

T.C.
ISTANBUL YENI YÜZYIL UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATUR DEPARTMENT
ANGLO-AMERICAN LITERATURE AND CREATIVE
WRITING PROGRAMME



VIOLENCE IN ANTHONY BURGES'S *A CLOCKWORK*
ORANGE* AND CHUCK PALAHNIUK'S *FIGHT CLUB
THROUGHTFREUD'S PSYCHOANALYTICAL
PRESPECTIVE

MA THESIS

WAHAB NABEEL ABDULWAHHAB AL-AZZAWI

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İSTANBUL, DECMBER2023

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İSTANBUL, DECMBER 2023

T.C.
İSTANBUL YENİ YÜZYIL ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

TEZ ONAY BELGESİ

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ETHICAL STATEMENT

I prepared my project following the thesis writing rules of the Institute of Social Sciences at Istanbul YeniYüzyıl University, and I hereby declare that;

- I have obtained the data, information, and documents provided within the thesis according to academic and ethical rules,
- I have submitted all information, documents, evaluations, and results under the requirements of scientific ethics and moral rules,
- I have cited all works that I have used in the project by appropriately referring to my sources,
- I have not made any changes to the data used,
- I declare that the work I present is original, and

if found otherwise, I accept all loss of rights that may occur.

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WAHAB NABEEL ABDULWAHHAB

PREFACE

Firstly, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my supervisor Dr. Asghar Heidari for his tremendous efforts through his advice and guidance to me and for his great patience during the process of writing this thesis.

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In the end, I would like to thank my fellow students who helped and supported me, especially in the first days of study which were among the most difficult days I have ever experienced.

ISTANBUL, 2023

WAHAB NABEEL ABDULWAHHB

ÖZET

FREUD’UN

PSIKANALİTİKBAKİŞAÇISIYLAANTHONYBURGES’

İN OTOMATİK PORTAKAL VE CHUCK PALAHNUK’UN DÖVÜ

ŞKULÜBÜ ADHE SERİLERİNDE ŞİDDET İNCELENMESİ

WAHAB NABEEL ABDULWAHHAB AL-AZZAWI

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Bu çalışma, Anthony Burgess'in *A Clock Orange* ve Chuck Palahniuk'un *Fight Club* eserlerindeki şiddet tasvirini kapsamlı bir psikanalitik inceleme yoluyla incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Psikanalitik bir bakış açısı benimseyen çalışma, bu iki edebi eserdeki şiddetin psikolojik motivasyonlarını ve sonuçlarını ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlıyor. Bu olguyu Sigmund Freud'un psikolojik bakış açısıyla, özellikle de insan saldırganlığını incelemesiyle inceleyen bu çalışma, her iki romandaki karakterlerin davranış ve deneyimlerinin, zevk arama (eros) ve saldırganlık (thanatos) dürtüleri arasındaki karmaşık etkileşimi nasıl örneklendirdiğini titizlikle analiz ediyor. Ayrıca bu çalışmada, iç çatışmaların, toplumsal baskıların ve kimlik oluşumuyla ilgili mücadelelerin, kahramanların şiddetle karşılaşmaları üzerindeki derin etkileri tasvir edilmektedir. Aynı zamanda bu faktörlerin şiddet içeren eylemlere katılımlarını nasıl şekillendirdiğini ve körüklediğini açıklamaya çalışmaktadır. Ayrıca, güç dinamikleri, erkeklik ve insan ruhunun karmaşıklıkları gibi daha geniş temalara önemli bakış açıları getiren bu çalışma, *A Clockwork Orange* ve *Fight Club* eserlerinde şiddetin tezahürlerindeki benzerlikleri ve farklılıkları ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Sonuç olarak bu çalışma, şiddeti çevreleyen karmaşık psikolojik dinamiklerin ve bunun edebiyattaki temsilinin daha derinlemesine anlaşılmasına katkıda bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışma, titiz incelemesiyle şiddetin çok yönlü doğasına, insanlık durumu üzerindeki derin etkisine ve insanların özgür irade kavramıyla nasıl kesiştiğine ışık tutmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *A Clockwork Orange*, *Fight Club*, Şiddet, Psikoloji, Özgür irade.

ABSTRACT

VIOLENCE IN ANTHONY BURGESS'S *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE* AND CHUCK PALAHNIUK'S *FIGHT CLUB* THROUGH FREUD'S PSYCHOANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE WAHAB NABEEL ABDULWAHHAB AL-AZZAWI

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The current study endeavors to delve into the portrayal of violence in Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange* and Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club* through a comprehensive psychoanalytic examination. Adopting a psychoanalytic lens, the study aims to unravel the psychological motivations and implications of violence within these two literary works. Studying the phenomenon through Sigmund Freud's psychological perspective particularly his exploration of human aggression, this study meticulously analyzes how the characters' behaviors and experiences in both novels epitomize the intricate interplay between the pleasure-seeking (eros) and aggressive (thanatos) drives. Moreover, the profound influences of internal conflicts, free will societal pressures, and struggles with identity formation on the protagonists' encounters with violence are portrayed in this study. It also seeks to elucidate how these factors shape and fuel their engagement with violent acts. Furthermore, this study applying significant insights into broader themes such as power dynamics, masculinity, and the complexities of the human psyche intends to reveal the similarities and differences in the manifestations of violence in *A Clockwork Orange* and *Fight Club*. Ultimately, this study contributes to a deeper comprehension of the intricate psychological dynamics surrounding violence and its representation in literature. Through its rigorous exploration, this study aspires to shed light on the multifaceted nature of violence, its profound impact on the human condition, and how human beings cross with the notion of free will.

Keywords: *A Clockwork Orange*, *Fight Club*, Violence, Psychology, Free Will.

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INTRODUCTION

Violence has always been an inherent part of human existence, capturing the attention of academics, artists, and writers alike. The fascination with this subject matter stems from the desire to unravel its causes and conditions. Violence is a term that encompasses a range of aggressive behaviors that deviate from what is considered 'natural' in the context of human interaction. It refers to acts carried out with the intent to cause severe physical harm, such as death or significant injuries (Anderson and Bushman, 2002). This seriousness of using violence has made it a major topic to be studied in broad range of fields, especially psychology.

While exploring the origins of human violence, one prominent theory is psychoanalysis, which was developed by Sigmund Freud. Freud's psychoanalytic approach is widely recognized as one of the significant theories in the field of psychology. According to Freud, "human violence is an inherent impulse that arises from the individual rather than external circumstances, making it an inevitable aspect of human life" (Glassman, 2004, p.340). Based on the idea, violence may not only be gained by a person later on during his/her life and they may carry it instinctively.

Freud's theory revolves around two fundamental human instincts: the drive for pleasure (eros) and the urge for aggressiveness (thanatos). He believes that these instincts play a significant role in shaping personality development and behavior. Moreover, the life and death impulses continuously strive for expression and fulfillment while competing with each other within our subconscious. Every act of hostility is rooted in this internal struggle. Freud posits that aggression is a psychological component that determines behavior, and the ego (the rational self) and the superego (the idealized self) act as opposing or repressive forces to these aggressive impulses (Freud, 1910).

The complete eradication of violence is an unattainable goal based on the theoretical perspective of Freud. Instead, he proposes a different approach: regulating violence by redirecting its expression towards symbolic fulfillment. Freud believes that human beings possess aggressive and restraining forces within their psyche that are in constant conflict with each other. When individuals are unable to achieve indirect fulfillment of their aggressive drives, it hampers the catharsis or release of

pent-up energy. This frustration can lead to the emergence of violent behavior.

It is interpreted from Freud's prominent discussion that violence serves as a manifestation of this inherent conflict. By acknowledging the existence of these aggressive tendencies and understanding their complex interplay with restraining forces, society can better address and manage violence. Rather than suppressing or ignoring these impulses, Freud argues for their redirection. This could involve channeling aggressive energy into creative outlets, such as art or sports, or providing opportunities for individuals to engage in symbolic acts that fulfill their desires without causing harm. Freud's view on violence may emphasize the need to regulate and redirect it rather than aiming for its complete eradication (Freud, 1905).

By understanding the underlying psychological mechanisms at play, society can strive to channel aggressive impulses towards symbolic fulfillment, enabling individuals to find release and potentially reducing the incidence of violent behavior. Freud's psychoanalytic theory offers insights into the complex nature of human violence. While it provides a framework for understanding the underlying psychological mechanisms, it does not offer a definitive solution or conclusion regarding the control or elimination of violence. Instead, it emphasizes the need to acknowledge and address the aggressive instincts that are part of human nature.

Contemporary research and theories have significantly expanded on Freud's initial perspective, offering diverse insights into the origins and management of violence. Sociological theories, for instance, emphasize the influence of social structures, cultural norms, and environmental factors on violent behavior. They highlight how factors such as poverty, inequality, and social disorganization can contribute to the prevalence of violence in certain communities. Biological theories, on the other hand, explore the role of genetics, neurobiology, and brain chemistry in predisposing individuals to violent tendencies. These theories recognize that certain biological factors can interact with environmental influences, potentially increasing the likelihood of violent behavior.

Psychological theories focus on individual experiences, cognitive processes, and personality traits to understand violence. They examine how factors like exposure to violence, trauma, aggressive modeling, and distorted cognitive schemas

can shape an individual's propensity for violence. Moreover, psychoanalytic theories aim to deconstruct the phenomenon of violence and provide insights into its significance for individuals and society. They delve into the unconscious motivations and conflicts that underlie violent behavior, emphasizing the importance of understanding the symbolic meaning and psychological dynamics involved.

Contrary to demonizing violence, psychoanalysis recognizes that violence can serve as a communication of unmet needs, repressed desires, or unresolved conflicts. By uncovering these underlying factors, psychoanalysis offers the potential for individuals to gain insight into their violent tendencies and work towards more constructive and non-violent ways for fulfilling their needs.

In this study, a psychoanalytic approach is utilized to delve into the portrayal of aggressive behavior in Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* and Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club*. Both literary works serve as poignant examples that vividly illustrate the consequences of unrestrained or excessively controlled violence within society. By closely examining these texts, the current study intends to uncover deeper insights into the meaning and implications of violence, aiming for a nuanced understanding of this fundamental human impulse.

A Clockwork Orange (1962), set in a dystopian future, delves into a dystopian society where attempts are made to create a peaceful and harmless community by modifying individuals. The novel explores the consequences of suppressing and repressing violence, highlighting the inherent flaws in this approach. It explores the mind of the protagonist, Alex, and his penchant for extreme violence. Through psychoanalytic analysis, the study aims to unravel the repressed desires and psychological conflicts that drive Alex's aggressive actions. It probes the intricate relationship between power, control, and the expression of violent urges, examining how societal conditioning and external forces impact the individual's behavior.

On the other hand, Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club*, published in 1996, takes a contrasting viewpoint. The protagonist believes that true liberation and a better society can only be achieved by embracing and unleashing violent impulses. *Fight Club* delves into the psyche of its unnamed narrator and his alter ego, Tyler Durden. The story explores the allure of violence as a means of reclaiming identity,

challenging societal norms, and seeking liberation. By employing a psychoanalytic lens, the researcher seeks to illuminate the unconscious drives, suppressed emotions, and existential dilemmas that fuel the characters' engagement in extreme acts of violence. Both novels offer valuable insights into the reasons behind violence and the repercussions it brings forth.

It might be argued that violence is a part of human being's natural behavior. In this sense, the current study aims to delve deep into the intricate complexities of violence and its control by employing a psychoanalytic framework to analyze the literary works of Burgess and Palahniuk. It seeks to unravel the underlying psychological motivations, unconscious desires, and societal influences that shape aggressive behavior. By acknowledging the inherent contradictions and tensions surrounding violence, the study intends to shed light on the multifaceted nature of violence, examining its symbolic significance and exploring the psychological dynamics at play. Ultimately, this analysis aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the portrayal of violence in these novels, offering insights into the human psyche and the sociocultural factors that contribute to the manifestation and regulation of aggressive tendencies. Violence would be considered an innate drive within humans. Neither extreme repression nor unbridled liberation of this drive can lead to positive outcomes. Instead, a balanced approach that acknowledges and channels this impulse is necessary for a healthier society. By examining the psychological underpinnings of aggression in the selected novels, the fallacy of extreme responses to violence is intended to be revealed through this study. An explanation and understanding of the reasons behind violence and its impact on both perpetrators and society would find its significance. By focusing on the methods of social treatment for aggressors and analyzing their behavior, the broader discourse surrounding violence and its management would appear at this discussion.

A Clockwork Orange and *Fight Club* serve as significant sources for exploring the complexities of aggressive behavior and its control. In this sense, they provide valuable insights into the appropriate treatment and understanding of violence, by unraveling the underlying motivations and consequences portrayed in these works. Ultimately, they emphasize the importance of striking a balance

between repression and liberation to foster a harmonious society.

The questions posed in this thesis encompass a comprehensive exploration of the complex theme of violence in the selected works. Firstly, the study delves into the underlying reasons that drive the occurrence of violence within these literary works, aiming to uncover the motivations and factors that contribute to its portrayal. Secondly, it delves into the impact of violence on the lives and psyches of those who perpetrate it, shedding light on the psychological and emotional consequences that violence may have on individuals. Thirdly, it investigates the potential for society or individuals to exert control or limit violent acts, inviting an examination of the mechanisms and strategies that can be employed to mitigate or prevent violence. Finally, the study considers the far-reaching ramifications of controlling or liberating individuals prone to violence, prompting an analysis of the societal, ethical, and moral implications that arise from such interventions.

There have been some studies and researches on *A Clockwork Orange* by Anthony Burgess, which mostly have focused on the ethical side and issues of free will versus morality with little to concentrate on violence. However, there are significant works that are related to the purpose of this study. For instance; the work, named *Violence in Anthony Burgess' Clockwork Orange* by Dedria Bryfonski. The work focuses on the exploration of the meaningful connections between violence, free will, and political control. The work discusses the ways in which Burgess sheds light on significant issues through the portrayal of violence in his novel. By examining the intricate relationship between these elements, the author uncovers the underlying themes and messages conveyed by Burgess, highlighting the implications of violence in relation to personal agency and societal manipulation.

Another research with the name of "Understanding Ultraviolence: Narrative Ethics and Depictions of Violence in Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange*" by Sanna Lepoaho also tackles a relevant topic. In this thesis, an analysis is conducted on how Anthony Burgess utilizes depictions of violence in his novel *A Clockwork Orange* as a narrative tool, simultaneously prompting readers to critically assess their own relationship with violence and society's broader attitude towards it. By drawing on theories concerning the potential positive effects of violence in literature and

Phelan's concept of narrative ethics, it might be argued that the inclusion of violent depictions is essential for Burgess's societal critique and to challenge readers' preconceived notions about the nature of violence and those who perpetrate it. The idea that experiencing negative emotions can provide a form of enjoyment traces back to Aristotle. The relevance of ethical and moral considerations in literary analysis remains a subject of extensive debate among scholars.

An article namely, "A Malenky Review of *A Clockwork Orange* and Attitudes Towards Behaviour Therapies" by Eoin Madsen (2020), discusses themes of morality in relation to behavior control. The author discusses the fact that Anthony Burgess's novel, *A Clockwork Orange*, sparked controversy due to its depiction of violence, initiating discussions on the ethical implications of employing behavioral psychology to curtail individual autonomy. Although Burgess intended to explore the latter issue, he acknowledged that the film adaptation directed by Stanley Kubrick in 1971 inadvertently heightened the controversy surrounding the violent content. This evaluation delves into the effects of these controversies on the field of abnormal psychology, preceded by an examination of the novella's significant themes and the author's underlying motivations. By analyzing the novel's impact, this assessment sheds light on the broader implications for the understanding and study of abnormal psychology.

Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club* also received a good deal of critical and academic attention. However, a lot of works have focused on the film adaptation rather than the novel. Among the studies on this novel, there are certain significant works. In an article titled "Brutalised Bodies and Emasculated Politics" (2008), Henry Giroux tackles the interconnection between postmodern social dynamics and the escalating levels of violence portrayed in the novel under examination. Giroux's focus lies on exploring how the depicted violence in the novel reflects and relates to the complexities of contemporary social life within a postmodern context. By analyzing the various forms of brutality depicted in the narrative, Giroux seeks to uncover the underlying societal factors that contribute to the proliferation of violence. This analysis sheds light on the ways in which the novel serves as a commentary on the political power and the impact of societal changes on individuals and communities.

Suzanne Clark in a research named “Historicizing the Rhetoric of Masculinity, Violence, and Sentimentality” (2001), explores a significant and pertinent subject matter. The article centers on examining the correlation between an individual’s crisis of masculinity and the manifestation of violence directed towards others. Clark delves into the historical context and societal factors that contribute to the portrayal of masculinity in the novel under study. By analyzing the characters and their actions, Clark highlights how the protagonist’s struggle with his sense of masculinity leads to resorting to violent behaviors as a means of reclaiming a perceived lost sense of identity and power. This article provides valuable insights into the complex interplay between gender, violence, and emotions, shedding light on the ways in which societal expectations and personal struggles can shape individuals’ expressions of masculinity. Clark’s work contributes to a deeper understanding of the thematic underpinnings within the novel and invites readers to critically examine the intricate relationship between masculinity, violence, and the quest for identity.

By delving into the existing literature, it becomes evident that conducting a study on violence in the novels of Burgess and Palahniuk from a psychoanalytic perspective holds significant potential for a distinct contribution to the field. This study endeavor aims to bring a fresh and unique analysis to the study of violence by exploring the psychological dimensions present in these literary works. By employing a psychoanalytic lens, the study seeks to uncover novel insights into the intricate nature of violence, shedding light on the underlying motivations, unconscious drives, and societal influences that shape aggressive behavior within the narratives. Through this approach, the study expands the existing knowledge base, providing a deeper understanding of the portrayal of violence in literature and its implications in the selected works.

The thesis will be divided into three chapters, an abstract, an introduction, and a conclusion. The introduction serves to provide a comprehensive overview of the issues to be studied, presenting the thesis statement, research question, and defining significant terms. Chapter one focuses on the theoretical groundwork of the thesis. In this chapter, the researcher delves into the notion of violence, examining its various types and manifestations. The discussion then moves on to the theory of

psychoanalysis, exploring its key concepts and principles. This chapter establishes a solid foundation for the subsequent analysis of violence in the chosen literary works.

Chapter Two presents an application of the thesis's fundamental ideas to Anthony Burgess' novel, *A Clockwork Orange*. Drawing upon the theoretical framework established in Chapter One, the researcher analyzes and interprets the portrayal of violence within the novel. By examining the characters, plot developments, and underlying themes, this chapter explores how psychoanalytic concepts can shed light on the depiction of violence in the literary work.

Chapter Three focuses on the exploration of violence in Chuck Palahniuk's novel, *Fight Club*, through the lens of Sigmund Freud's theory of life and death instincts. Building upon the theoretical foundation established in Chapter One, this chapter delves into the analysis of violence in the context of Freud's conceptual framework. The researcher investigates how the characters and narrative in *Fight Club* reflect Freud's ideas, offering insights into the nature and motivations behind the depicted violence.

Finally, the conclusion offers the concluding remarks of the thesis, summarizing the key findings and insights gained from the analysis of both novels. This section also provides a comparative analysis of the portrayal of violence in *A Clockwork Orange* and *Fight Club*, highlighting any similarities or differences in their representation and underlying themes. The conclusion serves to tie together the threads of the thesis, reflecting on the significance of the research findings.

Organizing the thesis into these three chapters enables the researcher to conduct a thorough investigation of the theoretical underpinnings of psychoanalysis, the essence of violence, and their relevance to the selected literary works. This structure facilitates a methodical and profound analysis of each element, resulting in a comprehensive and unified exploration of the subject matter.

Studying the notion of violence, fundamental reasons, which cause it, come up and what comes out of it, along with its causes, is not an easy task. Usually, human thoughts and emotions are loaded with the experiences and opinions that shaped or created them. Psychoanalytically studying violence of characters in *A Clockwork Orange* and *Fight Club* is one way to show the complexity and impacts of

violence. This study intends to reveal how people of different contexts experience strong derive to violence and tend to express it physically and in other forms. Going through the text and scrutinizing via the lens of psychoanalytical theory, the current study aims to assist its readers to observe the matter of violence from a dissimilar dimension.



1. THEORITICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1.Introduction to Cruelty, Violence, and Aggression

Cruelty is an everlasting phenomenon in the human existence. It is present in different aspects in the human life. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines a cruel act as “willfully causing pain or suffering to other, or feeling no concern about it” (Stevenson, 2010, p.420). Michael R. Trice in *Encountering Cruelty: The Fracture of the Human Heart* (2011), identifies cruelty as “excessiveness of action that is violative and raw, shocking and dehumanizing” (p.24). On the other hand, Kathleen Taylor describes it as an “unjustified behavior, inflicted on an undeserving victim - or else it would be appropriate punishment” (p.32). However, what distinguishes ‘cruelty’ from these concepts is that its assessment is not solely rooted in its inherent characteristics but rather in its underlying motivations. In essence, an action categorized as aggressive or violent transforms into cruelty when its rationale cannot be justified. Otherwise, it would be categorized merely as an act of violence or aggression (Tylor, 2009, p.32). As a result, a cruel act’s manifestation can encompass elements of aggression or violence, necessitating a comprehensive comprehension of these terms.

Majority of the people are aware of the existence of cruel conflicts and hatred and have experienced them, whether they agree with them or not, as common elements of the human world. Throughout history, there are numerous accounts of the brutal consequences of cruel actions, although the ways in which cruelty is displayed may have evolved depending on cultural, social, economic, and religious contexts. The nature and impact of cruelty on people, however, have remained constant. “Murder, rape, theft, adultery, and slaughter have always met with severe criticism and condemnation if there was a public authority to do so” (Classen, 2004, p.1). Surprisingly, despite the efforts to stop brutality among human beings, there has been a lack of equal attempts to understand why cruelty occurs in the first place.

The way children are brought up and educated often makes them less inclined to recognize and confront violence or cruelty in its various forms. People tend to shy away from acknowledging cruelty as a part of human behavior that requires discussion and understanding, mainly because it is uncomfortable to confront. This

avoidance is also influenced by the clash between our moral values and the primitive aspects of cruelty, which are considered anything but 'good' or 'right'. Consequently, many individuals, including scholars, choose to ignore such issues and turn a blind eye to acts of cruelty in an attempt to maintain the image of what is considered morally right and civilized. Nancy Scheper- Hughes (1999) believes that;

Our literature on warfare - "primitive" or "civilized" as the case may be, but equally savage in each instance-is small. Our understanding to all levels of violence-from domestic and sexual abuse... to female circumcision and infibulation, to individual homicide...and genocide-is likewise extremely modest. (p.7)

The rejection of violence in modern civilization has resulted in a significant misunderstanding of its true nature and root causes. Society tends to recognize cruelty only within the framework of legal punishment, ignoring and denouncing forms of violence that fall outside this established system.

Wiehe (2018) would define aggression as "injurious or destructive behavior of one person directed toward another" (p.1).Aggression can be manifested in both physical and verbal forms, encompassing actions like striking, stabbing, slapping, punching, and firearm use for physical aggression, while insulting, degrading, and harsh verbal remarks constitute verbal aggression. Despite leaving no visible physical traces, verbal aggression, also known as emotional maltreatment or psychological harm, can inflict profound damage on a victim's emotional well-being and often precedes physical acts of aggression. Aggression can be categorized into two types: hostile and instrumental, a distinction of utmost importance when addressing child maltreatment. Hostile aggression involves deliberate harm or injury, as exemplified by a parent intentionally burning a child's hand to instill caution around fire, reflecting a harmful form of discipline. On the other hand, instrumental aggression encompasses actions that have the potential to cause harm without the explicit intent to injure another person, such as the utilization of physical punishment within a family context (Wiehe, 2018, pp.1-2).

Numerous theoretical perspectives have emerged to elucidate the origins of aggressiveness. These encompass viewing aggressiveness as an innate drive, a response to anxiety and despair, a learned behavior, or a means of asserting authority and control (patriarchal theory) (Wiehe, 2018, p.2). In modern psychological terms, aggressiveness would be defined as “the desire to subordinate, overcome, harm, or annihilate others, and the expression of any of these desires through action, words, or fantasy” (Herron & Javier, 2018, p.108). This definition is straightforward yet inclusive, recognizing that aggression can assume covert forms, target oneself, and involve positive behaviors like assertiveness. Beyond its motivational drive, aggression also finds its roots in psychoanalytic thought. For instance, domestic violence stands as an aberrant manifestation of aggression, with multifaceted causes, some rooted in genetics (Herron & Javier, 2018, p.108).

The development of aggressiveness is subject to considerable debate, with numerous theoretical frameworks in play. Freud perceives it as an inherent urge that can be either maladaptive or adaptive, with domestic violence serving as an example of maladaptive outcomes. Such failure to adapt aligns with both the notion of aggression as an intrinsic impulse and as a response to psychological deficiencies. Given the presence of multiple causal factors, it's prudent to acknowledge the interplay of innate tendencies and environmental influences (Herron & Javier, 2018, p.108).

The one engaging in aggressive behavior is termed the perpetrator, while the recipient of the hostile action is the victim. However, some individuals who have endured various forms of abuse prefer to identify themselves as survivors. The term ‘victim’ carries connotations of powerlessness; for instance, a crash victim trapped beneath wreckage requires someone to act as a rescuer. Conversely, ‘survivor’ conveys resilience and healing despite the inflicted violence (Wiehe, 1998, p.2).

Violence is a phrase used to describe an aggression that has gone beyond what is ‘natural’ or adaptive. Based on the idea of Anderson & Bushman (2002) “Violence is aggression that has extreme harm as its goal”(p.29). Defining violence in a comprehensive and accurate manner can indeed be challenging, as it encompasses a wide range of actions and intentions. Spielberger (1970) adopts

Megragee's definition of violence (1968), which states that "acts of violence mean overtly threatened or overtly accomplished application of force which results in the injury or destruction of persons or property or reputation, or the illegal appropriation of property" (p. 98). However, Spielberger raises a valid objection to this definition. While it may cover actions that are commonly considered violent, it lacks an essential component—the intention of the perpetrator to harm an undeserving victim. As a result, the definition fails to distinguish between deliberate violent acts and situations where harm is unintentionally caused or where acts are legally justified (p. 99). In essence, a comprehensive definition of violence should encompass both the action itself and the underlying intention to cause harm to an innocent target.

Another term to bring up here at this discussion would be the Self-directed violence, which involves actions directed towards oneself. It can be further divided into two subtypes: suicidal behavior, which includes self-harm and thoughts of suicide, and self-abuse, where an individual intentionally inflicts harm upon himself or herself. Interpersonal violence refers to violence that occurs between individuals. It is subdivided into two categories. The first category is family and intimate partner violence, which encompasses violence within family relationships and between married or intimate partners. This type of violence is commonly known as domestic violence and includes instances of child abuse, intimate partner violence, and abuse of the elderly. The second category is community violence, which involves violence between unrelated individuals who may or may not know each other. Community violence typically takes place outside the home.

Collective violence involves violence committed by groups or communities with specific social, political, or economic motives. Within this category, there are three subcategories. Political violence includes acts committed to advance a particular political agenda, such as organized hate crimes, terrorist acts, and mob violence. Social violence is driven by social factors and aims to achieve certain social objectives. Economic violence, on the other hand, involves attacks aimed at destroying specific economic activities, denying access to certain services, or creating economic divisions and fragmentation.

Violence has a harmful influence on everyone's health, not just its victims.

Violent criminals are more likely to become physically and mentally unwell than the general population. The demographics of offenders are heavily represented in personality disorders, most often antisocial personality disorder (ASPD). This is especially true for those with violent crime convictions. High rates of concurrent mental illness, drug abuse, poor bodily health, and early mortality from suicide or risky behavior are all related to ASPD. Both the offenders and the victims of violent actions are at risk for developing post-traumatic stress disorder. A focus issue has been identified as improving offender health. (Yakeley, 2018, p.83)

The Christian tradition has influential writings on violence such as the writings of Augustine. Augustine's treatment of violence is unique in that he emphasizes its reflexive nature. He goes beyond viewing violence as merely an action that affects someone else and instead highlights how it can deeply impact the actor or doer as well. According to Augustine, violence is not only judged by its external consequences but also by its repercussions on the individual who commits the act (cited in Baraz, 2014, p.204).

In Augustine's understanding of human nature, he would consider man as a combination of body and soul. The soul is entrusted to the body, which becomes the vehicle for sinning. Any form of sin, according to Augustine, is a form of violence towards the soul itself. This perspective underscores the importance of considering the spiritual and moral implications of one's actions, as they have an internal effect on the individual's soul (Baraz, 2014, p.203). Augustine even extends the concept of violence to include the notion of 'libido crudelis,' which refers to cruel lust or the desire for sexual pleasure. It is comprehended from his ideas that even being involved in such desires can be seen as an act of violence, possibly due to the potential harm it can cause to oneself and others.

There might be a sort of distinction between "instrumental aggression" and "hostile aggression" in the literature on the causes of violence. Instrumental

aggression would refer to acts carried out with the purpose of achieving a specific goal, such as seeking revenge, self-defense, or advancing religious or racist motives to establish dominance of one group over another. On the other hand, hostile aggression, also known as “expressive violence,” stems from psychological urges to harm, driven by emotions like hatred or underlying psychological disorders like sadism, which may lead to a state of euphoria from violence. The instrumental/expressive distinction has been subject to criticism because, in practice, these two types of aggression are often intertwined (Ray, 2011, p.10). The idea might be better explained by considering a robbery, which is carried out for gain, but the perpetrator may also experience pleasure in the act of violence itself. This pleasure can come from asserting dominance over the victim, exerting unchallenged power, and feeling superior and capable while making the victim inferior.

Indeed, violence is a complex phenomenon with various underlying motives, and it is not always straightforward to categorize actions as purely instrumental or expressive. Often, these motivations coexist, making violence a multidimensional and challenging subject of study. Understanding the psychological and sociological factors that contribute to violence, several effective strategies for prevention, intervention, and improvement would be helpful.

The question of whether violence is an innate tendency in human beings or an act of necessity is a topic that has been a topic of debates by philosophers for centuries. Two notable philosophers who present contrasting views on this matter are Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Thomas Hobbes, in his work *Leviathan* (1651), describes the state of nature as “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” (p.253). According to Hobbes, in the absence of organized society and governance, humans are being driven by their self-interest and a desire for self-preservation. This view is often interpreted in that way to suggest that humans are inherently violent and aggressive by nature. From Hobbes’ argument, it is interpreted that civilization and the creation of social contracts are necessary to restrain human violence and establish order.

On the other hand, Jean-Jacques Rousseau holds a different perspective on human nature. He portrays the natural state of human beings as “the noble savage,” an image of a wild and peaceful individual who has not yet been corrupted by the influences of civilization. Rousseau believes it is societal institutions and the complexities of civilization that lead to violence. In his view, humans are inherently good, compassionate, and peaceful, but societal structures and inequalities corrupt their innate goodness.

The discrepancy between Hobbes’s and Rousseau’s views has implications for how we understand human behavior and the roots of violence. It raises fundamental questions about the influence of society and civilization on human conduct and seeks whether there is an inherent nature of humans that leads to violence. It is important to note that this is a complex topic, and human behavior might be influenced by a combination of biological, social, cultural, and environmental factors. As such, violence cannot be attributed solely to one reason, but rather, it arises from a complex interplay of various factors in human nature and society as will be elaborated below.

1.2. Aggression in Psychoanalytic Theory

Human beings behaviors would be studied differently in various circumstances by standing on distinguished lenses. Psychology in this sense would play a significant role in revealing their manners and acts and reasons behind them. One could distinguish between two camps of scientists when it comes to the causes of aggression. There are those who believe that aggression is a natural instinct, advocated by Melanie Klein (1882 –1960) and Wilfred Bion (1897–1979) in the UK, and Heinz Hartmann (1894-1970). Some psychologists would believe that aggression is a reaction to traumatic experience and miseries, like Donald Winnicott (1896–1971) and Ronald Fairbairn (1889-1964). Recent discussions over the relative importance of genetic vs psychosocial elements in the origin of pathological violence have paralleled this polarization of constitutional or instinctive versus environmental or reactive theories of aggressiveness (Yakeley, 2018, p.84).

Psychoanalysts now have certain reservations about the notions of libido and

instinct, which are the cornerstones of psychoanalytic thought. The idea came up when Freud constructed a dualistic instinct theory in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, which held that the oppositional interplay of a libidinal, productive life instinct and a no libidinal, self-destructive death instinct, governed life in both its regular and unusual embodiments. It should be kept in mind that Freud's initial core instinct hypothesis, which was dualistic as well, was based on the clinical research of transference psychopathology. It envisioned a struggle between the sexual instinct and the ego, or as Freud put it at the time, a struggle between ego impulses and sexual instincts (Simmel, 1944, p.160). Freud believes that there is no house without struggle. These conflicts occur in pursuit of parental attention, space, belongings, etc. Thus, these conflicts can be found among old as well as young members (1961, p.205).

Human brain has two opposing drives according to Freud and psychoanalysts have a lot to say about the nature of aggressiveness. These drives are the innately destructive death instinct (thanatos) and the creative or constructive life instinct (eros). Earlier, he had identified violence as an aspect of the sexual impulse that is employed for mastery. Freud considers the possibility of two opposing impulses greater than sexual instinct. Early writers on aggressiveness who came before them sought to expound on only a few ideas Freud has, neglecting to develop a full and well-rounded theory.

Psychoanalytic work is not typically connected with aggressive behavior, which is viewed by most as an adverse reaction for treatment, despite the fact that analysts have contributed to a sizable literature on aggressiveness since Freud first wrote about the topic. However, prevailing ideas of violence derived from fields like psychopathology, sociology, or forensic psychiatry have always been examined and studied by psychoanalysts (Yakeley, 2018, p.83). Freud's contribution to the study and examination of violence have instigated major arguments and studies since he first advocated it. He has placed the aggressive behavior among instinctive impulses after it has been viewed merely as a reaction to an outside initiator.

It is crucial to understand that modern psychoanalysis is not one cohesive theory when considering the subject of aggressiveness from a psychoanalytical

standpoint. The basic hypothesis has gradually evolved into various unique ways as it has been altered and enlarged. Between structural theorists, who often consider aggressiveness as an underlying drive or instinct, and self-psychologists, who typically view violence as subsequent to narcissistic harm, there is a fundamental difference. Perhaps the most disputed aspect of psychoanalytic thought is Freud's death instinct. This study focuses on Freud's original theory on the nature of aggressiveness rather than the contemporary arguments that have evolved from his writings.

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1955), Freud makes an attempt to explain why the repeating urge simply gives the sense of being some sort of demonic entity. In chapter three, he complains that any idea that a demonic force is causing regular people to repeat things is untrue. Freud's philosophical interruptions in his discussion of the death instinct shows that the human psych is such a complex network of items that each of them impact everything else. He has based his theory on his experience with the patients. His clinical work has provided him with a large data that eventually generated his work on the life and death drives (Tomlinson, 2011, p.79).

Freud's instinct theory contains two separate theories. He declares that the sexual impulse, aggressiveness is an instinct. Second, because living things evolved from inorganic materials, aggressiveness initially manifests as a self-directed death urge. This is based on the homeostatic principle. The first proposition has long been debated by the majority of experts. The question frequently asked about this theory is that if it is accepted that all mental activity eventually represents either Eros or Thanatos, and almost often a fusion of both, then are they sufficient to include all human activities? Hartmann has persuasively argued for the presence of other mental powers, which historically would have been referred to as ego impulses (Gillespi, 1975, p.157). However, Freud has answered such doubts in his work *Civilization and its Discontents* as follows;

The assumption of the existence of a death instinct or a destruction instinct has roused opposition even in analytical circles; I know that there is a great tendency to ascribe all that is dangerous and hostile in love rather to a

fundamental bipolarity in its own nature. The conceptions I have summarized here I first put forward only tentatively, but in the course of time they have won such a hold over me that I can no longer think in any other way. To my mind they are theoretically far more fruitful than any others it is possible to employ. (Freud, 1930, pp.98-99)

According to Freud's early works, the "EROS" or life instinct, which aids in the procreation of life, would be the source of all human behavior, either directly or indirectly. Before Freud, hostility was viewed as only a response to the suppression of libidinal urges. Therefore, it was not a necessary nor automatic aspect of existence. However, as psychoanalysis progressed and especially during World War II, Freud progressively realized that there were actually two primal impulses, such as Eros and Thanatos, or the life instinct and the death instinct, as opposed to the one instinct (life instinct) he had previously believed. Consequently, he updated his prior writing on intuition:

Freud suggests that psychologists must distinguish between two categories of instincts; first, the sexual impulses, or Eros, being by far the most obvious and easily studied. It includes the self-preservation instinct, which must be attributed to the ego, in addition to the instinctive impulses of unrestricted sexual instinct that was difficult to identify. In the end, Freud identifies sadism as the representative of this type of sex instinct when combined with the second type of instinct which is aggression or death instinct. He brings forth the theory of a death instinct, whose purpose is to guide organic life back into the lifeless condition, based on theoretical reasons and backed by Darwin's evolutionary theory. Freud, on the other hand, theorizes that Eros seeks to complicate existence while also maintaining it. By acting in this way, both impulses would be attempting to restore the natural order of things before the development of life (Freud, 1961, p.40).

Thus, Freud gradually adopts the nature of human hostility as he accumulated experience and conducted analysis. He suggests Thanatos, the power of death or destruction, as the second primary impulse. The latter's energy is focused on the abolition or annihilation of life, hatred, rage, and violence, as well as all other forms

of hostile thoughts, sentiments, deeds, and behaviors. As a result, he maintains that all human behavior, including aggression, is the result of a complicated interaction between Thanatos and Eros instincts and the ongoing conflict between them.

As explained by Freud the potential of a more or less thorough separation of the two groups of instincts imposes itself upon the theorist once he admits the notion of their merging. The sadistic aspect of the sexual impulse would serve as a classic illustration of an innate fusion that may be useful, and the sadism that has separated into its own category as a perversion would be indicative of a split, but not one that is gone too far according to him (Freud, 1961, p.41).

According to psychoanalysis, the death instinct leads to hostile and violent behavior, aggressive sexual behavior, or the eradication of one's race and/or self. Love and hatred, pleasure and suffering, and the drives for life and death coexist as a result. The death instinct, commonly referred to as the impulse of violence, also manifests in destructive and combative intellectual pursuits like criticism, satire, and insults. The death impulse, according to Freud, is unchecked and leads to self-destruction. Therefore, he suggests that alternative processes, such as displacement, may be used to refocus Thanatos' fury in such a way that it fuels aggressiveness towards others rather than the destruction of the self. He states "the more a man controls his aggressiveness, the more intense becomes his ideal's inclination to aggressiveness against his ego. It is like a displacement, a turning round upon his own ego" (Freud, 1961, p.53). Therefore, based on his perspective, controlling one's aggressiveness might heel them up and put them in a sort of peace.

Freud's thoughts on aggression is first declared in his work named *Times on War and Death* (1915). One of the basics and the starting points might be simplified in a question such as; *Why War?* (1933). Thus, several publications in that time represent Freud's virtually instantaneous response to the First World War. When Freud published these essays, the fight had only been going on for about six months, but it was immediately clear that this war was quite different from other European wars and something new was taking place (Sampson, 2005, p.78).

Freud observes "that no event has ever destroyed so much that is precious in the common possessions of humanity, confused so many of the clearest intelligences,

or so thoroughly debased what is highest” (Freud, 2011, p.81). War causes a deeply bitter disillusionment relating to development and the triumph of moral standards that are universally accepted. Therefore, War would essentially be reduced to a courteous passing of weapons. The wars, which were fought without the slightest regard for international law, exposed the fallacy of these notions of justice and the rule of law. Freud vehemently draws attention to the discrepancy between the state’s demand that citizens uphold high moral standards and the degradation that it tolerates when war breaks out (Sampson, 2005, p.82).

Freud’s goes beyond the power that self has in creating any aggression and its consequences. He determines the role of the states in corruption and spoiling a communities and states;

[T]he state has forbidden to the individual the practice of wrong-doing, not because it desires to abolish it, but because it desires to monopolize it, like salt and tobacco. A belligerent state permits itself every such misdeed, every such act of violence, as would disgrace the individual. [. . .] The state exacts the utmost degree of obedience and sacrifice from its citizens, but at the same time it treats them like children by an excess of secrecy and censorship upon news and expressions of opinion which leaves the spirits of those whose intellects it thus suppresses defenseless against every unfavorable turn of events and every sinister rumor. It absolves itself from the guarantees and treaties by which it was bound to other states and confesses shamelessly to its own rapacity and lust(Freud, 1968, p.156).

Sigmund Freud introduced the instinct-based aggressiveness theory. The primary tenet of instinctive ideas would be people who are destined by nature to be destructive since aggression is an impulse fueled by energy. According to Freud, aggressiveness is a biological impulse that arises from the ongoing conflict between Thanatos and Eros. This conflict causes an intrinsic urge for fulfillment and results in a sense of satisfaction. The aforementioned struggle or the defeat of one or both instincts leads

to changes in human behavior. For instance, if Thanatos grows too powerful, a kid may employ numerous violent techniques to attempt to control it, such as verbally or nonverbally expressing rage, sublimating undesirable emotions into acceptable social substitutes, and forms of violence that take place in the imagination (Livazović & Bojčić, 2020, p.270).

As mentioned above, Freud presents the idea of the Thanatos or death instinct in 1920 in "Beyond the Pleasure Principle", where he discusses aggression as a biological drive. Later on, he expands on its psychological significance in 1923 in "The Ego and the Id." According to him, part of the death instinct is diverted out in the manner of an attack on the object when the life instinct is predominant. Freud writes that "[b]esides the instinct to preserve living substance and to join in into ever larger units, there must exist another, contrary instinct seeking to dissolve those units and to bring them back to their primeval inorganic state" (Steiner, 2018, p.138). Unlike his presentation of the sexual drive and sex as the main instinct that lies beneath the thoughts and actions of people predominantly, here, he admits that life and death are created together and placed in opposition in the human mind. Life then is governed by the interaction of these two instincts. So that, unconsciously people begin to redirect part of their death instinct to the external world in order to be "destroying some other thing, animated or inanimate instead of destroying its own self." (Freud, 1930, p.119). This might be what causes the tension and challenges that people go through throughout their whole life.

Here Freud elaborates on something quite significant; the blindness of the aggressive instinct. As the case with all instincts, the urge for aggression demands fulfillment no matter how or at what expense. Thus, in case it is not taken out on the world and other people, it will be redirected inwardly to destroy the person himself/herself: Freud argues that "Conversely, any restriction of its aggressiveness directed outwards would be bound to increase the self-destruction, which is in any case proceeding" (Freud, 1930, p.119). One may further infer from the current example that the two types of instinct rarely, if ever, emerge separately from one another but are alloyed with one another in varied and very diverse amounts until they are unrecognizably distinct from one another in our judgment.

With the death instinct, if one is willing to adopt Freud's theory that all living things are clamoring to regain their inorganic status and lose their organic status. Then it is feasible to assume that this source should result in some sort of demand put upon the mind for labor. Thus, there is a physical desire for death and the source of the death instinct is truly the in one's own mind and body. The mental exercise may possibly involve attempting to balance the need for death with the contradictory desire to postpone death until the right time. The externalization of the aggression may easily be used to accomplish this mental objective (Gillespi, 1975, p.157). However, the manifestation of aggression does not always involve direct insult or attack, aggression has different types as stated above. Thus, all types of behavior that are carried out to harm someone or something else can be considered as an example of this theory.

According to Freud, the instincts of life and death take on their most well-known manifestations during sex, namely sadism and masochism. He claims:

If for a moment we leave its erotic components on one side, it affords us a guarantee of the existence of a trend that has self-destruction as its aim. If it is true of the destructive instinct as well [as of the libido] that the ego-but what we have in mind here is rather the id, the whole person-originally includes all the instinctual impulses, we are led to the view that masochism is older than sadism, and that sadism is the destructive instinct directed outwards, thus acquiring the characteristic of aggressiveness (Freud, 1964, p.105).

Thus, all types of aggressive behaviors manifest from one origin. There is, according to Freud, an amount of innate desire for destruction that urges the person to do some true harm or it would harm the person himself/herself. He claims that such desires are perceived in two conditions: "if it is combined with erotic instincts into masochism or if-with a greater or lesser erotic addition-it is directed against the external world as aggressiveness" (Freud, 1964, p. 105). Based on his idea aggressiveness may appear in one's behavior in different conditions.

Thus, if violence is an instinct of the human being, then what keeps people

from pursuing it all the time? And why punish outlaws and criminals if they are only following an irresistible drive? The answer, according to Freud might be similar to the human's handling of the sex drive. Even though sex is an instinct, people do not follow it without previous planning that goes along the general social norms. People can be identified as having an aggressive inclination in general. Freud makes the correct assumption that people's knowledge of other people's aggression is what disturbs their relationships with their neighbors, strangers, other nations, etc. Culture establishes its high standards because people are capable of causing serious harm to each other. Only strong boundaries enforced by law can help to restrict the primitive human inside them: He declares;

Civilized society is perpetually menaced with disintegration through this primary hostility of men towards one another. Their interests in their common work would not hold them together; the passions of instinct are stronger than reasoned interests. Culture has to call up every possible reinforcement in order to erect barriers against the aggressive instincts of men and hold their manifestations in check by reaction-formations in men's minds (Freud, 1930, p.86).

To Freud, aggression is an instinct that is highly suppressed, perhaps more than sex, and its suppression comes from the social institution not from the individual's choice. The need for a stable, safe and civilized life obliges people to live according to a set of rules. However positive, these rules do restrict the human instincts and result in unhealthy manifestations of them. He continues;

We should probably have met with little resistance if we had wanted to ascribe an instinct with such an aim to animals [aggressiveness]. But to include it in the human constitution appears sacrilegious; it contradicts too many religious presumptions and social conventions. No, man must be naturally good or at least good-natured. If he occasionally shows himself brutal, violent, or cruel,

these are only passing disturbances of his emotional life, for the most part provoked, or perhaps only consequences of the inexpedient social regulations which he has hitherto imposed on himself (Freud, 1964, pp. 103-104).

Thus, sex, civilization and social life obliges the individual to suppress their urge to destroy. However, this urge does not disappear, rather it reappears in different forms such as sadism and masochism. Freud (1964) believes that during sex, the instinct of life and death manifest in their best known forms as sadism and masochism. He states that aggressiveness during sex, whether against the partner or oneself, gives pleasure because it satisfies this instinct (p.105).

The violent death impulse is handled by the person in a variety of ways: partially by being merged with sensual components, sometimes by being turned towards the outside world in the form of aggressiveness, and to a considerable measure, surely, by continuing their internal work unrestrained. Freud explains: "it may be said of the id that it is totally non-moral, of the ego that it strives to be moral, and of the super-ego that it can be supermoral and then become as cruel as only the id can be" (Freud, 1961, p.54). Freud's distinguished description of one's moral/immoral behavior might stand on his/her different dimension which was discussed above.

For Freud, it is impressive how the man's ego ideals grow more intense and hostile when he restrains his aggression towards the outside world. According to the conventional viewpoint, the rules established by the ego ideals are the driving force behind the repression of violence. However, what Freud has observed from his work with patients is that the more an individual suppresses his aggression, the more powerful his ideals become in attacking his ego and criticizing his behavior (Freud, 1961, p.54).

The idea of the superego as an internal psychological structure was first put forth by Freud in 1923. It would appear differently in genders. For instance; in a boy, it arises from identifying with the father to prevent castration fear. Additionally, a girl's connection with her mother arises from a desire to retain her mother's affection. Today, the superego is largely considered as the internalization of parental

values, objectives, and constraints to create an internal mental framework. This structure symbolizes the individual's morality, which can be seen as being active, missing, or supportive (Yakeley, 2018, p.86). Male and female children grow up to adapt to their parent's rules and principles that regulate their interaction with the world. Freud criticizes this point in his *Civilization and its Discontents* saying:

If civilization requires such sacrifices, not only of sexuality but also of the aggressive tendencies in mankind, we can better understand why it should be so hard for men to feel happy in it. In actual fact primitive man was better off in this respect, for he knew nothing of any restrictions on his instincts. [...] Civilized man has exchanged some part of his chances of happiness for a measure of security. We will not forget, however, that in the primal family only the head of it enjoyed this instinctual freedom; the other members lived in slavish thralldom (Freud, 1930, pp.91-92).

The ego holds a status similar to that of a limited monarch in matters of action. Without the monarch's approval, no law may be approved, but he takes long time before exercising his veto over any proposals made by Parliament. The ego is enriched by all of life's events that come from outside of it. The id, on the other hand, is its second external world, which it attempts to dominate for itself. The ego uses the experiences from earlier times kept in the id with the help of the super-ego (Freud, 1961, p.55).

The driving energy that male bodies experience in their genitals as they mature into teenagers manifests itself primarily as a desire to explore, as sexual curiosity. When examined more closely, a large number of the aggressive and exhibitionistic behaviors that children engage in turn out to be sexual experimentation. However, youngsters eventually learn that lustful and violent expressions will be evaluated without mercy. This repression leads to a struggle between the ego and the id, between people's needs for acceptance and instinctive fulfillment (Freud, 1961, p.144). In more than one occasion, Freud stresses that societies need to accept certain degree of aggression and sex as they are

both natural instincts that affect the overall thinking and life of people.

There is little question that cruelty and the sexual drive are intimately linked, as demonstrated by the history of human civilization. However, nothing has been done to explain this relationship other than to emphasize the aggressive aspect of desire. Freud criticizes his contemporary experts. He states that the aggressive aspect of the sexual instinct is actually a remnant of cannibalistic impulses. It might mean that it is a contribution drawn from the apparatus for attaining mastery, which is concerned with satisfying the latter, and, consequently, aggression could be the oldest of the major instinctive demands. However, it is not given this emphasis in analysis. Each and every pain carries within it the potential for ecstasy. This abnormality implies the probability that other mental impulses may have been combined to achieve the same effect (Freud, 1953, p.159). Thus, aggression is not separated from other activities of thinking as different instincts and drives control the subconscious desires and thinking of the individual.

Freud adopts Darwin's evolutionary theory into psychology. He believes that people have come to develop their instincts, drives, desires, etc. depending on their need to survive and adapt into their environment. For ages, parents have unconsciously transferred their social adapting behavior to their sons and daughters, building with that a set of rules that are derived from the community's acceptance and approval of the individual. He explains this notion by referring to the fact that a leader's son easily replaces the leader's position as a father of the community after his death. In such a change, the community places higher concern over symbols and rules than individuals. The phenomenon according to Freud asserts that: "[t]here must therefore be a possibility of transforming group psychology into individual psychology; [...] just as it is possible for bees in case of necessity to turn a larva into a queen instead of into a worker" (Freud, 1922, p.93). Therefore, not only the values might be transferred to the others while being practiced in a society, psychologically people would also be involved and affected via such a transmission.

The preceding lines demonstrate how, in Freud's view, a person's ancestry and personal conditions affect both the qualities of their basic impulses and other human reactions. For example, Freud highlights the significance of the effect of

ancestral symbolic culture. He also emphasizes the importance of separating between of life and death impulses in his study on the creation of the superego. The connection, decasualization, and reduction of a person's relationship with his or her parents are the causes of this separation. Due to the ego's conflict with the sexual instinct, the separation magnifies the self-destructive impulse and its manifestations. The superego's violent instincts are freed by the ego's act of suppression, which separate the superego's instincts. This battle with desire puts the superego in danger of being mishandled and gradually ignored. (Garma & Aires, 1971, p.145)

Freud confirms that it is difficult for men to satisfy their need for aggression. However, he also admits that when they are deprived of its enjoyment, they become uncomfortable. The solution for this, according to Freud, is in small communities and groups. The benefit of smaller groups, for Freud, is that they allow the aggressive tendency to find expression in hostility against individuals outside the group. This fact is the reason why people feel loyal to their community and feel aggressive against others:

It is always possible to unite considerable numbers of men in love towards one another, so long as there are still some remaining as objects for aggressive manifestations. I once interested myself in the peculiar fact that peoples whose territories are adjacent, and are otherwise closely related, are always at feud with and ridiculing each other, as, for instance, the Spaniards and the Portuguese, the North and South Germans, the English and the Scotch, and so on (Freud, 1930, p.90).

Following Freud's theories, the hypothesis of life and death instincts may also be used on a national level. According to Freud's theories of evolutionary psychology, a single person may be thought of as the coexistence of multiple egos, each with a unique set of ancestral memories. One can suppose that these memory-traces of the forefathers' experiences have survived in as part of the persons' legacy. Therefore, the gap between individual psychology and group psychology has been filled by this concept. What Freud's ideas also imply is that the civilization of the modern world

has replaced the primitive regions inhabited by our ancestors, but it can never replace the roles on which they have experienced such as 'self and group protection'. The need to survive has transmitted through generations by prioritizing the self and attacking others, individually or collectively.

Freud believes that today's aggression comes from innate factors that have developed to save our ancestors from danger. Thus, being aggressive is inescapable and have damaging effect when people suppress it. Thus, being aggressive should be seen differently through the lens of science and not as something completely within the hands of people. If by chance people do not manifest their aggression to other people, they redirect it towards themselves by being depressed, melancholic, suicidal or masochistic. Thus, the pair sadist and masochist are created based on what he argues;

It is noteworthy that the obsessional neurotic, in contrast to the melancholic, never in fact takes the step of self-destruction; it is as though he were immune against the danger of suicide, and he is far better protected from it than the hysteric. We can see that what guarantees the safety of the ego is the fact that the object has been retained. In obsessional neurosis it has become possible, through a regression to the pregenital organization, for the love-impulses to transform themselves into impulses of aggression against the object (Freud, 1961, p.53).

According to Freud, taking the aggression out onto the world is a safer procedure than directing it against oneself. However, doing so is not as easy as it sounds. The world today is not like the primitive world whose rules we adopt today, rather it is filled with rules and regulations that condemn any amount of harm on other people. When discussing this case, Freud states that something like this can only jeopardize the internal health of the individual as he seeks to fulfill the world's rules at the expense of needs and instincts: He argues that "Impeded aggressiveness seems to involve a grave injury. It really seems as though it is necessary for us to destroy some other thing or person in order not to destroy ourselves"(Freud, 1964, p.106). Guarding

the health of oneself by allowing certain amount of aggression to come out is the only thing that can guarantee the health of the person and society. Freud states that one should embrace his own true nature and not the artificial roles of the modern world as follows;

The bit of truth behind all this — one so eagerly denied — is that men are not gentle, friendly creatures wishing for love, who simply defend themselves if they are attacked, but that a powerful measure of desire for aggression has to be reckoned as part of their instinctual endowment. The result is that their neighbor is to them not only a possible helper or sexual object, but also a temptation to them to gratify their aggressiveness on him, to exploit his capacity for work without recompense, to use him sexually without his consent, to seize his possessions, to humiliate him, to cause him pain, to torture and to kill him (Freud, 1930, p.85).

Something that is strongly present in the human world, like aggression, becomes an intriguing and captivating subject for artists. Prior to the emergence of structured scholarly and philosophical writings on cruelty, artists and writers explored this theme aesthetically and offered fresh perspectives on it. After all, aggression must be taken out of the individual or it will be redirected to more dangerous objects. This aggression does not have to be in the form of bloody violence, but the type that makes the person feel superior. Freud's theory is best suited to study the criminal action of individuals whose crimes are not motivated by the environment. Such types of violent aggressors are found in *Clockwork Orange* and *The Fight Club*, which will be analyzed based on Freud's theory on aggression and death instinct in the upcoming chapters.

2. VIOLENCE IN ANTHONY BURGESS' *A CLOCKWORK ORANGE*

Violence and the consequences of it might be studied from various perspectives in dissimilar circumstances. It might be the researcher who would intend to figure out the roots of unpleasant behaviors in a community. Behaviors, especially those which are addressed violent in one society might be seen and accepted moral or non-violent in another based on what people may define violence in their tradition, law and their ongoing lives. The text will still remain ambiguous in case there would be no leaning points and agreed standards to stand on them. Psychology in this respect would assist scholars and researchers to study human being's behaviors and try to find out the possible reasons behind those acts. This study intend to study the roots and reasons behind the behaviors of characters in the selected novels.

Anthony Burgess' novel, *A Clockwork Orange* (1962), is a dystopian work of literature that deals with the themes of free will, morality, and violence. The novel serves as the basis for a famous movie with the same name. Since its publication, it remained consistently available and widely read. Burgess has a deep fascination with this work. Unlike many authors who receive their payment and relinquish their thoughts about the destiny of their work once it hits the screen, Burgess persists in discussing his novel tirelessly through essays, interviews, and letters to editors. He goes on to rework the material for two distinctly unique musical adaptations. The first of these was made in 1987 under the title *A Clockwork Orange: A Play With Music*. A few years later, Burgess introduced yet another musical rendition called *A Clockwork Orange* (2004), which was produced by the esteemed Royal Shakespeare Company in London. (McDougal, 2010, p.2)

In the novel of *A Clockwork Orange*, the story unfolds through the first-person narration who is the protagonist of the story. He exhibits many traits commonly associated with psychopaths, a recurring figure in twentieth-century English fiction. This character is portrayed as a white male of high intelligence, displaying a calculated and unremorseful nature. Capable of both charm and extreme violence, he goes by the name "Alexander the Large" or simply Alex. Deliberately and routinely

engaging in acts of organized brutality, he presents the reader with a disturbing spectacle of horrors and explicit descriptions of these deeds. It is widely acknowledged that the reports provided by these characters contain deeply disturbing and, for many, repugnant instances of cruelty.

A Clockwork Orange delves deeply into the emergence of a new youth culture, often referred to as a subculture, during the 1960s. It becomes evident that this youth culture stood in direct opposition to the traditional values and norms that had long formed the foundation of British social life (Molloy, 2019, p.130). The novel offers an insightful explanation for the birth of this subculture within Britain—a response and resistance to the structural challenges faced after the devastating effects of the post-war era, particularly impacting the working-class community and its deeply rooted values.

2.1 Violence Portrayal in *A Clockwork Orange*

No one would commit crimes or would act abnormally in normal life conditions if the topic is discussed generally. Violent acts that take place by the character/s of the story is intended to be analyzed through this chapter. The novel's protagonist, Alex, is a violent young man who commits heinous crimes without any remorse. The novel's central question is whether it is better to have a society that eliminates violence by removing free will or to have one that allows individuals to exercise their free will, even if it means they may act violently. By going through the text and analyzing the characters' behaviors, this study intends to discuss the different forms of violence depicted in the novel and how they contribute to the overall message of the work.

In addition to his deep fascination with “ultraviolence,” Alex's character in *A Clockwork Orange* also exhibits a profound love for classical music, particularly Beethoven. Alongside his teenage peers, he communicates using a unique fictional slang known as ‘nadsat’ which incorporates Russian slangs. Burgess in this work eloquently describes Alex as “an exemplar of humanity, [stating] he is aggressive, he loves beauty, he is a language-user” (2015, p.46). The idea may clarify that Alex is a character who can use his skill in using language and shows his sense in loving beauty. According to E. Madsen, this complex portrayal often leads to categorize

Alex as a sociopath or psychopath, with some noting behaviors consistent with antisocial personality disorder. (2020, p.41)

Different forms of violence take place in *A Clockwork Orange*. The most obvious form is physical violence, which is depicted throughout the novel. Alex and his “droogs” (gang members) engage in brutal beatings and rape, often for no reason other than to satisfy their own twisted desires. This physical violence is depicted in graphic detail, and Burgess does not shy away from describing the horrific acts that Alex and his gang commit. Based on what Freud addresses “Physical and emotional suffering” (Perelberg, 2055, p.74), Alex, the protagonist of the story suffers from physical violence while interacting with other group members and at the same time emotional suffering comes toward him accordingly.

Alex’s actions transcend his own being, pushing him beyond the boundaries of humanity itself. His cruelty defies conventional norms. The victims of Alex and his cohorts span across different ages and diverse backgrounds, as their crimes exhibit no specific preferences. The selection of their victims is purely situational, driven by superficial factors such as appearance, gender, or social status. This transforms their brutality into an almost natural catastrophe or an unfathomable force, whose motives are simply varied. In Alex’s case, his insatiable craving for violence finds its roots in the power of classical music. The works of Beethoven and Mozart not only fuel Alex’s destructive energy, but also symbolically metamorphose his monstrous deeds into a performance akin to ancient mysteries, where the divine, sacrificial, and the destroyer intertwine. This motif finds expression in the unique language utilized by young delinquents, serving as a subtle allusion to these profound themes.

The unconventional language employed by these individuals surpasses mere adolescent slang; it becomes a satirical imitation of sacred incantations, veiling its true significance from ordinary individuals. Furthermore, the transliteration of Slavic words into English lends an element of playfulness to obscenity and brutality. In this context, one cannot help but draw parallels to the works of Marquis de Sade, replete with profanity that defiantly challenges societal norms and defies the suppression of “taboo” subjects (Kotov, 2016, p.332). At the beginning of the novel, Alex recounts

a time when he and his gang spotted a book reader and came to disturb, bully, and attack him and his books: “we began to filly about with him. Pete held his rookers and Georgie sort of hooked his rot wide open for him and Dim yanked out his false zoobies, upper and lower” (Burgess, 1962, p. 3). The Nadsat language is used from the first page.

Alex surrenders himself to a spree of murderous violence—an act of rebellion against a society that has become numbingly mechanical. The novel is set in an urban wasteland, devoid of soul, where a putrid atmosphere permeates every facet. In this grim reality, the youth prey upon the elderly without consequence or order, as the absence of law and structure allows such transgressions to flourish unchecked. Perversity, violence, crime, and guilt reign supreme in Alex’s putrefied realm, where antisocial acts abound and the world becomes dystopian. According to Freud (1930), “The natural instinct of aggressiveness in man, the hostility of each one against all and of all against each one, opposes [...the] program of civilization”(p.104). Thus, the prevail of hostility and violence makes the world around Alex filled with horror and pain.

It might be argued that the novel delves into the relationship between violence and the act of listening, especially in scenes where Beethoven’s or Mozart’s music conjures images of violence, ultimately instigating further acts of aggression. In the story, while listening to the 6th Brandenburg, Alex comes to the realization that he should have been more ferocious in his earlier attack, contemplating, “I would have liked to pummel them both harder and tear them apart on their own floor” (Burgess, 1962, p.40).The statement might express that how anger sometimes may control the thought and move one to act irrationally.

According to H, Király (2022), Burgess’s perspective aligns with Plato’s critique of music in *The Republic*, highlighting its emotional and ethical perils (p. 109). The idea would assert that how music and rhythmic melodies might affect one’s behavior against some happenings. Unbeknownst to his parents, Alex and his companions engage in countless acts of cruelty. The story commences with the erosion of moral integrity and a disregard for cultural values exhibited by Alex and his friends. Without motive beyond their own amusement, they mercilessly attack an

elderly man, robbing him of his money and shattering his umbrella—a callous act that sets the tone for their twisted exploits. The attack on a homeless man is the first act of violence that Alex and his company commit. The group beats the man to the ground and then kicks and stomps him until he is left unconscious and bleeding. This act of violence is particularly brutal, as it is unprovoked and the victim is defenseless. The matter is demonstrated in the work as follows;

Old Dim gave up his umbrella danàe and of course had to start reading one of the letters out loud, like to show the empty street he could read. ‘My darling one,’ he recited, in this very high type goloss, ‘I shall be thinking of you while you are away and hope you will remember to wrap up warm when you go out at night’. [...] Then we smashed the umbrella and razrezzed his platues and gave them to the blowing winds (Burgess, 1962, p.13).

Alex and his gang represent the death instinct in action. They are driven by a desire for violence, destruction, and domination, and they take pleasure in causing pain and suffering. This violence is particularly evident in the scenes where Alex and his gang commit acts of physical and sexual violence against innocent victims. However, Alex’s violent behavior might not be purely a result of the death instinct. Instead, his behavior is a manifestation of a deeper psychological conflict between his life instinct and death instinct. Alex’s unconscious mind is repressing certain desires and emotions, such as his fear of abandonment and his feelings of inadequacy. When he is later abandoned by his parent he screams in pain “I know how things are now. Nobody wants or loves me. I’ve suffered and suffered and suffered and everybody wants me to go on suffering. I know” (p. 52). This repression leads to a build-up of tension, which is then released through violent and aggressive behavior.

Alex and his gang break into his home one night, intending to rob and vandalize the property. However, when they discover that F. Alexander is a writer, they decide to torture and humiliate him instead. During the attack, Alex and his gang beat F. Alexander who is a writer and a political dissident who opposes the government’s authoritarian regime, severely, leaving him paralyzed from the waist

down. The attack is brutal and sadistic, and it exemplifies the extreme violence that Alex is capable of. The group beats F. Alexander and his wife, sexually assaults his wife, and then proceeds to destroy the couple's possessions. This attack is motivated by the group's desire to exert power and control over those who oppose their way of life. Based on what Freud believes "... a desire for absolute control, mastery, and domination the violence of which is projected outside" (Elliott, 1999, p.5), it might be interpreted that a violent act would have a motive to be taken place outside than to a big extent rather than the doer starts committing. In other words, the possibility of violence taking place would decrease if there is no motive outside calling into action.

Alex's fascination with cruelty and violence stems from a psychological urge to harm. This expressive violence gives him a sense of pleasure, further motivating him to carry out the attack. Additionally, Alex's feelings of societal alienation play a role in his violent actions. He feels disconnected from society and alienated from its norms, leading him to rebel against the established order and assert his existence and individuality through acts of violence. The assault on educated people and married ones reflect his alienated and distorted image off himself. He harms the people that remind him of what he is. Furthermore, Alex's association with his violent gang influences his aggressive tendencies. The group dynamics and pressure to conform to their norms contribute to his willingness to engage in violent behaviors. Freud (1949) tackles the group mentality stating that it pushes people to venture into actions they would not do otherwise:

When once natural continuity has been severed in this way, it is easy to regard the phenomena that appear under these special conditions as being expressions of a special instinct that is not further reducible, the social instinct ('herd instinct', 'group mind'), which does not come to light in any other situations (p.3).

The attack on Alexander's home has significant consequences that shape the trajectory of the story. Burgess uses this violent incident as a critique of society's neglect of the teenagers and their grouping and gang life that help to foster violence and hate inside them.

Alex is portrayed as a violent and aggressive individual. His actions are a manifestation of the death instinct. Alex fails in ascending to the realm of heroism, as he emphatically asserts that his deviant behavior and moral decline are the direct result of his conscious decision to embrace evil and assert his own identity. Burgess states:

[...] that self is made by old Bog or God and his great pride and radosty. but the not self cannot have the bad, meaning they of the government and the judges and the schools cannot allow the bad because they cannot allow the self. And is not our modern history, my brothers, the story of' brave malenky selves fighting these big machines? I am serious with you, brothers, over this. *But what I do I do because I like to do* (p. 45).

As it was discussed earlier in the first chapter, Anderson & Bushman (2002) argue "Violence is aggression that has extreme harm..."(p.29). This ideology might support the matter which is portrayed in the novel. Alex's enjoyment in crime and aggression reflex the general tendency of the youth at his time, as Burgess expresses deep concern over the erosion of conventional cultural values and the emergence of a subculture rooted in crime, and brutality. His aggression and unstoppable behavior reflects Freud's statement that "civilized society is perpetually menaced with disintegration through this primary hostility of men towards one another" (Freud, 1930, p.86). Alex represents a danger not only to the outside society but even to his family and gang. He installs fear and a sense of being threatened in everyone around him and justifies that by simply saying that he does what he does because he "like to do [that]" (Burgess, 1962, p.45). It might be interpreted that even the evil act would possibly turn into a normal one after repetition and being done several times. Then the doer of that act might easily justify it by saying 'I like it'.

After beating his gang members for trying to replace him, Alex and his droogs break into the home of an elderly woman known as the Cat Lady. The group beats the woman, killing her beloved cats in the process. This act of violence is particularly cruel, as it targets an innocent and defenseless person who has done

nothing to provoke the attack. On the fateful night, while Alex forcibly enters the residence of the cat lady and engages in a deadly altercation with her, his friends ensure that he is apprehended by the police. The first part of the novel concludes with Alex being imprisoned as a result of this setup orchestrated by his friends. It is undeniably evident that the theme of extreme violence among the youth occupies a central position in the first part of the novel. On the other hand, Freud recognizes a social side to sadistic pleasure of inflicting pain on others, he finds that “one of the roots of the sadistic instinct would seem to lie in the encouragement of sexual excitation by muscular activity” (1953, p.103). It is, thus, crucial to recognize that this violence stems from the environment of adult-inflicted brutality, which should not be disregarded.

The second section of the novel commences with Alex’s two-year imprisonment. In the second section of the novel, Alex’s relentless ultra-violence continues unabated, but it is contrasted with a form of violence controlled by the state. This state-controlled violence manifests through the actions of the police, prison personnel, scientists, doctors, and ultimately the politicians of the totalitarian regime. Additionally, Alex becomes a target of aggression from his fellow criminals in prison, who harbor intentions of assaulting him. Furthermore, the opponents of the ruling party, specifically the civil libertarians led by F. Alexander, seek to exploit Alex’s situation to undermine the government’s electoral support. This dystopian vision revolves around the reliance on behavioral science as a means to maintain societal order by exerting control over violence, crime, and deviant behavior. In essence, it represents the transformation of a sentient and capable individual into a mechanical entity devoid of the capacity for independent thought and free will due to the authority’s dominion over their mind.

After being implicated in the death of a fellow inmate, Alex is sentenced to undergo a groundbreaking experimental procedure known as the “Ludovico’s Technique.” This revolutionary crime-reduction program, implemented by the new Government, relies on aversive respondent conditioning. The treatment involves administering drugs that induce unpleasant symptoms such as nausea, headaches, and thirst, while simultaneously exposing Alex to graphic depictions of extreme violence through film imagery. As a result, whenever Alex encounters violence or harbors

violent thoughts, he undergoes physical pain and overwhelming waves of nausea. Additionally, the music of Beethoven, once beloved by Alex, is accidentally shown while projecting the picture making him develop a sense of aversion to both Beethoven and violence. The elimination of violence by the Ludovico is accompanied by an elimination of Beethoven's music

Physical violence is, thus, not the only form of violence that is depicted in *A Clockwork Orange*. The novel also deals with the psychological violence that Alex experiences when he is subjected to the Ludovico Technique. The Ludovico Technique is used to eliminate Alex's violent tendencies by conditioning him to feel sick whenever he experiences violent thoughts or actions. This technique is a form of psychological violence because it robs Alex of his free will, essentially turning him into a puppet that can be controlled by those in power. Palmer (1973) argues that "When a man cannot choose, he ceases to be a man" (p.84). The discussion touches what Burgess encapsulates his central thesis when the prison chaplain conveys to Alex that "goodness is something chosen" (p.90). This is a sentiment echoed by F. Alexander in the concluding section which may represent that sometimes being an undesired man would be the only choice.

The Ludovico Technique is used to repress Alex's violent tendencies. It is a reflection of society's attempt to suppress the death instinct. However, this attempt at repression is ultimately unsuccessful, as it fails to address the underlying psychological conflicts that drive Alex's violent behavior. Instead, it simply suppresses the outward expression of his aggression, leading to a situation where he is unable to act on his desires. In this respect, Freud states that "the state has forbidden to the individual the practice of wrong-doing, not because it desires to abolish it, but because it desires to monopolize it, like salt and tobacco" (1968, p.156). Based on Freud's statement, the idea behind the authority in *A Clockwork Orange*, might be to create a less violent society by exercising psychological violence on its subjects.

The repression of the death instinct in *A Clockwork Orange* is also reflected in the novel's setting. The society depicted in the novel is one in which violence is rampant, and the government's response is to attempt to eliminate it by any means

necessary, even if it means taking away people's free will. This attempt at repression ultimately leads to a situation where individuals are no longer able to act on their desire for violence and aggression. In Alex's case, this repression leads to a build-up of tension. This treatment eliminates his capacity to be violent which renders him in a situation of helplessness.

Ludovico is employed by State Jail (Staja) to reform Alex into a morally upright individual. The Government firmly believes that this experimental psychological treatment will "cure" Alex of his criminal inclinations, transforming him into a well-behaved individual. The program relies on a conditioning technique where Alex is administered drugs and forcibly restrained in a chair with his eyes held open. He is subjected to a distressing film depicting repeated acts of violence and rape. Alex finds it difficult to articulate the extent of the horrors he witnessed, stating, "I do not wish to describe, brothers, what other horrible vicious [things] I was like forced to viddy [see] that afternoon" (Burgess, 1962, p.113). Alex's description might refer to the idea that how people have been feeling cold against others and how they might not care of others problems.

In the novel, the doctors supervising the treatment observe that "Horrorshow is right, friend. A real show of horrors", describing the film to which Alex was subjected (p.108). As Alex recounted his experience, he found himself unable to resist the impact of the violent imagery: he says that "I knew it could not really be real, but that made no difference. I was heaving away but could not sick, viddying first a britva cut out an eye, then slice down the cheek, then go rip riprip all over" (p. 80). Alex undergoes various personal and mental transformations as a result of Ludovico's technique being imposed upon him. These transformations are not a result of his own conscious choices but rather triggered by external factors. The influence of the treatment on Alex's behavior is profound, shaping him in ways that go beyond his own volition. Alex's life after the use of Ludovic transforms entirely. In addition to physical and psychological violence, *A Clockwork Orange* deals with societal violence. This societal violence is depicted through the actions of the government and people's treatment of Alex after his release. Instead of accepting and trying to help him to adapt, society attempts to use Alex's helplessness against him.

The third section of the novella portrays Alex's release following his treatment. A noteworthy aspect of *A Clockwork Orange* is the depiction of an initially anarchic society, suggesting the dominance of liberals. However, upon his release from prison, Alex notices significant changes: a previously broken elevator has been repaired, and the police force has expanded. These developments signify the rise of a more authoritative party, although not as extreme as an Augustinian ideology characterized by wars and religious fanaticism (Rabinovitz, 1979, p.44). Freud's discussion of "...right is the might of a community. It is still violence..." (1964, p.205), may find its significance by Burgess's utilization of this portrayal of libertarian and authoritarian factions within a society rooted in underlying liberal principles.

When Alex returns to his parents' home after the treatment he is treated differently. Despite their initial happiness to see him, they soon become disillusioned with him when they realize that he is actually a criminal and no longer dangerous to them. They view his lack of aggression as a sign of weakness. Alex's father, in particular, is ashamed of his son's actions. He takes advantage of Alex's vulnerability and tells him that he is no longer welcome in the house. Alex's meekness turns him into a receiver of abuse rather than an exporter of it. Alex is also soon attacked by his former gang members. They view him as weak and powerless without his ability to act violently, and they use this to their advantage by beating him up and leaving him motionless. Freud (1964), claims that "...domination by whoever had the greater might-domination by brute violence or by violence supported by intellect" (pp. 204-205). Alex's attack highlights how that those who do not possess the capacity to draw the line for their enemies turn into a vulnerable target. The discussion also expresses that being capable of violence is something good and necessary to protect one's life and possessions.

After being attacked by his gang and forced out of the house by his parents, Alex turns into a random house that turns out to be the house of his former victim. F. Alexander, initially failing to recognize Alex, reaches out to his fellow activists who see an opportunity to exploit Alex for their political agenda. They attempt to attack the government's methods by shedding light on Alex's case. Alex's treatment ultimately leads to a loss of his essential human quality: free will. Paradoxically,

Alex appears to have embraced this loss of autonomy, having been stripped of his free will. Following his “cure” (a term used sarcastically by the author), Alex is reintegrated into society like a mechanical clockwork, devoid of volition. It is true that the reconditioned Alex refrains from engaging in acts of violence, but he also becomes devoid of any power even in the face of violence inflicted upon him. F. Alexander summarizes Alex’s situation by uttering;

You have sinned, I suppose, but your punishment has been out of all proportion. They have turned you into something other than a human being. You have no power of choice any longer. You are committed to socially acceptable acts, a little machine capable only of good. And I see that clearly - that business about the marginal conditionings. Music and the sexual act, literature and art, all must be a source now not of pleasure but of pain (p. 87).

Although Alex finds it nonsensical, this sentence encapsulates F. Alexander’s defiance against the notion of imposing restrictive laws and circumstances suitable for mechanical beings upon a human being characterized by growth and capacity for sweetness. It embodies his resolute opposition to such attempts and serves as a pivotal component of the novel’s narrative.

The major proof of the defects of the technique in the novel happens when Alex is left alone in a room, subjected once again to the haunting sounds of Beethoven’s ninth symphony. This is the piece he had previously associated with violent films during his Ludovico treatment. Due to the conditioning he underwent, he is unable to tolerate the music, causing him to feel nauseous and filled with despair. Overwhelmed by loneliness and a profound sense of insecurity, with no perceived source of solace to seek refuge in, Alex reaches a breaking point and jumps from the window to kill himself:

And like it was Fate there was another malenky booklet that had an open window on the cover, and it said: “Open the window to fresh air, fresh ideas, a new way of living.” And so I knew that was like telling me to finish it all off

by jumping out. One moment of pain, perhaps, and then sleep forever and ever and ever(Burgess, 1962, pp.158-159).

Alex's suicide is not solely a result of his aversion to music or feelings of nausea; rather, it stems primarily from his profound sense of insecurity and powerlessness. The weight of his insecure sense of self becomes an overwhelming burden, leading him to seek liberation from the void of emptiness by eliminating the source of his dissatisfaction, which lies within himself.

Alex's suicidal attempt reflects Freud's remark concerning the 'death instinct'. When individuals are unable to direct their destructive impulses towards others, for various reasons, they often turn their aggression inward, targeting their own self. This self-directed hostility can escalate to a significant extent, often resulting in physical illness and even suicide attempts. Freud (1964) claims that "Some portion of the death instinct, however, remains operative within the organism, and we have sought to trace quite a number of normal and pathological phenomena to this internalization of the destructive instinct," (p. 211). Thus, Alex is unable to channel his sadistic tendencies, which previously empowered him, towards external targets. He finds himself in a state of desperation, seeking to eradicate his own existence.

Freud (1962) discusses the notion of suicide and finds it relevant to losing 'hope' by asserting "The phantasy of suicide is the last hope if all other means have not succeeded in bringing relief from the burden of aloneness"(p.153). Repressing violence can lead to a loss of individual freedom and autonomy. In the novel, Alex effectively removes his ability to choose whether or not to engage in violent behavior. This loss of autonomy is a violation of his human rights, and it raises important ethical questions about the role of the state in controlling individual behavior. By the protagonist of the story represses, violent tendencies manifest themselves in his psychological suffering and suicide. The novel suggests that repressing violence can have negative psychological consequences that are not immediately apparent.

During his hospital stay for recovery, Alex's physical condition deteriorates. However, he eventually gets cured from the Ludovico's repression. In order to salvage their reputation and reputation, the Government approaches him, offering freedom and a cushy job if he agrees to cooperate with their efforts. Nevertheless, Alex's enthusiasm for extreme violence wanes, and the novella concludes with Alex contemplating the prospect of a calm life, yearning to establish a family. Alex's Government, known for its totalitarianism, could theoretically justify its treatment of him as punishment for his violent crimes. However, it chooses not to. According to their belief, 'punishment means nothing,' and they propose that individuals like Alex should be approached purely from a curative standpoint. According to Freud, there is no real difference between the violence of one brutal individual and the violence of a strict government ruling. In fact, it is worse and more dangerous on the psyche because it people view its rules and brutality as 'justice'. He states:

Violence could be broken by union, and the power of those who were united now represented law in contrast to the violence of the single individual. Thus we see that right is the might of a community. It is still violence, ready to be directed against any individual who resists it (Freud, 1964, p.205).

Freud agrees with the social power in running a community by stating 'right is the might of a community'

The entire government's actions are falsely discredited as torture, while styling what is done to Alex as a cure, as evident from the use of the word 'treatment.' In the novel, the Minister of the Interior puts it succinctly, stating, 'Kill the criminal'. From the very beginning, the Government discredits punishment as an explicit objective of torture, as well as confession and intimidation, which are conspicuously absent.

To distance torture from its conventional understanding, the Government employs a tactic of removing 'torture' from the equation and replacing it with alternative terms. They proclaim that they are not punishing, they are curing. This strategic maneuver seeks to detach the actual content of torture from its conceptual framework. Facilitating this approach is the insertion of the first element without the

sheath of the second into a bureaucratic order that appears fully assembled, though in reality, it is merely a façade—a structure capable of deceiving itself (Molloy, 2019, p.134). This structure intentionally lacks “torturers” and instead fills its ranks with what Foucault (1979) would describe as “a whole army of technicians” (p.11). In this case, the actual criminal and abusive brute is neither Alex nor his gang, as they are mere teenagers in the face of the governmental authority. It turns out that the government in the novel is more psychologically abusive and physically aggressive than all the criminals it attempts to ‘cure.’

Freud assumes that unequal power in hands of people and laws are legislated by powerful people, may not possibly support weak ones. He uses the term ‘masked violence of the government’ and states:

[T]he community comprises elements of unequal strength—men and women, parents and children— [...] The justice of the community then becomes an expression of the unequal degrees of power obtaining within it; the laws are made by and for the ruling members and find little room for the rights of those in subjection (Freud, 1946, p.206).

Alex’s willingness goes on to have a family and he loses his interest in ‘ultra-violence.’ As he lies in the hospital, he listens to Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony and indulges in violent fantasies.

The conflict between the life instinct and death instinct in *A Clockwork Orange* is ultimately resolved when Alex is able to overcome the repression of his violent tendencies and reclaim his free will. In the final chapter, Alex renounces his previous behavior and expresses a desire to live a life free from violence. By doing so, he is able to achieve a balance between his life instinct and death instinct, allowing him to live a more fulfilling life. Therefore, the role of violence in the novel is complex, and it serves a variety of purposes. On the one hand, the novel depicts violence as a destructive force that tears apart individuals and society as a whole. Alex and his gang’s violent acts are portrayed as senseless and cruel, with no redeeming qualities. The novel’s message seems to be that violence is never the

answer and that it only leads to pain and suffering. However, the novel also suggests that violence is a natural part of human nature, and attempts to eliminate it through external means which is both futile and dangerous.

Dystopian fiction often features a protagonist who questions the society or government, realizing that something is amiss in their actions. As a protagonist battling against the system, Alex raises doubts about the treatment he undergoes and ponders the possibility of being cured through it. He begins by interrogating Dr. Branom, one of the responsible figures for the treatment, seeking answers about its nature (Burgess, 1962, pp. 56-57). In another scene, Alex struggles to comprehend why he feels unwell during the process of treatment (p.62). He even questions the supposed assistance of F. Alexander, asking, "Do I get cured of the way I am? Do I find myself able to slooshy the old Choral Symphony without being sick once more? Can I live like a normal Jeezy again? What, sir, happens to me?" (p.90). He quickly realizes that F. Alexander's true intentions have nothing to do with curing his conditioned state. Through Alex's perspective, the novel exposes the negative aspects of the dystopian world, urging readers to recognize them.

However, the state's strategy ultimately fails as it reaches an extreme scenario. Instead of achieving its intended purpose, it merely reduces humanity to a metaphorical 'clockwork orange.' This metaphor symbolizes a mechanized and soulless being stripped of their freedom of choice and self-determination. Burgess himself elucidates its meaning as "laws and conditions appropriate to a mechanical creation" (Burgess, 1962, p.26). Burgess's novel raises profound inquiries such as: is violence a necessity or a danger that must be eliminated? Is it worse to be violent or completely submissive? Consequently, the novel can be seen as a cautionary message to society, warning about the perils of creating clockwork men and sacrificing essential human qualities like the freedom to be aggressive.

Standing on various viewpoints and believing that one method is right while assuming the others wrong, might bring up dissimilar manners and behaviors in practice. Burgess in the novel prompts readers to recognize that beneath Alex's furious cruelty lies a glimmer of something more: a sense of purpose in life, the existence of other individuals, the courage to resist, genuine concerns for society's

well-being, incorruptible moral values, a just system, or at the very least, the possibility of a better society through free will (Kotov, 2016, p.332). The narrative presents the complexity of human nature and the intrinsic value of free will in shaping one's identity and moral choices. This study goes on with analysis of the terms of violence and aggression in Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club* from psychoanalytical perspective.



3. PSYCHOANALYTIC READING OF CHUCK PALAHNIUK'S *FIGHT CLUB*

3.1 Introduction

The idea that everyone might be involved in psychological disorders and experience some sort of problems accordingly, would remain argumentative since a problem may not have a concrete definition by itself. People in different time periods and various methods of analysis would perceive the matters dissimilarly. Based on the assumption that divergent outlooks would into unlike practices, psychology would open different files to everyone in order to study their psyches better. It won't be irrelevant if one puts his finger on the debates and arguments that even well-known psychologists haven't agreed on and their visions on them have been divergent.

Fight Club is a novel written by Chuck Palahniuk in 1996. The story revolves around an unnamed protagonist who grapples with insomnia. In 1999, director David Fincher adapted the novel into a film of the same name, featuring Brad Pitt and Edward Norton in the leading roles. Palahniuk's writings position him as a critic of the American Dream. His novels fall into the category of transgressive fiction, which purposefully challenges societal boundaries and confronts taboo subjects. Notably, *Fight Club* stands as a critique of capitalism and features aggressive themes, ensuring its controversial reputation that have endured for years. The impact of *Fight Club* extends beyond its original form, with numerous allusions, parodies, spin-offs, and merchandise featuring quotes from the story. This attests to the lasting influence of the novel on American and global pop culture history (Kuhn & Rubin, 2009, p. 1).

Fight Club portrays an underground club where men seek meaning and release through violent fights. It critiques consumer culture and explores the transformative power of rebellion. While the club initially provides an outlet for personal growth and authenticity, it descends into chaos and destruction, raising questions about the consequences of unchecked rebellion. The novel challenges conventional norms, encouraging readers to reflect the systems that govern them.

3.2 Psychoanalytic Reading of *Fight Club*

The novel begins with the anonymous narrator who struggles with his sleeping issues and cannot concentrate or sleep well. The narrator seeks medical advice for his insomnia and was advised by his doctor to attend support groups to gain a sense of real pain. The doctor believes that if the narrator sees people telling their painful experiences then he might feel better about himself and his life. Surprisingly, the narrator found solace in participating in these support groups and eventually managed to overcome his insomnia after three weeks.

The storyline of *Fight Club* revolves around this disillusioned narrator who experiences a deep sense of social isolation, leading him to feel despair and loneliness. This alienation stems from a complete intrusion into his personal and intimate space. Cohen (1992) argues that “We use the term stress to refer to both psychological and physiological effects of stress appraisal. Psychological effects of appraisal that are implicated in disorder include increased negative affect, lower self-esteem, and lower feelings of control” (pp.110-111). It might be assumed that social isolation and feeling lonely would increase the possibility of several sorts of disorders that would harm the person both psychologically and physically.

The story of *Fight Club* reveals how someone may fight against his feelings by himself. The protagonist of the story intends to support groups for testicular cancer, which uncovers his strong desire for belonging. He discovers a support group called Remaining Men Together, which specifically caters to men dealing with testicular cancer. This group stands out as it defies societal norms and expectations regarding masculine behavior. Within this unique setting, men are encouraged to openly express their emotions and grieve the loss of their testicles, which can evoke feelings of castration anxiety. Rather than suppressing their feelings, the members of this group would find solace and support by allowing themselves to cry and acknowledge their sadness. The group serves as a safe space for them to confront and process their emotions without judgment. This act of crying expresses a genuine need for the human body to feel pain and sorrow. This act might be ‘a sort of internally directed torture that satisfies the death instinct’ as Freud mentions in one of his works.

The Narrator of the story meets people who are weak or rejected by society. They show him a different way of living that doesn't require being perfect or pretending to be perfect. The therapy sessions focus on different problems related to the body, like cancer, parasites, brain issues, bone diseases, and leukemia. These things are unpleasant, but they remind the Narrator that he has a body and it's real. The body represents possibilities, even if they're not pleasant ones. The Narrator imagines himself dying during these sessions, and by "dying" he finds a way to appreciate life again. It's like he's creating a dream world where he can keep finding happiness every day. Freud (1949) believes that "...the individual forming part of a group differs from the isolated individual, but it is less easy to discover the causes of this difference" (p.7). Finding the self, different from others in a group would negatively affect one's psyche and he/she would feel rejected by a group. In the story, the protagonist says "Every evening, I died, and every evening, I was born. Resurrected" (Palahniuk, 1996, p.22). The idea might be interpreted that the person experiences a shift in feelings and attitudes once he becomes part of a group.

Being apart from a society or a social group would affect everyone and they might find themselves lonely without any support. This feeling of loneliness may be a base for several psychological disorders and problems. In this respect, the narrator of the story interacts with another person in the testicular cancer group. Feeling lonely and being emotional, he utters "I've been coming here every week for two years, and every week Bob wraps his arms around me, and I cry" (Palahniuk, 1996, p.4). Mijuskovic, (1977), in a work "Loneliness: An interdisciplinary approach" argues that "Confronted with this impressive variety of interpretations, I don't know if I am able to offer a comparable general principle, but I shall try. In a word that principal is loneliness... (p.113). It is interpreted that loneliness might be a source for many psychological problems in a personal life and may cause unpleasant actions against others.

The main story of *Fight Club* begins when the Narrator, gets into a fistfight with Tyler Durden. The Narrator loses his place to live and moves into an old, run-down building on Paper Street to live with Tyler. Shortly after, Tyler asks the Narrator to hit him with all his strength. He says "I want you to hit me as hard as you can" (p.46). This strange request results in a continuous fight between them where

they hit each other hard in public. Their fight is not an intentional hurt but it might be described as 'new way to change' and be another person. The narrator says states;

I didn't want to, but Tyler explained it all, about not wanting to die without any scars, about being tired of watching only professionals fight, and wanting to know more about himself. About self-destruction. At the time, my life just seemed too complete, and maybe we have to break everything to make something better out of ourselves (Palahniuk, 1996, p. 46).

Their fight also leads to the formation of a club after people notice their fight in front of the bar. The fight in itself is a strange kind of performance where the Narrator and Tyler are like mirror images of each other causing similar wounds to each other. The fight between them is a form of friendly fight but it is an equally violent one. It is a violence that they both welcome and desire. The fight between these two is a sadomasochistic act where they hurt and get hurt at the same time.

The narrator makes the case that violence is a way for people to break free from society's expectations. This idea goes back to traditional activities that men used to do, like fighting, to challenge modern values and norms. In *Fight Club*, violence is a way for the lower class to protest against their struggles (Arifin & Bodiman, 2020, p.39). The idea of contradiction and fighting against the norms of society to prove who the self is becomes obvious when the topic is studied from a 'psychological violence' point of view. Along with the discussion, in a work which is addressed; *Psychoanalytic Understanding of Violence and Suicide* (2005), and in the contradiction between violence and sadism, Perelberg, argues that "in Self-preservative violence, the aim is to negate the danger and to remove the source of danger... (p.4). It is interpreted that, in some cases violence might be for self-determination of one in a group for various reasons.

Tyler Durden's way of looking at the world starts to influence The Narrator's thinking, and Chuck Palahniuk clearly shows that these two characters have very different beliefs. Tyler doesn't agree with the way society revolves around money

and business. The Narrator begins to adopt Tyler's perspective not long after they meet. The narrator explains why he and other men like and follow Tyler's method:

You tell yourself, this is the last sofa I will ever need in my life. Buy the sofa, then for a couple years you're satisfied that no matter what goes wrong, at least you've got your sofa issue handled. Then the right set of dishes. Then the perfect bed. The drapes. The rug. Then you're trapped in your lovely nest, and the things you used to own, now they own you (Palahniuk, 1996, p.44).

The quote above reveals how The Narrator's way of thinking changes over time. He starts to understand that being too focused on material possessions is dangerous. He also notices that mindset is spreading through society. In this part, The Narrator talks about how people in American culture are not thinking logically. They don't realize that buying things obsessively won't make them happy (Arifin & Bodiman, 2020, p.41). This perspective on American culture, shared by The Narrator and Tyler Durden, leads to the creation of the fight club.

In the context of the fight club, engaging in physical combat can be seen as a way for individuals to tap into their primal instincts and release pent-up frustration or aggression. By breaking away from the constraints of materialism and societal expectations, participants may experience a sense of liberation and self-discovery. After all, human modern teaching dictates that violence is not something human and it must be eliminated. Freud argues the uselessness of these methods as there is no escape from the violent impulse in humanity. He states:

We have argued in favor of a special aggressive and destructive instinct in men, not on account of the teachings of history or our experience in life but based on general considerations to which we were led by examining the phenomena of sadism and masochism (Freud, 1964, p.104).

Based on Freud's discussion, these men release their pressured instincts by beating each other. This can potentially lead to their liberation from the grip of material possessions. One may argue that the participation in physical combat and the release

of aggression aligns with Freud's concept of the death instinct. By engaging in violent activities, individuals may find an outlet for their repressed aggressive impulses and destructive tendencies. Feeling disillusioned and dissatisfied with his consumer-driven existence, the protagonist forms the club as a way to rebel against society's constraints and regain a sense of control.

Moving out of Trinity Episcopal's basement into the basements of unnamed bars shows a transition from support groups to fight clubs. The narrator forms the fight club under a bar. By moving to these basement bars, these men are able to experience their masculinity without worrying about societal norms. This desire for a more primitive state emphasizes the need to dismantle societal structures in order to start fresh. Tyler isn't longing for a specific moment in history; he simply wants a primitive state untainted by feminizing influences and consumerism. Instead of targeting a specific historical era, Tyler wants to destroy history as a whole. In the first chapter, the narrator reveals that Tyler's intention is not just to blow up the Parker-Morris Building, but to use it as a way to destroy "the national museum which is [his] real target" (Palahniuk, 1996, p.14). By destroying the national museum, Tyler aims to erase the preserved records of the nation's history. This radical approach disregards the significance of preserving collective experiences and the lessons they offer, favoring a complete rupture with the past in pursuit of his primitive ideal. The discussion may find its relevance to the topic called 'affective violence' which is brought in as "[affective violence] is a reaction to a specific threat... (Perelberg, 2005, p.32). One may argue that this sort of violence would be a sort of reaction to not being accepted in a group and being rejected by its members.

The members of the fight club are disenchanting men who seek an outlet for their frustrations. They come from various walks of life, encompassing a wide range of professions and backgrounds. The club serves as a refuge where these men can unleash their primal instincts. By engaging in brutal fights, they find a cathartic release, transcending their mundane lives and experiencing a raw sense of liberation. Participating in the fight club has a profound impact on the members. The physical violence they engage in serves as a form of therapy, allowing them to confront their repressed emotions and societal conditioning. The fights strip away their superficial

identities, exposing their true selves. Through pain and suffering, they discover a sense of authenticity and self-realization. The author states;

Maybe at lunch, the waiter comes to your table and the waiter has the two black eyes of a giant panda from fight club last weekend when you saw him get his head pinched between the concrete floor and the knee of a two-hundred-pound stock boy who kept slamming a fist into the bridge of the waiter's nose again and again in flat hard packing sounds you could hear over all the yelling until the waiter caught enough breath and sprayed blood to say, stop (p.48).

The narrator and Tyler enjoy their problems and become violent because they feel it makes them more human instead of less human. There is a particular part of the story where Tyler tells the narrator to scare Raymond, a clerk who works at a low-paying and unfulfilling job at a store called Korner Mart. Thus, the narrator believes that such a frightening experience is needed to wake him up.

In a work, *The Fiction of Self-Destruction* (2005). Kavadlo, by analyzing the novel discusses that the characters' frequent celebrations and glorifications of masculinity, sex, individuality, and mayhem attempt to forge something palpable and real in a world where everything is a 'copy of a copy of a copy' or a world of surreal hyper-reality. Through Palahniuk's dramatic irony, however, readers have the opportunity to feel the redemptive powers of violence and near-death experiences (Kavadlo, 2005, p.7). These experiences are supposed to be a relief of their suppressed violent instincts.

The members of the fight club are all men. Women are not anywhere near the club. The reasons behind violence has been mostly associated with certain social convictions that establish a connection between males and violence. Robert Muchembled, in his work *History of Violence* (2012), notes that "destructive aggression is a male affair" (p.13). This pattern has remained relatively consistent throughout history, with a small percentage of murderers being women both in thirteenth-century and contemporary Europe and England.

While it might be tempting to attribute this fact to notions of feminine gentleness versus male brutality, the true link lies not between maleness and violence but between violence and the concept of manliness. This concept of manliness is upheld by societies to maintain the recognition and definition of gender roles. Boys are often rewarded for conforming to male stereotypes, which include displaying aggressive behavior and competing with and defeating other boys. These male stereotypes have emerged from traditional family role distributions (Muchembled, 2012; Campbell & Cross, 2012). In essence, the association between males and violence is not intrinsic but a social construct that arises from the notion of manliness perpetuated by society's gender expectations and roles.

In the club, men engage in violent fights to be closer to their primal selves and have a sense of being truly alive. They believe that by embracing their desires for raw, physical experiences, they can discover a more authentic way of living. Through these intense and sometimes painful encounters, they explore the possibilities of their bodies that were previously suppressed. They see their bodies as a gateway to a utopian experience, not in the sense of achieving a perfect society, but in the sense of opening up new and exciting opportunities (Burgess, 2015, p.265). Tyler Durden establishes strict rules for the fight club, emphasizing the importance of not talking about the fight club and the acceptance of pain and violence as a path to enlightenment. The idea behind such a thought might be found in Freud's viewpoint which says; "It really seems as though it is necessary for us to destroy some other thing or person in order not to destroy ourselves, in order to guard against the impulsion to self-destruction" (1964, p.105). This statement by Freud aligns with the belief on which the fight club is created.

Chuck Palahniuk's writing often focuses on harming and changing the human body. Bodies are physically damaged from the outside, beaten until they are unrecognizable and completely destroyed. Palahniuk sees the human body as a place where people search for ways to live genuinely in a world where it's hard to tell what is real and what is fake. The rules that used to guide our behavior and determine our chances for a good life no longer apply. This includes rules about desire, pleasure, and family roles. Everything is turned upside down. The destruction of bodies through mutilation is one way to recognize their power and influence over the self.

He states “Only two guys to a fight. One fight at a time. They fight without shirts or shoes. The fights go on as long as they have to. Those are the other rules of fight club” (Palahniuk, 1996, p.49). This nonstop violence makes the fight club unique in that no one cares about their physical engagement or restricts their freedom in fighting, they fight for as long as they have to be.

The violence in *Fight Club* delves into the concept of masculinity. The fights become a means for the characters to assert their masculinity and rebel against a society that often emasculates them (Slade, 2009, p.62). In a world that suppresses their primal instincts, the fight club offers an opportunity for the characters to reclaim power and dominance. Through violent acts, they find a sense of identity and purpose. Without ties to the past or the influence of male figures, there is no clear future for them. However, the harm they inflict on the body may be a way to create new opportunities for finding value, identity, and a genuine existence in a world that seems to have erased those possibilities.

Tyler succeeds in attracting people around him because he speaks to their desires. He enjoys what Freud (1949) describes as the personality ‘prestige’. He is capable of persuading people of the righteousness of his actions. Freud states that:

Prestige is a sort of domination exercised over us by an individual, a work, or an idea. It entirely paralyzes our ‘critical faculty and fills us with astonishment and respect. It would seem to arouse a feeling like that of fascination with hypnosis (1964, p.21).

The idea might find its significance when one becomes aware of human beings' emotional and physical needs. The fight club, however, gains popularity, more members join, and the intensity of the fights escalates, with participants seeking a deeper sense of liberation through violence. Tyler Durden has a remarkable talent for recruiting men into Fight Club and later into Project Mayhem. This suggests that men harbor a deep dissatisfaction and an innate longing to reconnect with their forgotten heritage. Surprisingly, the rigid expectations imposed by traditional masculinity paradoxically provide a sense of liberation. These expectations empower

men to showcase their courage, validate their masculinity, and reclaim their rightful place in society (Boon, 2003, p.272).

Another aspect of Freud's critique is the idea of 'groupthink,' where the collective identity of a group can lead to a loss of individuality and a heightened conformity to group norms. In "Fight Club," the members become immersed in the group's culture, adopting the aggressive and violent behavior promoted by Tyler. The shared identity of the fight club fosters a sense of belonging and camaraderie, leading the participants to embrace the violent acts collectively. Freud (1949) asserts;

Isolated, he may be a cultivated individual; in a crowd, he is a barbarian—that is, a creature acting by instinct. He possesses the spontaneity, the violence, the ferocity, and also the enthusiasm and heroism of primitive beings. [...] He then dwells especially upon the lowering in intellectual ability which an individual experiences when he becomes merged in a group (p.14).

Moreover, Freud's theory also emphasizes the role of social reinforcement within a group. In *Fight Club*, the participants feed off each other's aggressive energy, creating a self-perpetuating cycle of violence. The shared experiences of violence reinforce the group's cohesion and sense of purpose, intensifying their collective engagement in criminal activities. Additionally, the members direct their frustrations and resentments toward norms, Western culture, and authority figures. Through their violent acts, they collectively channel their grievances and project them onto external targets, symbolizing a form of rebellion against the system. The thrill and gratification derived from participating in the club provide a powerful incentive for the collective continuation of criminal activities.

The fightclub becomes a subversive force, urging its members to reject conformity and embrace their primal instincts. The violence escalates, blurring the line between rebellion and destruction. This shows that violence gradually turns in the novel from being a release to being appetitive. Individuals no longer seek violence to answer the call of instinct only, but also because they enjoy it. Freud emphasizes that "is that men are not gentle, friendly creatures wishing for love, who

simply defend themselves if they are attacked, but [...have] a powerful measure of desire for aggression” (Freud, 1930, p.85). This is a fact echoed through the thirst for violence found among the club members. A key to this desire to regain masculine heritage is a longing for the father, the source of masculine legacy. Significantly, both the narrator and Tyler Durden are products of absent fathers. The narrator’s father was only around for the first six years of his life, choosing every six years to set up a new franchise for a new family, human relationships had been consumed by the capitalist impulse toward production; families are his product. It's been said that Tyler never knew his father. Each personality represents a reaction to a culture that provides little guidance into manhood.

Throughout the novel, the Narrator often talks about a distressing event that happened in his past. He opens up about the way his parents treated him, with a special focus on the role his father played in shaping his life. He declares;

Me, I knew my dad for about six years, but I don’t remember anything. My dad starts a new family in a new town about every six years. This isn’t so much like a family as it’s like he sets up a franchise (p.50).

The situation described in the quote reflects a common occurrence in contemporary Western society. Freud suggests that the jealousy of a father figure develops into completion in masculinity to beat this figure and rise above him (Freud, 1964). However, this has not happened with the main characters. In the novel, the Narrator perceives his father’s actions as terrible and distressing, yet his father seems to find enjoyment in his behavior. This highlights the contrasting perspectives on the same actions within the story.

The Narrator sees Tyler as a reflection of his personality and admires him. In simple words, the Narrator wants to be just like Tyler. In Freudian psychology, this desire to become like someone else is called “ego-ideal.” It means that Tyler represents an ideal version of the Narrator that he aspires to become (Ali & Suleiman, 2021, p.632). The sense of “lack” experienced by the narrator, as well as the other members of the fight club, can be seen as a failure to integrate with the authority of the father figure (resulting in psychosis). However, it can also arise from being

deeply influenced by patriarchal norms and expectations. As a split subject of the phallic signifier, the narrator feels a heightened intensity of symbolic castration. The underlying anxiety in *Fight Club* is a result of the blurring of traditional gender distinctions between what is considered “masculine” and “feminine.” In this view, the strong desire for the phallus is an attempt to establish a clear division between these symbolic positions, seeking stability by returning to what is considered masculine and strong.

Thus, violence plays a crucial role in the characters’ journey of self-discovery.

Frykman (2003) in the work named *Violence and the Re-discovery of Place* Believes that “... violence intensifies the relationship between people and place, and provokes a complex, and very pronounced feeling of self-being fused with the sense of place” (p.70). By engaging in physical combat, the members of the fight club strip away the layers of societal conditioning and find their innate masculinity. The pain and suffering they endure become a pathway to authenticity. It is through violence that they break free from their mundane lives and experience a transformative journey toward self-realization. Tyler Durden stages a car crash stunt to confront the members’ mortality and encourage them to embrace a fearless, authentic existence. In this scene, he forces the narrator into an ear-death experience. Tyler believes that “only through destroying myself can I discover the greater power of my spirit”(Palahniuk, 1996, p.110). Palahniuk’s writings employ violence as a means to prompt contemplation about what could arise beyond violent acts. He encourages readers to consider an alternative to a cultural environment where people’s lives are dominated by a mere imitation of genuine experiences. Within this context, pain serves as a pathway to access and appreciate authentic forms of pleasure.

In *Fight Club*, the narrator takes a contrasting approach by resorting to self-inflicted harm as a means of expressing his existence amidst the hollowness of his consumer-driven world. He causes harm to others and inflicts pain upon himself, both physically (by engaging in fights) and by provoking others to fight him. He employs his own suffering as a symbolic representation of his presence in the world. He states,

Fight club isn't about winning or losing fights. [...] There is grunting and noise at fight club like at the gym, but fight club isn't about looking good. There's hysterical shouting in tongues like at church, and when you wake up Sunday afternoon you feel saved (Palahniuk, 1996, p.51).

Although not involving criminal acts, the narrator's actions are equally vicious and extreme. The narrative implies that in a society that increasingly disregards meaning and individuality, violence becomes the only means to reclaim one's sense of self, whether through aggression toward others or self-inflicted harm. This dilemma is further exemplified in another quote portraying;

I love everything about Tyler Durden, his courage and his smarts. His nerve. Tyler is funny and charming and forceful and independent, and men look up to him and expect him to change their world. Tyler is capable and free, and I am not. I'm not Tyler Durden (p.174).

The quote above highlights that the Narrator grapples with a sense of admiration for a violent and sometimes criminal person who serves as an ideal of masculinity. To cope with this internal conflict, he projects his psyche onto an alter ego that he has constructed. Initially, this alter ego appears as a "shadow," but it eventually evolves into a manifestation of his sexual anxiety, insomnia, and feelings of isolation.

According to M. Abiyyu and D. Anwar (2023), unbeknownst to the Narrator, this alter ego takes the form of Tyler Durden, who becomes the charismatic leader of a domestic terrorist organization, providing an avenue for the Narrator's pursuit of liberation and enjoyment (p.130). Taken as a whole, Palahniuk rearranges Freudian concepts such as sublimation, projection, and discontent with civilization into a violent organization led by a man and his alter-ego. In *Fight Club*, the rebellion against the social order manifests as a twisted cruelty directed inwardly and outwardly towards society.

The Narrator visits various fight clubs across the country. Yet, each time he inquires about Tyler's whereabouts, the Fight Club members display confusion. At

this crucial juncture, a powerful twist in the narrative unfolds. It becomes evident that Jack himself is experiencing schizophrenia, and Tyler is a manifestation of his own fantasies and unconscious desires. Becoming aware of his schizophrenia, the narrator (formerly referred to as Jack) now strives to prevent the planned terrorist attack on the seven skyscrapers. He realizes that he has been experiencing *Dissociative Identity Disorder* (DID), which led to the creation of multiple identities within himself. He says “Oh, this is bullshit. This is a dream. Tyler is a projection. He’s a dissociative personality disorder. A psychogenic fugue state. Tyler Durden is my hallucination” (Palahniuk, 1996, p.168). It becomes apparent that the narrator begins to grasp the realization that everything he has experienced thus far has been a product of his hallucination. He starts to perceive his reality as a dream-like state

One of the targets that a reader may intend to find in *Fight Club* would be that Tyler Durden is the alter ego of the narrator who suffers from dissociative identity disorder. But how do readers make sense of this split identity in the story? Recent psychoanalytic criticism has put forward several possible explanations. One possibility is that the narrator creates this division within himself as a defense mechanism against the emotional wounds caused by his father’s repeated humiliations and abandonment. Another interpretation is that the text serves as a portrayal of psychosis, a failure to internalize the guidance and authority of a father figure, reflecting a broader cultural decline of paternal influence. This suggests that the narrator splits himself to introduce a father figure into his life and cope with his unresolved emotional struggles (De Chavez, 2017, p.4).

It is revealed in the twist ending that the injuries sustained by the narrator are self-inflicted. This revelation arises from the fact that the narrator and his alter ego, Tyler Durden, are essentially the same person with a split personality. Both the narrator and Tyler engage in acts of sadomasochism, but as the truth unfolds, it becomes clear that these acts are primarily focused on masochism alone (Kavadlo, 2005, p. 5). Palahniuk’s narrator in *Fight Club* revolts against the novel’s portrayal of emasculating conformity prevalent in contemporary America. According to Younis Ali and Nahidh Suleiman (2021), a psychoanalytic interpretation of the text views Tyler Durden as a manifestation of Freud’s id, representing primal instincts and desires, while the narrator embodies the ego, responsible for imposing

the reality principle. The narrator creates Tyler within his unconscious as a means of projecting his personal issues and the impulsive aspects of the id onto society. Tyler, representing the id, exhibits increasingly violent behaviors, reflecting the narrator's succumbing to societal pressures that lead him to behave in morally questionable ways. Tyler's actions are often reckless and unacceptable, such as blending pornography into family movies, engaging in violent acts, and engaging in unsanitary behavior while working as a waiter, like urinating in customers' food (p.630).

The actions of Project Mayhem ultimately lead to chaos and violence, blurring the line between rebellion and destruction. The novel explores the fine line between liberation and anarchy, questioning the consequences of challenging societal norms without a clear moral compass. It serves as a cautionary tale, reminding us of the dangers of unchecked rebellion and the need for responsible resistance. Bob, a member of the fight club, is shot dead during one of the club's destructive missions, leading to increasing tensions and questioning among the members. Additionally, Tyler plants explosive materials beneath the national museum to destroy it. Tyler, as the embodiment of the narrator's repressed desires, is driven by a deep-seated urge for destruction and rebellion against societal norms. The act of vandalizing the museum and destroying cultural artifacts is a symbolic expression of Tyler's aggressive impulses and his desire to dismantle established cultural values. Furthermore, the act of violence in the museum serves as a form of release for Tyler's pent-up aggression and frustration. The museum, as a symbol of high culture and societal norms, becomes a target for Tyler's instinctive violence, as he seeks to challenge and disrupt the prevailing order. Additionally, Freud's theory of instinctive violence suggests that individuals may use violence as a means of asserting dominance and power. In the case of Tyler Durden, the ramifications and criminal actions that have spread after forming the fight club do satisfy him.

The narrator of the story engages in a fight with his alter-ego and then points the gun to Tyler's head. However, he knows the uselessness of such an action and decides to point the gun to his own head telling Tyler that this is how he is going to kill him. He symbolically kills Tyler, merging all of Tyler's memories, beliefs, and experiences with his own. As a result, the narrator, now referred to as Joe, embodies a unique character who encompasses the full potential and knowledge of two distinct

identities and ideologies. Within the Narrator, the reconciliation of both Tyler and himself takes place, showcasing the coexistence and integration of these once conflicting identities. Tyler, though killed by his own creator, does express something that the narrator does not see. He expresses the narrator's vision of the world. A place where people are free from the norms might be exactly what the narrator is seeking throughout the novel. In fact, Freud (1949), states that dreams, hallucinations and hysteria are expressive of the repressed desires:

We have pointed out that this predominance of the life of phantasy and of the illusion born of an unfulfilled wish is the ruling factor in the psychology of neuroses. We have found that what neurotics are guided by is not ordinary objective reality but psychological reality. A hysterical symptom is based upon phantasy instead of upon the repetition of real experience, and the sense of guilt in an obsessional neurosis is based upon the fact of an evil intention which was never carried out (p.20).

Thus, Freud's theory posits that the unconscious mind contains hidden desires, fears, and memories that can influence an individual's actions without their awareness. In the case of the narrator, he struggles with deep-seated feelings of emasculation, societal conformity, and inner frustrations. These repressed emotions find an outlet through the creation of Tyler Durden, who represents the narrator's unconscious desires for rebellion and empowerment. The narrator's unconscious need for liberation from societal constraints and conformity leads him to create Tyler as a manifestation of his repressed self. Tyler becomes the embodiment of everything the narrator wishes he could be: assertive, powerful, and free from societal norms.

In a research with the title of "Psychoanalysis and the aggression of large groups" Alexander Mitscherlich (1971) states "The source of aggressive behavior is hotly debated" (p.52). Since there are various sources for the bases of 'aggression' based on the argument above, in Tyler's case might be unconscious. Tyler begins to act out the narrator's unconscious desires for aggression and rebellion, the fight club serves as a symbolic outlet for the narrator's pent-up emotions. Tyler's violent acts

and the fight club become vehicles through which the narrator can vicariously experience a sense of empowerment and liberation from the constraints of his everyday life. Furthermore, Freud's theory of the unconscious mind also sheds light on the dissociative identity disorder present in the narrator's character. Tyler Durden represents a dissociated part of the narrator's psyche, acting out his unconscious desires and allowing the narrator to distance himself from the consequences of these violent acts.

Palahniuk does not explicitly address Tyler's permanent disappearance in the novel by leaving room for various interpretations regarding the narrator's future. It remains uncertain whether the narrator will continue to coexist with or without Tyler. While Tyler appears to have vanished from the narrator's life, there is no concrete evidence suggesting that this disappearance is permanent. The novel's ending does not provide a definitive indication of Tyler's lasting absence. However, it does imply that the narrator, represented through the use of "I," takes on the responsibility of pulling the trigger of the pistol and shoots himself. His initial response prioritizes his own death over the "death" of Tyler (Ali & Sulaiman, 2021, p.637).

Palahniuk explores different types of violence and delves into their resolution and their connection to a future that holds value. In this respect, his approach to address violence is through family relationships remains evident (Slade, 2009, p.66). According to Freud, child disciplining and guidance leads to more suppression of primal instincts than success and civilizing. As a grown up, the narrator as a disciplined human realizes the repercussions of using violence and terrorism he, thus, unconsciously creates an alter-ego that does those wildly violent crimes for him. Tyler is the untamed liberated version of the Narrator's desires and unconsciousness. He represents everything that the narrator is not. The novel raises concerns about the consequences of mindless rebellion and the need for a moral compass. It reminds us that violence, when untethered from ethical considerations, can lead to chaos and perpetuate a cycle of destruction.

In conclusion, violence is the major theme which is portrayed in Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club*. It serves as a manifestation of frustration, a vehicle for asserting masculinity, and a path to self-discovery and authenticity. However, the

novel also emphasizes the potential dangers and ethical implications of unchecked violence. *Fight Club* offers a thought-provoking critique of consumer culture and encourages readers to reevaluate their values and the societal structures they inhabit. In the context of society, *Fight Club* serves as a critique of consumer culture and the dehumanizing effects of capitalism. Violence is a notion which challenges and questions individuals' values and priorities. It exposes the emptiness of materialistic pursuits and prompts readers to reflect on their own lives. The novel acts as a subversive force, urging society to reevaluate its obsession with consumerism and conformity. Trying to find a path that is free from its dominance and penetration of people's minds, the protagonist, intend to express the inner and unconscious part of one which drives his/her actions indirectly, thus, it drives their behaviors.

CONCLUSION

Violence is an excessive and dehumanizing act which may have various bases. Theories on cruelty and aggressiveness would include natural drive, reaction to anxiety, learned habit, and exertion of authority. Aggressiveness might be characterized by the desire to harm others, expressed through actions, words, or fantasy. Development of aggressiveness involves a combination of innate and environmental influences, with failures to adapt leading to violent behaviors. Violence refers to aggression that goes beyond natural or adaptive limits and aims for extreme harm, even death. Overall, violence has significant impacts on individuals' physical, mental, and emotional well-being, emphasizing the need for understanding, prevention, and intervention in these harmful behaviors.

Understanding cruelty, aggression, and violence might be significant since these behaviors have fundamental impacts on individuals and also society. Violence can be categorized as either hostile or instrumental. Hostile violence involves actions intended to hurt or harm others, such as using physical force as a form of discipline. On the other hand, instrumental violence such as physical punishment within families refers to actions that have the potential to cause harm without the intention to hurt or damage another person. In this respect, various theories attempt to explain the development of violence in dissimilar circumstances. Some may argue that violence is an innate drive or reaction to anxiety and despair. On the other hand, others may suggest that it is a learned habit or a means of exerting authority and dominance, particularly within patriarchal systems. Additionally, psychoanalytic thought highlights that aggression may stem from abnormal expressions of hostility, such as domestic violence. Genetic factors have also been implicated in certain types of aggression.

Violence not only affects its direct victims but also has a broader impact on the health of society. As Perelberg (2005) discusses the matter as "[affective violence] is a reaction to a specific threat... (p.32), threats might be found everywhere and society would be involved in such threats in case violent acts are shaped and run in a community. Offenders, particularly those convicted of violent crimes, are more prone to physical and mental illnesses, including personality

disorders and substance abuse. Concurrent mental illness, drug abuse, poor physical health, and increased mortality rates are common among individuals often associated with violent behaviors. Both offenders and victims are at risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder, further highlighting the profound and lasting effects of violence.

Sigmund Freud introduced the concepts of life instinct (eros) and a death instinct (thanatos). Freud's exploration of these drives was influenced by his clinical research on transference psychopathology and emphasized the conflict between ego impulses and sexual instincts. Based on Freud's arguments, one may interpret that aggression is not solely a reaction to external stimuli but also an inherent part of the human psyche. He suggests that the death instinct manifests as aggressive and destructive behavior, while the life instinct seeks to maintain and complicate existence. Freud's theory of aggression expanded on his earlier ideas about violence being a manifestation of the sexual impulse used for mastery. He acknowledges the existence of other mental powers, such as ego impulses, which influence human behavior alongside the sexual and aggressive instincts.

Although psychoanalysis is not typically associated with the study of aggressive behavior, psychoanalysts have contributed to the understanding of violence. Freud's work on aggression sparked significant debates and studies, shifting the focus from viewing aggression as a mere reaction to an external stimulus to recognizing its instinctual nature. Modern psychoanalysis encompasses various perspectives, including structural theorists who consider aggression an underlying drive and self-psychologists who view it as a consequence of narcissistic injury.

Freud's theory of aggression posits that the death instinct focuses on destruction and violence and it coexists with the creative and constructive aspects of the life instinct. Based on previous discussion by Alexander Mitscherlich (1971) "The source of aggressive behavior is hotly debated", there might be various reasons and sources for aggression and violence in unlike situations. It may be in line with the idea of Chuck Palahniuk's in *Fight Club*. The author assumes divergent bases for Tyler and the narrator's aggressiveness. They may fight in different circumstances for unlike reasons, but the reasons behind them would be various.

Freud recognizes the importance of societal norms and regulations in restraining aggression. He contends that civilization imposes restrictions on instinctual impulses, including aggression and sexuality, to maintain social order. The suppression of aggression is necessary for individuals to coexist harmoniously, although it can result in internal conflict and the intensification of aggressive tendencies directed towards the ego. This perspective is something that occurs in *Fight Club* and *A Clockwork Orange* in various ways. Characters in these stories experience violence and aggression from dissimilar sources.

Freud emphasizes that the need for boundaries enforced by law helps contain the primitive instincts within acceptable limits but it creates internal struggles at the same time. While society endeavors to control and channel aggression, individuals must find healthy outlets for their aggressive impulses. Failure to express aggression can lead to self-destructive tendencies. One may interpret from Freud's arguments that small communities and groups provide an avenue for the expression of aggression against individuals outside the group, helping individuals find satisfaction for their aggressive inclinations. Freud's theories of aggression extend beyond the individual level to include group psychology and societal dynamics. He believes that ancestral memories and cultural influences shape both individual and collective behaviors. Freud views aggression as an inevitable aspect of human nature, closely tied to survival instincts and the struggle for self-preservation. He emphasizes that acknowledging and understanding aggression as a natural instinct can contribute to a healthier society.

Thus, the study of aggression in psychoanalysis encompasses contrasting viewpoints regarding its origins. While some attribute aggression to innate instincts, others see it as a reaction to external circumstances. Freud's theories on aggression emphasize the conflict between life and death instincts, with aggression being an inherent part of human nature. The idea is reflected in the story of *A Clockwork Orange* in which the author utters "I [Alex] would have liked to pummel them both harder and tear them apart on their own floor" (Burgess, 1962, p.40). This discussion represents that how human being might be aggressive to a big extent even to the anger point to 'tearing someone apart'. Freud recognizes the need for societal regulations to curb aggression but also highlights the importance of finding healthy outlets for its

expression. Understanding and acknowledging aggression as a natural instinct can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of human behavior and societal dynamics.

Anthony Burgess' novel, *A Clockwork Orange* explores themes of free will, morality, and violence. Burgess, unlike many authors, discussed the novel extensively through essays, interviews, and letters to editors. He has expressed the danger of controlled behavior within the story by portraying the characters' acts and behaviors. In this story, Alex exhibits characteristics commonly associated with psychopaths and serves as a recurring figure in twentieth-century English fiction. Alex, a white male of high intelligence, displays a calculated and unremorseful nature. Capable of charm and extreme violence. The novel presents explicit accounts of organized brutality, offering a disturbing spectacle of horrors. Alex's narratives contain deeply disturbing and repugnant instances of cruelty.

Violence is a prominent theme in *A Clockwork Orange*. The central question of the novel revolves around whether it is better to eliminate violence by removing free will or to allow individuals to exercise their free will, even if it means they may act violently. The novel portrays different forms of violence and their contribution to the overall message. The novel explores the complex portrayal of Alex, often categorizing him as a sociopath or psychopath, with behaviors consistent with antisocial personality disorder. The novel also portrays different forms of violence, with physical violence being the most obvious. Alex's violence goes beyond conventional norms, driven by a frenzied state devoid of rational justification. His brutality is an almost natural catastrophe, with motives that are simply varied. Classical music, particularly the works of Beethoven and Mozart, fuels Alex's destructive energy and transforms his deeds into a performance. Burgess expresses concerns over the erosion of cultural values and the emergence of a subculture rooted in crime, deviance, violence, and brutality.

Furthermore, Alex embodies the death instinct in action. He is driven by a desire for violence, destruction, and domination, taking pleasure in causing pain and suffering. His violent behavior is a manifestation of a psychological conflict between his life instinct and death instinct. Repressed desires and emotions, such as fear of

abandonment and feelings of inadequacy, build up tension within Alex, leading to the release of aggression and violence.

Throughout the novel, Alex's actions highlight the deterioration of moral integrity and the disregard for cultural values. His acts of violence are often unprovoked, targeting innocent individuals. The novel portrays an urban wasteland, devoid of soul, where the youth prey upon the elderly without consequences. Perversity, violence, crime, and guilt dominate Alex's realm, where antisocial acts flourish in the absence of law and structure. Thus, the work, examines different forms of fascination with violence and classical music. The novel's language, particularly the Nadsat language, serves as a tool for the young generation to establish their distinct culture. It a disturbing portrayal of brutality, challenging societal norms and highlighting the erosion of traditional values.

Similarly, *Fight Club* is a novel that explores themes of masculinity, consumer culture, rebellion, and the consequences of unchecked violence. The story follows an unnamed protagonist who struggles with insomnia and eventually forms an underground fight club as a means of rebellion against societal norms. The work has been considered a critique of capitalism and has had a lasting impact on American and global pop culture. *Fight Club* positions Chuck Palahniuk as a critic of the American Dream. It specifically critiques consumer culture and explores the transformative power of rebellion. Initially, the club provides an outlet for personal growth and authenticity, but it descends into chaos and destruction.

A psychoanalytic reading of *Fight Club* reveals the protagonist's struggle with isolation. The narrator initially seeks solace by attending support groups for various illnesses, finding comfort in the presence of others who share their pain. However, his life takes a different turn when he meets Tyler Durden. The formation of Fight Club stems from the narrator's desire to break free and explore a more authentic existence. In the story, physical combat serves as a channel for participants to access their primal instincts and unleash pent-up frustration or aggression. The act of violence becomes a rebellion against the constraints imposed by materialism. Engaging in this raw experience grants individuals a profound sense of liberation and self-discovery, prompting them to reevaluate their values and priorities. By aligning

with Freud's concept of the death instinct, the fight club offers an outlet for repressed aggressive impulses and destructive tendencies.

By critiquing American consumer culture, the novel highlights the detrimental effects of its emptiness and alienation. The protagonist's apartment is gradually consumed by material possessions, symbolizing the intrusion of consumerism into his personal space. This invasion corrodes his authenticity, leaving him with a profound sense of emptiness. The fight club serves as a defiant rejection of this consumer-driven existence.

Tyler Durden's perspective challenges society's fixation on material possessions and exposes the superficiality of American culture. He advocates for breaking free from societal expectations and embracing a more fulfilling life. The deliberate destruction of material possessions, symbolized by the act of blowing up buildings, signifies a rejection of history and a yearning to start anew in a primitive state. Tyler's intention to destroy the national museum embodies a complete rupture with the past, rejecting the preservation of collective experiences. *Fight Club* is a novel that invites readers to reflect on societal systems, the pursuit of the American Dream, and the need for authenticity in an increasingly consumer-driven world.

Fight Club and *A Clockwork Orange* both explore the themes of restraining and unleashing violence, but they approach these themes from different perspectives. In Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club*, violence serves as a cathartic release for its participants. It provides an outlet through which individuals can rebel against the suffocating constraints of materialism and the numbing effects of a consumerist society. Through this violent outlet, characters in the novel undergo a transformative journey, experiencing a sense of liberation and self-discovery that is otherwise elusive in their mundane lives. By engaging in physical combat, the participants of *Fight Club* tap into a primal energy that allows them to break free from the monotony and superficiality of their existence. This violent release becomes a means of reclaiming their agency, defying societal expectations, and embracing a raw, authentic version of themselves. It becomes a symbolic act of resistance against a society that values conformity and commercialism.

However, Palahniuk's novel also raises thought-provoking questions about

the consequences of unleashing violence in a society driven by consumerism. As the novel progresses, the line between rebellion and anarchy blurs, and the characters become entangled in a destructive spiral that challenges the very foundations they sought to defy. It highlights the potential dangers of unchecked violence and the fragility of societal order.

On the other hand, In Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange*, violence takes on a different dimension. The protagonist, Alex, is a deeply disturbed individual who partakes in extreme acts of violence without remorse or any sense of liberation. However, rather than glorifying or unleashing violence, the narrative centers around the concept of restraining it. Alex undergoes a form of therapy aimed at eradicating his violent tendencies. This technique conditions him to associate violence with intense feelings of sickness and excruciating pain. The novel delves into the ethical implications of utilizing this method of control, questioning the morality of stripping an individual of their freedom in becoming violent.

Through Alex's experiences, *A Clockwork Orange* explores the profound consequences of removing an individual's agency and the potential dangers of enforcing behavioral conformity through extreme measures. It raises complex philosophical questions about the nature of free will, the role of punishment and rehabilitation, and the boundaries of societal control. By focusing on the restraint and manipulation of violence, the novel challenges readers to critically examine the balance between personal freedom and the need for societal order. It forces readers to confront the uncomfortable reality that suppressing one's capacity for violence may also suppress other essential aspects of human nature, such as individuality, choice, and personal growth.

To sum up, *Fight Club* and *A Clockwork Orange* present contrasting perspectives on the role of violence in human existence. In *Fight Club*, violence is initially portrayed as a necessary and transformative force that facilitates psychological well-being and fosters social connections. The protagonist's involvement in underground fights allows him to free himself from societal constraints and discover a sense of empowerment and purpose. However, as the narrative unfolds, the excessive indulgence in violence leads to the emergence of

terrorism and harm inflicted upon others, cautioning against the unchecked unleashing of violence. On the other hand, In *AClockworkOrange*, the consequences of both unleashing and suppressing violence are explored. The protagonist of the story, Alex, engages in extreme acts of violence that result in societal disorder and upheaval. However, when he is subjected to aversion therapy, his violent tendencies are forcibly suppressed by raising concerns regarding the elimination of the individuals' violence. Both novels offer thought-provoking perspectives on the restraint and expression of violence, suggesting the importance of accepting its existence while finding healthy ways to manage and come along with it. Both works prompt readers to contemplate the complexities surrounding violence, exploring its psychological, social, and ethical implications. They advocate for a nuanced approach that acknowledges the primal nature of violence while seeking constructive outlets for its expression, challenging preconceptions and promoting healthier and balanced approaches to addressing this fundamental aspect of human beings.

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