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**THE PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDY OF  
QUASAR: TERRORISM IN *GHOSTWRITTEN* BY  
DAVID STEPHEN MITCHELL 1999**

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of the requirements for a Master's degree in Literature and  
Civilization*

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## **Dedication 1**

First of all, I thank God almighty, the provider, my creator, my source of knowledge and wisdom for everything I have reached till now.

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This work is also dedicated to special people. Even though they belong no more to this world, their memories will remain forever my grandfathers and grandmothers.

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## **Dedication 2**

It is with genuine gratitude and warm regard that I dedicate my dissertation to God, my source of courage. With great love and happiness I dedicate this work to my parents.

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## Table of Contents

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| <b>Dedication1</b> .....  | <b>ii</b>  |
| <b>Dedication 2</b> .....   | <b>iii</b> |
| <b>Acknowledgments</b> .....  | <b>iv</b>  |
| <b>Table of Contents</b> .....  | <b>v</b>   |
| <b>Abstract</b> .....   | <b>vi</b>  |
| <b>General Introduction</b> .....   | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>Chapter One: Author’s Biography and the Historical Background of <i>Ghostwritten</i></b> ..... | <b>6</b>   |
| <b>Chapter Two: The Psychoanalytic Theory and its Relation to Terrorism</b> .....                 | <b>26</b>  |
| <b>Chapter Three: The Psychoanalytic Analysis of the Terrorist Quasar</b> .....                   | <b>48</b>  |
| <b>General Conclusion</b> .....   | <b>67</b>  |
| <b>Works Cited</b> .....  | <b>71</b>  |

## **Abstract**

David Stephen Mitchell's *Ghostwritten* is a postmodern novel that captures several realities and tackles one among many serious issues of our contemporary world, namely, terrorism. This research focuses on the main character, the terrorist Quasar, found in the first chapter. This research work attempts at using the psychoanalysis theory as a means to examine the protagonist Quasar under four vital concepts that are trauma, brainwashing, personality transformation, and the death drive. Relying on these concepts, we get a clear understanding of the terrorist psyche, the way it functions, and its motives.

**Keywords:** David Mitchell, *Ghostwritten*, Quasar, psychoanalysis, terrorism, trauma, brainwashing, identity theory, death drive, Japan.

## **Résumé**

*Ghostwritten* de David Stephen Mitchell est un roman postmoderne qui capture plusieurs réalités et aborde l'un des nombreux problèmes graves de notre monde contemporain, à savoir le terrorisme. Cette recherche se concentre sur le personnage principal, le terroriste Quasar, trouvé dans le premier chapitre. Ce travail de recherche tente d'utiliser la théorie de la psychanalyse comme moyen d'examiner Quasar le protagoniste sous quatre concepts vitaux que sont le traumatisme, le lavage de cerveau, la transformation de la personnalité et la pulsion de mort. En nous appuyant sur ces concepts, nous obtenons une compréhension claire de la psyché terroriste, de son fonctionnement et de ses motivations.

**Mots-clés:** David Mitchell, *Ghostwritten*, Quasar, psychanalyse, terrorisme, traumatisme, lavage de cerveau, théorie de l'identité, pulsion de mort, Japon.

## **General Introduction**

The post modernist era is the period that comes after modernism, it began in the 1950s, and it is still continuing. This era made a shift in perspective, and it includes many various disciplines such as art, architecture, fashion, communication, and certainly literature. Postmodernism is characterized by several features including the use of intertextuality, metafiction, historiographic metafiction, and magic realism.

During this period, literature has seen the birth of a variety of authors, among them John Barth, Kurt Vonnegut, Thomas Pynchon, Don DeLillo, and the famous English screenwriter and novelist, David Stephen Mitchell. Mitchell is famous for his postmodern touch in almost all his novels which clearly portray postmodern literature not only in Britain but also in various countries around the globe. As *Ghostwritten* captures it, it consists of several postmodern features, for example, the historiographic metafiction through which Mitchell fictionalizes real historical events, as the case of the sarin gas attack in Tokyo.

Mitchell is best known for his debut novel *Ghostwritten*, which is considered his masterpiece work. The novel won the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize for the best work of British literature written by an author under 35

Through the Okinawa chapter, the author exposes the protagonist who is a Japanese terrorist cult member. The latter committed endless terrorist acts in that country. Hence, the main subject of *Ghostwritten's* first chapter is terrorism. This research aims to show to what degree the psychological state of the main character Quasar is affected by terrorism. Moreover, the main questions would be how does terrorism affect Quasar's psyche and what drives him to develop a new personality?

The research work is done with the purpose of highlighting the way Quasar's personality is both destroyed and transformed due to the combination of a traumatic past experience and terrorism, which resulted in his adoption of terrorist behavior.



While examining any piece of literature, there are various approaches and methods to achieve an adequate analysis. In the case of our analysis of *Ghostwritten* first chapter, we have noticed that there are previous studies done on the novel which focused on a postmodern interpretation of it, but they neglected the psychological side that is prevalent and deserves scholarly attention. Therefore, the present work attempts to analyze the psychological status of the character Quasar. The present paper focuses in a deep way on the psychological side found in the novel, relying on the character of Quasar, who is the protagonist in the first chapter entitled "Okinawa".

This research is significant in the way it returns with benefits for students. It helps them to master the correct use of psychoanalytic literary theory, and it helps them to understand how the human psyche of a terrorist functions. In addition, to identify what controls people's behaviors.

In order to have a fruitful process, we need to answer some questions that will help us to resolve our problematic, these questions are:

What kind of trauma affected Quasar?

What pushed him to have a transformation in his personality?

How does the death drive become prevalent in the life of Quasar?

### **Hypotheses**

If Quasar is influenced by his past trauma, brainwashing, and the death drive, we should expect that he is unconsciously acting, thus he is a victim.

If Quasar is aware that he is going to commit harmful acts, we should expect that he is conscious. So, he is an anti-hero.

## The Structure of the Thesis

Our thesis is divided into three chapters. In the first chapter, we provide David Mitchell's biography with his crucial literary pieces. Also, we portray and analyze both the authors and the works that influenced Mitchell in his writings. Then, we expose the synopsis of *Ghostwritten*, the main characters, and at last, we portray the history of Japan and its relation with terrorism.

In the second chapter, we expose the psychoanalytic approach, its origins, its well-known theories. Then, we include a part that aims at analyzing the way psychoanalysis views terrorism where we present four crucial concepts that are trauma, brainwashing, personality transformation, and the concept of the death drive. Afterward, we analyze the modern psychoanalytic view of terrorism.

In the last chapter, we apply the psychoanalytic major concepts that we mentioned in the theoretical chapter on Quasar's character. We explain first how the traumatic experience has a great impact on Quasar's personality transformation. Then, we examine the role of brainwashing in making Quasar integrate the world of terrorism. In addition, we highlight the influence of the death drive on Quasar's deeds. Then, we try to prove whether Quasar is driven by his conscious psyche or his unconsciousness.

The final and the last part of the whole research is devoted to the conclusion, where we provide the result and the final feedbacks of our analysis applied to our character.

In this study, we have used David Mitchell's novel *Ghostwritten* which shows the novel's first chapter protagonist, named Quasar, who is a Japanese terrorist cult member and who is obsessed with destruction. The pieces of information taken were analyzed using the qualitative method since we are dealing with a literary work and with information that we obtained from non-numerical sources. As a primary source, we have used the *Ghostwritten*

novel by David Mitchell. As secondary sources, we have used books and articles that have a relation with the psychoanalytic theory and with the functions of the terrorist's psyche.

**Chapter One: Author's Biography and the Historical Background of**  
*Ghostwritten*

## 1. The Biography of David Stephen Mitchell

David Stephen Mitchell was born on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 1969 in South Port, Lancashire, England. He grew up within an artistic family in which both of his parents were visual artists. This author didn't have an easy childhood because he was facing an issue that was considered in his difficulty in speaking. Consequently, a huge fear emerged within his parents. They were afraid that he had a serious problem. Later on, they treated his issue at a speech therapist, and at the age of seven, he developed a stammer. David Mitchell was educated at Hanley Castle High school, and he received higher education at the University of Kent where he obtained a B.A in comparative literature. In 1994, this British writer moved to Japan where he became an English teacher to technical students for eight years.

David Mitchell has a great treasure of works, including novels like *Number9 Dream* which was written in 2001. It follows the story of the character and the narrator, Eiji Miyake, who is in search of his origins due to the anonymous identity of his father. Therefore, the story is told from his perspective. *Cloud Atlas* is Mitchell's third novel which was published in 2004. In fact, it is similar to *Ghostwritten* in the way that both of them are episodic novels. This piece of literature is inspired from a piece of music that was made by a Japanese composer named Toshi Lchiyanagi. In addition, to another novel entitled *The Bone Clocks*. As he wrote short stories such as *January Man*, *Character Development*. Besides, the writing of significant articles such as the one entitled *Learning to live with my son's autism*, and *Japan and My Writing*. Hence, he is best known for his debut novel entitled *Ghostwritten*, which is considered his masterpiece.

### 1.1. Notable Influences

The journey of writing *Ghostwritten* is marked by several influences in all of the writing styles, authors who impacted David Mitchell, to different settings around the universe “*Ghostwritten* feels like the product of sensibility that's still unformed and still too easily

swayed by literary influence” (Miller). However, in its largest state, it is influenced by East Asian culture.

## **1.2. Haruki Murakami and his Influence on David Mitchell**

In fact, Mitchell is a western writer, knowing that the westerners were stereotyping the Japanese culture. However, David changed all the balances, with the use of his novels, he tries to go beyond those stereotypes and bring a new vision to the Japanese culture through the eyes of a western writer. David is influenced by the Japanese culture, and this influence can be traced to several things.

First, the period he spent in Japan, where he lived and worked for a good period of time “the setting and style of Mitchell’s early work seemed to be influenced by his experience living and working in Japan” (Bradbury). Second, his marriage to a Japanese woman. From these two aspects, Mitchell’s attachment to the Japanese setting started. The chance of living there gave him an opportunity to portray Japan from the eyes of a western writer in a way that did not exist before. In other words, to portray Japan for the first time outside the western box, as in the case of his novel *Ghostwritten*. That is, he puts himself in the place of the other, and he starts to see that culture from the perspective of its people, but not from the western angle.

Also, with the writing of his novels, he is targeting to get the Japanese culture and perspective the same appreciation that the Westerners and Europeans have as Mitchell says “to write a bi-cultural novel, where Japanese perspectives are given an equal weight to Dutch/European perspective” (qtd. in Nihei 7). In addition to the influence of the Japanese setting, there is also the influence of the Japanese writers, particularly, Haruki Murakami. He is the most person who succeeded in influencing Mitchell.

Haruki’s influence on David is seen in many ways. Starting from the admiration that David Mitchell showed to this author as he exposes “I had a crush on *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicles!*

Absolutely besotted by it. Love it, love it, love it” (qtd. in Nihei 93). Also, among the remarkable influences that Haruki has on Mitchell is in the way of describing Japan which he characterized under the term “Japaneseness” which mainly refers to the Japanese traditions. Here Mitchell is influenced by the traditional vision which Haruki attributes to his characters. Hence, Mitchell adopts this characteristic, but he mixes it with the western culture in order to give a new soul to the Japanese culture and present it as a contemporary one. Taking the example of Mitchell’s novel *Number9dream*, with the use of traditional elements of the Japanese culture like the Samurai, for a western reader, he will take it as a violent act and immoral, however, it is cleverly placed by Mitchell to show its values of loyalty and generosity according to Nihei “through this display of ultra violence Mitchell makes his readers aware of their own stereotyping of Japan” (98). Another characteristic that portrays Haruki Murakami’s influence on David Mitchell is the use of the subjective voice. The Westerners for ages depended on the use of an objective voice while tackling the subject of the other, as in the case of the Japanese culture, contrary to Mitchell who adopted a subjective way of representation of the other “Mitchell constantly stresses the importance of taking subjective sense something he claims to have learned from Murakami” (Nihei 98).

Eventually, Murakami puts a great emphasis on subjectivity and its importance for the readers “Murakami believes that we can perceive things only subjectively” (Nihei 99). Taking the example of the *Ghostwritten* novel, the British author considers each place significant and he looks at them in a subjective way. This subjectivity is also shown through the voice that David gave to his characters, he permits each one of them to narrate his or her own story in detail.

Moreover, David Mitchell in his novels targeted the aim of portraying Japan as it is, the thing that he clarifies very well in his works. This real depiction of Japan is exactly what Haruki Murakami put the emphasis on “In his works wants to depict Japan as it is” (Nihei 92).

Finally, from our observation of Haruki Murakami's novel entitled *Underground*, we notice that the novel shared some common points with *Ghostwritten*. To argue this point, we cite the following arguments.

First, as Haruki Murakami was inspired and influenced by the Tokyo Subway gas attack that happened in 1995 in Japan, and that was organized by a cult named "The Aum Shinrikyo", the event was portrayed exactly in his work under the title *Underground* which was published in 1997. David Mitchell was also influenced by the same event. Thus, he showed it clearly in his novel *Ghostwritten*.

### **1.3. Style Influences**

In style, Mitchell was influenced by Thornton Wilder. The latter was interested in gathering meaning in randomness, in a particular way, he was interested in exposing the causality of the work. David Mitchell adopted the same subject and style to his writings as De Loughry asserts "*Ghostwritten* search for meaning in randomness" (3). Also, during the interview, Mitchell showed the influence of this writer on him through the use of one of his characters in his work as a sort of admiration and gratitude.

### **1.4. The Writing Style of David Stephen Mitchell**

After publishing his first novel *Ghostwritten*, Mitchell's writing was the core of comparison to other postmodern figures such as Don DeLillo, Thomas Pynchon, Tolstoy, and others "Mitchell's writing has been compared with that of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Twain, Sterne, Joyce, Nabokov, Pynchon, DeLillo" (Wyatt). This comparison is referred to the fusion that his novels contain, by which they featured global and historical sweep, the thing that is quite unique for a writer of his generation.

Indeed, his style of writing is seen as the exploration of the issue of modernity in the way that it gives access to be in contact with different locations at the same time. Moreover,



Mitchell's novels are known for their lyrical prose style and complex structures; for example, "I tried asking them about inner places because it seemed relevant" (Mitchell 23). "You mentioned him when we went out last week" (Mitchell 122). As well, the writing of intertwined stories, which is considered a personal touch of David Mitchell, in the sense that almost all his novels contain chapters that are connected in a way or another such as our case study *Ghostwritten*, and *Cloud Atlas*.

Also, Mitchell depicted realistic stories with the use of fictional elements. It is a postmodern feature that is known as historiographic metafiction that works as a process of fictionalizing real historical events or figures, for example, in *Ghostwritten* Mitchell fictionalized a real event that is the Tokyo gas attack, it dates back to 1995.

In addition, to the conscious selection of locations in his novels, which means that the choice of those places is not done randomly because all the locations used in the novel are inspired from the world tour that David did during his lifetime, that is, those places were visited by him. As a result, they left an impact on him; such as Tokyo, China, and London.

Finally, the writing of episodic novels reflects his childhood's passion for writing short stories, which is seen through his writing of different parts in one story; however, he was targeting the big picture and how those parts will make a meaningful fit together as a whole.

## **2. Introduction to *Ghostwritten***

The novel is a series of episodes that consists of different sections. From the beginning, the author didn't have the attention to gather these parts. He wrote each part independently, but after writing the first half, he became aware of the possibility of gathering them and making them a whole novel. Therefore, the stories became intertwined by coincidence. These sections would describe different settings and cultures. David Mitchell in his novel *Ghostwritten* was highly interested in answering two important questions which are: what is the reason behind things, and in which way did they happen?

## 2.1. Plot Summary

*Ghostwritten* is David Mitchell's postmodern fictional novel that was published on 19 August 1999 by Hodder and Stoughton. This piece of literature took the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize that was delivered for the best work of fiction in the commonwealth by an author under 35. *Ghostwritten* is a novel that was told from the point of view of nine different narrators with an additional part that works as a coda. David Mitchell referred to and named each chapter according to a place.

Mitchell started his novel from Okinawa with the use of a narrator whose original name is Keisuke Tanaka, known as Quasar. He is a member of a Japanese doomsday cult known as the fellowship. Quasar is brainwashed by the leader of the cult who is not honest with him concerning his status. Thus, Quasar's intention for the future of the world is somehow noble.

So, he feels sorrowful about the state of Japan, especially with the increasing uniform urban sprawl that for Quasar and his cult will lead only to negative consequences. As a result, he committed an attack on the Tokyo subway. For him, it was like a gift. He did a noble mission in order to save both the present and the future. The cult members succeeded to convince him that people are uncleaned, so it is his divine mission to clean the world from them, and it could happen only through killing them.

After this dramatic event, Quasar took refuge in Okinawa, where he adopted a new identity as a computer employee. Later on, he moved to an island found in Kumejima, and during his stay there, his master got arrested. Quasar heard what happened to his master, the thing that pushed him to call another man, who is anonymous in this chapter, seeking protection. However, that phone call was received by a man named Satoru, who is a character in the second chapter. With such a step, Mitchell was targeting to show the connection between the chapters and characters that the audience will catch. Through the phone call that Quasar made, Mitchell opened the door of interaction between characters and chapters.

The second part is entitled Tokyo. It narrates the story of Satoru, who is a Japanese jazz lover, working in a record shop in downtown Tokyo. This character underwent difficult childhood due to his separation from his parents. As a result, he was raised by the madam of a whore-house where his prostitute mother used to work. One day, as he was closing the shop, he received a call from Quasar, the main character of the previous chapter. This phone call gave him the chance to meet the girl he loves, Tomoyo, a Japanese and Chinese girl. After being in a relationship for a while, Tomoyo returned to her hometown, Hong Kong. The thing that made Satoru follow her.

Moving to Hong Kong, which is the third part of this novel where Neal Brose acts as the main character. He is a lawyer who is separated from his wife because of the fact that they couldn't have children. In addition to this, the good relationship between Satoru and Tomoyo from the preceding chapter, which he saw in a restaurant in Hong Kong, influenced his marriage and brought its end. Later on, Neal took part in a deal committed with illegal money. In fact, as a response to his boss's orders, he owned a secret bank account that belongs to another character who would remain in the sixth part of the novel, his name is Andrei Gregorski. This tragic event and the fact that Neal Brose suffered from diabetes led to his death.

The subsequent chapter is entitled Holy Mountain, which we discover and see through the eyes of a woman who carries on and who is in charge of a tea shack. This female character saw many troubles in her life. She first underwent a savage act by which she was raped by the local warlord's son. Then, she tried in countable times to reconstruct her tea shack, which was considered as her only interest in life. After, it was destroyed twice by not only the war that happened between Japan and the Republic of China but also by the communists on the cultural revolution in China. Hence, twentieth-century China is portrayed very well in this

chapter. As time passed, she found that she had a granddaughter who is the housemaid in Neal Brose house from the earlier chapter.

The following chapter takes place in Mongolia. This section relates the story of a spirit named the noncorpum. It lives in the minds of people. Its major aim is to remember its origins from where it came. In fact, this spirit inhabited and conquered even the mind of the tea shack's woman mentioned in the former chapter. Afterward, this noncorpum wanted to find a writer who may know its origins. For this reason, it manages both to settle and transmigrate among many Mongolians. Therefore, the origins of this spirit were found after his transmigrating to a baby grandmother's mind. Indeed, the noncorpum refers to a young boy whose soul is rescued by a friar when a communist tried to take off his soul and life. Ultimately, his soul is transferred to a girl who is now the grandmother, and its end came when the baby who inhabited died.

The next chapter which is set in Saint Petersburg narrates the spiel of a museum assistant and a servant named Margaritta Latinsky. The former and her boyfriend were planning to steal the Delacroix painting piece found exactly in the Hermitage Museum. This couple received the power to commit that act by the Russian Mafia boss Andrei Gregorski mentioned in the third chapter. This affair led to the ruin of both Margarita, who is arrested by the police, and Rudi, her boyfriend, who is killed.

The seventh chapter is denominated London where the author exposes the story of Marco, a ghostwriter and a drummer in the Music of Chance's band. This character was involved in a trap of wager in a casino, the thing that resulted in turning his life upside down.

Clear Island is the title of the eighth chapter. It recounts the life of a female character named Mo Muntervary. She is a physicist who developed a clever technology, but unfortunately, it was used in a destructive way by the American Army. Through the way, they depended on her knowledge in order to form destructive weapons, a thing that Mo didn't

accept. This resulted in her running away in order to avoid being a part of such a harmful act. However, in the end, she returned to her homeland in Clear Island waiting for her destiny. Then, the American Army found her, and she accepted to go with them since she found that it was the only solution to protect the world.

Finally, the story of the last chapter is told from the perspective of the narrator named Bat Segundo, who is a late-night radio host known as Night Train that is situated in New York City. While Bat was doing his job, he received a call from a mysterious caller whose name is Zookeeper. As time passes, specifically, in the period of the world nuclear, the Zookeeper phoned once again on Bat's show. It used its power to protect people and to stop the war between them, but this didn't take a long time to reproduce again, even though it did its best to stop the destruction. After a discussion with Bat, the Zookeeper reveals that there is a danger coming to destroy the earth. Knowing that this time it will not intervene since people are already causing harm to each other. So, there is no need to stop them.

To conclude, *Ghostwritten* ends with a coda that remains and acts as a conclusion, which returns to the early beginning. It returns to the terrorist character Quasar and Tokyo's major event.

The relatedness between all the previous chapters can't be seen directly; however, when the reader gets deep into the novel, he starts to become conscious about the coincidence found between the chapters, and this relatedness is done in several situations.

Starting from people who do not know each other, but they are linked by several connections. This connection is illustrated by Mitchell in the novel through the main character in the first chapter, Quasar, who was obliged to make a phone call seeking help by saying the code phrase of the cult "The dog needs to be fed" (Mitchell 16). That call was received by mistake by Satoru, the character of the second chapter. By such act the author created the first bridge between characters of different chapters That is; if that call didn't exist all the coming

events wouldn't be emerged "If that phone call hadn't rung at that moment, and if he hadn't taken the decision to go back and answer it, then everything that happened afterward wouldn't have happened" (Mitchell 54).

Second, by sharing acquaintances or sexual partners, such as the case of Neal Brose's wife from the third chapter who betrayed him and had a sexual relationship with another character from the seventh chapter named Marco.

A ride in the same boat, a brief meeting in the street for example, Neal Brose meets the couple Satoru and Tomoyo of the second chapter, his meeting was not arranged, it took place strangely, even these people don't know each other, but that meeting had an impact on Neal's life and resulted in a big switch in his personal life, that is; due to that meeting, Neal made the big decision that changed his life upside down.

Finally, Witnessing another death, or one character saves another life suddenly, here we can illustrate it by the case of Mo, who is a character in the eighth chapter. She has been saved by chance and luck by Marco from chapter seven after she was taking the flee from the American Army to London.

In this case, Mitchell succeeded in turning the random events into one unified piece of literature.

## **2.2. Main Characters**

The novel provides a massive number of characters, but since this paper is concerned with the first chapter, the focal point will be on the characters presented there with a slight mention of other chapter's main characters. First of all, Okinawa's characters:

**Quasar:** Originally named Keisuke Tanaka, known as Quasar. He is a member of a Japanese doomsday cult known as the fellowship. He acts as an anti-hero who symbolizes evil in society, he has one target which is to cause harm. Quasar has great thirst for blood that

resulted in killing people with no mercy. This act of killing emerged from his belief that every person in the world is “uncleaned”. Therefore, it is his duty to clean it through the use of brutal, savage, and cruel acts just like the Tokyo gas attack that he committed. This character is said to be brainwashed, the thing that may justify his bad deeds.

**His Serendipity:** He is a character in the first chapter. He is presented as the leader and the mind behind the cult which is known as the fellowship. This character acts as the one who is giving instructions to the members of the cult in order to commit terrorist acts. He has the obedience of those members, they believe in him, and they are persuaded that he has extra power and forces. Thus, it is their duty to worship him and stay under his control and will.

**The minister of defense:** He is also known as the minister of security. He is considered as the favorite and the special person to His Serendipity. He qualified and graduated from Imperial University. Before hearing about the call of His Serendipity, he worked as a judge. Quasar describes him as “a born-leader” (Mitchell 5). Like His Serendipity, he appreciates Quasar’s act very much.

**The hotel host:** she remains as the receptionist of the hotel or the hotel’s desk clerk, where Quasar is going to rest. From the sight of Quasar, she symbolizes the unclean person.

**The Brother:** He is one of the cult’s members Quasar belongs to. He is the first person to congratulate Quasar for the success of their recent mission. He makes Quasar speak with the minister.

Second, other chapters’ main characters:

**Satoru:** A young man and an admirer of jazz music, he works at a music shop. Satoru fell in love with a girl named Tomoyo with whom he shared a great love story. He has a prostitute mother, Filipina, thus, he was raised in a whore house.

**Neal Brose:** A lawyer who takes part in a deal committed with illegal money. He has an unstable relationship with his wife, since he has a problem, he can't give birth to children. As a result, they got divorced. In the end, he died because of his illness "diabetes".

**Mount Emei:** An old woman who lives in the Holy Mountain, a possessor of a tea shack. She became a victim of rape by the warlord's son. Through her experiences, we see the history of China in the period of the twentieth century. Emei represents both the host of the noncorpum, and the grandmother of the maid in part three.

**The Noncorpum:** A fictional character that remains as a disembodied spirit, it inhabited and transmigrated between many people, including the physicist Mo from part eight and the tea shack woman in part four with the hope to find its origins.

**Margarita Latunsky:** An expert thief, she gets tied up in a complex relationship with her boyfriend, Rudi, with whom she stole an important painting named Delacroix. Consequently, Margarita was arrested by the police, and Rudi was killed by a character named Jerome.

**Marco:** He is a ghostwriter, drummer, and a womanizer. He saved Mo in part eight, and he slept with Neal's wife. However, he just fell in love with another woman named Poopy.

**Mo Muntervary:** An intelligent expert and specialist in Quantum Cog, the thing that pushed the Americans to follow her because they were in need of her knowledge to develop nuclear weapons.

**Bat Segundo:** He is a man who works as a DJ on a radio named Night Train. He received a strange call from a mysterious character named The Zookeeper.

**The Zookeeper:** A computer program invented by a clever physicist, Mo Muntervary, in order to work as a protector for humanity. It saves the world from nuclear destruction and gets rid of "His Serendipity" in the first section of *Ghostwritten*.



### 2.3. The Major Themes in *Ghostwritten*

*Ghostwritten* is a complex novel that resulted from the existence of several intertwined stories that Mitchell succeeded to shape correctly in order to form a meaningful fit as a whole. Consequently, this complexity gave the opportunity for this piece of literature to be thematically generous as we can see it through the coming themes. Starting with the main theme which is terrorism found in the first chapter, on which this thesis puts the emphasis.

**Terrorism:** The writer exposes terrorism as the mirror of violence and cruel reality that threatens the peacefulness of people. Its tragic consequences were seen clearly in the first chapter entitled Okinawa through first its protagonist Quasar, who was controlled by the terrorist beliefs, and second, through the attack he committed in the Tokyo Subway, in which he depended on the use of destructive chemicals. These evil actions destroy any kind of feeling safe and living without fear.

**Spirituality:** Spirituality in *Ghostwritten* has two significant references. First, it is shown clearly in the doomsday cult mentioned in the first chapter. In fact, the justification Quasar has in his mind about the massacre he made in the Tokyo subway is that it is his divine mission to clean the world from the sins of people. His doomsday cult was convinced by a religious idea known as Apocalypticism, which means that the world is going to disappear and people will be judged for their actions committed in their lives, and some catastrophic global events will happen “Apocalypse is an event involving destruction or damage on catastrophic scale” (Oxford 61). Quasar and His Serendipity believe in what is called millenarianism, which mainly means a religious, political, or social movement that will change the world or, in a true sense, they will destroy the universe “In popular and academic use the terms millenarianism is often synonymous with the related terms millennialism chilialism and millenarism. They refer to an endtimes golden ages of peace on earth for a long period preceding a final cataclysm and judgments. Sometimes referred to as millennium” (CenSAMM).

Besides, Hickman and Webster state that millenarianism is “A framework for moral world building occurring through a temporal trajectory laying claim not only to the future but also to the past and present, which ultimately seeks to transfigure everyday immanence into the image of transcendent without losing into ordinary quality” (4). In other words, the two authors state that millenarianism is a concept of world-building just because millenarianism is referred to two significant parts, which are the religious cults like the Aum Shinrikyo and technological references like the danger of apocalyptic climate change. From all these concepts we notice that the human belief here is said to be a serious problem. It is considered as the moving power that encourages and pushes Quasar to commit such a bloody act.

Second, spirituality is also seen through the presence of distinct spirits like the noncorpum, zookeeper, Arupadhatu. In the holy mountain’s chapter, the woman believes that a tree outside her tea shack talks to her. It is what always makes her hopeful even though she underwent too many difficulties in her life. Also in the Mongolia chapter, we discover that this woman is inhabited by the noncorpum, the mysterious character that is searching for its origins. Spirituality here is used in order to illustrate the connectedness of the characters and to show unity. It is used to describe the world away from its traditional picture and to portray it through a series of corporeal acts as a bridge that relates some aspects to the main narrative of the novel.

**Artificial intelligence:** it is considered as a significant theme that David Mitchell put the light on. He showed that the development of technology affected human lives, and in a particular way he depicted its negativity rather than its positive side. The thing that we can explain through the eighth chapter is that we notice people have an unconscious use of technology, they use it to develop destructive nuclear weapons that cause a real threat to the safety of humanity.

**Globalization:** Globalization in its true sense is first, the social interaction and interconnection between people around the globe. Second, it is the cultural exchange of beliefs and thoughts. Third, it is the political consolidation of different union all around the world, and it is achieved in a legal manner. *Ghostwritten* is a novel that clearly captures the features of globalization. In fact, it is a novel that consists of nine separate chapters and one coda remains as a conclusion. The nine chapters are all set in distinct locations around the world, and it narrates disparate stories and experiences of people. Throughout the novel, we notice that the author discusses many world's fields like terrorism, art, finance, science as he covers some historical events. The preceding fields are what argue in a clear way that *Ghostwritten* is a novel of globalization. In other words, by exposing the problem of terrorism and referring to some historical realities, with social problems like corruption in the field of money and finance clarify that David Mitchell's novel is a global work. In addition to this, the connectedness in events and the interaction between characters assert this fact of globalization.

**Causality:** Causality is observed to be among the themes in *Ghostwritten*. It has two major definitions. Firstly, it is the principle that everything has a cause. To relate it to *Ghostwritten*, there are many actions and deeds that are committed by the characters because of noticeable reasons. Taking into consideration the acts that are presented in the first chapter. When the members of the cult always try to satisfy their master His Serendipity. Such an act pushes a lot of them to question for what reason they are doing that. For example, the case of the main character Quasar, who questioned that act of obedience "Maybe they just did it because they loved him" (Mitchell 23). In this case, love is presented as a cause, and Dillon adds "His Serendipity suggests to Quasar that the reason he joined the sect was not luck, but love" (142). Also, in the Mongolia chapter, every movement done by the spirit, noncorpum, is referred to its goal of finding its origins.

Secondly, causality is the relationship between cause and effect. The major example that illustrates this second meaning of causality in *Ghostwritten* is how the good relationship shared between Satoru and Tomoyo in the second chapter affected and influenced clearly the marriage of Neal's Brose, who ended directly his relation with his wife, Katy Forbes. It means that his divorce is the result of the love he noticed between the couple in the Tokyo section. It is the result of the lack of love between him and his wife, they didn't have a solid base in their relationship "Lack of love that leads to Neal's downfall, the breakdown of his marriage caused by his wife's inability to produce a baby to love" (Dillon 143). Causality demonstrates the interconnectedness that operates within the novel.

**Reality:** David Mitchell in *Ghostwritten* succeeded in portraying and referring to some realities, mainly historical ones like the Tokyo gas attack mentioned in the first chapter, and twentieth-century China in the fourth chapter entitled Holy Mountain.

### **3. Japan and its History with Terrorism**

*Ghostwritten* is considered a masterpiece made by the British writer David Mitchell. While reading this piece of literature, we notice that it contains many significant themes and realities, and while entering deeper into its chapters, we find that the author tried in a way or another to present not only the Japanese culture but also its history. Taking into consideration two crucial things. First, this novel is set in Japan, and second, its author lived there for years. Therefore, this author succeeded in portraying the problems or issues that Japan saw in the past like the issue of terrorism. So, since our thesis focuses on analyzing one sample of this terrorism, which is the terrorist's acts of the character Quasar, we preferred first to provide and to go back to the history of Japan and its suffering with terrorism.

Japan is an island nation that has a great increase in population. It is considered as one of the most powerful countries, especially in the field of economics. However, despite the fact that Japan is a developed country, it suffered a lot from a terrible fact, which is terrorism.

Indeed, Japan between the years 1990 and 1999 saw more than thirty terrorist acts done by several organizations (Asai, and Arnold 107). As an example of these terrorist events, we cite two unforgettable ones. First, the 1995 Tokyo subway sarin attack. Second, the bombings of the headquarters of Mitsubishi heavy industries in Tokyo in 1974. Here, we should ask the question: why is Japan exposed to all these deadly attacks? In fact, the answer to this question is referred to two significant reasons.

The first reason is said to be the political issues in Japan as Asai, and Arnold explain “In most cases, terrorism in Japan has been related to the political opposition to various laws or policies of the Japanese government or practices of Japanese corporations”. They continue “For example, opposition to the continued presence of US military forces in Japan or the expansion of the Narita Airport outside Tokyo spawned a number of terrorist attacks in the 1990” (109).

Second, terrorism in Japan is also referred to as religious beliefs “One of the most notorious terrorist groups in Japan in 1990 was the Oumu religious cult, better known to the west as Aum Shinrikyo, which aimed to not only take over Japan, but also the world” (Asai, and Arnold 109).

This religious cult is the one that organized and committed the most terrible terrorist event, the Tokyo subway gas attack that took place exactly on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1995. The former defines and portrays terrorism in its true sense. It was the second attack done by the Aum Shinrikyo religious organization, which is well-known not only in Japan but also all over the world as Watanabe defines it “Aum Shinrikyo [Aum sect of truth] is a new religious group founded by Asahara Shoko in 1987, whose former body, *Aum Shinsen no Kai* [Aum circle of Divine Hermits] was founded in 1984. Its doctrine is a mixture of Hinayana Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, Yoga philosophy. Etc” (81). Also, Metraux argues “Aum represents most of the basic characteristics of a cult. It is a small voluntary group of strict

believers who choose to live apart from the world. It defied Japanese society and withdrew from it” (1142).

In addition to this, the Aum Shinrikyo despite the fact that is a religious organization, many scholars consider it as a criminal one “The fact that Aum’s leaders allegedly have abducted and even killed several followers and supposed enemies of the sect, manufactured and sold illegal narcotics, and killed or hurt numerous innocent citizens adds credibility to Davis’s view of Aum as a criminal religion” (Metraux 1143).

Aum Shinrikyo’s leader is named Asahara Shoko, and his registered name is Matsumoto Chinzo, he is a half-blind man, and he was sent to a public boarding school for the blind. Later on, he graduated from Kumamoto Prefectural School for the blind. Asahara practiced Esoteric Buddhist new religion for three years, and he was very interested in yoga, and he even became a self-trained master of yoga. In 1984, Asahara founded the Aum Shinrikyo organization, which he established on two bases “At this stage, he stressed two points: one’s own enlightenment (gedatsu) and self-realization (satori)” (Watanabe 83). In the beginning, this leader wanted to teach the Buddhist religion, and he followed the Mayahama Buddhist theology.

Then, as time passes, he enters deeper into this religion, he begins to teach to his disciples the most dangerous ideas in Tibetan Buddhism. In other words, he used the violent ideas that he learned from the Tibetan tradition Tantra Vajrayana as Asahara says “The teaching of the Esoteric Buddhism of Tibet was pretty savage. For instance, when a guru ordered a disciple to kill a thief, the disciple went ahead and did as an act of virtue” (qtd. in Watanabe 84-85).

Later on, in 1989 he published his work entitled *Doomsday*, which was as Watanabe states “a commentary on the Apocalypse in the new testament in the light of the Hindu God Shiva’s revelation through Asahara” (87).

To sum up, Japan after undergoing all these events and terrorist attacks succeeded in taking some caution. For example, after the 1995 Tokyo subway sarin gas attack, Japan became more aware of the danger and started to do its best to stop these attacks “It also awoke the government to the need for emergency planning and preparedness for terrorist events involving weapons of mass destruction” (Asai, and Arnold 112).

## **Conclusion**

Throughout the first chapter, we gave an insight into the life of the author, David Stephen Mitchell with his major significant works. Besides, in the first part, we analyzed both the works and the authors who influenced this British writer. In addition to the explanation of his writing style.

Second, we presented his 1999 novel *Ghostwritten*, mainly giving a description of this work, its historical background, besides the study of its main characters. In this part, we have examined as the last point the themes found in *Ghostwritten* from terrorism, globalization, artificial intelligence, spirituality, causality, and the theme of reality.

Finally, the last part, we devoted it to the explanation of the history of Japan and its relation with terrorism.

Indeed, there are only a few researches made on Mitchell’s first novel, *Ghostwritten*. The previous analyses were based on the use of the postmodern theory, however, they neglected the psychoanalytical side found in it. Thus, this current paper will put the emphasis on analyzing the novel through the use of a psychoanalytic theory. The thing that we will provide in the subsequent chapter.

## **Second Chapter: The Psychoanalytic Theory and Its Relation to Terrorism**



This chapter presents the psychoanalytic theory. Clarifying its meaning, principles, and the major components it holds. Besides, it exposes the relation of psychoanalysis with terrorism, specifically the way this theory treats terrorist's behaviors and actions.

## **1. An Introduction to the Psychoanalytic Theory**

Psychoanalysis is a theory of psychology found between 1883 and 1939. It is seen as a way of investigating and treating mental and emotional disturbances. It involves communication between two main participants, who are the psychologist and the patient; with the purpose of gaining the ability to have an insight into the inner world of the patient, to his previous life, bringing those events and conflicts to his consciousness. Also, to see how those events affect patient's emotions, behaviors, and relationships.

### **1.1. The Origins and Development of Psychoanalysis**

Psychoanalysis went through various changes and different stages to reach its current status. It marked its start within the field of medicine with Dr. Joseph Breuer, mainly with the first application of his method on a girl who was suffering from hysteria.

At first, the Dr. Breuer faced a huge struggle to understand hysteria, thus the sympathy towards the people who were facing it was decreased. The doctor saw those patients like "they overstepped the law of his science" (Freud, "The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis" 183). According to Freud, the patients were exaggerating in their acts. Consequently, Freud blamed them and deprived them of his attention. But later on, Dr. Breuer changed his previous vision, and he started to give them all the sympathy and the care they deserved. While he was observing the case of the girl, he came by the first step toward a solution, which is treating her using hypnosis or what is called the talking cure.

In fact, that hysterical situation resulted from the existence of an experience that played a key role in shaping it. The treatment practiced over the girl was to make her live the previous

situations that led to her illness, which acts as mediation to her emotions and to let her expose everything that hurt her. From this case, Freud became a huge fan of Breuer's method. As a result, he adopted Breuer's way of treatment and practiced it on his patients. Freud claims "hysterical symptoms were explained in relation to the life history of the patient" ("The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis" 188).

This experience provoked the emergence of what is known as hysterical conversion. In addition, the experiment of Breuer played the main role in helping Freud to discover the existence of a double state of consciousness, which is the division of the human psyche in which one part is named the conscious mind, and the second is named the unconscious mind.

The hypnotic experiment paved the way to discover that the unconscious state can influence the conscious one, thus Breuer named his experience and the state took in charge of hypnoidal states. The latter pushed Freud to work on other suggestions that contained other influences that were shown besides Breuer's hypnoidal states.

In addition to this, Breuer made his first application of this method in Vienna, meanwhile another neurologist named Jean. Martin Charcot made his first path in this method, and he was interested in studying the disease of hysteria for which he used many researches. In fact, Charcot's method was unknown in the beginning. However, this situation didn't remain a mystery since after ten years both Freud and Dr. Breuer published their communication of the psychic mechanism of hysterical phenomena, which was the result of the treatment that Breuer practiced on his patient.

Few years later, Freud noticed that there was no attempt made by his French teacher to develop psychological theories "the great French observer, whose student I was during the years 1885-1886, had no natural bent for creating psychological theories" (Freud, "The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis" 191). On the other hand, the attempt was made

by Charcot's student named P. Janet, who was the first to dare to manipulate in a deep way the psychic processes of hysteria.

Freud turned against Breuer's method that is based on hypnosis, especially after he discovered that he didn't have the ability to hypnotize all his patients. This resulted in getting rid of that way of treatment, and he broke his method from the predecessor one "Freud came down on the liberal side of the acceptance of lay analysts, those with no medical training" (Ruth 3). That is, instead of using hypnosis, he worked with his patients in their normal status. The ultimate target is to get the patient's memory back. As Freud failed to reach that result through hypnosis, he directed his attention to another method known as somnambulism that was crowned with success.

Consequently, Freud exposed via this method the ability to bring the unconscious memories of the patient into his conscious mind. From this point, Freud explained that his theory was not the same as that of Janet. This means that Janet's theory is based on the idea that Freud argues "he drives the psychic fission from a congenital lack of synthesize its experience" ("The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis" 194). However, Freud's theory is based on the conflict of opposing forces. All this led to the emergence of what is known nowadays as psychoanalysis.

## **1.2. The Main Contributors to Psychoanalysis**

Psychoanalysis contains three main contributors that Martin. S. Bergmann introduced after studying and analyzing the psychoanalytic past. Thus, those contributors are classified into: heretics, modifiers, and extenders.

The heretics are the ones who were frequent and recurrent in Freud's time "the heretics rare in recent years, but prevalent in Freud's lifetime, they were typically closed to Freud for a certain period of time, made important contributions, and then bolted to start their own

schools” (Bergmann 930). Among these heretics, we cite the following ones: the Austrian medical doctor and psychotherapist Alfred Adler, who collaborated with Sigmund Freud in finding psychoanalytic theory. He was the founder of the school of individual psychology. In addition to the latter, we also find Wilhelm Stekel, who is Freud’s earlier follower, an Austrian physician and psychologist. Stekel was marked by his crucial contribution to symbolism in dreams.

The modifiers appeared after Freud’s death, in a true sense they didn’t leave or neglect psychoanalysis; however, they modified it Bergmann says “a typical strategy for a modifier is to claim that his or her modification is implicit in Freud’s writing or flows directly out of Freud’s idea” (930). The famous modifiers are as follows: Sando Ferenczi, Federn, and Jack Lacan whose modifications can be seen as an attempt to recast psychoanalysis in the language of structural linguistics, he is known for his mirror phase or stage idea in psychoanalysis.

Finally, the last type is the extenders “this group usually extend psychoanalysis into areas as yet unexplored, but their findings don’t demand modifications, unlike the modifiers they evoke no entity and their contributions are appreciated” (Bergmann 930). Among these extenders we cite: the Austrian psychoanalyst Robert Waelder and Oho Fenichel.

All the scholars stated above form the three significant classifications of contributors that psychoanalysis saw. They established the basic rules and ideas of this theory.

### **1.3. The Major Theories of Psychoanalysis**

Psychoanalysis is a theory that is developed and established by Sigmund Freud between the years of 1883-1939. It is mainly used with the aim of understanding, analyzing, and treating individual’s inner life. Here are the major and famous theories that dominate the psychoanalytic field.

First of all, we start with the Freudian theory. It is named according to its founder Sigmund Freud, who focused on treating human abnormal adult behaviors. Freud put the emphasis on finding the reasons for this abnormality in individual's behavior "the novelty of Freud's approach was in recognizing that neurotic behavior is not random or meaningless but goal-directed" (Hossain 42). In addition to this, the Freudian theory is characterized by some significant terms. First, the Pre-Oedipal stage is considered by Freud as sexual or pleasurable desire.

In fact, the Pre-Oedipal stage is classified into three sub-stages named oral, anal, and phallic stages. The second term of the Freudian theory is the Oedipal complex. According to Freud, the concept is a desire for sexual involvement with the presence of the opposite sex which produces a sense of competition with the presence of the same sex, and it is a crucial stage in the normal development processes. Actually, Freud named it the Oedipus complex according to the Greek mythical boy who unconsciously killed his father and married his mother "I'm referring to the legend of king Oedipus and the Oedipus Rex of Sophocles" (Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*).

The third term in this theory is the unconscious, which was the central point of Freud. The unconsciousness is everything hidden in the human mind. It happens in an immediate way without any sort of reflex. The unconscious mind, in its simplest words, is the reaction of the stimuli. From a psychoanalytical perspective, the unconscious is a force that can only be recognized by its effects.

In fact, Freud was with no doubt, one of the most influential figures, and the main contributor in the field of psychoanalysis, in the understanding of the human personality, and its interpretation. There is no work of psychoanalysis that couldn't have Freud's touch, but as time passed, numerous theories emerged. Consequently, the Freudian theory was stripped from its uniqueness.

As we can see through other theories like the Lacanian theory, which is named according to its founder Jacques Lacan, who aimed to understand the Pre-Oedipal stage. He came to the result that this stage is imaginary. He was famous for the term which characterized his theory, which is named the mirror stage. It features the period when the child starts to make a distinction between himself and the others “this is the period when the child’s sense of self and the first steps of acquisition of the language emerged” (Hossain 43).

The last theory is entitled object relation theory. It deals with the concept that the psychological life of the human being is created due to the relations with others. In this theory, there are two types of birth that the object relation theorists distinguished. First, the physical birth, second, the psychological birth. While physical birth is a process that occurs over a specific and easily observable period of time, psychological birth is typically extended over the first three years of life and can occur only through social relations.

Indeed, psychoanalysis is known as a system of psychology, and when it comes to practice, it depends on the use of what is famous as the psychoanalytic theory. The latter can be applied to two different fields. First, it can be used when we are dealing with the human psyche. Second, it can be used within a literary field.

Taking into consideration the case when it investigates the human personality that deals with the idea that the human is more motivated due to the existence of invisible forces that are guided by conscious and rational thoughts.

In addition, people personality is seen as the product of childhood experiences, and how those experiences have influenced whether consciously or unconsciously the development of the human personality and how it models the person’s personality. From here, Freud divided that childhood process into five stages: oral, anal, phallic, latency, and genital.

Hence, psychoanalysis aims to bring out the forces that are buried within the unconscious mind and to turn it to be conscious, with the intention of showing an improvement and productivity; that is to get rid of the negative and destructive thoughts and to give a chance for positive, productive, creative aspects to emerge, and to take control.

## **2. The Concept of Death Drive**

Psychoanalytically, there is what is known as the theory of drives or instincts. It contains two types of drives. First of all, the one that is presented as the life drive or Eros “the first object of our study was only the sexual instincts, whose energy we named libido” (Freud, *New Introductory Lectures On Psychoanalysis* 4701). It is a type of drive that calls for creation, preservation; it reinforces life in society and as a physical organism. On the other hand, there is the death drive, death instinct, or as originally named by Freud, Todestrieb “Freud never used the term death drive to refer to organism’s innate propensity for destruction; rather he called it Todestrieb, which is accurately translated as the death drive” (Mils 375). It is an unconscious destructive force that contains destructive and aggressive actors “the aggressive instincts, whose aim is destruction” (Freud, *New Introductory Lectures On Psychoanalysis* 4707). But before getting deeper into the concept of instincts, we should first know what the term instinct signifies.

Actually, an instinct is an inner impulse that controls and drives our actions. It is a natural, spontaneous way of thinking and therefore acting; Spielrein claims that “the reproductive instinct consists also on a psychological level of two antagonistic components and therefore is simultaneously a creative and a destructive drive and as well a drive for coming into being” (184). It means the instinct is made of two types that are contradictory to one another. Also, as De Lauretis defines it “it is an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things” (8).

The destructive drive is the second type among the theory of drives. It mainly means the desire for death and destruction. It is the childlike impulses, or the natural impulses for decay, destruction, and death. This new concept caused a great debate among various scholars, but the two figures who are mostly concerned with this debate are Sigmund Freud and Sabina Spielrein.

Indeed, each one of them established his own hypotheses and developed his ideas on this concept. For this reason, the origins or in a true sense the foundation of the term death drive is wavering between the two. However, this part will focus on analyzing Freud's investigations on this term, and the rigorous definition they have laid to this concept.

### **2.1. The Freudian Death Drive Theory**

Freud's foundation of the death drive is referred to the period during which Freud lived in the middle of the first and second world wars. The former reflected his ideas very well, and as a result, he developed his concept. Knowing that that period was full of death, threat, and genocide. Therefore, death appeared everywhere "when Freud elaborated the idea of the death drive, between the first and the second world wars, he was living in Europe under the shadow of death and threat of biological and cultural genocide" (De Lautris 1). Also, when Freud developed his new concept, he referred to war neuroses like De Lautris claims "the compulsive repeating, in dreams and hallucinatory fantasies, of the shock and terror, actually experienced during the war" (5).

#### **2.1.1. Freud's Process to reach the Concept of Death Drive**

The concept of drives was introduced by Freud several times but in its major context in his work in 1905 *Three Essays on The Theory of Sexuality*.

Indeed, the drives from the early beginning were divided into two classes known as the sexual drive and the self-preservation drive. The attempt to understand these two and the



claim of the difference found between the two classes led Freud to develop another concept known as narcissism. However, later on, things took another road in which both previous classes of drives became under the same class of drive referred to us as life drive. On the other hand, Freud established a new class of drive that comes in opposition to it, known as the death drive.

In return, Freud explained the aim of drives through returning to the earlier state of things, and he concluded that this origin is death. That is, life has the power to return to its inanimate state, which means to reach death. After Freud confirmed the vitality of the idea that states that the increase in stimulation strengthens life, he argued that the death drive acts as a reducer of excitation, and the life drives increase it.

The death drive is highly related to hate, aggression, destruction, and everything that is negative and harmful “the existence of an aggressive, destructive and above all self-destructive drive which works at times in opposition to love or eroticism and at times in concert with it” (De Lautris 23). It was the case since 1923, Freud strengthens his idea once again in his work *The Ego and The ID* through which he exposed that death drive is exposed through the thirst to harm, mass, damage, and devastation Freud asserts that “the second class of instincts was not so easy to point to, in the end we came to recognize sadism as its representative” (*The Ego and the ID* 38).

### **3. Psychoanalysis and Terrorism**

#### **3.1. The Psychoanalytic View of Terrorism**

When we speak about terrorism, it is directly associated with violence and with the influence of death drive. It acts as the first production of pain and harm, first to the others “society” and second to the self through suicide acts such as bombing attempts. Psychoanalytically, the terrorist acts result from some brain disturbances that the person has

that gave birth to destructiveness, violence, and aggression. The violent acts went through different applications of different psychological theories to understand it, and these theories are:

### **3.1.1. Identity Theory**

Identity theory focuses on analyzing terrorist's identities, claiming that it is hard for a terrorist to form his or her own identity and personality since he or she misses self-confidence. Olsson explains this fact by stating that "it has been proposed that candidates for terrorism are young people lacking self-esteem who have strong or even desperate needs to consolidate their identities" (qtd. in Victoroff 22). This difficulty to build a terrorist's own identity is referred to the authoritarian and the over-manipulation of parents toward their children. Crenshaw asserts this over-manipulation through her interviews with eight members of German terrorist groups "over-controlling parents prevented these respondents from developing autonomy, leading to identity crises that made violent struggle irresistible" (qtd. in Victoroff 23). These children would later certainly become violent and live in a crisis within their personalities. They would also become isolated. Consequently, they entered and engaged in the terrorist field as a reaction to the hard situations that they went through.

### **3.1.2. Instinct Theory**

As we explained before, the theory of instincts is a new discovery established by Freud. It is developed in his books like his 1923 book *The Ego and The ID* where he gave not only the description of the two types of instincts, which are known as Eros and Thanatos, but also he made a comparison between the two. The first one is a sexual instinct also named life instinct, it is the easiest instinct for treatment as Freud claims "the sexual instinct or Eros, is by far the more conspicuous and accessible to study" (*The Ego and The ID* 36). Yet the second one is named death instinct and it is a destructive one which holds difficulty in treating it "there is no difficulty in finding a representative of Eros, but we must be grateful that we can find a

representative of the elusive death instinct in the instinct destruction, to which hate points the way”(Freud, *The Ego and The ID* 41).

The psychoanalytic study of the crime depends on the instinct theory in order to take the veil of the murder dynamics found in the person “psychoanalytic studies of crime depending upon the instinct theory as an explanatory base have proved to be inadequate for a number of reactions” (Fitzpatrick 71). This criminal sense of destruction is returned to birth. It is seen through what Freud named the Oedipal complex, in which the child from his childhood develops criminal thoughts that consist of getting rid of the parent of the same sex. In fact, this sense is unconscious, the child is not aware of it. This also leads to create a sense of guilt within him. This sense of guilt acts as the main catalyst of the murder attitudes that the child adopts “Freud and his early followers found that criminals are not able to master their oedipal conflicts, and consequently they suffer from an acute, albeit unconscious, sense of guilt that seeks alleviation through punishment” (Fitzpatrick 69).

Here, the superiority is given to the unconscious sense of the person, mainly his primitive instincts to act as the principal source of the creation of destruction. It means people commit criminal acts in order to be punished for the guilt they committed, which is an unconscious sense. Hence, destruction is rooted in the unconscious Oedipal conflicts.

The instinct theory is based on the fact that violent acts are seen as an innate trait as Borum states that “violence was seen as the displacement of Thanatos from self and onto others” (11). That is, Thanatos is introduced by Freud before as the death force, a force that deals with destruction. Also, the terrorist acts can be seen or explained through both frustration and aggression, it is suggested that aggression is placed as the first cause to understand violence practiced by humans. In fact, the two are largely linked, in the sense that when there is frustration, it automatically provokes the production of aggression. Besides, the recent view

of the relation between these two feelings is that “frustration would lead to anger, and that anger in the presence of aggressive cues would lead to aggression” (Borum 12).

### **3.1.3. Narcissistic Theory**

It argues that terrorists passed from a narcissistic situation, which means that their ego was injured and destroyed in their past experiences “the premise was that terrorist behavior was rooted in a personality defect that produced a damaged sense of self” (Borum 19).

### **3.1.4. Apocalyptic Theory**

This theory is based on analyzing groups that believe in apocalyptic beliefs, or in a true sense on doomsday like the Aum Shinrikyo cult “apocalyptic groups typically exhibit absolutist moral polarization, idealization of messianic figure, and impaired reality testing, imagining vast conspiracies of evil such as “world shadow government of Jesus” (Victoroff 25). These groups have the idea that only destruction is what will bring a clean, pure world.

## **3.2. The Psychological Causes for Becoming a Terrorist**

There are several factors that play a key role in causing a shift within the person from his or her normal status to the status of becoming a terrorist.

First of all, there are the past experiences, especially if it is a terrifying one, it could create a certain shock within the person that will later develop into trauma “we described as traumatic any excitation from outside which are powerful enough to break through the protective shield” (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* 23). Then, this trauma makes him or her easily influenced. Thus, the person will be brainwashed and easy to manipulate.

The second cause is humiliation and the bullying that the child receives from his entourage “humiliation often results from extreme forms of abuse often involving the anticipated judgment of others” (Borum 38). It emerges in him a sense of inferiority. Consequently, this

pushes him to be isolated, and it creates in him a sense of hate that would develop into revenge Juergensmeyer states “humiliation and the consequent internal pressure for revenge is another psychological factor that has been hypothesized to drive terrorist violence” (qtd. In Victoroff 29).

Then, there is the existence of unconscious motives that are considered as a cause that leads to terrorism. These motives are psychological desires or emotions which are characterized by their flexibility and variety “that reality is that motives to join a terrorist organization and to engage in terrorism vary considerably across different types of groups, and also within groups and they may change over time” (Borum 24). There are several examples of these motives that Crenshaw suggests “the opportunity for action, the need to belong, the desire for social status, and the acquisition of material reward” (qtd. in Borum 24).

Moreover, the obstacles that society produces lead to deprive the individual of his or her right to feel like a normal human being, that is, to become dehumanized. As a result, this leads to aggressive actions.

Finally, globalization and the complexity of the world is another reason that pushes the terrorist to be convinced about the necessity of the globe’s destruction.

In order to be a part of a terrorist cult, the person should pass over some stages that are first, brainwashing, which is a sort of mental persuasion and manipulation that influences people to accept and be under the control of certain commands and beliefs. Second, not to have any kind of communication with the outside world, or simply to be isolated. Moreover, to have a unique language that is created only for them, it is a code language that can be understood by the cult’s members only. Finally, the presence of a powerful and dominant leader.

As it was mentioned in the previous part, that there are various factors that have a great impact on a person to transform him or her to a terrorist; here is the development of these factors.

### **3.2.1. Trauma**

Trauma is the shock that provokes a huge sense of fear within the person that leads to the devastation of his or her personality and identity. Often the traumatic event breaks the link found between the traumatized person and others like Balaev claims “a traumatic event disrupts attachment between self and others” (150).

In the psychology of trauma, the importance is given to the demonstration of the place of trauma because it provides a chance of interpreting both the personal and histories that were behind the person’s trauma. For example, the case of Quasar in *Ghostwritten* first chapter.

In fact, the traumatic experience is captured as that negative feeling stacked in the brain “traumatic experience is understood as a fixed and timeless photographic negative stored in an unlocatable place of the brain” (Balaev 151). Thus, the individual provides immoral responses.

This concept was illustrated in several literary works such as the ones dealing with a conflict of racial identity that is associated with the black race. For example the work of Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: an American Slave* that exposed clearly the various traumas that the African Americans underwent at the hands of the whites, the thing that resulted in their aggressive attitudes.

### **3.2.2. Brainwashing**

Brainwashing is a strategy of manipulating people’s feelings, beliefs, and attitudes. Therefore, replacing them with other new ideologies that the brain-washer wants. In this

regard that N., Pam M.S asserts “as a coercive method of manipulating behavior, brainwashing aims to indoctrinate a person into a new set of beliefs”.

In fact, brainwashing is more associated with religion through which the cultists do their best to erase the previous beliefs and ideologies of the person and replace them with their own beliefs. It is a sort of a paradigm shift from a previous ideology to a new one which is completely different as Takdir claims “the term brainwashing is very related to cleansing the mind of a certain paradigm or viewpoint so that it changes completely from before” (18).

When the leader of the terrorist cult wants to brainwash someone, he depends on the use of some activities such as the use of alpha brain waves through which it takes the human from his state of consciousness and makes him enter in the unconscious state “brainwashing activities in human are usually carried out on alpha brain waves as a phase of the human conscious mind state which then enters the unconscious mind” (Takdir 19).

In addition, the brainwashing process also consists of taking control over that person, in which he implants the idea of isolation in him. Thus, all the social relations and interactions including the closest members like family, friends, and members of society are cut off Takdir argues that “a terrorist tries to cut off relations or interactions with the outside world” (19). It is one principle of their ideology that insists on the fact that the outside world is full of sins. The thing that is perfectly illustrated in *Ghostwritten* through the character of His Serendipity and the way he adopted to manipulate Quasar.

Furthermore, the brain-washer puts stress on the idea of reward and punishment that the brainwashed victim will be convinced with. Brainwashing in the field of terrorism became an indispensable tool and a phase that continued till the brain-washer went to the step of action. That is, he will be fully convinced about the morality and the vitality of the radical terrorist’s beliefs that will make him reach eternal happiness and the afterlife where he will be rewarded

by paradise “brain-washer began to implement the reward and punishment method for brainwashing victims” (Takdir 20).

### **3.2.3. Death Drive**

Freud’s analysis of the death drive referred to the great impact of the first world war on humanity. After living in a period full of death, he started his treatment that deals with destructive and aggressive acts practiced by humans.

Freud first discussed the term death drive in his well-known books *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* and *The ID and the Ego* he suggests that “under the circumstances, the term death instinct ought to mean an inspiration, a drive to be dead” (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*).

Freud highlighted three significant points concerning the death drive. First, he pointed out that the goal of all life is death. It means that things should return to their inanimate state which is death.

Second, death drive major feature is aggression and destruction which can be achieved through two distinct ways, destruction toward the others, and destruction toward self “if we recognize in this instinct the self-destruction of our hypothesis we may regard the self-destruction as an expression of a death instinct which cannot fail to present in every vital process” (Freud, *New Introductory Lectures On Psychoanalysis* 4711).

Third, the death drive is the result of a traumatic experience. Freud believed that a terrible traumatic experience is a crucial manifestation, and indication of the death drive.

### **3.3. The Contemporary Psychoanalytic View Towards Terrorism**

The way of thinking of a terrorist is associated with violence whether as an individual or as a group “the organization captured the attention of international audiences through the widely



broadcast act of barbarity” (O.Willem and B.Willem 5). He has the belief that if there is one sinner this may touch the whole population. Thus, he will take it as his divine mission to clean up the world. This act is known by the cultists as the “Wholly War” and the extermination of the target will be achieved.

Therefore, the terrorists identify themselves to religious movements like they are doing it for the sake of God, that is they always justify their cruel deeds in terms of religion, mainly Islam, they rely on it to justify their behaviors and to show it as moralistic, and those beliefs should not be doubted, in order to avoid any split or rebellion within the terrorist groups, and to keep their unity under the same doctrines.

In addition, they make sure that these beliefs are serving a noble cause, but not in the real sense of religion that prohibited all sorts of violence and terror. For the cult’s members, they have the belief that they are the ministers of justice in the world, they are convinced with their tenet that says that they should be the successors on earth, or as it is famous in their language “Caliphate” “he proclaimed the Islamic State as a worldwide caliphate reinstating an institution that had not formally existed since its abolishment by Turkey’s Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in 1924” (O. Willem and B. Willem 8).

Also, the way of trying to spread their doctrines and to turn the heads of people is seen as brainwashing and manipulation. This situation is seen by the whole world in recent years, particularly in the twentieth-one century with the emergence of a cult known as ISIS, which is named Daech. It succeeded to turn the heads of a lot of people to be their alliance and to fight for them like in Syria.

ISIS illustrates perfectly the contemporary psychological view of terrorism in the way that it adopts the same ways to justify its barbarian acts and the use of violence depending on the Islamic scale as O. Willem and B. Willem claim that “ISIS’s entire strategy is built around millenarian vision executed with an uncompromising and merciless ideological approach” (9).

For them, it gave them the right to apply the sharia as the base of their authority exercising “it is clear that ISIS claims to be Islamic and to implement sharia to the letter serves their instrumental purposes very well” (O. Willem and B. Willem 9). Unfortunately, this authority is also seen through the execution attempts they made, for example, the execution of the Japanese journalist in 2015. It is also seen through suicide missions that are practiced by bombing themselves. This act is well-known as “Martyrdom” which is practiced by the terrorist as a test that is to prove to the members of the cult in general and to the leader in particular the faith of that person in God. In return, he will be seen as a hero who will be rewarded in the afterlife.

#### **4. Psychoanalysis as Literary Criticism**

When looking at this title, we notice that it includes two huge, unique but related disciplines which are psychoanalysis and literature. Indeed, both of them share some significant points, mainly, in explaining human beings' behavior.

Psychoanalysis goes deeper into providing an insight into the human inner life, and literature analyses a character's engagement in a certain literary piece. Thus, they are individual-centered disciplines.

Later on, with Freud's investigation in psychology, another discipline emerged, and it concentrates on analyzing literary works and their components. It is named psychoanalysis literary criticism.

##### **4.1. Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism**

Psychoanalysis deals with fictional literary works in order to expose the author's mental status and personality structure. In fact, the author's work is highly related to his distinctive mental and emotional traits, which means we should investigate the author's personality in order to be able to interpret and analyze his piece of literature.

In short, psychoanalysis was developed by Sigmund Freud as a kind of analysis and therapy for neurosis, but later on it was adopted in other fields such as literature, religion, and mythology.

#### **4.2. Psychoanalysis of Literary Works**

Psychoanalysis is an adequate approach to study human nature, whether on an individual level as in the case of therapies, or when it comes to study a group of phenomena such as terrorism. It is also regarded as the best and appropriate technique that analyses and understands the literary works and their components like characters, and most importantly, comprehends the author's ideas and thoughts that gave birth to his or her piece of literature.

To start with the author, psychoanalysis helps very well in understanding and getting the author's own desires, wishes, and aims of writing such work. In fact, psychoanalysis aims to analyze two vital points concerning the author.

First, the creative processes that provide different interpretations for different authors. From the Freudian point of view, the creative processes of a writer are past experiences. It means each author has his or her own unconscious, unsatisfied needs in the past. Therefore, this type of need must be satisfied, they can remain either in dreams or in achievement of work of literature.

Moreover, the second point deals with the psychological relationship between the author and his or her work, by which each piece of literature has a great reference to his or her own author. It means that the literary work is the product of its author's psyche.

In terms of characters, psychoanalysis became a way and a tool that clarifies character's behaviors and motivations. Particularly speaking, this theory goes with the idea that while analyzing literary and fictional characters, it means that it is the human real experience that comes to debate and treatment. As an example of this type of study, there is Freud's interest

in comprehending and finding references to the Shakespearean famous character Hamlet. Freud tried to analyze what makes Hamlet withdraw from the idea of killing Claudius even though the latter had killed Hamlet's father (Mollinger 11).

Besides, this theory is used to make clear how the audience considers the literary texts. Mollinger states that "to Freud the writer puts the readers into situations where they can enjoy partly unacceptable daydreams without shame" (25). Also, there is the one of Kriss who saw the work of literature as a tool of communication between writers and readers or authors and audience "for Kriss, art functions as an invitation to common mental experiences; literature is a call to the reading audience to experience literary products in common with collective humanity and with the artist" (Mollinger 25).

Another view that explains the reader's own interaction with the text or with literary work in general, is the scholar Holland who relied on a theory labeled reader's response theory, in which the reader re-creates the text with his or her personal touch. This theory shifts the attention from the psyche of the author to the reader's psyche.

Finally, psychoanalysis is used in analyzing and interpreting the unclear things in the text like symbols and language. As an example of this study, there is the Freudian treatment of the Caskets literary symbol in *The Merchant of Venice* by Shakespeare claiming that these caskets represent "the mother in three forms the mother herself, the wife and the mother earth" (Mollinger 3). Barry claims "Freud believed that literature could often be interpreted as the reflection of our unconscious" (3). She also states that "the psychoanalytical critic is able to reveal the tricks of repression, displacement, isolation, reversal, attribution and other factors to identify themes, ideas and messages that are hidden in literary works" (5).

## **Conclusion**

In the thick of the second chapter, we presented the theory that our thesis is based on, which is psychoanalysis. This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part is entitled “An introduction to the psychoanalytic theory” where we demonstrated its origins and development, its main contributors, the major theories it holds, and at last we portrayed its aim.

Moving to the second part of this chapter that is labeled “the concept of the death drive”. Here, we tackled vital points. We introduced first what is an instinct. Second, we defined the two types of instincts which are named life instinct and death drive, which is our concern. We gave its origins. Then, we presented and examined in general the investigations of Sigmund Freud who is well associated with this term. Afterwards, we went deep in explaining Sigmund Freud’s death drive theory by answering two vital questions, first, what influences Freud to develop this concept of the death drive, and second, what are the steps he went through to evolve it?

The third part is entitled “psychoanalysis and terrorism”. We analyzed the psyche of a terrorist, the motives behind terrorism, and we gave an insight into the modern psychological view of terrorism.

Finally, in the last part under the title “psychoanalytic literary criticism” we defined psychoanalytic literary criticism, and how this literary theory treats pieces of literature in terms of authors, characters, audience, and symbols.

Indeed, we took those psychological concepts into consideration because they fit perfectly what is portrayed within our case study. The thing that we will explore clearly in the coming and the last chapter of analysis.

### **Chapter Three: The Psychoanalytic Analysis of the Terrorist Quasar**

## 1. Quasar's Psychoanalytic Analysis

Throughout this final chapter, we will analyze Quasar's character through the use of the psychoanalytic theory. Particularly, we will devote our focus on four crucial concepts which are Trauma, Brainwashing, Identity, and the death drive.

*Ghostwritten* is considered as the best example that portrays a variety of themes such as globalization, reality, causality, but our focal point will be on the theme of terrorism, which is captured perfectly within the story of Okinawa's chapter.

Throughout the first chapter, we encounter a character named Quasar who is presented as an evil person. He wants to achieve his desire of killing all people based on the idea that all of them are unclean, not pure, and they are just sinners. They make the world a non-paradise place. So, he enters the world of crime in order to fulfill his divine mission of purifying the world.

We depend on the use of psychoanalysis as a theory for our case study because in this chapter we are going to analyze the main character of *Ghostwritten* first chapter, Quasar, from the perspective of how he became a terrorist. We will try to expose all his processes of becoming a lover of destruction and a bloodthirsty.

This pushes us to investigate the reasons that stand behind Quasar's criminal sense, thus being a real threat to society and himself. In addition, the situations or things that influence him to commit such acts.

In fact, Quasar's personality alteration toward terrorism, destruction, and becoming an anti-social person can be related to some crucial situations that have an influence on him.

First of all, the possibility of passing through a horrific past experience pushes him to enter a state of shock that develops later on into trauma. Second, there is a case of brainwashing practiced by the leader of the cult as his main tool in convincing Quasar. Then there is the

existence of the identity theory. Finally, the vital role that the death drive has on Quasar's psyche.

When we are dealing with trauma in a literary work, it is worth mentioning first the kind of trauma that the character is facing in order to be able to explain the character's situation at the core of the analysis. Generally, there are two major types of trauma that could affect a person. It could be physical trauma or psychological trauma. Hence, in the coming part, our analysis will be on the study of the traumatized protagonist Quasar, who is facing psychological trauma.

### **1.1. Trauma**

Trauma is the negative experience stacked in the brain of the traumatized person. Often the traumatic event breaks the link that existed between the traumatized person and others.

While analyzing the character Quasar, we notice that he is a victim who is affected by some external factors, particularly two main ones; the first one consists of a terrifying past experience that he lived. The second one is the bad relationship he has with his biological family. Consequently, an utmost reaction appears and pushes him to commit anti-social acts.

The traumatic event that Quasar underwent is the result of the social bullying that he received during his youth. This traumatic event took place at the high school where he studied; a school that is full of bullies and cruel teachers.

Indeed, when he was a student, he was a victim of bullying practiced by his classmates who made him live a real nightmare. Those people made him appear like a dead person in the way they deprived him of his right of social belonging, they neither talked to him nor responded to him as Quasar describes "I remembered that day when the bullies had got everyone in the class to pretend that I was dead" (Mitchell 4). The reason that pushed him to enter in a state of shock is exposed through the way he reacted to the pretending of his death



by the school members. Quasar screamed out loud at them to stop, but no one responded to him. They treated him as invisible. It means he is screaming as he is in an empty hole (Mitchell 4). This resulted later on in his entry into a traumatic status.

Taking any individual who is in his or her normal state, and suddenly he or she will experience the same situation, he or she will react in the same manner. Such an act plays on the nerves and on the mental state of the person. He could even start to suspect his mental health. Therefore, he will enter a state of hysteria and shock. Later on, it will be developed into trauma.

In fact, Quasar shows his infection by mental trauma. It expresses a huge negative impact on his persona, which is seen through the insecurity, lack of confidence, and the loss of self. Consequently, he starts to feel weak and defenseless. For this, in *Ghostwritten* Quasar exposes that “before his serendipity lit my life, I was defenseless” (Mitchell 4). The pain and the suffering he feels at this moment leads him to handle an unforgettable mark which indicates the beginning of Quasar’s journey in the world of trauma.

Furthermore, the past trauma drives Quasar unconsciously to the desire of revenge from all people who take part in making him suffer and feel powerless. In particular, his classmates and his biological family “some want revenge on teachers and parents who promised success would deliver them all” (Mitchell 14). Actually, it is a normal reaction because he feels disappointed and betrayed by the people of his entourage who were supposed to be the first to support him and not to ruin him.

After Quasar marks his engagement within the fellowship, we start to notice the beginning of a transformation in his persona the thing that pushes him to take whether consciously or unconsciously a decision to change as Quasar says “I had signed the papers releasing me from the prison of materialism” He continues “I felt freer than I had even believed possible” (Mitchell 6). These two sayings signify in a clear way that Quasar begins a new life.

Later on, with the process of the story and being very close to his master, Quasar expresses a twist in himself, and he starts to take powerful decisions about the new world they are going to create as he exposes “there will be no bullying no victimizing” (Mitchell 15). Also, there is another interpretation for the previous example through which we can understand that Quasar is still unconsciously affected by his trauma. In the sense that it left an unforgettable wound within his soul. It became an imprinted scare. Hence, he is always in search of recovering that pain even if he doesn’t recognize it consciously. So, his ultimate target is to get rid of any kind of victimizing in order to prevent other innocent people to endure the same suffering.

Even though throughout the process of the story Quasar doesn’t mention directly that he is driven by his past trauma, his actions show the total opposite, and the previous example is the best thing that supports it. Because even after his engagement in terrorism and all the transformation of his personality, the power he gained, he still mentions his disgust towards bullying, this could only signify that he is really marked by his horrific past experience.

At last, it is very significant to mention that the traumatic experience that Quasar underwent is presented in the chapter in the form of a dream as Quasar declares “I awoke early not remembering where I was for the few first moments. Jigsaw pieces of my dream lay around” (Mitchell 4). The former signifies that Quasar’s past conflict experience is implanted inside him. Thus, this dream has great importance in understanding his inner psyche and his trauma. Indeed, it is a mirror that reflects it. This goes perfectly with the study made by Sigmund Freud in his work *The Interpretation of Dreams* through which he states that a dream always signifies something, mainly it penetrates an unconscious feeling and emotion. He also affirms that a dream is derived and resulted from a certain experience, which itself is recreated in terms of a dream.

## **1.2. Brainwashing**

Brainwashing is a technique that aims at both manipulating and modifying an individual's attitudes, emotions, values, and beliefs. It uses not only a persuasive, convincing strategy but also coercive and forcible ones. This method is also considered a way of making someone think what you want him or her to think.

Brainwashing is the reality that Quasar sees through the hands of his master. The traumatic experience acts as the main factor and source of Quasar's transformation. The fact of being weak paves the way easily to his submission to brainwashing, through which His Serendipity gets a golden chance to manipulate Quasar's thoughts, beliefs and to change them with new ones that serve his needs.

In fact, brainwashing can be practiced in several ways, but in the case of Quasar, it is an ideological brainwashing. By which His Serendipity depends on religious beliefs that show to Quasar that all the deeds that he will order him to commit are beneficial to society and even religion, and God gives him the right to do it as His Serendipity claims "the new earth is approaching. The judgment of the vermin is coming. By helping it along a little, we are putting them out of their misery. Sons, you are the chosen agents of Divine" (Mitchell 10). This shows the way of justifying the inhuman deeds of the cult and how they implant the idea of divinity in the heads of the people, particularly Quasar, as a means to track them unconsciously to commit those actions.

For the leader of the cult, he portrays it as God's will that should be obeyed in order to reach paradise and to get rid of all the sinners, uncleaned people. This obedience could only be reached via destructive actions. The point here is that for the cultists all the criminal acts they commit are sacred and done for the sake of God since they are motivated by religion, that is the cleansing of the world is the ticket to reach paradise and being close to God like The Minister of Defense argues "this is a war against the unclean myriad and in this war acts of courage do not go unacknowledged, nor unrewarded" (Mitchell 5). They succeeded to portray

self-sacrifice as a sacred cause “Pride in one’s sacrifice is not a sin but self-respect” (Mitchell 5).

Thus, Quasar starts to see and to be convinced that all the world outside is not pure, and should be cleaned. Since he is now one of the ministers of justice on earth, he takes it as his divine mission.

Brainwashing acts as a sort of salvation that succeeded in bringing Quasar from being powerless to the state of power. At the moment Quasar feels weak and helpless, His Serendipity comes into his life and brings him out from the obscurity he is living in into the world of light, as Quasar claims “for the first time in my life I was becoming a name” (Mitchell 18). It means, before the master applies the act of brainwashing on Quasar, he was totally weak and stripped from his power. However, after he got brainwashed, he starts to have the power he was lacking.

Through His Serendipity, Quasar associates the father figure characteristic through which he starts to see the father attitudes that he is lacking with his biological father, taking the words of Quasar “the last letter I ever received from my mother informed me that my father had written me out of his will” (Mitchell 6). From this example, we understand that Quasar does not have a father/son relationship that every child dreams of.

In fact, the father figure took its roots from psychoanalysis, in particular through Freud’s relationship with his father with whom he had a bad relationship. His father didn’t take his responsibility toward his children. He didn’t succeed in offering them the life they dream of. He left them to suffer in their poverty, and he didn’t do anything to change their miserable situation.

In addition, he didn’t provide him with the protection he was waiting for. Thus, Freud became fully disappointed in him. His father misses the heroic characteristics that each father

must have. The thing that pushes Freud to lose his respect toward him. The father figure problem that Freud went through is the same situation and problem Quasar sees with his father. For this, it is very important to relate the two. Indeed, instead of having a protecting, caring father, he finds a careless one. As a result, he is totally disappointed as Freud was before.

However, his master is the total opposite, he finds in him the tenderness of the father he was missing. Since the master does not treat him as his worker, but he gives him the impression of the father through the love, the power, and the protection that every father gives to his son as His Serendipity says “my little brother we both know that it was not luck which brought you here. Love brought you to us” (Mitchell 6). Thus, Quasar makes him in the place of his real father as he declares “I loved him as a son does his father and would protect him as a father does a son” (Mitchell 15). Therefore, His Serendipity succeeds in taking Quasar’s weakness and turning it to his advantage.

Once His serendipity marks his presence in Quasar’s life, he insidiously starts to apply mental manipulation on him through the use of two important things. First, the language, he strongly depends on the use of religious language in order to persuade Quasar that everything he is saying is right and sacred, as we illustrate it through Quasar’s saying “His Serendipity told me that his trusted cleanser had the greatest role to play” (Mitchell 14). Through this example, we comprehend directly that His Serendipity plays perfectly on the words, and he chooses words that will influence Quasar immediately. Besides, the use of language, there are also some actions done by His Serendipity in order to influence Quasar, as he states “then he kissed me and I kissed the mouth of eternal life” (Mitchell 6). This act makes Quasar happy and satisfied, and he convinces him about the Holly mission. This specific way of speaking and acting by His Serendipity toward Quasar spreads a kind of peacefulness and purity in his soul. Consequently, he will be easily affected and easy to endure all what the brain-washer is

saying.

Second, he takes advantage of his main weakness that consists of Quasar's bad relationship with his biological family. He offers him the allusion of having a new family, which is much wider and more real than his biological one. A new family that will be on his side in everything he needs as His Serendipity describes "today you have joined a new family you have transcended your old family of skin and you have joined a new family of spirit", he adds "how do you feel newest child of our nation without borders without suffering?" (Mitchell 6).

From here, we can restate that the success His Serendipity reaches in transforming Quasar's mind signifies the fact that he is more than a cult's leader, but a person with a high amount of intelligence and a man with a psychologist attitude because it is not easy to have such power to play with the inner psyche of a person. This act needs a person who is highly qualified to do so. His Serendipity is a perfect brain-washer and a talented person in all fields, he uses some techniques that are very rare and specific. He is also an author who wrote *The Sacred Revelation* as Quasar argues "His Serendipity can come and go where he pleases using sub-space conversion techniques" (Mitchell 5). He continues "how could such unclean low lives ever hope to coerce His Serendipity into doing anything? A bodhisatva who can make himself invisible at will, a yogic flier, a divine being who can breathe underwater" (Mitchell 7). Another description by Quasar is as follows "in those last few moments, as we pulled into the station, His Serendipity fortified me with vision of the future" (Mitchell 10).

Moreover, we notice the existence of brainwashing through the obedience that Quasar has toward the cult in general and toward His serendipity in particular. That is; he is totally brainwashed to the point where he becomes like a toy within the hands of his master. The only thing that matters for him is to obey and satisfy the desires and the orders of his master. As Quasar states "I obey his serendipity in all things" (Mitchell 9). He adds "I was ready to die for him" (Mitchell 15). He becomes like a dog who does whatever his master orders him.

Quasar holds a great admiration toward His Serendipity that in each occasion he shows it “His Serendipity spoke cleanly and beautifully and the words came from his very eyes” (Mitchell 6). He is not seeing or hearing anyone else except his master as he says “as I had once done in the days before His Serendipity opened my inner eyes” (Mitchell 7). He believes his fake ideas to an extreme degree “then the fellowship will create something we deserve, which the survivors will cherish for eternity” (Mitchell 4). Therefore, Quasar’s life is unworthy without His Serendipity.

Furthermore, the brainwashing application is highly seen through the technique of telepathy. The leader of the cult uses it in order to reach the deep conscious psyche of Quasar “he smiled at me knowing telepathically who I was and what I had done” (Mitchell 6). This will permit him to implant the inputs he wants. So, Quasar’s normal thoughts will be dominated and controlled by his master. Also, Quasar, His Serendipity, and the other members of the cult rely on telepathy as a main tool of communication like Quasar argues “I focused on my alpha telepathy and sent messages of encouragements to my co-cleansers in various metro trains throughout Tokyo” (Mitchell 10). Simply because they are against all the modernist components, mainly technology, which they consider as unclean as the minister of defense expresses “have you seen the television reports? I avoid the lies of the unclean state Minister”, he continues “Television is unclean lies, and it damages your alpha cortex” (Mitchell 6-7).

Telepathy is done for the purpose of showing that the master has supernatural power that permits him to invade the thoughts of his victim. Hence, the act of brainwashing succeeds to provoke a change within Quasar’s personality. From being a person with a broken personality to a new person who has a new personality that is re-built in an extreme manner.

### 1.3. Identity Theory

As it was mentioned before, the identity theory aims at decoding the terrorist identity and personality, based on the idea that a person encounters difficulties to build his or her own identity. These difficulties are related to several circumstances, but in the first place to the control the parents have over their children. As a result, the child will react violently.

From the process of the story, we notice a big transformation in Quasar's personality, from the status of invisibility to the status of visibility. This transformation of the self is the result of brainwashing, the limitations, and the hardships of his environment. Quasar sees difficulty in building and forming his own personality. This fact is presented through two periods. First, before his integration into the fellowship. Second, the period after his engagement in the world of terrorism.

First of all, the period before Quasar's meeting with his master. He was a person who lacked confidence in himself. He was defenseless and didn't have a place within the society where he lived. A person with these features simply implies that his personality is weak and therefore hard to re-build. The difficulty in forming Quasar's personality is returned in the first place to the authority that his family imposed over him when he was a child. They measured and manipulated him in every path he made in his life. The thing that deprived him of the familial sense of belonging and from the freedom and the right of choice, Quasar illustrates "my family – my unclean, biological family, my skin family – predictably failed to understand. All my life, they had measured every last millimeter of failure and success, and here I was snapping their role across my knee" (Mitchell 6).

From our analysis, we notice that there is always the repetition of the term "biological" by Quasar. We can interpret it as a symbol of the existence of another family to Quasar. It is not a family of blood, but a cultist family. Since, before Quasar joins the world of terrorism, he already has a biological family with whom he doesn't have a familial connection. He felt



isolated, weak, and their presence or not remains the same. Afterward, when he became a member of the fellowship, things changed. He got a new family that he dreamed to have before as His Serendipity shows it through his words “from this day, you have ten thousand brothers and sisters” (Mitchell 6).

Later on, with Quasar’s joining the cult, another new man was born, and every detail in his personality changed as Quasar describes himself “you are such a survivor, Quasar. Strong features, highlighting my samurai legacy. Ridged eyebrows. A hawkish nose, Quasar, the harbinger” (Mitchell 4). This example shows that Quasar starts to see a new man in front of him. A man who is no more defenseless, but a man of bravery. Simply a warrior, yet not any kind of warrior because here he associates himself with a samurai in order to show his courage, power, and masculinity. Besides, the most important thing is to show his fidelity to his master. It means he is completely devoted to him.

This act indicates a re-build of his personality, but this time it happens in an extreme manner. He steps out of his box and shows a major change within himself. The thing that we will illustrate through his new way of speaking in which Quasar adopts the way of the cult which is largely different from a normal way of speaking, for example “I understand, Minister. I bowed deeply” (Mitchell 5). This example shows that Quasar’s way of speaking is a kind of worship. In normal life, people do not speak in such a way. In addition to his extreme attitude and actions as Quasar describes “when I ripped open the seal and pressed the three buttons simultaneously, I would have one minute to get clear before the solenoids shattered the phials, and the great cleansing of the world would begin” (Mitchell 10).

After this personality transformation and the sturdy character, Quasar adopts, it pushes us to notice that there are no signs that indicate the remains of Quasar’s past trauma.

This leads us to think that the author does not capture the victimized Quasar from its big picture since he gave him a larger space as a powerful character who is full of control.

However, logically speaking, the traumatic experiences and the fact of being victimized cannot be easily forgotten.

So, as our interpretation for this, the author did this for the purpose of exposing the powerful dynamics of terrorism and the outstanding vigor it holds to succeed to provoke a whole new change within the injured person.

The empowerment that results from the brainwashing and the change of personality is reflected through the death drive via the terrorist attacks toward the members of the society.

#### **1.4. Death Drive**

The death drive is that kind of drive that holds only negative feelings such as hate, damage, destructiveness, aggressiveness, and murder. It supports the idea which states that things should return to their origins, mainly death.

Throughout the analysis of Quasar, there are no signs that indicate his recognition of life. It means his psyche and inner feelings are full of negative thoughts. The only love he has is the love for extermination.

As Quasar is driven by his death drive, this illustrates the fact of being a threat not only to society but also to himself. First, along the process of the story, we notice that the self-harm in Quasar's character is seen through his personality change from being a quiet, passive person to being a violent person. This act is shown through the way he becomes a brutal, savage person. Consequently, he will be deprived of his humanity and normality.

Since years before, specifically before his integration into the terrorist cult, his death drive was hidden, particularly before the act of brainwashing. At this stage, he wasn't a violent person in contrast he was a passive, weak individual, a lover of peace as Quasar exposes "the only peaceful place in Naha was the port. I watched boats, islanders, tourists, and mighty cargo ships. I've always enjoyed the sea. My biological uncle used to take me to the harbour

at Yokohama” (Mitchell 8). Depending on this example, we can explain the fact that Quasar is a man of peace, and he has the ability to conduct a normal life. However, the circumstances and the experience he lived after obliged him to transform and adopt a barbaric personality, the thing that is clearly shown through this example “I wanted to kneel on his neck and cut that abomination off with a sharp pair of scissors” (Mitchell 13). Here we see the amount of cruelty Quasar became, if not the evil itself. Because to reach this point of savagery and have this will and thirst to murder and blood, one should be really deprived of any feeling of humanity and sympathy.

Second, the threat on society is seen through several forms that go from the lowest feeling that appears in a form of hatred to develop in its return to aggressive and destructive actions. Finally, to increase and reach its extreme, which is killing.

To start, taking the case of hatred which is shown clearly through Quasar’s inner feeling toward the world in general and toward the unclean Japanese race in particular. From the early beginning, he shows his conviction that the Japanese are unclean as he states “unclean, unclean. These Okinawans never were pure-blooded Japanese” (Mitchell 3).

He hates everything that has a relation with the Japanese, especially the way its people look like, in which the boys are transforming into girls through having long hair and piercings, and the girls in their return lose their shyness and femininity. As a result, a feeling of hate grows inside him as Quasar describes “hate them you have to hate the world Quasar” (Mitchell 8).

In addition, he exposes his hate toward the modern Japanese world because it is not matching with the standards of the cult. For them, anything modern is a sign of uncleanness. Veritably, this is so logical for cultist thoughts for the reason that the terrorist cults are known by such a way of thinking.

Each time they show their refusal to any kind of development and progress, they are fully attached to the traditional way of living. For them, the world should remain like the period of the caliph. The period when men always have the word and control over everything, and women should only obey their husbands' wills and carry children. Modernity and development for them is the bridge to sins. So, they fight it in order to prevent the emergence of sinners and keep the world and its people clean and pure.

Moving to the second stage that comes after hatred is Quasar's aggressive practices. In this case, Quasar's aggressiveness is translated in a form of frustration that is caused due to the disrespect that the Japanese people have toward the cult and the way they are mocking them "oh, that maggot he's hiding like the coward he is"(Mitchell 13).

This act of mockery and even hatred the Japanese demonstrate against His Serendipity pushes Quasar to his limits. He is trapped, he cannot do any action now, but this increases in him the sensation of frustration as he clearly shows it "if only, I could make these vermin understand" (Mitchell 13).

The final stage is the act of killing through which we see that Quasar reaches and fulfills his divine and ultimate will. Consequently, this indicates the release from the previous frustrate feeling that holds him. As a vivid example, we will take the bombing attack made by Quasar and his cult. Quasar demonstrates "when I ripped open the seal and pressed the three buttons simultaneously, I would have one minute to get clear before the solenoids shattered the phials and the great cleansing of the world would begin" (Mitchell 10).

This transformation of Quasar is followed by the arrest of His Serendipity, thus Quasar became his successor, and he became not only the leader of the cult, but also he associates himself as the father of the cult's member as Quasar states "the fellowship of Humanity will gather together on a purer island, and the survivors will call me father Quasar" (Mitchell 15). Like this, Quasar replaces the monster to become the monster itself.

So, after analyzing the previous four concepts in relation to Quasar, this lead us to the idea that whether Quasar is really influenced and controlled by his unconscious side. In this case, he will act as a victim, or he is conscious about all what he committed. In this case, he will act as an anti-hero.

Thus, to confirm or infirm these two hypotheses, we should first analyze Quasar's conscious and unconscious states in relation to what is presented in this chapter.

## **2. Quasar's Conscious and Unconscious Mental State**

### **2.1. Quasar's State of Consciousness**

Throughout *Ghostwritten's* first chapter, we encounter some situations which show the status of consciousness in Quasar's psyche.

Despite the fact that Quasar is manipulated and influenced by His Serendipity to commit such harmful deeds, he sometimes becomes aware of his status. This fact is proved through his way of thinking. For example, when Quasar first came to Tokyo to complete his mission of bombing the Tokyo subway, he was completely conscious of his promised mission, and that he was actually going to commit a criminal act. The former is clearly shown in his dialogue with the hotel host as he says "she wouldn't be smirking if she knew the caliber of mind she was dealing with. Her time will come like all the others" (Mitchell 4).

Besides, there are other examples that portray this fact of consciousness in Quasar's psyche, it remains on the time when he comes to achieve his divine mission of cleaning the world from all the sinners, here he recognizes very well his terrorist act like Quasar describes "I put the package on the baggage rack and waited for the appointed minute", he continues "I had the life and the death of those low lives in my hands" (Mitchell 10).

Relying on these arguments and examples that we mentioned above, we come to understand that Quasar is aware, and he recognizes all the cruel deeds committed against

innocent people who he calls sinners. We expect that he is a devil walking on earth. He is completely heartless, brutal, and inhuman person. He injures an uncountable number of people, he does not differentiate between children and old people, neither women nor men. Like this, Quasar might be an anti-hero.

However, there are other examples and situations which support the idea that Quasar is not driven by his conscious side; instead, he is driven by his unconscious mind.

## **2.2. Quasar's State of Unconsciousness**

In the course of the analysis we made for this character, we comprehend that he is a complicated person. Quasar's inner life is hidden, and due to the concepts we mentioned at the beginning of this analysis, which is related to psychoanalytic theory, we come to see his inner life and of course to understand his behaviors.

Quasar is not only portrayed as an anti-hero or as an evil person, the thing that we explained in the previous part. In fact, there are a lot of things hidden in the deep of that evil facade. Since he is introduced as a victim, weak and defenseless. As a result, all his harmful deeds might be done unconsciously.

To start, Quasar's traumatized experience that resulted from bullying and the bad relationship he has with his family justify very well the fact that Quasar is not a bad person, but just a victim who is affected by some factors. Thus, these hard circumstances are what pushed him to act destructively and have a cruel attitude toward the outside world.

Indeed, it is an unconscious influence because at first, this influence is not directly noticeable, but in the fill of time, its negative impact starts to take part in Quasar's life. This thing is shown through his personality diversion and the adoption of a totally new terrorist personality.

In addition to this, there is the existence of brainwashing applied to Quasar by the leader of his cult. This act is famous for taking people from their conscious status and making them step inside the unconscious status for the purpose of making the brainwashed person a tool within the hands of the brainwasher, and he becomes a machine that achieves all his master's wills. He implants in him all kinds of hatred towards people through the use of specific techniques to manipulate Quasar's inner psyche. Therefore, he responds actively. So, from this point, we understand that Quasar is acting unconsciously. He is just receiving the orders and achieving them. He is completely out of his awareness.

The last point that supports Quasar's unconscious deeds is the fact that he is driven by his drives, mainly and specifically the death drive. It means Quasar acts unconsciously because he is simply controlled by the childlike urges that push him to go through destruction and killing. Furthermore, via death drive, he is unconsciously trying to overpass his past trauma. It is the unconscious tool of release from all his previous soreness.

Consequently, while depending on these powerful and psychological realities, we come to the expectation which says that Quasar might be a victim and his deeds are justified as unconsciously committed.

## **Conclusion**

Throughout the course of the final chapter, we provided a deep psychoanalytic discussion of the terrorist Quasar through which we explained four main concepts reflected by his personality.

We first started with the head concept, which is trauma. It acts as the reason for all the destructive deeds practiced by the terrorist. Second, we examined the act of brainwashing that Quasar experienced at the hands of his master. Afterward, we analyzed the personality of Quasar before and after the brainwashing. The last concept we analyzed is the death drive. In

this part, we provided an analysis of Quasar's terrorist and aggressive acts, and how they resulted from the influence of the death drive.

Finally, we investigated Quasar's psyche, and we tried to show whether the actions committed by him are driven by his consciousness or unconsciousness supporting the two situations with concrete psychological facts.



## **General Conclusion**

*Ghostwritten* is David Mitchell's debut novel. It is a fictional literary piece published in 1999. It is characterized by its inter-relatedness by which it is built upon nine chapters and a coda. However, our concern is the analysis of the protagonist Quasar of the first chapter entitled Okinawa. Quasar is portrayed as a terrorist who belongs to a religious cult known as the fellowship.

The former is directed by a character named His Serendipity. Quasar committed several cruel acts, and he was the main actor of the Sarin gas attack practiced at the Tokyo subway. This harsh event resulted in endless catastrophes that expanded to injure and even kill numerous people.

While looking at this harmful act, we understood that he is a brutal person, and his integration in this terrorist act has a price that must be paid. The latter consists of Quasar's radical change and becoming a destructive machine.

When his behavior became unacceptable, it became interesting to search and find the reasons that stood behind this change. Therefore, the only appropriate theory that fits this kind of treatment is the psychoanalytic theory. It allows a deep exploration of Quasar's psyche as it helps in decoding his personality and uncover his inner motives.

The current paper is divided into a general introduction succeeded by three chapters and a general conclusion. We started first by providing an insight into the postmodern era, next to Mitchell's novel *Ghostwritten*, and we put the stress on the significance of studying this novel. Second, we displayed an overview of the historical background of the novel, the author's biography, its main themes, as we included the history of Japan with terrorism. Then, we fixate on the theory of psychoanalysis with its major components. Subsequently, we provided the psychoanalytic analysis of the terrorist Quasar. Finally, we exposed our findings.

Throughout the third chapter, we entered deep into Quasar's inner psyche, and we treated his personality with reliance on his sayings. In the Okinawa chapter, we noticed some significant points that absolutely helped us a lot in comprehending the reasons that led him to integrate a terrorist cult. In fact, we took the analysis of Quasar through mainly four concepts which are trauma, brainwashing, personality transformation, and the death drive.

The first point we understood is that Quasar wasn't born as a terrorist. However, the circumstances around him are what drove him to become a bad person. Particularly, his experience of trauma. From this, we understand that the traumatic experience of Quasar acts as the main cause and reference for his coming transformation.

Afterward, the reaction Quasar made to this harsh experience of trauma is his engagement within the world of terrorism. From this point, the leader of the cult practiced the brainwashing technique over him. He made him his own machine. Thus, Quasar became fully attached to his master, and he even considered him his real father. Taking into consideration that Quasar didn't have a good relationship with his biological father. The latter is exactly what His Serendipity took advantage of, he pressed his deep weakness to manipulate him the way he wanted. On the side of Quasar, he responded easily to his master's instructions, he realized all his wills of destroying and cleansing the universe.

Consequently, since there is the act of brainwashing, and since Quasar responds immediately to his master, we understand that he is acting unconsciously. Besides, this marks the beginning of his transformation.

The third point we analyzed in this character is his personality transformation. Indeed, Quasar before his engagement in terrorism was so weak, he didn't react to any kind of bad treatment done by his entourage. However, with his meeting with His Serendipity Quasar changed from a defenseless person to a destructive one. He symbolizes all the negative things in the world.

The final concept we examined is the death drive based on the idea that each human being is born with destructive hidden impulses. It is just when a person faces a specific experience, this death drive will be exposed and displayed in a direct way. The latter is exactly what we noticed in Quasar's psyche, who is influenced and driven by his death drive.

Along our analysis, we found that there are a lot of signs and situations that indicate and support the fact that Quasar is consciously acting. However, Quasar shows a mental break from reality, the thing that happened after the act of brainwashing, which pushed him to enter an unconscious status.

So, here we understand that the ID part of his psyche has too much control over him. It is translated through his wild, cruel, and destructive actions. In addition, those unconscious reactions are done in order to overpass his past trauma, which itself is stuck within his deep unconsciousness. Also, it forms the early source of all the transformation that happened within his personality. Consequently, Quasar is not acting as an anti-hero, but as a victim.

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