

**ELEANOR'S ANXIETY AND DEFENSE MECHANISM IN  
HONEYMAN'S *ELEANOR OLIPHANT IS COMPLETELY FINE***

**THESIS**

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK  
IBRAHIM MALANG  
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HONEYMAN’S *ELEANOR OLIPHANT IS COMPLETELY FINE***

**THESIS**

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**2022**

## STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

I state that the entitled “**Eleanor’s Anxiety and Defense Mechanism in Honeyman’s Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine**” is the original work of mine. I do not involve any materials priorly written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection or claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, 16 September 2022

The researcher



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## APPROVAL SHEET

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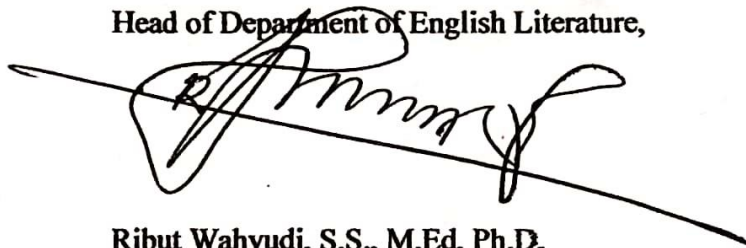
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## **MOTTO**

“For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease.” –Al-Inshirah 94:5

“Hard work will never betray you.” –Kim Junkyu of Treasure

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to my parents. Especially, to my mother who has always been patient to take care of me. And to my father who is already in heaven, I dedicated this thesis for him. My sisters who support me through their motivation. Finally, me and myself, who has always believed to finish this thesis and keep it up. May The Almighty God always bless and hope you all receive a lot of happiness in the entire life.

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*Assalamu'alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

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Firstly, I would like to thank my advisor, Miss Whida Rositama, M.Hum, for helping me patiently to accomplish the thesis. I also would like to thank my former and recent academic advisor, Mr. Miftahul Huda, M.Pd and Mr. Agwin Degaf, M.A. Apart from that, I would like to thank all of the lecturers in English Literature Department for their knowledges. Then, I would like to thank the author of the novel, Gail Honeyman, for her novel, *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*, which being the object research of the thesis.

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Moreover, I hope the readers would receive knowledges from this thesis that far from perfect and still have multiple flaws. I hope they could give any suggestions for this thesis in the future.

Malang, 19 September 2022

The researcher

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## ABSTRACT

Azizah, Hafidzatul (2022) *Eleanor's Anxiety and Defense Mechanism in Honeyman's Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor Whida Rositama, M.Hum

*Key word: psychoanalysis, anxiety, defense mechanism*

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This thesis focuses on the anxiety and defense mechanism of the main character named Eleanor Oliphant in Gail Honeyman's novel, entitled *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*. The thesis aims to discover the anxiety types experienced by Eleanor and understand how she copes with it using defense mechanism method. The type of this thesis is literary criticism. The researcher uses Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis to analyze the novel. The researcher found that Eleanor's anxiety includes three of the types: reality anxiety including worried of ashes, fire, emergency hotlines, ambulance sirens, loud noises, and about death, neurotic anxiety involving scared of her mother, and moral anxiety embracing scared of failed to be a good person and a good daughter. Besides, the researcher also discovered that Eleanor uses 7 types of defense mechanisms: repression, denial, displacement, projection, reaction-formation, sublimation, and fixation.

## مستخلص البحث

العزيزة، حفيظة (٢٠٢٢) آلية اليانور للقلق والدفاع في هانيمان *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*. أطروحة جامعية. قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة الإسلامية الحكومية مولانا مالك إبراهيم مالانج. المستشار ويدى راسيتاما، م.م.هم

### الكلمات الأساسية: التحليل النفسي والقلق وآلية الدفاع

تركز هذه الأطروحة على آلية القلق والدفاع للشخصية الرئيسية المسماة إيانور أوليفانت في رواية جيل هانيمان، بعنوان إيانور أوليفانت بخير تماما. تهدف الأطروحة إلى اكتشاف أنواع القلق التي تعاني منها إيانور وفهم كيفية تعاملها معها باستخدام طريقة آلية الدفاع. نوع هذه الأطروحة هو النقد الأدبي. يستخدم الباحث التحليل النفسي لسيفغوموند فرويد لتحليل الرواية. وجد الباحث أن قلق إيانور يشمل ثلاثة أنواع: قلق الواقع بما في ذلك القلق من الرماد، والحرائق، والخطوط الساخنة للطوارئ، وصفارات الإسعاف، والضوضاء الصاخبة، وعن الموت، والقلق العصبي الذي ينطوي على الخوف من الدتما، والقلق الأخلاقي احتضان خائف من فشل في أن يكون شخص جيد وابنة جيدة. إلى جانب ذلك، اكتشف الباحث أيضا أن إيانور تستخدم 7 أنواع من آليات الدفاع: القمع، والإنكار، والتشريد، والإسقاط، وتشكيل التفاعل، والتسامي، والتشبيث.

## ABSTRAK

Azizah, Hafidzatul (2022) *Eleanor's Anxiety and Defense Mechanism in Honeyman's Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*. Skripsi. Jurusan Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Pembimbing Whida Rositama, M.Hum

*Kata kunci: psikoanalisis, kecemasan, mekanisme pertahanan*

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Penelitian ini berfokus pada kecemasan dan mekanisme pertahanan karakter utama bernama Eleanor Oliphant dalam novel Gail Honeyman yang berjudul *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*. Tesis ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui jenis-jenis kecemasan yang dialami oleh Eleanor dan memahami bagaimana ia mengatasinya dengan menggunakan metode mekanisme pertahanan. Jenis skripsi ini adalah kritik sastra. Peneliti menggunakan Psikoanalisis oleh Sigmund Freud untuk menganalisis novel. Peneliti menemukan bahwa kecemasan Eleanor mencakup tiga jenis: kecemasan realitas seperti ketakutan akan debu, api, layanan panggilan darurat, sirene ambulans, dan kematian, kecemasan neurotic yang melibatkan ketakutan terhadap ibunya sendiri, dan kecemasan moral termasuk khawatir akan gagal menjadi pribadi yang baik dan anak perempuan yang baik. Selain itu, peneliti juga menemukan bahwa Eleanor menggunakan 7 jenis mekanisme pertahanan, yaitu represi, penyangkalan, perpindahan, proyeksi, reaksi formasi, sublimasi, dan fiksasi.

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Background of the Study**

As a human being, every person in their life wants to have a feeling of peace throughout their life. However, such problems always walk alongside human's existence. Unfortunately, some people might experience a traumatic event. People who have trauma tend to treat themselves badly. They also avoid some events that is occurred in the past, like accidents, natural disasters, domestic abuse, sexual assaults, bullying, and so on. They are not only looking at ones' events, but also the ones that is directly experienced by themselves. For example, someone has a car accident in his childhood. Then, he gets haunted by the events so that he avoids driving a car or traveling by public transports. Another example is a woman is sexually assaulted by men when she was a teenager, she would avoid men because she is frightened. Following the impacts, traumatic people would like to avoid environments. They would be more closed, rarely interact with people, and spend their time alone. For this reason, they could establish anxiety in their life after the traumatic experience.

As Freud stated, anxiety is built from birth when a human baby was separated from his mother's womb that led into another problem in life. Then, when people obtained bullying treatment in his childhood, they might feel anxious. However, people may misunderstand viewing anxiety as a disorder. In fact, it would be categorized as an illness if anxiety lasted for months and influence mood and performance (Canadian Mental Health Association, n.d.). In addition,



people could not self-diagnose, but they have to go to a psychologist. Nowadays, people could get anxiety. Without looking at the age, it starts from the oldest to the youngest.

Moreover, going from traumatic events, people who mostly experience anxiety must be coping with it to live a better life. People usually do something to forget and avoid anxiety. They use defense mechanisms to deal with it. They utilize it to help either themselves or others. Sigmund Freud, with his daughter Anna, stated that defense mechanisms become the casual and normal way to cope with anxiety (Feist, Feist, & Roberts, 2018). Also, people, who have done it must be unaware of doing that due to the characteristics: unconscious and denial (Schultz & Schultz, 2017). For example, when one lost their family, they would be presenting denial. They would not accept that their loved ones had passed away. Hence, some people choose alcohol and drugs to cope with it, but there are ones who choose to validate their feelings, move on, and continue their lives. Such coping mechanisms could be healthy and/or unhealthy. The healthy one results in a calm feeling and stays in control. In contrast, the unhealthy one denies every bad thing that happened and often hurts physical, mental, and social. In other words, one uses defense mechanisms unconsciously to secure and face anxiety from trauma.

Gail Honeyman had written *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* in two years as her debut novel (Penguin Random House Canada, n.d.). She published it in 2017 and then obtained a reception at the 2017 Costa First Novel Awards. In addition, she also won as Overall Winner in British Book Awards 2018. As a

Scottish writer, in Glasgow University, she had taken a major in French Language and Literature. She joined a class in a writing course and started writing the novel. Unless the awards, her book also sold millions of copies, including New York Times Best Seller and The No.1 Sunday Times Best Seller. Before that, she had followed competition in Cambridge's Lucy Cavendish College and then submitted it (Armitstead, 2018). Though she did not win the competition, the judge recruited her and signed her up for his publication. In her blog, it has been written that a lot of people asking about either Eleanor Oliphant represented her personality and life (Honeyman, n.d.). However, she answered that the main character in her novel wasn't her, or someone else. Instead, she believed that everyone, so does she, felt loneliness. Loneliness was the topic she read in an article that showed that not only elder people who have it, but also the younger ones (Penguin Random House Canada, n.d.). For this reason, she began to write the novel *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*.

*Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* narrates certain issues in psychology, focusing on Eleanor as the main character. Initially, Eleanor was a character who portrayed a 29 years-old woman. She was an office worker in a graphic design corporation. However, what makes her life different from common people was that Eleanor has experienced a traumatic past. In her 10, she was trapped in a fire with her sister in her house which her mother set. It affected her life until he got a social worker visiting her home every six months. She preferred to spend her time alone. For example, when the weekends came, she chose to eat frozen pizza, drink a glass of wine and vodka, and call with Mummy, her mother. However, the

traumatic events that influenced her everyday life led to anxiety. By all means, she was unaware of that because anxiety is characterized as unconscious. Like when she would like to call an ambulance to help a fainted drunk old man, Sammy, she could not do it. It was because she remembered the traumatic experience, a house wildfire, that almost took her to death. To survive, Eleanor needs a defense mechanism which she also did. For example, she considered not dialing 999 and went ahead to talk to the old man to calm him. Moreover, like anxiety, it embraces denial and ignorant characteristics so that she didn't aware that she applied a defense mechanism to temporarily avoid the bitter reminiscence. Then, in the novel, Eleanor met a man who was her work colleague and started to make friends with him due to his help to the old man. Finally, she developed her lonely personality into more sociable. At this point, the defense mechanism is not always bad, but it can be healthy. She secured herself to forget the traumatic experience by improving her social skills. In conclusion, focusing on those topics, this present study aims to identify the anxiety of Eleanor Oliphant and reveal the defense mechanism she conducted by using Freud's Psychoanalysis.

There had been only one study that investigated the novel *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*. As follows, the study applied a psychological approach (2021). Similar to the present study, Tiansyah, Suharyati and P (2021) also used Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis to analyze the problem in the novel. They examined the impact of trauma that the main character experienced (Tiansyah et al., 2021). For this reason, in the present paper, the researcher fills the gap of the previous journal article. While the prior paper explained the

trauma's factors and impacts of the main character, the present study examines the life of her long after the traumatic tragedy. It uncovers the anxiety types done by Eleanor, the main character, and how she overcomes them to survive. In addition, to support the topic, there have been several prior papers that examined anxiety and defense mechanisms. Monica, Jepri, and Jannah (2020), Ulfa and Wulandari (2019), Riawandono (2018), Andriana and Kasprabowo (2020), Warkey, Sili, and Asanti (2020), and Pradhana (2018) in their research, provided a similar aspect that uncovers anxiety types and defense mechanisms undergone by the main character. Through the prior studies, the researcher could take it as a reference. Hence, the present study takes anxiety and defense mechanism topics for revealing Eleanor Oliphant's life long after a traumatic experience in Honeyman's *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*.

### **B. Problems of the Study**

Following to the background of the study, the researcher establishes two problems of study:

1. What are the kinds of anxiety experienced by Eleanor in Honeyman's *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*?
2. What does Eleanor do to overcome her anxiety in Honeyman's *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*?

### **C. Significances of the Study**

This study could benefit people theoretically and pragmatically. The former, this study could be a reference for the researchers who investigate similar topics. Also, this study could understand how a psychological aspect builds in the

novel. The latter could also be a benefit for understanding the type of anxieties and how to cope with them.

#### **D. Scope and Limitation**

There are a lot of scopes in psychology that could be taken for the focus to analyze Honeyman's *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*. However, the researcher only examines about the anxiety and defense mechanism of the main character, Eleanor Oliphant. Moreover, the researcher puts limitation on Eleanor Oliphant's focus because she has a concern on trauma which affected her life until establishing anxiety and the way to cope it with defense mechanism.

#### **E. Definition of Key Terms**

1. Freudian Psychoanalysis is a theory of psychology coined by Sigmund Freud.

This theory establishes a concept of personality which consists of id, ego, and superego (Schultz & Schultz, 2017).

2. According to Sigmund Freud, anxiety is a fear without any clear source or reason. Freud stated that anxiety is established by the ego. Also, id and ego are included within it which leads to the types of anxiety: neurotic, moral, and realistic (Freud in Feist et al., 2018).

3. According to Sigmund Freud, defense mechanism is a way to overcome anxiety. Even though human has a desire to fulfill their pleasure, they still examine it in order to fulfill society's moral standard. Freud categorized defense mechanisms into ten kinds: denial, displacement, fixation, introjection, projection, rationalization, reaction-formation, regression, repression, and sublimation (Schultz & Schultz, 2017).

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### A. Psychology in Literature

Literature connects with various disciplines, including sociology, history, and psychology. Especially, psychology and literature similarly examine humans and their perceptions. Lodge (2002) stated that literature is “the record of human’s consciousness (Aras, 2015, p. 251).” A novel, one of literary works, becomes the medium for people to express their point of view through space and time. Semi (1993) stated that the intrinsic elements, including characterization, becomes the focus because the main character experiences the psychological things (Al-Ma’ruf & Nugrahani, 2017). Through that, people can learn the personality and the life of humans. Another reason is that literary works are personal experiences of the author which makes them unique (2015, p. 251). Wellek and Warren (1963) also said that literature is the representation of life (2015, p. 251). They (1989) also said that an aesthetical truth can improve the coherence and complexity of literary works (Al-Ma’ruf & Nugrahani, 2017). It means the fiction reveals the social reality and natural world. In addition, literature could be canon which influences people in some old eras. For those reasons, literature and psychology can be mentioned as relative disciplines because both of them not only investigate “human imagination and feelings”, but they also center human beings to be their focus of analysis (Cuddon in Aras, 2015, p. 252). In conclusion, they have a functional relationship that can be the tool for understanding human’s mind and behavior (Jatmanto in Al-Ma’ruf & Nugrahani, 2017).

## **B. Freudian Psychoanalysis**

Coined by Sigmund Freud, psychoanalysis is a psychological theory and method to cure mental illness patients using psychoanalytic tools, focusing on the unconscious state, and is called as *depth psychology* (The Editor of Encyclopaedia, 2020). Accompanied with his colleagues, Freud believed that many forms of mental illness, such as anxiety and hysteria, were the results of traumatic events in the past which obscured in unconsciousness. In *Studies on Hysteria* (1985), they claimed that there was a way to liberate the hidden memory and allow the patients to call back them for symptoms to be disappeared. However, while Freud has another opinion that emphasizes “the sexual origins and content of neuroses” as the problems caused by psychological conflicts, Breuer disagreed. Then, they were not in one line anymore (Collin et al., 2012).

Following the separation, Freud developed the theory by himself and found several thoughts. He believed that ideas, memories, and impulses are too inappropriate for the conscious mind so that they are repressed and hidden in the unconscious one. Then, it directed the thought and behavior. The repressed memory could be released from the unconscious using psychoanalysis.

Moreover, Freud agreed with Ernst Brücke, who found 19th new physiology, that every human being has an energy system. It can stay constant over time and can't be destroyed, instead, to be moved or transformed. Freud mentioned it as psychic energy that can be modified, transmitted, or converted. As mentioned before, that human thought in the conscious state, if it is not acceptable, is moved into the state of unawareness. For instance, people who had childhood

trauma, an unacceptable desire, and threatening ideas undergo repression to hide them. Furthermore, the unconscious itself drives human behavior through choices to fulfill and satisfy human basic needs, including food and water, sex to continue descendants, and necessities like warmth shelter, friends, and so on. It holds a human's "death" drive—conflicting forces (Collin et al., 2012).

In his later work, Freud thrived the new controlling structure, which before is only conscious, preconscious, and unconscious, including id, ego, and superego. Id is a primitive impulse. It wants everything without thinking about how bad or good it is. It obeys the Pleasure Principle. Following the pleasure, ego obeys the Reality Principle. In its ideas, people can't have everything they desire. Hence, ego negotiates with id to find a reasonable way for fulfilling their desire without any damage and consequence. While both negotiating, superego controls ego. Superego is the internalized voice of parents and society's moral codes. It brings the source of conscience, guilt, and shame while having a judging force (Collin et al., 2012).

### **C. Anxiety**

According to the Oxford Dictionary, anxiety means a state of worry, nervousness, usually about a close event or something with unsettled consequences. Besides, Freud stated that anxiety is "an objectless fear" which means a worry that has no obvious reason (Schultz & Schultz, 2017). In the beginning, Freud defined anxiety as the transformation of tension (Freud, 1959). He also stated that it was established from libidinal impulse (p. 80). However, Freud, in *New Introductory Lectures* (1933a), developed his theory that anxiety is



“a reaction to a traumatic situation (Freud, 1959, p. 80).” For this reason, anxiety can be defined as a blurry unpleasant state with physical awareness that brings the person to aware against forthcoming danger (Feist et al., 2018). The one who can generate anxiety is only ego. However, “id, superego, and external world” are also involved within (2018, p. 38).

There are three types of anxiety based on Freudian psychoanalysis (Feist et al., 2018; Hall, 1954; Schultz & Schultz, 2017), as follows:

### **1. Reality Anxiety**

In reality anxiety, ego relies on the outer world. Reality anxiety is an unclear, terrible state or feeling involving a possible threat (Feist et al., 2018). This type of anxiety is likely to close to “real fear” because the source of the threat is from the external world (Hall, 1954). People with reality anxiety have a perception to something, and it is innate. Hence, people naturally fear of something at the first time. Another reason is that people have traumatic experience through their lifetime so that they fear of the traumatic things happened in the past. For example, when people have undergone driving in an unfamiliar spot which could be connected with danger in reality.

### **2. Neurotic Anxiety**

This anxiety refers to ego and comes from id. Neurotic anxiety is a state of fear about “hostility and punishment (Feist et al., 2018)”. The source of the danger is from the pleasure principle which is id (Hall, 1954). Id would like to deal with something that makes it obtains the satisfaction. However, ego still controls id because it is scared if id would uncontrollable and harm the people themselves. It

might come from childhood. It can be meant as the unconscious worry of being punished. This type might be more burdening than the previous one because instead of gradually fade, it always stick in people's head. For instance, people might be scared of teachers, especially towards the authority one. One of the reasons is that when someone did not get obtain parents' affection.

### **3. Moral Anxiety**

Finally, moral anxiety is established from the conflict of id and superego (Schultz & Schultz, 2017). It can be called that the source of this type is moral sense of superego (Hall, 1954). In addition, superego usually begins to appear about 5-6 years old. Then, the children around the age start to conflict with the reality and expectation which occurred in superego. The outcome of moral anxiety happens because of the failure to do something good. It builds a feeling of guilt and shame developed from the superego. For example, people believe that providing unacceptable desires, like "not caring for aging parents", is morally wrong (Feist et al., 2018). After that, they will act or behave in a moral way.

Even though anxiety has different types, they are easy to be separated and, occasionally, be combined. Anxiety is an "ego-preserving mechanism" because it signals people when it comes to danger (Feist et al., 2018). It is also "self-regulating" which provides repression that leads to anxiety's pain reduction. If it wasn't repressed, the anxiety will be uncontrollable. For this reason, a defensive act is a significant and helpful thing to overcome anxiety.

## **D. Defense Mechanism**

Freud stated that defense mechanisms can be defined as the ego strategy to protect or defend against anxiety (Schultz & Schultz, 2017). Freud (1926/1959a), accompanied by his daughter, Anna Freud (1946), established this type of defense mechanism that is universally applied, especially when anxiety occurs extremely—"compulsive, repetitive, and neurotic (Feist et al., 2018)."

There are types of defense mechanisms by Sigmund Freud (Feist et al., 2018; Hall, 1954; Schultz & Schultz, 2017), as follows:

### **1. Repression**

This type is the most principle one of the defense mechanisms. Repression makes a memory and idea which can be a threat to build a barrier against anxiety (Hall, 1954). Id threats ego, then ego defense itself with repression towards id impulses. In a numerable case, it lasts long by lifetime. However, in some cases, repression could be gone if the source of threat is faded. For example, a child conceals her hatred for her younger sister because it can generate anxiety. In addition, society doesn't accept intense and uncontrollable guises.

### **2. Denial**

Denial is a way of defense mechanism associated with repression and includes denial, as mentioned. People don't want to remember or memorize the traumatic event or threat that has happened (Schultz & Schultz, 2017). For instance, a person who mourns for their parents doesn't want to believe that his parent has been passed away. Instead, they still see that his parents are in the house.

### **3. Displacement**

Like the name of the type, displacement, which is to displace something. It means that people alter their source of hatred to other things, such as another human or objects, even animals. To avoid anxiety, they don't release their anger into the source, but the other. For instance, when a person is annoyed by her children, she does not release their displeasure to them, but her husband.

### **4. Projection**

This type of defense mechanism is almost similar to displacement. Both are releasing their anxiety into other objects. However, projection tends to make the person who becomes the object of anxiety release. Those who did the defense mechanism think that the person has an unacceptable feeling, not them. Projection can be used to cope with neurotic and moral anxiety. For example, someone sees whom hates him is another person, not he was the haters (Feist et al., 2018).

### **5. Rationalization**

Rationalization is likely close to denial. However, this type chooses to be more rational and approvable. People defend themselves through justification that leads to threat their anxiety. For instance, when a person gets fired from the job, he convinces himself that he doesn't like the job (Schultz & Schultz, 2017).

### **6. Reaction-Formation**

Reaction-formation leads a person to show the opposite behaviors. It is a different reaction from the id impulses. The ego diverts unacceptable impulses into the opposite one. For example, when a person hates his mother, they would

not show it. Instead, they express their love to his parents, but not genuine, because of the demands of morals and socials.

### **7. Sublimation**

In contrast to displacement, this type replaces the id impulses itself. Even though both are changing them, they are different. Sublimation tends to conduct things that are socially acceptable. For example, a person's sexual desire can be altered or sublimated into academic or non-academic things (Schultz & Schultz, 2017).

### **8. Fixation**

Fixation is a universal type of defense mechanism. It happens when someone take another thing to do, but they are excessively worried. People with this type of defense mechanism feels insecure because something in front of them is new so they do not want to receive painful in the future. Hence, they remain in one place and don't go ahead. It is usually mentioned as a "primitive stage of development (Feist et al., 2018)."

### **9. Regression**

While fixation chooses to avoid progress, regression tends to go backward. They return to the earlier era that was full of happiness and no anxiety. In this case, they come back into the stages of childhood. In fact, a lot of people overcome with this type of defense mechanism. Hence, some of regression actions, like "eating too much, daydream, rebel against rule, and any other childish behavior" is common among adults (Hall, 1954). For instance, when a person becomes more "childish and dependent (Schultz & Schultz, 2017)."

## **10. Introjection**

In introjection, a person undercover themselves into another person. They take the profitable quality of another. People with introjection put aside their anxiety by adopting the “values, beliefs, and mannerism” of other people (Feist et al., 2018). It would grow their self-worth. For example, people adopt public figure’s good manner. It makes them feel better and hide their anxiety.

### **E. Main Character**

One of the literary work’s elements is character. It is a fictional structural component that produces events. Nurgiyantoro (2005) stated that the characters in the story are the people depicted in the narrative work (Haslinda, 2019, p. 53). According to the participation in the whole story, Haslinda stated that the characters are divided into two categories: central or main character and subordinate character (2019, p. 54). The main character can be identified in three ways. They are (1) the character who takes account the story’s theme, (2) the character who associates the most with the other characters, and (3) the character that has a lot of storytelling. Hence, the main character is the key point in the literary work because it brings the whole story.

### **F. Previous Studies**

There have been several studies that have taken anxiety and defense mechanism as the topic, but the present object, *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* only had one research. With the same object, Tiansyah, Suharyati, and P (2021) used the descriptive method and aimed to find the factors and impacts of the psychological trauma of the main character. It is discovered that the factor is

the house fire set by Eleanor's mother. Besides, the impact is Eleanor's personality which became social misfit. For this reason, the researcher found the novelty resided on how Eleanor's life long after the tragedy happened. The researcher would like to elaborate the previous studies using the same theory, Freudian Psychoanalysis, but focuses on anxiety and defense mechanism. Due to amount of Eleanor's uncomfortable feeling, the researcher choose anxiety as the topic. It is one line with defense mechanism to make her survive.

However, in the other object, Monica, Jepri, and Jannah (2020), Ulfa and Wulandari (2019), Riawandono (2018), Andriana and Kasprabowo (2020), Warkey, Sili, and Asanti (2020), and Pradhana (2018) have the same purpose: to discover the anxiety and defense mechanism of the main character(s). They also used the same method which is the qualitative method, but Pradhana's (2018) thesis. He used library research to analyze data in his study. Meanwhile, the present study uses textual approach to analyze the data.

Monica, Jepri, and Jannah (2020), in Jojo Moyes's *Me Before You*, found that the main characters embrace three types of anxiety: moral, neurotic, and realistic anxiety. In addition, they coped it in four ways: displacement, rationalization, reaction formation, and sublimation.

Ulfa and Wulandari (2019), in Lewis Carroll's *Adventures in Wonderland*, discovered that Alice, the main character, had also undergone three types of anxiety. They conclude that Alice feels "unpleasant and guilty" due to her huge imagination and expectation towards the fantasy world (Ulfa & Wulandari, 2019). However, the study has a difference from the others in terms of defense

mechanisms. The main character has six ways to overcome the anxiety, including displacement, intellectualization, introjection, reaction formation, regression, and repression.

Similar to Ulfa and Wulandari (2019), Riawandono (2018), in *Diary of a Young Girl*, also found three types of anxiety undergone by Anne Frank, the main character. Moreover, Anne Frank, according to the thesis, overcome with anxiety using defense mechanisms: displacement, projection, rationalization, and fantasy. Even though it used the same theory as the present study, Riawandono (2018) included fantasy in the theory. Besides, the present study does not involve it because the researcher has different references with the previous one. The researcher chooses Duane P. Schultz and Sydney Ellen Schultz's *Theory of Personalities* (2017) and Jess Feist, Gregory J. Feist, Tomi-Ann Roberts' book with the same title and year published. As a matter of course, the researcher still embraces Freudian psychoanalysis as the theory. In the books, there are no kind of *fantasy* in defense mechanism. Hence, the previous and present study also has a difference that resided in the references.

In contrast to the other previous studies, Andriana and Kasprabowo (2020) used a short story in their research, entitled *The Black Cat* written by Edgar Allan Poe. Like the majority of previous studies mentioned, they also discovered three anxiety types: realistic, neurotic, moral anxiety. Also, the researcher found five mechanisms to overcome the anxiety, involving displacement, denial, acting out, symbolization, projection. The defense mechanism in the previous study includes acting out and symbolization. The researcher does not involve them in the present



study because it is not the latest types that are used like mentioned in Duane P. Schultz and Sydney Ellen Schultz's *Theory of Personalities* (2017) and Jess Feist, Gregory J. Feist, Tomi-Ann Roberts' book with the same title.

Utilizing library research as the method, Pradhana (2018) found the main character, Kat Novak, has two types of anxiety, including reality and neurotic anxiety in Tess Gerritsen's *Girl Missing*. Kat Novak felt anxious towards Adam Quantrell, corpses, her mother, and South Lecington (Pradhana, 2018). To overcome it, according to the thesis, Kat Novak cope with five kinds of defense mechanisms. They are repression, projection, reaction-formation, fixation, and regression. Pradhan also stated that defense mechanism easy to use are repression and projection.

Unlike the other prior studies mentioned, Warkey, Sili, and Asanti (2020) applied a movie entitled *Exodus: Gods and Kings* to their research. However, they used the script of the movie so that can be considered as a prior study in this research. Like the other previous research, the main character also has three types of anxiety. Then, the defense mechanisms comprise repression, formation, isolation, denial, aggression. The difference between Warkey, Sili, and Asanti's study, the present study uses novel as the object of research.

Moreover, Novianti and Permatasari (2020), in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, using the method of descriptive qualitative, had a goal to explain the anxiety of the main character. Unlike the other studies mentioned above, this research only discovered the anxiety types, involving neurotic and moral anxiety. The main character felt anxious because of her affair

which he did in Puritan society. In addition, he also left Hester Prynne alone being punished by them.

Furthermore, Inaya (2021) has a different method and aims from the others. She used literary criticism as the method and aimed to discover the anxiety types and their causes and the defense mechanism (2021). In her study, Inaya (2021) uncovered that the main characters in Nicola Yoon's *Everything, Everything* had experienced three types of anxiety, similar to Monica, Jepri, and Jannah (2020) and Ulfa and Wulandari. This previous study has a difference in the amount of main characters analyzed, including two people, Pauline and Madeline. Then, the causes consist of two: Pauline got the anxiety because of her perception due to traumatic past and Madeline obtained it because she was frightened with her illness would make her life in danger. Hence, they faced it with five types of defense mechanisms, including denial, projection, rationalization, repression, and sublimation.

Finally, Zulfaisya and Hasra (2020) have the most distinguished topics with the other. They only examined the defense mechanisms of the main character without anxiety causes and types. Thus, there are various types of them than the other studies. The researchers discovered nine ways of mechanisms. Repression, rationalization, regression, reaction-formation are the dominant ways which the main characters used. The other ones are projection, replacement, isolation, identification, sublimation. In this previous study, Zulfaisya and Hasra (2020) included isolation and identification in the types of defense mechanism, but the present study does not.

In conclusion, the novelty is found in the article researched by Tiansyah, Suharyati, and P (2021). The present study would like to elaborate the previous study using the same theory, but the different focus. While the previous study only resulted the factor and impact of the main character, the present study would like to widen it to anxiety and defense mechanism topic. Besides, the other previous studies mentioned are used for references to the present study. The researcher can also compare the present one with the previous studies from the kind of defense mechanisms which is varied. In brief, this present study related to the prior works which has similar topics, the main characters' anxiety and defense mechanism, with different objects and also another related study with the similar object Gail Honeyman's *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **RESEARCH METHOD**

##### **A. Research Design**

This study uses literary criticism which can be defined as the activity of “interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating” literary works (Fard, 2016). The researcher uses literary criticism as the research method because the material object is a literary work. The object is considered as it is because it forms as novel.

Moreover, the researcher uses a psychological approach to examine the topic. In psychology in literature, there are three kinds of approaches, including expressive, textual, and receptive (Aminudin in Al-Ma’ruf & Nugrahani, 2017). In this case, the researcher uses the textual approach to analyze the literary works through the character’s psychology.

There are a lot of psychologist figures who established psychological theory, but the researcher chooses psychoanalytical theory by Sigmund Freud because it fits to the topic of the thesis, anxiety and defense mechanism. In addition, the researcher chooses the theory because it is the core in psychoanalysis and can be used by today, especially in anxiety and defense mechanism. This study focuses on anxiety and defense mechanism because it relates to the main character, Eleanor Oliphant, who has a traumatic experience and continue her life with anxiety and defense mechanisms.

Also, the author brought the story from the first-person point of view so that the reader can understand what is on the main character’s mind. This novel narrates about a 29 years old woman named Eleanor Oliphant who has a job as a

clerk which has a traumatic past in her life. The researcher chooses the novel because it relates to the people who have trauma in their life. In brief, this novel uncovers how the life of a person with trauma could survive after the past.

### **B. Data Source**

The data is obtained from Gail Honeyman's novel, *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*. It was published by Pamela Dorman Books in 2017 in New York with the pages 383. The novel consists of three parts with 41 chapters. The data are taken from dialogues, monologues, and sentences from the novel.

### **C. Data Collection**

The researcher collects the data, as follows:

1. Reading and re-reading the novel,
2. Highlighting and taking notes on the important points,
3. Identifying and categorizing the data, and
4. Reducing the data.

### **D. Data Analysis**

Sugiyono (2018) stated that data analysis can be defined as a way to discover and assemble data taken from some sources, like field notes, by coordinating data into classification or categories, and investigating into parts, putting them together, reducing into the important part, and conclude them (Rositama & Furaida, 2022, p. 215).

In analyzing data, the researcher has done some steps:

1. After collecting the data, the researcher compiles it into one.

2. With the categories within, the researcher classifies the evidences of anxiety and defense mechanism into a variety of types.
4. She analyzes and examines the evidences into the discussion, and
5. She closes it with a conclusion towards the main character based on the findings and discussion.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter explains about findings and discussion that is discovered by the researcher. Also, it elaborates the answer of the problems of study written in chapter two. It consists of two parts including Eleanor Oliphant's Anxiety and Eleanor Oliphant's Defense Mechanisms. The researcher discovers the types of anxiety in the novel, involving reality anxiety, neurotic anxiety, and moral anxiety. Meanwhile, she discovers the defense mechanisms which comprises displacement, denial, fixation, reaction-formation, projection, repression, and sublimation.

#### **A. The Anxiety Types Experienced by Eleanor Oliphant**

##### **1. Reality Anxiety**

This kind of anxiety embraces ego to rely on the outer world. Reality Anxiety resembles to "actual fear". It means a blurry and unpleasant state including a possible threat (Feist et al., 2018). Eleanor came through this anxiety when she faced something terrible which involved in her past traumatic events.

In this novel, Eleanor comes through reality anxiety when she faces something terrible that recalls her past traumatic events. Eleanor experienced it when she was a child. She gets trapped in a fire with her sister. In her sight, only her sister cannot survive the accident. In contrast, her mother had also passed away during the house fire without her knowing. The only one who lives alive is Eleanor. For this reason, she has dealt with anxiety throughout her life.

### **a. Worried to Call Emergency Hotlines, Ambulance Sirens**

One day, while Eleanor went home, she encountered Raymond who walking on the same road as her. At a pedestrian crossing, they saw elderly person sway. Eleanor belittled him. She thought that he was only a drunk man. However, Raymond suspected him oppositely because he had already stumbled into the pavement. Then, Raymond asked Eleanor to call an ambulance very soon while he kept an eye on him. In contrast, she could not do that thing until she remembered the traumatic experience. As stated in the sentences below:

*“Call an ambulance, Eleanor,” he said quietly.*

...

*“Hurry up,” he said, “the old guy’s out cold.”*

*I started to dial 999, and then a memory punched me full in the face. I couldn’t do it again, I realized, I simply couldn’t live and listen to a voice saying “Which service do you require, caller? Then to approaching sirens. I touched my scars, and then threw the phone back at Raymond (p.34).*

Based on the quotation above, it indicates that Eleanor’s ego generates reality anxiety. She remembered the incident that day when she called the emergency service. She was too worried to listen to such voices: police customer service and ambulance sirens. She also touched her scars while recalling the event.

### **b. Worried of Ashes and Fire**

Moreover, she often declined deal with things like fire and ashes when she was eleven. She ignored to do the house duty in the foster house. It had been in the department of social work’s report. The sentence below presents the evidence.

*Eleanor refused point-blank to assist with simple household chores, such as lighting the fire or clearing out the ashes (p.45).*

In the quotation above, she experienced reality anxiety because of fire and ashes. Not long after the accident. she could not do household chores, like lighting the fire and cleaning up the ashes. Her ego avoids them because it considers as



threat. The traumatic event in the past continuously ran around her mind until she was worried about the things. She was worried she would set the house on fire and trapped inside anymore. Also, she was scared she would see the ashes.

She does not only fear fire, but also smokes. Whenever people said anything about smoking, she always said she did not like it. It even happened while the stylist asked her to do her eye makeup—smoky-eye makeup. As indicates in the quotation below.

*“We’ve only got ten minutes till the store closes,” she said, “So, I’ll focus on camouflage and eyes. D’you like smoky eye?”*  
*“I don’t like anything to do with smoking,” I said, and, bizarrely she laughed again.*  
*Strange woman (p.107).*

The quotation above shows that Eleanor experiences reality anxiety because of smoke. She feels anxious when the makeup artist said the word smoke. She directly stated that she does not like anything about smoke. Her ego chooses to keep away from the topic. The makeup artist responded to Eleanor’s answer with a joke, but it was not. Despite this, Eleanor answered it genuinely.

Eleanor hates anything about fire, even though it is only a thought crossed her mind briefly. When she heard that Sammy had passed away, she was sad and shed tears. It is mentioned in the quotation below.

*I felt terrible. I felt terrible for Sammy and for his family, .... Tears came, and the more I tried to fight them, the more they came. The lump in my throat was burning, burning like fire, **no please, not fire**.... (p.166).*

The evidence above shows that she experienced reality anxiety. While she lamented for Sammy, she also feels anxious. It is shown at the word *no please, not fire*. Even though it was just a representation of her, she feels worried. Whereas, there is no real fire, but her mind.

### c. Worried about Death

Eleanor came across her anxiety again when she came to Sammy's funeral. She feared thinking about death and would like to go home. It shows in the quotation below.

*"I really, really, really do not want to go to the Hawthorn House Hotel for light refreshments, Raymond," I said. "I want to stop thinking about death. I just want to go home, put on normal clothes and watch television (p.174)."*

The quotation above indicates Eleanor's reality anxiety. Although every person, including Raymond, did not want to see any death, Eleanor saw it while getting worried about her death in the house fire that day. She had a thought passing in her mind thinking about her sister's death. Hence, she wanted to go home and did not come there.

### d. Worried of Loud Noises

Furthermore, the traumatic accident still passed over Eleanor's head, even when she was in a concert. At first, she assumed that she would enjoy watching it, but it did not fulfill her expectation since there were a lot of dust, screams, and hustling noises. The sentence below presents the evidence.

*My focus was slightly filmy by that stage—the vodka—and I didn't trust my eyes I screwed them up, strained to confirm what I thought I was looking at. Smoke, gray, hazy, deadly smoke, emanating from the side of the stage and along the front. The room started to fill with it. The man next to me cough; a psychosomatic action, since dry ice, stage smoke, prompts no such reflex. I felt it drift over me, saw how the lights and the lasers cut through it. I closed my eyes. **In that moment, I was back there, in the house, upstairs. Fire. I heard screams and could not tell if they were mine.** The bass drum beat fast with my heart, the snare drum skittered like my pulse. **The room was full of smoke, and I couldn't see. Screams, my own and hers.** The bass drum, the snare. ... **Back to the wall, I slumped down, sprawled on the ground, the screaming in my ears, body still pounding. I vomited.** I was alive, I was alone. There was no living thing in the universe that was more alone than me. Or more terrible (p.200).*

According to the quotation above, Eleanor experienced reality anxiety. Her ego told her to leave the concert while she started to get dizzy. The sentence

above starts from the ambience of the concert. Then, it leads to how Eleanor closed her eyes. She began to have a vision to the traumatic event. She saw fire in the house. She listened to someone screaming but did not know either it was hers or someone else. The musical instruments and her feelings combined. Then, the climax arrived when she *slumped down, sprawled on the ground, and pounded, then vomited*. Then, she passed out.

It got worse when Eleanor went home. She was more sensitive about the similar sound, like banging doors. When she was home, days after the concert, a person—later known that he was Raymond, came to her house because she had been absent for days in the office. Raymond knocked on the door and called out her name. The evidence below indicates.

*I heard banging—bang bang bang—and a man shouting my name, I was dreaming a charnel house scene of fire, blood and violence, and it took forever to make the transition from then to now, to realize that the banging was real and coming from my front door. ... My legs were shaking and I had to hold on the wall as I walked. ... I could feel nothing, no pain, had no recollection of how I had acquired it. It may as well have been painted on (p.201).*

As the matter of the loud noises, Eleanor felt anxious. Her ego told her to shake her leg and then fainted again. While Raymond came, she hallucinated. She could not differentiate between the past and the present.

## **2. Neurotic Anxiety**

Neurotic anxiety is occurred by ego, but originated from id. This type of anxiety can feel worried because of “hostility and punishment (Feist et al., 2018).” Majority of people used this when they face authoritative figure, such as employer, teacher, or parents. Eleanor encountered this anxiety when she memorized or

remembered the past traumatic events when she was a child, especially when it comes to her mother.

This novel shows that Eleanor encounters this type of anxiety when she memorizes or recalls the past traumatic events when she was a child, especially when it comes to her mother. As written in the previous parts, Eleanor had a traumatic event. When she was childhood, her mother set fire to their house. It shown that her mother had not taken care of her and her sister properly. In Eleanor's eyes, she was an authoritative, cruel, manipulative mother who did not have any affection. Even more, Mummy made them in a danger until Eleanor had an anxiety and Marianne, Eleanor's sister, had died in the accident. Hence, due to the fear of hostility and punishments, Eleanor experience neurotic anxiety.

#### **a. Scared of her mother**

When listening to her mother's voice, Eleanor had always looked at it as her nightmare. She remembers what her mother has done to her and her sister. It made her fear just listening to her voice on the telephone. It presents in the sentences below.

*She cut across me, nice as pie on this occasion, switching her accent to match mine. That voice; **I remembered it from childhood, hear it still in my nightmares** (p.24).*

The evidence mentioned above happened when Eleanor and Mummy had a conversation on the telephone. It shows that Eleanor looked at her mother as a nightmare. She feels anxious whenever she listens to her voice, recalling her childhood.

It is also supported with the evidence below.

*"As soon as I heard her voice, I felt that familiar, creeping dread (p.25)."*

In the quotation above, Eleanor feared Mummy's voice. The sentence, *I felt that familiar, creeping dread*, concluded that Mummy did not treat Eleanor and her sister well when she was a child.

Another anxiety is showed in the quotation below.

*"That may or may not be true, Mummy," I said quietly. Such audacity. I don't know where I found the courage. **The blood was pounding through my body and my hands quivered** (p.27).*

The quotation shows that she obtained neurotic anxiety. She braced herself to say something opposite to her mother's desire. After she delivered it, she felt anxious. It shows in the last sentence of the quotation. Her blood pressure rises and her hands' tremble.

Besides, Eleanor also heard voices that whispered through her ears when she was at her colleagues' mother's house. She caught some whispers that always appeared when she was in an unstable state. It came while another person started to ask about her mother, like when Raymond's mother asked about her siblings.

*"And what about your family?" she said. "Do they live close by? Any brothers or sisters?"*

*"No unfortunately," I said. "I would have loved to have had siblings to grow up with." I thought about this. "It's actually one of the greatest sources of sadness in my life," I heard myself say. I had never uttered such a sentence before, and, indeed, hadn't even fully formed the thought until this very moment. I surprised myself. And whose fault is that, then? **A voice, whispering in my ear, cold and sharp. Angry. Mummy....** (p.81).*

The evidence above mentions that Eleanor had a delusional hearing the voice of her mother's anger whenever she thought of her. It happens when Mummy gets blamed for her fault. The voice runs around her ears and sounds angry.

Then, she answered Raymond's mother's question uneasily. She began to stammer, talking about the relationship between her and Mummy. The dialogue below supports it.

*"Oh, but I'm sure that must mean you've got a lovely relationship with your mum and dad, then? I bet you mean the world to them, being the only one."*

*"I don't see her, she's inaccessible," I explained. "We communicate once a week, but..."*

...

*"On the contrary," I said, "if anything, weekly contact is too much for me. Mummy and I—we're... well, it's complicated... (p.82)."*

The quotation indicates that she felt anxious to answer it because she thought the voice of Eleanor's mother could appear again if telling the truth. For this reason, her ego makes her voice stutter and does not answer the question.

Moreover, after the incident of Eleanor's passing out, her friend recommended her to the counselor. During the counseling, Maria Temple, the counselor, asked her a question about why Eleanor seemed uncomfortable while talking about her mother. The following statement shows it.

*"I know that it's difficult, really difficult, to talk about painful things, but, as I said, that's the best route to helping us move forward. Let's start very slowly. Can you tell me why you don't feel comfortable talking about your mother?"*

*"I... she wouldn't want me to," I said. That was true. I remembered the last—and only—time I'd done it, with a teacher. It wasn't a mistake you made twice.*

***My left leg had begun to tremble; just a little quiver, but once it started, I couldn't get it to stop. I threw my head back and made a noise, a sort of sigh mixed with a cough, to try to distract her eye from it (p.218).***

The preceding quotation indicates that Eleanor could not talk about Mummy because she disallowed her when she was in school. She gets worried about the last time she did the same thing, talking about her mother to her teacher. It means that Mummy did something to Eleanor which makes her anxious. The anxiety shows in the bold words above. Her ego aimed to tell her that it was

something bothering that occurred in the past so that her body reacted just like written in the bold words.

However, she still tried to try another method suggested by the counselor. Thereby, she sat and faced an empty chair. The counselor asked her to imagine her mother sitting before her. She was asked to say something to her *mother*. Yet, she still experienced anxiety thriving over her body. The statement below shows it.

*I turned to face the empty chair. My leg was still trembling. I cleared my throat. I was safe. She wasn't really listening. I thought back to that house, the cold, the damp smell, .... While we were here left alone or—worse—left with her (p.219).*

The quotation above shows that Eleanor struggled to phrase her feelings to *Mummy*. In contrast, her body still reacted. It can be seen in the sentence *My leg was trembling*, by recalling the place where she had lived with her mother. Also, the sentence *or worse, left with her* is the evidence that she was still scared of her mother.

The quotation below also supports.

*"Mummy... please," I said. ....  
"Please don't hurt us (p.219)."*

It proves that Mummy had hurt them—Eleanor and her sister when they were a child. It can be concluded that the reason Eleanor experienced neurotic anxiety is because of her mother.

### **3. Moral Anxiety**

This type of anxiety came from the conflict of id and superego. Like the name, moral anxiety is worried of a failure to be a good person (Feist et al., 2018). Similar to neurotic anxiety, Eleanor experienced moral anxiety when she dealt with her mother.

Eleanor experienced moral anxiety when she dealt with her bad habit, critical and selfishness. Eleanor is a straightforward and judgmental person. As the matter of her social skills lack, she often gives comments to some things she does not like. For example, when Raymond released the cigarette and started to smoke, Eleanor told him that it was disgusting. It is proven in the quotation below:

*... We started to walk downhill together and he took children and small bears? We started to walk downhill together and he took out a packet of cigarettes, offered me one. I reared back from the packet.*

*"How disgusting," I said. Undeterred, he lit up.*

*"Sorry," he mumbled. "Filthy habit, I know."*

*"It is," I said. "You'll die years earlier than you would have otherwise, probably from cancer or heart disease. You won't see the effects on your heart or your lungs for a while, but you'll notice it in your mouth—gum disease, loss of teeth—and you've already got the smoker's characteristically dull, prematurely lined skin. The chemical constitution of cigarettes includes cyanide and ammonia, you know. Do you really want to willingly ingest such toxic substances? (p.32-33)"*

Apart from that, June Mullen, the social worker who changed the previous one, also got a comment from Eleanor. When Mullen visited her house, Eleanor began to say offensive words that Mullen did not look like the one from the social services. The evidence below presents.

*"You don't look like a social worker," I said. She stared at me but said nothing (p.37).*

However, she still had a fear of being a worse person. Her ego presented that she had moral anxiety.

#### **a. Worried of failed to be a good daughter**

Despite her hatred and scared of her mother, she still feared not being a good daughter. It happened when she was in a conversation with Mummy telling Eleanor that mother and daughter had a strong bond, but Eleanor denied it. Her



courage to say denial words made her cry afterward. It is written in the quotation below.

*“I do so love to hear from a mother to child, it’s ... how best to describe it, unbreakable. The two of us are linked forever, you see—same blood in my veins that’s running through yours. You grew inside me, your teeth and your tongue and your cervix are all made from my cells, my genes. ... However hard you try to walk away from that fact, you can’t, darling, you simply can’t. It isn’t possible to destroy a bond that strong (p.26).”*

*“That may or may not be true, Mummy,” I said quietly. Such audacity. I don’t know where I found the courage.*

...

***It was only when the air went dead that I noticed I’d been crying (p.27).***

The quotation above shows that she feels anxious. The bold sentence indicates that she cried because her superego worried about failing to treat her mother well, so her ego made her cry. She regretted that she uttered the words that would harm her feeling.

On the next day, Eleanor still felt terrible because the conversation last night with her Mummy. She did not feel good while waking up in the morning because she did not sleep well. It is written in the quotation below.

*I hadn’t slept well again in the previous evening, being somewhat unsettled by my conversation with Mummy (p.28).*

#### **b. Worried of failed to be a good person**

The second time Eleanor encountered Raymond, they helped an elderly man who passed out in the footpath. Previously, Eleanor underestimated him because she looked like a drunk person. She even hated it because it happened in daytime. According to her, it was an annoying thing to get drunk when the sun stood still in the sky. In contrast, after Raymond did something oppositely, she started to feel bad of the old man and began to help him. The statement below proves.

*"Leave Him," I said. "He's drunk. He'll be fine."*

*Raymond stared at me.*

*"He's a wee old man, Eleanor. He smacked his head on that pavement pretty hard," he said.*

***Then I felt bad. Even alcoholics deserve help, I suppose, although you should get drunk at home, like I do, so that they don't cause anyone else any trouble. But then, not everyone is as sensible and considerate as me (p.34).***

The quotation above indicates that Eleanor experiences moral anxiety. Her superego feels bad when her id underestimated the old man as a drunk man. Then, she helped the old man. Hence, she had a thought that every person deserves a help.

## **B. The Defense Mechanisms Done by Eleanor Oliphant**

### **1. Repression**

Repression is the major primary of the defense mechanisms. Every defense mechanism at least had repression. Id threatens ego and ego defense itself with this way of mechanism towards id impulses. In several cases, it lasts long by lifetime (Schultz & Schultz, 2017). Eleanor Oliphant applied repression to cope with the state of anxiety. Eleanor had done it when she had a bad feeling in her head remembering the traumatic events.

In the story, Eleanor Oliphant applied repression to cope with the state of anxiety. Eleanor had done it since she had a bad feeling in her head remembering the traumatic events. She often repressed her feeling, keeping it to herself, before she considered to go the therapist. The voices of Mummy appeared again in her head, keeping her down. However, she had always repressed it. The following statement shows.

*“No unfortunately,” I said. “I would have loved to have had siblings to grow up with.” I thought about this. “It’s actually one of the greatest sources of sadness in my life,” I heard myself say. I had never uttered such a sentence before, and, indeed, hadn’t even fully formed the thought until this very moment. I surprised myself. And whose fault is that, then? A voice, whispering in my ear, cold and sharp. Angry. Mummy. I closed my eyes trying to be rid of her (p.81).*

The quotation above shows that Eleanor dealt with her anxiety using repression. The repression can be seen in the sentence *I closed my eyes trying to be rid of her*. When Eleanor’s mother’s voices suddenly appeared, she tried to fade them away. She did not tell her issue to anyone but decided to repress it by herself.

Another one shows that Eleanor repressed her feelings when Raymond’s mother said something about how her relationship with her parents. The following statement indicates.

*“Oh, but I’m sure that must mean you’ve got a lovely relationship with you mum and dad, then? I bet you mean the world to them, being the only one.”*

*I looked at my shoes. Why had I selected them? I couldn’t remember. They had Velcro fastenings for ease of use and they were black, which went with everything. They were flat for comfort, and built up around the ankle for support. They were, I realized, hideous (p.81).*

Instead of telling the truth, she repressed it to defense herself. From the quotation above, she switched her focus to her shoes. She did not want anyone to know about her family, which is not as peaceful as most people. For this reason, she did not answer Raymond’s mother’s question and chose to keep quiet.

Not only did Mummy’s voice in Eleanor’s mind make her worried, but on one Wednesday, Eleanor only stayed silent after her Mummy belittled her. She kept sighing, as quiet as possible. She could not express her feeling of regret.

*“Don’t you go getting sidetracked, now, Eleanor—don’t go ignoring Mummy, will you? Oh, you think you’re so smart now, don’t you, with your job and your new friends. But you’re not smart, Eleanor. You’re someone who lets people down. Someone who can’t be trusted. Someone who failed. Oh yes, I know exactly what you are. And I know how you’ll*

*end up. Listen, the past is over. The past is a living thing. Those lovely scars of yours—they're from the past, aren't they? And yet they still live on your plain little face. Do they still hurt? (p.99)."*

*I shook my head, but said nothing (p.100).*

In the quotation above, Eleanor performs repression. Mummy degraded her over and over in the sentence *You're not smart, Eleanor. You're someone who lets people down. Someone who can't be trusted. Someone who failed. ... And I know how you'll end up.* Mummy hurts Eleanor's feelings, but Eleanor cannot convey her sadness. For this reason, Eleanor considered shaking her head and remained quiet when Mummy asked something about her scars. She chose to repress it to secure herself for not hurting anymore.

Furthermore, at Raymond's mother's house, his mother asked about how Eleanor's parents are. At that moment, Eleanor shed tears. She stated that the last time she cried was about years ago. It shows that she had hidden her emotion until that day. The following sentences demonstrate.

*I was crying. Sobbing! I hadn't cried so extravagantly for years. I tried to remember the last time; it was after Declan and I split up (p.81).*

The quotation above indirectly shows that Eleanor repressed her feelings for a long time. Eleanor had never been cried since then. After the accident happened, she decided to repress her feelings. She tried to be okay, but the reality said no.

Then, she feels anxious about the baby's cry that leads her into the past trauma. She also closed her eyes and attempted to avoid the yelling. It shows in the following evidence.

*In slow motion, his sweet pink mouth puckered into a kiss and then opened wide to release a wail at quiet momentous volume. His mother glanced down and, reassured that*

*he was fine despite the noise, continued her conversation. The crying got louder... (p.156).*

*He was winding up himself up now, fists balled furiously, his face getting redder by the minute. **I closed my eyes, tried and failed to ignore the noise** (p.156).*

When Eleanor went to the counselor, she did not express her feeling freely.

The statement below shows.

*She looked intently at me. "Could you tell me why you were feeling sad?" she said. I released a sigh that was longer and more unintentionally histrionic than I had been expecting. I felt my throat constrict at the end of breath, tightening with tears. Don't cry, Eleanor. **DO NOT CRY IN FRONT OF THE STRANGER** (p.215).*

From the quotation above, Eleanor repressed herself in front of the stranger. She did not want the counselor who can help her situation to be told to. The counselor, named Maria Temple, asked Eleanor the reason why she was feeling sad after the incident years ago happened. Then, Eleanor feels that she would like to cry, but she repressed her emotions because she had a mindset that crying in front of stranger is prohibited. Hence, she considered to repress it.

## **2. Denial**

This kind of defense mechanism relates with repression and involves denial. Denial defines the state happened when people don't accept the reality and don't want to memorize the traumatic past or threat has occurred (Schultz & Schultz, 2017). Eleanor used this mechanism when she denied her loneliness and her belief of her mother's existence.

Eleanor used this mechanism when she denied her loneliness and her belief in her mother's existence. Eleanor was always lonely, but she did not realize it. In her call conversation with Mummy, she said that she was fine on her own.

*"I'm not lonely, Mummy," I said, protesting. "I'm fine on my own. I've always been fine on my own (p.26)."*

Furthermore, June Mullen, the social worker, came to Eleanor's house for a routine visit. Eleanor did not want to accept that Mummy had passed away when Mullen said an implicit question. She even called her every Wednesday, once a week. In brief, she had a conversation with herself as long as she had not realized it yet.

*"You're still of the view that you don't want to know anything else about the incident, or about you mother, I understand?" No smiling this time.  
"That's right," I said. "There's no need—I speak to her once a week a Wednesday evening, regular as clockwork."*

Moreover, when she visited Raymond's mother house, Raymond annoyed her on purpose because he did not remember that he had a sister. At that time, she still believed that her mother was still alive.

*This was puzzling. How on earth could you forget that you had a sister? He hadn't forgotten, I supposed—he'd simply taken his sibling for granted: an unchanging, unremarkable fact of life, not even worthy of mention. It was impossible for me to imagine such a scenario, alone as I was. **Only Mummy and I inhabit in the Oliphant world** (p.78).*

### **3. Displacement**

Defining the name, displacement means to displace something. People transformed their origin of resentment to the other things, either human, animals, or objects. On purpose of anxiety releases, they don't liberate their hatred into the main cause, but the other things (Schultz & Schultz, 2017). Eleanor experienced this mechanism to help reducing her anxiety.

Eleanor experienced this mechanism to help reduce her anxiety. Eleanor introduced herself as another woman. She had a routine activity. One of the activities was to drink alcohol.

*When I get home, I eat some pizza and drink the wine. **I had some vodka** afterward (p.2).*

Not only in her daily life, but it also happened when Eleanor had an unstable state. For example, she decided to drink more vodka when she was distressed about what had already happened at the concert.

*I slept again. When I woke, my head was empty, finally, of all thoughts except physical ones: I am cold, I am shaking. Decision time. **I decided on more vodka** (p.196).*

Moreover, it happened after she had her first consultation with Dr. Maria Temple, the counselor whom Raymond recommended. The first session had full of tears. Eleanor was crying while walking home. However, she did not go home directly but bought a vodka.

*It was 11 a.m. I wasn't supposed to be drinking, but I wiped my tears away, **went into the nearest pub and ordered a large vodka** (p.220).*

She even looked at vodka as something that had always been available in her house. Sometimes, when she continuously listened to voices inside her head, she could not sleep. She decided to take a shortcut by drinking vodka. It even helped her to fall asleep easily.

***Vodka is, for me, merely a household necessity, like a loaf of bread or a packet of tea. The very best thing about it is that it helps me to sleep. Sometimes, when the night comes, I lie there in the darkness and I can't prevent myself remembering: fear, and pressure, but mostly fear. On nights, like those, Mummy's voice hisses inside my head. .... On those nights I need the vodka, or else I'd break apart too** (p.114).*

#### **4. Projection**

Projection almost resembles displacement. Projection and displacement liberate their anxiety into other objects. In contrast, this kind of mechanism make another person becomes the object of it. Those who did projection think that they aren't the main cause of their anxiety, but the other people (Feist et al., 2018). Eleanor often used this to make her feeling secure.

Eleanor often used this to make her feel secure. Eleanor always projected her feeling into someone else. She made a *victim blaming* to other people. For example, Eleanor had been working in the office for years. She could be called the senior there. However, she always had thought that Bob, the owner accepted her forcedly.

*“I’m nearly thirty years old now and I’ve been working here since I was twenty-one. Bob, the owner, took me on not long after the office opened. I suppose he felt sorry for me. I had a degree in Classics and no work experience to speak of, and I turned up for the interview with a black eye, a couple of missing teeth and a broken arm (p.1).”*

Moreover, she often prejudiced her colleagues. Then, when she was promoted to be a manager, she presupposed them once more. She stated,

*“My colleagues had appeared somewhat underwhelmed upon hearing the news that I would be managing them, but, thus far at least, there had been no sign of mutiny or insubordination (p.162).”*

The following statement also shows that she presupposed them.

*“They hate me, but they don’t actually wish me dead. I don’t think so, anyway (p.3).”*

Two quotations above proves that she has a negative thinking towards her colleagues. She felt like she was not enough to fit into them, being a good colleague. Hence, she felt like they hate her. However, the second quotation shows that she doubted it. But still, the words *they hate me* depicted that she prejudiced her colleagues. For these reasons, she decided to project her anxiety.

She also had a judgment for people who had the pretty privilege. She was insecure about the scars that resided on her face from the traumatic past, so she projected it on specific people who looked beautiful by her standards.

*“I feel sorry for beautiful people. Beauty, from the moment you possess it, is already slipping away, ephemeral. That must be difficult (p.20).”*



## 5. Reaction-Formation

People shows opposite behaviors when it comes to reaction-formation. It is a different reaction from the id impulses. Eleanor used this to her mother who set the fire to their house. She should be showing her anger, but she didn't. Instead, she formed her reaction into a person who is really care towards her mother (Schultz & Schultz, 2017).

Eleanor used this on her mother, who set fire to their house. She was supposed to show her anger, but she did not. Instead, she formed her reaction into a person who cares for her mother.

Eleanor hated her mother because she was the one who put her sister and herself in danger. However, she would not like to express her true feeling. Instead, Eleanor had been good to her mother. Even though it was not her mother but herself, who spoke over the telephone, she always called her mother every Wednesday. It had been a routine since she was in the foster house.

*“Really? After all this time, that’s still happening? Interesting... Are you keen to... maintain this contact?”*  
*“Why wouldn’t I be?” I said, incredulous (p.41).”*

The quotation above indicates that she still had a conversation even though she hated her. It is shown when the social worker came to her house for annual checking. The social worker asked her a genuine question about their contact and Eleanor answered it doubtfully. It shows that she still respected her mother even though she disliked her.

Moreover, the following quotation shows another piece of evidence that shows Eleanor's dislike of her mother.

*"I was poised, en garde, from this conversation, as one always had to be with her. She was a formidable adversary. Perhaps it was foolhardy, but I made the first move (p.24)."*

From the evidence above, she looked at her mother as *a formidable adversary*. In other words, she did not like her mother because of something happened in the past. Despite her hatred, she still treated Mummy as if she was care of her. It shows in the sentence, *but I made the first move*. She was the one who started the conversation on the telephone with her mother which had been a routine.

## **6. Sublimation**

This kind of defense mechanism is the antithesis of displacement. In this type, people don't displace their anxiety into something bad, but morally approvable (Schultz & Schultz, 2017). Eleanor used sublimation to improve her social skills and aware about the surroundings.

It usually came from moral anxiety. Eleanor used sublimation to improve her social skills and awareness of her surroundings. Eleanor had been living for years with her selfishness. Then, multiple events made her change into a generous person.

Firstly, when Raymond and she helped the old man, Sammy, who passed out in the pavement. Eleanor chose to help Sammy by talking to him while Raymond called an ambulance. Like the quotations below.

*"Hello," I said, "I'm Eleanor Oliphant." Keep talking to him, Raymond had said, so I did.*

*"What a lovely sweater!" I said. "You don't see that color often on a woolen garment. Would you describe it as vermillion? Or carmine, perhaps? ..."*

*I braced myself and took three deep breaths, then slowly put out my hand and placed it over his. I held it gently for as long as I could bear.*

*“Mr. Gibbons is calling an ambulance,” I said, “so don’t worry, you won’t be lying here in the street for long. There’s no need to be anxious; medical care is completely free of charge in this country, and the standard is generally considered to be among the best in the world.*

*... I stood up and stretched my spine out, and then started to collect the spilled shopping and put it into the carrier bags. One of them was torn, so I went into my shopper and took out my favorite Bag for Life, the Tesco one with lions on it. I packed all the comestibles and placed the bags by the old man’s feet (p.35).*

In the quotation above, she attempted to make Sammy aware because he was in the half-sober position. Eleanor keeps talking to him until the ambulance came. She also purposed to accompany Sammy to keep him safe, to stay calm. Eleanor did not only do the things mentioned, but she also help the spilled things from the man’s plastic bags. In brief, she did a sublimation to cope with anxiety.

Apart from that, when she went to Raymond’s mother’s house, she helped her mother and she was happy. The quotations below show it.

*I was glad to help, glad to be moving away from Mummy-related conversation. There were various chores Mrs. Gibbons needed assistance with—Raymond had elected to change the cats’ litter trays and empty the bins, so I’d certainly drawn the long straw with the laundry (p.82).*

*Back indoors, I helped Raymond swap the sheets on his mother’s bed for the clean ones I’d brought from the line. Her bedroom was very pink and smelled of talcum powder (p.83).*

Furthermore, she did not deal with trivial issues. The following statement indicates it.

*“Oh, that’s right,” she said, “you never go, do you? I’d forgotten about that. You don’t do the Secret Santa either. Eleanor the Grinch, that’s what we ought to call you.” They all laughed.*

*...  
I went back to my work, hoping it would inspire them to do the same (p.87).*

The quotation above shows that Eleanor chose the more mature option. She considered not continuing the conversation. It looks like repression but sublimation. Eleanor gets insulted, but she does not see it as a big deal.

Not only going to another person's house and lending her hand, but he also went to Sammy's homecoming party. Previously, she had spent her time alone every day. She loved to be at home after work and walk to another place by herself. She even had a hobby that helped her spend time alone, which was a crossword. She had never been that open to a new person, even her coworkers. For this reason, it could be her defense mechanism to displace her emotion for something better rather than worse.

*"Was I not here, after all, out in the world, and going to a party? Dressed in my finery and awaiting an acquaintance? Look out, Saturday night, here comes Eleanor Oliphant! I allowed myself a little smile (p.120)."*

Moreover, Eleanor had not usually gone out together to eat lunch with any acquaintance. At that moment, she had grown up into a person who is open, not always stood apart, and avoided meeting people.

*"This was the first day in nine years that I'd eaten lunch with a companion, and that I hadn't done the crossword (p.141)."*

## **7. Fixation**

This type is the universal one. People usually do this when they scared of something in the future. They don't want to take another step. Then, they stay in one place and don't go ahead (Feist et al., 2018). Eleanor applied this kind when Mummy, as the voice inside her head, brought her to stay at home and don't socialize with people.

Eleanor applies this kind when Mummy, the voice inside her head, brings her to stay at home and not socialize with people. She has done a lot of self-defense mechanisms, including fixation.

One day, when Mummy and Eleanor had a call conversation, they conversed about how was Eleanor's day. The reality revealed that Mummy did not support her as another good mother but terrible. She had a social issue caused by her traumatic past, but her mother degraded her. She forced her to not going into social activities. Eleanor was only approved to stay at home with her loneliness.

*"..., please don't trouble yourself by being proactive and pushing forward with it ... Please—continue to do nothing. Go sit in your empty little flat and watch television on your own, just like you do Every. Single. Night (p.161)."*

*"I sat down and watched television alone, like I do Every. Single. Night (p.162)."*

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter involves conclusion and suggestion of the thesis. In this chapter, the researcher concludes clearly the analysis in findings and discussion, based on the data in Gail Honeyman's *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine* novel. Also, the researcher gives the suggestion towards the other researchers using this thesis as a reference for another thesis or articles including the similar topic or novel.

#### A. Conclusion

The researcher found three types of anxiety that was experienced by the main character, Eleanor Oliphant. According to the findings, the types discovered are reality anxiety, neurotic anxiety, moral anxiety. Eleanor experienced reality anxiety when her unconscious state recalled the past traumatic events when she was trapped in house fire. There are three things Eleanor feared during her reality anxiety, including fire, ashes, smokes, loud noises and death. Besides, she experienced neurotic anxiety when she faced her mother, called as Mummy. She started to feel anxious and worry whenever talking with Mummy. Also, when she recalled the past events, she keeps listening to her voice, delusional hearing. Moreover, Eleanor experienced moral anxiety when she feels failed to be a good person. Even to her mother, she was worried to not being a good daughter although she hated her for everything she did to her since childhood. She was also worried to not helping people. Hence, she helped Sammy, a passed out elderly man, and Raymond's mother.

Apart from the anxiety types, the researcher discovered the defense mechanism Eleanor did to overcome her anxiety. Through all types mentioned in chapter two, she found seven defense mechanisms out of ten. They are repression, denial, displacement, projection, reaction-formation, sublimation, and fixation.

### **B. Suggestion**

From this thesis, the researcher hopes that the reader can understand what are the types of anxiety and how to cope with it using defense mechanism because anxiety and defense mechanism is a situation that cannot be realized directly since the characteristic is unconscious. However, even though it is undetectable, people must be experiencing it throughout their life to defend themselves physiologically. Apart from those, this thesis cannot be mentioned as the perfect research. For this reason, the other researchers can fill the gap if there is any. They can also use this as a reference to their study or thesis. Also, the other researchers can make research with the same topics, anxiety and defense mechanism. They can also make another research using the novel as the object with the other topics related within.

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## CURRICULUM VITAE



Hafidzatul Azizah was born in Malang on September 22, 2000. She was graduated from MAN 3 Malang (now MAN 2 KOTA MALANG) in 2018. During her study at the senior high school, she participated in some external school activities, including Journalistic, Band, and Choir. She also actively participated as a committee in the section of decoration and documentation in an event established by language and culture department named *Bulan Bahasa* once a year. She started her higher education in 2018 at the Department of English Literature UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang and finished in 2022. During her study at the university, she involved in some internal competitions (Ma'had, department, university). Also, she has joined an external volunteer in the organization named Earth Hour located in Malang.