

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Humanity has always had the capacity to believe that there is something more than themselves, regardless of the passage of time. This emergence of belief correlates with their notion that there is, or are, something(s) greater than themselves. One of the most recognized and practiced forms of belief in ancient civilizations is Polytheism, is a system of belief that worships more than a singular god, most identifiable with the existence of pantheon, a set number of gods that is worshipped collectively by the ones that hold the belief.

The pantheon would consist of enigmatic gods who came from astral origins dependent from the culture it originated from. In the Middle East, the Egyptians had their pantheon of gods whose gods are still widely recognized, such as Ra, Osiris, Isis and Anubis while over at the Mediterranean Sea, the Greeks worshipped their own pantheon of gods that are still very popular in even today's modern culture such as Zeus, Poseidon and Hades. Moreover, the people living in Scandinavia have their own pantheon of gods as well, called the Norse pantheon which were widely believed by Nordic folk, primarily those known as the Vikings.

The Norse pantheon is divided into two tribes, the Aesir and the Vanir. Some of the Aesir consists of Odin, the chief of the Aesir, the Allfather and the god of wisdom and war, Thor, the warrior god of thunder and the son of Odin, Tyr, the god of law and justice, and Baldr, one of the gracious gods in the pantheon that is loved by all except for one. The few Vanir are known as Freya, goddess of love and

fertility as well as her twin brother Freyr, the god of harvest and sexual fertility. The cosmology of the mythology is comprised of nine realms that are all interconnected in one central world-tree known as Yggdrasil. These nine realms are different homes that are resided by the gods, mankind, giants and other beings, such as elves and dwarves. As all mythologies would include in its narrative, the story begins with the creation of the world, the series of events and adventure that occur in the various realms and the characters that are involved in it as well as the turmoil that would lead to the end of the cosmology itself.

The stories of Nordic mythology are analysed from one of the works of the prolific author, Neil Gaiman, fittingly named *Norse Mythology*. The novel is a recent adaptation for the modern audience, based on the original Icelandic manuscripts. The content of the book consists of a collection of stories that begin from the creation of the cosmology to the end of it. It is divided into several short stories that are varied from one another but interlinks with each other based on the characters that are involved in each tale. The occurring characters that are involved in these stories serve as the one that bridges the narrative.

Almost all the stories that involve Loki have a very recognizable pattern. In the beginning, one of the gods encounters a problem that they themselves cannot resolve. They then would either blame Loki for the unfortunate circumstance that has befallen upon them or, if Loki himself was not involved with the trouble before him, they would ask Loki for his wisdom and cunning to resolve their situation. Depending on how one would deal with him, they would either plead or force Loki into solving the current predicament at hand. He would then use his guile and

devious tricks to help the gods and in the end, the situation would be sorted out in his favour most of the time. Of course, many of the various situations that he would encounter would settle in a way he would not have expected it to be.

1.2. Research Questions

From the three main characters that are featured within the novel, Loki is the one that is the most interesting character. Thus, the primary subject of the study is none other than Loki himself. The following are research questions for this study.

1. How is Loki's personality described within the novel?
2. How is Loki's attitude described when encountered with a problem?
3. How does Loki's nature fit with the Jungian Archetype based on his personality and behaviour?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

These are the objectives that the study aims to understand Loki as a character and to comprehend his complex behaviour.

1. To describe Loki's personality within the novel.
2. To describe Loki's attitude towards a problem that is encountered.
3. To accentuate the Jungian archetype that is appropriate to Loki's nature based on his personality and behaviour.

1.4. Previous Studies

This section provides previous studies that is relevant to the study. The first paper entry is the thesis, "Retelling as a Form of Adaptation in Neil Gaiman's *Norse Mythology* (2019)". This thesis uses the same object of the research which is Neil Gaiman's *Norse Mythology*. The writer of the paper inquires if the work of Neil

Gaiman is considered his retelling to be another form of adaptation. The theories used on this paper are from Julie Sander's *Adaptation and Appropriation* as well as Linda Hutcheon's theory of adaptation. The aim of this thesis is to analyse the correct classification for Neil Gaiman's retelling of Scandinavian mythology.

The second journal entry is the review, "Norse Mythology by Neil Gaiman (review) (2018)". This review once again uses the same object of the study which is Neil Gaiman's *Norse Mythology*. The writer of the review gives appreciation to Gaiman's ability to still capture the fantastical and wondrous style from the *Prose Edda* and the *Poetic Edda* for the modern audience. The writer also appreciates how faithful Gaiman has made his retelling of the Scandinavian mythology, even with Gaiman's efforts to highlight certain key narrative points in the novel which the writer acknowledges.

The third journal entry is the paper, "An Analysis of Main Characters in *Warm Bodies* Film using Jung Theory of Archetypes (2018)". The paper uses Carl Jung's analytical psychology theory to obtain the aspects of the character's archetypes. The writers utilize the characters R and Julie from the film *Warm Bodies* (2013) as the main subjects of the paper. The writers also analyse the archetypes of Persona, Shadow, Anima, Animus, Great Mother, Wise Old Man, Hero and Self on the characters of the movie as mentioned previously.

The fourth paper entry is the thesis, "Mythological and Archetypal Analysis on Mollen Mohr's Life Journey in "The Marriage Bed" Novel (2008)". This paper utilises Carl Jung's mythological and archetypal theory and analyses the collective unconscious as well as the archetypes that exists in the object of the study. The

object of research is the novel *The Marriage Bed* (2004) by Regina McBride and it explores hidden meaning in the novel as well as the character of Molleen Mohr. The archetypes that are analysed in the thesis are the self, the father and the initiation.

The first half of the previous studies cover the object of the study, *Norse Mythology*, analysing the contents of the writing in accordance with its suitability as a work of adaptation and reviewing the story whilst comparing the author's previous works. Due to the lack of academic paper that uses the object of the study, it is imperative to analyse the novel *Norse Mythology*, as such the existence of the current study. The second half covers Carl Jung's theory of archetypes in which the writer of each paper utilizes the theory for their academic analysis. The analysis of the papers cited leaves much to be desired, as such this current paper offers another form of analysis utilizing the aforementioned theory.

1.5. Research Method

This study utilizes two aspects of data which are divided into primary and secondary data. The primary data is divided into two forms which are the object of the study which is the novel *Norse Mythology* (2017), whereas the subject of the study is Loki, one of the main casts in the mentioned novel. The secondary data is the various published documents that is used in the study. The main data of the study is the dialogues and descriptions of narrative in *Norse Mythology* (2017). The theory that is used is Carl Jung's theory of archetypes.

The study employs the library research methodology by utilizing the numerous journal articles, research papers, and academic books as well as the

innumerable facts and expert opinions that can be found from the sources previously mentioned. The many sources that have been found will then be implemented into the study, being used as references for the paper.

The study also utilizes the mythological and archetypal approach. The primary source of the criticism is Carl Jung's theory of the collective unconsciousness and his theory of archetypes. Jung proposes that myths are humanity's psychic phenomena giving meaning to the natural occurrences that happen in the world whereas archetypes are psychic predispositions that has always existed within humanity.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The study firstly analyses the intrinsic elements of Neil Gaiman's *Norse Mythology* and secondly applies Jungian theory of archetype to analyse Loki. Internal elements are the aspects that are contained within a narrative work and this study focuses on analysing the character & characterization, conflict and setting. Jung's theory of archetypes utilized for the analysis are theories on Persona, Shadow, Anima, Self and the Trickster. This study utilizes each of the archetypes that is presented to analyse the character of Loki. The study also claims that Loki is a character that embodies Carl Jung's descriptions of the trickster figure.

1.7. Organization of the Writing

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter includes the background of the research, research questions, objectives of the research, previous studies, scope of the studies as well as the writing organization.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

Within this chapter, all the theories that are propagated are shown to be able to analyse and be given a foundation so that it would be utilized for the thesis. The theories are only focused on intrinsic aspects, specifically on the character and conflict within the short stories. From here, the study will analyse the main subject of this thesis through the lens of Jungian archetypes.

Chapter 3 The Trickster Nature of Loki in Neil Gaiman's *Norse Mythology*

Within this chapter, the study analyses the character and conflict that has been mentioned beforehand and uses the theoretical framework as the basis of the analysis. This chapter will discuss the main subject's personality, their behaviour whenever a problem is presented, the consequences that the main subject's actions and the reaction of the affected party, as well as finalizing the fitting Jungian archetype that the main subject presented to be from the book itself.

Chapter 4 Conclusion

Within this chapter, the definitive conclusion of the cumulation of the works for this thesis is written here.