

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Literature is a media to express ideas, thoughts, or even feelings and emotions through writings in fictions (prose, poetry, play) or nonfictions (biography, autobiography, memoir, essays). In the case of the media for expressions, literary works, specifically, fictions or nonfictions tells stories. One of the fictional works is novels.

Novel is one of author's works which describes how a character is presented. It also describes events that are happening in the novel. Novels are considered to be fictional. When analyzing novel as a part of a study, we are told whether the storyline or the thoughts of the characters are based on the author's psychology or not.

In the analysis of the characters' psychological condition, the characterizations of the characters are going to be discussed. Literature and psychology are related to each other. Literature reflects human life such as feelings, thoughts, imaginations and perception that could be viewed by the personal judgment. Psychology of literature is the psychological study of the authors as a creative process. It is also a study of psychology where the laws are presented within the works of literature that affects the readers upon its stories (Welleck and Warren. 1970:81).

One of the novels that reveals the psychological problems is the novel *Silent Cry* by Kenzaburo Oe. This novel is one of the novels that has ever written by Oe. This novel describes the various conflicts experienced by two brothers

Mitsusaburo and Takashi. Takashi is a closed person and his life full of mystery.

Takashi is described as really admiring figure of his great-grandfather who was a pioneer in the rebellion in 1860. His memories of his grandfather was very intense and always overshadowed himself. He wasn't happy with things that intersect with his opinion about these figures, in particular towards different opinions and memories by his own older sibling Mitsusaburo. Because this makes Takashi become a cruel figure.

Meanwhile, the feeling of death due to the death of his sister was carried out suicidally because of himself and feelings of revenge for his brother's death beginners who were killed by the emperor's soldiers made Takashi's figure turn cruel and it was very cruel to raise a rebellion against the emperor in his village. All means carried out in order to achieve a successful rebellion.

The *Silent Cry* tells the story of two brothers, Mitsusaburo and Takashi, who return to their ancestral village and are confronted by personal and familial traumas that mirror the broader national crisis of identity. As the story unfolds, the novel exposes not only the characters' fractured relationship with each other, but also their internal struggles with shame, guilt, suppressed desire, and emotional detachment. These themes are deeply rooted in the unresolved tensions between the characters' past and present, and in the psychological burden of their family history. Their emotional and mental fragmentation signals a profound identity crisis, making the novel an ideal subject for psychoanalytic literary analysis.

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, particularly his structural model of the psyche—id, ego, and superego—provides a useful framework for examining the inner lives of Ōe's characters. Freud postulates that human behavior is the result of the dynamic interaction between unconscious desires (id), the rational self (ego), and internalized moral standards (superego). These elements are in constant conflict, and when unresolved, they result in psychological disturbances such as repression, anxiety, guilt, and identity confusion. Applying this theory to *The Silent Cry* allows the researcher to unpack the characters' motivations and behaviors as expressions of deeper unconscious processes. Through this lens, the novel becomes more than a social critique or historical reflection; it becomes a case study in psychic fragmentation and emotional survival.

Additionally, the novel explores the effects of generational trauma, a theme that resonates strongly within the context of both the characters' personal experiences and postwar Japanese society. The emotional wounds passed down from previous generations marked by mental illness, suicide, and historical shame form an invisible yet powerful force shaping the characters' current psychological state. The failure to process this inherited trauma contributes to self-disintegration, as seen in Mitsusaburo's emotional paralysis and Takashi's radical rebellion. Their defense mechanisms ranging from repression to projection further illustrate Freud's theories of the unconscious mind's attempts to cope with unbearable truths.

The crisis of identity depicted in *The Silent Cry* is not merely individual, but symbolic of Japan's postwar struggle to reconstruct its national and cultural identity. The dislocation felt by the characters mirrors the spiritual and ideological uncertainty of a society caught between tradition and modernity, between shame over its past and a desire for reinvention. Thus, the novel offers fertile ground for exploring how psychoanalysis and literature intersect to portray identity loss, trauma, and psychological survival.

This thesis, therefore, aims to analyze *The Silent Cry* using Freudian psychoanalysis to reveal how the novel represents internal conflicts through the interplay of id, ego, and superego, as well as how it portrays identity crisis, generational trauma, and self-disintegration. By focusing on the psychological dimensions of the characters, particularly Takashi and Mitsusaburo, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of Ōe's literary exploration of the human mind under the weight of history, family, and internal repression.

Apart from that, there are feelings of anxiety, inner pressure, doubts and inner fears carried out a rebellion, resulting in Takashi acting out of bounds mental disorders such as: killing a village teenager, sleeping with his older brother's wife, and then shot a gun at his own head.

Based on the story description above, the novel *Silent Cry* reveals many problems Takashi's character's psychology in living his life. Therefore the author is interested to discuss the novel *Silent Cry* from a psychological perspective. Thus, deep in discussing this thesis, the author chose the title "IDENTITY CRISIS

IN THE SHADOW OF TRAUMA: PSYCHOANALYSIS OF THE MAIN
CHARACTER IN KENZABURO OE NOVEL *THE SILENT CRY*".

1.2. Problem Identification

Based on the research focus, the formulation of the problems are stated below :

1. What are the forms of identity crisis in the novel?
2. How are the forms of identity crisis revealed in the novel?

1.3. Objective of the Research

The objective of the research is the main character named Takashi in the novel “Silent Cry” written by Kenzaburo Oe. The writer explains about identity crisis such as intergenerational trauma, self disintegration, ego mechanism defense psychological and problem experienced by Takashi is the some types in psychoanalysis theory. Some events that happened in the novel are caused by *id, ego, and superego*.

1.4 Scope

This study is limited to a psychoanalytic literary analysis of the main character in *The Silent Cry* by Kenzaburō Ōe, using the theoretical framework of Sigmund Freud psychoanalysis. The analysis is focused on four interconnected psychological dimensions to uncover the depth of the character’s internal conflict and emotional suffering. These are: the structure of the psyche (id, ego, and superego), intergenerational trauma, self disintegration, and ego defense mechanisms.

1. Structure of the Psyche (Id, Ego, and Superego)

This section examines the dynamics of the Freud tripartite model: the id (unconscious desires and instincts), the ego (the rational mediator between the id and the external world), and the superego (internalized moral values and social norms). The analysis explores how these components interact within the protagonist's mind, generating tension, guilt, and psychological conflict. Particular focus is placed on how the ego struggles to manage the opposing forces of desire and morality, especially under the weight of trauma.

2. **Intergenerational Trauma**

This part investigates how past traumas such as familial shame, inherited guilt, and historical wounds are unconsciously transmitted across generations and internalized by the protagonist. The study explores how this inherited trauma influences his psychological state, emotional responses, and life choices. Trauma is viewed not as a singular event, but as a psychological legacy that shapes identity and contributes to the character's internal suffering.

3. **Self Disintegration**

This component focuses on the breakdown of the main character unified sense of self. The analysis considers how unresolved trauma and overwhelming inner conflict cause a fragmentation of identity, leading to feelings of alienation, paralysis, and existential despair. This ego disintegration reflects a loss of psychological cohesion, where the character becomes disconnected from his own values, desires, and direction in life.

4. **Ego Defense Mechanisms**

The study also identifies the unconscious defense mechanisms employed by the main character to cope with anxiety and psychological distress, such as repression, denial, projection, and regression. These mechanisms serve as temporary means of self-protection but often hinder emotional growth and healing. The analysis highlights how these defenses manifest in the character's behavior and interactions, reflecting his struggle to manage deep internal pain.

This research is limited to a close reading of the literary text and does not seek to provide a clinical diagnosis or a historical biographical interpretation. Instead, it focuses on how *Ōe's* narrative portrays the psychological complexity of the main character through symbolic, emotional, and structural dimensions. By combining these four psychoanalytic perspectives, the study offers a comprehensive interpretation of the character's inner life and psychological development.

1. 5. The significance of the Research

a. Theoretical use

Theoretically, this research is to make the reader understand the role of psychoanalysis in analyzing the main character.

b. Practical use:

Practically, this research is to make people not imitate the act, tragedy, or violence in the story because the psychoanalysis theory can utter the fact.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents any related that able to support this research. It is begins with psychoanalysis personality theory and identity crisis, later it's also presents some review of previous study.

2.1 Related Theory

2.1.1 Psychology of Literature

The word psychology was formed by combining the Greek psyche means breath, principle of lie, life, soul with logia which comes from the Greek logos means speech, word, reason (merriam-webster.com). Earlier, it is stated that psychology is the knowledge of the soul. Nowadays, psychology is concerned with the science or study of the mind and behavior. Many branches of psychology are differentiated by the specific field to which they belong, such as animal psychology, child psychology, and sports psychology.

Whilhelm Wundt, father of psychology, in his book "Principles of Psychological Psychology" (1904:1) told that Psychology pays attention to all those life phenomena that are presented to us as physical processes in sensory perception, and therefore constitute part of the entire environment that we call the external world. On the other hand, psychology attempts to explain the interconnection of the processes indicated by our own consciousness, or the interconnection of the processes that we infer from this manifestation of the physical life of other organisms, to show that existence is related to our own consciousness. Similar consciousness. As written in simply psychology.org psychology is the scientific study of the mind and behavior, according to the American Psychological Association.

Psychology is a multifaced discipline and includes many sub-fields of study such areas as human development, sports, health, clinical, social behavior and cognitive processes. Psychology is a novelty science, with most advances

happening over the past 150 years or so. The emphasis was a philosophical one, with great thinkers such as Socrates (470 BC – 399 BC) influencing Plato (428/427 BC – 348/347 BC), who in turn influenced Aristotle (384 BC – 322 BC).

There is an intimate relation between psychology studies and literary works. Literary works such novel contain a elements of psychology inside which is shown by the characterization of the character in the novel both major or minor character. Literature as written on journal *Personality and Individual Differences : Literature in Psychology – Psychology in literature* (2014) which intertwines within such fields as history, philosophy, sociology, psychology and so on is a discipline wherein language is used as a medium of expression so as to interpret man, existence and culture, personality and individual differences which have always been studied and discussed by writers, philosophers, artists, psychologists and psychiatrists. David Lodge in his work titled *Consciousness and the Novel Connected Essays* explains the meaning of literature as follows : “... literature is a record of human consciousness, the richest and most comprehensice we have. Lyric poetry is arguably man’s most successful effortnto describe qualia. The novel is arguably man’s most successful effort to describe the experience of individual human beings moving through space and time” (2002:10). The meaning of psychology in literature is explained by Wellek and Warren (1963:81) as follows: “By ‘psychology of literature’, we may mean the psychological study of the writer, as type and as individual, or the study of the creative process, or the study of the psychological types and laws present within works of literature, or, finally, the effects of literature upon its readers (audiencepsychology)”.

2.2 Psychoanalysis Theory

A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud (1920 : 7) explained that psychoanalysis is a method of treating nervous patients medically. In psychoanalysis nothing occurs but the interchange of words between the patient and the physician. The patient talks, tells of his past experiences and present impressions, complains, confesses his wishes and emotions. Freud sets forth with a frankness almost startling the difficulties and limitations of psychoanalysis, and also describes its main methods and results as only a master and originator of a new school of thought can do. On Studies on Hysteria (1893-1895 : 375) a new method of psychoanalysis is a little intricate, but it is irreplaceable, so fertile has it shown itself to be in throwing light upon the obscure paths of unconscious ideation. By means of that procedure – this is not the place in which to describe it hysterical symptoms are traced back to their origin, which is always found in some event of the subject's sexual life appropriate for the production of a distressing emotion. If psychoanalysis now plays a role in American intellectual life, or if it does so in the future, a large part of this result will have to be attributed to this and other activities. In a psychoanalysis one learns to interpret propinquity in time as representing connection in subject-matter. Two thoughts which occur in immediate sequence without any apparent connection are in fact part of a single unity which has to be discovered; in just the same way, if someone write an 'a' and a 'b' in succession, they have to be pronounced as a single syllable 'ab'. Psychoanalysis is justly suspicious. One of its rules is that whatever interrupts the progress of analytic work is a resistance (page: 951). In the psychoanalysis of neurosis, these two theorems are most fully utilized-when conscious and purposeful thoughts are discarded, the hidden purposeful thoughts will control the trend of thoughts, while the superficial associations are only suppressed. Replaced by deeper associations. Indeed, these theorems have become basic pillars of psychoanalytic technique. There are some theory in psychoanalysis such as Anxiety, Structure of Personality, Topography of Mind, and Defense Mechanism. But the writer here only explain some that related in her analysis.

2.2.1 Structure of Personality

According to Freud, human personality develops from the interactions among what he proposed as the three fundamental structures of the human mind: the id, ego, and superego. Conflicts among these three structures, and our efforts to find balance among what each of them “desires”, determines how we behave and approach the world. What balance we strike in any given situation determines how we will resolve the conflict between two overarching behavioral tendencies: our biological aggressive and pleasure-seeking drives vs. our socialized internal control over those drives (courses.lumenlearning.com). The job of the ego is to balance the aggressive/pleasure-seeking drives of the id with the moral control of the superego. In short, id is represent to something pleasant and superego is the moral value of it, while ego is the bridge between two thoughts that balancing them. Freud believed that the id, ego, and superego are in constant conflict and that adult personality and behavior are rooted in the results of these internal struggles throughtout childhood. He believed that a person who has a strong ego has a healthy personality and that imbalances in this system can lead to anxiety and depression and unhealthy behaviors.

2.2.1. 1 *id*

The id is the most primitive of the three structures, is concerned with instan gratification of basic physical needs and urges. It operates entirely unconsciously (outside of conscious thought). For example, if your id walked past a stranger eating ice cream, it would most likely take the ice cream for itself. It does not know, or care, that it is rude to take something belonging to someone else; it would care only that you wanted the ice cream.

The id is driven by the pleasure principle, which strives for immediate gratification of all desires, wants, and needs. If these needs are not satisfied immediately, the result is a state anxiety or tension. The if is very important early in life because it ensures that an infant’s needs are met. If the infant is hungry or uncomfortable, they will cry until the demands of the id are satisfied. Young infants are ruled entirely by the id, there is no reasoning with them when these

needs demand satisfaction. However, immediately fulfilling these needs is not always realistic or even possible. If we were ruled entirely by the pleasure principle, we might find ourselves grabbing the things that we want out of other people's hands to satisfy our own cravings. (verywellmind.com).

2.2.1. 2 *Ego*

The functional importance of the *ego* is manifested in the fact that normally control over the approaches to motility devolves upon it. It is easy to see that the *ego* is that part of the *id* which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world acting in a sense it is an extension of the surface-differentiation. Moreover, the *ego* has the task of bringing the influence of the external world to bear upon the *id* and its tendencies, and endeavours to substitute the realityprinciple for the pleasureprinciple which reigns supreme in the *id*. In the *ego* perception plays the part which in the *id* devolves upon instinct. The *ego* represents what we call reason and sanity, in contrast to the *id* which contains the passions. All this falls into line with popular distinctions which we are all familiar with; at the same time, however, it is only to be regarded as holding good in an average or 'ideal' case.

In contrast to the instinctual *id* and the moral *superego*, the *ego* is the rational, pragmatic part of our personality. It is less primitive than the *id* and is partly conscious and partly unconscious. It is what Freud considered to be the "self", and its job is to balance the demands of the *id* and *superego* in the practical context of reality. So, if you walked past the stranger with ice cream one more time, your *ego* would mediate the conflict between your *id* ("I want that ice cream right now") and *superego* ("it's wrong to take someone else's ice cream") and decide to go buy your own ice cream. While this may mean you have to wait 10 more minutes, which would frustrate your *id*, your *ego* decides to make that sacrifice as part of the compromise-satisfying your desire for ice cream while also avoiding an unpleasant social situation and potential feelings of shame.

2.2.1. 3 *Superego*

The considerations that led us to assume the existence of a differentiating grade within the *ego*, which may be called the ego-ideal or *superego*, have been set forth elsewhere. The new proposition which must now be gone into is that this part of the *ego* is less closely connected with consciousness than the rest. The *superego* is however not merely a deposit left by the earliest object choices of the *id*; it also represents an energetic reaction-formation against those choices. The differentiation of the superego from the *ego* is no matter of chance; it stands as the representative of the most important events in the development both of the individual and of the race; indeed, by giving permanent expression to the influence of the parents it perpetuates the existence of the factors to which it owes its origin. The *superego* is concerned with social rules and morals-similar to what many people call their “conscience” or their “moral compass”. It develops as a child learns what their culture considers right and wrong. If your superego walked past the same stranger, it would not take their ice cream because it would know that that would be rude. However, if both your *id* and your superego were involved, and your *id* was strong enough to override your superego’s concern, you would still take the ice cream, but afterward you would most likely feel guilty and shame over your actions.

2.2.2 Topography of Mind

Freud delineated the mind in the distinct levels, each with their own roles and functions. The preconscious consists of anything that could potentially be brought into the conscious mind. The conscious mind contains all of the thoughts, memories, feelings, and wishes of which we are aware at any given moment. The unconscious mind is a reservoir of feelings, thoughts, urges, and memories that are outside of our conscious awareness. Freud likened the three levels of mind to an iceberg (verywellmind.com). the top of the iceberg that you can see above the water represents the conscious mind. The part of the iceberg that is submerged below the water, but is still visible, is the preconscious. The bulk of the iceberg that lies unseen beneath the waterline represents the unconscious.

2.2.2.1 Conscious

Freud “The Ego and the Id” (1927/2013 : 5) said that consciousness is the essence of mental life, but is obliged to regard consciousness as one property of mental life, which may co-exist along with its other properties or may be absent. The term ‘conscious’ is to start with a purely descriptive one, resting on a perception of the most direct and certain character. Experience shows, next, that a mental element (for instance, an idea) is not as a rule permanently conscious. On the contrary, a state of consciousness is characteristically very transitory; an idea that is conscious now is no longer so a moment later, although it can become so again under certain conditions that are easily brought about. Conscious is the aspect of our mental processing that we can think and talk about rationally. This also includes our memory, which is not always part of consciousness but can be retrieved easily and brought into awareness.

2.2.2. 2 Preconscious/Subconscious

The whole conduct of our life is constantly influenced by subconscious ideas (Freud:199). The preconscious contains thoughts and feelings that a person is not currently aware of, but which can easily be brought to consciousness (1924). It exists just below the level of consciousness, before the unconscious mind. The preconscious is like a mental waiting room, in which thoughts remain until they succeed in attracting the eye of the conscious (Freud:306).

2.2.2.3 Unconscious

Unconscious in this sense of the word coincides with ‘latent and capable of becoming conscious’ (The Ego and the Id : 5). The unconscious mind is the primary source of human behavior. Like an iceberg, the most important part of the mind is the part you cannot see. The unconscious contains all sorts of significant and disturbing material which we need to keep out of awareness because they are too threatening to acknowledge fully, the unconscious mind acts as a repository, a ‘cauldron’ of primitive wishes and impulse kept at bay and mediated by the preconscious area. The unconscious mind contains our biologically based instincts (eros and thanatos) for the primitive urges for sex and aggression (Freud, 1915).

Freud argued that our primitive urges often do not reach consciousness because they are unacceptable to our rational, conscious selves. He emphasized the importance of the unconscious mind, and a primary assumption of Freudian theory is that the unconscious mind governs behavior to a greater degree than people suspect. Indeed, the goal of psychoanalysis is to reveal the use of such defense mechanisms and thus make the unconscious conscious.

2.2.3 Defense Mechanism

People use a range of defense mechanisms (such as repression) to avoid knowing what their unconscious motives and feelings are. Defense mechanisms are behaviors people use to separate themselves from unpleasant events, actions, or thoughts (healthline.com). These psychological strategies may help people put distance between themselves and threats or unwanted feelings, such as guilt or shame. The idea of defense mechanisms come from psychoanalytic theory, a psychological perspective of personality that sees personality as the interaction between three components: id, ego, and superego. First proposed by Sigmund Freud, this theory has evolved over time and contends that behaviors, like defense mechanisms, are not under a person's conscious control. In fact, most people do them without realizing the strategy they're using.

2.3 Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism

Psychoanalytic literary criticism is a method of analyzing texts through the lens of psychoanalysis, particularly the theories established by Sigmund Freud and later developed by theorists like Carl Jung, Jacques Lacan, and others. This approach explores the unconscious motivations of characters, the psychological mechanisms that drive behavior, and the symbolic meanings hidden within the text. It assumes that literature, like dreams, reflects repressed desires, unresolved conflicts, and inner turmoil.

Freud's structural model of the psyche—id, ego, and superego—serves as a foundational framework in understanding character motivation and psychological depth. Additionally, Freudian theory emphasizes concepts like the unconscious mind, defense mechanisms, and psychosexual development, which provide insights into character disintegration and trauma.

2.4 Generational Trauma

2.4.1 Definition and Theory

Generational trauma, also known as intergenerational or transgenerational trauma, refers to the transmission of historical or familial trauma from one generation to the next. Scholars such as Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart and Yael Danieli have explored how trauma does not end with the individual but is inherited—psychologically and emotionally—by descendants.

In psychoanalytic theory, this transmission occurs through unconscious processes. The unresolved grief, shame, and anxiety of one generation are often projected onto the next, shaping identity, emotional expression, and even bodily symptoms. Cathy Caruth (1996) highlights that trauma often returns through repetition, flashbacks, or unconscious behaviors, which may not be fully understood by those who inherit it.

2.4.2 Application in Literature

In literary studies, generational trauma is examined by tracing characters' inherited burdens. These may manifest as inherited guilt, silence, compulsive behavior, or psychological fragmentation. In *The Silent Cry*, Takashi and Mitsusaburo's lives are heavily shaped by the past—family disgrace, war trauma, and ancestral shame—all of which influence their psychological conditions and actions.

2.5 Self Disintegration

2.5.1 Definition and Psychoanalytic Basis

Self-disintegration refers to the psychological breakdown of the cohesive sense of self. In Freudian terms, it can be seen as a failure of the ego to mediate between the id's impulses and the superego's constraints. When trauma, repression, or unresolved conflict overwhelms the ego, the subject may experience identity fragmentation, depersonalization, or mental collapse.

Donald Winnicott's theory of the "false self" and Heinz Kohut's theory of self-psychology

elaborate on how early relational failures and trauma can cause the individual to lose a stable sense of identity. In literature, this disintegration is often portrayed through unreliable narration, inner conflict, dissociation, or contradictory actions.

2.5.2 Manifestation in Fiction

In *The Silent Cry*, Mitsusaburo's inner monologue and physical ailments reflect the disintegration of self. His inability to confront his family history, coupled with his brother's radical ideology and the burden of his disabled son, leads to psychic breakdown. Self-disintegration becomes a central theme that mirrors postwar Japan's loss of cultural and national identity.

2.6 Ego Defense Mechanisms

2.6.1 Conceptual Background

Freud introduced the concept of ego defense mechanisms as unconscious strategies the ego uses to manage anxiety, conflict, and unacceptable impulses. Anna Freud expanded this theory, identifying various mechanisms such as repression, denial, projection, rationalization, sublimation, and regression.

Defense mechanisms serve to protect the individual from emotional pain but often distort reality. Though helpful in the short term, they may lead to long-term psychological complications, especially when overused or inappropriate.

2.6.2 Relevance in Literary Characters

In literary characters, ego defense mechanisms are often used to understand behavior that seems irrational or contradictory. In *The Silent Cry*, Takashi rationalizes violence and revolution as a form of higher purpose, while Mitsusaburo represses his emotions and distances himself from his family's past. These defense strategies reveal deeper psychological wounds and internal conflicts that the characters are unable to consciously process.

2.7 Previous Studies

Several scholarly works have examined trauma and psychoanalysis in Japanese literature. Notably, Susan Napier's studies on postwar Japanese narratives discuss how trauma and alienation shape postwar identities. John Whittier Treat's *Writing Ground Zero* explores how Japanese literature processes national trauma through personal narrative. While these studies provide insights into trauma and historical memory, few have specifically applied psychoanalytic theory to *The Silent Cry* with a focus on generational trauma, self-disintegration, and defense mechanisms.

Therefore, this thesis seeks to fill that gap by analyzing the psychological depth of *The Silent Cry* through Freudian psychoanalysis, particularly focusing on how trauma is inherited and how characters psychologically respond through ego defenses and personal fragmentation.