

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Framework

As an object for this thesis, the writer has chosen a novel, *The ODESSA File*, by Frederick Forsyth. Therein the main focus would be to analyze the issue of the main protagonist's defense mechanism; therefore the appropriate overall knife to slice the issue would be Psychoanalysis theory. As there is more than one experts on psychoanalysis while the aspect that the writer is going to further explore concerns more precisely on denial and some little mentions about sexuality, the writer thus narrowed the scope to Freudian psychoanalysis—the first, most basic preposition among all other later revisions.

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. Freud's early argument was that the patients' "fantasies and wishful thinking, not actual experiences, play a large part in the onset of neuroses." (Bressler 144). Going ahead, he posited several models to better explain this theory. These are: *dynamic model*, highlighting the comparison of *conscious* (the rational) and *unconscious* (the irrational); the *economic model*, emphasizing *pleasure* and *reality principles*—these he described as clash of

energies he termed '*cathexes* and '*anti-cathexes*'. Later he added *typographical model* in which another term, *preconscious*, or the intermediary stage between the comparisons of the first model, was integrated. His most renowned model, however, was the *tripartite* or *structural model*, putting a human self as a battleground between *id* and *superego*, with the *ego* (actual, 'real' self) acting as a 'referee'. (Bressler 146)

Other than the mentioned models, Freud also formulated two other concepts. First, sexuality as a matter of biological pressure expressed through sexual intercourse (he termed such drive '*eros*'), and which lead him later to believe that the entire human behavior were sexually driven (158). The second one, in sharp contrast, featured death as a form of ultimate abandonment, the resulting drive termed '*thanatos*'. These two 'drives' constituted most of the subsequent 'fears and anxieties'. Fears of intimacy, abandonment and betrayal, in which a human being refrains from 'giving the self too much to someone else' might emanate from either *eros* or *thanatos* drive, possibly even both.

In the following decades, this Freudian approach underwent considerable revisions from his pupils. Jung, for example, acknowledged the existence of the unconscious, but differed from his mentor in how best to interpret dreams and models of human psyche. In this respect, Jung was also responsible for laying out principles of 'myth and archetype' as an integral part for dream-interpretations—a notion soon to be elaborated by Northrop Frye with his *mythoi* diagrams. (Tyson 221-222)

Another notable proponent for this theory was Jacques Lacan, with his own model of human psyche. He basically agrees with Freud in stages of child development and also in the same belief of existence of *unconscious* nature in human self. Lacanian model on human psyche, however, serves both to elaborate Freud's theory and distinctly posit Lacan's own arguments. This model consisted of two basic 'orders': *imaginary order*, which contains our wishes, fantasies, and images; and the *symbolic order*, which began immediately after we realize our 'separateness' from our mother. This second stage involves recognition of 'power' (*phallus*) of the father and, according to Lacan, is a form of castration, in that the entr ee loses his/her own 'self' once again, having accepted the father as the new center of interest. (Tyson 31)

A third area of interest from Lacanian point of view, which would also become its main issue in analyzing literary works, was what Lacan termed 'the *Real*'. Simply put, this was a whole new set of universe beyond any form of our perceptions which hence we find both perplexing and exciting at the same time; in fact, it is this anxiety from us (because of the unfamiliar nature of this third order) that both previous orders in Lacanian model of human psyche attempt to mitigate. (Tyson 32). After Lacan, psychoanalysis criticism continued to gain popularity as well as controversy; some feminist critic, like Irigaray and Kristeva, firmly rejected Freud's views which they perceived as too male-dominated. Still others tried to find a less sexually-centered base; that being said, Freud's 'dream-based analysis' is still commonly in use today.

One of the key terms Freud developed to help guide his theory was defense mechanism, or ways to cope with unpleasant things we chose to repress deep in our unconscious nature. The mechanism consisted of, among others, ‘denial’, in which the self refuses to believe that some unpleasant memories had ever occurred in one’s life.

In light of the mentioned problem, it might be safe, then, to argue that such theory would prove most useful in contending with cases of trauma which are caused, more often than not, by wars. This could happen either individually or as a group, which might then result in a change of ideology, and has been depicted in various kinds of literature works including novels.

2.2. Related Studies

In support of the analysis of the object novel, unfortunately the writer has thus far not been able to find enough directly comparable previous researches of the same object other than a book-review, because the novel itself is relatively old—it was first published in around 1970. For works of similar topic, however, there are so far three articles to be compared with. First the writer will go ahead with the book-review before proceeding to those three articles.

The first article, also focusing on a novel, was entitled *In Room Nineteen Why Did Susan Commit Suicide? Reconsidering Gender Relations from a Doris Lessing’s Novel*, authored by Wang Ningchuan and Wen Yiping. This article in general aimed to observe the contradictory relations between feminism and patriarchal values, along with some psychoanalytic analysis—more precisely

Karen Horney and Lacan's theory of *self*—which focus on the balance between *actual self*, *real self* and *idealized self*, originating from Freud's concepts of *ego* and *superego*, to figure out why the main heroine, Susan, committed suicide; however the focus was more on the failure of self-actualization as the possible cause of the ultimate suicide rather than ways to cope with the trauma other than by suicide. The paper also argued that Susan's failure to actualize herself had given rise to a *despised self* rather than the ideal.

Second was an article by Andrew Gross, itself analyzing a poem entitled '*The Imaginary Jew*' by John Berryman—the latter work was published in 1945. The poem itself was considered a way of alienating the Jews, even as a 'mirror of anti-Semitism' (Gross 4). In fact, the poem showed Berryman's anti-mainstream views on poetry: not only he rejected 'first-person lyricism'; he also reiterated that it was not his point to 'be the 'other' or explaining about the other', but in explaining how 'othering' is related to 'selving'(Gross 19). Thus, according to Gross, Berryman remarked that 'Jewishness' was not an identity, but more like a projection, depicted both in poetry and prejudice.

The third article, entitled *Freudian Defense Mechanisms and Empirical Findings in Modern Social Psychology: Reaction Formation, Projection, Displacement, Undoing, Isolation, Sublimation and Denial* by Roy F. Baumeister, Karen Dale, and Kristin L. Sommer. This article, in general, compared and analyzed seven kinds of Freudian defense-mechanism methods as mentioned in the title, along with the evidences. In the general analysis it was highlighted that out of seven methods of social psychology, two, that of *sublimation* and

displacement, were not adequately supported by reliable sources; especially *sublimation*, to which so far there have not been any source which mentioned it in detail. Its conclusion aimed to propose a general alteration of emphasis to more cognitive-behavioral rejection rather than impulses, and to revise the concepts of some ill-documented methods out of the seven.

All four researches had something in common: they highlighted the notion of psychoanalysis as well as some aspects of it, and to some extent Jewishness—which is so closely relevant to the issue of Nazism in *The Odessa File* novel. However, to begin with, *In Room Nineteen* by Wang Ningchuan and Wen Yiping, although using the same object (namely, a novel) for analysis, focused more on the notions of gender inequalities and how difficulties with adjusting to patriarchal values served as the character's motivation to finally commit suicide, instead of exploring the character (Susan's) psyche. The second work, by Andrew Gross, brought up the issue of 'Jewishness', an otherwise noteworthy piece of information for further researches on Nazism. The research, however, differed from the writer's thesis in that its object was a poem instead of a novel. The third research, by Baumeister et al, provided mere descriptive nature of the materials. Thus, what the writer is attempting through this thesis is to try and figure out how denial as part of defense mechanism could work as smoothly even when implemented to analyze a novel story, focusing first on an individual character's trauma, comparing its values with that of an exclusive organization that had had its own problems, before relating the two issues with Nazism as an indirect cause.