In addition, Jung gave a more comprehensive account of the mother archetype in the monumental work *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, published in 1959.

This archetype encompasses not only the physical aspects of motherhood, but also aspects such as wisdom, tenderness, gentleness, calm and serenity. In other words, the maternal archetype is an expression of maternal qualities that are universal and common to all people, male and female. Jung further explained that the mother archetype has two different sides: a good (positive) side and a bad (negative) side (Jung, 1959: 82).

The positive aspects of the mother archetype are represented by figures such as Virgo. Mary and the goddess of fertility, symbolizing loving motherhood, warmth and compassion. On the other hand, the negative aspects of the mother

archetype are represented by figures such as Kali and Medusa, who symbolize the destructive, fearful and greedy aspects of motherhood. Jung believed that a full understanding of the maternal archetype required recognition and acceptance of both aspects (Jung, 1959: 82).

Jung wrote in his book *Aspects of Femininity* (1982) that both are integral parts of the whole experience of motherhood. Jung also emphasized that archetypes of motherhood are not limited to individual experiences but represent the collective experience of all humanity (Jung, 1982). Jung wrote in his book "Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious" (1959) that maternal archetypes not only represent each person's personal experience with a mother, but also represent universal maternal archetypes throughout human history (Jung, 1959).

Representation of Motherhood in Contemporary Films

The representation of motherhood in contemporary film has undergone positive changes in recent years. Modern films feature more complex, strong, realistic and diverse mother characters. This can help to change negative stereotypes about mothers and promote a better understanding of the role of mothers in society (Cineastle, 2013: 39, Vol.1)

Representations of motherhood in films not only reflect reality, but are also shaped by complex social and cultural factors. According to article journal "Motherhood and Media: Exploring the Representations of Mothers in Popular Culture" by Sarah Baker.

Representations of motherhood in film are the result of a complex interaction between social and cultural factors. These factors can influence how mothers are portrayed in films, and these representations can impact social expectations and norms about how mothers should behave and look. It is important to be critical of representations of motherhood in film and other media, and to promote more complex, realistic and diverse representation (Routledge, 2020).

Motherhood Archetype

The mother archetype has a profound effect on life, influencing how mothers see themselves, how they relate to other women, and how they define themselves as a woman or a man. According to Carl Jung, the mother archetype is an archetype within every human soul that has maternal qualities such as nurturing, love, fertility, creation and transformation. The mother archetype shares common features in mythology, literature, and culture, such as nurturing and compassion, fertility and creation, and transformation and wisdom (Jung, 1959).

The character of the mother in "Mother (2023)" is a complex manifestation of the archetype of motherhood. She shows both the positives and negatives of this archetype and considers how mothers might behave in different situations in

the real world. The film invites viewers to consider the role of mothers in society and the relationship between mothers and children.

Persona is a technological system owned by individuals that turns everyday objects into something useful. Every profession has its own character. People take certain actions as a result of their environment. After that, people try to live up to those expectations of his book and his voice. The danger is when people develop their own uniqueness of personality. After that, they move into life against the background of the story (Jung, 2005: 65-66). However, man cannot fight the world with his true feelings. They have to create something that seems to meet the demands of society. It's a facade. In other words, it is similar to the actor's mask, which functions as their mask (Ewen, 2014: 59).

In psychology, a shadow is a lure tied to the earth. As a result, the definition of the word shadow can be derived directly from basic psychology. Earth and shadow are identical to primitive. Shadow is a visual concept that is essentially connected to the ground, it cannot be separated from the ground. In this case, the shadow is the main component of the definition of the soul. If someone violates the shadow of another, for example, by stepping on it, it seems that he gives a blow, then this statement is said to offend the person. In other words, the shadow is another person. It is the embodiment of that which follows us and lies in the shadow of our consciousness. (Jung, 2008: 120-129). As Jung explained, "I must have a dark side if I want to be whole; and when I am aware of my shadow, I also remember that I am a human being like everyone else." (Today's man is looking for a soul, 2005:35).

Jung describes Anima and Animus as feminine qualities in men and masculine qualities in women (Jung, 2005:67). However, men and women have unique characteristics that are contrasting from their opposite sex. In other words, men have a female subconscious called anima, and women have a male archetype called animus (Ewen, 2014). According to the book *The Keribadian Sigmund Freud Theory* by Ferdinand Zaviera (2022), the anima and animus are called syzygy. The anima and animus are archetypes used to communicate with the collective unconscious and play an important role in male-female emotions, which means that when someone falls in love, it can "charge" the archetypal anima and animus within them (Zaviera, 2022: 39).

In Carl Jung's theory of motherhood archetypes entitled *The Archetypes And The Collective Unconscious* 1959, the wish old man is one of the important archetypes that represents wisdom, experience and knowledge. This figure is often described as a mentor, advisor and guide who provides direction and advice to individuals who are searching for meaning and purpose in life. The wise old man has important functions such as guiding individuals on their journey through life, offering solutions to problems and imparting knowledge and wisdom.

As people become interested in the protagonists of movies, books, and other media, then the image of the protagonist is augmented with the archetype's traits. In mythology and legend, a hero is represented by a powerful figure. She or he is the individual who overcomes the villain, and relieves us from pain and impotence. However, a hero can become the example of the ideal personality that we want to emulate (Jung, 1934/1954a, cited in Feist, 2008:111).

Jung believed that everyone tended to movement, improvement, and completion. He terms it as his own (Feist, 2008:111). The self is positioned outside of the human's awareness. It's between awareness and lack of awareness. Even though the innate tendency is shared by every personality that aims to be singular and develop their own identity, achieving the desired individual is uncommon (Ewen, 2014: 65).

Method

This research used qualitative research in this study. Qualitative research is a methodology that examines people's experiences in depth utilizing a specialized set of research methodologies such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation, content analysis, visual methods, and life histories or biographies. Qualitative research also observes people in natural settings, consequently, accepting and comprehending the contextual influences on the research concerns is another goal of qualitative research (Hennink, 2020:10).

The object of this research is Mother, a character in the movie *"The Mother"* 2023. This 1 hour 57 minute movie aired on May 12, 2023 on Netflix. Two categories exist for research data. Specifically the primary data; additionally, every statement and dialogue, related to the research subject that appears in the movie's subtitles serves as data for this study and any supporting data; to ensure that the analysis is relevant, other data is gathered from books, journal articles, and other relevant sources related to the study.

Data collection from this research method includes watching the film *"The Mother"* (2023) and reading the subtitles and scripts in this film, identifying the data containing problems, classifying the chosen information, sorting by looking at how it relates to the problems, and selecting to choose specific information to solve the problem. The data analysis of this research method are displaying, explaining, and interpreting. The researcher analyzed the data by using the psychoanalysis theory of Carl Gustav Jung and the relevant approaches related to The Archetype of Motherhood.

Finding and Discussion

The Archetype of Motherhood Reflected in the Character of Mother in Niki Caro's "The Mother" (2023)

Tenderness and Compassion

Juan Pablo Kalawski (2010) in his article entitled "Is tenderness a basic emotion?" represented tenderness as one notion connected to tenderness is called love. Love is glaringly absent from this list of basic emotions. Juan Pablo Kalawski defines sensitivity as a fleeting feeling, a "surge" emotion that ties to love as caring. Peters and Calvo (2014) represent compassion that they have reviewed in an article entitled "Kasih Sayang vs Empati: Merancang Ketahanan" describes compassion as the act of being sensitive to the suffering of others. In the film *The Mother* (2023), there are several dialogues that show the Tenderness and Compassion as presented below:

- Nurse : "It's a girl." (baby crying)
Mother : "Is she okay?"
Nurse : "She's perfect."
Mother : (exhales deeply).
FBI Agent : "Gimme the room. Special Agent Williams. How are you?"
Mother : "Where's my baby?"
FBI Agent : "She's in the nursery. She was very fortunate."
Mother : "I wanna see her."
FBI Agent : "Well, what you want is no longer the deciding factor in what happens next. You wasted 12 hours of FBI time trying to cut a deal for yourself and seven agents were killed. This conversation now takes place on our terms."
Mother : "You can't keep her from me. I'm her mother."
(*The Mother*: 2023, 00:6:59-00:7:48)

The dialogue above shows that after the mother struggles to give birth to a beautiful baby girl, the mother has not seen the child then the FBI agent comes to keep the child away from his mother. The dialogue above shows the representation of the price of motherhood archetype which is the mother's compassion and tenderness to always be with her child by the way the mother does not want to be separated from her child the dialog above shows the representation of the price of motherhood type in the form of care and affection.

Sacrifice and Protection

The article written by Francesca Righetti, Mariko L. Visserman and Emily A. Impett (2022) entitled "Sacrifices: Costly prosocial behaviors in romantic relationships" they describe from what they have explored that Sacrifice conduct

differs from other prosocial activities in that it involves deciding not to pursue a self-oriented preference after evaluating the impact on the partner or relationship. In terms of protection, an effort to protect something, whether it is a relationship, a product, etc. In the film *The Mother* (2023), there are several dialogues that show the Sacrifice and Protection as presented below:

FBI Agent : “Your daughter will be placed in witness security...”
Mother : “My daughter is not going into the foster system.”
FBI Agent : “...so no one knows who her mother is.”
Mother : “You underestimate my ability to protect my child.”
(*The Mother*: 2023, 00:8:16-00:8:25)

The dialogue above occurs when after the mother gives birth and then the FBI agent comes to separate her from the child the mother does not agree because the mother feels that they undermine the mother in protecting the child. The dialogue above shows the representation of archetype of motherhood from the mother's character, in the form of a desire to always protect the child by refusing because the mother feels that they undermine her expertise as a mother.

The Role of Mother Psychological Perspective of the Character of the Mother in Niki Caro's "The Mother" (2023)

In analyzing the characteristics of mother in *The mother* (2023), it is important to consider the psychological perspectives that drive the character's actions and behaviors. Several aspects of psychology can affect a character often, a person's behavior is influenced by past traumatic experiences. If the mother character has a background full of hardship or suffering, it can shape the way she views the world and affect the way she interacts with others. As for the other aspect, the relationship between mother and child can also have a great psychological impact. In this movie, it can be found that the relationship between the mother character and her child is very good, the mother wants to always protect the child from danger. The need to protect her child is often strong enough to encourage actions that may be extreme by others. As a mother, she must experience inner conflicts and complex moral dilemmas, but also the social, cultural, and economic environment in which the character lives can influence the character's behavior and outlook.

Persona

Persona or masks is a technological system that is owned by individuals and converts wordly objects into useful ones. However, humans cannot battle the world with their actual feelings. They must creat something that seems appropriate to the demands of society. This is a facade. In other words, it's similiar to the actor's mask that serves as their disguise (Ewen, 2014: 59). In the film *The*

Mother (2023), there are several dialogues that show the Persona as presented below:

Mother : "It's good. Thanks."
Jons : "If you want..."
Mother : "I don't want anything, Jons."
Jons : "Hey. We're all lost when we get out."
Mother : "I got more than lost."
Jons : "Whatever you've done, you're still here. Still time make it right."
Mother : "Anybody sees us in town, you don't know me."
Jons : "it's that bad?"
(*The Mother*: 2023, 00:13:16-00:13:45)

The dialogue above occurs when the mother and her friend go to the mother's new house which is in the middle of a snowy forest full of wild animals, the mother in the forest is training to become a hitman. The dialogue above represents the meaning of another type of motherhood of the Mother's character, namely the Persona of the Mother covering her sadness and anxiety in front of others she wants to cover her sadness in the sight of many people.

Shadow

Shadow is a visual concept that is intrinsically linked to the earth, it cannot be detached from the earth. In this instance, the shadow is the most rudimentary component of the definition of the soul. When someone injures another's shadow, such as stepping on it, it appears as if they are giving a punch, then the statement will be said to have injured the person. In other words, the shadow is the second individual. This is an embodiment of what follows us, and is located in the shadow of our consciousness (Jung, 2008: 120-129). In the film *The Mother* (2023), dialogues that show the Shadow as presented below:

Mother: I'm asking the fucking questions! [in english] Where's the girl? [in spanish]

FBI Agent 1 : "I don't think he knows."
Tarantula : "What'd he say?" [in spanish]
Mother : "Want me to tell? Let me translate."
FBI Agent 1 : "So this is how you interrogate."
Tarantula : "What happened? [laughs] you get tired? Hector's whore."

(*The Mother*: 2023, 00:31:44-00:32:10)

The dialogue above occurs when the FBI agent and the mother managed to capture the tarantula but the tarantula did not want to admit where Hector and his daughter were. The dialogue above represents the meaning of another type of

motherhood of the Mother character, namely the Shadow mother who usually has a compassionate nature to be a merciless person against her enemies who kidnapped her daughter.

Anima and Animus (syzygy)

However, males and females have unique characteristics that are opposite to each other due to the opposite of sex. In other words, there is the feminity in the unconscious of men that is called an anima, and there is the male archetype in woman that is called an animus (Ewen, 2014). In the film *The Mother* (2023), there are several dialogues that show the Anima and Animus (syzygy) as presented below:

FBI Agent 1 : "What kind of weapons?"

Mother : "This place isn't secure."

FBI Agent 2 : "Lady, stop telling us our jobs. We can take you in if you want."

Mother : "You don't know how bad this gets."

FBI Agent 2 : "Then tell us."

(The Mother: 2023, 00:1:37-00:1:52)

The dialogue above occurs when the mother is interrogated by the FBI agent about Hector and Adrian and then the FBI agent tries to warn the mother. The dialogue above represents the meaning of the type from another aspect of the mother's character, namely animus if all women usually feel scared when being interrogated but the mother has masculine traits, namely courage and can read the situation of chaos that will occur which can usually be done by men.

Hero

In mythology and legend, a hero is represented by a powerful figure. She or he is the individual who overcomes the villain, as relieves us from pain and impotence. However, a hero can become the example of the ideal personality that we want to emulate (Jung, 1934/1954, cited in Fiess, 2008: 111). In the film *The Mother* (2023), there are several dialogues that show the Hero as presented below:

Adrian : "See where you're looking? She's just up there, isn't she? She's watching. She's got a shot, eh? Bullet in your head will take us both out."

[Mother yelling]

[both grunting]

Adrian : "Did you teach her to be ruthless? Hmm? Can she stop her heart like you? We die and she survives. If that's what you want, take a breath and tell her. Tell her. Take the shot!"

[gun fires]
(*The Mother*: 2023, 1:35:28-1:37:45)

The dialogue above occurs when the mother and Adrian are fighting, they are fighting without weapons Adrian wants to shoot Mom but Zoe shoots from the other side. The dialogue above shows the embodiment of the archetype of motherhood in terms of other archetypes in the character, namely Hero, Mother puts herself to keep her daughter safe from the villain who endangered her.

Self

The self is positioned outside of human's awareness. It's between awareness and lack of awareness. Even though the innate tendency is shared by every personality that aims to be singular and develop their own identity, achieving the desired individual is uncommon (Ewen, 2014: 65). In the film *The Mother* (2023), there are several dialogues that show the Self as presented below:

Mother : "I should've run the other direction."

FBI Agent 1 : "So why didn't you?"

Mother : "What else was I gonna do after the service? I was the best, and the best that I could hope for was being a cashier at a retail chain."

(*The Mother*: 2023, 00:36:46-00:36:59)

The dialogue above occurs when the mother and the FBI agent are trying to find Zoe and stay at the hotel after fighting with the tarantula to clean themselves. The dialogue above shows the embodiment of the archetype of motherhood in terms of other archetypes in the mother's character, namely self, the mother character considers herself great at serving and the mother hopes to become a cashier in a retail network.

Conclusion

The archetype of motherhood reflected in the character of Mother in Niki Caro's "*The Mother*" (2023) is representation of maternal archetypes of tenderness and compassion. Mother has tenderness and compassion towards everyone. As well as the maternal archetype of sacrifice and protection, the mother character has a very high archetype of motherhood, the mother is willing to sacrifice her life for her daughter.

The Psychological Perspective of the Mother Character in Niki Caro's *The Mother* (2023) occurs due to many aspects that influence the behavior and actions of the mother character such as past traumas, the relationship between the mother and Zoe, the need to protect Zoe, the inner conflict experienced by the mother, environmental, economic and social factors of the mother character.

Persona, Mothers often cover up reality in order to see the safety of their daughters. Shadow, the mother character is not only a loving woman but also full of ambition. Anima and Animus, Mother's character has another archetype which is animus, mother is like a man, she is a strong woman and never fragile. Hero, The mother character also has the ability to be a hero because she always helps her colleagues and children. Self Mom's character also has a desire for herself.

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