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Inner Conflict and Moral Consciousness in Qamar al-Zamān: A Freudian Psychoanalytic Interpretation

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Abstract

This study analyzes the dynamics of the personality structure of the characters in the tale " Qamar al-Zamān ibn al-Malik Shahramān" in *Alf Laylah wa-Laylah* using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic approach. In contrast to previous studies that focused on the protagonist, this study broadens the scope of analysis to four central figures: Qamar al-Zamān, Princess Budūr, King Shahramān, and Princess Ḥayāt al-Nufūs, to reveal the interrelation of psychic conflicts that build narratives. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method with hermeneutic textual analysis techniques. The research findings show that: (1) Qamar al-Zamān undergoes a transformation from an intellectual defense mechanism to a mature Ego integration; (2) Princess Budūr manifests a shift in instinctual energy from Thanatos (aggression) to Eros (obsessive love); and (3) King Shahramān represents the rigidity of the external Superego that triggers an existential crisis. The study concludes that narrative stability in classical literature is highly dependent on the achievement of psychological equilibrium of its characters. The story's conflict is proven to be not merely an external event, but an externalization of the failure of the Ego's mediation function in reconciling the Id's urges and the demands of reality.

Keywords: *Alf Laylah wa-Laylah, Conflict Dynamics, Literary Psychoanalysis, Personality Structure, Qamar al-Zamān.*

Introduction

The tales of One Thousand and One Nights (*Alf Laylah wa-Laylah)* occupy a strategic position in the canon of world literature as a narrative entity formed through a complex and gradual process of oral transmission and textual codification (Marzolph, 2017). This work was not born as a single product at a single historical point, but rather is the crystallization of a society's collective memory that evolved across various cultural layers and generations before finally being documented in written form (Horta, 2017). The academic significance of this work lies in its profound narrative structure; Taha Hussein (Hassan, 2017) recognized it as a foundation that influenced the development of the modern narrative genre. Roland Barthes further analyzed the complexity of this work as a text that has layers of deep meaning behind its surface structure (Allen, 2022). Therefore, scholars place it as a fundamental object of study that serves as a reference for the development of other literary genres.

The narrative structure of *Alf Laylah wa-Laylah* is built on a sophisticated frame story technique, which essentially functions as an existential defense strategy for the narrator, Shahrazād (Nurgiyantoro, B. 2018). The psychological dynamics underlying this main narrative framework open up analytical space that the sub-stories within it also contain psychological complexities that are relevant to dissect. In this context, the story of " Qamar al-Zamān ibn al-Malik Shahramān " stands out as a significant object of study due to its high density of psychological content. This narrative does not simply offer an adventure plot, but rather presents a spectrum of intense internal conflicts through the relationship between Qamar al-Zamān, Princess Budūr, King Shahramān, and Princess Ḥayāt al-Nufūs. The complexity of this story is manifested in its depiction of emotional conflicts that are beyond its time, encompassing the phenomenon of extreme attachment, the suffering of separation, and the tensions within a polygamous family structure (*Alf Laylah wa Laylah*, 2022).

All interpersonal and emotional conflicts are rooted in character constructions built on strong psychological attributes, thus demanding an analytical approach capable of dissecting their internal motivations. Endraswara (2016) emphasizes that psychological aspects in literary works can be studied through literary psychology, because literary works themselves are manifestations of human mental activity and creativity. As a reflection of psychic phenomena, this narrative projects internal dynamics through the characterization of its characters. Specifically, these dynamics reveal patterns of conflict between desire, anxiety, and mechanisms of repression. Therefore, to understand the behavior of fictional characters that reflect the complexity of real people, a careful analysis of their personality structures is necessary.

The application of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory in this study functions specifically as a system of interpreting meaning to describe the complexity of the characters in the story "Qamar al-Zamān ibn al-Malik Shahramān". This perspective reads the controversial actions of figures—starting from the radical resistance of Qamar al-Zamān's attitude towards the institution of marriage, his manipulation of Princess Budūr's desires, and King Shahramān's emotional outbursts —are not merely plot ornaments, but rather symptoms of unresolved internal struggles. Within the framework of literary psychology, these external behaviors are understood as dynamic manifestations of the dialectic of three personality structures: *the Id,* which demands instinctual satisfaction, *the Ego*, which negotiates with reality, and *the Superego,* which monitors moral standards (Freud, 1987). Thus, the analysis focuses on how the mechanisms of these personality structures operate in response to crises, ultimately determining the course of tragedy and resolution in this narrative.

In this perspective, Freud's theory is positioned as a hermeneutic tool for dissecting the texture of narratives, rather than as an instrument for clinical diagnosis of real human subjects (Ratna, 2015). Characters such as Qamar Al-Zamān and Budūr are not treated as patients in need of therapy, but rather as aesthetic constructions that project universal psychological dynamics through the medium of language (Minderop , 2018). The literary psychological approach views the struggle between *the Id*, *Ego*, and *Superego* not merely as a pathological symptom, but as an internal mechanism that builds the causality of the story. Thus, the fluctuations in the characters' impulses and

self-control are analyzed to reveal how psychological conflict functions as a driving force of the plot that determines the integrity of the structure of the literary work (Endraswara , 2016).

The application of a critical approach in analyzing *Alf Laylah wa -Laylah* has been done before, but there are significant analytical gaps in understanding the internal dimensions of the characters as a whole. Amini (2020), for example, analyzes the structure of the story "Qamar al-Zamān" through the lens of Lévi-Strauss's structuralism. Although successful in mapping the units of myths and patterns of binary opposition, the study is limited to the analysis of the external narrative architecture and does not touch on the intra-psychic turmoil of the characters. On the other hand, Al-Mubarak (2023) examines the defense mechanisms within a broader corpus. However, the generic and macro nature of the study causes the analysis to fail to capture the specificity of psychological conflict and unique causality in the single narrative of " Qamar al-Zamān ".

Another, more specific study using Freudian psychoanalysis was conducted by Syam and Rosaliza (2020), who dissected the personality structure of the main character in the frame story, King *Shahrayār*. Their findings showed that *Shahrayār's* behavior was driven by the Id to kill a woman, influenced by the Ego to listen to the story, and returned to good nature by the Superego (Syam & Rosaliza, 2020). However, this study was limited to the character in the frame story. The study that most closely overlaps with this research is the work of Al Husna and Huda (2023), who analyzed the psychology of the characters in the story of *Qamar al-Zamān* (Al Husna & Huda, 2023). Despite using the same material and formal objects, Al Husna and Huda's research limits its analysis to only two main protagonists, *Qamar al-Zamān* and *Budūr*, and concluded that the character *of Qamar al Zamān* showed fluctuating development while *Budūr* was dominated by Id (Al Husna & Huda, 2023).

The limitations of previous research, particularly conducted by Al Husna and Huda (2023), leave a gap in the comprehensive understanding of the psychological ecosystem of *Qamar al-Zamān's story.* The dynamics of this story are not only driven by the protagonist, but are also greatly influenced by secondary characters who play key roles in triggering conflicts and crises, such as King *Shahramān* and Princess *Ḥayāt al-Nufūs*. Therefore, this study aims to expand the scope of analysis by including these important figures (Al Husna & Huda, 2023; *Alf Laylah wa-Laylah*, 2022). By analyzing *Qamar al Zamān, Budūr, Shahramān,* and *Ḥayāt al-Nufūs* simultaneously, this study seeks to uncover how their personality structures interact with each other and form a complex web of conflict.

Based on this background, this study aims to map the configuration of personality structures—including *Id*, *Ego*, and *Superego* —that operate within the key characters in the story "Qamar al-Zamān ibn al-Malik Shahramān". The analysis focuses on revealing how the simultaneous interaction between Qamar al-Zamān, Budūr, Shahramān, and Ḥayāt Al-Nufūs establishes a systemic causality of conflict, where the psychic instability of one character triggers a crisis for another. The theoretical significance of this study is projected to strengthen the discourse on literary psychology in the realm of classical Arabic literature. This serves to validate classical texts as material objects rich with psychological data, while also broadening the interpretive horizons in Arabic literary

criticism, which previously tended to be dominated by solely philological and historical approaches.

Method

This research was conducted using a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical design (Wajiran, 2024). This paradigm was adopted because the characteristics of material objects in the form of literary works require in-depth textual exploration of meaning, rather than statistical measurement of variables (Ratna, 2015). Operationally, this research positions literary psychology with Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic approach as the main analytical framework (Endraswara, 2016). This approach functions to dissect the internal dynamics of the characters—including *the Id*, *Ego*, and *Superego*—as a system of signs in the text that builds the wholeness of the story, rather than as clinical data (Minderop, 2018). Through this design, the research contributes to the development of Arabic literary criticism methodology by demonstrating how classical texts can be reread using a modern perspective to uncover the unconscious motivations that drive the narrative structure.

The research's data sources are classified into two main categories: primary and secondary. Referring to the limitations of literary data formulated by Ratna (2015), the primary data source for this research is the narrative text of the story " Qamar al-Zamān ibn al-Malik Shahramān," which is contained in the corpus of *Alf Laylah wa-Laylah* published by Hindawi Foundation (2022). The selection of this edition was based on the urgency of using authoritative text editing to ensure the validity of the interpretation of the narrative structure and character dialogue, considering that variations in manuscripts can affect the interpretation of the data (Ratna, 2015). From these sources, data were extracted in the form of narrative units—including dialogue, internal monologue, and descriptions of actions—that specifically represent manifestations of psychic conflicts. Meanwhile, secondary data sources include supporting literature in the form of psychoanalytic references and relevant literary criticism that serve as a theoretical foundation to sharpen the analysis.

The data collection technique was carried out through reading and note-taking method, which operates in two stages of systematic reading (Wajiran, 2024). This process begins with heuristic reading, which functions to understand the linguistic structure and storyline, literally to capture the first level of meaning. This stage is continued with hermeneutic reading, which aims to interpret symbolic codes and uncover the implicit motivations behind the characters' actions that are not explicitly stated (Wajiran, 2024). Next, the collected data are classified into Freud's personality structure based on specific textual indicators (Minderop, 2018): narrative units that display spontaneous impulses, raw emotional outbursts, or the pursuit of instant gratification are categorized as manifestations of the Id; dialogues or monologues that demonstrate logical reasoning, delayed gratification, and problem-solving strategies are classified as functions of the Ego; while expressions containing ethical values, feelings of guilt, or references to social and religious norms are identified as representations of the Superego (Minderop, 2018).

Data analysis was conducted using qualitative descriptive techniques that adopted the interactive workflow model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2019), including data condensation, data presentation, and concluding. A crucial stage in this process was data interpretation, in which narrative units were dissected using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic perspective. In this phase, the character's actions are not read simply as plot events, but rather deconstructed as manifestations of the dynamics of psychic energy that fluctuate between the urges of *the Id*, the mediation of *the Ego*, and the restrictions of *the Superego* (Freud, 2009). The analysis process culminates in drawing conclusions to address the personality structure patterns that dominate characterization and their implications for the construction of the story's conflict (Mahmudi, 2019). The validity of the interpretation is maintained through persistent observation of the text and triangulation with authoritative theoretical references.

Results and Discussions

The story of "Qamar" al-Zamān ibn al-Malik Shahramān" presents a broad configuration of characters, but the most determining psychological dynamics are centered on four central figures: Qamar al-Zamān, Princess Budūr, King Shahramān, and Princess Ḥayāt al-Nufūs (Hindawi Foundation, 2022). In this analysis, the characters' actions and decisions are not seen as mere events that complement the storyline, but rather as external manifestations of their turbulent personality structures. Based on a literary psychoanalytic perspective, the research findings indicate that each character experiences an intense internal struggle between instinctual drives (*Id*), considerations of reality (*Ego*), and moral standards (*Superego)* (Freud, 2009). The instability of the interaction of these three elements serves as the main driving force of conflict in the story, where the failure of the Ego's mediating function often triggers crises experienced by the characters (Minderop, 2018).

Qamar al-Zamān's Psychological Dynamics: From Neurotic Resistance to Ego Integration

The analysis of the character Qamar Al-Zamān reveals a complex trajectory of psychological transformation. This character's journey is not seen as a simple character change, but rather as a shift in psychic energy from a rigid, defensive state to a mature ego function. This dynamic begins with an internal conflict triggered by external pressure, which then forces the character to activate various defense mechanisms to maintain his psychological stability.

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A. Intellectualization as an Ego Defense Mechanism

Qamar al-Zamān's main psychic conflict begins when he is confronted with King Shahramān's demands for an immediate marriage for the sake of the dynasty's survival. Textually, Qamar Al-Zamān's radical refusal indicates a deep anxiety. From a psychoanalytic perspective, this anxiety arises because the ego feels threatened by the Id's urges, which view marriage as a threat to individual comfort and freedom (Freud , 2009). However, instead of expressing his fear emotionally or primitively, Qamar Al-Zamān employed a far more sophisticated defense strategy: intellectualization. This

mechanism is a process by which an individual attempt to distance himself from painful emotional conflicts by transforming them into impersonal, abstract or intellectual reasoning (Minderop, 2018).

In this narrative, intellectualization is manifested through the use of poetry and literary references that degrade women's dignity and glorify celibacy (Hindawi Foundation, 2022). Qamar Al-Zamān did not say that he feared responsibility or sexual relations; rather, he constructed a logical argument that women were a source of slander and betrayal. This strategy served as an intellectual shield that allowed his Ego to maintain a sense of superiority and rationality, even though underneath it lay the impulses of the Id, which were trying to avoid a traumatic situation. By transforming emotional anxiety into a philosophical debate, Qamar Al-Zamān successfully postponed his inner tension without directly addressing the root of the problem. This aligns with the view that intellectualization allows subjects to control impulsive impulses by covering them in seemingly objective logic (Al-Mubarak, 2023).

Furthermore, Qamar Al-Zamān's use of literary quotations demonstrates the formation of a distorted Ideal Ego. Here, the Superego no longer functions as an agent of social morality demanding obedience to parents, but has instead allied with the Ego to create a self-image as an ascetic or pure intellectual. He feels that by shunning women, he is fulfilling a higher standard of virtue than simply following royal tradition. Consequently, the Ego's function is distorted, ignoring the principle of reality in favor of maintaining the intellectual narrative it has constructed. Pressure from King Shahramān, who represents external reality, is responded to not with negotiation but with a hardening of defense through rhetoric.

This tension reaches its peak when the intellectualization is no longer able to withstand the increasingly massive pressure of reality. When he was locked in the old tower, his Ego was in a fragile state due to physical isolation and mental stress. In this solitude, the previously strong intellectualization mechanism began to crack, making room for the Id to push back to the surface. Studies of literary psychology show that when the defense mechanism of intellectualization fails to mediate conflict, an individual tends to experience regression or uncontrolled emotional outbursts (Endraswara, 2016). This explains why in the next phase, Qamar Al-Zamān undergoes a stark behavioral transition. Thus, the use of intellectualization early in the narrative is not merely a character's style of speaking, but rather a crucial psychic strategy for maintaining the character's inner balance amidst the tension between dynastic obligations and unprocessed internal fears.

B. Failure of Repression and Manifestation of Acting Out as an Impact of Ego Fragmentation

The next phase in Qamar Al-Zamān's psychic dynamics is marked by the collapse of the previously solidly constructed walls of intellectualization. In the psychoanalytic analysis of literature, this transition is triggered by the failure of the repression mechanism (return of the repressed), where the impulses that are repressed into the unconsciousness begin to seep out because the Ego no longer has enough psychic energy to control them (Freud, 2009). The condition of isolation in the old tower is not just a

setting element, but a metaphorical space that accelerates the fragmentation of the Ego. Without the distraction of the social environment that he usually uses to rationalize, Qamar Al-Zamān is forced to confront his internal anxieties head-on. This failure to repress them results in a drastic change in his behavior, from a calm and poetic youth to a subject who explodes aggressively when confronted with external authority.

This phenomenon can be explained through the concept of Acting Out, which is a mechanism in which the subject expresses internal conflict through impulsive physical actions instead of processing it through words or memories (Minderop, 2018). When King Shahramān and his ministers came to the tower to demand his obedience, Qamar Al-Zamān no longer used literary or poetic arguments as a shield. Instead, he resorts to confrontational physical actions—such as rolling up his sleeves and displaying harsh verbal aggression—as a way to relieve unbearable psychic tension. From the perspective of literary psychology, this Acting Out indicates that the sensor function of the Superego has been temporarily paralyzed, so that the aggressive energy of the Id flows directly into action without going through the rational consideration process of the Ego (Endraswara, 2016).

The theoretical implications of this phase suggest that past intellectual success was merely a fragile "false equilibrium." When external reality exerts greater pressure than the Ego's ability to mediate, regression occurs, that is, the individual returns to primitive, disorganized behavioral patterns (Ratna, 2015). The outburst of Qamar Al-Zamān's anger towards his father is a manifestation of an unconscious resentment against authority figures that he has repressed through poems about purity. Narratively, the Ego's failure to maintain control serves as a turning point (psychological climax) that shifts the plot from an internal drama to an open, physical, and tragic conflict.

The failure of this repression also shows how fragile the "ascetic-intellectual" identity he had previously constructed was. In the text, it is seen that after the explosion of aggression, Qamar Al-Zamān experiences psychic exhaustion that leads him to a passive state. This passive state is what is methodologically viewed in literature as a phase of "defensive emptiness," which later allows the entry of a new element—namely the presence of Princess Budūr through supernatural intervention—to fill the character's psychic space. Thus, the Acting Out carried out by the character is not just a form of ordinary anger, but rather a cleansing mechanism (abreaction) of pent-up psychic energy, while also proving that without mature emotional integration, no matter how sophisticated intellectual arguments will always collapse when faced with the massive pressure of reality (Al-Mubarak, 2023; Hindawi Foundation, 2022). The Ego's inability to remain stable in this crisis confirms that Qamar al-Zamān's character is in a transitional phase towards a broader reorganization of personality.

C. Cathexis Shift and Maturation of Ego Function

Qamar Al-Zamān's psychological transformation occurs through a radical shift in psychic energy, or cathexis, following his visual encounter with Princess Budūr. The presence of this feminine figure triggers the awakening of the life instinct (Eros), effectively breaking down the neurotic resistance previously built up through intellectualization (Freud, 2009). This shift marks the end of the self-isolation phase and the beginning of a process

of personality reorganization, in which the energy previously spent on suppressing anxiety is now fully diverted toward the external love object as a form of desire fulfillment (Al Husna & Huda, 2023).

Although the Id's drive exerts massive pressure for instant gratification, Qamar al-Zamān's Ego maturity begins to manifest through the delay of gratification ability. The character does not allow biological impulses to blindly control his actions, but instead makes logical considerations regarding moral boundaries and social reality (Minderop, 2018). The symbolic act of taking the ring is seen as a process of sublimation, in which raw Id urges are diverted into more orderly forms of action and have value weight within the narrative structure (Hindawi Foundation, 2022).

This success proves that the Ego has been able to carry out its synthetic function by balancing internal urges, Superego limitations, and the demands of objective reality. The integration of desire, logic, and ethics allows the character to escape from psychic impasse to a more integrative stage of personality development (Endraswara, 2016). Theoretically, this phase confirms that inner stability in literary texts is achieved when the Ego is no longer defensive, but can mediate various internal conflicts through the adoption of mature and functional reality principles.

D. Psychic Reconciliation and Achieving Ego Harmonization

Qamar Al-Zamān's psychic dynamics are characterized by a reconciliation between the individual and the social reality he previously radically rejected. This process reflects the Ego's success in assimilating the demands of the Superego without sacrificing its integrity as a subject. Through his union with Princess Budūr, the character no longer sees the institution of marriage as a threat to personal autonomy, but rather as a legitimate means of self-actualization within the order of reality (Al-Mubarak, 2023). This demonstrates a process of identification with authority figures, where neurotic resistance at the beginning of the story transforms into an acceptance of mature social roles and dynastic responsibilities (Minderop, 2018).

Theoretically, this phase represents a concrete manifestation of the harmonization of the libidinal drives of the Id with ethical boundaries and collective norms. Psychic energy, previously fragmented in the form of aggression and defensive mechanisms, is now integrated into a more stable and adaptive personality structure. The success of this unification demonstrates that the Ego has been able to perform a mature synthetic function, where the satisfaction of an individual's desires no longer clashes with the interests of the external order (Endraswara, 2016). Marriage, in the context of this narrative, functions as a space for final sublimation, directing instinctual energy toward a constructive and socially recognized relationship (Hindawi Foundation, 2022).

The psychological implications of this conflict resolution confirm that character transformation in classical Arabic narratives follows a systematic pattern of psychic development. The restoration of inner balance (psychological equilibrium) in the character Qamar Al-Zamān provides a resolution to the narrative tension that has been built since the beginning of the story. By achieving the integration of desire, logic, and norms, the text demonstrates that psychic maturity is achieved when the subject can overcome his internal anxiety through functional interactions with the outside world

(Ratna, 2015). The conclusion of this dynamic proves that the stability of the character's personality structure is the main foundation for creating the integrity of the narrative structure as a whole.

E.   Ego Consolidation and the Achievement of Psychological Integrity

Qamar Al-Zamān's psychological transformation is a manifestation of the consolidation of the Ego that successfully achieves stability through a series of long narrative crises. The culmination of this dynamic is not merely the resolution of external conflict, but the achievement of Ego sovereignty over the irrational urges of the Id and the restrictions of the Superego that were previously contradictory. This success proves that the character has been able to transform his neurotic anxiety into an adaptive psychic power, where the previously rigid self-defense mechanism is replaced by functional openness to objective reality (Freud, 2009). This dynamic shows that personality maturity in literary texts is often marked by the subject's ability to align personal desires with collective demands without losing his integrity (Endraswara, 2016).

From a literary psychology perspective, this final integration demonstrates the optimal operation of the reality principle in directing libidinal energy toward constructive goals for the character's future. Qamar Al-Zamān no longer views the outside world as a threat to individual freedom, but rather as a space for the actualization of a functional and stable Ego (Minderop, 2018). This unification of psychic energy allows the character to carry out his social role and dynastic responsibilities with full awareness, which narratively closes the gaps in conflict resulting from the fragmentation of personality that occurred at the beginning of the story (Al-Mubarak, 2023). This emphasizes that the character's psychic resolution is an absolute prerequisite for the creation of a satisfying narrative resolution within the broader story structure (Hindawi Foundation, 2022).

Theoretically, this character's psychological trajectory provides a picture of the "libido economy" in the text, where each crisis serves as a phase of systematic mental maturation. The change from a narcissistic state to a mature object relationship reflects the subject's success in navigating his inner complexity amidst the pressures of the social environment (Ratna, 2015). The main implication of this finding for the development of Arabic literary studies is that characterization is not static, but rather moves dynamically towards achieving complete self-integration. This understanding strengthens the thesis that the psychic stability of the character is the main driving force for the aesthetic harmony and structural integrity of the work as a whole.

The Psychological Dynamics of Princess Budūr: From Narcissism to Moral Destruction

Princess Budūr's psychological dynamics represent the manifestation of *the ego's* struggle in balancing internal pressure with repressive external-reality pressure. As Qamar al-Zamān, this character experiences a crisis of identity triggered by conflict between instinctual drive (Id*)* and social-moral restrictions (Superego). Through the lens of literary psychoanalysis, Budūr's personality transformation was analysed as a complex psychic-negotiation process, starting from the use of defensive mechanisms to the achievement of more stable personality integration (Minderop, 2018).

A. Aggressive Resistance and Manifestations of Death Instinct (Thanatos)

Budūr's internal conflict started from the radical rejection of the Reality Principle that is present through King al-Ghayur's proposal. In a psychoanalytic perspective, this denial is not just a form of a non-compliant child towards parents, but rather a self-defence mechanism that is triggered by intense instinctual anxiety. Budūr's *ego* perceives wedding institutions as an existential threat to her self-autonomy. As a result, her personality system responds by mobilizing strong energy resistance to reject the external demands, keeping the integrity of the *Ego* from what she considers a foreign invasion (Minderop, 2018).

Different from Qamar al-Zamān, who used intellectualization, Budūr expresses her refusal through the release of the death instinct or *Thanatos*. The textual indicator can be seen clearly when she uses physical violence threats and sharp weapons as a tool of negotiations (Hindawi Foundation, 2022). This action is categorized as aggressive Acting Out, where the impulse of the *Id* to destroy a threatening object (marriage) takes over the control of the *Ego*. In this condition, the function of the *Superego* experiences temporary paralysis, so moral boundaries are not able to stem the destructive emotional explosion addressed to its surrounding areas (Al-Mubarak, 2023).

The consequence of the domination of *Id* is the occurrence of psychological regression that leads to total isolation. Budūr's confinement inside the palace represents the subject's withdrawal from object relations towards narcissistic closed condition (Ratna, 2015). This isolation functions as the *Ego*'s final fortress to avoid further anxiety, but simultaneously stop the development of character's mature mentality. This psychic stagnation creates empty room that awaits external intervention to re-activate her personality dynamics to more integrative direction (Endraswara, 2016).

B. Object's Cathexis Shift and Reorganization of *Ego* Function

Visual encounter with Qamar al-Zamān functions as a catalyst that changes the orientation of Budūr's psychic energy fundamentally. In the psychoanalysis analysis, this moment marks the occurrence of the object's cathexis shift, where the investment of libido energy previously locked in closed self-defence is now diverted fully to the external figure (Freud, 2009). Qamar's presence activates life instinct (Eros), which effectively devastates the domination of aggressive impulse (Thanatos), which previously controlled the character's behaviour (Hindawi Foundation, 2022). As a result, stiff defence mechanisms collapse, allowing the release of emotional current which has been so far buried in the form of intense and directed romantic interest.

The change of this instinct orientation is followed by the reorganization of ego function, which is significant in responding to reality. If previously Budūr's *Ego* perceives the wedding as a threat to self-autonomy, now she precisely demands reality as a means of desire fulfilment. Her firm action in claiming Qamar as her couple to her father shows the success of the *Ego* in mediating the encouragement of *Id* with social norms (*Superego*) (Minderop, 2018). This transformation represents transition from passivity to active agency, affirming that psychological stability in narrative can be achieved when subject is capable to choose object of her love in an autonomous way without coercion of external authority (Al-Mubarak, 2023).

C. Psychic Energy Transformation and Achievement of Self-Autonomy

Princess Budūr's psychological trajectory proves the concept that aggressive energy (Thanatos*)* can be transformed effectively, becoming the power of life (Eros) when *Ego* succeeds in finding a proper satisfaction object. The resistance energy previously exploded in the form of a physical threat to her father is now canalized through a sublimation mechanism, becoming determination to maintain a legitimate marriage bond (Freud, 2009). This drastic change marks the end of intra-psychic conflict, previously triggering narrative tension.

Structurally, *Ego* domination in making crucial decisions proves that this character has reached the level of mature psychic autonomy. She is no longer positioned as a passive object in social exchange, but rather acts as an active subject capable in negotiating her fate before patriarchal authority (Minderop, 2018). Budūr's ability to align the pressure of internal desires (Id) with parents' approval (Superego*)* shows the success of the mental mediation function in responding to reality.

The theoretical implications from these dynamics confirm that the resolution of conflict in classical literary texts is highly dependent on the stability of the inner state's stability of the characters. The psychic balance that is finally achieved by Budūr functions as the main prerequisites for comprehensive settlement of the story's external conflict (Al-Mubarak, 2023). This strengthens the view that a complete and integrated personality structure is an absolute prerequisite for the creation of aesthetic harmony in structure of the story's plot.

D. Total Corruption of Ego and Superego: The Tragedy of Incest

The degradation of comprehensive analysis to the psychological dynamics of Princess Budūr shows that this character succeeds in reaching the stage of mature *ego* integrity at the end of the narrative. This phase is marked with the ability of *Ego* to accommodate instinctual drive (Id*)* without violating normative boundaries (Superego). If at the early phase the character is dominated by aggressive self-defence mechanisms and rejection to reality, the final phase shows the proportional balance of inter-element personality. This transformation indicates that psychic energy previously wasted for internal conflict is now allocated efficiently to build productive social relations (Freud, 2009). This stability proves that Princess Budūr is no longer looking at the outside world as a threat, but rather as a room for self-actualization.

In the literary psychoanalysis perspective, the reception of Princess Budūr to her new role as Qamar al- Zamān's couple is not a form of passive submission, but rather a result of an identification mechanism. The character consciously internalizes new values in harmony with her wish, so external demands are no longer felt as coercion. This reflects the working of the optimal synthesis function of *Ego*, namely mental ability to unite various conflicting elements become one unity of complete behavior (Minderop, 2018). Decisions taken by the characters at the end of the story are based on objective reality considerations, no longer driven by instinctual anxiety or uncontrolled impulse of anger (Hindawi Foundation, 2022).

The theoretical implications from these findings confirm connection of causality between psychology characters and plot structure. The achievement of intra-psychic stability in Princess Budūr functions as the main pre-requisite for comprehensive conflict settlement of the narrative. The text shows that the turmoil of the story's plot can only be completed when the main character has solved his inner turmoil first. Thus, the psychological journey of Princess Budūr from resistance going to integration gives solid foundation for resolution of the story (Al-Mubarak, 2023). This strengthen the thesis that in classical literary works, the mental health of the characters —defined as harmony between desire and reality — is a determining element that drives the narrative going to balanced ending (Endraswara, 2016).

Ego Fragility in Secondary Characters: A Case Study of King Shahramān and Hayāt al-Nufūs

The psychological analysis of King Shahramān placed this character as personification from external *Superego* that enforces " Reality Principles " to main character. His inner conflict is triggered by dynasty continuity, which is responded through the mechanism of authoritarianism to suppress his son's resistance. In the psychoanalytic structure, the King's behaviour represents *Ego*'s effort to maintain symbolic order of the kingdom from the threat of instability (Minderop, 2018).

A.   Existential Anxiety and the Mechanism of Identity Projection

Deep analysis to King Shahramān's behaviour shows that the main motivation of his actions sourced from existential anxiety related to uncertainty of his successor. In literary psychology, strong motivation to own the descendants is not just an administrative need for the kingdom, but rather manifestation from the instinct of self-preservation. The king positions his son, Qamar al- Zamān, as a symbolic projection of his ego. Through his son's existence, the King tried to maintain his existence and deny the limitations of biological nature that he possesses (Freud, 2009). Therefore, Qamar's refusal to marry is not only interpreted as a non-compliance of a son, but rather perceived by the subconscious mind of the King as a direct threat to the continuity of identity and his power (Hindawi Foundation, 2022).

When Qamar al-Zamān rejects the order in front of the public, King Shahramān experienced a shock to the integrity of his ego. Shame and anger arising an indicators that the ideal self-image he built is currently disturbed because the object of his hopes fails to fulfil established standards. To overcome this psychic tension, King Shahramān activates a defence mechanism by emphasizing his position as a figure of absolute authority (Minderop, 2018). He transforms become the representation of a rigid external Superego, which demands total adherence to norms and traditions without opening a room for negotiations. In this phase, the affection function was put aside to uphold rules that are considered absolute.

King Shahramān's repressive actions, such as isolating Qamar in the old tower, is an effort to restore shocking authority stability. Theoretically, this action is a manifestation from coercion of Reality Principle towards Qamar who still holds firms to the Pleasure Principle. The king uses instrument of power to force his son to face real

consequence from his choice (Al-Mubarak, 2023). Although this action looks aggressive, structurally this functions to uphold symbolic order or Law of the Father which requires young subject to submit to prevailing social norms. Thus, King Shahramān's aggression is not impulse of anger without direction, but rather a mechanism of discipline aimed to force the occurrence of the mental maturation process in the object of the target through external pressure (Endraswara, 2016).

B. Hayāt al-Nufūs: The Misused Intelligence of the Ego

Resolution of conflict in King Shahramān is achieved simultaneously with Qamar al-Zamān's obedience to marriage demands. The King's drastic changing attitude, from a punitive figure and authoritarian , becoming a father full of acceptance, signifies decreasing psychic tension previously dominating his personality structure. In a psychoanalytic perspective, this moment represents fulfilment of *Ideal Ego*, namely perfect description of self and the successor desired by the subject. When external reality (Qamar's marriage) is finally in harmony with internal desires, the anxiety to the loss of the bloodline that haunts the King becomes disappeared instantly (Freud, 2009). This allows psychic energy previously used for repressive defence mechanisms to be diverted to build positive affective relation.

The reconciliation between father and son is not just an emotional incident, but rather a reintegration social process. King Shahramān succeeds in restoring his authority without needing again to use an instrument of violence, because the "Law *of the Father* " has been obeyed and internalized by his son. This condition creates equilibrium or a new balance in narrative structure, where the function of *Superego* of the kingdom is no longer present as a threat, but rather as a protector that guarantees stability (Minderop, 2018). Qamar's reception in palace environment symbolizes the King's success in securing projection of his future. Thus, the psychological dynamics of King Shahramān asserts that power stability in classical literary texts rely heavily on certainty of biological regeneration, which functions as the main anchor for mental peace of mind of the ruler (Al-Mubarak, 2023; Hindawi Foundation, 2022).

Synthesis of Findings: Inter-relationship of Personality Dynamics and Narrative Structure

Collectively, the psychological dynamics of the characters in this story reflects pattern of close reciprocal relationship between personality structure and story's plot development. The analysis shows that mental stability of the characters is not static conditions, but rather a result of continuous negotiation between pressure of instinct and demand of reality. Failure of mediation function of *Ego* in this process is proven becoming the main trigger of the emergence of existential crisis that moves conflict in the narrative (Minderop, 2018).

A. Dominance of the Pleasure Principle as the Driving Force of the First Plot

The analysis shows that the dominance of the Id or Pleasure Principle functions as the main driving force in the narrative structure. The impulsive actions of the characters, starting from Qamar al-Zamān's irrational rejection to the aggression of Princess Budūr,

is not merely a dramatic element, but rather a manifestation of instinctual drive that demands immediate gratification without regard for the consequences of reality. In the context of literary psychology, this phenomenon confirms that the conflict in the story does not originate from external factors alone, but rather from the character's inability to delay of gratification. This overflowing libidinal energy is what creates the initial tension, forcing the plot to move forward in search of an outlet or resolution (Freud , 2009).

B.   Fragility of the Second Ego's Mediating Function
The text highlights the fundamental vulnerability of the characters' ego functions in the face of pressure. Before reaching maturity, the characters' egos are depicted as failing to carry out their primary role as mediators between the inner and outer worlds. This inability is evident in the use of primitive defense mechanisms, such as denial and projection, to avoid instinctual anxiety. This finding indicates that characters in classical literature are built on a fragile psychological foundation, where mental stability is easily shaken by changing circumstances. This fragility allows for plot complications, as every decision made by a weak ego tends to create new problems rather than solutions (Minderop, 2018).

C.   Flexibility and Adaptability of the Third Superego
The role of the Superego in this story is proven not to be static or rigid, but rather has flexibility that depends on the character's psychic interests. The Superego can be manipulated by the Ego to legitimize hidden desires, as when Qamar uses moral arguments to cover up his fears, or when the King uses legal authority to enforce his personal will. This shows that the moral values in the character's personality structure are adaptive. In literary analysis, this dynamic shows that moral conflict is not a black-and-white battle, but rather a complex internal negotiation in which social rules are often reinterpreted for the psychological comfort of the subject (Al-Mubarak, 2023).

Overall, this synthesis concludes that the story of Qamar Al-Zamān is a symbolic representation of the process of maturing the structure of the human personality. The integrity of the narrative can only be achieved when the characters succeed in transforming the conflict between the Id, Ego, and Superego into a harmonious integration. In psychoanalysis, the happy ending resolution of the story is interpreted as the achievement of mental equilibrium or balance, where the ego has gained full control over reality. Thus, this study proves that the psychological structure of a character is a determining variable that determines the direction, conflict, and resolution in a literary work (Hindawi Foundation, 2022).

Conclusion
Based on literary psychoanalysis that has been conducted, this research concludes that the dynamics of conflict in the story of *Qamar al- Zamān ibn al-Malik Shahramān* is an external manifestation of the instability of the personality structure of the characters. The main findings show that the driving force of the narrative in this text is not coincidence, but rather a result of a dialectical fight between instinctual drive (Id),

rational consideration (Ego*)*, and moral boundaries (Superego*)*. The narrative tension appears when the mediation function of the *Ego* experiences failure in responding to the pressure, which then forces the character to activate various self-defence mechanisms, starting from intellectualization and rationalization to impulsive aggression.

General patterns found indicate that every character experiences a similar psychological transformation trajectory, namely, moving from the " Pleasure Principle " towards reception against the " Reality Principle ". In the early phase, the character's unpreparedness in facing social demands triggers internal anxiety that is responded to with resistance and self-withdrawal. However, as the narrative unfolds, a mental maturation process occurs where the psychic energy previously fragmented then succeeds in re-integrating. The resolution of the story can be achieved not just because settlement of a physical problem, but rather because the *ego* of the characters succeeds in reaching a mature synthesis function, which allows the occurrence of harmonization between personal desire and collective responsibility.

The theoretical implications from this study confirm that in classical literary structure, characters' psychological stability functions as the main determinant for the regularity of the story's plot. The character's inner turmoil is proven in line with complications of the conflict that occurred, while mental balance recovery becomes an absolute prerequisite for the settlement of the narrative. As a recommendation for the continuity of research, further research can expand the analysis using the Lacanian psychoanalysis approach to study the structure of desire and language, or review aspects of Jungian archetypes to reveal more universal collective unconscious patterns within classical Arabic literature.

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