

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter discusses the theoretical foundation used as a reference in this research. The theoretical review is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the concepts related to the research topic, specifically the psychological character of the main character in *The Creator* movie.

#### **A. Psychoanalysis**

In general, psychoanalytic theory examines how the conscious and unconscious mind interact and how this relationship can be used to understand and address mental disorders (Abdullah, 2023). This approach emphasizes the internal mental processes within an individual, particularly inner conflicts and psychological dynamics that shape personality. Various psychologists have developed theories that aim to explain how personality is formed and how internal imbalances can influence behavior. Psychoanalysis also has a strong connection to literary studies, including feminism, structuralism, the sociology of literature, and the psychology of literature, because concepts like "censorship" and "unconscious work" in dreams make a significant contribution to the development of modern literary theory (Barry, 2017). This connection can be seen through psychoanalysis's explanation of the concepts of "censorship and unconscious work" in dreams, which has significantly contributed to the development of modern literary theory, especially in the study of psychological approaches to literature.

Psychoanalysis is one of the most influential psychological approaches used in literature and film studies because it helps explain a character's hidden motivations, behaviors, and inner conflicts. This approach was first developed by Sigmund Freud, who argued that human personality is shaped by the unconscious mind, early childhood experiences, and internal mental processes (Freud, 1960). Freud also introduced the structure of the personality id, ego, and superego, which control human instincts, realistic thinking, and moral values (Hall, 1954). In addition, he explained defense mechanisms as ways the ego protects itself from anxiety and conflict (Freud, 1936). Although later thinkers such as Jung, Adler, and Klein expanded psychoanalytic theory, Freud's ideas are still widely used in character analysis because they help reveal hidden meanings behind actions, dialogue, and symbols in films (Engler, 2014). In film studies, psychoanalysis allows researchers to understand how visual elements, character development, and storylines reflect psychological struggles that are not directly shown. Even though psychoanalysis is sometimes criticized for being interpretative and not fully scientific, it remains an important and useful framework for understanding the psychological complexity of characters in films.

Freud was the founder of psychoanalysis. He composed that there are three parts of human personality. In his view, Freud explained that the structure of the human psyche consists of three main components: the id, the ego, and the superego. He first discussed this concept more thoroughly in his 1920 essay *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, and later explained it in more depth in his work *The Ego and the Id* (Freud & Strachey, 2024). Each of these elements develops at different stages of

life and together shape an individual's behavior, exerting a strong influence on their overall personality.

### **1. Id**

It is located in the unconscious realm of the human mind and is the center of basic instinctual drives. According to Saleh (2018), the id is the source of primitive impulses that have not been shaped by cultural influences or life experiences. Id need a mechanism that can connect to reality in order to satisfy urges. Unrealized instincts and passions that are not free to manifest in consciousness are found in the id (Prasetyo et al, 2021). Freud explains that the id lacks the ability to differentiate between good and bad, right or wrong; what matters is the fulfillment of instinctual needs without waiting or considering other factors. Although the pleasure principle is the primary basis of the id's operation, Freud also notes that the id can manifest more complex urges, such as aggression and fear, which can become destructive if not controlled. Thus, the id operates in the unconscious mind, driving individuals to act based on basic impulses, which can sometimes lead to conflicts in daily life (Freud, 1923).

The id contains instincts and passions that are not realized and not free to appear in consciousness. In other words, the id contains the drive to preserve life (life instinct) and the drive toward death (death instinct), both of which operate without regard to norms, moral values, or social rules. The life instinct is manifested through sexual urges known as

libido, while the death instinct is reflected in aggressive urges, namely the tendency to attack, fight, wage war, or vent anger towards others. The id continuously drives the ego to satisfy its desires for pleasure, yet it lacks the capacity to differentiate between reality and illusion (Rahman, 2019).

## **2. Ego**

According to Rahman (2019), in his book *The Ego*, functions as the rational component that operates under the reality principle, mediating between the impulsive demands of the id and the moral constraints of the superego. The ego acts as a mediating system where the impulses of the id and superego conflict with each other, with the main function of maintaining balance between the two. This means that the ego prevents the impulses of the id from fully emerging into consciousness, but also does not completely obey the demands of the superego (Saleh, 2018). The ego itself does not have its own energy or drive, but works based on the reality principle, which is to adjust the desires of the id and superego to the actual conditions in the external environment.

## **3. Supergeo**

The superego is a personality system that is against the id because it is entirely formed through the influence of culture, education, and a person's life experiences (Saleh, 2018). The superego functions as the part of personality that reflects parental values and the parents' understanding of social norms, which are passed down to children

through rules, restrictions, and expectations (Alwisol, 2004). From childhood, individuals receive education from their parents who instill values about the difference between good and bad, what is permissible and what is not, and what is in accordance with or contrary to social norms.

The superego serves as a moral guide that helps a character regulate the ego's actions, especially when distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable behavior, as it is rooted in ethical standards and a sense of conscience. Beyond functioning as the character's internal regulator, the superego also becomes a narrative tool through which an author can communicate moral lessons by shaping the character's conduct.

The superego, as a personality structure arising from the subconscious, determines what is considered right or wrong through forms of guidance such as commands, advice, criticism, or suggestions that reflect societal expectations. It is composed of two main elements: the conscience and the ideal self. The conscience appears as feelings of guilt when the ego gives in to the id's impulses, often described as the "inner voice." In contrast to the id, the superego embodies moral values, social norms, and the capacity to experience guilt (McLeod, 2022).

The superego is the last structure of personality to develop and is grounded in moral values and judgments of right and wrong. Although the superego and the ego may arrive at similar decisions, the basis of

their considerations differs: the superego is guided by moral principles, whereas the ego evaluates how others might perceive the action and considers the consequences for the individual. For example, when a student finds a wallet containing a large amount of money at school, the superego urges the student to immediately return the wallet to the school authorities without opening or inspecting it, as this is viewed as the morally ideal action. However, in reality, the student may need to check the owner's identity to expedite the return process or consider situational factors such as whether the wallet was found in a place where it could easily be lost again.

In this case, the superego's insistence on strictly adhering to moral rules can become less rational, as overly rigid moral demands do not always align with practical needs. The final decision may therefore require balancing ideal moral standards (superego) with realistic judgment (ego).

As a person matures, all the social values and norms obtained through education and culture are internalized into the superego, which then encourages the individual to do good, obey rules, and conform to the moral values of society. The moral drive that arises from the superego serves to suppress the primitive desires of the id, because the impulses of the id are considered incompatible with accepted moral standards. This is where the conflict between the two arises sometimes; the superego controls a person's behavior, but at other times, the id can become more dominant.

Freud's theory also introduces key concepts such as repression, defense mechanisms, and psychosexual conflict, which influence the character's emotions and actions. Repressed desires often manifest indirectly through dreams, slips of the tongue, or symbolic actions. In the context of film analysis, Freud's psychoanalysis helps reveal the unconscious motivations behind a character's choices, conflicts, and obligations.

## **B. Conflict**

Conflict is one of the important elements in human life as well as in literary works. In daily life, conflict cannot be avoided due to differences in interests, perspectives, or feelings between individuals Abdullah (2023). In literary works, conflict becomes the main element that builds the plot so that the story becomes alive, interesting, and full of dynamics.

According to Burhan Nurgiyantoro in the Theory of Fiction Analysis, conflict is the opposition experienced by a story's character, whether it occurs within the character themselves or between the character and other parties. This conflict then drives the development of the plot and shapes the overall structure of the story. In line with that Ade Nur'Aini et al. (2021) stated that conflict is a struggle that occurs in a story, either within a character or between a character and their surrounding environment, which creates tension and drives the development of the story.

Conflict in literary works is dramatic because it involves a confrontation between two opposing forces. This confrontation can be in the form of differences

in desires, values, interests, or circumstances. Therefore, conflict becomes an inseparable part of the story, because without conflict, a story will feel flat and less interesting. Conflict in fictional works is divided into two main types, namely internal conflict and external conflict:

**a. Internal Conflict**

Internal conflict is a conflict that occurs within a character, especially related to psychological conditions such as thoughts, feelings, and the inner self. This conflict arises when a character faces a contradiction between two or more desires, values, or choices that conflict with each other, thereby creating a dilemma. Internal conflict is personal in nature because it is experienced by the individual and does not directly involve external parties.

According to Burhan Nurgiyantoro, internal conflict is a conflict that occurs in the heart or soul of a character, reflecting the inner struggle experienced by the character (Nurgiyantoro, 2013). This conflict is often related to the psychological aspects of the character, such as hesitation, guilt, fear, or doubt in making decisions.

For example, the main character experiences an internal conflict when faced with two equally important choices in their life. On one hand, they want to pursue their dream of continuing education in another city, but on the other hand, they feel responsible to stay and help their family. The conflict between personal desire and obligation to the family creates uncertainty within them. As a result, the character

experiences inner pressure that affects their attitudes and decisions in the story.

**b. External Conflict**

External conflict is a conflict that occurs between a character and something outside of themselves. This conflict involves the character's interaction with the surrounding environment, whether with other individuals, society, or nature. External conflict is usually visibly evident through actions, disagreements, or events experienced by the character in the story.

External conflict is a conflict that occurs outside of the character, which can be a conflict with other humans or with the environment (Nurgiyantoro, 2013). This conflict plays an important role in developing the plot because it presents various events that drive the dynamics of the story. There are three types of external conflict, namely:

- a. Man versus Man, This conflict occurs because of opposing interests, desires, or views between one character and another. It is usually presented in the form of arguments, competition, or hostility. Example: in a story, character A disagrees with character B over a position or love, resulting in an argument or prolonged conflict.
- b. Man versus Society, which occurs between one character and another character or society. This type of conflict is usually caused by

differences in interests, values, norms, or perspectives. It can take the form of interpersonal disputes, group conflicts, or even large-scale issues such as social injustice or war. Social conflict is closely related to community life, because characters cannot be separated from the social system in which they exist.

- c. Man versus nature, which happens between a character and the natural environment or physical conditions around them. This includes conflicts involving forces beyond human control, such as natural disasters, extreme weather, or harsh geographical conditions. In this type of conflict, characters are usually depicted struggling to survive or adapt to environmental pressures.

In addition, external conflict, according to Nurgiyantoro's view, not only functions as a source of tension but also serves to reveal character traits, clarify themes, and build the overall dynamics of the narrative. Through external conflict, the relationship between characters and the outside world becomes more complex, making the story more lively and meaningful.

### **C. Character**

In literary and movie studies, character refers to the figure or persona that drives the narrative and through whom themes and conflicts are expressed. A character is not merely a name or a role, but a psychological, moral, and social construct shaped through actions, dialogue, descriptions, and interactions with other characters (Abrams, 1999). Character is one of the most essential elements in

narrative works, including movies and literature, because it functions as the central agent that drives the plot and conveys the themes of the story. Through characters' behavior, dialogue, motivations, and psychological struggles, audiences can understand how meaning is constructed within a narrative (Krämer, 2019). This is particularly relevant in psychological analyses, where understanding the unconscious motivations and internal conflicts of a character becomes central to the interpretation of their actions.

Forster (1927) classifies characters into two major types: *flat* and *round*. Flat characters are simple, predictable, and do not undergo significant development, while round characters are more complex and experience meaningful changes throughout the story. In movie studies, analyzing a character goes beyond identifying their role in the storyline; it also involves examining their psychological depth, personality structure, and internal conflicts that shape their actions (Rahman, 2020). These classifications are important for analyzing Joshua Taylor in *The Creator*, who demonstrates both complexity and development as the plot progresses.

Characterization, the method by which an author or filmmaker develops a character, can be divided into direct and indirect forms (Booth, 1961). Direct characterization is expressed explicitly through narration or description, while indirect characterization is shown through behavior, dialogue, thoughts, and visual portrayal. In film, indirect characterization becomes particularly significant because visual cues such as facial expressions, gestures, cinematography, and sound design

play a major role in revealing a character's inner state (Bordwell & Thompson, 2019).

From a psychological perspective, characters can be analyzed using theories that explain human behavior, motivation, and personality structures. Psychoanalysis, especially Freud's theory of the id, ego, and superego, provides a framework for examining unconscious desires, inner conflicts, and the psychological tensions that shape a character's actions. Freud (1923) argues that these three structures influence how individuals behave and respond to their environment, making psychoanalysis a valuable method for interpreting film characters, especially those who experience complex emotional and moral dilemmas. Studies from the past decade also emphasize that understanding a character's internal struggle allows researchers to explore deeper themes related to trauma, identity, and personal transformation (Wilson, 2017).

Recent scholars highlight that characters often serve as representations of real human emotions, moral dilemmas, and social experiences, which makes character analysis an essential approach for understanding how films portray complex aspects of human life (Sari and Putri, 2021). Therefore, character study becomes a crucial foundation for interpreting narrative development and the overall message presented in cinematic works.

#### **D. The Creator**

*The Creator* is a 2023 science fiction film directed by Gareth Edwards and co-written with Chris Weitz. It was produced by 20th Century Studios, New Regency Productions, and Entertainment One (eOne), and distributed globally by Walt

Disney Studios Motion Pictures. The main producers include Gareth Edwards, Kiri Hart, Jim Spencer, and Arnon Milchan. The film, which runs approximately 133 minutes, originates from the United States and uses English as its primary language.

Technically, the film showcases outstanding cinematic visuals through the work of cinematographers Greig Fraser and Oren Soffer, while Hans Zimmer's musical score enhances the emotional depth of each scene. The Creator was officially released on September 29, 2023, featuring a blend of action, drama, and science fiction. It stars John David Washington as Joshua Taylor, Madeleine Yuna Voyles as Alphie, Gemma Chan as Maya, and Ken Watanabe as Harun.

This film marks one of Gareth Edwards' most ambitious projects, following his successes with *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* (2016) and *Godzilla* (2014), combining futuristic warfare with deep humanistic values. With efficient filming technology and a realistic visual approach, *The Creator* presents a future world filled with moral conflict between humans and their creations, making it not only a visually stunning spectacle but also a philosophical reflection on what it means to be human in the age of artificial intelligence.

*The Creator* is a science fiction film set in a future world torn apart by war between humans and artificial intelligence. After a nuclear explosion destroys Los Angeles and kills millions, the United States blames AI as the cause and launches an all out war to eradicate all artificial life. Meanwhile, an Asian region known as New Asia coexists peacefully with simulants humanoid robots capable of emotion and consciousness. Amid this chaos, a former special forces soldier named Joshua Taylor is recruited by the U.S. military for a dangerous mission: to find and destroy

a mysterious figure known as The Creator, believed to have developed the most powerful AI weapon ever. However, Joshua is shocked to discover that the so called weapon is not a machine of destruction, but a small AI child named Alpie, who possesses an extraordinary ability to control technology.

Joshua's encounter with Alpie becomes the turning point of his life. Initially, he views Alpie as a threat and mere target, but as their journey continues, he begins to see the child's genuine innocence and humanity. Through their perilous travels across war zones, Joshua learns that his wife, Maya, whom he believed to be dead, is actually alive and aligned with a group of AI seeking peace. This revelation shatters his faith in the military system and his country's ideology. Torn between duty and compassion, Joshua faces an internal conflict that forces him to choose between fulfilling his mission or following his conscience to protect Alpie and end the unjust war.

In the climactic finale, Joshua and Alpie infiltrate Nomad, a massive military space station that serves as humanity's ultimate weapon against AI. In an act of redemption and sacrifice, Joshua chooses to give up his life to destroy Nomad and ensure Alpie's survival. His decision symbolizes the rebirth of his humanity and the reconciliation between man and machine. The film concludes with an emotional scene as Alpie weeps with joy in front of Joshua, signaling the end of the war and the beginning of a new hope for peace. Through its story, The Creator offers a profound reflection on the essence of humanity, conveying that true humanness is not defined by flesh and blood, but by the capacity to love, empathize, and sacrifice for what is right.

## E. Previous Studies

First, from previous studies by Abdullah, (2023) his research aimed to analyze the psychoanalytic aspects reflected in the main character of *Fight Club*, directed by David Fincher, using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory as the framework. The study employed a descriptive qualitative method focusing on the dialogue of the protagonist as the main data source to explore how his personality and conflicts are portrayed. Two research questions were examined, such as the depiction of the main character's personality based on Freud's structural model id, ego, and superego and the identification of internal and external conflicts he experiences. The results revealed 22 data points consisting of 12 related to the id, 3 to the ego, and 7 to the superego, showing that the id is the most dominant aspect of the protagonist's psyche. Additionally, 10 conflicts were found, including 7 external and 3 internal, indicating that external pressures and unconscious drives significantly influence the character's behavior and mental state throughout the movie.

The second previous study by Fitriani, (2019) examined the psychological aspects of the main character in Todd Phillips' movie *Joker* using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, the researcher analyzed the film by repeatedly watching it and studying its script to identify the manifestations of the id, ego, and superego within the protagonist's behavior. Based on Freud's framework, the character's id reflects his negative thoughts toward the injustices of life and the hostility of his environment, operating under the pleasure principle through primary process thinking. His ego is portrayed through his actions

of killing those he perceives as wrongdoers, representing the reality principle that fulfills the id's desires using secondary process thinking. Meanwhile, his superego is expressed in his sense of morality, preserving good people and adhering to ideal standards shaped by parental and societal values.

The third previous study by Afkarina, (2019) analyzed Moana's personality through Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory and identify the factors influencing her personality development. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the research examines the film's dialogues, actions, and situations. The findings reveal eleven data points related to the id, ego, and superego, with the ego appearing as the most dominant structure. The study also identifies several developmental factors, including heredity, physical environment, family environment, cultural environment, and social roles, with cultural factors being the most influential in shaping Moana's personality.

The fourth previous study by Anandi, (2022) analyzed the personality of the main character, Arthur Fleck, using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory and to identify the types of character portrayed in the film. This research applies a descriptive qualitative method through identification, classification, analysis, and conclusion based on the film's dialogues and scenes. The findings reveal that out of twenty identified data points, the id is the most dominant personality structure (7 data), followed by the ego (5 data) and the superego (2 data). The study also identifies six character types, with the round character being the most dominant, as Arthur undergoes significant psychological and behavioral changes throughout the movie.

The last previous study by Masyhur, (2023) analyzed the representation of internal conflict in Bruce Wayne and identify its underlying causes. The research applies Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, Stuart Hall's representation theory, Barbara Engler's personality theory, and Peter Michaelson's internal conflict framework. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the data are drawn from scenes, dialogues, and narration in the film.

The findings reveal that Bruce Wayne experiences three types of internal conflict: avoidance-avoidance conflict, double approach avoidance conflict, and approach-avoidance conflict. These conflicts arise from self doubt, past trauma, low self esteem, and moral dilemmas between unconscious desires and ethical principles. Two of the conflicts are resolved, while the double approach-avoidance conflict remains unresolved. Overall, the study highlights the significant role of internal conflict in shaping Bruce Wayne's psychological development and behavior throughout the film.