

CONTRADICTIONARY CHARACTER TRAITS AS SEEN IN *PERSONA 4: THE ANIMATION*

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ABSTRACT

Anime is Japanese cartoon that has a vast popularity due to its story and art. The popularity of anime results in the various genres such as: crime-fiction, urban fantasy, and slice of life. One of the popular animes that combines the three genres is *Persona 4: the Animation*. The popularity and the combination of three genres of that anime makes me interested in analyzing this anime. I am particularly attracted to the two main characters in *Persona 4: The Animation* namely, Yu Narukami and Tohru Adachi. Those two main character possess contradictory character traits and represent a certain symbol on the society. In this paper, I examine the values that influence their character traits. Using Carl Gustav Jung's theory of individuation, I proves that they have contradictory character traits by looking through their Persona, Shadow, Ego, and Self. Through the analysis of character traits, I find that they symbolize *yin yang*. Like *yin yang*, they are contradicting as well as complementing. Yet, they also are not paragon of evil or good.

Keywords: Character traits, Persona, Self, Shadow

Anime is Japanese cartoon that has a worldwide popularity. Its popularity comes from the uniqueness of the story and the art. The variety of the stories makes it appealing for people in the world. The story can be as simple as fairy tales and can be as complex as adult film. This broad variety can also be found in the artistic visual image of the character. It can be cute to realist. This kind of animation makes audiences from all ages appreciate it. The broad variety of its stories also lead to the broad variety of genres. Further, anime can have more than one genre or they called as combined genre such as: crime-fiction, urban fantasy, combined with slice of life genre. Anime can be unique in the sense that they can have more genres, it is called anime with the combined genre. Anime like this is usually more popular than anime with just one specific genre.

The example of the popular anime that has combined genres is *Persona 4: The Animation*. The popularity of *Persona 4: the Animation* comes not only from the combined genres, but also from the popularity of the game series of *Shin Megami Tensei: Persona*. Originally, *Persona 4: The Animation* comes from the game series of *Shin Megami Tensei: Persona* that is very popular not only in Japan but also in the world.

Another reason why *Persona 4: The Animation* is aired is because of the complexity of the story. The story is about a young man journeys in finding the truth behind the murder case. Yu Narukami, the protagonist of the story, comes to Inaba because of his parents' work. He lives with his uncle for one year there. On the second day of his arrival, a murder takes place in town and soon it occurs again on the third day of his arrival. This case becomes one of hot topics among teens and his new friends. To avoid that gloomy topic, his friends tell him about a mysterious television channel that only appears on midnight. Midnight channel, they call, can show person's true love. However, this channel only appears on rainy day. As Yu Narukami tries that night, he finds that he can enter the television. The next day, he and his friends try bigger television on Junes, the department store in Inaba. By accident, they enter the television and meet a bear-like-thing, who called himself Kuma. Kuma explains the world inside Television as well as the monster who inhabits it. The monster is called the Shadow. Because of the attack from shadow, Yu is able to awaken his Persona and fights back. He defeats all the shadow and they exit from the television world. The night after his awakening, he meets Igor and Margaret who explains about Persona. After the television incident, Yu Narukami, together with their friends that can use persona also try to uncover the mysteries behind the murder case as well as to catch the culprit. In the end, they know that Tohru Adachi, the police officer who helps them to solve the case, is the one behind the murder case as well as the one who manipulates and plans all of it. They confront him to question his motive on doing the case.

As the story goes, we can see that there are many traits we can learn from the characters. However, most of the character traits that we can see clearly are from Yu Narukami, the protagonist, and Tohru Adachi, the antagonist. As they are the main contradictory characters, they also possess different traits that make them as a hero and a villain. Although they possess some character traits that make them look evil or good, they also possess some character traits that do not suit their role as neither protagonist nor antagonist. That is why I am interested in analyzing the contradictory character traits of Yu Narukami and Tohru Adachi. Another thing I notice is that the contradictory human character traits as seen in the main protagonist and the main antagonist can also symbolize something in the human life.

In order to reveal that they have contradictory character traits and find the symbol they represent, I use Carl Gustav Jung's individuation theory. This theory is about a journey in understanding one's self. Individuation is the transformational process of integrating the conscious with the personal and collective unconscious (Jung, 1962, p. 301).

According to Jung, a person must have two consciousness in which are conscious and unconscious. Conscious is the part that human acknowledge it, while unconsciousness' existence is concealed. In each consciousness, there are parts that are different with another that can be represented by the archetypes Jung has made. There are five archetypes that represent those consciousness from the outer part: Persona, Ego, Shadow, Anima or Animus, and Self. However, in this paper I only use four namely: Persona, Ego, Shadow, and Self.

Inside the conscious part there is only one archetypes Jung has classified: Persona. Persona is identity which represents human to the outside world. This is the characters human being shows to others during the interaction. Basically this is what human shows towards each other. Another archetypes is Ego. Ego is an archetypes that stands between the conscious part and unconscious part. This is the last and also the core of what human understand about themselves in the consciousness. It can be said that Ego is the consciousness that people understand. In other words, in Ego we think that we understand anything we do and think.

The unconscious part consists of: Shadow, Anima or Animus, and Self. The outer part of unconscious part is Shadow. Shadow is the counterpart of Persona. This part is what we call our nature self. The middle part of unconscious is Anima or Animus. The core of the unconscious part is Self. Self is more like the center of psyche in which it contains all the consciousness. Self is the symbol of unification. It means that if someone could understand their self-part, they understand their mind completely and thus will bring harmony between two consciousness. I am going to use this theory to analyze that through persona, ego, shadow, and self, Yu Narukami and Tohru Adachi have contradictory character traits. The revelation of their selves will answer the symbol they represent.

CONTRADICTIONARY ELEMENTS AND SYMBOLISM

Yu Narukami as an ideal man

In *Persona 4: The Animation*, Yu Narukami is shown as a portrait of the ideal person everyone wants to be, an optimist, honest, hardworking, and selfless young man with handsome face.

Yu Narukami is an optimist young man despite the difficult situation he has. It is shown throughout the story to uncover the culprit behind the murder case. His optimism to catch the culprit stays even after his cousin's death. Despite the hardness he faces, Yu Narukami is optimistically sure that he can successfully catch the culprit behind the murder case.

He is optimist, but also an honest and hardworking person. In chapter 14, he applies jobs as a part-time worker in children day care center and as a private tutor for middle school boy. He works diligently everyday (because it is summer break, a month of holiday for the student in Japan) to work and he does not take a break from the work.

His honesty is shown when he tries to persuade his uncle that what he does is right and how he wants to help his uncle. Yet, his uncle does not believe him. Nevertheless, Yu Narukami tells him everything although he can lie to him. In the end, his uncle believes in his story after thinking the truth on the story.

His last traits is selfless. He always thinks of others first before thinking about himself. It is seen in episode 8 when he has a conversation with Saki Konishi's younger brother, Naoki Konishi. Naoki is alienated by people because of the murder case that kills his sister. This leads Naoki Konishi to hate Yosuke Hanamura, the son of Junes' manager where his sister once work at, and Yu Narukami,

Yosuke Hanamura's friend. In this situation, Yu Narukami may be angry because of Naoki's reason to loathe him. Despite that, Yu Narukami tries to understand him.

Persona can be used to determine what kind of Ego someone has. The belief and value people have are considered as Ego. The personality that we have created is influenced by the belief that we have. As a result, Persona is the reflection of the Ego. The three values I choose to analyze Yu Narukami's traits are: the perspective of life, the way on achieving something, and the treatment for other people. Those three values are the result of his persona.

As far as perspective of life is concerned, Yu Narukami thinks that life is something that he needs to treasure. This way of thinking about life's preciousness gives him the persona of an optimist young man. As he wants to live his life as good as he can, he tries to be optimist on every chance. Even when hardship comes, this value still manages to make him optimist even when the chance is nearly impossible.

The way of achieving something is Yu Narukami's value to get everything legally. For example, he works as a private tutor to earn money for buying things. The legality on achieving something that is Yu Narukami's Ego creates Personas of honest and hardworking. To achieve everything rightfully, he works hard and tries to be sincere on everything. For example when he breaks a boy's toy, he sincerely says that it is his own mistake and will buy the new toy to replace the broken one. His other persona he gets also comes from different Ego he values.

Yu Narukami highly values friendship. This is the reason why he thinks of other. This is shown when he tries to help his friends' problem. Without thinking about himself, he helps them one by one. In the story, he is the last person that is able to overcome his fear because of his belief. This way of thinking creates his selfless persona.

If Persona is a trait that has been created by the Ego, then there is also Shadow which is a natural born trait. Jung (1938) wrote that "Everyone carries a shadow, and the less it is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it is" (p. 131). Shadow's personality will be counterpart of persona, usually it will be bad, but it can be good too.

Yu Narukami's Persona is an optimist person, but he is a pessimist inside. His Shadow appears that he always feels pessimist towards what he does. Further appearance of his shadow reveals that he is pessimist when it comes to friends. He feels insecure because he thinks that his friends will forget him after his departure. Even when he makes friend with many people, he still feels insecure and pessimist that their friendship will be lost because of his condition.

Another side of Yu Narukami is a hardworking and honest person, yet he is actually a passive and stoic person. Although he is hardworking when it comes to work, yet he needs someone to help him find the right job or pick it for him. He may be the right person to hire as an employee, but he is a passive one when it comes to take the initiative. For example, his summer part-time jobs are given by the fox. The fox is the one that forced him to apply it in order to buy the new umbrella.

Although he is honest, he remains stoic most of time. Even when he needs to act or talk, he will remain silent and watch other first. It is good that he admits that he is wrong when he makes a wrong decision. However, there is a time that he remains stoic until the fight become worse. This is the side of him that he does not want to admit it is there but it is there all the time.

Like Tohru Adachi, he is a self-centered man, although he appears to be self-less. He is selfish when he tries to be self-less to his surroundings. This is because he does it to ensure that the friendship never break. So, by solving their problem, he actually wants to keep them close to him. It is like barter, much more like Tohru Adachi's case in treating others. However, in this case his sacrifice by becoming self-less is actually a selfish act he makes in order to gain what he want.

Persona and shadow are not always good or bad, both can be either one. However, they can have greater influence towards self. When somebody cultivates it towards goodness, his self will create for good things. Yet, if he is doing in different way, it will turn worst.

According to Jung, Self is the core of the unconsciousness part in his human mind's map. Self is a condition when human beings accept themselves as what they are. Self can be attained when someone accepts the shadow like a part of him and when he accidentally shows to others, he does not have any intention to just show off but he just does it because it is what he is. At this point, both shadow and persona will have greater influence to shape someone's Self. However, in attaining it, everyone has different ways. So, even though people have already attained Self, they have different self because of the differences in attaining it as well as because of different shadow and persona they have.

Yu Narukami attains Self with the help from his friends. The fact that he may lose his bond with his dear friends scares him very much. However, his friends reassure him by stating that no matter how far he will go, they will be stay together. Being awoken from his fear, he realizes and accepts his fear of losing friends. That is why he decides to treasure his bonds with his friends, so his fear will not turn into a reality.

Tohru Adachi as a flawed man

If Yu Narukami as the protagonist is depicted as an ideal man, then the antagonist, Tohru Adachi is describe as a flawed man. Unlike Yu Narukami, he is neither handsome nor kind unlike Yu Narukami. In *Persona 4: The Animation* Tohru Adachi's highlighted character traits are opportunist, liar, lazy, and self-centered.

As an opportunist, he takes every opportunity so that his plan works. For example, in episode 3, when Yukiko Amagi is missing, Tohru Adachi gives affirmation about the missing people although it is supposedly a secret. Later, Ryotaro Dojima scolds him because of his action.

Another example that shows that Tohru Adachi is an opportunist can be seen from the event when Tohru Adachi persuades Taro Namatame to kidnap people. Tohru Adachi manipulates him to do it for entertain his dull and boring life. As a policeman he thinks that his life is boring and dull because for him working in peaceful city without any crime is not fun at all. That is why, he creates a serious case to light up his life.

Tohru Adachi is a liar and also a lazy person. For example, when Mitsuo Kubo exclaims that he is the real culprit behind the murder case, knowing that he is just a freak who wanted an attention, Tohru Adachi who is the police that handles the case pushes Mitsuo Kubo into the television world to lead Yu Narukami's team into the false conclusion. His plan is successful for a moment, because the investigation team thinks it is over until the next abduction.

He is not only a liar but also a lazy police officer. Adachi feels that working in a peaceful city like Inaba that has no cases is not fun. This is the reason why he works lazily. His laziness is shown in other things, such as he makes others do his job. Even when executing his plan, he only does the first and lets the other; Yu Narukami, Taro Namatame, and Mitsuo Kubo; to do the rest of his plan.

In the end, Tohru Adachi is a self-centered man. He thinks that everything is for himself first and then for other. He treats them nicely as long as he gets benefits from them. We can see the example from his treatment towards Yu Narukami, Taro Namatame, Saki Konishi, and Mayumi Yamano. In Yu Narukami's and Taro Namatame's cases, he acts as a good guy towards them. He seems like a kind guy who wants to help them. While in Saki Konishi's and Mayumi Yamano's cases, at first Tohru Adachi tries to act like he wants to help them, but because of the women's rejection makes him kill them, and he does not even think of how the others may feel because of his action or how their close family and friends would feel if they know they will lose an important person. Tohru Adachi only thinks of what is better for him. This kind of thinking makes him a self-centered man.

As stated before, the persona we have is created by the influence of Ego. Everyone had a different Ego or value. In Tohru Adachi's cases, he thinks that life is meaningless, that getting what we want illegally is acceptable, and friendship is meaningless without benefit.

Tohru Adachi thinks that life is meaningless as his life is full of boredom. He just lives his life without purpose. His wish is to get out of his bored life. Thus this leads him to finding the world inside television. Since he found it, his objective in life has changed. He wants to end human world, because from his perspective human life is meaningless. This way of thinking creates the persona of an opportunist man. He takes every chance he gets to make his life become more meaningful.

His principal about the way of getting something also contradicts with Yu Narukami. He will get everything he wants without thinking the legality of his action. He will use every way he finds to get what he wants. Even if his method is unfair, he still does it to get what he wants. This is shown when he manipulates Yu Narukami and Taro Namatame. He lies and manipulates both of them in order to make the cases for his own good. His belief in using everything to get what he wants create his persona of a liar and lazy person. But of course this Ego is not the only one he gets, he still has another Ego and thus leads him to create other persona as well.

Tohru Adachi is treating his friends and acquaintances as friends with benefit. He befriends Yu Narukami to make sure that the boy acts like he wants. His kindness is not a free gift, but a payment to get something in return. When the investigation team confronts him, he tries to explain that Taro Namatame is the culprit. He does so that because he thinks that Taro Namatame does not bring any

benefits for him, and he dumps him by using his name for his defense. His selfish persona is born because he thinks that friendship is not real. Therefore, he believes that people will do as he does.

To conclude, Tohru Adachi sees life is meaningless, which is why he creates a persona of opportunist. He tries to seize everything to make it less meaningless. He has a Persona of a liar and lazy person because he never wants to work hard to get what he wants. He wants to get everything but he will achieve it in the easiest way he can find, and even uses any methods he can find. Tohru Adachi is the type of a person that see people in their values towards him. If the person is useless for him, he will throw them away without thinking, and this creates his persona of a self-centered young man.

Persona is the traits that people create through their ego, yet there is shadow, which is a natural born trait that people always have from the beginning. In Tohru Adachi's case, he is depicted as an opportunist, lazy, liar, and self-centered young man. His shadows will either same or slightly worse or maybe even better than his persona.

From outside characteristic Tohru Adachi is an opportunist but inside he is a pessimist like Yu Narukami. Tohru Adachi is somewhat like tactician who has plans to get what he wants by taking every opportunity he can. However, he can be a pessimist when his plan is not going smoothly like what he wants. Mayumi Yamano's and Saki Konishi's cases are the proof of that. Tohru Adachi has already planned to seduce both of them, yet when he fails to do it he became so pessimistic to do it again. So, his pessimism leads him to depression. This depression makes him take a drastic action such as killing them.

Moreover, even though he in other aspect he looks lazy, in other aspect he is a hardworking person. He mentions that he is actually just a normal human without talent or everything. Therefore, in order to achieve what he wants, in this case to join the police force, he need to work hard. It is not easy to become a police officer because there are many test and years of training. Furthermore, Tohru Adachi says that he wants to hold a gun, it needs further training and certificate. This fact shows that he is actually a hardworking person despite his laziness that he shows in the outside.

He may be a liar because he manipulates Taro Namatame by giving him false information about how to save the people. However he does not completely a liar. He does not give false information, but he does not tell the full truth either. He can be an honest person, such as when Yu Narukami confronts him and accuses him of his sins, he does not deny any of them. Yet, he is not that honest to admit his wrong doings.

Although he appears as a self-centered young man, he is a caring person. Most shadows appears as the bad side of someone, but in Tohru Adachi's case is not. It seems that his desire to have friends that understand him makes him care for those who accept him as a friend. When Ryotaro Dojima nearly dies, he can just throw him into the television without any problems because of the injury. However, he does not do it. Instead he is watching over his superior's health and helps him. Because of this, I conclude that he is a caring person inside, but he does not want people to know about this side.

As I said before, neither Persona nor Shadow is always good. They can be bad. Yet, to Self, both have greatest influence than other. If somebody cultivate it toward goodness, then their self will create good things and vice versa.

In Tohru Adachi's case, he attains Self by himself. He does not need other people to make him realize and accept his shadow. Unlike Yu Narukami who believe that having bonds with others can develop strength, Tohru Adachi does not believe any of that. This is why he always works alone, he thinks that Taro Namatame only as a pawn. In the story, shadow is a monstrous form if you are not accepting your hidden part. Shadow will be defeated by those who have mastered their heart. It means that Tohru Adachi has already accepted his dark side or his own shadow. This shown by the fact that no shadow attacking him in the World inside Television that he already attains his Self.

Symbolism in human life

After analyzing the persona, ego, shadow, and self of Yu Narukami and Tohru Adachi, I find that they are symbolizing the balance or *yin* and *yang*. *Yinyang* is a symbol origin from China used to symbolized harmony. As Chen Guying (1983) claims, "*Yin* in its highest form is freezing while *yang* in its highest form is boiling. The chilliness comes from heaven while the warmness comes from the earth. The interaction of these two establishes *he* (harmony), so it gives birth to things. Perhaps this is the law of everything yet there is no form being seen" (p. 21).

As *yinyang* symbolizes harmony, it reflects the relationship between Yu Narukami and Tohru Adachi in *Persona 4: The Animation*. Although Yu Narukami and Tohru Adachi are completely different, as Yu Narukami is the good one and Tohru Adachi is the bad one, they are actually complementing each other as they bond their relationship. In the story, Yu Narukami is somehow helping Tohru Adachi to change for a better person by giving him the reality about the world they live in in the last chapter. This change makes Tohru Adachi realize his own fault and later he will also help Yu Narukami in his own way to realize his own weaknesses too. So, although they are different, they are completing each other.

Seen through this *yin yang* perspective, Tohru Adachi and Yu Narukami complete each other. Besides that looking at the definition of *yin yang*, inside the black one and the white one there is also a small part of the opposite color in each other color. This is applicable in the case of Yu Narukami's and Tohru Adachi's character traits. From the analysis above, we know that Yu Narukami has a dark part, while Tohru Adachi also has a good part. This is like in *yin yang*. There is no pure virtue or evil. This all is shown by two opposite persons, which at first is taught to be full of virtue (Yu Narukami) or pure evil (Tohru Adachi).

In the end, Yu Narukami and Tohru Adachi can be either good or evil depending on people perspective. They are not pure evil or good although they have attained self in different way. Although it seems that they are paragon of virtue or evil, they have both side on their selves. Yet, because of that, they complete each other. Like *yinyang*, they are symbolized as *yin* and *yang*. Two part that seems different, yet complement each other.

CONCLUSION

In my analysis, in order to prove that they have contradictory character traits, I analyze the values that the main characters hold. The values I choose are: the perspective of life, the way of achieving something, and their treatment towards other. I choose those three values because they often appear in the anime itself. Through the analysis of those three values I prove that Yu Narukami and Tohru Adachi have not only different character traits, but the character traits also are the contradictory ones.

My further analysis shows that Yu Narukami and Tohru Adachi's contradictory character traits that are made by having different beliefs prove that they symbolizes something in human life. I find out that as they are completely the opposite of each other. Yet, they are also completing each other. Because of that, I find out that they can be symbolized as *Yinyang*. *Yin* and *yang* are two different patterns, yet they are completing each other with their differences.

In conclusion of my research, Jung's theory helps to prove that Yu Narukami and Tohru Adachi have contradictory character traits. By using that theory, I am not only capable in proving the contradictory on their character traits, but I am also manage to find the answer of their symbol on society by using their character traits.

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