

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Background of The Research

Shirley Jackson is one of the most brilliant and influential American author of the twentieth century. She is best known for her gothic works. She is widely acclaimed for her stories and novels of the supernatural, including the well-known short story The Lottery (1948) and the best-selling novel The Haunting of Hill House (1959). Jackson received many awards for her works, some of her short stories have been chosen as Best American Short Stories. She also received the Edgar Allan Poe Award for Louisa, Please Come Home (1960).

We Have Always Lived in the Castle is one of gothic novel written by Shirley Jackson which was published in 1962. This novel was included in the year's Ten Best Novels by Time Magazine. It has been adapted into play in 1966 by Hugh Wheeler, and in 2010 this novel has been staged as musical version by Adam Bock and Todd Almond at Yale Repertory theatre. On March 2002, the main character of this novel, Mary Katherine Blackwood named by *Book Magazine* as seventy-first best character fiction since 1900.

This novel tells about an eighteen years old orphan, Mary Katherine Blackwood who well known as Merricat. She lives isolated with her older sister,

Constance and her uncle, Julian. Constance suffers with agoraphobia<sup>1</sup> that not allows her to go any further than the yard. Uncle Julian needs a wheelchair and not quite in his right mind. The rest of the family was dead in the arsenic incident during family dinner. The arsenic was blend into sugar bowl. Later on, it revealed that Merricat was the one who put the arsenic in the sugar.

The writer is interested to analyze Shirley Jackson's We Have Always Lived In The Castle because the writer found that Merricat, the main character of the novel, has psychological problem. The writer believes that Merricat suffers from antisocial personality disorder. The writer wants to analyze the causes of her antisocial personality disorder. As additional information and to strengthen the analysis, the writer also analyzes the defense mechanisms which are used by Merricat and relate it to her antisocial behavior.

Based on the reason above, the writer wants to analyze Shirley Jackson's We Have Always Lived In The Castle by using psychoanalysis approach and entitled her thesis "**Antisocial Personality Disorder As Seen In Shirley Jackson's We Have Always Lived In The Castle: A Freudian Psychoanalysis.**"

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<sup>1</sup> Agoraphobia is an extreme or irrational fear of open or public places. Oxford Dictionaries. 2016. Oxford University Press. 1 May 2016  
<<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/agoraphobia>>.

## **1.2 The Identification of the Problem**

In this research, the writer assumes that the main character of this novel, Merricat, suffers from antisocial personality disorder. Merricat poisoned her family by using arsenic poison. There are some causes of her antisocial personality disorder. It can be seen from her past life and childhood experiences and the way she copes her unpleasant feelings. The writer believes that unhealthy family environment and fear of loss are the reason for her psychological problem. The writer also believes that there is unconscious motive behind her psychological problem. Therefore, the writer focuses this research on analyzing the causes of Merricat's antisocial personality disorder by using Freudian psychoanalysis. To strengthen the analysis, the writer also analyzes the defense mechanisms which are used by Merricat to cope with her unpleasant feeling.

## **1.3 The Scope of The Research**

Based on the problem above, here are the main objectives of this research:

1. The causes of Merricat's antisocial personality disorder.
2. The types of defense mechanisms which are used by Merricat.

#### 1.4 The Objectives of The Research

This research is aimed to analyze the main character in Shirley Jackson's We Have Always Lived In The Castle by applying psychoanalysis approach and defense mechanisms proposed by Sigmund Freud. The writer wants to analyze the causes of her psychological problem. The writer also wants to increase the number of research concerned with We Have Always Lived In The Castle and Psychoanalysis character. And also with the research, the writer as an English literature student wants to increase the awareness of antisocial personality disorder as portrayed in literary work amongst the public.

#### 1.5 The Review of Previous Studies

In conducting the research, some previous studies are used as references and comparisons. There are some previous studies that can be used. The first research is master's thesis by Roline Sluis entitle The Many Faces OF The Housewife: The Female Gothic In Shirley Jackson's Fiction (2014). In her research, Sluis discussed the psychologies of three protagonists in Shirley Jackson's fiction and relate it to Jackson's background as housewife. Those protagonists are Natalie Waitie in the Hangsaman, Eleanor Vance in The Haunting of Hill House, and Merricat in the We Have Always Lived In The Castle. She believes that those three protagonists are haunted by the same demons of the ideology they live in. she argues that Jackson's trope for her gothic works is the house, or the gothic castle. The house is a symbol of

the self, or the mother. House is a place for protection but also confinement. She also believes that the function of the house is as a symbol of the dominant ideology as well as the psychology of protagonists. By describing each protagonist she jumps to the conclusion that the three novels could be seen as forming a kind of female life cycle. Sluis's research is totally different with this research although she also uses Shirley Jackson's We Have Always Lived in the Castle as one of the object of her research. What makes it distinct to the writer's research is Sluis uses three novels as her object and compare it to the author's background while the writer's research does not relate to the author.

Another research related to the novel is master thesis written by Bettye Alexander Cook entitled Gothic Elements in the Novels of Shirley Jackson (1972). In this research, Cook concerned with gothic elements in six novels of Shirley Jackson. She found that the six novels of Shirley Jackson are notably gothic. Since the writer only analyzes Jackson's We Have Always Lived in the Castle, the writer only rolls out Cook's research about it. According to Cook, We Have Always Lived in the Castle contains of gothic elements which are the secluded setting, eccentric characters, bizarre circumstances, interest in abnormal psychology, moral ambiguity, and touches of the supernatural and suspense commonly associated with the gothic tale which is set in rural sunshine. Those elements combine to create unusual gothic. Cook's research helps the writer to understand elements in the novel deeply.

The last research is thesis entitle Defense Mechanism In The Main Character Of Tennessee William's A StreetCar Named Desire (2011) by Meiriza Lidya, a student of English department in Andalas Univeristy. In her thesis, Lidya discusses

the psychological conflicts of main character in Tennessee William's play A Streetcar Named Desire. She also analyzes the self defense mechanisms which are used by the main character to face her conflicts. From Lidya's thesis, the writer can understand more how to analyze the psychoanalysis and defense mechanism in a literary work.

From the elaboration of the previous works above, all the works focused on analyzing Shirley Jackson's We Have Always Lived in the Castle and defense mechanism theories which helps the writer analyze this novel. So, the writer will use their researches as references.

### 1.6 Theoretical Framework

This research focuses to objective research. It proposes that one must find what happens within a literary work. According to Abrams, in A Glossary Of Literary Terms (1999), Objective criticism deals with a work of literature as something which stands free from what is often called an "extrinsic" relationship to the poet, or to the audience, or to the envioning world. Instead it describes the literary product as a self-sufficient and autonomous object, or else as a world-in-itself, which is to be contemplated as its own end, and to be analyzed and judged solely by "intrinsic" criteria such as its complexity, coherence, equilibrium, integrity, and the interrelations of its component elements (63).

Hence, the writer applies Psychoanalysis criticism as the basic criticism to the novel. Psychoanalysis was proposed by Sigmund Freud. It attempts to study the human behavior. Freud separated mental life into *unconscious* and *conscious* level

and focused on investigating the level of unconscious. The unconscious contains all those drives, urges, or instincts that are beyond our awareness but that nevertheless motivate most of our words, feelings, and actions. Although we may be conscious of our overt behaviors, we often are not aware of the mental processes that lie behind them. The consciousness can be defined as those mental elements in awareness at any given point in time. It is the only level of mental life directly available for us.

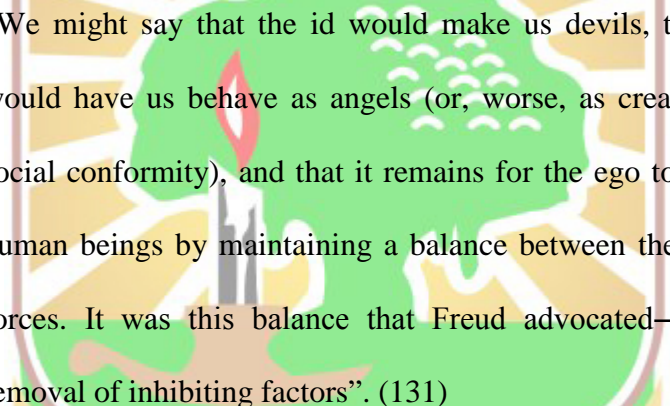
Later Freud suggested a three part model of psyche, dividing it into the *id*, the *super-ego*, and the *ego*. According to Guerin and friends in his book, A Handbook of Critical Approaches to literature (1999), the *id* is the reservoir of libido, the primary source of all psychic energy. It functions to fulfill the primordial life principle, which Freud considers to be the *pleasure principle* (129). The *Id* has no contact with reality, it urges constantly to reduce tension by satisfying basic desire. In short, the *id* is all of our aggressions and desire. The *id* is responsible for our basic drives such as food, sex, and basic impulses.

The *ego* is the only region of the mind in contact with reality. It grows out of the *id* during infancy and becomes a person's sole source of communication with the external world. It is governed by the reality principle, which is tries to substitute for the pleasure principle for the *id*. Guerin compare the *ego* and *id* by stating that the *ego* stands for reason and circumspection while the *id* stands for the untamed passions. (130)

The *superego* represents the moral and ideal aspects of personality and is guided by the moralistic and idealistic principles as opposed to the pleasure principle of the *id* and the realistic principle of the *ego*. The *superego* grows out of the *ego*, and

like the ego, it has no energy of its own. In short, the *superego* works oppositely to the id. The superego controls our sense of right, wrong, and guilty. Guerin states that, the *superego* serves to repress or inhibit the drives of the id, to block off and thrust back into unconscious those impulses toward pleasure that society regards as unacceptable, such as overt aggression, sexual passions, and the Oedipal instinct. (131)

Psychological problem appears when the three psyches: *id*, *ego*, and *superego* are not balance. Guerin also states that:



“We might say that the id would make us devils, that the superego would have us behave as angels (or, worse, as creatures of absolute social conformity), and that it remains for the ego to keep us healthy human beings by maintaining a balance between these two opposing forces. It was this balance that Freud advocated—not a complete removal of inhibiting factors”. (131)

Based on quotation above, it can be concluded that the balancing of the three psyches: *id*, *ego*, and *superego* are the most important thing to keep healthy personality. When there is unbalancing amongst the three psyches, there will be psychological problem

In this research, the writer wants to see how the main character becomes an antisocial by analyzing her past life. It can be seen from her childhood experiences and the family environment. Lois Tyson states in his book Critical Theory Today (2006):



“Through psychoanalytic lens, we see that it is compromised of individual human beings, each with a psychological history that begins in childhood experiences in the family and each with patterns of adolescent and adult behavior that are the direct result of that early experience.” (12)

Another statement from Tyson which will be used by the writer to analyze this research is “the *family* is very important in psychoanalysis theory because we are each product of the role we are given in the family-complex” (13). The writer found that there is sexual desire of the main character towards her sister which becomes her unconscious motive to poison her family in this novel. Woman whose sexual desire is directed toward women is called lesbian (324). Tyson also states that:

“Some lesbian theorists have suggested that lesbian identity is not restricted to the sexual domain but consists of directing bulk of one’s attention and emotional energy to other women as and having other women as one’s primary source of emotional sustenance and psychological support.” (324)

For supporting the research, the writer rolls out the defense mechanisms which are used by the main character to overcome her unpleasant feeling. The writer also uses Lois Tyson’s Critical Theory Today (2006) as the source of this analysis. Tyson states that defenses are the processes by which the contents of our unconscious. In other words, they are the process by which we keep the repressed in order to avoid knowing what we feel we cannot handle knowing. Defenses include selective perception, selective memory, denial, avoidance, displacement, projection,

and regression (15). The writer assumes that the main character of this novel uses two kinds of defense mechanisms, denial and displacement. Denial does by believing that the problem does not exist or the unpleasant incident never happened. Displacement does by “taking it out” on someone or something less threatening than the person who caused fear, hurt, frustration, or anger (15).

### **1.7 The Methods of The Research**

In conducting the research, the writer follows three steps. Those three steps are collecting the data, analyzing the data, and presenting the result analysis. In the first step, collecting the data, the writer applies library research method, the research has two kinds of data, the primary and secondary data. The primary data taken from the literary work itself, We Have Always Lived In The Castle by Shirley Jackson. The secondary data are collected from literary theory books, journals, essays and articles related to the topic of the research. These data are collected by reading books, journal, essays, theses and browsing internet.

The next step is analyzing the data. In analyzing the data, the writer uses some books and other sources that deals with the concepts of psychoanalysis and defense mechanisms by Sigmund Freud.

The last step is presenting the result of the research. In presenting the result of the research, the descriptive method will be applied since the research is a qualitative one. Qualitative research is a descriptive research which is the data is collected in words rather than numbers.

