

**DEFENSE MECHANISM OF SZPILMAN IN ROMAN POLANSKI'S
THE PIANIST MOVIE: A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH**



RESEARCH PAPER

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Human being lives in a society, for that reason problems may arise in the society in which the individual contacts with another. Sometimes the problems make someone unsatisfied such as getting anxious or hurry in his/her life. In this condition, one needs solution to solve it. Every body has ability to handle it. In human psychology, ego will act to save his/her self without caring the superego; ego has the ways in keeping away from anxiety. In psychological world or psychic condition it needs a defense, it is called with defense mechanism.

In Freud psychoanalytic theory, defense mechanisms are psychological strategies brought into play by individuals, groups and even nations to cope with reality and to maintain self-image (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/defense_mechanisms). Healthy persons will use different defenses in the life to maintain self-image; it can be pathological only when mental life of the individual is affected by negative threats.

Ego defense mechanisms help someone to protect from anxiety. It has purposes to reduce or even to avoid unpleasant condition when somebody faces a problem or threat. Freud defined an ego defense mechanism as a mental strategy to against superego pressures (Hjelle and Zieglar, 1992: 104). The ego reacts to break the threats by blocking the impulse from expression in

conscious behavior and by changing it to a degree that the original intensity is markedly reduced.

Sigmund Freud had proposed defense mechanism since he proposed psychoanalysis, it is “a method used by the ego in dealing with anxiety aroused by the id or superego” (Freud in Dworetzky, 1972: 421). Psychologically it occurs when there is a struggle between the id and the superego that produces anxiety and then the ego used those methods to handle the anxiety (Dworetzky, 1972: 104).

Defense mechanisms are effort to deny or falsify of reality. Hjelle and Ziegler (1992: 104) state that “all defense mechanism share two common characteristics: (1) they operate unconscious level and therefore self-deceptive and (2) they distort, deny, falsify perception of reality, so as to make anxiety less threatening to the individual.”

Literary work always concerns with human life. It is made by processing all sides of human life, such as in psychological aspect and other aspects that deal with human behaviors. All the sides of human life will become inspiration in literary work that contains many things. For that reason, psychology phenomena quite influence in literary work. Visual example is in a movie or film. A director will make a story based on fiction or true story in psychological knowledge and condition of human being surrounding. The characters will be made similarity with characteristic or real life of human being. An example will be applied and discussed with psychoanalytic study in a literary work with director Roman Polanski's that is *The Pianist*.

The Pianist is a literary work in a movie form, the genre is Biography/ drama/ music/ and war, it is a compilation of them. It was released premiere on May 24, 2002. The screenplay was written by Ronald Harwood and the book by Wladyslaw Szpilman. The running time of movie is 150 minutes or 2 hours 90 minutes. Inside conversation consists of some languages such as English, German, and Russian, but it more emphasizes to English. The film is included as a classic film of holocaust with director Roman Polanski ([http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/the_pianist_pianist\(2002_film\)](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/the_pianist_pianist(2002_film)))

Roman Polanski was born in Paris (France), on August 18, 1933. The son of Bula(née Katz-Przedborska) and Ryszard Liebling (aka Ryszard Polański), who was a painter and plastics manufacturer. His father was a Polish Jew and his mother, a native of Russia, Roman Catholic. Polanski was educated at the famous polish film school in Łódź, Poland, from which graduated in 1959. (<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm000591/bio>)

Roman Polanski rose as a polish film director, writer, actor and producer in 1953. After the beginning of his carrier in Poland, he became a celebrated art house filmmaker, and Hollywood director of such as *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), *Chinatown* (1974). Beside the United States, he had continued to direct films in Europe, including *Frantic* (1988), *Death and the Maiden* (1994), the Academy Award-winning and Cannes Film Festival Palme d'Or-winning *The Pianist* (2002), and *Oliver Twist* (2005). (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Polanski)

The Pianist gets many awards and wins to some categories. *The Pianist* movie is about situation and condition Poland in 1939, exactly in World War II. At the time invasion of Poland in September 1939, Nazi German occupies Poland, they do to the Polish Jewish sadist and cruelly. They are killed without reason, they may not have much money, and goods and they are poor and hunger, persecution and humiliation. They are Jews man, women, and children; they are always moving from one place to another place to being slaves. The situation and condition make a half of Polish against to Nazi, and a half is survival with their ability to defend their ego with hiding or being slave laborer for German reconstruction units. Many of them are failed and killed by Nazi army.

Szpilman is one of people who survives from oppression Nazi German. He is a famous Polish Jewish pianist. Szpilman is separated from his family and must survive. At the time in Ghetto, he works as a slave laborer for German reconstruction units. And later, in hiding outside by assistance his friends non-Jews who still remember him, he survives. Finally, he hides from German army alone. Hunger, fear, and anxiety he feels. He always survives in the difficulty, many people are killed and the corpses spread over in the road, he believes that the war will end and he will get his job again as a pianist.

In the hiding, he is hungry and looks for food around him and then he finds a can of cucumber, while trying to open it, he realizes to his horror that he is being watched from behind. Captain Hosenfeld, German army, he gives attention to Szpilman after he heard the playing of Szpilman's piano. He lets

Szpilman stay in hiding up to war finish, and even he gives some help for Szpilman by giving some breads and coat when Szpilman is cold. The war ends in the winter, Szpilman wakes up and look out from his hidden. He is almost shot because wearing German coat, and then he explains that he is cold.

Captain Hosenfeld and other German are captured. He asks help to a musician, He is a Jewish prisoner who passes them. Hosenfeld wants the musician contacts Szpilman to free him. Szpilman is too late because German prisoners have been removed. Szpilman backs to play piano and lives in Warsaw radio and performs in Chopin;s Grand Polonaise Brillante in E flat major to a large audience in Warsaw.

The Pianist does not only win over audiences in theaters, but also holds the spot on Billboard's classical chart after 13 weeks in release (<http://www.Spiked-online.com/articles/0000006DC22.htm>). Beside that, the film gets many other awards such as the Oscars for Best Director, Best Actor, and Best Screenplay, and it is awarded by seven French Cesars including Best Picture, Best Director and Best Actor for Brody (http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/the_pianist_pianist_2002_film). In addition, there is a comment that the film is the best holocaust movie ever made. Every film production wishes to get award and convention from the public. For *The Pianist* film, those awards are satisfaction for the production inside.

This movie is difficult to be understood and uninteresting, or maybe make sleepy to be watched. After the writer sees it, more than once, it is very

interesting to be analyzed. There are four reasons that can be attraction to the writer to analyze *the Pianist* movie by Roman Polanski.

First, the story of the movie is an adaptation of the autobiography of the same name by Jewish-Polish musician, Władysław Szpilman. The film is about of personnel's life of Szpilman. He gets suffering in survival when World War II.

Furthermore, second reason is more interesting, that the story is connected with Polanski personnel's life too when he survived in Ghetto when he was kid. He always moves from one place to another place to save his life.

Third reason can be seen from the cinematography sides, such as photographical qualities of shot, the framing of shot, an also the duration of shot. A process of making a film or movie is different with the product. In making process it needs long time to produce a product in a cassette form, that can be watched only two or three hours. It needs the balance inside, and also coincidentally in taking or cutting the picture. For the successful, *The Pianist* movie has gotten nomination in Academy Award for Best Cinematography, Best Costume Design and many other nominations and awards.

Fourth, the last reason is the survival of Szpilman that is interesting to be discussed. Why does Szpilman save his life only? The film is included in holocaust, the time is occurring oppression to Poland Jews, where they are pressed to move and separated from Poland non-Jews. They are killed sadistically and cruel. The men work as laborer for German reconstruction units. Many buildings are exploded and borderline is made by Nazi's army

between Poland Jews and non-Jews. Szpilman is getting anxious in his life; he is separated from his family and friends. He must keep his life with hiding from Nazi army, whereas he does not have anything. He always moves from one place to another place when his hidden place is attacked.

This is one of psychological sides in Szpilman as main character that defends his ego to save himself from unsatisfied condition without caring the others. It is very possible done by everybody to avoid from unsatisfied.

Based on the reason above it can be learned that a famous person who brings good name for the country will be known and remembered time by time. Bring good name not only with against enemies and become a hero but also can be done by other activity for example to this time having achievement in sport, art, science, and so on. From the other side, it can be learned the cinematography in the movie. The important thing in this life can be learned such as how to protect this life from the danger threats that will attack and make anxiety in the mental life, that is by defense the ego or in psychological term is defense mechanism.

From the illustration above, the writer is interested in analyzing defense mechanism that is used in main character in Roman Polanski *The Pianist* Movie. The title for the research paper is **DEFENSE MECHANISM OF SZPILMAN IN ROMAN POLANSKI'S *THE PIANIST* MOVIE: A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH**

B. Literature Review

The writer did the observation and looked for the references, she found four articles in virtual references, which discussed about *The Pianist* movie, they are Keith Allen she analyzed the artistic and the entertainment value of *The Pianist* movie. David Gurevich focused on the feature of film. Allison Felus and Toby heard Roman Polanski strike different notes in the pianist. And Rene Rodriguez's article which was published on Friday, January 30, 2003, he talked about the movie.

In this research, the writer will focus to analyze the defense mechanism of Szpilman in psychoanalytical approach.

C. Problem Statement

The major problem in this study is "how is defense mechanism reflected by Szpilman in Roman Polanski *The Pianist* movie?"

D. Limitation of the Study

To focus on the study, the writer focuses on the analysis of Wladyslaw Szpilman's defense mechanism as a major and main character in Roman Polanski's *The Pianist* based on psychoanalytic approach.

E. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. Analyzing Roman Polanski's *The Pianist* based on its structural elements.

2. Analyzing defense mechanism on Roman Polanski's *The Pianist* movie based on psychoanalytic approach.

F. Benefit of the Study

In studying Research paper, the benefits expected are:

1. Theoretical Benefit

Theoretically, the study gives contribution to the larger body of knowledge particularly literary study on Roman Polanski's *The Pianist* Movie.

2. Practical Benefit

Practically, it adds the writer knowledge about Roman Polanski's *The Pianist* movie particularly related to the psychoanalytic approach.

G. Research Method

1. Type of the Research

In this study, the researcher applies qualitative research.

2. Object of the Research

Object of the research in the case is Roman Polanski's *The Pianist* movie. In inducting the research, the writer is going to analyze it by using psychoanalytical approach.

3. Source of the Data

There are two types of data sources namely:

a. Primary Data Source

The primary data sources are taken from Roman Polanski's *The Pianist* movie and its manuscript by Ronald Harwood.

b. Secondary Data Resources

The secondary data are taken from other sources, which are related to the primary data that support the analysis. They are books and virtual references as documentation.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The methods used for collection data are library research and documentation. These are techniques of data collecting

- a. Watching and learning the movie repeatedly.
- b. Reading the script to get more understanding.
- c. Reading some related references to observe the theory, data and information.
- d. Making notes of important part and both primary and secondary data sources.
- e. Classifying the data into some categories.

5. Techniques of the data analysis

In this research, the technique that is used to analyze the data is descriptive analysis, in which the researcher identifies defense mechanism of major and main character in Roman Polanskis *The Pianist* movie using psychoanalytic perspective.

H. Research Paper Organization

The writer organizes the research paper into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction, which contains the background of the study, literature review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study, research methodology and research paper organization. The second chapter is dealing with underlying theory that consist of the notion of psychoanalysis, structure of personality, anxiety, defense mechanisms in psychoanalysis theory, structural element of movie, and theoretical application. Third chapter deals with the structural analysis of the movie and discussion of the movie. Fourth chapter is the Psychoanalytic analysis. In addition, the finally is fifth chapter draws conclusion and suggestion.