
Psychological Analysis of “ISIS” Personality in “the Bird Tattoo” Novel Based on the Personality Theory of Alfred Adler

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Introduction

Reviewing the concept of personality and the psychological nature of humans is of the main subjects of the science of psychology attended by personality psychologists and various theories have been discussed on this issue. Each psychologist tries to describe different patterns of personality to find the “what” and “why” of the difference in the human personality. According to the science of psychoanalysis established by Sigmund Freud, early childhood experiences and events, the unconscious mind, and the sexual instinct affect the person’s personality and its formation. Erik Homburger Erikson, Carl Gustav Jung, Alfred Adler, and Karen Horney are “Neo-Freudian” psychologists who are considered to be students and followers of the Freudian school of thought. Due to the expression of opposing views, some of them with Freud’s theories, including Adler, on issues such as the unconscious mind and sexual instinct, the ground for the separation of those two psychologists was provided, and as a result, a new school that Adler called “psychologie Individuelle et compare” was founded.

The most important concepts of this theory are humiliation and compensatory mechanism, superiority complex, mass communication, lifestyle, creative self, and social interest. He does not consider a person a separate unit but rather examines them in their social context.

The relationship between literature and the science of psychology is a two-way relation. Just as some psychologists have developed their theory based on their studies of the works of poets and writers, some literary works can be reviewed from a psychological perspective as well. Among the fields of fiction, the novel

is the main and most important literary genre reflecting problems and events of society. Character is one of the indispensable elements of every novel and without it, literary works often do not make sense. A character can be a person, a shape, an inanimate object, an animal, or a group. Different categories of characters have been made in literary works. Among the classification based on the action of the character in the course of the story, we can refer to the dynamic character, the static character, the antagonist character, the hero, etc. In “the Bird Tattoo” novel by “Dunya Mikhail”, the Iraqi writer and poet, she gives a special character to the ISIS personality by building a kind of personality consistency resulting from special behaviors in various domains of personality and depicts a special character for them which we try to identify by comparing it with the Adlerian approach. The antagonistic personality of ISIS has a conflict-oriented discourse taking action against villages and cities under its control and other characters in the novel. This group as a phenomenon emerged from the context of society and collective mobilities caused by the accumulation of complexes and the feeling of humiliation having a superiority complex and a feeling of self-righteousness and their special lifestyle develops in their mind the goal of having an overarching caliphate all over the world. Thus, their personality can be psychologically reviewed based on the individual psychology of Alfred Adler.

Methodology

The main goal of the present study is to analyze the “ISIS” personality in “the Bird Tattoo” novel by “Dunya Mikhail” based on the mentioned theory and using a qualitative content analysis with an analytical-descriptive approach.

Results and Discussion

The most important achieved results show that among the four discussed lifestyles by Adler, the ISIS lifestyle falls into the first category which is the “dominant type” which lacks social interest. In fact, by taking this Islamic lifestyle and ignoring other people in society and attacking them, ISIS tries to reach its main goal which is the Islamic caliphate. Factors such as feeling

jealous or fearful, lacking empathy with others, not having social interest and the tendency towards violence and sadism play a role in forming ISIS terrorist group and their raging dominance. This violent tendency and enjoyment from it are heavily promoted and intensified by modern media, formal training, and socialization of forces and reflect a special and exclusive lifestyle resulting from their personality bases. - The ISIS personality does not only consist of an inferiority complex and negative impressions from the external environment but they make use of social factors in their new experiences and “initiated activities” to satisfy their desire for superiority. - The ISIS initiative to exploit children is that they consider children equal to adult mujahideen in such a way that they participate in military training and execution of captives like experienced militants. ISIS targets children to gradually transfer their own culture and ideology to the children and institutionalize the group’s norms and values and “mentally assassinate” them by brainwashing, threatening, frightening, and weakening the spirit of altruism. From the Adlerian perspective, such issues are reviewed under the subjects of style and methods of achieving a dynamic life and fictional finalism but the ISIS uses them in a negative way and the form of raging dominance. Another “initiative” by ISIS is the use of intelligent engineering principles based on the special propagandistic method utilizing the internet and virtual contexts such as YouTube. They post epic videos about their invasions, beheading captives, muslimizing Yazidis, and selling female captives which indicate their unique propagandistic style. At last, it should be said that despite these initiatives, ISIS does not progress and the reason is that they are not authentic and their claimed Islam is not true.

Conclusion

According to the theory of Alfred Adler, the prominent feature of the ISIS personality is having ambitious goals and fictional finalization which is mentally represented in the form of establishing justice, muslimizing all people around the world, and restoring the rights of Sunni Muslims. Their attempts are for establishing the Islamic caliphate, reviving caliphs of early Islam and

the Abbasid glorious period, and using their titles, habitus, and style. Therefore, they try to realize their fictional finalization through different methods, including implementation of governing methods of early Islam without considering the contemporary necessities and essential norms, radical implementation of apparently Islamic laws, abusing children and epic propaganda, etc.

Keywords: Personality Theory, Alfred Adler, ISIS, the Bird Tattoo, Dunya Mikhail.

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