

Psychosocial conflicts and defense mechanisms in leadership: psychoanalytic view in *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* movie

Konflik psikososial dan mekanisme pertahanan dalam kepemimpinan: pandangan psikoanalitik dalam film “Elizabeth: The Golden Age”

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Abstract

This study examines the personality structure of the character Elizabeth, who is the Queen of England in the film *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* (2007) through the theory of Sigmund Freud, as well as the psychosocial development of Erik Erikson's theory, and the defense mechanisms of Sigmund Freud's theory that she uses. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with content analysis, examining the elements of dialogue and character behavior in the film. Data for this study were collected by watching the film, noting relevant scenes, and analyzing them according to the theory used. The results of the study show that Elizabeth experiences internal conflict between her id, ego, and superego and this reflects how she develops as a national leader. Erikson's psychosocial stages such as Identity vs Role Confusion, Intimacy vs Isolation, and Generativity vs Stagnation, show Elizabeth's changes when dealing with matters related to politics and society. In addition, the defense mechanisms used by Elizabeth such as rationalization and sublimation play a positive role in maintaining her emotional stability, while regression and forgiveness lead to negative ones.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji mengenai struktur kepribadian tokoh Elizabeth yang merupakan seorang Ratu Inggris dalam film *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* (2007) melalui teori dari Sigmund Freud, beserta perkembangan psikososial dari teori Erik Erikson, serta mekanisme pertahanan diri dari teori Sigmund Freud yang digunakannya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan analisis isi, mengkaji unsur dialog dan perilaku karakter dalam film. Data untuk penelitian ini dikumpulkan dengan menonton film, mencatat adegan yang relevan, dan menganalisisnya sesuai teori yang digunakan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan Elizabeth mengalami konflik internal antara id, ego, dan superegonya dan ini mencerminkan bagaimana perkembangannya sebagai pemimpin negara. Tahapan psikososial Erikson seperti *Identity vs Role Confusion*, *Intimacy vs Isolation*, dan *Generativity vs Stagnation*, memperlihatkan perubahan Elizabeth ketika berhadapan dengan hal yang berkaitan mengenai politik dan sosial. Selain itu, mekanisme pertahanan diri yang digunakan Elizabeth seperti rasionalisasi dan sublimasi berperan ke arah positif dalam menjaga stabilitas emosionalnya, sedangkan regresi dan penolakan membawanya ke arah negatif.

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A. Introduction

Film is a powerful medium for popularizing and learning about history (Stevenson in Rani & Winaya, 2020). Films are not just visual and audio entertainment, but also a medium for conveying criticism, values, ideologies, or building views (Sari & Rusdiarti, 2024). In a movie, the character is one of the most important things. A character can be the soul of a movie, especially if the character has interesting personality ups and downs. *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* (2007) is a historical fiction movie set in the 16th century that depicts the reign of the main character, Queen Elizabeth I of England (Bronfen & Straumann, 2016). The movie offers some of the psychological aspects that Elizabeth experienced due to the pressures she was under.

Elizabeth: The Golden Age (2007) is a movie that tells the story of Elizabeth's reign after being appointed Queen of England. Some of the opposition during Elizabeth's reign, such as Spain, English Catholics, and Mary Stuart, triggered some of Elizabeth's changes. But the most underlined in this movie shows Elizabeth's conflict with Spain (Bronfen & Straumann, 2016). This research focuses on the problem of the personality structure of the protagonist character of the movie *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* (2007), Queen Elizabeth, her psychosocial development, and how she coped with the political pressure she experienced with defense mechanisms. The complexity of the challenges Elizabeth faces caused her to experience the ups and downs of personality change during her reign (Bronfen & Straumann, 2016). A character's personality structure can be analyzed using the theory of psychoanalysis popularized by Freud in the 1900s. This theory is related to the function of human personality development (Rani et al., 2023). Later, Erikson proposed eight stages of human development through psychosocial theory including Basic Trust vs. Mistrust, Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt, Initiative vs. Guilt, Industry vs. Inferiority, Identity vs. Role Confusion, Intimacy vs. Isolation, Generativity vs. Stagnation, and Ego Integrity vs. Despair (Maree, 2021; Syed & McLean, 2019), and some of them are relevant to explain Elizabeth's emotional and psychological journey as a queen.

Furthermore, defense mechanism is a theory that is still included in the theory of human personality structure, which is defined as a strategy used by individuals to reduce or eliminate anxiety experienced by individuals (Pratama & Rullyanti, 2020). Defense mechanisms exist to protect the self from anxiety or guilt that arises when the self feels threatened (Khoirunisa & Rahayu, 2020). As a queen, Elizabeth's political leadership is often challenged not only by aspects of power and decision-making, but also how she manages her psychological state with defense mechanisms.

To better understand Elizabeth in this film, this research applies Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory which has three structural aspects of personality, namely id, ego, and superego which are then known as the tripartite of personality (Amaliyah & Prastiwi, 2022). The second theory is Erikson's psychosocial theory, which applies the stages of psychosocial development to understand Elizabeth's psychological dynamics and personality development. Moreover, Defense Mechanism which Freud also developed. In the Freudian psychoanalytic perspective, characters are not only fictional, but also serve as a vehicle for the author to explore hidden aspects of his or her personality, allowing the audience to find personal resonance with the characters (Aras, 2015).

A search for previous studies that discuss psychoanalysis and defense mechanisms has been conducted to support this research. The first research on psychoanalysis by Nolen & Arianto (2020) discusses the psychoanalysis of the character Aladdin from the film *Aladdin* and how the id, ego, and superego, and id which are the most dominant among the three aspects influencing Aladdin's behavior. Further research by Rani et al. (2023) discussed the psychoanalysis of the characters Andy Dufresne and Red from the film *Shawshank Redemption* and found that Andy Dufresne has a stronger ego and superego than Red. Meanwhile, other studies that discuss the topic of defense mechanisms, such as those conducted by Khoirunisa & Rahayu (2020) which discuss conflict and its impact on the main character of a film, *Maleficent*, as well as changes in *Maleficent*'s character for the better because she sincerely loves Aurora and her defense

mechanisms. The following research on defense mechanisms by Setiawan et al. (2021) discusses how Michonne's character in *The Walking Dead* game movie Michonne uses defense mechanisms to overcome her anxiety.

The research above tends to analyze the top layer and lacks in-depth analysis, such as how it relates to other relevant topics such as social, cultural, or others, and the lack of deepening using other theories that can be related. Women are unique figures who often attract public attention, offering numerous aspects to be studied in greater depth (Meivitasari & Widyatwati, 2023), this research conducts a layered analysis and explains from how Elizabeth's character as female leader relates to her political leadership at the beginning of the film, mid-film, to the end of the film, how Elizabeth changes throughout the film, what psychosocial stages occur to Elizabeth, and what defense mechanisms Elizabeth uses to deal with the pressure, especially from politics, that she experiences.

B. Method

This research is descriptive qualitative research with a content analysis method. Creswell et al. (2007) said that qualitative research focuses on the processes, attitudes, beliefs, and ways in which individuals make sense of their experiences in a particular context, it relies on text and image data as the research focus. This approach explores and interprets the meanings individuals or groups construct about social issues. Meanwhile, descriptive research aims to describe phenomena or their characteristics systematically, it is a process of collecting factual data, followed by efforts to interpret the data (Nassaji, 2015; Patel & Patel, 2019). Content analysis method conduct an in-depth analysis of the elements in the film, including dialogue, patterns, themes and characters (Lolang et al., 2023). Content analysis not only focuses on external aspects but also includes ideas or ideas contained in the object. This method was chosen because it can explore and interpret the meaning behind character behavior in more depth by linking it to Freud's psychoanalytic theory and Erikson's psychosocial theory.

The data from this research were taken from the film *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* (2007) directed by Shekhar Kapur, which later became the primary data of this study. Data collection began with the selection of film clips, where the entire film was analyzed to identify key scenes that show Elizabeth's character development, the situations that influence her, and emotional and behavioral responses that illustrate defense mechanisms and psychosocial stages. The selected scenes were then grouped based on Freud's psychoanalytic concepts and defense mechanisms, as well as Erikson's psychosocial stages. The researchers noted actions or dialogues that showed defense mechanisms, as well as Elizabeth's internal conflicts that corresponded to Erikson's psychosocial stages. The data that had been obtained were grouped based on the film's narrative stages (beginning, middle, and end of the film), as well as psychological analysis categories (psychoanalysis, defense mechanisms and psychosocial stages). To maintain the validity and authenticity of the data collected, the data was conducted by integrating findings from the primary source (the film) with secondary sources, including scholarly literature on Freud's and Erikson's psychological theories. This approach ensures that interpretations drawn from the film align with established theories. As a support, this study also used secondary sources in the form of books, journal articles, and literature related to Freud and Erikson's theories to strengthen the interpretation and validation of data collected from the film.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Elizabeth's Internal Conflict: Tension between Id, Ego, and Superego

The relationship between Elizabeth's id, ego, and superego is made clear by several situations she encounters in the film *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*. These three factors—which often clash—are the basis of Sigmund Freud's personality theory, which explains human behavior (Barratt, 2016).

a. Id: Elizabeth's Impulsive Drive

Id is the impulsive and primitive part of personality. The id has been one of the most critical components in humans since birth. Id refers to the part of personality that is fully conscious and instinctive because Id runs according to the pleasure principle that develops from needs and desires (Mahesar & Mashori, 2018; Mawuntu et al., 2023; Nolen & Arianto, 2020). In *Elizabeth*, Id may have taken on the role of herself several times, with pride as a ruler, driven by the desire for power, not wanting to lose, and instant gratification.

The following excerpt is an example of Elizabeth's aggressive dialogue when she argues with the Spanish Ambassador, which can be seen as an expression of uncontrolled Id impulses,

“You will leave my presence, sir! Go back to your rat hole! Tell Philip, I fear neither him, nor his priests, nor his armies. Tell him if he wants to shake his little fist at us, we're ready to give him such a bite he'll wish he'd kept his hands in his pockets!” Elizabeth was furious (Kapur, 2007).

Elizabeth acts aggressively and emotionally in the dialogue when her authority is challenged. Expressions such as “I fear neither him, nor his priests, nor his armies” and “we're ready to give him such a bite” show the Id's desire to dominate and seek immediate gratification without considering the impact of her words when she argues with Spanish Ambassador. The instinctive urge to maintain her power takes over her without regard for diplomacy or the possible consequences of her words. The scene illustrates the influence of the id on Elizabeth, resulting in her emotional outbursts and impulsive behavior.

b. Ego: The Rational Mediator

In personality psychology theory, ego is the rational and conscious part that mediates between the Id's impulsive drives and the Superego's moral constraints. Ego is a component that is able to control the id, this layer uses a more realistic method of thinking and tries to fulfill the demands of the id in a more social way (Kurnia & Santyaputri, 2024; Nolen & Arianto, 2020). In Elizabeth's character, Ego plays a vital role in decision making. Over time, Elizabeth began to think more maturely.

This ego is reflected in the dialogue from *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* (2007), when Elizabeth says:

“Ambassador, what do you know about the Enterprise of England?” Elizabeth asked. (Kapur, 2007).

This dialogue shows how Elizabeth's Ego tries to adjust to reality and manage emotions more rationally. She acts rationally by asking for the truth about the takeover of England. Elizabeth's Ego acts as an effective mediator in dealing with the complexities of political and emotional reality, allowing her to shift from impulsive responses to more prudent actions.

Another example is in the quote below when Raleigh the Pirate comes to a royal meeting and the Spanish Ambassador seems to dislike him.

“I also come bearing gifts for Your Majesty—“ Raleigh's speech is immediately cut off by the Spanish Ambassador.

“These gifts, Majesty, are the fruits of piracy. The true property of the realm of Spain.” said the Spanish Ambassador.

“Let's see, shall we?” Elizabeth said (Kapur, 2007).

Elizabeth said, “Let's see, shall we?” to maintain control of the situation, avoid open conflict, or find a diplomatic solution by checking the facts first, it is an expression of ego. The queen may have realized that checking the gifts was a logical way to clear up the accusation, showing that she was acting as a rational mediator.

c. Superego: Morality and Social Norms

The superego is an internal moral compass, often representing the norms and values of society. Moral standards are primarily influenced by the family and developed through social life (Kurnia & Santyaputri, 2024). A person's superego activities, especially those that conflict with the ego, will manifest in emotions such as guilt and regret (Mawuntu et al., 2023; Nolen & Arianto, 2020). Elizabeth's superego may seem less prominent because the Id has dominated her actions quite prominently several times. However, as events increase and she becomes more aware of the broader social implications, her superego becomes more influential.

This is evident in her conversation with her adjutant when she finds her country on the verge of war, Elizabeth asks for the release of the prisoners as a form of human rights and prioritizing the common good to protect their country.

“... The harvest must wait. All prisoners had to be released. England is their country, too. And release Raleigh... he's forgiven. As I, too, long to be forgiven.” Elizabeth closed her eyes (Kapur, 2007).

Elizabeth's decision to free and forgive the prisoners, including Raleigh, who had hurt her, shows moral judgment and a desire to do what is right. Phrases such as “All prisoners must be released. England is their country too,” imply the existence of her superego, a moral compass that judges actions and shows social implications, it illustrates her concern for all her people, including those who may be considered bad person (prisoners), in order to create common security.

d. Tension between Id, Ego, and Superego

As the story progresses, the tension between these three components of personality becomes more apparent. For example, when Elizabeth is in a meeting with the royal officials discussing the differences in beliefs held by her people, Elizabeth's ego is shown to be relatively strong, allowing her to balance the desires of the id with the demands of her superego. The ego is a layer of personality that acts as a balancer so that id thinking is carried out realistically based on the superego (Endrawati et al., 2022; Hossain, 2017). It can be seen in the scene when Elizabeth's royal officials urge her to act on the English Catholics, who they think could betray her at any time.

“... But I will not punish my people for their beliefs. Only for their deeds. I am assured that the people of England love their Queen” (Kapur, 2007).

In the data above, Elizabeth shows that she rejects the expulsion of English Catholics calmly but firmly. Elizabeth wisely calls out that she respects every belief as she says, “I will not punish my people for their beliefs. Only for their deeds.” She will only punish her people if they make mistakes. In this case, Elizabeth's ego successfully suppresses her from acting impulsively and choosing a wiser path. Elizabeth's ego also successfully combines her power as a queen, wisdom, and courage to create a more just and tolerant society.

Then, it can be seen in the scene when rumors about her infertility circulate, Elizabeth asks her advisor, Walsingham, to keep the people's views on her.

“Have my doctors confirmed that the Queen is still fertile. People need to be reassured” (Kapur, 2007).

In the data above, Elizabeth's request to her advisor, Walsingham, to ensure that the doctor has confirmed her fertility and to calm the people in her sentence, “... People need to be reassured,” shows how the ego works well. Elizabeth's id drive may be related to the instinctive need to maintain power. Meanwhile, her superego serves as a reminder of the moral responsibility and expectations of the community towards her as a leader who can meet social standards. Through the ego, Elizabeth makes realistic and rational decisions by asking for medical evidence from doctors to control rumors and maintain political stability.

Elizabeth's ego weakens significantly after learning that Spain plans to take over England. External pressures such as the conflict with Mary Stuart, the threat of English Catholics, and tensions with Spain trigger more impulsive and instinctive reactions from Elizabeth. Under tremendous pressure, her id begins to take control of her personality. The id is a layer of personality that reacts based on instinct and impulsiveness (Hossain, 2017; Kurnia & Santyaputri, 2024). This is evident in the scene after Elizabeth argues with the Spanish Ambassador when meeting the servants she passes; Elizabeth says the following sentence:

“What are you staring at? Lower your eyes! I am a queen! You are not my equal, sir, and you never will be!” (Kapur, 2007).

In the data above, it can be seen that Elizabeth acts superior when she is angry. She considers everyone below her by saying it clearly. This shows how strong emotions can change her behavior and decision-making process. When Elizabeth feels threatened or disrespected, her id kicks in and drives her to assert her power in impulsive ways. Statements such as “I am a queen! You are not my equal” directly express the desire to dominate and assert her status. Elizabeth's change of attitude in this quote provides insight into the complexity of human personality. Although Elizabeth is a wise and strong leader, she is also susceptible to the influence of her id, especially in stressful situations.

As time passes and she experiences more, Elizabeth has developed a better balance between her id, ego, and superego. This is reflected when Elizabeth goes to the battlefield when Spain invades her country. Elizabeth personally involves herself to encourage her people who are about to fight to defend their land.

“... I am resolved in the midst and heat of the battle to live or die amongst you all! ... While we stand together, no invader shall pass. Let them come with all the armies of Hell, they will not pass!” Elizabeth said (Kapur, 2007).

Elizabeth's decision to go to war is a complex combination of id, ego, and superego. According to Masyhur et al. (2023) id focuses entirely on instinctive drives. In this case, the instinctive drive that drives Elizabeth to go to war is the desire to protect her country and her people, as shown in the dialogue: “... Let them come with all the armies of Hell, they will not pass!”. This scene also reflects the survival instinct that exists in every individual. At the same

time, the ego acts as a means of fulfilling the id in a more social way (Masyhur et al., 2023). It can be seen in her dialogue, "... While we stand together, no invader shall pass." As a queen, Elizabeth realizes that her physical presence on the front lines will provide a huge morale boost for her troops. Meanwhile, the superego is the voice of conscience that becomes the standard and morality regarding what is right and encourages individuals to behave morally (Endrawati et al., 2022; Masyhur et al., 2023). As Elizabeth's dialogue says, "... I am resolved in the midst and heat of the battle to live or die amongst you all!" in which case, Elizabeth realizes that her decision to lead from the front lines reflects the moral awareness that a leader must be an example for his people.

2. Elizabeth's Identity Crisis: Applying the Identity vs. Role Confusion Stage of Erikson's Psychosocial Theory

Identity vs. Role Confusion is a stage of Erikson's Psychosocial that emphasizes the search for self-identity. During this time, individuals begin to focus on a new and very important project, building their own identity (Chung, 2018; Syed & McLean, 2019). Individuals often have uncertainty about their decisions during the Identity vs. Role Confusion stage because they are unsure of their proper role (Chung, 2018; Knight, 2017). This stage usually occurs during adolescence. Although Elizabeth is an adult in the film, she still experiences identity confusion regarding her role as a queen and human being. This reflects that the process of searching for identity is not limited to adolescence but can continue into adulthood, especially when someone is faced with a major role or responsibility. Elizabeth must find a balance between her responsibilities as a political leader and her personal side.

a. Identity Crisis in Leadership

Erikson highlights that an identity crisis occurs when personal feelings and ideals clash with anticipated responsibilities (Knight, 2017; Syed & McLean, 2019). Elizabeth experiences an identity crisis when faced with political challenges, particularly when faced with the case of Mary Stuart, who is suspected of plotting her murder. Her advisor, Walsingham, asks Elizabeth to prosecute Mary according to the law. Elizabeth must decide whether to act as a strict and authoritative queen or follow her empathetic side.

"Must? Mary Stuart must die? Where is it written? Who said that? Have I ordered it?!" (Kapur, 2007).

This inner conflict shows the confusion between her responsibility as queen, who must make firm decisions for the kingdom's safety, and her personal side, which feels empathy for Mary as a fellow human being. This identity crisis influences her decisions and illustrates that even in adulthood, the search for identity can still be a significant issue, especially for those in prominent leadership positions. Ultimately, although Elizabeth feels caught between her role as queen to protect her kingdom and her empathy for Mary, she chooses to execute Mary. Although her heart struggles with doubt and conflict, Elizabeth feels that as queen, her responsibility to the kingdom and its stability must come first. This shows how identity crises in leadership affect major decisions and how leaders balance their public and private roles.

Another example is in the following dialogue excerpt when everyone asks her to punish Mary Queen of Scots.

"Was it my father's duty to murder my mother? She was a Queen, for a time. Oh, I would be loath to die such a bloody death" (Kapur, 2007).

This dialogue reflects her doubts about her fate as a woman who rules. Although she is a ruler, a Queen, Elizabeth is worried about experiencing the same tragic fate as her mother, which is a brutal and bloody death. This internal conflict mirrors the unpredictability of human emotions and responses to grief, the changes in Elizabeth's reactions suggest that grief and fear are not easily controlled, much like how nature may have predetermined the timing and circumstances of sorrow in someone's life (Pratiwi et al., 2024). This creates a conflict between her image as a queen who must be strong and the possibility of becoming a victim of history. This dialogue shows how Elizabeth struggles with her identity, trying to understand who she is in a world full of expectations, conflicts, and legacies that are difficult to avoid.

3. Elizabeth's Emotional Isolation: Application of Erikson's Psychosocial Theory's Intimacy vs. Isolation Stage

The conflict between intimacy vs. isolation is also reflected in Elizabeth's character. Intimacy vs. Isolation is one of Erikson's Psychosocial stages that usually occurs when individuals are in early adulthood. According to Erikson's theory, isolation is the inability to do so due to external pressure or fear, while intimacy is the ability to build intimate relationships and share emotionally with others (Chung, 2018; Kerpelman & Pittman, 2018). At this stage, individuals need to find their identity in relationships with others outside the family circle (Knight, 2017). If they fail to find intimacy, they risk experiencing isolation or feelings of alienation from others (Syed & McLean, 2019). As queen, she experiences emotional isolation due to her position, making it difficult for her to form close relationships, especially in romance. Her loneliness and longing for love, as depicted in her relationship with Raleigh, highlight the dilemma she faces—between living a private life full of affection or maintaining her role as a queen who keeps her distance from personal relationships.

a. Isolation Due to Queenship

Elizabeth's position as queen creates distance between herself and others, especially in romantic relationships. This is reflected in her relationship with Raleigh, a pirate she loves. Although her heart yearns for a deeper relationship, Elizabeth feels constrained by her role as head of state. In one of her lines, she says:

“You come here as if from another world, and I...—you have real adventures, you go where the maps end. I would follow you there if I could, believe me” (Kapur, 2007).

Her role as queen keeps her in her country on the brink of collapse even though her heart wants to follow Raleigh wherever he goes. Her potential relationship with Raleigh, who is not from the royal family, reflects Elizabeth's dilemma of whether to give in to her personal desires and pursue love or to maintain her distance to fulfill her role as queen. Elizabeth is in a stage where she must choose between intimacy and isolation. She longs for a close emotional connection with someone, but her responsibilities as queen create a distance that she cannot cross. This situation is consistent with Erikson's idea of the isolation stage, where a person's inability to form close bonds with others can lead to alienation, affecting their personal and professional interactions (Lawford et al., 2020; Malone et al., 2016). According to Erikson, this is the peak of isolation, where Elizabeth chooses her social role and responsibilities over her personal emotional needs.

Another example is the dialogue between Raleigh and Elizabeth when Elizabeth had to decide on the punishment of Mary Queen of Scots.

“Since when were you so afraid?” asked Raleigh.
“I am always afraid.” Elizabeth trembled (Kapur, 2007).

This dialogue illustrates Elizabeth's fear of the decision to kill Mary Stuart, reflecting a deeper emotional isolation, which arose from the heavy burden of leadership responsibility. In this context, Elizabeth's fear was not only about personal failure, but also about the political decision she had to make, which concerned morality, responsibility, and the stability of the kingdom. People who were close enough to her like Raleigh didn't even know that Elizabeth had always been afraid, which was proof that Elizabeth isolated herself. Elizabeth was trapped in emotional isolation due to her throne and her obligations as a leader. Her decision to sacrifice Mary for political stability led to feelings of isolation from aspects of her humanity and personal morality. This fear reflects a deeper isolation, because even though she was in a position of power, she was isolated from emotional support or relationships that could provide her with comfort in facing this decision.

4. Elizabeth's Productivity as Queen: Generativity vs. Stagnation Erikson's Psychosocial Theory

Generativity vs. Stagnation is one of the stages in Erikson's psychosocial theory that usually occurs when individuals have matured. At this stage, individuals need to develop the ability to nurture and care for not only themselves but also others (Maree, 2021; Syed & McLean, 2019). It means that this stage highlights the individual's need to contribute to society, either through raising a family or creating a lasting legacy. According to Erikson, generativity is a sign that someone has gone beyond focusing on themselves and trying to make a difference in the world (Lawford et al., 2020). As a queen, Elizabeth demonstrates generativity by taking responsibility for the welfare of her people and keeping England safe. Her responsibility is a form of great contribution to society that illustrates generativity.

a. Leadership as a Form of Generativity

Elizabeth's leadership is seen as a form of generativity when she actively leads the planning to fight the threat of the Spanish Armada. In this crucial scene, Elizabeth is not only involved in decision-making but also shows strategic understanding and awareness of her responsibility to her people. The situation is shown by the scene where Elizabeth directly leads the planning of a strategy to fight Spain.

"This Spanish Armada is at sea with an army of ten.. thousand men? And Philip's friend, The Duke of Parma, has fifteen thousand men on the French coast." Elizabeth walked, pointing at the map.

"They plan to cross the Channel in barges and sail up the Thames." said Walsingham.

"But they don't yet have enough barges. We have a little time." Elizabeth added (Kapur, 2007).

Elizabeth realizes she has limited time to prepare for the attack, but she remain resolute in planning a course of action to counter the invasion. Her role as queen compels her to defend her country from the attack and take responsibility for the well-being and safety of her people. Elizabeth clearly chooses the path of generativity over stagnation. Her decision to continue fighting and leading her troops shows that she prioritize generativity, contributing to the well-being of her people rather than giving up to feelings of stagnation (Lawford et al., 2020). Her dedication to make a lasting positive impact is based on continuing to contribute to the well-being of her people and defending her country during difficult times.

5. Elizabeth's Defense Mechanisms: Applying Freud's Theory to a Crisis Situation

Defense mechanisms are a form of psychology that is used by ourselves to protect ourselves from feelings of anxiety or guilt that arise because we feel threatened (Bilbo, 2019; Khoirunisa & Rahayu, 2020). In general, defense mechanisms are self-defense mechanisms that naturally arise in response to stress or threats (Ramalakshmi & Sophia, 2022). In Elizabeth's case, researchers found two types of defense mechanisms that Elizabeth used to protect herself from feelings that disturbed her, and this led to a positive direction for her.

a. Rationalization

Rationalization is a type of defense mechanism that gives a person a reasonable reason for their behavior (Bilbo, 2019; Setiawan et al., 2021). Rationalization occurs when a person tries to convince themselves that what they are doing is right (Amaliyah & Prastiwi, 2022). This defense mechanism is related to the incident when Elizabeth faced a difficult choice, such as when she was pressured to act decisively against the Catholics at the beginning of the film. In this scene, Elizabeth's use of rationalization is seen when she states that her actions were taken with a noble purpose—to gain the affection and loyalty of her people.

“I am assured that the people of England love their Queen. My constant endeavor is to earn that love” (Kapur, 2007).

By stating that “her constant endeavor is to earn that love,” Elizabeth frames her efforts and actions positively, indicating that any shortcomings or difficult decisions were made with the best intentions, to serve her people and gain their affection.

Elizabeth's defense mechanism, rationalization, is positive because it helps her to survive negative feelings, such as guilt or self-doubt, because she can see herself doing everything possible to fulfill the expectations of her role. In fact, the people in the film seem to love and respect Elizabeth as their queen and this is shown in the scene where they ask for the queen's blessings for their children. It also has a positive impact on her social relationships, helping build trust and loyalty among her people, who see her as a compassionate and people-oriented leader.

Another example of Elizabeth using rationalization as a defense mechanism is when she asks the Spanish Ambassador about the English invasion plan.

“I refer to this plan as the Enterprise of England. It should more accurately be called ‘*la Empresa di Inglaterra*’, because it is a Spanish plan. The plan of my one-time brother-in-law, your king, to attack my country” (Kapur, 2007).

Elizabeth emphasizes that she believes the invasion was a Spanish plan. By mentioning ‘*la Empresa di Inglaterra*’, she attempts to make the threat more concrete and more acceptable, highlighting that it is a Spanish plan aimed directly at England. By describing the plan as clearly Spanish, Elizabeth can feel that she has a clear understanding of the enemy and the threat she faces.

b. Sublimation

Sublimation is a defense mechanism in the form of a diversion into socially beneficial activities (Ramalakshmi & Sophia, 2022; Setiawan et al., 2021). Simply put, sublimation is the process of converting negative energy into something positive. This defense mechanism is related to the incident where Walsingham reported a rumor circulating that Elizabeth was infertile, and this threatened the people's perspective on her. In this scene, Elizabeth chooses to divert her attention and emotional energy to a more pressing issue, namely the safety of the kingdom.

“The sea wall at Dover is cracking, Francis. We have no money to rebuild that defense. Turn your mind to that threat” (Kapur, 2007).

Sublimation is about transforming potentially harmful or stressful emotions into positive actions or efforts that benefit society. Instead of responding or reacting emotionally to the rumor, Elizabeth channels her energy into constructive action—urging Francis Walsingham to focus on issues that affect the kingdom's safety.

The defense mechanisms sublimation used by Elizabeth has positive impact because her efforts to deal with difficult situations are healthy adaptations that demonstrate her strong leadership skills and put others first. On the social side, sublimation increases Walsingham's trust in Elizabeth's ability to lead in a crisis, thereby strengthening his support for Elizabeth.

Another example of sublimation is when rumors of her infertility spread among her people. Elizabeth tells Francis to ask the doctor to confirm that the Queen is still fertile, she channeled her problems into something that would convince her people.

“Have my doctors confirmed that the Queen is still fertile. People need to be reassured” (Kapur, 2007).

The rumors of her infertility could have caused feelings of frustration, helplessness, or even self-doubt. However, rather than reacting emotionally or destructively, Elizabeth redirected the pressure into actions that would give her people confidence. She decided to confront the rumors head-on through a rational approach, asking for medical confirmation to reassure the people.

Defense mechanisms that direct her towards positivity, such as rationalization and sublimation, help Elizabeth channel negative energy into constructive actions and maintain her self-image as a good leader. However, not all defense mechanisms are positive. Some situations make Elizabeth form defense mechanisms that are negative for her, such as regression and denial.

c. Regression

Regression is a form of defense mechanism that shows someone acting childishly or doing something uncontrollable (A. Rani et al., 2023; Setiawan et al., 2021). In other words, changes in behavior or thought patterns become more impulsive. This defense mechanism is related to the incident when Elizabeth learned that Spain was planning to take over England. In this situation, Elizabeth showed more childish behavior, responding to the conflict with the Spanish Ambassador with provocative words.

“I too can command the wind, sir. I have a hurricane in me that will strip Spain bare, if you dare to try me!” (Kapur, 2007).

While her words sound like a threat, they also reflect an impulsive, uncontrollable, emotional response, rather than a diplomatic response for someone who has become queen. The dramatic tone of her statement suggests a regression to a more primitive, reactive state, an attempt to assert dominance in a stressful situation. This regression may have been triggered by feelings of anger, helplessness, or frustration after being provoked by the Spanish Ambassador, causing her to react in a way that prioritizes emotional expression over diplomacy.

Another example of Elizabeth's actions that can be categorized as regression is when she walked past several people, Elizabeth, who was still emotional, immediately said that they should lower their gaze towards the Queen.

“What are you staring at? Lower your eyes! I am a queen! You are not my equal, sir, and you never will be!” (Kapur, 2007).

Elizabeth's statements and actions in this scene can be categorized as regression because they show impulsive and emotional behavior, like a child who wants to assert her authority or superiority when she feels threatened or angry. Her way of asserting her status as a leader is similar to a child who forces to be recognized when she feels disrespected. This behavior shows a defensive reaction to feelings of insecurity or loss of control.

The defense mechanisms regression formed by Elizabeth is negative because the impulsive behavior that appears can cause stress and problems in various aspects, which in this case Elizabeth sounds like she is challenging Spain to attack her country. While the negativity from the social side, Elizabeth's emotional regression creates greater tension in diplomatic relations between England and Spain.

d. Denial

Denial is a form of defense mechanism in the form of an attitude of rejection of facts (Warkey et al. in Amaliyah & Prastiwi, 2022). When faced with painful or threatening events, a person can unconsciously reject or deny reality (Iftikhar et al., 2022). This defense mechanism is related to an incident where Elizabeth had a disagreement with Walsingham, her advisor, when Walsingham rationally said that, in reality, Mary Stuart must be tried according to applicable law.

“The law must have its way.” Walsingham said.

“The law is for common men, not for princes.” said Elizabeth (Kapur, 2007).

Elizabeth's response reflects denial because she has difficulty accepting or acknowledging the bitter reality and emotional burden of Mary Stuart's execution order. She denies her own desires or responsibility for the situation, even though political and legal realities encourage her to make the decision.

Another example of Elizabeth's action that can be categorized as denial is when she found out Bess is pregnant with Raleigh's child.

“Is it his? Tell me, say it! Is the child is isn't his?” (Kapur, 2007).

In this scene, Elizabeth seems to be struggling not only to accept a painful emotional truth, as in this context about Raleigh and Bess's relationship. Her denial is evident in her emotional intensity, as instead of processing the possible truth, she tries to demand a straight answer to protect herself from the deep emotional pain.

Elizabeth's denial is negative because it means she avoids facing real reality, which can hinder problem-solving and self-development and her ability to make rational and responsible decisions. On the social side, the negative impact of this denial creates a distance between Elizabeth and her advisors, especially Walsingham, who tries to act according to law and logic.

While all defense mechanisms serve the purpose of protecting oneself from stress and threats, regression and denial tend to have a more significant negative impact. Both of these mechanisms can hinder personal growth and disrupt relationships with others. Overall, Elizabeth's use of defense mechanisms in the film reflects the complexity of her character and the challenges she faces as a leader. The flexible and occasional use of defense mechanisms can help individuals cope with difficult situations. However, when used excessively or inappropriately, defense mechanisms can hinder personal growth and cause new problems.

6. Integration of Freud and Erikson's Theories in Elizabeth's Character Development

The combination of Erikson's and Freud's ideas offers a deeper understanding of Elizabeth's growth as a character in *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*. Freud's theory, which divides personality into the Id, Ego, and Superego, explains Elizabeth's internal dynamics, while Erikson's theory of psychosocial development offers a framework for understanding the difficulties Elizabeth faces in her role as queen.

a. Character Development through Freud's Lens

According to Freud, humans' innate drive to pursue quick gratification stems from their Id and operates on the pleasure principle (Rizqawanti & Susilowati, 2023; Vyas, 2023). This is in line with Elizabeth's behavioral example as follows,

"You will leave my presence, sir! Go back to your rat hole! Tell Philip, I fear neither him, nor his priests, nor his armies. Tell him if he wants to shake his little fist at us, we're ready to give him such a bite he'll wish he'd kept his hands in his pockets!" Elizabeth is furious (Kapur, 2007).

The Id often manifests in Elizabeth's personality as intense feelings and hasty responses, especially when her authority is questioned. For example, here, Elizabeth displays overt anger when confronted by the Spanish Ambassador, demonstrating her arousal and helplessness and prompting aggressive behavior.

Then, the Ego functions as an intermediary between the norms enforced by the Superego and the drives of the Id (Niaz et al., 2019; Septiani et al., 2022). This is in line with the following example of Elizabeth's behavior,

"Ambassador, what do you know about the Enterprise of England?" Elizabeth asked (Kapur, 2007).

When faced with a dire situation, such as when Elizabeth heard that Spain would take over England, she used her ego to think of a more moral and rational action. This showed maturity in making decisions by first asking the truth of the news.

In addition, Elizabeth's actions and moral judgments are guided by her Superego, which reflects the moral and ethical standards formed within her (Y. Sari et al., 2019; Wahidah et al., 2022). This is in line with the following example of Elizabeth's behavior,

"... The harvest must wait. All prisoners had to be released. England is their country, too. And release Raleigh... he's forgiven. As I, too, long to be forgiven." Elizabeth closed her eyes (Kapur, 2007).

Elizabeth's superego grew stronger with experience and pressure, allowing her to make moral decisions even in stressful political scenarios. Examples of decisions here include her decision to free the prisoners and to show empathy.

b. Identity Crisis Through Erikson's Lens

Meanwhile, Erikson emphasized many stages of psychological growth, suggesting that Elizabeth experienced a significant conflict in Identity vs. Role Confusion where individuals often have uncertainty about their decisions during this stage (Knight, 2017; Syed & McLean, 2019). Elizabeth found it difficult to define herself as a queen and a person even after she reached adulthood. This is in line with the following scene example,

“Must? Mary Stuart must die? Where is it written? Who said that? Have I ordered it?!” (Kapur, 2007)

This tension becomes very clear when she is faced with moral confusion, such as when she thinks about punishing Mary Stuart. She experiences deep identity uncertainty due to the conflict between her duty as a queen and her empathy as a human being.

However, Elizabeth also experiences difficulties during the Intimacy vs. Isolation stage. At this point, individuals must find their identity in the context of intimate relationships with people outside the family; if they are unable to do so, they risk feeling alone or alienated from others (Knight, 2017; Syed & McLean, 2019). Being queen left Elizabeth feeling emotionally isolated, which hindered her ability to build meaningful relationships. This is in line with the following scene example,

“You come here as if from another world, and I.—you have real adventures, you go where the maps end. I would follow you there if I could, believe me” (Kapur, 2007).

Her relationship with Raleigh, where she yearns for closeness but must put her emotions aside to fulfill her leadership duties, is a clear example of this isolation.

Elizabeth demonstrates a solid dedication to caring for and providing for the well-being of her people in the Generativity vs. Stagnation stage. This stage emphasizes how important it is for people to contribute to society, whether by raising a family or leaving a lasting legacy (Lawford et al., 2020). This is in line with the following scene example,

“This Spanish Armada is at sea with an army of ten.. thousand men? And Philip's friend, The Duke of Parma, has fifteen thousand men on the French coast.” Elizabeth walked, pointing at the map.

“They plan to cross the Channel in barges and sail up the Thames.” said Walsingham.

“But they don't yet have enough barges. We have a little time.” Elizabeth added (Kapur, 2007).

She planned strategically to protect her people from external dangers, demonstrating her commitment to leaving a lasting legacy and making a constructive difference. Elizabeth demonstrated that she had achieved generativity in her leadership when she led her people directly against the Spanish invasion, instilling confidence and a sense of security in them.

Based on the previous analysis of Elizabeth's character development, Freud and Erikson's approaches complement each other because they both capture different dimensions of human psychological complexity, but together provide a broader picture of the internal and external dynamics of a person, which in this context is Elizabeth's character. The reason why these two theories are intertwined in this analysis is that they both address mutually supportive aspects of Elizabeth's development: Freud focuses on internal conflicts that arise from unconscious drives, while Erikson expands on this by adding a social dimension and psychosocial development related to one's role and responsibilities in society.

D. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research analyzes the character of Queen Elizabeth I in the film *Elizabeth: The Golden Age* using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis and Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory. It was found that Elizabeth's personality is shaped by Freud's three main components, the id, ego, and superego. Elizabeth's id often brings out impulsive desires for power and control, especially when she faces threats. However, Elizabeth's ego acts as a rational

mediator that helps her make diplomatic decisions and balances the id's impulses with the moral standards depicted in her superego, which reflects social and moral values.

In addition, Elizabeth's psychosocial development is explained through Erikson's stages, such as Identity vs. Role Confusion, where she experiences an identity crisis as the queen who plays a major role in her life. Another striking stage is Intimacy vs. Isolation, where Elizabeth experiences emotional isolation due to her responsibilities as queen, inhibiting her ability to form personal relationships, including with her lover, Raleigh. In the Generativity vs. Stagnation stage, Elizabeth demonstrated generativity through her leadership, which sought to protect her people from the threat of Spanish invasion.

This research also found that Elizabeth used various defense mechanisms to cope with stress, such as rationalization and sublimation, which led to positive outcomes, and regression and denial, which led to negative outcomes. In conclusion, Freud and Erikson's approaches complement each other in explaining Elizabeth's internal and external dynamics as a leader, highlighting her psychological complexity that plays a role in dealing with political and moral conflicts.

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