

Jungian analytical psychology into *The Kite Runner*

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ABSTRACT. *The novel narrated a story of Amir, a young boy from well-being family in Afghan, and his closest friend, Hassan, a servant. Due to the cowardice of Amir, the relationship between Amir and Hassan had been changed. When Amir reached an adult, he returned his hometown to initiate to pursue the road of self-redemption. Anima, Animus, persona and shadow were the dominating archetypal images in Jungian psychology, which played significant roles in the interaction between individuals and environment. This thesis specifically analyzed the roles of Amir's father and Amir in the *The Kite Runner* through Anima, Persona and Shadow to make interpretation of the personality and implication which were hidden in the roles.*

KEYWORDS: *Analytical Psychology; Anima; Persona; Shadow*

1. Introduction

The *Kite Runner* was written by Afghan-American author Khaled Hosseini which was published in 2003. The book narrated the story of a young, rich boy from the Wazir Akbar Khan district of Kabul, Amir, whose imitate friend was Hassan, who was Amir father's young Hazara servant. The novel was set against a background of turbulence situation, from the fall of Afghanistan's monarchy through the Soviet military intervention, the exodus of refugees to Pakistan and the United States, and the rise of the Taliban regime.

2. Literature Review

Jungian analytical psychology pertained to psychoanalysis, which derived from Sigmund Freud's theory. Sigmund Freud, an Austrian physician, originally presented the nomenclature, psychoanalysis, as well as a set of relevant psychological and psychotherapeutic theories and techniques. After Sigmund Freud, many

psychologists, such as Alfred Adler, Carl Gustav Jung, have inherited and expanded the quintessence, revised the deficiencies in Freudian psychoanalysis and even developed their own theories independently from Sigmund Freud.

Carl Gustav Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist, was known as the founding father of analytical psychology which formed based on Sigmund Freud's theory. As one of celebrated psychologists in psychoanalysis, Jung not only carried forward the emphasize on unconsciousness in traditional psychoanalysis, but also made modification and improvement on that and came up with new ideas, such as extraversion and introversion, the collective unconscious and archetypes, to enrich the original system.

Jung divided the consciousness into four parts, namely personal consciousness, personal unconsciousness, collective consciousness and collective unconsciousness. The first three were similar with the conscious mind, the unconscious mind and the subconscious mind, which was put forward by Sigmund Freud. It was worth mentioning that collective unconsciousness was an innovation of traditional psychoanalysis.

3. Persona: Amir's father

Amir's father was the one of most significant figure in the whole novel on account of special relationship with the protagonist Amir and Hassan, as well as influence of the image of his father on the contents of *The Kite Runner*. The author made a vivid description of Amir's father in the novel. Amir's father, as a Pashtun specimen, had a thick beard, a wayward crop of curly brown hair as unruly as the man himself, with hands which were likely to uproot a willow tree. The author also wrote in the book that Amir's father was so tall that all attention shifted to him at parties just like the sunflowers turning to the sun. At the same time, Amir's father was heavyset man, gentle demeanor and looked like a man full of sense of social justice and social responsible. From those appearance descriptions in the novel, it was easy to find that his father was stalwart and a man of integrity.

However, compared with the descriptions of his father's appearance, as a matter of fact, the image of Amir's father was rather complex and contradictory. According to Jung's theory, the persona referred to the social face which was carried by individual to present to the society. And in general, what individual presented to the

outside world was not the thing they really hope to demonstrate to others. What's more important, individual made a selection of various personas according to the circumstances. Exactly as Amir's father, he always employed different persona in different situations to give the impression that he owned the absolute power and the highest seniority.

According to the complexity of persona itself, Jung divided the persona to persona of individual, which referred to specific character in literature works or in real life, persona of role, further divided into persona in family, persona in workplace and persona in society and as well as basic persona which was the basic unit of two other personas. As a result, the thesis made a detailed analysis of the persona of Amir's father though persona of role.

4. Shadows: Amir

The author once commented on Amir, the protagonist in *The Kite Runner*, about Amir's experiences—"an unlikeable coward who failed to come to the aid of his best friend". The figure, Amir, was born in a Pashtun well-to-do family and his mother died for giving birth to him. When he was young, he was encouraged by Rahim, a friend and cooperator of his father, to launch his writing career and create his fame ultimately. To escape the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Amir and his father immigrated to America, where he had a brand new life. In Jung's opinion, individual possessed a shadow which was embodied in unconscious life. At the same time, shadow was at the bottom of one's heart and had connection with original instinct. Outwardly, the role of Amir was a gentle, polity person who did his most to achieve his dreams. However, it was this kind of person that made harm to his best friend, Hassan who would devote his life to Amir. Although it was hard to trace the reason of his action though the external persona, we could explore the shadow of Amir to make an explanation for Amir's conducts.

5. Anima: Amir

According to Jung's theory, any male has an archetype of feminine inner personality which is called anima. And the development of anima can be divided into four levels, namely Eve, Helen, Mary, Sophia. There are a few female images existing in the whole novel, such as Amir's mother, Sanaubar, Soraya. Amir's mother is the first female image which emerges in the beginning of the novel. His

wife's accompany him at the rest of his life to give him courage to overcome his sin and complete redemption. The first level of anima of Amir refers to his mother and the second, third and fourth levels refer to his wife, Soraya

6. Conclusions

The thesis makes an analysis of the charter of Amir's father and Amir through archetypes, Anima, Shadow, and Persona. The persona of Amir's father also can be divided into different parts to observe his overall external mask. When comes to the anima of Amir, the levels of anima exhibit attributes through different phases. As to the shadow of Amir, this thesis demonstrates through Amir's jealousy and inferiority.

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