



**THEO FABER'S PSYCHOANALYTICAL CONFLICT,
ANXIETY, AND EGO DEFENSE MECHANISMS
AS DEPICTED IN ALEX MICHAELIDES'
*THE SILENT PATIENT***

A THESIS

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Bachelor Degree Majoring Literature
in English Department
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University**

Submitted by:

MAFTUKHATUR RIANINGSIH

13020115120058

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY
SEMARANG**

2022

PRONOUNCEMENT

The writer truthfully confirms that this thesis entitled Theo Faber's Psychoanalytical Conflict, Anxiety, and Ego Defense Mechanisms as Depicted in Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient* is written and compiled by herself without taking any results from other researchers in S-1, S-2, S-3, and diploma degrees of any university. The writer also ascertains that she does not quote any illegal material from other publications or other papers except from the references mentioned.

Semarang, December 28 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maftukhatur Rianingsih'.

Maftukhatur Rianingsih

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

Allah, there is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of [all] existence.

Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep.

To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth.

Who is it that can intercede with Him except by His permission?

He knows what is [presently] before them and what will be after them.

And they encompass not a thing of His knowledge except for what He wills.

His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth, and their preservation tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.

– Quran (The Throne Verse)

*This thesis is dedicated to
the writer's family and everyone
who supported me accomplished this thesis*

APPROVAL

**THEO FABER'S PSYCHOANALYTICAL CONFLICT,
ANXIETY, AND EGO DEFENSE MECHANISMS
AS DEPICTED IN ALEX MICHAELIDES' *THE SILENT PATIENT***

Written by:

Maftukhatur Rianingsih

NIM: 13020115120058

is approved by thesis advisor

on December 28th, 2022

Thesis Advisor,



Hadiyanto S.S., M.Hum.

NIP. 19740725 200801 1 013

The Head of the English Department



Dr. Oktiva Herry Chandra, M. Hum.

NIP. 19671004 199303 1 003

VALIDATION

Approved by
Strata 1 Thesis Examination Committee
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University
on December 30th, 2022

Chairperson,



Drs. Jumino, M.Lib., M.Hum.
NIP. 19620703 199001 1 001

First Member,



Ariya Jati, S.S., M.A.
NIP. 19780228 200502 1 001

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Praise be upon Allah SWT, who has given strength and genuine spirit, so this thesis entitled “Theo Faber’s Psychoanalytical Conflict, Anxiety, and Ego Defense Mechanisms as Depicted in Alex Michaelides’ *The Silent Patient*” came to a completion. The writing and the assembling of this thesis are conducted to fulfill a requirement to earn a bachelor’s degree in Literature from the Department of English at Diponegoro University.

The deepest gratitude and appreciation are extended to Hadiyanto S.S., M.Hum., as the thesis advisor, who has given his continuous guidance, helpful correction, moral support, advice, and suggestion, without which it is doubtful that this thesis came to completion. The deepest thank also goes to the following:

1. Dr. Nurhayati, M.Hum, as the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
2. Dr. Oktiva Herry Chandra, M. Hum., as the Head of the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
3. Rifka Pratama S.Hum., M.A., as the writer’s academic advisor.
4. All of the lecturers in English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University, who always give their knowledge and motivation.
5. Mashuri, Supiyah, Shintia Dwi Agustina, and Diah Tri Rahmawati, for being the writer’s warmest family ever.
6. All of the writer’s friends at Diponegoro University.

7. All of the writer's friends from English Department 2015, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University, especially Rizma Agustin, Bima Santi, Enggita Aprilika Yustian, Eva Mut Riana, Gisela Nastiti Nugraheni, and all Class B, for being loyal in friendship.
8. Endank Soekamti, Slipknot, EXO, and Kesenian Gambang Semarang, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University, for the melodious days.
9. The writer's KKN friends and family from Desa Petanjungan, Petarukan, Pemalang 2018, for the unforgettable sweet memories.
10. Rise of Kingdoms' 1945 community, especially Jungfrau, JungZhi3, JungNezt, JungMbool, JungWor, Jungshin, deMon, JungKong, SCHEN, BABIMERAH, KOMBES SUDOMO, JungWife, JungBar, Ahmad Maulana Wibowo, Ellian Tomo Arruan Batara Putra, Muhammad Habibie Ismail, GS Ark of Osiris team, and all Jung Family, for being the most valuable pairings.

This thesis is written and compiled to the best of the writer's ability. Nevertheless, the writer will be glad to receive any constructive criticism to make this thesis better. At last, the writer expects that there will be advantageous from this thesis for a lot of people in the studies.

Semarang, December 28th 2022

The writer



Maftukhatur Rianingsih

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER	i
PRONOUNCEMENT	ii
MOTTO AND DEDICATION	iii
APPROVAL	iv
VALIDATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	viii
ABSTRACT	xii
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Research Problems	2
1.3 Objectives of the Study	3
1.4 Previous Study	3
1.5 Scope of the Study	5
1.6 Writing Organization	5
CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHOD	7
2.1 Theoretical Framework	7
2.1.1 Intrinsic Elements	7
2.1.1.1 Character and Characterization	7
2.1.1.2 Setting	7
2.1.2 Extrinsic Elements	8
2.1.2.1 Personality Structure	8
2.1.2.2 Psychoanalytical Conflict	9
2.1.2.3 Anxiety	9
2.1.2.4 Ego Defense Mechanisms	10
2.1.2.4.1 Regression	10
2.1.2.4.2 Denial	10
2.1.2.4.3 Repression	10
2.1.2.4.4 Displacement	10
2.1.2.4.5 Rationalization	10
2.1.2.4.6 Anticipation	11
2.2 Research Method	11
2.2.1 Method of Data Collection	11
2.2.2 Research Approach	11
CHAPTER III DISCUSSION	13
3.1 Intrinsic Elements	13
3.1.1 Character and Characterization	13
3.1.1.1 Theo Faber's Direct Characterization	13
3.1.1.2 Theo Faber's Indirect Characterization	14
3.1.2 Setting	15
3.1.2.1 Setting of Place	15
3.1.2.2 Setting of Time	16

3.1.2.3 Setting of Social Environment	17
3.2 Extrinsic Elements	17
3.2.1 Theo Faber's Personality Structure	17
3.2.1.1 Theo Faber's Id	17
3.2.1.1.1 Theo Faber's Id: Seeking Kathy's Affection	17
3.2.1.1.2 Theo Faber's Id: Maintaining His Relationship with Kathy	18
3.2.1.1.3 Theo Faber's Id: Confronting Kathy	18
3.2.1.1.4 Theo Faber's Id: Blaming and Killing Gabriel	18
3.2.1.1.5 Theo Faber's Id: Denying His Involvement In The Murder Case	19
3.2.1.1.6 Theo Faber's Id: Determination to Be Alicia's Psychotherapist	19
3.2.1.1.7 Theo Faber's Id: Continuing the Therapy Session	20
3.2.1.2 Theo Faber's Ego	20
3.2.1.2.1 Theo Faber's Ego: Realizing Kathy's Infidelity	20
3.2.1.3 Theo Faber's Superego	20
3.2.1.3.1 Theo Faber's Superego: Not to Kill Gabriel	20
3.2.1.3.2 Theo Faber's Superego: Feeling Guilty for Alicia	21
3.2.2 Theo Faber's Psychoanalytical Conflict	21
3.2.2.1 Theo Faber's Internal Conflict	21
3.2.2.1.1 Theo Faber's Id versus Theo Faber's Ego	21
3.2.2.1.1.1 Theo Faber's Id versus Theo Faber's Ego: Looking for Affection	21
3.2.2.1.1.2 Theo Faber's Id versus Theo Faber's Ego: Incapable to Leave Kathy	21
3.2.2.1.2 Theo Faber's Id versus Theo Faber's Superego	22
3.2.2.1.2.1 Theo Faber's Id versus Theo Faber's Superego: Not to Kill Gabriel	22
3.2.2.1.2.2 Theo Faber's Id versus Theo Faber's Superego: Feeling Guilty for Alicia	23
3.2.2.2 Theo Faber's External Conflict	24
3.2.2.2.1 Theo Faber's Id versus Ruth's Ego: Denying the Facts	24
3.2.2.2.2 Theo Faber's Id versus Kathy's Superego: Fail to Confront	24
3.2.2.2.3 Theo Faber's Id versus Alicia's Id: A Silent Therapy Session	25
3.2.2.2.4 Theo Faber's Id versus Alicia's Id: Being Attacked by Alicia	25
3.2.2.2.5 Theo Faber's Id versus Alicia's Id: The Last Therapy Session	26
3.2.3 Theo Faber's Anxiety	26
3.2.3.1 Theo Faber's Neurotic Anxiety	26
3.2.3.1.1 Theo Faber's Neurotic Anxiety: Overthinking	26
3.2.3.1.2 Theo Faber's Neurotic Anxiety: Avoiding His Conversation with Ruth	27
3.2.3.1.3 Theo Faber's Neurotic Anxiety: Unable to Make Alicia Speak Again	27
3.2.3.2 Theo Faber's Moral Anxiety	27
3.2.3.2.1 Theo Faber's Moral Anxiety: Being Found out of Smoking Weed	27
3.2.3.2.2 Theo Faber's Moral Anxiety: Not to Kill Gabriel	28
3.2.3.2.3 Theo Faber's Moral Anxiety: Being Responsible for the Murder	28
3.2.3.3 Theo Faber's Objective Anxiety	29
3.2.3.3.1 Theo Faber's Objective Anxiety: Being Attacked by Alicia	29
3.2.3.3.2 Theo Faber's Objective Anxiety: Fear of Alicia's Revenge	29
3.2.4 Theo Faber's Ego Defense Mechanisms	29
3.2.4.1 Theo Faber's Regression	29
3.2.4.1.1 Theo Faber's Regression: Asking for Help from Ruth	29

3.2.4.2 Theo Faber’s Denial	30
3.2.4.2.1 Theo Faber’s Denial: Denying His Feelings	30
3.2.4.3 Theo Faber’s Repression	31
3.2.4.3.1 Theo Faber’s Repression: Holding Back His Confrontation	31
3.2.4.3.2 Theo Faber’s Repression: Missing the Chances to Kill Gabriel	32
3.2.4.3.3 Theo Faber’s Repression: Speaking Carefully to Alicia	32
3.2.4.4 Theo Faber’s Displacement	33
3.2.4.4.1 Theo Faber’s Displacement: Revenge on The Berenson	33
3.2.4.5 Theo Faber’s Rationalization	33
3.2.4.5.1 Theo Faber’s Rationalization: Working at the Grove	33
3.2.4.5.2 Theo Faber’s Rationalization: Gathering Alicia’s Information Illegally	34
3.2.4.6 Theo Faber’s Anticipation	34
3.2.4.6.1 Theo Faber’s Anticipation: Injecting Alicia into Coma	34
CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION	36
REFERENCES	38
APPENDIX	40

ABSTRACT

This thesis is written to analyze the main character of Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient*, Theo Faber, a psychotherapist who tries to uncover the reason behind a murder case of his patient that is related to him. He uses some ego defense mechanisms daily to ease his anxiety. This thesis intends to identify the triggers, the types, and the damage of his ego defense mechanisms. The writer uses library research and the psychology of literature approaches in this thesis. The writer observes character, characterization, and setting for the intrinsic aspects, whilst Freudian psychoanalysis theory and its branch, the ego defense mechanism, and anxiety are observed for the extrinsic elements. The result of this thesis reveals that the primary triggers of his ego defense mechanisms are his anxiety after revealing his wife's affair. He uses ego defense mechanisms such as regression, repression, denial, displacement, rationalization, and anticipation. His defense mechanisms bring more negative damage to his life.

Keywords: The Silent Patient, ego defense mechanisms, Freudian psychoanalysis, anxiety, guilt.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Human beings live in this world with instincts. Instincts are the basic factors of personalities that rule behavior and the goals of somebody by turning the human body's needs into the wishes in mind (Schultz, 2009:54). The purpose of instinct is to fulfill needs and to set the body free from the tension that is natural for humans to keep their psychological balances. Instincts influence human behavior in accomplishing their goals. Humans achieve their goals through interaction with others and the environment as social creatures. In the process of interaction, different personalities are created in humans. Personality is an individual's dynamic system that decides how to adapt to the surroundings. In the 1890s, Sigmund Freud discovered a theory named psychoanalysis that concerns the mental development of humans.

Personality always develops, producing various interactions and results in human life. Sometimes it is easy to face the differences and handle unwanted situations, yet occasionally it is hard to adapt or deal with problems. When people feel threatened, they will be anxious. The case will push the ego to activate the protection Sigmund Freud called an ego defense mechanism. Not only in real life can psychoanalysis and ego defense mechanisms also be found in literary work because literature is also so close to human life. Psychology is one of the most relative knowledge to literature (Boyd, 2014:17).

The writer wants to discuss ego defense mechanisms and chooses *The Silent Patient* novel because it can be an excellent example to spot ego defense mechanisms. Theo Faber, one of the main characters in the novel, is portrayed using ego defense mechanisms on some occasions to ease his anxiety, which later causes conflict related to someone's murder case. In this thesis, the writer intends to examine the impact of psychoanalytic conflicts and anxiety that are carelessly resolved by ego defense mechanisms, as depicted in Theo Faber.

The Silent Patient is a novel by Alex Michaelides, released in 2019. The novel tells about Theo Faber and Alicia Berenson, who are involved in the murder case. Theo Faber is a forensic psychotherapist doing therapy sessions with Alicia Berenson to heal her trauma after she murders her husband. It is discovered later that Theo is involved in the murder case because he is there before the murder happens. He is there to release his grudge after he finds that his wife, Kathy, has an affair with Alicia's husband. Feeling anxious and guilty, Theo uses ego defense mechanisms recklessly to solve his problems. This novel is a good representation that ego defense mechanisms misused can cause severe problems in people's lives. So that readers will be more careful and aware in using ego defense mechanisms through this thesis.

1.2 Research Problems

In writing this thesis, the writer points out four research problems, as follows:

1. What are Theo Faber's id, ego, and superego in Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient*?

2. What is the psychoanalytical conflict of Theo Faber in Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient*?
3. What is the Theo Faber's anxiety in Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient*?
4. What are the ego defense mechanisms of Theo Faber in Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In order to answer the research problems, the writer decides four objectives, as follows:

1. To analyze Theo Faber's id, ego, and superego in Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient*.
2. To analyze the psychoanalytical conflict of Theo Faber in Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient*.
3. To analyze Theo Faber's anxiety in Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient*.
4. To analyze the ego defense mechanisms of Theo Faber in Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient*.

1.4 Previous Study

Firstly, the writer finds a writing with the same object of the research, which is a journal by Laila Shoukat, Khushnood Arshad, and Sana Azam namely "A Psychoanalytic Analysis of the Character of Theo Faber in Alex Michaelides Novel *The Silent Patient*." The journal discusses Theo Faber's id and ego using Sigmund Freud's theory of personality. The journal examines Theo's sexual and death instinct desires that are against his ego which prioritizes rational thoughts and acts.

Secondly, there is a journal by Priyaa P R and Dr. Kanchana C. M. named “Exploring the character Alicia Berenson’s defense mechanism in Alex Michaelides’ novel *The Silent Patient*.” The journal connects the Greek mythology with one of the main characters in the novel. The story of *Alcestis*, a Greek myth that tells about a woman who lives in silence after being raised from the dead, is related to the story of Alicia, one of the main characters in the novel, who lives in silence after killing her husband. Alicia reflects an ego defense mechanism called displacement that later harms herself and her surroundings.

Thirdly, the writer finds a journal namely “A Postmodernist Critique of Michaelides’ *The Silent Patient*” that is written by Ayesha Ashraf, Saba Zaidi, and Asim Aqeel. This journal examines the novel using Lyotard’s postmodernism through the particular words and conversation.

Fourthly, there is a dissertation entitled “A comparative psychoanalytic study of T.S Eliot’s *The Cocktail Party* and Alex Michaelides’s *The Silent Patient*” by Shirline Dias. The writing tries to find out the equilibrium between the characters in both literary works from cultural and psychological perspectives by considering three similar aspects, that are marriage, deception, and Greek myth.

Fifthly, the writer finds a thesis by Agnes Gita Deya namely “An Analysis of Personality Changes of Alicia’s Character in *The Silent Patient* Novel by Alex Michaelides.” It discusses Alicia’s personality shifting before and after she kills his husband.

Sixthly, another example comes from Mohammad Afzal Hossain's journal with the title "A Literary Analysis of *The Silent Patient* by Alex Michaelides." The writing examines Bion and Winnicott's psychoanalytic perspectives called container-contained and holding and holding environment on Alicia's relationship with her father and her husband. It says that her relationship with her father is related to the murder of her husband.

Based on the example of previous studies above, the writer decides to analyze Theo Faber by using psychoanalysis, anxiety, and ego defense mechanisms. This thesis is very different from the previous studies by detailing the psychoanalysis study on Theo Faber. It also examines his anxiety that will leads to several events in the story. In addition, the writer does not find any writing that particularly examines Theo Faber's ego defense mechanisms.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The writer limits this research to a specific topic. The limitation of the intrinsic elements is about character, characterization, and setting in Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient*. Moreover, the writer limits the extrinsic aspects in this research, covering a psychoanalytical conflict that leads to anxiety and ego defense mechanisms as portrayed by Theo Faber.

1.6 Writing Organization

This thesis contains four chapters, which will be divided into sub-chapters. The four chapters are as follows:

Chapter I INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the background of the study, the research problems, the objectives, the previous study, the scope of the study, and the writing organization of the thesis.

Chapter II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHOD

This chapter consists of theories and methods that the writer uses to analyze the novel.

Chapter III DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses intrinsic elements, including character, characterization, and setting. It also consists of extrinsic elements of the novel, that is, psychoanalytical conflict, anxiety and ego defense mechanisms, to answer the research problems.

Chapter IV CONCLUSION

This chapter concludes the analysis of the previous chapter.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHOD

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Intrinsic Elements

2.1.1.1 Character and Characterization

A character can be described as an imagined person who leads a story whose personality can be accepted (Kennedi and Dana, 2007:74). The reader will accept the character that has various personalities related to human's real life. In addition, a character can be defined as a main character if it has a unique way of thinking and it dominates the storyline more than other characters (Klarer, 2004:10).

Characterization is how the characters in narrative and dramatic works are represented (Baldick, 2001:37). The characterization can be divided into two forms, which are direct and indirect characterization. Direct characterization appears in direct mentions, descriptions, or commentary. On the other hand, indirect characterization can be found in the action or speech of a character.

2.1.1.2 Setting

Setting can be the physical or spiritual environment from which events occur in a story (Holmes, 1980:98). There are three type of setting, which are setting of the place, setting of time, and setting of social environment.

Setting of the place is the actual geographic place like topography, scenery, and the physical arrangement of furniture in a room (Holmes, 1992:453).

It can refer to the location in real life to make the story more realistic, and there is a chance for the author to create another different world in his literary work.

Setting of time specifies the time or period of the event in which the story happens, for instance, the era or season, etc. (Holmes, 1992:453). The literary work can use the exact time when the event takes place, but it can also show the natural phenomena, the clothes that the character wears, the trendy things, or particular tools that only occur in a specific epoch.

Setting of the social environment is the general environment of the character, including religious, social, emotional, mental, or moral conditions (Holmes, 1992:453).

2.1.2 Extrinsic Elements

2.1.2.1 Personality Structure

The personality of humans is determined by human psyches that contain three elements, which are id, ego, and superego (Freud, 1923:6).

Id is a pleasure principle that is the most primitive and instinctive part of a human's personality since birth. It is related to biological needs and instincts that try to accomplish pleasure, satisfaction, and every impulse.

Ego is the reality principle that controls impulses from the id by considering reasons, commonsense and rational thinking. In other words, the ego becomes a reality connector.

Superego is the moral principle that prioritizes the moral conscience or the social value that a human learns from their family and society. Superego can also be called the conscience of the personality because it tends to accomplish the

ego's perfection and ideal standards. Therefore, the superego will evoke a feeling of guilt if the ego follows the id's immoral or lousy demand.

2.1.2.2 Psychoanalytical Conflict

Three components of psyches in psychoanalytical conflict are the opposite of one another, and the leading cause of the conflict is always the ego (Hall, 1999:52).

There are two types of conflict, internal and external conflicts. Internal conflict happens within the character's mind while external conflict happens between other characters and an outside force (Klarer, 2005:15).

2.1.2.3 Anxiety

Anxiety is a negative emotional reaction caused by stimulation in the internal organs of the human body (Hall, 1999:61). Freud categorized anxiety into three types, which are neurotic anxiety, moral anxiety, and objective anxiety.

The first type is neurotic anxiety. It happens when human instinct detects a sign of threat, someone with a phobia or irrational fear of something dreadful that does not necessarily happen. The ego that dominates the id can cause fear in a person (Hall, 1999:65).

The second type is moral anxiety. It can appear if someone is afraid of getting punished because he or she has made a mistake (Hall, 1999:68).

The third type is objective anxiety. It occurs if the environment seems disturbing or harmful. The causes can be fire, wild animals, criminals, abusive treatment, etc. (Hall, 1999:63).

2.1.2.4 Ego Defense Mechanisms

As an essential term in psychoanalytic theory, the word defense is identified as the process of the ego dealing with painful or unwanted thoughts or situations (Freud, 1923:42-44). In this thesis, the writer applies some of the ego defense mechanisms as follows:

2.1.2.4.1 Regression

Freud (1936) in *Theories of Personality* says that regression pulls a person back to his previous period of life that was free from frustration by manifesting the behavior displayed at that time, for example, into childish behavior and dependence (Schultz, 2009:49).

2.1.2.4.2 Denial

Freud (1936) states that denial works to calm down our feeling caused by the threatening images of the outside world that we experience from childhood (Cramer, 1991:36).

2.1.2.4.3 Repression

Freud (1936) describes repression ease our tempestuous feelings from instinctual impulse (Cramer, 1991:36).

2.1.2.4.4 Displacement

Freud (1936) believes that displacement changes the target of the anxiety release of an unpleasant impulse to a different target that is related (Schultz, 2009:49).

2.1.2.4.5 Rationalization

Rationalization occurs when the id is confronted with inescapable reality, or even with the superego. The ego mediates by taking rational action to counteract the

id's impulses, which are sometimes lies, opportunists, or sycophants (Freud, 1923:56).

2.1.2.4.6 Anticipation

Freud (1950a) says that anticipation is a defense that makes the individual use anxiety-inducing thoughts, feelings, or impulses to plan for the future (Vaillant, 1971:117).

2.2 Research Method

2.2.1 Method of Data Collection

In completing this writing, the writer uses library research as the method of data collection related to psychological phenomena in Alex Michaelides' novel *The Silent Patient*. Library research is a method to solve the research question by considering some real thoughts from the experts through some sources (George, 2008:6). The writer explores sources from printed and electronic data to complete the scientific literature.

The writer refers to two kinds of data: primary and secondary data. The primary data is the original work that provides new information (George, 2008:6). In this writing, the primary data comes from a novel written by Alex Michaelides named *The Silent Patient*. On the other hand, secondary data is work or study collected from different researchers found as text-based sources like books, magazines, journals, etc. (George, 2008:6).

2.2.2 Research Approach

Based on the background of the study that reveals psychoanalytical phenomena in the novel, the writer uses the psychology of literature approach in writing this

thesis. The psychology of literature approach is defined as the psychological study of the author, aspects of the literary work, or the reader (Wellek and Warren, 1963:81). The writer uses psychoanalysis theory to analyze the psychological phenomena of the main character in Alex Michaelides' *The Silent Patient*.

CHAPTER III

DISCUSSION

THEO FABER'S PSYCHOANALYTICAL CONFLICT, ANXIETY, AND EGO DEFENSE MECHANISMS AS DEPICTED IN ALEX MICHAELIDES' *THE SILENT PATIENT*

3.1 Intrinsic Elements

The writer decides to analyze a character in the novel named Theo Faber. The analysis of his characterization is necessary to support the analysis of extrinsic elements afterwards. The writer also tries to examine the setting in the novel.

3.1.1 Character and Characterization

The writer classifies Theo Faber as a main character because he is a dominant figure compared to other characters in the novel. He is a narrator who guides the events using first person point of view. In addition, the novel tells about his life journey as a psychotherapist. He can be described through direct characterization and indirect characterization.

3.1.1.1 Theo Faber's Direct Characterization

Theo Faber is portrayed as a forty-two-year-old psychotherapist who tries to heal a patient of a secure forensic unit named The Grove in Edgware Hospital, London. He is a British since he was born and he lives in England. He is married to a half-American woman named Kathy.

Theo Faber is described as having a terrible appearance with dark hair and black eyes that looks intimidating as quoted, "He was tall.... Strong. I couldn't

see his face—he had put on a mask, a black mask. But I could see his eyes—they were dark holes. No light in them at all” (Michaelides, 2019:296).

3.1.2.2 Theo Faber’s Indirect Characterization

The writer sees Theo as a hypocrite. His good image as a helpful person is only for achieving his personal goals. During a job interview at The Grove, he says his goal as a psychotherapist is to help people. On the contrary, the reason he studies psychology and works as a psychotherapist is personal, not to help others but to heal himself from his childhood trauma.

Hypocrisy occurs when Theo says he wants to help Alicia, who is betrayed by her husband, Gabriel. Theo plans to tell Alicia about Gabriel’s affair, and then he will help her get through it and get a better life as he has done. Theo assumes that they share the same feeling of being betrayed by their spouse. Furthermore, Theo feels related to Alicia because Theo’s wife is having an affair with Alicia’s husband. Nevertheless, his real intention is not to help Alicia at all. It is a diversion because he fears asking his wife directly about her affair. Instead of helping Alicia get through the problem, Theo takes out his anger on Gabriel and Alicia by pitting them against each other, eventually leading Alicia to shoot Gabriel dead.

Although six years have passed, nobody knows that Theo is involved in Gabriel’s death because the only one who knows about it is Alicia, who is still living in silence. Taking advantage of Alicia’s condition, Theo applies for a job at The Grove by saying that only he can help her heal from the trauma following Gabriel's death. His real goal in working there is not to help Alicia but to dig up

Alicia's reason for killing her husband so he can reduce his guilt for being involved.

The difference between his statement and his real goal supports the writer's analysis that Theo is a hypocrite. It is supported when he fakes his habits when he meets Alicia as quoted, "I was nervous she might know me, despite my having worn the mask and disguised my voice. But Alicia didn't seem to recognize me, and I was able to play a new part in her life" (Michaelides, 2019:343).

3.1.2 Setting

3.1.2.1 Setting of Place

The story in the novel takes place in several places in England, specifically in the region of South East, London, and East. Theo's personality is created in a dreadful house in Surrey for eighteen years under his father's torment that created anxiety in himself as quoted, "I left that semi-detached prison in Surrey" (Michaelides, 2019:19).

Theo lives in an apartment in Kentish Town after graduating from his college. One year before the current time in the novel, he moves back to his childhood house. Theo works at Broadmoor Hospital before applying for a job at The Grove in Edgware Hospital, London.

After knowing that his wife has an affair behind him, Theo visits several places related to it. For example, he follows his wife, who has a date in the park and the pub near his apartment. He goes to his psychotherapist's house asking for suggestions to handle his feelings about the infidelity. He also follows Gabriel to

his house in Hampstead Heath, which later becomes the crime scene of Gabriel's death.

To investigate Alicia's background, Theo seeks information by coming to some places related to her. He comes to Max's office since Max is Alicia's brother-in-law. He visits Soho Gallery that is managed by Alicia's closest friend, Jean-Felix. He travels long distances to visit Alicia's childhood home in Cambridge to find out about her childhood life.

3.1.2.2 Setting of Time

The past time happens six years before the present time of the novel. Alicia starts writing the diary from July 14 until August 25 within the same year. Alicia writes about when Theo starts spying in her diary, while Theo tells his activities weeks before the murder chronologically. The past time in the novel mostly shows Theo's struggle with his wife's infidelity. Summer in this timeline is a good representation of a relationship that gets heated because of jealousy and ends with Gabriel's death.

The present time in the novel occurs in the winter from December to January, six years after Gabriel's death. It is when Theo works as a psychotherapist that takes care of Alicia. Winter in this timeline perfectly represents the event in the novel that is very cold and related to harmful actions as quoted, "The wind cuts into my face like a volley of icy razor blades (Michaelides, 2019:276).

3.1.2.3 Setting of Social Environment

The environment where Theo grows up is harmful and less affectionate. It is because he lives with his abusive father and his miserable mother. It damages his personality when he becomes an adult as quoted, “In my case, I grew up feeling edgy, afraid, anxious” (Michaelides, 2019:17).

Based on the quotation above, The lousy environment fails to create a good personality in Theo. As a result, even though he has a beautiful woman besides him, he still finds it difficult to find happiness. Even good colleagues in his work cannot warm his heart. The only environment that is similar to his depressed personality is the bleak life of psychiatric patients at work.

3.2 Extrinsic Elements

3.2.1 Theo Faber’s Personality Structure

3.2.1.1 Theo Faber’s Id

3.2.1.1.1 Theo Faber’s Id: Seeking Kathy’s Affection

After finding out about his wife’s infidelity, Theo is shocked and feels anxious. Theo smokes marijuana more frequently to reduce his anxiety. On one occasion, Theo drops a glass of wine because he smokes too much. The shard of glass scraps his finger until it bleeds. His id works based on the pleasure principle, which urges him to seek Kathy’s affection when he feels down as quoted, “It was Kathy I would reach for in a moment of crisis—when I needed sympathy or reassurance or someone to kiss it better” (Michaelides, 2019:104).

3.2.1.1.2 Theo Faber’s Id: Maintaining His Relationship with Kathy

Theo asks Ruth to reassure him. He is indecisive because he knows his wife betrays him, but his id is against the truth. Theo’s id works based on the pleasure

principle, which forces him not to lose his only family as quoted, “I know how much Kathy means to you” (Michaelides, 2019:109).

3.2.1.1.3 Theo Faber’s Id: Confronting Kathy

Ruth suggests Theo talk directly to Kathy. She also advises him to leave Kathy rather than return to unhappiness. Before going to Ruth’s house, Theo had thought about confronting Kathy, but he hesitated. Ruth convinces him that he has the right to live a better life without Kathy’s deceit. He agrees with Ruth’s statement. Then, his id works based on the pleasure principle, which forces him to talk to Kathy after returning from Ruth's house as quoted, “I had to go home and confront Kathy. I had to leave her” (Michaelides, 2019:113).

3.2.1.1.4 Theo Faber’s Id: Blaming and Killing Gabriel

Theo decides to pretend as if he never finds out about Kathy’s affair instead of confronting her. However, he is still curious about it. So, Theo starts stalking Kathy. One day, Theo discovers that Kathy meets a man and makes out with him. Kathy and the man, who is Gabriel, walk into the park and sneak into the woods. Unexpectedly, Theo finds his wife having sex with Gabriel there. He is shocked and he gets angry. He intends to blast his feelings on Gabriel who takes his only family. His id works based on the pleasure principle, which urges him to kill Gabriel as a solution to take back his wife as quoted “Was that what I should do? Kill him? Dispose of him? It was a way out of this mess—a way to break the spell, release Kathy and set us free” (Michaelides, 2019:269).

Based on the quotation above, Theo has an intention to kill Gabriel. He even imagines three possible ways to kill Gabriel, which are by immersing

Gabriel's head into the pond in the park, pushing him to the oncoming train, or breaking his head with a brick.

3.2.1.1.5 Theo Faber's Id: Denying His Involvement In The Murder Case

Theo's id appears after the day of the murder. He never expects that his revenge on Gabriel will drive Alicia to shoot Gabriel. He refuses the idea that he is related to the murder case by stating that he never asks Alicia to do it. His id works based on the pleasure principle, which he believes that he is innocent as quoted, "I never intended nor expected her to kill him. All I wanted was to awaken Alicia to the truth about her marriage" (Michaelides, 2019:342).

3.2.1.1.6 Theo Faber's Id: Determination to Be Alicia's Psychotherapist

After being approved to work at The Grove, Theo sees Alicia for the first time in six years. Alicia looks miserable after Gabriel's death. Theo's id works based on the pleasure principle, which he intends to take care of Alicia as quoted, "I knew then and there I'd made the right decision in coming to the Grove. All my doubts vanished" (Michaelides, 2019:31).

Based on the quotation above, Theo makes the right decision to come to The Grove. He wants to take care of Alicia and bring her to a better life. He will do anything to accomplish his mission.

3.2.1.1.7 Theo Faber's Id: Continuing the Therapy Session

After passing several therapy sessions in silence, Diomedes stops the process because of the accident where Alicia harms another patient named Elif. Alicia stabs Elif's eye with her painting brush. Diomedes blames Theo since it is Theo's idea to provide the painting studio for Alicia. Theo's id urges him to keep

continuing the therapy session with Alicia because he does not get what he wants yet. He tries to persuade Alicia to agree by telling that the therapy session is the only option for them to reach their goals to as quoted, “This is our last chance” (Michaelides, 2019:287).

3.2.1.2 Theo Faber’s Ego

3.2.1.2.1 Theo Faber’s Ego: Realizing Kathy’s Infidelity

Theo will usually turn to Kathy for help when he feels down, but his ego works based on the reality principle, which makes him realize that he cannot do it because his wife has changed as quoted, “Kathy was gone—I had lost her” (Michaelides, 2019:104).

3.2.1.3 Theo Faber’s Superego

3.2.1.3.1 Theo Faber’s Superego: Not to Kill Gabriel

Working as a psychotherapist at a well-known hospital before moving to The Grove proves that Theo is an educated person. Thus, his superego makes him believe that he cannot kill Gabriel as quoted, “I couldn’t kill him” (Michaelides, 2019:315).

3.2.1.3.2 Theo Faber’s Superego: Feeling Guilty for Alicia

Theo’s superego makes him feel guilty for Alicia, who lives her ruined life in silence after the murder. She has to be a secure unit patient and stops talking after killing his husband. The murder happens after Theo manipulates Alicia and Gabriel’s minds. In other words, he is involved in ruining Alicia’s life. Theo’s superego makes him believe that he needs to make amends for his mistake as quoted, “... and the desire to expiate my guilt ...” (Michaelides, 2019:343).

3.2.2 Theo Faber's Psychoanalytical Conflict

3.2.2.1 Theo Faber's Internal Conflict

3.2.2.1.1 Theo Faber's Id versus Theo Faber's Ego

3.2.2.1.1.1 Theo Faber's Id versus Theo Faber's Ego: Looking for Affection

Theo's id urges him to get Kathy's affection, but his ego makes him realize that it is impossible because Kathy betrays him. It makes him anxious, so he needs to seek affection from someone else. The anxiety reminds him of Ruth, a psychotherapist who always supported him in the past. Considering that Ruth may help him, his ego uses regression. As a result, Theo unknowingly walks to Ruth's house to seek affection from her as quoted, "It was a testament to how upset I was that I considered going up to her door and ringing the bell and asking for help" (Michaelides, 2019:196).

3.2.2.1.1.2 Theo Faber's Id versus Theo Faber's Ego: Incapable to Leave Kathy

Although he realizes that Kathy cheats on him, Theo's id demands to keep her by his side. He rethinks if he dares to leave her or not since he fails to confront his wife about the infidelity after coming home from Ruth's house. He knows that her affair is a fault, but he does not want to be alone either. Living alone without someone he loves will hurt him. Theo wishes that his household would turn out to be like before since he does not want to go back to his depressed past life. The indecisive thoughts drag neurotic anxiety into him.

To ease his anxiety, he determines not to leave Kathy. He wants her to be his side as quoted, “I made a decision, there and then. Leaving Kathy would be like tearing off a limb. I simply wasn’t prepared to mutilate myself like that”.

Based on the quotation above, Theo decides not to leave Kathy. Instead of solving his problem and removing his anxiety, Theo will pretend as if he never finds out about the infidelity. He will act as if nothing happens. His act of pretending reflects an ego defense mechanism which is repression. As a result of his id’s impulse to keep Kathy and cut out the infidelity as the source of his resentment, Theo starts stalking Kathy to reveal the man she is dating. Later, he moves his rage into the man to ease his id’s drive to express his disappointment.

3.2.2.1.2 Theo Faber’s Id versus Theo Faber’s Superego

3.2.2.1.2.1 Theo Faber’s Id versus Theo Faber’s Superego: Not to Kill Gabriel

Theo is burned with anger after seeing his wife having sex with Gabriel in the park. He draws some possibilities to murder Gabriel in his head, but he does not take a step at that time. On the second time he stalks Kathy and Gabriel dating, he ends up following Gabriel back home. Theo’s id asks him to push Gabriel when the bus comes, but he resists it. He continues following Gabriel going home.

After taking several buses, Gabriel arrives at the street to his house. Gabriel does not know that Theo still follows him because he is talking on his phone. Finally, Theo determines his intention to murder Gabriel. Theo reaches a rock on the side of the street and comes closer to Gabriel as quoted, “I acted

without thinking—my body seemed to move on its own” (Michaelides, 2019:314).

Based on the quotation above, Theo’s id works based on the pleasure principle, which drives him to follow his instinct to get rid of someone he hates by killing him. His id overcomes his superego that prohibits him to accomplish his sinister intention. However, Theo eventually revokes his action when he hears the crowd behind him that restores his consciousness. He becomes anxious and immediately hides behind the tree when Gabriel looks back. Theo once again pulls back his intention to harm Gabriel. Nevertheless, his id keeps urging him to eliminate Gabriel, which makes him anxious.

3.2.2.1.2 Theo Faber’s Id versus Theo Faber’s Superego: Feeling Guilty for Alicia

Theo knows that he cannot approach Alicia haphazardly, because Alicia is a patient under the treatment of mental healing. Theo realizes that he feels guilty for Alicia after the murder, but he does not want to admit that he is responsible for the tragedy. Since his id and his superego are opposites, his ego needs to find a solution to balance them. His ego chooses to help Alicia heal from her tortured life as quoted, “... to do my duty to Alicia: to help her” (Michaelides, 2019:39).

3.2.2.2 Theo Faber’s External Conflict

3.2.2.2.1 Theo Faber’s Id versus Ruth’s Ego: Denying the Facts

Theo feels irritated when Ruth’s ego tries to convince him to leave his wife by bombarding him with the facts as a response to his story. His id drives him to argue Ruth’s statements. She asks him to look into himself to find the possible

causes of the affair. Theo assumes it happens as his wife does not find excitement in their relationship anymore. Ruth tells him that pure love is a deep calm feeling that sometimes seems boring. It is different from what Kathy expects. Ruth sees that Kathy does not give the same love as Theo does as quoted, “Whether or not she is capable of giving it back to you is another question” (Michaelides, 2019:111).

Theo’s id tries to resist anything Ruth says. On the other side, Ruth’s ego keeps pushing him to open his eyes on the truth. She explains that the story happens repeatedly. Theo is trapped in a relationship where he has to please others while he has to suffer. Theo starts to feel irritated as he knows where the conversation is going. His ego starts to realize that he cannot accomplish his id to be with Kathy after having a debate with Ruth. It triggers neurotic anxiety in him.

3.2.2.2.2 Theo Faber’s Id versus Kathy’s Superego: Fail to Confront

Theo's id drives him to confront Kathy about her infidelity right after returning from Ruth’s house. Theo arranges the words to be said, but Kathy takes the first step by starting the conversation. Theo gets nervous and acts like he is the one who makes a mistake as quoted, “I avoided looking at in case she could read my thoughts. I felt ashamed and furtive—as if I were the one with the guilty secret” (Michaelides, 2019:114).

Kathy’s superego prevents his intention from finding his jar of weed in the living room when he has not come home yet. Kathy knows that Theo used to smoke weed before they got married, but she does not expect that Theo will go back to his old bad habit that she hates. She blames him for being dishonest and

disappointing her. Theo actually can argue back by blaming Kathy for the affair she has behind his back, but he does not do it. His id urges him to express his feelings, but he cannot beat his wife's superego.

The feeling of guilt makes him hold back his anger while his id pushes him to confess his disappointment. He imagines harming Kathy and shouting about her affair as his expression of disappointment, but he refuses to do it. As his ego cannot actualize his id's drive, Theo becomes anxious. It brings neurotic anxiety into him. Thus, he uses repression as an ego defense mechanism.

3.2.2.2.3 Theo Faber's Id versus Alicia's Id: A Silent Therapy Session

His intention to be Alicia's psychotherapist does not work well as he expects. On the first therapy session, Alicia just sits ignoring him. The therapy surely will not make any progress if there is no information exchange between the patient and the therapist. Nevertheless, Theo cannot do anything at that time but join her silence as quoted, "And we simply sat in silence (Michaelides, 2019:40).

3.2.2.2.4 Theo Faber's Id versus Alicia's Id: Being Attacked by Alicia

In the second therapy session, Alicia jumps on Theo and harms him after Theo says that he wants her to know that he is trying to help her. Alicia's id urges her to kill him after she recognizes that Theo is the man who stalks her before Gabriel's death six years ago. Alicia knows that Theo is the same person that breaks into her house and causes the mess back then. Theo's instinct drives him to survive from Alicia's attack as quoted, "It took all my strength to throw her off" (Michaelides, 2019:84).

3.2.2.2.5 Theo Faber's Id versus Alicia's Id: The Last Therapy Session

Alicia agrees to continue the therapy session with Theo. She even starts talking again after living in silence for six years. Although she agrees with Theo's idea to proceed with the treatment, it does not mean that Alicia is on his side. Alicia's id drives her to make up the story about Gabriel's death in the therapy session to provoke Theo as quoted, "No, I knew she was lying" (Michaelides, 2019:307).

Based on the quotation above, Theo realizes that Alicia has recognized him. Alicia's id defeats his id to reveal the true story behind the murder.

3.2.3 Theo Faber's Anxiety

3.2.3.1 Theo Faber's Neurotic Anxiety

3.2.3.1.1 Theo Faber's Neurotic Anxiety: Overthinking

Neurotic anxiety comes to Theo when he feels that he needs affection but he is unable to get it from Kathy. If he does not discover Kathy's infidelity, he will not feel gloomy and seek affection. Kathy is the source of the problem, so he cannot ask her to calm him down. Realizing that the infidelity hurts him yet he still needs Kathy, it causes him anxiety as quoted, "one horrible thought after another punching me." (Michaelides, 2019:104).

Based on the quotation above, Theo becomes overthinking because of his anxiety. His head is full of blaming and cursing voices of his father. There are no good memories between them. Theo becomes anxious because his father, as a terrorizing figure, comes to mind after he feels depressed due to his wife's affair.

3.2.3.1.2 Theo Faber's Neurotic Anxiety: Avoiding His Conversation with Ruth

Neurotic anxiety appears as he is incapable of accepting the fact about his wife's infidelity. He starts to feel uneasy when Ruth responds to his story. He can guess the direction of the conversation. He tries to divert his mind as quoted, "I didn't like where Ruth was going. I tried to deflect her" (Michaelides, 2019:111).

3.2.3.1.3 Theo Faber's Neurotic Anxiety: Unable to Make Alicia Speak Again

Theo wishes Alicia will give him a response in the first therapy session because he expects to heal Alicia as fast as he can. He does not meet the expectation since Alicia refuses to talk. Not getting any progress on his first therapy session, Theo suffers neurotic anxiety that he is afraid of not being able to achieve his goal. His anxiety can be seen from his overthinking behavior as quoted, "I hesitated, hoping for an acknowledgment of some kind—a blink, a nod, a frown. Nothing came. I tried to guess what she was thinking" (Michaelides, 2019:38-39).

3.2.3.2 Theo Faber's Moral Anxiety

3.2.3.2.1 Theo Faber's Moral Anxiety: Being Found out of Smoking Weed

His moral anxiety occurs after Theo fails to express his disappointment in Kathy. If Kathy does not start the conversation and does not blame him for smoking weed, Theo may be able to confront her affair and solve their problem. Both Theo and Kathy have their secret behind their back, but Theo feels more guilty because Kathy confronts him in the first place as quoted, "At once my heart sank. She was holding the small jar where I kept the grass" (Michaelides, 2019:114).

Based on the quotation above, Theo starts feeling uneasy when he sees that Kathy holds his weed jar. Theo stops smoking when Kathy moves into his

apartment because Kathy does not like smokers. Theo feels anxious because he makes his wife upset after being discovered smoking again.

3.2.3.2.2 Theo Faber's Moral Anxiety: Not to Kill Gabriel

Theo gets anxious after failing to kill Gabriel. His id demands him to do it, but his superego refuses it. It raises morality anxiety in him as quoted, "I knew I couldn't leave it here—I had to do something. But what? Despite my best homicidal fantasies, I wasn't a murderer" (Michaelides, 2019:315).

Based on the quotation above, Theo knows that he has to fulfill his desire, but he cannot find any other way than killing Gabriel. He realizes that he is not a criminal, so he is incapable of doing it. The condition sets him anxious.

3.2.3.2.3 Theo Faber's Moral Anxiety: Being Responsible for the Murder

The feeling of guilt because of being involved in the criminal act triggers his moral anxiety. Theo is afraid of being punished, so his id urges him not to admit his participation. However, his ego refuses to follow his id. As a result, Theo still feels responsible for Alicia as quoted, "I wanted to fix her" (Michaelides, 2019:15).

Based on the quotation above, Theo intends to help Alicia heal from the trauma after the murder. His anxiety will not disappear if he does not help Alicia. He thinks that healing Alicia is a better solution than confessing his mistake.

3.2.3.3 Theo Faber's Objective Anxiety

3.2.3.3.1 Theo Faber's Objective Anxiety: Being Attacked by Alicia

Alicia's attack makes Theo aware that Alicia is a dangerous person. In addition, Alicia holds grudges on Theo for the murder case several years ago. In the

following therapy session, Theo is alert when Alicia makes a movement as quoted, “My body tensed in anticipation” (Michaelides, 2019:102).

3.2.3.3.2 Theo Faber’s Objective Anxiety: Fear of Alicia’s Revenge

Theo becomes anxious after Alicia shows that she recognizes him. He is not ready to take responsibility for his involvement in the murder six years ago. He is afraid that Alicia will take revenge on him. Theo suffers objective anxiety, and Alicia becomes the cause of it as quoted “I was annoyed that she had lied” (Michaelides, 2019:307).

3.2.4 Theo Faber’s Ego Defense Mechanisms

3.2.4.1 Theo Faber’s Regression

3.2.4.1.1 Theo Faber’s Regression: Asking for Help from Ruth

Since his ego is unable to fulfill his id's request to gain affection from Kathy, he decides to find someone other than Kathy. Theo psychologically acts regression as one of the forms of ego defense mechanisms by coming to his old psychotherapist, Ruth, to exclude himself from neurotic anxiety. It is initiated by an old habit to come to his old psychotherapist, Ruth, whenever he feels down.

Ruth is an old woman in her eighties who always listens to Theo’s story. Theo has therapy sessions with Ruth from his suicide attempt during his first year in the university until several years after his graduation. Ruth helps him recover from his abusive childhood trauma caused by his father. She does not force him to quit smoking weed. Instead, she hopes that Theo will quit smoking weed when he finds his love. Even her kindness inspires Theo to be a psychotherapist. Ruth is able to be a reliable mother figure to Theo who shares love and affection.

His despair that night reminds him of his terrible past. So, he comes to Ruth as he used to do to get a solution, moreover, to get affection. He realizes that, as an adult, his action is not right, but his instincts push him as quoted, “I thought suddenly; yes, it was unprofessional and highly improper conduct, but I was desperate, and I needed help” (Michaelides, 2019:106).

Ruth is the object of Theo’s impulse to gain affection he gets when he has therapy sessions with her back then. His childish and unprofessional mannerisms indicate the ego’s temporary reimbursement to ease his neurotic anxiety. Thus, he applies regression as if it is the only way to get affection.

3.2.4.2 Theo Faber’s Denial

3.2.4.2.1 Theo Faber’s Denial: Denying His Feelings

Theo keeps debating Ruth who shows the reality to him. She explains that Theo’s love is different from Kathy’s love. Ruth judges that both Theo and Kathy do not have the same perspective to define love. Theo understands what Ruth is trying to say, but he always deflects it. Theo applies denial to ease his neurotic anxiety.

Theo does not want to accept the truth that his relationship cannot be fixed anymore. He looks away to ease his anxiety. He starts denying by comparing his wife’s dishonesty with his lie about smoking weed. Ruth counters him with a statement that those are not the same. Theo who lies repeatedly is different from Kathy who lies well without regret. Theo continues rejecting her idea by saying that his wife may feel a bit guilty for her betrayal. He does not say it with self-confidence, instead, he hesitates as quoted, “But even as I said that, I didn’t believe it” (Michaelides, 2019:111).

Ruth reminds him of a similar story about his relationship with his father when he was a kid, which is the effort to satisfy people around him who do not literally like him. He meets the same pattern again in his relationship with Kathy. At this time, Theo does not give any feedback. Ruth completes her argument by saying that Theo is carrying a feeling of not being loved. She suggests he puts an end to his dishonest relationship, so he can be happier.

3.2.4.3 Theo Faber's Repression

3.2.4.3.1 Theo Faber's Repression: Holding Back His Confrontation

As he is anxious after his wife blames him for smoking weed again, Theo commits repression. He intends to bring out his upset by confronting his wife's infidelity, but it fails because his wife confronts his mistake earlier on. Theo feels mad and guilty at the same time. He imagines blasting his wrath by attacking her and then hugging her as quoted, "I wanted to hit her. ... I wanted to weep and howl and bury myself in her arms. I did none of this" (Michaelides, 2019:115).

Based on the quotation above, Theo is described to have the intention to express his feelings, but he chooses to keep it back. He knows that he cannot attack his wife after she shows his mistake in front of his face. The moral anxiety drives him to hold back his intention as an act of repression. He also pulls back his attempt to ask about the affair that his wife has. He rather pretends as if nothing happens. He will also act like he never reads the emails between Kathy and Gabriel. Instead of solving his problem by directly talking to his wife, he chooses to hold back his feelings while hoping that everything will automatically turn as before. Theo is incapable of confronting his wife's affair.

3.2.4.3.2 Theo Faber's Repression: Missing the Chances to Kill Gabriel

Theo always misses the chances to harm Gabriel because he hesitates. Since his ego cannot actualize his id's impulse to hurt Gabriel, he uses an ego defense mechanism named repression. It is the way to ease his anxiety by unconsciously pushing back his id's desire so he will not do something that breaks the norm as quoted, "... shoving him under the oncoming bus. But I didn't push him" (Michaelides, 2019:314).

3.2.4.3.3 Theo Faber's Repression: Speaking Carefully to Alicia

As a result of his objective anxiety caused by Alicia's attack, Theo decides to be more careful when he speaks with Alicia as an ego defense mechanism called repression. The attack happens because Theo makes Alicia mad by his words as quoted, "I'd pushed her too far, too hard, too soon" (Michaelides, 2019:102).

Based on the quotation above, Theo knows his fault, and he will not repeat it because he does not want to be attacked by his patient anymore.

3.2.4.4 Theo Faber's Displacement

3.2.4.4.1 Theo Faber's Displacement: Revenge on The Berenson

Theo's ego tries to solve the problem between his id's impulse to kill Gabriel and his superego's prohibition to harm people. He realizes that it is impossible to follow his id, but the desire is too strong that causes him anxiety. To ease his feelings, Theo uses the displacement on Gabriel's wife, Alicia, as quoted, "She looked innocent, as I had once looked. ... I could reveal the truth about the man she was living with ..." (Michaelides, 2019:329).

Based on the quotation above, Theo states that he wants to help Alicia to know the truth about Gabriel's infidelity. It is just a lie to reflect his intention to make Alicia hate Gabriel as he does. It has nothing to do with Alicia if Theo cannot accept the fact about his wife's betrayal or if he is incapable of taking revenge on Gabriel.

After more than a month of stalking Alicia, Theo decides to execute his plan by breaking into The Berensons' house. He releases his anger by telling about the infidelity and intimidating Alicia and Gabriel. After feeling relieved, Theo leaves the house.

3.2.4.5 Theo Faber's Rationalization

3.2.4.5.1 Theo Faber's Rationalization: Working at the Grove

Theo uses rationalization as an ego defense mechanism to ease his moral anxiety. His ego prefers to help Alicia heal from the trauma rather than to admit his mistake. So, he decides to apply at the Grove when the vacancy is available after six years of the murder as quoted, "I followed my gut—and applied for the job" (Michaelides, 2019:16).

Based on the quotation above, Theo applies to The Grove to accomplish his goal. Being Alicia's psychotherapist is an act of rationalization because it is the most logical way to heal Alicia. Theo works in the field where he has the right to arrange the therapy sessions as the method of the treatment. He can take advantage of his profession to ease his feeling of guilt.

3.2.4.5.2 Theo Faber's Rationalization: Gathering Alicia's Information Illegally

To ease his neurotic anxiety that he cannot make Alicia speak sooner, Theo starts gathering information except from Alicia as an act of ego defense mechanism called rationalization. He thinks that it is logical to collect information from an outsource if the patient refuses giving information. He will keep doing it although it violates some of the ethical codes of psychotherapists as quoted, “I should have stopped there. But even then it was too late to stop” (Michaelides, 2019:44).

Based on the quotation above, his ego fails to bring up a way to fulfill his id's impulse and balance the work of his superego and id. He knows that he makes a mistake, but he ignores it since he thinks it is rational to do that. Theo does not consider the consequences if he breaks the rules.

3.2.4.6 Theo Faber's Anticipation

3.2.4.6.1 Theo Faber's Anticipation: Injecting Alicia into Coma

To ease his anxiety after knowing that Alicia recognizes him, Theo uses an ego defense mechanism called anticipation by injecting Alicia into a coma to make her silent again. He does not want Alicia to take revenge on him. So, he tries to remove his worry by making Alicia unconscious as quoted, “This was how it was going to end. Alicia was silent again, and this time her silence would last forever” (Michaelides, 2019:318).

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Theo Faber's life in Alex Michaelides' novel *The Silent Patient* changes since he finds out about his wife's affair. He feels anxious because his ego is unable to handle the id's desire to get affection. He starts acting immature by coming to Ruth's house to seek affection, as an act of an ego defense mechanism namely regression. As his old psychotherapist, Ruth understands what life Theo has been through. Ruth advises him to leave his wife, Kathy, so he will never feel hurt anymore. Theo cannot implement the suggestion because Kathy blames him first for smoking weed again. Since Kathy's superego overpowers, Theo suppress his desire to confront the infidelity as an act of repression to escape from his anxiety.

His id keeps pushing him to vent his anger after he fails confronting his wife. However, he knows that he does not want to let go Kathy. As a result, he intends to turn his anger on Kathy's lover, Gabriel, as an act of displacement. His id urges him to kill Gabriel, but his superego forbids him because killing people is wrong. The opposition between his id and his superego makes him anxious. Theo uses displacement again with Alicia as a new target. He wants to tell Alicia about the affair so that she will feel the same hatred towards Gabriel. The plan works, leading Alicia to shoot Gabriel in the face five times and live in silence afterwards. The court sends her to a secure unit in Edgware Hospital, namely The Grove, after considering that she has a mental health problem.

Six years later, Theo still feels guilty because he believes he never asks Alicia to kill her husband. To ease his feelings, Theo applies for a job where Alicia is being treated to help her heal from the trauma after the murder and to prove that he is not responsible for what happens to Alicia. As Alicia still does not want to speak, Theo wants to make progress by gathering information outside of the therapy process although he knows it violates the psychotherapist's code of ethics. An unexpected reaction comes on the second therapy session, which Alicia attacks Theo because she knows that Theo is the man involved in Gabriel's death. The attack causes the therapy session to be stopped for a while.

Theo request the director of the Grove to allow Alicia to paint as an alternative to express her feelings. However, this method has to be stopped since Alicia stabs Elif's eye with a brush for ruining Alicia's painting. Theo meets Alicia and tells her that they can no longer continue therapy. Hearing that, Alicia hands Theo her diary. Theo reads the book and gives it back to Alicia while saying that it is their last chance to achieve their goals. Alicia does not want to lose her chance to take revenge, so she starts to speak. The director gives them permission to continue with the therapy session, but it does not last long for a short time as Theo injected Alicia into a coma. Theo silences Alicia who shows signs that she already recognizes him. Theo's action is a form of anticipation to calm his anxiety.

The torturous incidents will never happen if Theo dares to be honest and solve his problem directly with Kathy in the first place. His revenge to ease his anxiety drags him into a greater trouble, which harms so many people and makes Alicia must bear the risk because Theo uses ego defense mechanisms carelessly.

REFERENCES

- Barnet, S., Burto, W., & Cain, W. E. 2011. *An Introduction to Literature: Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*. Boston: Longman.
- Boyd, Brian. 2014. *Psychology and Literature: Mindful Close Reading. Mindful Aesthetics: Literature and the Science of Mind*. New York: Bloomsbury Collections.
- Cramer, Phebe. 1991. *The Development of Defense Mechanism*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- _____. 1991. "Denial". *The Development of Defense Mechanisms*. Springer, New York, NY. 36-37. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4613-9025-1_3
- Dickinson, Leon T. 1966. *A Guide to Literary Study*. New York: University of Missouri.
- Freud, Sigmund. 1923. *The Ego and The ID*. Free E-Book. Retrieved from www.SigmundFreud.net.
- Freud, Anna. 1993. *The Ego and The Mechanisms of Defence*. London: Karnac Books.
- _____. 1936. *The Ego and The Mechanisms of Defense*. London: Hogart Press and Institute of Psycho-Analysis.
- George, Mary W. 2008. *The Elements of Library Research: What Every Student Needs to Know*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Hall, Calvin. 1999. *A Primer of Freudian Psychology*. New York: Meridian Books.
- Holman, C. Hugh. 1960. *A Handbook to Literature*. New York: The Odyssey Press.
- _____. 1980. *A Handbook to Literature*. Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill Education Pub.
- _____. 1985. *A Handbook to Literature: Fourth Edition*. Indiana: ITTS Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing Company, Inc.
- _____. 1992. *A Handbook to Literature*. Indiana: The Bobbs-Merrill Company.
- Kennedy, X. J. 1991. *5th Ed. Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

- Kennedy, X. J., and Dana Gioia. 2007. *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and Writing, Compact Edition (8th Edition)*. New York: Longman Publishers.
- Klarer, Mario. 2004. *An Introduction to Literary Studies Second Edition*. London: Routledge.
- _____. 2005. *An Introduction to Literary Studies*. London: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Michaelides, Alex. 2019. *The Silent Patient*. New York: Celadon Books.
- P. Schultz, Duane and Sydney Allen Schultz. 2009. *Theories of Personality. 9th edition*. Canada: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Perrine, Laurence. 1998. *Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense. Fifth Edition*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Potter, James L. 1967. *Elements of Literature*. New York: The Odyssey Press.
- Vaillant G.E. 1971. "Theoretical Hierarchy of Adaptive Ego Mechanisms: A 30-Year Follow-up of 30 Men Selected for Psychological Health". *Arch Gen Psychiatry*, <https://doi.org/10.1001/archpsyc.1971.01750080011003>
- Wellek, Rene and Austin Warren. 1949. *Theory of Literature. 3rd ed.* New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovic.
- _____. 1963. *Theory of Literature*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- _____. 1956. *Theory of Literature*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

APPENDIX

Biography of Alex Michaelides

Alex Michaelides is a British-Cypriot author born on September 4, 1977. His father is a Greek-Cypriot, and his mother is British. He studied English literature at Trinity College, Cambridge University. He got his Master of Arts degree in screenwriting at the American Film Institute in Los Angeles. Alex Michaelides ever had extended therapy to heal himself, which that experience dragged his interest into the psychology field. He later had three years studying psychotherapy and worked for two years at a secure unit for young adults as recommended by his sister. In 2013, Alex Michaelides wrote a film named *The Devil You Know*, and he co-wrote *The Con is On* five years later.

As a writer born and raised in Cyprus, Alex Michaelides started his career as a writer and released his debut novel entitled *The Silent Patient* on February 5, 2019. He poured his personal experience and background into the novel with a thriller theme followed by psychological cases. The book successfully grabbed “No.1 The New York Times Best Seller,” “The Amazon Editors’ Best Mystery of 2019,” and later won the Mystery and Thriller category of “The Goodreads Choice Award 2019.” Continuing his interest in thriller theme work, Alex released his second novel, *The Maidens*, on June 1, 2021. Similar to his first work, *The Maidens* caught people’s attention during its release.

Summary of *The Silent Patient*

After several years of marriage, Theo's household was not as intimate as it used to be. He was too busy working as a psychotherapist at Broadmoor Hospital while his wife, Kathy, was busy practicing acting for an upcoming theatrical production. The condition made Theo feel lonely. Things got worse after Theo found out about his wife's affair. His old psychotherapist advised him to confront the affair and end his relationship with Kathy, but he did not accept the idea. He would rather pretend he never knew than lose his love.

Nevertheless, Theo was upset about the infidelity. Theo began his effort to release his feelings by stalking his wife. From his stalking, Theo knew that Kathy's lover was Gabriel Berenson, a famous and handsome photographer who lived in the same city. Theo never expected that he would see his wife having sex with a stranger in the woods in the park not far from their apartment. Theo was shocked, and he got mad. Theo did not blame Kathy because of his love. Instead, he intended to get rid of Gabriel because he assumed Gabriel was responsible for the affair.

Theo realized that he did not dare to kill Gabriel. So, Theo prepared a plan to harm Gabriel without using his own hands. After knowing that Gabriel cheated on his wife as Kathy did, Theo felt empathy for that woman. Alicia Berenson was Gabriel's wife. She was a painter working on his exhibition project preparation at home. She did not know that his husband had an affair. Theo wanted to tell Alicia about the infidelity and to make her take revenge on Gabriel.

On the afternoon of August 25th, Theo executed his plan to take revenge on Gabriel. He sneaked into the Berensons, where there was only Alicia. Theo tied Alicia in the living room and spent time together, waiting for Gabriel to come home. Soon after his arrival, Theo hit Gabriel's head from behind using the gun he got from the kitchen previously until he collapsed. Gabriel woke up with his body tied to a chair with his back to his wife. Theo started intimidating them by saying he would test how much they loved each other. He asked them to decide who would sacrifice. Theo pointed the gun at Gabriel's head and started counting from ten. Alicia convinced her husband not to choose because she believed that Theo would kill them. When the count reached zero, Gabriel whispered that he did not want to die. Theo laughed and walked to Alicia's front. He was satisfied with the answer because he could prove that Gabriel did not love Alicia as she loved him. Theo told about the affair and then aimed the gun at Alicia's face. He said that Alicia did not deserve to live after knowing the truth. Gabriel begged Theo not to kill his wife, but the gun exploded. Alicia opened her eyes, and Theo was still in front of him after shooting the ceiling. He put his finger in front of his lips and asked Alicia to keep silent. Theo put the gun on the floor, untied Alicia, and left.

As she could not accept the truth, Alicia took the gun and released her rage in five close-range gunshots on Gabriel's face. Alicia refused to speak after the murder, so the trial decided to send her to a secure forensic unit named The Grove in Edgware Hospital. Theo did not expect that Alicia would kill her husband. He felt guilty for being involved. He was also curious about Alicia's reason for

shooting Gabriel. So, Theo immediately applied to The Grove when there was a vacancy as a psychotherapist, even though it had been six years. He managed to be Alicia's psychotherapist, and he pretended like he was not involved in the murder case.

Theo wanted to help Alicia heal from the trauma after the murder as soon as possible. So, Theo gathered information about her from the people at the Grove and Alicia's relatives. He understood that a psychotherapist could not investigate a patient's background, but he wanted to make progress. From his exploration, Theo requested Diomedes, the clinical director of The Grove, to let Alicia paint as a method of communication. His request was allowed, but it led to an accident that would stop the therapy session process. Alicia stabbed Elif's eye using a painting brush after she ruined Alicia's painting by writing a curse word on it. Theo responded to the action by telling Alicia that Diomedes had banned the therapy session, so Alicia handed him her diary. She expected to keep continuing the therapy progress.

Theo gave back the diary to Alicia after he finished reading it. Then, he visited some people related to Alicia's writing. Carrying the information, Theo met Alicia the following day. He told her about meetings with her relatives and their last chance to work on the therapy. Unexpectedly, Alicia responded by speaking for the first time after six years. She said, "What do you need?."

Theo continued the therapy session with Alicia after Diomedes gave back the permission. Alicia spoke her mind in the following sessions as much as she could until it came to talking about the day of the murder. Alicia told the

chronology before the murder. After that, she said the stalker shot Gabriel six times and left the crime scene. Theo finally realized that Alicia had already recognized him as the stalker because she lied about the killing part.

In the following early morning, Alicia was found unconscious in her room with pills scattered next to her. People assumed that she committed suicide, but Theo managed to convince Diomedes and Stephanie, the manager of the Grove, that Christian, Alicia's doctor at The Grove, was responsible for the case. He told about Christian's illegal treatments back then, as Alicia wrote in the diary. Not long after that, the police arrived at the Grove and restrained Christian. Inspector Allen talked to Theo and informed him that Diomedes had retired. The authorities decided to close the Grove and offered Theo to lead the upcoming new secure unit. Theo was glad to hear that and was relieved because nobody knew the truth yet. So he tried to look for the diary in Alicia's room but did not find it.

That night, Inspector Allen came to Theo's house after Jean-Felix, Alicia's art friend, gave the diary he found behind the painting from the therapy session, a picture that Theo hated. Theo could not reject the visit, and they talked inside. The inspector started to read Alicia's new writing in front of Theo. Alicia wrote it before she collapsed.



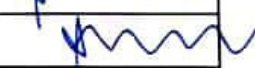


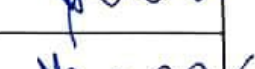




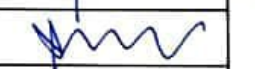
In the diary, Alicia wrote that she had already recognized Theo since the early therapy session, and she tried to kill him as soon as possible, but she failed. So, she pretended to follow his game. When Theo realized that Alicia had already recognized him, he wanted to make Alicia silent again. So, he came to Alicia's


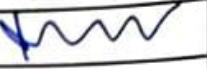


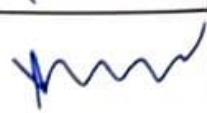
room without saying anything and suddenly injected her. Alicia did not resist because she took it as punishment for killing her husband.

On the other hand, the diary revealed the truth. Theo was involved in Gabriel's murder six years ago. Now Theo had already satisfied his curiosity. He knew the trauma that triggered Alicia to kill her husband after gathering information from Alicia's diary and her relatives. He also understood her reason for being silent for six years.

THESIS CONSULTATION CARD

NAME : Maftukhatur Rianingsih
STUDENT'S NUMBER : 13020115120058
TOPIC : Theo Faber's Psychoanalytical Conflict, Anxiety,
 and Ego Defense Mechanisms as Depicted in
Alex Michaelides' The Silent Patient
ADVISOR : Hadiyanto, S.S., M.Hum.

NO	DATES	CONSULTATION MATERIALS	ADVISOR'S NOTES	SIGNATURE
1	5 July 2022	Cover and outline	Make it brief	
2	6 July 2022	Quotation and grammar	To the point	
3	7 July 2022	Chapter I-II	To the point	
4	19 July 2022	Chapter I, chapter II	Make it brief, grammar error	
5	2 August 2022	Chapter III	Add more source	
6	12 August 2022	Theory, chapter IV	Quote the related theory	
7	15 August 2022	Chapter IV	Grammar error	
8	1 September 2022	Chapter IV	Make it brief, quotation error	
9	15 September 2022	Chapter IV	Focus on extrinsic aspects	
10	26 September 2022	Chapter IV	Grammar error	
11	12 October 2022	Chapter I-IV	Use the new model	

12	7 November 2022	Chapter II	Add more previous study	
13	18 November	Chapter II	Grammar error	
14	2 December 2022	Previous studies, theories	Use the related source only	
15	7 December 2022	Chapter III	To the point	
16	23 December 2022	Chapter III	Grammar and writing correction	
17	27 December 2022	Full writing	Grammar and writing correction	