

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

**THE PORTRAYAL OF MCGLUE'S DEFENSE MECHANISM
IN OTTESSA MOSHFEGH'S *MCGLUE*: A FREUDIAN
PSYCHOANALYSIS STUDY**



By

AULIA NURUL IZZAH

NIM 121811233156

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
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SURABAYA**

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**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the *Sarjana* Degree
of the English Department Faculty of Humanities Universitas Airlangga**

By

AULIA NURUL IZZAH

NIM 121811233156

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS AIRLANGGA**

SURABAYA

2022

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I declare that this undergraduate thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of *Sarjana Humaniora* (S.Hum) of the English Department Faculty of Humanities Universitas Airlangga is entirely my own work and has been solely the result of my own original research. Hereby, I confirm that:

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Aulia Nurul Izzah
NIM 121811233156

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, father, stepmother, and four wonderful siblings. Their endless love and support are the reason for me to keep on living.

Also, last but not least: To myself, who always try to work hard.

APPROVAL SHEET

Title : THE PORTRAYAL OF MCGLUE'S DEFENSE
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STUDY

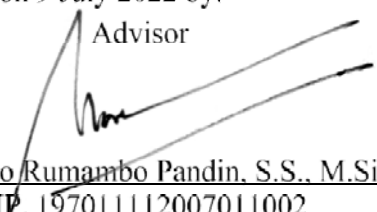
Name : Aulia Nurul Izzah

Student's Number : 121811233156

Department : English Department

Approved to be submitted on 9 July 2022 by:

Advisor


Dr. Moses Glorino Rumambo Pandin, S.S., M.Si., M.Phil.
NIP. 197011112007011002

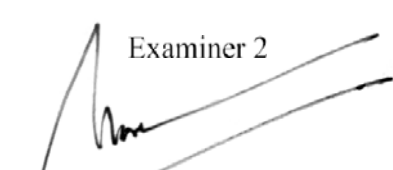
And has been examined and accepted by the Board of Examiners:

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Chair/Examiner 1


Dra. Christinawati, M.Si.
NIP. 195712251985032002

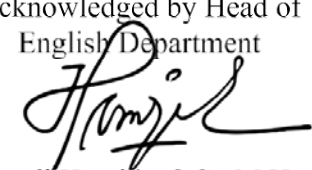
Examiner 2


Dr. Moses Glorino Rumambo
Pandin, S.S., M.Si., M.Phil.
NIP. 197011112007011002

Examiner 3


Dra. Sudar Itafarida, M.Hum.
NIP. 195901201989032001

Acknowledged by Head of
English Department


Dr. Layli Hamida, S.S., M.Hum.
NIP. 197512162003122001

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*The ocean does not apologize for its depth and the mountains do not seek
forgiveness for the space they take and so, neither shall I.*

– Becca Lee.

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Abstract

Mental health has become a severe issue in our society. The causes are numerous, but most originate from how an individual was treated as a child. Psychoanalysis, a theory by Sigmund Freud, generally discusses a person's experiences in their early stage of life. This study employs psychoanalysis as the grand theory, focusing on the relationship between childhood trauma and its impact on adulthood, and implements a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the main character of Ottessa Moshfegh's novel, *McGlue*. The story follows McGlue, a man who suffered childhood trauma after discovering he was unloved by his mother and was rejected by society. It aims to analyze what caused his trauma, what defense mechanisms he employed to defend himself, particularly in the face of Johnson's death, and how all of this contributed to the formation of his new personality. This study finds that because of the childhood trauma, McGlue sought a temporary escape, which was drinking alcohol since he was young. When confronted with Johnson's death, he used four defense mechanisms: selective memory, regression, projection, and denial. It all resulted in him becoming a rude, careless, and aggressive individual.

Keywords: *Anxiety, Childhood Trauma, Defense Mechanisms*

Abstrak

Kesehatan mental telah menjadi masalah serius di masyarakat. Penyebabnya ada banyak, tetapi sebagian besar datang dari bagaimana seseorang diperlakukan semasa kecil. Psikoanalisis, sebuah teori dari Sigmund Freud, umumnya membahas pengalaman seseorang di tahap awal kehidupan mereka. Penelitian ini menggunakan psikoanalisis sebagai teori utama, dengan fokus kepada hubungan trauma masa kecil dan dampaknya di masa dewasa, dan menerapkan metode deskriptif kualitatif untuk menganalisis karakter utama dari novel Ottessa Moshfegh, *McGlue*. Bercerita tentang McGlue, pria yang menderita trauma masa kecil setelah mengetahui bahwa ibunya tidak mencintainya dan masyarakat menolaknya. Bertujuan untuk menganalisis penyebab trauma, mekanisme pertahanan yang digunakan untuk melindungi dirinya terutama dalam menghadapi kematian Johnson, serta kontribusi dari keseluruhan hal dalam pembentukan kepribadian barunya. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa karena trauma masa kecil, McGlue mencari pelarian sementara, yaitu mengonsumsi alkohol sejak masih muda. Ketika dihadapkan dengan kematian Johnson, ia menggunakan empat mekanisme pertahanan: memori selektif, regresi, proyeksi, dan penolakan. Itu semua mengakibatkan ia menjadi seseorang yang kasar, sembarangan, dan agresif.

Kata kunci: *Kecemasan, Mekanisme Pertahanan, Trauma Masa Kecil*