

REPETITIVE DEFENSE MECHANISMS IN *THE SCARLET LETTER* (1850) NOVEL: A PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini fokus pada tindakan bawah sadar bagaimana tokoh-tokoh dalam novel bertahan dari ancaman. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini menggunakan konsep psikoanalisis karena fokus analisisnya terkonsentrasi pada jenis mekanisme pertahanan sebagai tindakan bawah sadar untuk menghadapi ancaman apa pun dan untuk mengungkap alasan di balik mekanisme pertahanan yang digunakan oleh Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale, dan Roger Chillingworth. Penelitian ini menekankan pada deskripsi dan tidak ada data numerik dalam proses analisis datanya, oleh karena itu penelitian ini perlu digolongkan sebagai penelitian kualitatif. Hermeneutika digunakan dalam penelitian ini sebagai pendekatan dalam penelitian kualitatif dalam menafsirkan data. Penelitian ini memperoleh tiga temuan; pertama adalah empat jenis mekanisme pertahanan yang digunakan oleh Hester, Arthur, dan Roger yaitu proyeksi, regresi, rasionalisasi, dan pembentukan reaksi. Yang kedua adalah penggambaran mekanisme pertahanan dalam novel itu pada tokoh dan peristiwa. Yang terakhir adalah alasan Nathaniel Hawthorne membahas mekanisme pertahanan dalam novelnya. Penelitian ini menyoroti bagaimana kondisi psikologi mempengaruhi sosial dan cara seseorang membangun mekanisme pertahanan untuk melindungi dan membantu diri mereka sendiri dari pikiran-pikiran yang tidak menyenangkan.

Kata Kunci: Psikonaltik, mekanisme pertahanan, novel *The Scarlet Letter* (1850)

Abstract

This study focused on the unconscious act of how the characters in the novel survive from threats. For this reason, this study applied psychoanalysis concept due to the focus of analysis concentrating on the kind of defense mechanism as the unconscious action to deal with any threats and to reveal the reason behind of the defense mechanisms were employed by the Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale, and Roger Chillingworth. This study emphasized on description and there are no numerical data in the process of analyzed the data, thus this study is necessarily classified as qualitative research. Hermeneutics is applied in this study as the approach in qualitative research in interpreting of the data. This study obtained three findings; first is four kind of defense mechanisms employed by Hester, Arthur, and Roger namely projection, regression, rationalization, and reaction formation. The second is the depiction of defense mechanisms in the novel was on the character and events. The last is the reason of Nathaniel Hawthorne addressed defense mechanisms in the novel. This study highlighted on how social affect psychology condition and the way a person establish defense mechanisms to protect and help themselves from the unpleasant thoughts.

Keywords: psychoanalytic; defense mechanisms; *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) novel

1. INTRODUCTION

Living life is not solely staying still and following how the flow goes because sometimes problems, unpleasant experiences, and challenges successfully exist for the sake of our improvement in adapting to various kinds of circumstances. Surviving from certain threats caused by disturbing thoughts or problems also has a role in the process of psychological development. This kind of issue may be found in literary works, stated by Butler (1973) that literary work is not just the mere imagination of the author but also a communication tool between individuals. Literary work commonly well-known in the written form such as poetry, drama, fiction, nonfiction. In the processes to create literary work there are the ability, uniqueness, and style of the author have the major role in an effort to deliver her or his main issue in literary work then, also the results can emerge the ideas of an ideal life based on those people who read it and understand the author's meant (Afifulloh, 2019; Butler, 1973).

Apart from the possibility that literary works can be a factor of the idea about how society and life should work as well as the emergence of continual emancipation as was revealed by Butler (1973), a literary work, especially if we refer to fiction, cannot be separated from the author's imagination which is wrapped up and developed delightfully along with the author's opinions and intentions (Peacocke, 2021). For that reason, in the relation between literature and psychoanalysis according to Hossain (2017), Freud analogized a literary work as a daydream of its author. A literary work, such as how daydreaming usually works, contains the author's fantasy to make the unacceptable reality better as the result of the unfulfillment of desire and wish (Hossain, 2017). For Brooks (2014) psychoanalysis and literary work have parallel connection because Freudians believed there are correspondences between the process of both literature and psychics, between the form and the structure of aesthetics which are produced, such as the use of literary tropes must side by side with the form and the condition of psychic and how the author unveil it. This connection is dependent on the acknowledgment of both psychoanalysis and literary work are bonded to humans. Literary work is a piece of art that involves imagination, emotion, and portrait of people's life. On the same hand, psychoanalysis also relies on people's psychic and social forces. Instead of that, in the era wherein knowledge grew massively, emerged psychoanalytical criticism in literature in order to be used in analyzing the literary work through the psychoanalysis concept.

In psychoanalytical criticism or we can call it psychoanalytical approach in examining literary works, that both the writer and the author was assuredly influenced by

psychological concept as we can see through their tool whether the characters, the plot, or the setting in their literary work (Hossain, 2017). In psychoanalytical, psychology in literature can be used to analyses some studies (Wellek & Warren, 1993). For the first, the psychology of literature may be used to investigate the author as the human being. Secondly, the study of the creative process of the author in creating literature is also can be considered as research of psychology of literature (Qodariyah et al., 2017). Furthermore, psychoanalysis approach also can be used in analysing the personality of character in literary works (Amaliyah & Prastiwi, 2022). Cited from Hossain (2017) also, there are four thing that can be the focus in analyzing literary work: (1) the author, we can investigate the author's life; (2) the audience or reader, the theory of psychoanalysis can be used to explain the appealing part of work for those who enjoy it; (3) the story or text, we can analyze and reveal the symbol in the work through psychoanalysis concept as well; (4) the character; characters in the literary work are the author's tool so we can explicate the motive or characteristic through psychoanalytical approach.

Character is the one of intrinsic element in literary work and it can be the media for the author to reveal their messages, their voice in agreement or disapproval about things in the world. Character also can be a tool to symbolizing the other object that have deeper meaning than the reader knows. According to Van Kirk (2023) each character in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) has their own symbol and representation. Such as Hester Prynne as a sinful person but try to be good, Roger Chillingworth referred to the poor victim who willing to be worst because the hatred in his heart, and Arthur Dimmesdale symbolize as a saint but not saint enough then the sinful one. *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) by Nathaniel Hawthorne actually the good one among others famous literary works of classic literature which use symbolization not only on things or phenomenon but also the characters in order to gain sorrow atmosphere in tragic story. The novel set in America in the 19th century when many of residents from Europe transmigrated to America and among of them was Puritan people who established settlements in there. Hester Prynne who was determined as a perpetrator of adultery must wear a scarlet A letter. It was a punishment in that time for her so that the public will know and remember the consequents of being a sinner. Arthur Dimmesdale, a young clergyman who was adored by everyone in the town but never being honest that he is the adultery partner of Hester Prynne. Until the appearance of Roger Chillingworth, a former husband of Hester Prynne, who know his dark secret and try to take a revenge caused by the hatred that Hester was cheated on him.

The three characters in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) novel, Hester Prynne, Arthur

Dimmesdale, and Roger Chillingworth, become the focus in this study in order to investigate how they are facing the treats that cause anxiety, worry, and anger to survive in life. This issue connects to the psychoanalysis concept about defense mechanism. It is based on theory of human personality that has three elements in human mind namely conscious, unconscious, and preconscious. This basic theory then developing, stated by Amaliyah and Prastiwi (2022) Freud added the three aspect structural of personality in mental state of the individual that is ego, id, and super-ego. Cited from Amaliyah & Pratiwi (2022) defense mechanism occurs when the id and the super-ego are bump into each which is mean there are the unbalances between the desire of the id and moral values of reality from the super-ego. Freud divided human personality into three systems which we can called it the Id which Freud said as primatial instinct; Ego is reality principle because in these systems someone is aware of the existing reality; then there is Super-ego, the last in the system but have important job in evoking people about moral (Vaillant, 1971). Somehow people feel overwhelm, pressure, and anxious when the need and social moral compass does not have synchronization. In other hands, the *Ego* do not know how take an action to make that two-contrast side win together. Basically, it is unconsciousness which driven by Ego in shield form, people who do defense mechanism tend to express it immediately. For the reason of that, defense mechanism deals with absolutely nothing from deliberate effort or conscious cognition. The various defense mechanisms based on Freudian psychoanalytic according to Minderop & Hidayat (2022) are repression, projection, regression, displacement, aggression or apathy, sublimation, rationalization, and fantasy.

The researcher found the previous studies which investigated *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne as well. They are divided into two field namely linguistic field and literature field. The first is the study of linguistic by Alwan (2018). He was revealed the use of reduplication word in the novel. The results he gained was about the effect of reduplication in the novel. Alwan (2018) stated in his study there are many reduplication word refers to the pronoun and name of the character due to attract the readers. The words have different meaning from one to others aside of its appearing frequently.

The second was conducted in the literature field by Marliana et al. (2020), Iqbal et al. (2021), Wulansari (2017), and Madani (2022). Each of them has the same approach to analyzing the novel which is sociological criticism in literature yet, the main issue of each previous study was different. Each of the previous studies also focused on the main character only which is Hester Prynne as the heroine. Marliana et al. (2020) in their study

talked about the role of women portrayed in Hester Prynne's character who must do extra work as a single mother. It is quite similar to the study by Iqbal et al. (2021) found that Hester Prynne broke the gender normative in society because Hester Prynne was a woman who had a masculine side to her life. Meanwhile, Wulansari (2017) in her study was about the effect of the Puritan law of adultery on Hester Prynne. As she analyzed in her study, people who were caught guilty and get punishment, they tend to do anything to become the better version them. Then, there is the previous study by Madani (2022) who had done on revealing the contradiction of how people see Hester Prynne as a sinner who had nothing left behind her and how Hester sew herself as a sinner who tried to do something good as her atonement. All the previous studies were good in the way its researchers elucidated each main issue through each approach in literary criticism. Besides there are Huo (2022) and Aldewan (2019) who used ecological approach in their study. The only previous studies which have same perspective, psychoanalytic perspective, in analysing the novel are previous study by Minderop & Hidayat (2022) and Listyowati (2020). Minderop & Hidayat (2022) in their study reveal the life and death instinct on Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale whilst, Listyowati (2020) examined the psychology effect of doing adultery. The other similarity between the previous studies and this present study is the choice of the object of the study which is *The Scarlett Letter* (1850) novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne. However, compared to those previous studies, this present study utilized the psychoanalytic concept to examine and reveal the characters' action toward threats due to surviving life. If we reexamine the previous studies above, there are none of them analyzed defense mechanisms in *The Scarlett Letter* (1850). For that reason, this present study's purpose is to analyze the kind of repetitive defense mechanisms used by Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale, and Roger Chillingworth to survive threats, the depiction of defense mechanism, and the reason Nathaniel Hawthorne addressed defense mechanism in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) novel.

2. METHOD

The Scarlet Letter novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne is the material object of this study which is explored through psychoanalysis approach. This study is library research. Qualitative research was applied in this study which the focus is on process, understanding, and meaning; the writer is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis; the process is inductive; and the product is richly descriptive (Merriam, B ; Tisdell, 2016). While the type of this study is kind of research that explore the relation between literary work and its

author. Hermeneutics technique to analysis data because the type of the study is about the relation between author and literary works. Hermeneutics method itself is try to understand between literary work and author's psychologies, emotion of author when do the works by deliver the meant or hidden message; constructing the meaning of the whole meant making sense of the parts, and grasping the meaning of the parts depended on having some sense of the words from the data (Patton, 2002).

The data gained from text in the novel whether from words, phrase, clause, sentences, or discourse. *The Scarlet Letter* novel as primary data while any previous studies that have the same material object become the secondary data sources. Document analysis is used to collecting the data with take-note and copy-paste technique which focuses primarily on what is contained within the novel (Given, 2012). As the steps in collect the data: (1) Reading *the Scarlet Letter* novel; (2) marking the data with highlighting then taking a note for anything that can be the evidence's explanation; (3) the last, discovery theories that relate to the topic being studied.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Defense mechanism is a kinds of psychology system in order to shield us against anxiety and external or internal unpleasant feeling (Strandholm et al., 2016). Using defense mechanism usually works in unconscious state as explained by Kramer (2010). It happened without planning by the user because, back again, it was used to help people whether from the things that they want to remember, anxiety, and other stressor that can called as threat to self-esteem (Cherry, 2021). This study found some type of defense mechanisms such as projection, regression, reaction formation, and rationalization which were employed by Hester Prynne, Roger Chillingworth, and Arthur Dimmesdale to survive in each life.

3.1 Kinds of Repetitive Defense Mechanisms

Hester Prynne

Regression

The Scarlet Letter (1850) novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne is about Hester Prynne, the main character, who was punished because people found her as a sinner. She did adultery. Hester must stand in public while holding her baby for hours. In the middle of her punishment time, some important people like the governor and clergymen wanted her to speak out about the adultery partner of her. Instead of being honest, Hester Prynne chose to keep it secret and shut her mouth. These attitude of her successfully raise amount of hatred by society

mostly women. They mocked at her, they being rude and violent orally, and it made her hurt. She lived with her only daughter far away from crowded town, she made her earn money, and did many good things such as donating some of his belongings to those in need. However, people still did not accept Hester Prynne who they see as a sinner in their society. The author, Nathaniel Hawthorne, created a character like Hester Prynne to be known by us that her was a symbol of human who has sensitive feeling (Van Kirk, 2023). Even though she was a sinner and did cruel thing, still, a need of being love is always be a part of human-being. All of the threats from the outside make her fragile and it cause fear and anxiety. When Hester Prynne went to the house of Governor Bellingham to take a stand about the issues of separation between her and her daughter; Pearl.

“Hester caught hold of Pearl, and drew her forcibly into her arms, confronting the old Puritan magistrate with almost a fierce expression. Alone in the world, cast off by it, and with this sole treasure to keep her heart alive, she felt that she possessed indefeasible rights against the world, and was ready to defend them to the death.”
(Hawthorne, 1850, p. 168)

Defense mechanism happens immediately even without trying. According to Pangestu and Sunardi (2016) fear, anxiety, anger, and worry are manifested to be defense mechanism. In the case of Hester Prynne, she was angry toward governor Bellingham and Mr. Watson who have the idea of separating Pearl and her in the name of her atonement. Despite of it, a fear of being alone was crawled in herself. She was alone in the world among the cruel people and those people still want to took her daughter from her side. Then unconsciously, drove by the desire to survive, Hester Prynne employed regression as a defensive mechanism. Behaving like a child at the previous stage of development and it can be showed by the behavior or emotion, it was stated by Lokko and Stern (2015) as the form of regression.

“God gave her into my keeping!” repeated Hester Prynne, raising her voice almost to a shriek. “I will not give her up!” And here by a sudden impulse, she turned to the young clergyman, Mr. Dimmesdale, at whom, up to this moment, she had seemed hardly so much as once to direct her eyes. (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 169)

Hester Prynne shouted at all of them; governor Bellingham, Mister Watson, a young

clergymen Arthur Dimmesdale, and an old doctor Roger Chillingworth, as a defensive response. Moreover, Hester Prynne cried aggressively at Arthur Dimmesdale, who known as her clergyman, in order to influence governor Bellingham and Mister Watson to not separate her and Pearl. It occurred without full of conscious of Hester Prynne. It was a kind of act to survive from threat like a hopeless kid need a help from the older. Therefore, regression was showed by Hester Prynne as defense mechanism to protect herself from being alienated again. Because the hurt and fear she have got recently was not heal enough.

Projection

Aside of regression, Hester Prynne also employed projection as her defense mechanism. Cited from Di Giuseppe and Perry (2021) projection is kind of immature defense mechanism which occurred on attributing the feeling of guilty, idea, and impulses to others. In the case of Hester Prynne, she was known as a sinner of adultery, and aware enough to know to the guilty inside of her. Sometimes, she can deal with it but in another time, she needs a release the hurt from it.

“Hast thou not tortured him enough?” said Hester, noticing the old man’s look. ‘Has he not paid thee all?’ “No, no! He has but increased the debt!’ answered the physician, and as he proceeded, his manner lost its fiercer characteristics, and subsided into gloom.”(Hawthorne, 1850, p. 258)

Then, Hester went to meet Roger Chillingworth and talked about Dimmesdale’s bad condition after she met him in the scaffold punishment. She assumed Chillingworth is the reason behind it. Asked him if it was enough to stop the kind of revenge because to Hester, Chillingworth as much evil as necessary to knock down Dimmesdale’s soul and physic.

“And it seemed a fouler offence committed by Roger Chillingworth than any which had since been done him, that, in the time when her heart knew no better, he had persuaded her to fancy herself happy by his side. “Yes, I hate him!” repeated Hester more bitterly than before. “He betrayed me! He has done me worse wrong than I did him!”(Hawthorne, 1850, p. 264)

The person whom Hester Prynne pointed out as the scapegoat was Roger Chillingworth. In the novel, Roger was used to be the husband of her but then, turn into a bad, evil stranger

to her. Because the worse intention of Roger Chillingworth, acting up as good doctor in front of Arthur Dimmesdale just to want a revenge on him. Hester Prynne could not stand anymore when she got the reality that Arthur Dimmesdale become unhealthier every time. Hester Prynne blame on Roger Chillingworth and his revenge, seek on the life of the young clergyman. When she made a meet up again with Roger Chillingworth, she asked him to stop the revenge and being a leech on someone's life. Hester talked that he should be satisfied due to the way Arthur Dimmesdale suffer enough all the time. But then, when Roger Chillingworth said it loud that he cannot lose his grip on the young clergyman due to the true fact between Hester and Dimmesdale are the pair of adultery and it hurt him a lot, Hester Prynne could not accept it. She unconsciously threw the blame on Roger Chillingworth instead of knowing that Arthur Dimmesdale fell sick because of their action (adultery) and the silent of her to not announce him at the time when she was punished in the middle of public.

Hester Prynne projected onto Roger Chillingworth that he betrayed her because his revenge hurt Arthur Dimmesdale, he was also the cruel person. Projecting person commonly tries to protect herself or himself from a conscious of their bad traits or any avoided experience (Holmes, 1978), nevertheless projection is counted into unconscious act because it happens without planning. Cited from Holmes (1978) projecting person usually projected onto someone else who has higher rated than himself or herself. So then, Roger Chillingworth be the subject of Hester's projection because Hester Prynne saw him as he the pitied victim and sit on the higher stage than her.

Roger Chillingworth

Reaction Formation

The first time he arrived in the town after two years exploring the world to get knew acknowledge, Roger Chillingworth was shocked by the existence of his wife, Hester Prynne, standing in the middle of public on the punishment stage while she was holding a baby. Without any clue but anger burn himself, Roger Chillingworth asked one of local people about what is happening. After he know that Hester Prynne did adultery and the baby was hers and there were nothing signs the partner of her adultery will appear in public, it made him got the idea of having new aims in the world.

“His face darkened with some powerful emotion, which, nevertheless, he so instantaneously controlled by an effort of his will, that, save at a single moment, its expression might have passed for calmness. After a brief space, the convulsion grew

almost imperceptible, and finally subsided into the depths of his nature.” (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 92)

Roger Chillingworth employed reaction formation when come to defensive response. It is kind of defense mechanism that occurred to protect from disturbing thought which is a part of threats by release an opposite response from the true feeling (Hanif & Almohammed, 2021). The evident is described obviously by the author, Nathaniel Hawthorne, when the face of Roger Chillingworth became full of anger then, at the next moment, it showed Chillingworth change the responses quickly into the way he must react. The act of his defense mechanism also hid the new evil intention deep down in his heart.

The encounter between him and Hester Prynne privately was in the jail after they got enough time to embarrassed Hester in public. Roger Chillingworth conveyed he was hurt seeing his only wife cheated on him instead being welcome, Hester Prynne who still mentally frighten, got a rude attitude. Chillingworth understood about it, he came to meet Hester just want to know the identity for her adultery partner. Roger Chillingworth suddenly have spirit to take a revenge on him but Hester cannot tell Chillingworth about him. But then, he said that was not a problem for him because even though Hester keeps it silent about the truth, he will always find it right away. Due to get the revenge success, Roger Chillingworth ordered Hester to hide his identity as her husband.

Living along with fake identity, acting like his past life was nothing, Roger Chillingworth made his own success path of revenge. He can finally live together with Arthur Dimmesdale as his private doctor. It was about time to approve his intuition about the strange condition of Dimmesdale. Tracking the life of that clergyman every time then he found out that Arthur Dimmesdale has a secret far away from every people in the town. Sometimes in order to achieve the step in his revenge, Roger Chillingworth was unconsciously showed the act of reaction formation.

“Ah,” replied Roger Chillingworth, with that quietness, which, whether imposed or natural, marked all his deportment, ‘it is thus that a young clergyman is apt to speak. Youthful men, not having taken a deep root, give up their hold of life so easily! And saintly men, who walk with God on earth, would fain be away, to walk with him on the golden pavements of the New Jerusalem.’” (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 182)

According to Purwo and Andayani (2022) because the id and super-ego are contradictive

each other and he or she has high of moral value by the super-ego, the user of reaction formation usually repress their original impulse then release the initial one. So that is why, reaction formation was showed by Roger Chillingworth in his daily activity with Arthur Dimmesdale. He acted sweet and nice every time because his super-ego still holds the moral value even though the id has the opposite need. In order to fulfill the need of id (revenge) but will not cross the super-ego, his defense mechanism was the difference response from what he was feeling. Defense mechanism also activated when it comes to help the user survive from the threats in any form such as trauma, anxiety, anger, or worry (Kramer, 2010). Roger Chillingworth refers to the victim who has worse humanity (Van Kirk, 2023). He was the victim, he was betrayed, and he was hurt, but to let the anger calm, instead of forgive everything in his life, he took a revenge and unconsciously did reaction formation.

Arthur Dimmesdale

Rationalisation

Van Kirk (2023) stated Arthur Dimmesdale is a type of person who weak in moral and Wang (2017) also revealed that he is hypocrite. In the novel, he has a face of god's mouthpiece, people like him even they thought every path of him are sacred and a guidance. On the other hands, actually, he was not as saint as people's opinion. He was a symbolize of human who has sin as the other. Arthur Dimmesdale hides his own secret from every people in the town, that he was an adultery partner of Hester Prynne. The dishonest of him could not help but drown him into the deep suffer. Time by time, Arthur Dimmesdale was going sick because of his guiltiness but never brave to conveyed it publicly. The anxiety of being caught; people mocked him like they did on Hester Prynne, it haunted him every single day and night.

People thought their lovely young clergyman need a doctor to help him get better. So, he lived with Roger Chillingworth as a friend and doctor-patient. Once in a day, it was a normal day for two of them, they talked and discuss about anything. Arthur Dimmesdale asked Roger Chillingworth where the place he got the ugly plant. It was all of the start until he felt uncomfortable with the opinion and replayed by Roger Chillingworth.

“Yet some men bury their secrets thus,” observed the calm physician. “True; there are such men,” answered Mr. Dimmesdale. “But not to suggest more obvious reasons, it may be that they are kept silent by the very constitution of their nature. Or—can we not suppose it?—guilty as they may be, retaining, nevertheless, a zeal for God’s glory and man’s welfare, they shrink from displaying themselves black and filthy in the view of

men; because, thenceforward, no good can be achieved by them; no evil of the past be redeemed by better service." (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 198)

Roger Chillingworth told him that he got hideous plant on someone's burial, right on the chest. For him it was a sign, a person in that burial has a dark secret and never conveyed in front of other people. It was related to Arthur Dimmesdale. They talked about it all along until he could not bear it. However, Arthur Dimmesdale still replayed and gave Roger Chillingworth some good feedback. But it was nothing than his defense mechanism. Annoying conversation triggered his anxious and fear. He, Dimmesdale, believed if there was a person who choose to keep the secret silently so, it was just his or her behavior. Then, even though a person was dishonest, he or she still longing for God's grace and afraid of being a bad person in the eyes of people. Arthur Dimmesdale unconsciously talked about what his feeling but the outcome was defensive due to his anxiety if Roger Chillingworth will know about his dark secret. According to Cherry (2021) people tend to avoid the unpleasant condition from the inside of themselves. It is called as an anxiety, a signal for the ego when something going wrong between the id and super-ego (Cherry, 2021). As the results, defense mechanism exists to help the user survive from a threat that can hurt him or her.

"Would you, therefore, that your physician heal the bodily evil? How may this be unless you first lay open to him the wound or trouble in your soul?" "No, not to thee! not to an earthly physician!" cried Mr. Dimmesdale, passionately, and turning his eyes, full and bright, and with a kind of fierceness, on old Roger Chillingworth. "Not to thee! But, if it be the soul's disease, then do I commit myself to the one Physician of the soul! He, if it stand with His good pleasure, can cure, or he can kill." (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 205)

Two condition above showed that Arthur Dimmesdale employed defense mechanism namely rationalization. Arthur Dimmesdale gave a reason why he could not speak the truth to Riger Chillingworth about his health condition. Arthur Dimmesdale rationalize that Roger Chillingworth was just a human even though people said he was a doctor; thus, he was not able to get him better spiritually. The defense mechanism was employed by Arthur Dimmesdale is rationalization, it was like he was so scared of being caught then defense himself by giving the rational reason in order to justified what he has done (Di Giuseppe &

Perry, 2021).

Projection

Arthur Dimmesdale afraid being caught because he was an adulterer. He was a clergyman, people in Puritan society admired him like he was a saint. He cannot even think what if they know that a person, they love greatly was a sinner. He wanted to convey that he was a sinner but the super-ego of him have distinguish directing. That why Arthur Dimmesdale got moral anxiety because the id and the super-ego of him are not the same, they are contradictive (Chahyawati et al., 2019). Furthermore, he also got neurotic anxiety because the terror followed in every activity he did. The source are unknown but Arthur Dimmesdale always feeling afraid and worry because the felt of guiltiness (Chahyawati et al., 2019). In addition, the character of Arthur Dimmesdale also employed defense mechanism namely projection. However, it is dissimilar with the base of Hester Prynne employed projection. Once again, Arthur Dimmesdale was haunted by anxiety.

“Oh, Hester Prynne, thou little, little knowest all the horror of this thing! And the shame! —the indelicacy! —the horrible ugliness of this exposure of a sick and guilty heart to the very eye that would gloat over it! Woman, woman, thou art accountable for this! —I cannot forgive thee!” “Thou shalt forgive me!” cried Hester, flinging herself on the fallen leaves beside him. “Let God punish! Thou shalt forgive!” (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 292)

“We are not, Hester, the worst sinners in the world. There is one worse than even the polluted priest! That old man’s revenge has been blacker than my sin. He has violated, in cold blood, the sanctity of a human heart. Thou and I, Hester, never did so!” (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 293)

Arthur Dimmesdale and Hester Prynne met in the middle of woods after seven years was separated. Hester told Arthur the truth about Roger Chillingworth. Indeed, he shocked by the information. All the time, the fact that he lived with enemy, the former husband of Hester. After know the true aims of Roger Chillingworth change his identity, Arthur Dimmesdale projected his anxiety to Hester Prynne because he thought the fault was from Hester after all and also projected to Roger Chillingworth’s worst goal of life. He was aware enough that both of them; him and Hester are a sinner but he still defended that what they

did was based on human pure love. Emphasizing that what Roger Chillingworth was doing is the cruel thing ever and thinking that himself was better than other people's sins is the projection of Arthur Dimmesdale (Di Giuseppe & Perry, 2021).

3.2 The Depiction of Defense Mechanism

Character

Nathaniel Hawthorne as the author of the novel *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) is well known for his writing style which contains a lot of symbolism. According to Elmahdi and Hezam (2020), symbolism itself can be used by something else to refer to something that has a deeper meaning than what is visible. In literary works, this is intended to convey emotions and deeper meaning or the author's aim in conveying a meaning. The use of symbolism in literary works can be found in how the author himself describes objects, settings, actions and characters in his story (Liu, 2023).

It was observed that the characters of Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale, and Roger Chillingworth, if we retrace the novel *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), are used by the author to represent something more meaningful than the surface. Hester Prynne in the novel is always associated as a passionate human being and the sin of adultery stated by Wang (2017), which is due to how her passionate nature has brought herself down. This is shown by the author himself how Hester Prynne laments her fate of being punished by the people in the town for her sin unfortunately, people did not immediately forget, forgive, and pity on what she had been done. How the author writes about Hester Prynne's hardship after she was publicly known that she was a sinner, she was resilient and strong in facing her punishment even though she secretly felt hurt proves that her defense mechanism is meant to protect herself from feeling hurt again. The same motive of Roger Chillingworth embodied defense mechanism due to the hurt Hester and Dimmesdale cause that he cannot stand it. Thus, along with revenge he did, his defense mechanism was to hide his truly feeling that why according to Van Kirk (2023), Roger Chillingworth is an example of a person who was hurt but has poor humanity. On the other hands, Arthur Dimmesdale, according to Wang (2017), he represented a hypocritical person. People called him a saint instead a sinner like Hester because Dimmesdale never spoke the truth and always act like he did not do anything worse. It was not do well because his health condition continuously down. Dimmesdale haunted by guilty feeling and it consumed him. His anxiety and fear pushed Dimmesdale to embody defense mechanism in order to release the tense he got.

Events

Martin et al. (2018) revealed that an event can cause changes in a story. This shows that the events described in a literary work are important because if the series of events are combined into one, it will build the plot (Ammanabrolu et al., 2020). There are several incidents in the novel *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) that show how defense mechanisms are described and emerged by the characters, especially Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale, and Roger Chillingworth.

“Knowing well her part, she ascended a flight of wooden steps, and was thus displayed to the surrounding multitude, at about the height of a man’s shoulders above the street. ... Here, there was the taint of deepest sin in the most sacred quality of human life, working such effect, that the world was only the darker for this woman’s beauty, and the more lost for the infant that she had borne.” (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 85)

The punishment Hester got was the reason her life changed. It drove Hester to trauma, anxiety, and any disturbing thought. She accepted it but in the early time, Hester felt that people’s attitude was super rude to her. With her own baby, Hester lived far from people’s crowd. People looked at her like she was dirtier than ever and they should avoid her. They scolded, blame, and cancelled her. As we know, defense mechanisms are a shield for a person to ward off fear, anxiety, anger, pain and various other emotions caused by an imbalance between the id and the Superego. How the local residents mocked her and gave her hateful looks immediately hurt Hester Prynne so that the incident caused shocks to her psychology condition. Because of this, we can see how Hester Prynne shows regression and projection several times with the intention of freeing her fear and pain.

“His face darkened with some powerful emotion, which, nevertheless, he so instantaneously controlled by an effort of his will, that, save at a single moment, its expression might have passed for calmness. After a brief space, the convulsion grew almost imperceptible, and finally subsided into the depths of his nature. When he found the eyes of Hester Prynne fastened on his own, and saw that she appeared to recognize him, he slowly and calmly raised his finger, made a gesture with it in the air, and laid it on his lips.” (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 92)

Meeting with closest person after two years in the odd situation, it was not like he

wanted ever. It obvious that Roger Chillingworth surprised, anger, and full of any mixed feeling although in the snap of time, he could control it and pretended to be calm enough. Chillingworth asked one of local people next to him about the identity of woman who was received punishment—like he was never acquainted Hester before—and about the father of the baby who was not there, stand behind Hester. Thus, local people answered that the father of the baby was unknown because Hester Prynne with her deep down keep it by herself, she was not wanting to give them a single word about her partner of adultery. Roger Chillingworth encounter with Hester established his evil purpose and started the new life. He became evil because he was hurt, he became kind to Dimmesdale even though his true feeling is the opposite. It was only because he was afraid of people finding out that he was Hester Prynne's husband and he was afraid that his actions were not worthy of being judged by others.

“It may be so, ’ said the young clergyman, indifferently, as waiving a discussion that he considered irrelevant or unseasonable. He had a ready faculty, indeed, of escaping from any topic that agitated his too sensitive and nervous temperament.” (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 199)

It was normal to them, to talk and discuss together about anything. Arthur Dimmesdale was the first asked Roger Chillingworth, where is he can find the hideous plants. They threw their own arguments and ideas. But, for sure, Chillingworth’s purpose in the conversation between them is to force Dimmesdale telling his secret that had been bothering him to the point of making him constantly fell sick. The topic really made Dimmesdale feel uncomfortable and end up agreeing what Chillingworth was talking about. The conversation between Roger Chillingworth and Arthur Dimmesdale occurred as the first occasion when the author, Nathaniel Hawthorne, shows readers the life of Dimmesdale and his characterization. From there, Dimmesdale began to use rationalization as his defence mechanism in the conversation between them which made him think that what Chillingworth had done was to hit him as if he had to confess all his darkest secrets.

3.3 The Reason of Nathaniel Hawthorne Addressed Defense Mechanisms

A literary work was influenced by its author’s background life and it is dissimilar with one another. In the case of Nathaniel Hawthorne, he was born in Salem, Massachusetts and his

life was in the middle of Puritan society where his family lives in New England. Hawthorne can easily depict the living of Puritan society because his circumstances were related to Puritan society. Hawthorne respected the way Puritan people persevered in their beliefs. On the other hand, in his *The Scarlet Letter* novel, Hawthorne expressed his critics of the behaviour of Puritan people which was too judgmental toward people whom they thought were bad as if those sinners must be shamed without mercy (Mills, 1948). Hawthorne's critics toward the judgmental behaviour of Puritan people were shown in the way he narrated the life of Hester Prynne as a sinner, the reluctance of Arthur Dimmesdale in being honest just because he was afraid of Puritan people's reaction and the judgement towards himself whom people thought he was a saint, and the silent evil revenge of Roger Chillingworth because Puritan people will blame him on Hester's sin.

"What do we talk of marks and brands, whether on the bodice of her gown or the flesh of her forehead?" cried another female, the ugliest as well as the most pitiless of these self-constituted judges. 'This woman has brought shame upon us all, and ought to die; Is there not law for it? Truly there is, both in the Scripture and the statute book.'" (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 79)

That is the scene where Hester Prynne was announced guilty from adultery. When Hester about to showed her face for the first time after a long time in stay in the prison. People, especially women, and all their judge about punishment upon Hester, thought it was not enough for a sinner like Hester. They assume Hester should receive others terrible punishment due to her ignominy such as death penalty, imprinted the symbol of sinner from heated iron on her forehead, and any heartless, brutal punishment.

"They heard it all, and did but reverence him the more. They little guessed what deadly purport lurked in those self-condemning words. 'The godly youth!' said they among themselves. 'The saint on earth! Alas! if he discern such sinfulness in his own white soul, what horrid spectacle would he behold in thine or mine!'" (Hawthorne, 1850, p. 216)

Hawthorne also put the way Puritans glorified the character of Arthur Dimmesdale down. With Puritans' belief on Arthur Dimmesdale as a saint, they assume him like a pure human among others. Hawthorne showed that Puritans only judge people from one side;

the way Puritans thought that Arthur Dimmesdale was the holiest human being and never will do things that violate the religion. Hawthorne's criticism in his novel towards Puritan society, indirectly shows how society affects psychological conditions. Cited from Bogdanova et al. (2016) and Aparicio (2014) that social interaction in the microsocial circumstance has a crucial role in the development of psychological defence. Using characters such as Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale, and Roger Chillingworth is not merely to symbolize the behaviour, attitude, and traits of real people but also, to bring out how Hawthorne is capable of depicting the various defence mechanisms that were influenced by social interaction and circumstance.

4. CLOSING

Nathaniel Hawthorne has an intention in revealing the good and bad side of society especially the judgmental side of Puritan. In the way of his aim, he used the characters to be a tool even he made them as a symbolization with a deeper meaning. This research can be added to the previous study by Listyowati (2020) who prosecuted the psychology of doing adultery. Using psychoanalysis criticism in analyzing *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) explain the effect of how society, environment, and nature established the condition of someone physics as we know by the characterization and motives on Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale, and Roger Chillingworth. The three of characters in *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) novel; Hester Prynne, Roger Chillingworth, and Arthur Dimmesdale employed defense mechanism such as regression, projection, rationalization, and reaction formation. Hester Prynne who lives in loneliness employed regression and projection, it helps to survive as adulterer in Puritan society, Roger Chillingworth remained a live with evil revenge from a threat to his self-esteem so that, he was employed reaction formation to scope his worry, and Arthur Dimmesdale tried hard enough from threats to his mental due to his own fault in lying to the public that he was the actually Hester's adultery partner. Those reason effected the anxiety, trauma, and worry which caused the unbalances between the role of ide, ego, and super-ego, in the next moment, all of the unpleasant feeling must be released due to avoid damage.

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