

**THE DEFENSE MECHANISM OF IVAN PETROVICH VOYNITSKY IN
ANTON CHEKHOV'S *UNCLE VANYA* SCRIPT (1899):
A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH**



**Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement
for Getting Bachelor Degree of Education
in English Department**

by:

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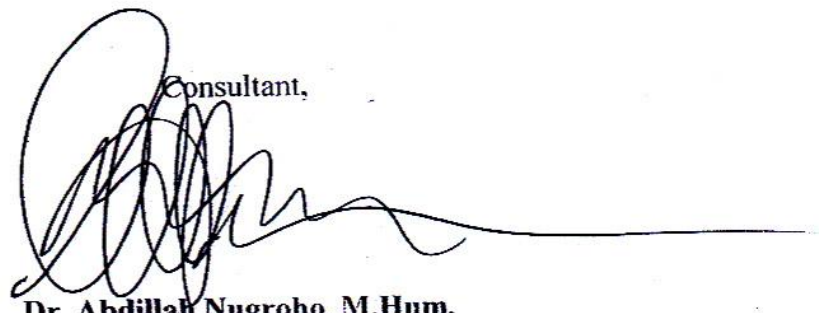
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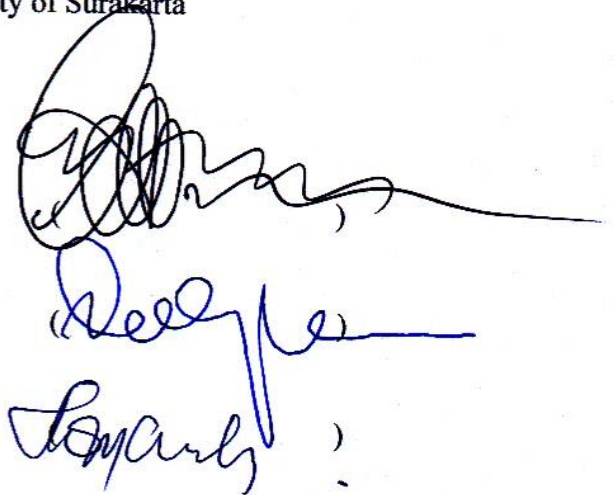
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ABSTRAK

Mekanisme pertahanan adalah salah satu bagian yang ada di dalam teori psikoanalisis yang mempelajari tentang pertahanan diri yang dilakukan secara sengaja ataupun tidak sengaja oleh manusia saat sedang mengalami ketakutan. Dengan menggunakan mekanisme pertahanan, penulis meneliti mekanisme apa saja yang ditunjukkan oleh Voynitsky pada naskah drama *Uncle Vanya*. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah (1) untuk menjelaskan bagaimana mekanisme pertahanan digambarkan oleh Ivan Petrovich Voynitsky di dalam naskahnya Anton Chekhov *Uncle Vanya*, dan (2) untuk mengungkapkan alasan kenapa Anton Chekhov memasukkan mekanisme pertahanan di dalam naskahnya *Uncle Vanya*.

Penelitian ini dianalisa dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan *Library Research* dan *Note-taking*. Penulis menggunakan teori psikoanalisis Sigmund Freud untuk menganalisa naskah *Uncle Vanya*, dan untuk menemukan bukti penggunaan mekanisme pertahanan oleh Ivan Petrovich Voynitsky. Menurut Sigmund Freud, ada beberapa bentuk mekanisme pertahanan, akan tetapi penulis hanya menemukan tiga jenis saja di dalam naskah *Uncle Vanya*, yaitu realisasi, penyangkalan, dan reaksi formasi.

Kata kunci: Mekanisme Pertahanan, Teori Psikoanalisis, Naskah, Anton Chekhov.

ABSTRACT

Defense mechanism is a part from psychoanalytic theory which learn about human defense that they do intentionally or unintentionally when they are getting the fear. By using defense mechanism, the researcher wants to analyze every kind of defense mechanism that used by Ivan Petrovich Voynitsky in the drama script *Uncle Vanya*. The purposes of this research are (1) to explain how defense mechanism is depicted by Ivan Petrovich Voynitsky in Anton Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* script, and (2) to reveal the reasons why Anton Chekhov addresses defense mechanism in his script.

The research is analyzed by using descriptive qualitative method. The technique of data collection is using Library Research and Note-taking method. The researcher is using the psychoanalytic theory from Sigmund Freud to analyze *Uncle Vanya* drama script, and to find out the evidences of defense mechanism that used by Ivan Petrovich Voynitsky. According Sigmund Freud, there are some kinds of defense mechanism but, the researcher only finds out three kinds of defense mechanism in the *Uncle Vanya*'s script, they are rationalization, denial, and reaction formation.

Keywords: Defense Mechanism, Psychoanalytic Theory, Script, Anton Chekhov.

1. INTRODUCTION

The researcher wants to discuss about defense mechanism in the psychoanalytic theory. Defense mechanism is a way to handle our anxiety. We always use defense mechanism when we feel that we are sad or mad. We use it unconsciously and sometimes when we get our mind back, we forget what happened. Every single of the creature in this world has its own defense mechanism, like a chameleon which can change its color like its surrounding to avoid the predators, or like a porcupine, if it wants to avoid or to attack the predators, it will make itself like a ball of thorn and it will make the predators get the pain and go away.

Defense mechanism is not simple like as what people see, it is more complicated in its explanation and its kinds. Many kinds of defense mechanism that people used to refuse the reality. What will people do to refuse the reality will be effected in the kind of defense mechanism. For example, one day somebody gets a bad news that his wife is dead, he is really shock for what happened and he does not believe that his wife is dead so when he comes home he acts that his wife is still going out with her friends and comes late. It is an example for the defense mechanism that called as denial. And the researcher will use this defense mechanism to analyze one of the character from Anton Chekhov's drama script.

Many people create the human personalities into scripts and make them be a play or drama. Some people think that to make a drama script or a play is a way to convey the playwright's mind or idea to the audience or reader. One of the famous Russian playwright in the 19th Century is Anton Chekhov. Anton Chekhov was born on January 29, 1860, the third of surviving children, in Taganrog, a port on the Sea of Azov in southern Russia. Chekhov began his career in writing jokes and anecdotes about the Russian life in that era. He had made a lot of short stories and some plays such as *The Seagull* (written in 1895), *Uncle Vanya* (written in 1897), *The Three Sisters* (written in 1900), and *The Cherry Orchard* (written in 1903).

Uncle Vanya is one of the famous plays made by Anton Chekhov. It was first published in 1897 and in 1899 it was received in a production by the Moscow Art Theatre. This play is about mediocrity, the impossibility of change, and unrequited love. It is about a whole of dissatisfaction rolled up into a dreary and Uncle Vanya is at the center of all dissatisfaction. This play tells about an elderly professor, Serebryakov, his glamorous, younger second wife, Helena, and his other families. Vanya is the son of Mme. Voynitskaya, mother in law of Serebryakov.

Vanya feels envy with Professor Serebryakov, Vanya thinks that every woman in the house has been stolen by Serebryakov even Vanya's mother. Without realizing it, Vanya compares himself constantly to Serebryakov who steals his women constantly. Vanya is in love with Helena, Serebryakov's second wife, but Helena always rejects him. He knows that everybody in that house always praises Serebryakov and they look at himself as a coward man. He does not has a work, he just wake up at the late and he also drunk in the nights.

The woman that he loved, Helena, is a young woman who married with the old proffesor, Serebryakov, the father of Sonya. Helena and Sonya have a bad relationship. Sonya thinks that Helena has married his father to get some advantages because the ages of Helena and her father is too different, her father is too old for Helena. But someday, Helena tries to make her relationship with her stepsister, Sonya. She knows that Sonya has a feeling with the doctor, Michael Astrov and she uses this fact to make their relationship be nice. Sonya does not has a confidence to express her feeling to Astrov, and Helene let herself to ask Astrov's feeling about Sonya.

The purpose of this study to analyze the defense mechanism that occurs in Ivan character play using Psychoanalytic approach. Based on those reasons, the researcher gave the title for this research THE DEFENSE MECHANISM OF IVAN PETROVICH VOYNITSKY IN ANTON CHEKHOV'S *UNCLE VANYA* SCRIPT (1899): A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the researcher will use descriptive qualitative study. The researcher uses descriptive study by reading, understanding and making notes to find the defense mechanism which is used in the *Uncle Vanya* script. The object is the analysis of defense mechanism that found in the Anton Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* script. The technique of data collection is using Library Research and Note-taking method. The researcher is using the psychoanalytic theory from Sigmund Freud to analyze *Uncle Vanya* drama script. Technique of analyzing data that used by the researcher is descriptive analysis.

3. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Denial

According to Freud (in Hjelle and Ziegler, 1992: 107), "denial is most typical of young children or immature older individuals." It means that this kind of defense mechanism usually happened at the children or immature older individuals who cannot think wisely what should they do. But in the *Uncle Vanya*'s script, the researcher found it happened on the main character, Vanya Voynitsky who has age about thirties. The first denial is when he had drunk and had conversation with Helena.

VOYNITSKY. In there, spending the night in my room. Perhaps I'm drunk, perhaps I am; nothing is impossible.

HELENA. Have you been drinking today? Why do you do that?

VOYNITSKY. Because in that way I get a taste of being alive. Don't try to stop me, Helena! ACT II, page 14.

Voynitsky thinks that he felt tortured because he lives in the house with the person he hated and the woman that he loved. He tries to disappear that feeling using drunk. Sometimes drunk makes somebody lost their control of their body, they will do what they want without feel anxious what will happened. Some people use drunk to forget the bad experiences which happened in their lives. Voynitsky suggests that using drunk, he can feel the taste of being alive.

Some people using denial in the worst way such as Vanya did. Maybe drunk can make the human psychology more better but, people

must remember too that drunk has a lot of negative effects. When the people get drunk, they cannot remember clearly what happened with them when they are having drunk.

The second denial is when Voynitsky shocked after saw Helena and Astrov was having kiss in the drawing-room. He lost of his words and cannot talk clearly when Helena asks him to talk with.

ASTROV. Tell me, tell me, where can we meet tomorrow? [*He puts his arm around her waist*] Don't you see that we must meet, that it's inevitable?

He kisses her. VOYNITSKY *comes in carrying a bunch of roses, and stops in the doorway.*

HELENA. [*Without seeing VOYNITSKY*] Have pity! Leave me alone! [*lays her head on ASTROV'S chest*] No! [*She tries to break away from him.*]

ASTROV. [*Holding her by the waist*] Be in the forest tomorrow at two o'clock. Will you? Will you?

HELENA. [*Sees VOYNITSKY*] Let me go! [*Goes to the window deeply embarrassed*] This is appalling!

VOYNITSKY. [*Throws the roses on a chair, and speaks in great excitement, wiping his face and neck with his handkerchief*] Nothing -- yes, yes, nothing.

ACT III, page 28.

From the conversation above, Voynitsky gets a terribly shocked that caused by seeing Astrov kisses Helena. Helena is the woman that he loves and Astrov is his friend. Seeing the woman that you love and your friend are having a kiss, it will make the people get a terribly shocked like what Voynitsky felt. He said “Nothing” to deny the fact that Helena and Astrov have an affair and also to hidden his pain that caused by seeing the woman that he loved was kissed by the other guy.

3.2 Reaction Formation

According to Freud (in Asimov, 1983: 418), “the stronger impulse toward socially unacceptable behavior, the stronger the defense against it, so that the crusaders who “protest too much” against what they consider reprehensible behavior may be displacing reaction formation”. What the people doing are the opposite with the reality. In this case, Vanya rejects the reality that he loves Helena and he regards her as his friend when he had a conversation with Astrov.

ASTROV. What's the matter with you tonight? You seem sad. Is it because you're sorry for the professor?

VOYNITSKY. Leave me alone.

ASTROV. Or in love with the professor's wife?

VOYNITSKY. She's my friend. ACT II, page 16.

Vanya said that Helena just his friend and he does not love her. If he said he loves her, it will make a new problem in the house and Voynitsky will regard as a sinner because he loves the wife of his brother

in law. People use reaction formation to avoid the truth that they hidden it from the reality. They hide it because they are afraid that someday it will make them in the dangerous situation.

3.3 Rationalization

Rationalization is reinterpreted of irrational behavior to be rational behavior and acceptable for the others (Hjelle and Ziegler, 1992: 105). People usually use the rationalization to make a rational reason when they another person asks the other about something or to . Vanya uses rationalization when he had a conversation with Sonya, his niece.

SONYA. Uncle Vanya, you and the doctor have been drinking again! The old boys have been getting together! It's all very well for him, he's always done it, but why do you follow his example? It looks bad at your age.

VOYNITSKY. Age has nothing to do with it. When real life is missing, one must create an illusion. It is better than nothing. ACT II, page 17.

Vanya gets drunk again with Astrov and when Sonya asks him, he said that it has no relationship between having drunk and his age. He thinks that age is a common thing and age is not a limit to do something.

4. CONCLUSION

The reason why Anton Chekhov uses defense mechanism in the Voynitsky's character is making his character to be more stronger. The researcher thought that Voynitsky's character is a weakness character who always does some useless things but, the using of defense mechanism in that character it can make Voynitsky more stronger because he can hide his truly feeling from the others although he still cannot handle his emotion.

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