

The Return of The Repressed in *The Midnight Library* (2020) by Matt Haig.

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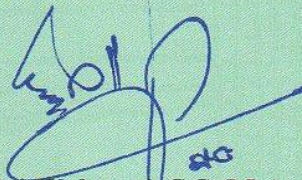
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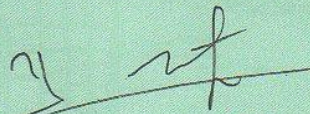


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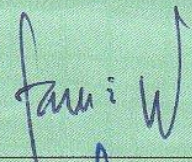
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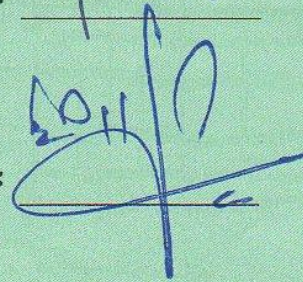
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ABSTRACT

Rafiyan, Rayhan. 2024. The Return of The Repressed in Novel The Midnight Library (2020) by Matt Haig. Undergraduate Thesis. English Language and Literature Department. Faculty of Language and Arts. Universitas Negeri Padang.

This research is an analysis of novel *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig (2020). The design of this research is qualitative descriptive analysis. The analysis delves into the form of repression in the experience of Nora Seed. It enhances the analysis process by assisting in the unveiling of the meaning. The research used psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud. The data in this research was obtained from the novel *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig (2020), Based on the use of quotations from character, plot, and setting from the novel. The results show that there are two forms of return of repression in the main character Nora Seed, consist of dream and anxiety. Furthermore, the data found from the novel shows Nora has released her repressed emotion by accepting her failure , Tolerancing the negative emotions, forgiving her parents in fact her parents are full of love to her, realizing that life is full of trials and needing connection to humans.

Keywords: *Repression, Return of Repressed, Release Repressed Emotions*

ABSTRAK

Rafiyah, Rayhan. 2024. The Return of The Repressed in Novel The Midnight Library (2020) by Matt Haig. Tesis Sarjana. Program Studi Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris. Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Penelitian ini adalah analisis novel "The Midnight Library" karya Matt Haig (2020). Desain penelitian ini adalah analisis deskriptif kualitatif. Analisis ini menelusuri manifestasi elemen yang ditekan dalam pengalaman Nora Seed, yang disebabkan oleh peristiwa traumatis masa lalu. Ini meningkatkan proses analisis dengan membantu mengungkapkan makna. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori psikoanalisis oleh Sigmund Freud. Data dalam penelitian ini diperoleh dari novel *The Midnight Library* karya Matt Haig (2020) Berdasarkan penggunaan kutipan dari karakter, plot, dan setting dari novel. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada dua bentuk dari kembalinya represi pada tokoh utama Nora Seed, yaitu melalui mimpi dan kecemasan. Selanjutnya, data yang ditemukan dari novel menunjukkan bahwa Nora telah melepaskan emosinya yang terpendam dengan menerima kegagalan, menoleransi emosi negatif, memaafkan orang tuanya yang sebenarnya penuh kasih sayang padanya, menyadari bahwa kehidupan penuh dengan ujian, dan membutuhkan hubungan dengan sesama manusia.

Kata Kunci: *Represi, Kembalinya Represi, Melepaskan Emosi Represi*

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Rayhan Rafiyan

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

In today's era, depression among people is a pressing concern that demands our attention. Many individuals face a multitude of challenges, including negative past experiences, that contribute to the onset of depression. The prevalence of depression and its devastating effects can significantly increase the risk of suicidal ideation and behaviors. According to Richesson, Magas, Brown & Hoenig (2022) from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, in 2021 estimated 14.1 million United States adults aged 18 or older had at least one major depressive episode with severe impairment in the past year. This number represented 5.5% of all U.S. adults. The fact that suicide ranked as the 12th highest cause of death in the United States in 2020 (Richesson, Magas, Brown & Hoenig, 2022), highlights the significance of addressing and preventing this tragic outcome. Raising awareness and promote the availability of mental health resources and a dependable support system is important. Ultimately aiming to minimize and prevent the heightened risk of mental issues and early trauma.

The examination of emotional responses to early trauma in human memory is a fascinating topic within the field of psychology, particularly in connection with the concept of return of the repressed. The scientific and clinical discourse

surrounding trauma and memory has largely revolved around the question of whether traumatic experiences from childhood can be suppressed. According to Lauretis (2008) repressed memory only becomes traumatic when it resurfaces at a later time, accompanied by an understanding of its sexual nature and the realization that the emotions it carries are unacceptable or threatening to the individual's sense of self. This internal conflict leads the individual's ego to repress the memory, and this subsequent secondary repression ultimately gives rise to neurotic symptoms.

Individual that are confronted with heightened levels of stress and trauma, potentially give rise to the emergence of repressed thoughts, memories, and desires. According to Madison (1961) The concept of the return of repressed suggests that when thoughts or memories are repressed due to their unacceptable or threatening nature, they may resurface in distorted forms, disrupting conscious functioning. The return of the repressed often expressed indirectly through dreams, slips of the tongue , and symptoms such as anxiety, phobias, or neurotic behaviors (Doreen Fowler, 2000). These repressed elements can have significant negative consequences on both mental and physical health. According to (Patel & Patel, 2019)repressing emotions can lead to detrimental effects on physical health, mental well-being, and overall quality of life. Therefore it is important to recognize and find healthy ways to express and manage emotions to promote well-being.

Due to the fact that productive age group 18 and above is very vulnerable to stress, this stage of life brings with it numerous responsibilities, challenges, and stressors, making individuals in this age group particularly vulnerable to depressed. According to Heckman (2023) This crucial period presents individuals with a multitude of demands, ranging from career advancement and financial stability to

family obligations and societal expectations. Work-related stress is a significant stressor for this age group, with younger workers reporting higher work stress, physically demanding jobs, and greater self-rated work pressure (Hsu, 2019). As a result, those within this age group find themselves navigating a complex web of pressures and expectations, making them particularly vulnerable to the detrimental effects of stress. The cumulative impact of these stressors can significantly affect their mental well-being, physical health, and overall quality of life.

Constant exposure to pressures and expectations within this productive age group, coupled with past negative experiences or traumas, can give rise to the return of the repressed. This overwhelming stress experienced by individuals can act on emotions and memories (Madison, 1961). The return of the repressed manifests in various ways, such as dreams, slips of the tongue and anxiety. In addition, dreams in particular, play a vital role in human experience as they serve as a conduit for the expression of repressed thoughts, desires, and emotions.

Thoughts from the subconscious trying to get out through dreams and the slip of the tongue hold profound significance in our psychological landscape, offering intriguing glimpses into the depths of our psyche. Dreams, with their mysterious symbolism and fluid narratives, serve as a portal to our unconscious, where repressed thoughts, desires, and unresolved experiences find an avenue for expression. They beckon us to embark on a voyage of introspection, inviting us to explore the hidden realms of our innermost selves (Gayle M. V. Delaney, 1993). Similarly, a slip of the tongue, an accidental revelation of unfiltered thoughts or emotions, can provide surprising insights into our deepest desires and fears (Motley & Baars, 1979). Anxiety, in this context, can be seen as a common response to the

return of the repressed. When repressed material begins to surface, it can bring with it unresolved conflicts, fears, or traumas that were initially suppressed. These repressed elements may cause discomfort, uncertainty, and a general sense of unease, leading to anxiety (Otgaar, 2019). These subtle cues from our unconscious serve as whispers, imploring us to pay attention, to listen intently to the messages encoded within. When we embrace the transformative power of self-discovery and delve into the hidden aspects of our being, we embark on a profound journey of self-understanding. By confronting and integrating the repressed, we create space for growth, healing, and the emergence of our authentic selves (Otgaar et al., 2019). The return of the repressed becomes an opportunity for liberation, allowing us to break free from the shackles of the past and experience a fuller expression of our true essence. Through this courageous exploration, we gain invaluable insights, find inner peace, and chart a path towards wholeness and self-fulfillment.

In the captivating novel *The Midnight Library* by Matt Haig, the concept of the return of the repressed takes center stage, offering a thought-provoking exploration of regret, missed opportunities, and the search for fulfillment. The return of the repressed especially in manifestation of dream and anxiety becomes a powerful catalyst for main character self-discovery in this story.

Nora Seed, a 36-year-old employee at a music store, is overcome with a deep sense of sorrow about the state of her life right now. In a span of just over a day, Nora experiences a series of unfortunate events: her beloved cat passes away, she loses her job at the music store, has a heated confrontation with her former bandmate, and her only piano student leaves her. Her closest friend Izzy ignores her messages, her brother Joe avoids her, and even Mr. Banerjee, who lives next door,

no longer needs her to administer who lives next door, no longer needs her for administering his medication.

Her mother just a few years ago, and her father when she was a teenager, both passed away. Just two days before their scheduled wedding, Nora broke off her engagement to Dan after the death of her mother. In the midst of simultaneous pressures, she often experiences anxiety. Nora's anxiety is portrayed as a persistent companion that molds her thoughts, perspective, and conduct. It emerges as a prevailing sensation of restlessness, apprehension, and fear regarding her past decisions and the potential outcomes that loom ahead. This anxiety hinders her from fully embracing and relishing her present circumstances, impeding her capacity to find contentment. When she contemplates her life, it appears as a landscape overwhelmed by suffering, anguish, and regret. She resolves to take her own life after feeling hopeless and deciding that there is nothing left to live for. She leaves a letter and posts a farewell message on social media.

Nora awakens in front of an unknown structure, not the afterlife, as she had anticipated. She walks in and finds an unending library full with books. In her dream state, she runs across Mrs. Elm, the high school librarian who had helped Nora through the difficult time of losing her father. Mrs. Elm explains that Nora is at the Midnight Library, a place where time stops at midnight and exists somewhere between this world and the afterlife. The Book of Regrets, which contains a list of all of Nora's regrets in life, is presented to her by Mrs. Elm. Nora can explore the numerous pathways she could have followed by different decisions by looking through each book on the library's shelves, which each symbolizes an alternative existence.

Through this exploration, Nora confronts the consequences of her repressed memory and unfulfilled dreams and desire. In her journey through these alternative lives in her dream state, Nora discovers that no life is without challenges, and the grass isn't always greener on the other side. While some lives bring success, others bring hardship, and she learns to appreciate the complexity of her own choices. By confronting her repression head-on and immersing herself in the lives she could have led, Nora gains profound insights into her true self. The return of the repressed in *The Midnight Library* serves as a reminder of the significance of acknowledging and integrating our buried desires, ultimately leading to self-acceptance, healing, and the pursuit of a life that aligns with our deepest aspirations.

1.2 Focus of the Problem

This research focuses on two parts about the repression faced by Nora Seed as the main character in novel *The Midnight Library* (2020) by Matt Haig. The aim is to understand the form of Nora Seed's return of repressed and find out how Nora Seed releasing her repression based on quotations from character, plot, and setting in the novel. the study seeks to uncover the intricate ways in which repressed material resurfaces.

1.3 Research Questions

1. To what extent does Nora Seed show forms of the return of the repressed based on quotations from character, plot, and setting in the novel *The Midnight Library* (2020)?

2. How far does Nora Seed express the releases of repressed emotions based on quotations from character, plot, and setting in the novel *The Midnight Library* (2020) by Matt Haig?

1.4 Purpose of the Research

This study seeks to find out the forms of Nora Seed's return of the repressed based on quotations from character, plot, and setting in the novel *The Midnight Library* (2020) And how far Nora Seed express the releases of repressed emotions based on quotations from character, plot, and setting in the novel *The Midnight Library* (2020) by Matt Haig?

1.5 Conceptual Framework

