Navigating psychosocial challenges: An analysis of Ariel's self-development in *Sayonara no asa ni yakusoku no hana wo kazarou* by Mari Okada

Ulfa Mutiara Isnayani[*], Ken Widyatwati, M. Suryadi

Universitas Diponegoro, Jl. Prof. Soedarto Tembalang, Semarang, Indonesia

Abstract

This research aimed to explain Ariel's narrative structures and stages of self-development from the anime *Sayonara no Asa ni Yakusoku no Hana wo Kazarou*. The researcher used a psychological approach to analyze the problems that arise. Psychosocial theory was employed to examine the self-development stages of the character Ariel. This research is a literature study. The researcher discovered that Ariel successfully navigated the eight stages of self-development based on Erikson's theory. The analysis concluded that Ariel reached the integrity stage of self-development because he successfully went through all stages with positive results, reached the integration stage of psychosocial, and overcame all his obstacles. Ultimately, it demonstrates a successful integration of his psychosocial identity and resolution of conflicts.

Abstrak

Analisis perkembangan diri tokoh Ariel dalam *Anime Sayonara no asa in yakusoku no hana wo kazarou* karya Mari Okada

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan tahapan perkembangan diri Ariel dari anime *Sayonara no Asa in Yakusoku no Hana wo Kazarou*. Peneliti menggunakan pendekatan psikologis untuk menganalisis masalah yang muncul. Teori psikososial oleh Erik Erikson diterapkan untuk memeriksa tahapan perkembangan diri karakter Ariel. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan. Objek material dari penelitian ini adalah anime *Sayonara no Asa in Yakusoku no Hana wo Kazarou* karya Mari Okada. Peneliti menemukan bahwa Ariel berhasil melewati delapan tahapan perkembangan diri menurut Erik Erikson. Analisis menyimpulkan bahwa Ariel mencapai tahap integritas dalam perkembangan diri karena ia berhasil melalui semua tahapan dengan hasil yang positif. Hal ini menunjukkan integrasi yang sukses dalam identitas psikososialnya serta resolusi terhadap konflik-konflik dalam hidup.

Corresponding author:

[*] ulfaisnayani@gmail.com

1 Introduction

Literature and humanity have a close bond within the framework of society. Swingewood (in Damono, 1984) argues that literary works are considered a means of connecting humans with other aspects of life, such as familial relationships, communities, politics, religion, and so on. A literary work serves as an alternative aesthetic aspect for humans to adapt and effect change within a societal structure.

Literary studies, as a part of human life, have several auxiliary sciences in their application, such as philosophy, sociology, anthropology, or psychology. Literary psychology is one branch of literary studies that examines the psychological issues of humans found in literary works, viewed from the perspectives of the author as creator, the work itself as a text, or the reader as consumers of the text (Ahmadi, 2015; Richter, 2017). From this statement, it can be understood that a literary work can be critiqued using a psychological approach to understand aspects of the work, including the creator, the reader, and the critique of characters within the literary work.

Written forms such as novels, short stories, poetry, and literary works can be expressed in other formats such as live performances, films, television shows, animation, video games, and role-playing games. While performances or films and novels are two different forms—since films are audiovisual while novels are written—both share similarities. As stated by Jinks (Adi, 2011) literature is composed of a sequence of plots and spatial concepts that share similar patterns in films. Some people also believe narrative films represent an evolutionary form of traditional narrative works. As an evolutionary form of literary medium, film has become an object of critique that is increasingly developing in contemporary society.

Currently, various types of films can be enjoyed by audiences from different backgrounds. Some of these include drama, comedy, action, horror, documentary, and animation. One of the most popular and widely appreciated types of film worldwide is animated films. Animated films have their appeal as they can present captivating visuals and imaginative stories (Brenner, 2007). The origins of animated films are diverse, with several countries known as centers of the animation industry, such as the United States and Japan. The United States, through major studios like Disney and Pixar, has produced many animated films that have become cultural icons. Meanwhile, Japan is also renowned for its animated works known as anime, which feature distinctive visual styles and narratives, as well as a very loyal fanbase around the world (Nugroho & Hendrastomo, 2017).

Anime has become a significant aspect of popular culture in Japan, captivating audiences both domestically and internationally with its diverse genres and unique storytelling styles. Anime has evolved into a major entertainment medium characterized by its vibrant art, imaginative worlds, and complex characters. It encompasses a wide range of themes, from action and adventure to romance and fantasy, appealing to viewers of all ages. Anime is not only influential in shaping Japanese youth culture but serves as a cultural export, with global fanbases engaging in anime conventions, merchandise, and streaming platforms (Macwilliams, 2014). Anime, like manga, as part of Japanese culture, influences consumers and greatly impacts international audiences (Noviana, 2018; Saifudin et al., 2024; Wijaya et al., 2023).

Sayonara no Asa ni Yakusoku no Hana wo Kazarou (サヨナラの朝に約束の花を飾ろう) simplified by the name *Sayoasa* is one of the anime titles produced by P.A. Works, in 2018. This anime tells the story of a girl named Maquia from the Iorph tribe. The Iorph people are considered a legendary myth, so they are isolated due to their incredibly long lifespan. An attack of the Mezarte

Kingdom on the Iorph village causes Maquia to become separated from her people and stranded in the Mezarte, where the normal human race lives. She finds a human baby in the woods and names him Ariel. Maquia decides to care for and raise him while searching for her friend who was kidnapped by the enemy. Ariel, as a normal human being, portrayed his growth from just a baby to a mature adult and then as an elderly man (Okada, 2018). With a non-human and long life span, Maquia, as a mother who raised him, Ariel, faced some challenges as he transitioned into adulthood.

The anime serves as an interesting research object for a literary, psychological approach because it explores human emotions, relationships, and existential themes rooted in Japanese cultural and literary traditions. The story has themes of love, loss, and motherhood, set within a fantastical world that emphasizes impermanence and the cyclical nature of life. In Japanese culture, impermanence reflects life's fleeting nature, urging appreciation of the present, while the natural cycle symbolizes growth, decline, and renewal. These themes enrich the narrative, making it a profound study of change and emotional depth (Kersey, 2022).

From a psychological perspective, *Sayoasa* dives into the emotional struggles of its characters, particularly as Maquia navigates the joys and pains of motherhood, separation, and the burden of immortality in contrast to the fleeting life of her adopted human son, making this anime interesting for analyzing human attachment, resilience, and identity formation through a psychological lens.

Prasadana (2019), in this writing Analisis Kepribadian Tokoh Utama Maquia dalam Anime Sayonara no Asa ni Yakusoku no Hana wo Kazarou Karya Mari Okada (Kajian Psikologi Sastra) argued that Maquia as a main character in *Sayoasa* has her own identity that can be studied with the psychological approach in literature. She has dynamic personalities that show her mature self. This study indicated that Maquia as the main character has a strong personality and it helps her through her journey in the movie. This study underscores how her dynamic personality traits are instrumental in portraying a nuanced and relatable protagonist, making her an integral part of the anime's exploration of themes such as love, loss, and identity.

While Prasadana's research focused on the psychological aspect, Ningrum (2021), in her undergraduate thesis *Analisis Nilai Moral Dalam Anime Sayonara no Asa ni Yakusoku no Hana wo Kazarou* has focused on the social aspect in Maquia. She argued that there are many moral values depicted in the main characters, such as Maquia and Ariel, which serve as central themes throughout the narrative. Maquia embodies values such as unconditional love, compassion, and selflessness. Despite her hardships, including her struggles with loneliness and loss, she continues to care deeply for others, especially Ariel. Her willingness to raise Ariel as her own, even though they come from different worlds and face many challenges, highlights her nurturing nature and commitment to family, regardless of blood ties. Maquia's character demonstrates the moral value of perseverance in the face of adversity as she navigates the complexities of life while maintaining her inner strength and kindness. Ariel, on the other hand, reflects moral growth, responsibility, and loyalty. As a child, he grows under Maquia's care, learning important life lessons about love and respect. Over time, his character demonstrates the value of loyalty as he remains dedicated to Maquia, even as he grapples with his own identity and the struggles of growing up. Ariel also represents the moral value of maturity—his journey from childhood to adulthood showcases how he learns to take on responsibility and care for others, much like Maquia cared for him.

From several studies that have been conducted, there has not yet been research that examines the character of Ariel or his psychological aspects, who was raised by Maquia as his son. Ariel, as an ordinary human, experiences normal developmental aging and grows old like regular humans,

whereas Maquia, who has a much longer lifespan, remains physically youthful for a much longer time. This difference naturally leads to psychological friction within Ariel. For example, this tension becomes apparent when Ariel's age eventually matches Maquia's physical appearance as two young adults. At this point, Ariel chooses not to call Maquia "mother," as he did when he was a child. This may occur due to the psychological conflict Ariel experiences, as the person who raised him does not age like an ordinary human and now appears to be the same age as him.

The author chose this research topic to explore the psychosocial development of the character Ariel, a human raised by Maquia, who is a long-lived member of the Iorph tribe. The narrative of the character Ariel in this anime begins when Ariel is still a baby and continues until the end of his life. With a caregiver who has no blood relation and is a young woman with an exceptionally long lifespan, the author is interested in analyzing character Ariel as one of the main characters in the anime *Sayoasa*, focusing on the stages of self-development from infancy to the end of his life using Erikson's psychoanalytic theory.

2   Methods

In this study, the author applied a psychological approach. This research falls under the category of qualitative research, which focuses on the narrative and descriptive aspects of data. Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research emphasizes processes and the search for meaning rather than numerical calculations. It also prioritizes the exploration of answers, relationships, and socio-cultural interactions (Ahmadi, 2015). A psychological approach in literature aims to examine characters by their psychological aspects (Noor, 2009).

Primary data for research refers to information obtained directly by the researcher, whereas secondary data is derived from other sources for use in the study (Sugiyono, 2015). The primary data in this research is taken from the anime *Sayoasa*, directed by Mari Okada, which premiered in Japan on February 24, 2018. The researcher draws from screenshots, narratives, and dialogues within *Sayoasa*. The secondary data in this study are adapted from various sources, including *Life-Span Development* by John W. Santrock. The data explored a narrative from the anime *Sayoasa* and discussed it using a psychological approach and Erikson's psychosocial stages of development.

According to Erik Erikson, there are eight stages of psychosocial development. The first stage is trust versus mistrust, the second stage is autonomy versus shame and doubt, the third stage is initiative vs guilt, the fourth stage is industry versus inferiority, the fifth stage is identity versus identity confusion, the sixth stage is intimacy versus isolation, the seventh stage is generativity versus stagnation, and the last stage is integrity versus despair (Santrock, 2012; Maree, 2022). Erikson indicates that every human has a lifetime of development, and every stage has its own importance for human life. Erikson's stages highlight the importance of social relationships and personal growth throughout the human lifespan, emphasizing that each stage builds on the successes or failures of the previous ones.

The data is presented using a descriptive method, where the previously analyzed data are used to provide a detailed, analytical presentation of Ariel's character development, which is aligned with the objectives of the research.

3   Results

Erikson's stages of personal development consist of eight stages. The author finds that some stages do not have good outcomes and sometimes overlap with others.

3.1. Trust versus Mistrust

The first stage occurs between the ages of 0 to 12 months. Ariel's basic needs were met from the moment she was rescued by Maquia. These basic needs, such as clothing, food, and shelter, were fulfilled during the early stages of development. This fulfills made Ariel trust the person who raised him right.

Figure 1. Ariel was feeded by Maquia
[Source: Okada, Mari. 2018]

This is evident in the scene shown in the screenshot above, where Maquia is seen feeding Ariel inside the house, both fully dressed. This suggests that Ariel's basic needs during this stage of life were well provided for. Based on this information, it can be concluded that Ariel successfully navigated the first stage of personal development and was able to establish a sense of trust.

3.2. Autonomy versus Doubt and Shame

The second stage occurs in early childhood, between the ages of 1 and 3. Ariel begins to express his sense of independence. He tries to be autonomous, doing things according to his initiative and making choices about what he wants.

Ariel's autonomy is evident in the scene below. Ariel takes the initiative to weave Hibiol himself and gives it to Onora, the dog belonging to Deol, which is currently unhealthy. Maquia, as the caregiver, provides space for Ariel to do the things she wants. In the screenshot and dialogue from this scene, it is clear that Maquia does not immediately take over the weaving of Hibiol but allows Ariel to work on it herself while still supervising her.

Figure 2. Maquia helps Ariel weaving Hibiol
[Source: Okada, Mari. 2018]

In addition, there is a conversation between Maquia and Ariel as shown in Dialogue 1.

Dialogue 1

エリエル　　　：できた！ちゃんと言葉？
マキア　　　　：うん、〝オノラ元気になって〟
エリエル　　　：オノラー！！
マキア　　　　：優しく　かけてあげて

Ariel	:	It's done! Did I write right?
Maquia	:	It is. It's written, "Get Well Soon, Onora."
Ariel	:	Onoraa!!
Maquia	:	Put the blanket softly!

(Okada, Mari: 2018. 00:25:08-00:25:52)

The sense of autonomy and desire to live independently without relying on others is clearly expressed. From the information presented, it can be concluded that the character Ariel successfully navigated this stage and developed a sense of independence and autonomy.

3.3. Initiative versus Guilt

The third stage of development occurs during the preschool years, between the ages of 3 and 6. During this stage of psychosocial development, children face new challenges that encourage them to develop active and purposeful behavior. At this age, children tend to enjoy playing, and through play, they begin to make decisions and take on roles within a group, fostering a sense of responsibility for their surroundings.

In group play, Ariel feels inferior to Dita and her friends, leading to a sense of not being accepted by the group, which causes anxiety. Additionally, on several occasions, Maquia also rejects Ariel's requests due to other priorities, as seen in the dialogue excerpt in Dialogue 2.

Dialogue 2

エリエル	：	パレード僕も見る。
マキア	：	そっかー、ごめんね、また今度ね。
エリエル	：	僕、俺、帰りたい！

Ariel	:	I wanna see the parade
Maquia	:	Is that so? I am sorry, next time we'll do
Ariel	:	I wanna go home. You have been so strange since we came here

(Okada, Mari: 2018. 00:34:22-00:34:55)

Ariel's lack of involvement in asserting his role within the social group and taking control of situations often leads him to feel guilty and less inclined to take the initiative. However, as he matures, Ariel gradually begins to show more initiative and becomes aware of his own sense of agency. Ariel ultimately achieves independence when he decides to live on his own, no longer relying on Maquia. This moment is a clear indication of Ariel taking initiative, realizing that she has the power to shape her own life independently.

From the analysis above, it can be concluded that during this stage of the conflict, Ariel initially experiences more guilt. However, as he grows older, he shifts toward greater initiative and becomes more aware of his ability to make decisions.

3.4. Industry versus Inferiority

The fourth stage of this developmental theory takes place during middle to late childhood, from school age to puberty, roughly between 6 and 12 years old. After successfully passing the previous initiative stage, children channel their energy into mastering knowledge and intellectual skills in school. Success in this stage leads to a strong confidence in their abilities, while failure results in feelings of inferiority.

For the character Ariel, there is no available data for this stage due to a time skip between the ages of 6 and 17-18. However, based on the conversation between Maquia and Lang, they lived a transient lifestyle because Maquia, as an Iorph, was constantly on the move, fleeing from Mezarte Kingdom's pursuit. As a result, Ariel was unable to devote his energy to acquiring knowledge and intellectual growth in a stable school environment due to the difficult and unstable conditions of their wandering lifestyle.

Figure 3. Ariel feels inferior to Lang
[Source: Okada, Mari. 2018]

The scene above is a screenshot capturing the moment when Ariel reunites with Lang after a long time. Lang, who has since become a commander in the Mezarte Kingdom's military, is seen engaging in conversation at the dining table. In contrast, Ariel remains silent, with his head lowered, not participating in the discussion. He also makes no effort to initiate a conversation with Lang. Ariel's body language conveys a sense of inferiority.
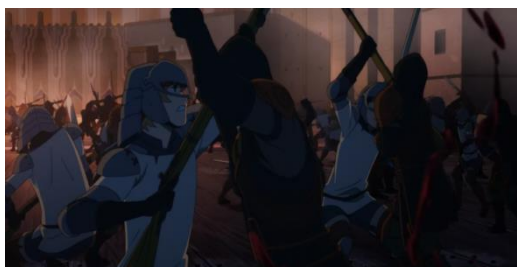
Figure 4. Ariel joins the military and fights as a front base
[Source: Okada, Mari. 2018]

In the scene above, Ariel is shown fiercely battling enemies that have surrounded the capital. He is fully committed, using all of his strength and skills to defend the kingdom's capital. This illustrates Ariel's growing confidence in his abilities and his dedication to hard work. At the beginning of this stage, Ariel tended to lean toward feelings of inferiority, but he successfully navigated the conflict and emerged with a strong sense of industriousness and pride in his achievements.

3.5.   Identity versus Identity Confusion

The fifth stage occurs during adolescence, typically between the ages of 12 and 20. During this stage, individuals face the challenge of discovering who they truly are, what their future holds, and the direction they will take in life.

At the beginning of this stage, Ariel experiences an identity crisis. The most prominent source of this confusion revolves around his identity as Maquia's "child." This inner conflict is evident in Ariel's changing attitude toward Maquia as he begins to grapple with the realization that Maquia is not his biological mother. This realization contributes to Ariel's struggle to define his own identity during this crucial period.

Dialogue 3

ラン	:	さすがに血につながりがないことは、もうわかってるか？
マキア	:	うん、五年くらい前。寝るとこを別にしてって言いだしてからかな。”母さん”って呼ばなくなりだして、”ねえ”とか”ちょっとー”とかそんなのばっかで
Lang	:	He did realize that you are not his real mother, right?
Maquia	:	Yeah, maybe about five year ago. Suddenly he chose to sleep in separate bed. Now he doesn't even call me "Mom", just a word like "hey" or "here".

<div align="right">(Okada, Mari: 2018. 00:53:39-00:54:02)</div>

The fifth stage occurs during adolescence, typically between the ages of 10 and 20. During this stage, individuals face the challenge of discovering who they truly are, what their future holds, and the direction they will take in life.

At the beginning of this stage, Ariel experiences an identity crisis. The most prominent source of this confusion revolves around his identity as Maquia's "child." This inner conflict is evident in Ariel's changing attitude toward Maquia as he begins to grapple with the realization that Maquia is not his biological mother. This realization contributes to Ariel's struggle to define his own identity during this crucial period.

Dialogue 4

リコ	:	いいケツしてんなぁ
エリエル	:	そうですかね？
ハイク	:	しっかし似てねえな二人
リコ	:	なあ、お前らここに来てそろそろ一年になるだろ？お前はどこにいたんだ？
はいく	:	いや、お前ら兄弟なんて嘘で本当は駆け落ちしてきたんじゃないかって話があってよ
Rico	:	Your big sister has a good body.
Ariel	:	Is that so?
Hike	:	I already told you once, but I didn't see any similarities between you and her.
Rico	:	So, you have been here since a year ago. Where did you live previously?
Hike	:	Yeah, we think you two are not siblings, but a couple in runaway.

<div align="right">(Okada, Mari: 2018. 00:50:14-00:50:48)</div>

Ariel's coworkers' remarks deepen his confusion about the relationship between himself and Maquia. This uncertainty about his identity prompts Ariel to develop himself further and seek his true identity. Ariel's obstacle to finding his identity is illustrated through his decision to leave and join the military. A few years later, he starts a family with Dita, leaving his old family with Maquia.

Ultimately, Ariel realizes his own identity as a son and his relationship with Maquia is about mother and child, as depicted in the scene below. This realization is proved in the dialogue when Maquia expresses her farewell.

Dialogue 5

マキア	:	エリエルとディタの赤ちゃん生まれたよ。
マキア	:	無理しちゃダメ！大丈夫エリエルのこと待ってる。ずっと二人は待っていてくれてる。

	ああ、やってエリエルもお母さんから生まれてきたんだね。エリエルのお母さんね、エリエルのこときゅうっと抱きしめてた。指がキューッて硬くなっててね。なかなか外れなかった。一本一本
エリエル	: いいから。
マキア	: 私はエリエルのお母さんになれなかったね。
エリエル	: もういいんだ！
マキア	: あなたが教えてくれたんだ！優しさを強さを必死さを誰かを愛する気持ちを
マキア	: 離れて一人ぼっちになって自分のことがよく分からなかった。それでも、エリエルを思い出せば私になれたのエリエルが私の呼んでくれるなら、それが”母さん”じゃなくもいい。どんな名前でもその名前がきっと私の名前になる。
Maquia	: Your child and Dita's have been born. Don't force yourself! It's okay, they are waiting for you. They will always be waiting for you. So that's how you are born from your mother. Ariel's mother held you so tight her fingers were hard as a rock. It's difficult to release it one by one.
Ariel	: Enough.
Maquia	: I, I will never become Ariel's mother.
Ariel	: It's enough, stop! You are the one who told me the meaning of kindness, power, despair, feeling of loving someone.
Maquia	: When we were separated. I lost my reason for living. But every time I think of you, I become myself again. If Ariel called me, even if that's not "mother", I don't mind. Whatever names you used to call me, so that's will be my name.

(Okada, Mari*:* 2018. 01:30:37)

In the dialogue above, Ariel realizes that although Maquia is not his biological mother, she is still the one who has raised him from childhood to this point. Maquia has taught him many things, shaping him into the person he is now. The scene above illustrates that Ariel has successfully resolved his identity conflict regarding the mother-child relationship with Maquia, and has established a strong sense of identity, recognizing himself as Maquia's child, despite the absence of a biological connection between them.

From the analysis above, it can be figured that at this stage, Ariel has successfully navigated the identity crisis within himself and strengthened his identity as Maquia's child, even though there is no blood relation between them.

3.6. Intimacy versus Isolation

The sixth stage occurs during early adulthood, typically between the ages of 20 and 30. In this stage, individuals have moved past childhood and adolescence and have entered early adulthood. During this phase, people form close relationships and intimacy with others. Success in this stage fosters strong interpersonal connections, while failure can lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation.

At this stage in Ariel's life, he begins to develop deeper emotional connections with others, marking a significant phase of intimacy and personal growth. He marries his childhood friend, Dita, solidifying a bond that has been nurtured over the years, and through this marriage, Ariel experiences the importance of commitment and companionship. This relationship with Dita represents a key moment in Ariel's life where love and loyalty become central themes. Additionally, Ariel also forges close bonds with his fellow soldiers, a camaraderie that further highlights his ability

to form meaningful connections beyond family and romantic ties. These relationships illustrate Ariel's growing capacity for trust and emotional intimacy, showing how his experiences have shaped him into someone who values the support and understanding of those around him. Through both his marriage and his friendships, Ariel learns the significance of building relationships that are based on mutual respect, shared experiences, and emotional closeness.

Figure 5. Ariel comes home to his wife
[Source: Okada, Mari. 2018]

In the scene above, Ariel arrives home to find his wife, Dita, who is heavily pregnant. Starting a family is one way to foster closeness and intimacy between individuals. Ariel's connection with others is also evident during his time in the military, where he interacts with fellow soldiers and demonstrates care for his colleagues. From this information, it can be concluded that Ariel successfully navigated the sixth stage of personal development, establishing intimacy with others.

3.7.　Generativity versus Stagnation

This stage occurs during middle adulthood, typically between the ages of 30 and 60. The main challenge faced by individuals in this stage is to support and guide younger generations in developing meaningful lives.

At this stage, Ariel strives to contribute positively to the next generation. In this context, he makes a promise to care for his newborn child. This commitment is reflected in the dialogue between Ariel and Dita.

Dialogue 6

エリエル	: 母さんは育ててくれた僕はお前を愛していく。この子も、きっと誰かと出会う育てていこう、一生に、僕とディタと、二人でこれから、誰かと愛していくこの子
Ariel	: My mother, who has cared for me until now, has made it possible for me to love you. This child, too, will one day meet their partner. So, let's care for this child together until they meet the one they love

(Okada, Mari: 2018. 01:41:05-01:41:27)

In the dialogue 8, Ariel invites Dita to join him in caring for their newborn baby, expressing a desire to nurture the child until they grows up and are capable of loving someone, just as Ariel does now. Ariel feels grateful for having been raised by Maquia and hopes to provide his child with the same nurturing care that Maquia gave him. His sense of generativity is evident in this exchange, as he takes the first steps toward contributing positively to the next generation.

From this analysis, it can be concluded that Ariel successfully navigates this stage and attains a sense of generativity —feeling empowered and useful for the future generation— by providing care and support to his child.

3.8. Integrity versus Despair

The final stage of Erikson's theory of personal development occurs during late adulthood, typically from the age of 60 until death. In this stage, individuals focus on reflecting on their life experiences. At this point, people look back to assess whether they are content with what they have experienced or if they harbor regrets about things that have happened or opportunities they missed.

During this time, older adults need to reflect on their past to achieve a sense of fulfillment. Success in this stage is characterized by feelings of wisdom and integrity, while failure is marked by regret and despair.

Ariel smiles as he recognizes Maquia's presence beside him. He then takes her hand and responds to her greeting with a warm welcome. It is mentioned in a dialogue below.

Dialogue 7

エリエル　　　：　お帰り、母さん。
Ariel　　　　：　Welcome home, Mom.

(Mari Okada: 2018. 01:44:31-01:44:32)

The scene described on Dialogue 9 captures a profound sense of peace and happiness as Ariel approaches the end of his life. His warm welcome to Maquia, along with the tender way he addresses her as (お母さん) or "mother," expresses a deep sense of affection and closure. Despite the complexities of their relationship—one marked by differences in age, lifespan, and identity—Ariel's choice to call her "mother" reflects his enduring love and gratitude toward Maquia, who raised him with care and devotion. This moment signifies that Ariel harbors no resentment or bitterness about his past or the challenges he faced growing up under such unique circumstances. Instead, it suggests that he has come to terms with his life experiences, embracing them as part of the journey that shaped him into the person he became. The warmth and acceptance he shows Maquia highlight the emotional reconciliation he has reached, illustrating that, at the end of his life, Ariel feels contentment, appreciation, and a sense of fulfillment in the relationships that matter most to him. Here is Table 1 that shows the psychosocial stages of development in Ariel's character and the result.

Tabel 1. Ariel's Psychosocial Stages, according to Erik Erikson

Years	Stages of Development	Result
0-1	Trust vs Mistrust	Passed
1-3	Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt	Passed
3-6	Initiative vs Guilt	Passed
6-12	Industry vs Inferiority	Not passed at first, but passed in the next stage
12-20	Identity vs Identity Confusion	Not passed at first, but passed in the next stage
20-30	Intimacy vs Isolation	Passed
30-60	Generativity vs Stagnation	Passed
60 <	Integrity vs Despair	Passed

Having successfully navigated all the stages of development positively, it is evident that Ariel has reached the final stage and achieved integrity—a sense of fulfillment that signifies he has lived his life well.

4. Discussion of Ariel's Psychosocial Stages Development

This part of the analysis delves deeper into the stages of self-development of the character Ariel. In this section, the researcher employs a psychological development approach to understand Ariel's emotional and social growth throughout the story. By integrating both analyses, this research aims to reveal the dynamics of Ariel's development, as well as how both contribute to the overall meaning of the anime.

4.1. Trust versus Mistrust

Ariel's successful navigation of the trust versus mistrust stage, as described by Erik Erikson, underscores the significance of caregiving and the fulfillment of basic needs in early psychosocial development. In this stage, which spans the first 12 months of life, an infant's ability to develop trust hinges on the reliability and consistency of their caregiver in meeting their fundamental needs for survival, comfort, and security.

The example of Maquia feeding Ariel in Figure 1 vividly illustrates the nurturing relationship between them. By ensuring Ariel's needs for food, shelter, and care were consistently met, Maquia provided an environment where Ariel could develop a sense of safety and dependability. This foundational trust became the bedrock for Ariel's future psychosocial growth.

The depiction of Ariel's early life highlights the importance of caregiving relationships in establishing trust. This aligns with Erikson's assertion that when an infant's needs are reliably met, they develop a basic sense of trust, which translates into a positive outlook and confidence in their environment and relationships. Conversely, neglect or inconsistency at this stage could have led to mistrust, which may manifest as fear, insecurity, or difficulty forming bonds later in life.

4.2. Autonomy versus Doubt and Shame

The autonomy versus shame and doubt stage, occurring between the ages of 1 to 3 years, marks a crucial period in a child's psychosocial development as outlined by Erik Erikson. This stage centers on a child's ability to assert independence, make choices, and gain confidence in their actions. In Ariel's case, his successful resolution of this stage is evidenced by his initiative and actions, as depicted in the scene where he weaves a Hibiol for Onora, Deol's ailing dog in Dialogue 1.

Ariel's autonomy is demonstrated by his active participation in creating the Hibiol, a task requiring initiative and decision-making. The dialogue between Ariel and Maquia highlights his emerging confidence, as he seeks validation for his effort and expresses pride in completing the task. This interaction illustrates a supportive environment where Ariel feels empowered to take the lead while still receiving gentle guidance from Maquia. Maquia's role is instrumental; by providing space for Ariel to engage in independent activities while offering supervision, she encourages his sense of capability without fostering dependence.

A supportive caregiver like Maquia plays a pivotal role in helping a child navigate this stage successfully. By allowing Ariel to exercise his independence and make meaningful contributions, she fosters his sense of autonomy. Failure to provide this balance might have led to feelings of shame or doubt, stifling Ariel's self-confidence and initiative. Ariel's ability to take ownership of his actions

during this stage sets the foundation for later stages of development, where self-reliance and confidence are crucial.

4.3.   Initiative versus Guilt

The initiative versus guilt stage, which occurs between the ages of 3 and 6, is characterized by a child's growing capacity to take initiative and engage in purposeful actions, often through play and social interactions. In this stage, children explore their ability to make decisions and take responsibility for their actions. For Ariel, this stage is initially marked by challenges in social settings and interactions with his caregiver, Maquia, which foster a sense of guilt but eventually lead to a stronger sense of initiative.

Ariel struggles during children's play, where he feels inferior to Dita and her friends. It highlights his early difficulties in asserting his role within social dynamics. This sense of exclusion generates anxiety and a lack of confidence, leading Ariel to withdraw and feel guilty about his inability to actively participate. Such experiences are pivotal in this stage, as they test a child's ability to navigate social environments and develop purposeful behavior. Additionally, Maquia's occasional inability to prioritize Ariel's requests, as seen in Dialogue 2 about attending the parade, reinforces Ariel's feelings of guilt and frustration. Her responses, while not intentionally dismissive, create moments where Ariel feels misunderstood and unsupported, further contributing to his hesitance in taking initiative.

As Ariel matures, his experiences shape his understanding of agency and decision-making. His eventual independence, exemplified by his choice to live on his own and no longer rely on Maquia, reflects a significant developmental milestone. By taking responsibility for his life and asserting control over his decisions, Ariel demonstrates a successful resolution of this stage conflict. This shift from guilt to initiative marks his growth as a character who is capable of purposeful and independent action.

4.4.   Industry versus Inferiority

The industry versus inferiority stage ages 6-12 in Erikson's theory focuses on developing skills and competence. Success fosters pride, while failure leads to feelings of inadequacy. Ariel's experiences during this stage are shaped by his unstable upbringing and transient lifestyle. Due to Maquia's need to evade the Mezarte Kingdom, Ariel lacked a stable environment for intellectual or skill development, contributing to early feelings of inferiority.

This is evident when Ariel reunites with Lang, now a military commander. In Figure 3, Ariel's subdued demeanor, reflected in his lowered head and disengagement, highlights his feelings of inadequacy compared to Lang's accomplishments. However, as Ariel matures, he demonstrates resilience and industriousness. In Figure 4, a scene depicting him as a soldier shows his transformation into a determined and skilled fighter, overcoming previous doubts and gaining pride in his abilities.

Despite early challenges, Ariel's journey illustrates that even without conventional opportunities, individuals can find alternative paths to competence. His growth from inferiority to industriousness emphasizes the power of perseverance and adaptability in overcoming adversity, ultimately achieving confidence and pride in his accomplishments. Ariel's story is a testament to the resilience needed to navigate life's challenges and find self-realization.

Ulfa Mutiara Isnayani, U.M., Widyatwati, K., & Suryadi, M. (2024). Navigating psychosocial challenges: An analysis of Ariel's self-development in Sayonara no asa ni yakusoku no hana wo kazarou by Mari Okada. *Japanese Research on Linguistics, Literature, and Culture* 7 (1), 45-61. https://doi.org/10.33633/jr.v7i1.11585

4.5. Identity versus Identity Confusion

The identity versus role confusion stage ages 12–20 is crucial for exploring and defining one's identity. For Ariel, this phase involves an intense identity crisis stemming from his ambiguous relationship with Maquia and societal perceptions. Ariel struggles with realizing Maquia is not his biological mother, which intensifies when others, like Lang and his coworkers, remark on their lack of resemblance. These comments lead Ariel to question his role and place in their dynamic, which is reflected in his decision to stop calling Maquia "Mom" and instead use neutral terms like "hey" or "here" as written in Dialogue 3.

Ariel's decision to join the military marks a turning point in his self-discovery, as he steps away from Maquia to forge his path. His later choice to marry Dita symbolizes his growing independence and desire to create an identity separate from his past. The resolution of his identity crisis occurs in a heartfelt conversation with Maquia, where he recognizes her as his true mother in every meaningful sense, despite their lack of biological connection. This mutual understanding solidifies Ariel's identity as Maquia's child, defined not by blood but by their emotional bond.

Ariel's journey highlights universal themes of belonging, self-discovery, and familial relationships. His growth from confusion to a confident, self-assured individual shows that identity is shaped by connections and shared experiences rather than biology.

4.6. Intimacy versus Isolation

The intimacy versus isolation stage ages 20–30 is pivotal for forming meaningful relationships. Success leads to strong emotional intimacy, while failure can result in loneliness. Ariel's development during this phase shows his emotional growth and ability to form both romantic and platonic bonds, indicating he has successfully navigated this stage.

Ariel's marriage to Dita, rooted in childhood friendship, marks a key moment in his transition to adulthood. Their deep emotional bond symbolizes his capacity for intimacy and trust, and his commitment reflects his recognition of loyalty and companionship in a relationship. The scene where Ariel comes home to his pregnant wife further emphasizes their emotional closeness, highlighting their deepening connection as they prepare for parenthood. Ariel also forms strong friendships with his fellow soldiers, showcasing his ability to build intimate relationships beyond family and romance. These bonds provide him with emotional support, trust, and loyalty, enriching his sense of belonging. His capacity for intimacy in various aspects of life demonstrates his growth in this stage.

Having faced loneliness and isolation in his youth, particularly during his identity crisis, Ariel resolves these conflicts in early adulthood. By building meaningful relationships, both romantic and platonic, Ariel successfully navigates the intimacy versus isolation stage, deepening his emotional connections and fostering a sense of self-worth. His development highlights his transition into adulthood through emotional closeness and trust.

4.7. Generativity versus Stagnation

The generativity versus stagnation stage ages 30–60 is characterized by the challenge of contributing to society and supporting future generations. For Ariel, this stage marks his shift from focusing on his own growth to nurturing the next generation.

Ariel's sense of generativity is evident in his commitment to raising his newborn child. In a dialogue with Dita, he expresses his intention to provide the same love and care that Maquia gave

him, emphasizing the importance of guiding their child to form meaningful relationships. This reflects Ariel's deep gratitude for Maquia's care and his desire to continue the cycle of nurturing. Ariel's role as a father shows he has successfully navigated the generativity vs. stagnation stage. His promise to care for his child demonstrates his understanding of legacy and responsibility. This commitment not only highlights his growth as an individual but also his desire to create a positive future for his child.

Ariel's generativity extends beyond his familial role. His partnership with Dita in raising their child, along with his past contributions as a soldier, showcases his broader societal contributions. By embracing his role as a father and mentor, Ariel exemplifies generativity through his commitment to the well-being of others and the next generation.

4.8. Integrity versus Despair

The final stage of Erikson's psychosocial development theory, integrity versus despair, occurs during late adulthood, typically from the age of 60 onwards. In this stage, individuals reflect on their lives, seeking a sense of fulfillment and wisdom. Success in this stage is characterized by feelings of integrity, where one feels content with their life choices and experiences, while failure leads to despair, regret, and a sense of missed opportunities.

Ariel's deep sense of integrity and emotional fulfillment is evident in his warm greeting to Maquia, saying, "Welcome home, Mom" as in Dialogue 7. This acknowledgment of Maquia as his mother represents a culmination of acceptance and love, reflecting the emotional peace Ariel has achieved. Ariel's relationship with Maquia had been complex, shaped by his identity struggles and the absence of biological parents. However, over time, he reconciles these feelings and recognizes the profound impact Maquia had on him. His use of "mother" signifies everything Maquia provided—love, care, and guidance. This moment represents Ariel's acceptance of the nurturing relationship that once caused him doubt.

Ariel's emotional peace comes from his ability to accept both the challenges and joys of his past. His warm greeting symbolizes the wisdom and integrity he has attained. He now views his life with gratitude, embracing all experiences as integral to his development.

Ariel's journey through Erikson's stages reflects resilience and self-discovery. By the end of his life, he finds fulfillment in his relationship with Maquia, understanding that all experiences, both good and bad, contributed to his growth. His final moments express his emotional reconciliation, wisdom, and fulfillment, showing a life well-lived.

5. Conclusion

From the results of this analysis, it was found that Ariel successfully navigated the eight stages of psychosocial development according to Erik Erikson's theory. Initially, Ariel faced challenges in two stages of development, characterized by struggles with identity crisis and emotional instability. However, she ultimately overcame these difficulties. By the end of the stages, Ariel's development demonstrated a positive trajectory, culminating in the final stage, "integrity vs. despair." Ariel's success in achieving the integrity stage signifies that she feels a sense of fulfillment with her life and believes she has navigated various challenges successfully, completing the stages of self-development with positive outcomes. This journey reflects significant character growth and underscores the moral message of this anime, which highlights the importance of personal growth and self-fulfillment.

Ulfa Mutiara Isnayani, U.M., Widyatwati, K., & Suryadi, M. (2024). Navigating psychosocial challenges: An analysis of Ariel's self-development in Sayonara no asa ni yakusoku no hana wo kazarou by Mari Okada. *Japanese Research on Linguistics, Literature, and Culture* 7 (1), 45-61. https://doi.org/10.33633/jr.v7i1.11585

The implication of this research explains that human life cycle should be embraced with gratitude. This is a reminder that cultivating a grateful outlook is essential for navigating life's challenges. This anime illustrates that human life is inevitably filled with both physical and psychological obstacles. Through Ariel's journey, viewers are encouraged to reflect on resilience and the pursuit of self-actualization despite adversities. Future studies could explore stories or novels that depict the journey of life across different ages and eras, offering a broader perspective on human development and growth.

References

Adi, I. R. (2011). *Fiksi Populer: Teori & Metode Kajian*. Pustaka Pelajar.

Ahmadi, A. (2015). Psikologi Sastra. In *Repository UNESA* (Nomor Maret). Unesa University Press.

Brenner, R. E. (2007). Understanding Manga and Anime. In *Understanding Manga and Anime*. Libraries Unlimited. https://doi.org/10.5040/9798216029595

Damono, S. D. (1984). *Sosiologi Sastra : Sebuah pengantar ringkas / Sapardi Djoko Damono*. Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa.

Kersey, K. W. (2022). Chapter 6 Impermanence, Futurity, and Loss in Twelfth-Century Japan. In *Destroyed—Disappeared—Lost—Never Were* (hal. 87–99). Penn State University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780271093758-009

Macwilliams, M. W. (2014). Japanese VISUAL CULTURE: Explorations in: The World of Manga and Anime. In *Japanese Visual Culture: Explorations in the World of Manga and Anime* (reprint). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315703152

Maree, J. G. (2022). The psychosocial development theory of Erik Erikson: critical overview. In *The Influence of Theorists and Pioneers on Early Childhood Education* (1 ed., hal. 15–30). Routledge.

Ningrum, D. C. (2021). *Analisis Nilai Moral Dalam Anime Sayonara no Asa ini Yakusoku no Hana wo Kazarou* . Universitas Darma Persada.

Noor, R. (2009). Pengantar Pengkajian Sastra. *Pengantar Pengkajian Sastra*, 138.

Noviana, F. (2018). Adaptasi cerpen Chuumon no Ooi Ryouri Ten karya Miyazawa Kenji menjadi anime Karya Shibuichi Setsuko. *Japanese Research on Linguistics, Literature, and Culture*, 1(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.33633/jr.v1i1.2131

Nugroho, P. A., & Hendrastomo, G. (2017). Anime Sebagai Budaya Populer (Studi Pada Komunitas Anime di Yogyakarta). *Jurnal Pendidikan Sosiologi*, *6*(3), 1–15. https://journal.student.uny.ac.id/ojs/index.php/societas/article/viewFile/9099/8770

Okada, M. (2018). *Sayonara no Asa ni Yakusoku no Hana wo Kazarou*. P.A.Works.

Prasadana, C. (2019). *Analisis Kepribadian Tokoh Utama Maquia dalam Anime Sayonara no Asa ni Yakusoku no Hana wo Kazarou Karya Mari Okada (Kajian Psikologi Sastra)*. Universitas Brawijaya.

Richter, D. H. (2017). A companion to: Literary theory. In *Companion to Literary Theory* (Vol. 1). Wiley Blackwall. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118958933

Ulfa Mutiara Isnayani, U.M., Widyatwati, K., & Suryadi, M. (2024). Navigating psychosocial challenges: An analysis of Ariel's self-development in Sayonara no asa ni yakusoku no hana wo kazarou by Mari Okada. *Japanese Research on Linguistics, Literature, and Culture* 7 (1), 45-61. https://doi.org/10.33633/jr.v7i1.11585

Saifudin, A., Risagarniwa, Y. Y., Citraresmana, E., & Sidiq, I. I. (2024). From pictures to words: A linguistic approach to comic strip humor. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, 12(1), 396-411. https://doi.org/10.22034/ijscl.2024.2019157.3321

Santrock, J. W. (2012). *Life-Span Development: Perkembangan Masa Hidup* (1 ed., Vol. 1). Erlangga.

Sugiyono. (2015). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan R&D*. Alfabeta.

Wijaya, M. J., Puspitasari, D., & Suryadi, Y. (2023). Western power relations against the East in the Code Geass anime series. *Japanese Research on Linguistics, Literature, and Culture*, 5(2), 96–109. https://doi.org/10.33633/jr.v5i2.7550