

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Throughout one's life, s/he went through various moments and experiences, some of which—pleasant or not—might leave deep impressions in one's mind, such that one never forgets it. These impressions' accumulation is what constitutes one's 'memory'. Over time, they became part of one's semi- and unconscious natures for later recollection.

While the pleasant memories would generally do almost no psychological harm to oneself, there would still be unpleasant memories to contend with. These are often a bit harder to easily get over with, and in some worse cases, one might have the impression that s/he is being 'haunted' by the foul memories. Psychologically, it could be stated that the person is experiencing 'trauma'.

Fortunately, humans have also been granted ways to contend with such phenomenon: in the 18th century, Sigmund Freud, the founder of 'Freudian' Psychoanalysis, termed such methods 'defense mechanisms', listing up to seven of them, along with their descriptions (Baumeister, Dale and Sommer 1081)—one of which is 'denial', consisting of one's firm refusal to believe that something terrible, such as a break-up or broken-home family, had ever occurred in one's life.

On more extreme cases of trauma, one might also resort to unconventional methods to mitigate the trauma's impacts; one such example is by having sexual intercourses.

When discussing such a concept, one might also need to consider its implications. Aside from the common understanding that sexual intercourses are in themselves explicit acts of procreation, they could also take on a cultural context. In Germany, for example (even to the present time), illicit sexuality is viewed in similar reasonability as any of its other aspects of life, say, its education; in Indonesia, however, such practice would be considered breaching one of society's greatest taboos. As this thesis would put more focus on German context, it is expected that this gap is well understood.

The aforementioned concepts are nicely intertwined in *The ODESSA File*—a historical-fiction novel first published in 1970s, authored by Frederick Forsyth, a former RAF pilot and BBC correspondent—which is why this novel was selected as object for further analysis. To begin with, the *Waffen-SS*, the organization that had a significant role in fomenting the upcoming traumas of the protagonist, shall be described first. Its precursor had been the SS.

The SS, or *Schutzstaffel*, established in Germany during 1930s, was a state-sponsored, exclusive 'special force' organization later bent on world domination. Literally 'protection squads', the organization was initially meant to serve as means of personal protection for Hitler, as well as safeguarding his party rallies, before exploding in size and role as the Second World War progressed. Its

Waffen (armed) branch came to have its own divisions fighting alongside German regular army until their mutual doom in 1945.

Other than fighting on the battlefield, these SS members also did technical functions, e.g. guarding the concentration camps, rounding up Jews and other 'sub-humans' considered worthless to be kept alive (this was done by a special unit in SS, known as the 'Death Squad'), a process that could turn out to be so severe as to cause a distinct syndrome among the inmates known as 'survivor syndrome' (Barel, Sagi-Schwartz and Bakermans-Kranenburg 678)—and other indescribable things to amass their own power with a vision to create its own government. Even so they continued to consider themselves as pure patriotic heroes, true sole saviors of German people which was in part a result of their training and indoctrination modeled on the belief of Aryan race superiority, themselves being such examples; an illusion soon to be shattered first by victors of the war, then denounced by German people themselves.

Their rejection was in some ways logical due to the group's secretiveness—almost to the point of denying—about any mention of war crimes to the general public. With little regard to any civilian trauma that might have ensued, they have to keep the war going if only to grant time of escape for senior SS members.

During the war, the novel's main character Peter Miller, a would-be journalist, endured a trauma in the form of his father's death in the war when he was eleven. Then, as the war drew to a close, compounding his problems, the victors of the war gave the impression that all Germans regardless of generation

were to blame for the calamities during the entire war; a notion of which Miller refused to accept but which his mother (resembling the older generation) apparently took for granted. As for the surviving *Waffen-SS* members, such impression served as a perfect excuse to help delay their own persecution. The notion of denial as part of Freudian defense mechanism is thereby applicable to both the SS members as well as the civilian population in post-war Germany. Miller was, moreover—and taking the novel's setting into account—part of what I. Laurien in her journal article *Facing the Nazi Past Today* dubbed 'the skeptical generation' where past horrors from the Nazi period were not to be discussed openly (96). Miller had an impression that because he himself did not personally take part in the war, he was thus not eligible to share the blame as the rest of them who did. This acknowledgement, in sharp contrast to that of the SS, led Miller to believe that whatever happened in the Second World War had no relevance for either him or his family—or even his entire present generation, and that in fact he was one of its victims. Seeking to prove this, he thus vowed to track down a certain Eduard Roschmann—anex-*Waffen-SS* member—dead or alive (even more so after he gained the belief that Roschmann was his father's killer) to make a point of his innocence.

Equally important, the trauma—in a slightly different form—would in time also plague one from amongst the rank-and-file of *Waffen-SS* itself: a certain Alfred Oster. He, through a uniquely monumental self-conscience, opted to step out of the organization and henceforth become a dissident. Oster's role, through not insignificant, would be displayed further in this thesis.

It might be useful to know that the novel's story was set in 1960s Germany, when the Cold War was raging, fear of the Communists was still prevalent, and Berlin and Germany itself were both still divided into West and East parts.

There has been undoubtedly numerous works of psychoanalysis, mostly general descriptions covering all tenets, such as a journal by Roy F. Baumeister, Karen Dale and Kristin L. Sommer entitled *Freudian Defense Mechanisms and Empirical Findings in Modern Social Psychology* encompassing explanations on reaction formation, denial, and five other branches of Freudian defense mechanisms(1081); however, as for this particular novel, the writer had as yet not found immediate works of the same object for direct comparison other than a book review by, among others, Stephen in goodreads.com stating that the novel “takes its time building up a foundation... It ultimately pays off in a fun and detailed manhunt that goes on for the rest of the novel... a fun read”

That point cleared, the writer shall now describe more on the Frederick Forsyth and his other works. His first work, *The Biafra Story*, was first published in 1969, a year after his reassigning from being a former BBC correspondent. His first true novel, however, was *The Day of the Jackal*, published in 1971, filmed two years later. This and his other novels (*The ODESSA File* being his second work) ‘portrayed his meticulous style of narration, centering on the power of an individual character to save the day and revolves around international intrigues and schemes as their themes’. The author himself was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1997(Publishers) and later received Cartier

Diamond Dagger award in 2012 by Crime Writers Association for his range of works, including *The ODESSA File*. Outside literary field, he was presenter for *Soldiers* documentary in 1985.(Britannica)

Despite the object novel's consistency throughout the plot to point out the ups and downs of Miller's quest to overcome his traumas, as the story goes, we will also find depictionsof Miller having sexual intercourses with his lover. This new, highlyconflicting notion, when related to the overall theme of denial, is in direct accordance with Freud's another position regarding the motive of almost every human conduct. Therefore, from this point, the notion of sexuality shall serve as secondary issue to support the overall analysis.

1.2 Statement of the Problems:

1. How are Peter Miller's and Alfred Oster's denials depicted and related throughout the story?
2. How are these resolved?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To figure out the relations of cases of denials depicted in the novel;
2. To observe the resolutions of these denials.

1.4 Significance of the Study

For students of Airlangga University, particularly of the Faculty of Humanities, English Department, the writer sincerely hopes that this thesis would

be another enriching contribution on how Psychoanalysis theory, more specifically its Freudian branch, could be applied to analyze a piece of literary work, in this case a novel. Also, to the general public, this may serve as an example on how particular issues could be taken from a piece of literary work, and then analyzed using a specific theory.

1.5 Theoretical Background

In its own right, instances of trauma had long been identified and accepted to be the main theme for myriads of literature work, primarily focusing on the dynamics of the main protagonist's psychological state throughout his/her adventures, as was indeed the case with the writer's object novel. As it is, for more critical observers, analysis of such detail could often be invaluable not only as means of fulfillment for some academic assignments, but in discovering, measuring and criticizing our own selves as well. One might become so immersed in the analysis that he/she had unwittingly figured out ways to improve oneself as the conclusions are being made, which in all serve as one of the main reasons in trying to analyze works of literature containing psychological and investigative elements. Novels, more than any other kinds of literature, provide just such an opportunity.

As was the case with this novel, for example, the writer never expected that Peter Miller's lifelong traumas could easily be surpassed through sexual intercourses—which is why the writer will be using Freudian Psychoanalysis to further explore the issue, because Freud specifically and expressly related human

conduct to sexual drives. Psychoanalysis, first discovered by Sigmund Freud (hence the term 'Freudian'), started to gain popularity in 1887 as a method of therapeutic purposes, namely, as a way to cure mental illness by allowing the patients to tell—and this should be taken quite literally—'what's on their mind', and use it to further investigate a patient's motivations for doing what s/he did that ostensibly disrupted public order.

The second reason is that by analyzing most literary works, we might come up with underlying issues never expected prior to reading. In the writer's case, it was the issue of neo-Nazism. It was rather astounding to learn out that the ideology we generally believe to have passed into the obscurities of history turned out to still be active, with fresh followers and modifications of ideals. A more thorough research on this issue might then help us to keep up with this now-global phenomenon (also owing to present-day technology) and provide ways to counter it should it be found that neo-Nazism is in fact a threat, or, conversely, even adopt some of its tenets as long as it is in line with the ideologies of the countries concerned.

In addition the writer, finding out that the organization mentioned in the novel—the ODESSA—had also had some instances of its own denial, thus decided to broaden the analysis to include the organization's denials, comparing it with the traumas of Miller, the individual, and assess the relations. In conclusion the writer discovered that the instances of denial and trauma are closely related and that both of which could in fact be resolved by apparently trivial means.

1.6 Method of the Study

The object novel will be analyzed qualitatively. The steps involved in the data collection included close reading of the novel to find the primary issues for analysis, as well as researching for journals, articles, and various other materials supporting the analysis. In the process the writer found most of the needed supporting arguments in two books, a journal article highlighting the overview of seven tenets of Freudian Psychoanalysis, and another highlighting the conditions and the social nature of Germany's post-war generations up until the 1980's, along with their predominantly believed values.

The next phase is the analysis, wherein it will discuss the relations and resolutions between Peter Miller's and ODESSA's cases of denial.

For overall analysis, the writer would be using the following formula as a model:

$$Y=fX$$

With Y standing for the 'effects', X for the 'causes', and f for the 'mechanisms', the formula is thus:

$$Y_1= f_1X_1$$

The formula works in the following pattern: “ Y_1 ’ is the general effect of ‘ X_1 ’, and between them there would be ‘ f_1 ’ to produce the effect the individual intended to have.”

For Peter Miller's case, Y_1 stands for the state of his present ‘traumas’ which were the loss of his father and the lingering burden of communal guilt in

his generation. This was generally caused by X_1 or the ‘war’ (the Second World War). The f_1 , therefore, would be the ‘mechanisms’ which he applied to cope with the traumas—that is, sexual intercourses.

Secondly, for Alfred Oster’s case, the Y_1 would be ‘the feeling of superiority’; the f_1 would be ‘Aryan idealism’. The X_1 would still be the same, that is, the war.

Therefore, for a solution, the writer would have to find the ‘binary oppositions’ of the previous situations involved, in order to fill in the new counter-formula of $Y_2 = f_2(X_2)$.

The last phase of this thesis would be the conclusion in accordance to the previous statement of the problems, and which will highlight the thesis’s findings.

1.7 Scope and Limitations:

Overall, despite the abundance of issues in the object novel such as international intrigues and an attempt to sabotage a project on rocketry, the scope of the analysis would only be on the twin instances of denial throughout the novel—firstly by Peter Miller, with an eye to describing the role of sexuality as a supporting issue; and secondly, by ODESSA, an exclusive organization also mentioned in the novel, and which was meant to be the main antagonist throughout the story. Further narrowing this, the writer would only observe Miller’s professional—and later on, near-personal—relations with the ODESSA, and how this has an impact on the overall quest.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Defense Mechanism: a branch of psychoanalysis with the aim of investigating ways by which we deal with and prevent the re-emergence of unpleasant memories deeply stored in our unconscious state. (Tyson 15)

Trauma: a mental state when we so deeply feared certain event(s) that directly or indirectly affects our perception of life, wishing it would never happen again—and the effects are such that it couldnot be curtailed even through dreams.(Tyson 21)

Denial: one tenet of Freudian defense mechanism where the sufferer refuse to believe, or at least acknowledge, that some terrible event did happen in his/her life. (Tyson 15)

Tripartite Model: a developed version of Freudian psychoanalysis where human's nature is divided into *id* (basic instincts), *ego* (actual self), and *superego* (set of norms/ideal self) (Bressler 146)

'Order':a position devised by Lacan as an improvement to Freudian theories, originally consisting of imaginary and symbolic ones.(Bressler 153)

The 'Real':one of Lacanian concepts, stating that there's simply something wholly beyond our perception that fascinates and frightens us at the same time.(Tyson 32)

