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## The Psychology of Sweeney Todd in 'Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street' (Psychological Study of Literature)

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**Abstract:** In this article, we delve into the character of Sweeney Todd in the script of the drama "Sweeney Todd: The Hideous Shaver of Fleet Street" through the lens of literary psychology. Utilizing a source triangulation approach, especially combining various library sources, we explore the background, motives, and inner conflicts that make up the complexity of the main characters. The results of the analysis showed that Sweeney Todd's psyche was formed by a number of factors, including traumatic experiences, social injustice, and strong impulses. In addition, this article considers the relationship of these characters to the social and cultural contexts that influence them, taking into account the various viewpoints reflected in the literature sources. This approach provides a deeper insight into the characters and the literary work as a whole. As such, this analysis not only provides a deep understanding of Sweeney Todd's complexity, but also highlights the importance of source triangulation in unraveling literary works. It is hoped that a deeper understanding of this character can provide a broader view of the human condition in general.

**Keywords:** *psychiatric conditions, Sweeney Todd, literary psychology*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Drama is a literary work that expresses various aspects of life, both in terms of the life of the author or the lives of the characters created in it. Drama or drama script contains the writer's personal experiences that he or she has experienced directly or indirectly. Drama comes from the Greek word (*draomai*) which can be interpreted as "action or deed" and is derived from the classical Greek (*dráo*) which means "to do". W.S. Rendra, in his book, writes that drama is an art that expresses people's thoughts or feelings by using physical practices, and speech (2007:103). Drama art is an art that expresses thoughts and feelings from the writer's personal experience through an action that is manifested in physical practice and speech. Indonesia is a country rich in art and culture so that Indonesia is one of the countries that is actively involved in the development of drama art. The art of drama is quite popular, but the branches are not all familiar, one of which is opera.

According to Burton D. Fisher, opera is a formal theater medium that expresses its dramatic essence by integrating its words and actions with music. Opera is a sublime blend of words, music, and all the arts of theater; It is a powerful theater that exerts an influence on one's sensitivity that can reach into the depths of the human soul (2005:14). Opera is a dramatic act that is staged on stage against the backdrop of the atmosphere and actors who use costumes, the sentences are conveyed, in whole or in part, by singing. A special feature of an opera is that the performance will be accompanied by an orchestra. It is true



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that most of the opera performances are delivered by singing or singing, but there are many elements in opera that must be considered, one of which is the dramatic practice and how the characters of the main characters can be conveyed.

This research is an analysis of one of the famous opera scriptwriters through *his stage performance* and film adapted from a script by Christopher G. Bond. This play was first staged in May 1973. The script of the musical drama titled *Sweeney Todd* tells a fairly actual event at this time, namely how trauma can change a person's character. Sweeney Todd is the main character of the theatrical show titled '*Sweeney Todd: The Hideous Shaver of Fleet Street*'. The script was later developed into a musical script in 1979 with Stephen Joshua Shondeim and Hugh Wheller, respectively, as composers and lyricists and as libretto makers. Then the musical script was turned into a film directed by Tim Burton. The story of Sweeney Todd brought about problems in England in 1846 when Queen Victoria was reigning. The problems that arise, among others, are the exploitation of young children, violations of the rule of law, financial problems and even love.

A Benjamin Barker is a very famous barber in London, his life is very sweet, he has a beautiful wife and has just been blessed with a cute baby girl. Life went perfectly until one day a judge named Turpin put his heart in his wife, who then tried to usurp her happiness. With the help of Opas Bamford, Barker is suddenly thrown into prison for an unreasonable mistake, albeit with unsubstantiated charges. He felt a tremendous injustice when he had to be imprisoned and exiled to Australia. Years later, with the help of Anthony Hope, a young sailor he met in exile, he managed to escape from prison and change his name to Sweeney Todd. He returned to London on a merchant ship with Anthony. Arriving in London, Todd tried to hide his identity as Benjamin Barker<sup>3e</sup>. All his attempts to hide his identity are in vain when he meets Mrs. Lovett, the owner of a meat pie restaurant located at the bottom of Todd's former house. Sweeney reoccupies the house with Mrs. Lovett, she is upstairs which she also uses as a barber and Mrs. Lovett downstairs occupies the restaurant which is also the main house. The wound inflicted by Judge Turpin was so serious and inflamed in Sweeney's heart, that Sweeney Todd was filled with anger. After hearing the story of Lucy being raped by Turpin and dying by suicide, as well as the story of Johanna being adopted and treated undeservedly by Turpin, anger grows stronger and turns into revenge. Sweeney wanted to kill Judge Turpin and Opas Bamford. However, his plan fell through when Anthony suddenly walked into the barber salon, revealing his plan to take Johanna away, unaware that Turpin was there. Sweeney Todd became even angrier because he had not succeeded in killing Turpin so he vented it on his customers. He killed all the customers who came to him to shave his hair, in exchange for his revenge on Judge Turpin who never came, and threw their bodies on the ground floor, in the fireplace, to be processed into pie filling by Mrs. Lovett. The reason for turning the victim's meat into a pie filling was not actually planned, but due to unstable economic conditions and to eliminate traces, Lovett and Sweeney agreed to use meat from their victims for the pie filling. The dirty work they did together turned out to be profitable for Lovett's restaurant. The success of the meat pie restaurant made Mrs. Lovett fall in love with Sweeney who she considered to bring good luck. Lovett always told Sweeney that his wife and child were dead in the hope that Sweeney would repay his

love. Eventually, just as Judge Turpin is actually about to come to Sweeney's barbershop, a mentally disturbed woman arrives, Todd then kills the woman without knowing that she turns out to be Lucy, his wife who is said to have died. After Lucy was killed, Turpin was the next victim. As Todd heads to the fireplace to confirm that Turpin is indeed dead, he notices Lucy's corpse and recognizes her as his wife. Remorse came to Sweeney, and soon he blamed Lovett and killed him by putting him in the fireplace. Later, Sweeney was killed by Toby, Mrs. Lovett's adopted daughter who was previously a subordinate of Sweeney's first victim.

After being hit by various life problems that are beyond reasonable limits, Sweeney Todd's character has a great tendency to grow up traumatic. Trauma that is ignored and tends not to be validated, either by the owner or by others, can give rise to various psychological disorders. A person's body and mind can be damaged by various mental illnesses. This is what attracted the attention of the writer to examine Sweeney Todd's life through the perspective of literary psychology to find out how the scriptwriter created this character.

## 2. METHOD

In this study, a qualitative descriptive approach is used to describe the phenomenon systematically and accurately. Qualitative research allows researchers to deepen their understanding of human experience, especially in the context of psychological theories. This method allows for an in-depth analysis of the characteristics and conditions related to the object of research.

Research data was obtained from three main sources: places, people, and documents. Place refers to the location where the manuscript or work was produced or produced, while the person involves the individuals involved in the use or production of the manuscript. In addition, documents and literature are also used as important data sources for research.

The main object of this research is the manuscript "Sweeney Todd: The Hideous Shaver of Fleet Street" by Christopher Bond translated by Bakdi Soemanto. This study aims to analyze the personality of the main character, Sweeney Todd aka Benjamin Barker, from a psychological perspective, especially in the context of psychopathology. The subject of the study is the character Sweeney Todd in the manuscript.

Data were collected through two main techniques: interviews and literature studies. Interviews are used to get information directly from relevant sources, while literature studies utilize documents and literature as data sources. Once the data is collected, the analysis is carried out through the stages of data reduction and data presentation, which allows the preparation of rational descriptions and conclusions. The validity of the data is guaranteed through triangulation techniques, by verifying the data through a variety of different sources and methods.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sweeney Todd is a key figure in Christopher G. Bond's opera script, titled Sweeney Todd: The Hideous Shaver of Fleet Street. The dark story of Benjamin Barker who has to hide his identity behind the name Sweeney Todd, because of the heartache he harbors due to the bad

luck experienced by him and his family. Seeking revenge for his wife and child so that he becomes cruel, cruel and king-hearted.

The heinous things that Sweeney did to avenge himself were not spared from the past trauma he experienced. The various bad things he experienced shaped his character. To find out how trauma and its behavior are related, it is necessary to first know how this manuscript is constructed.

The manuscript also mentions sociological and physiological aspects that also affect the development of Benjamin Barker's behavior towards Sweeney Todd.

#### A. *Heading*

The title of the manuscript researched by the author is 'Sweeney Todd: The Vile Shaver of Fleet Street' by Christopher Bond translated by Bakdi Soemanto. 'Sweeney Todd' in the title is the name of the main character in this script. 'The Vile Barber of Fleet Road' reveals that Sweeney Todd works as a barber located on Fleet Road. Fleet Street is the main street mostly in the City of London. The street runs from west to east from Temple Bar on the border with the City of Westminster to Ludgate Circus at the site of the London Wall and the River Fleet from where the street is named. Sweeney Todd: The vile shaver of Fleet Street means a vile barber who lives on Fleet Street.

#### B. *Synopsis*

Broadly speaking, the story of Sweeney Todd is about a man who loses his identity in order to avenge his past. Initially, Benjamin Barker, a successful barber, lived happily with his beautiful wife and daughter. However, his happiness was shattered when Judge Turpin slandered him and sent him to prison, then exiled to Australia. There, Barker transforms into Sweeney Todd.

Upon returning to London, Sweeney discovers that his wife has died and that his child is under Turpin's care. With a new name, he returns to being a barber and begins his revenge by killing his clients. Together with Mrs. Lovett, they made the victims as meat pie fillings that were sold.

Mrs. Lovett, who is in love with Sweeney, tries to persuade her to reciprocate her feelings. However, fate says something else when Lucy, Sweeney's wife who is actually still alive, arrives at the salon and is killed by Sweeney. When Sweeney realized the truth, he killed Lovett, but ended up dead at the hands of Toby, Pirelli's subordinate who was raised by Lovett.

#### C. *Theme*

From the beginning of his appearance in Act 1, Sweeney Todd reminisces about his past when he had a family and how he felt the absence of justice, as well as trickery. The anger, hatred, and all the emotions he felt in this script were not far from the family affair and how he was deceived. As a Benjamin Barker he felt victim to the machinations of Judge Turpin and Opas Bamford so he had to separate from his family. As a Sweeney Todd, he is again a victim of Nellie Lovett's trick who says that his wife is dead. Moreover, it wasn't just Sweeney who felt these things. At the end of the story, it is also written that Tobias eventually killed Sweeney after learning that Sweeney was the one who ended the lives of

Mrs. Lovett and Signor Pirelli, even though Tobias was always treated unfairly by Pirelli and deceived by Lovett about the success of his danging pie shop which turned out to use human flesh, the victims of Sweeney's murder. It is clear that, despite being treated badly by Pirelli and deceived by Lovett, he still considers that Pirelli and Lovett are his family because they are the only ones who are close to Tobias's family. It became clear that the theme of the script 'Sweeney Todd: The Vile Shaver of Fleet Road' was family and revenge.

#### D. *Dramatic Structure*

The script 'Sweeney Todd: The Vile Shaver of Jalan Fleet' by Christopher Bond translated by Bakdi Soemanto is an opera script that has a dramatic structure including exposition, climax, and conclusion.

##### 1) *Exposition*

In this script, the exposition begins with the arrival of the ship that Sweeney Todd and Anthony are on board at the port. In the opera script, the exposition is marked by an overture, which is in the song 'No Place Like London' sung by Sweeney Todd and Anthony Hope. It is stated in dialogue scripts no. 1 to no. 8 in round 1.

## ROUND 1

The deafening sound of the factory whistle, the tower clock chimes. There are people passing by describing the chaos of London. Instantly the atmosphere shifted to a port, and people were seen getting out of the ship. Followed by Anthony and Todd.

### **Around Jalan Fleet and Pai Shop : Twilight**

1. ANTHONY:

*(singing – No Place Like London)* **I don't want to explore the whole world from Dardanella to the mountains in Peru but not like London.**

2. TODD :

*(sings sarcastically)* **but not like London**

3. ANTHONY:

*(talking, surprised that someone interrupted)* Mr. Todd?

4. TODD :

*(singing)* **you are still young. Life has been kind to you. You will learn.**

My mind was very restless, because in these streets that I had known well, everywhere I felt the shadow of a ghost that made my hair stand up.

*(Todd sings quietly and intensely)*

**There used to be barbers... beautiful wife**

**A very stupid shaver... women are the reason To stay alive... he was kind... and the shaver- naïve**

**Present an envious man... to them**

**Ranked-ranking vultures. In an unwise law**

**Erase a reality. And everything has to happen**

**And that man, falls... go... vanishing and disappearing**

Now you can leave me here.

5. ANTHONY:

But surely we will see each other before I leave for Plymouth!

6. TODD :

If you want, you can look for me. Around Fleet Street.

7. ANTHONY:

Alright, until later, Mr. Todd.

8. TODD :

*(singing)* **There is a hole in the world like a big dark cave. And it's full of people covered in dirt and worms in the world living there...**

...

This section provides readers with an explanation of the character involved in Sweeney's story when he was exiled, namely Anthony, a young sailor. This section also gives a sad

picture of what happened, especially the lyrics of the song "No Place Like London". In the initial scene in Act 1, Sweeney Todd enters London with Anthony Hope. Shortly before landing, while looking at the silhouette of the city of London, Sweeney was carried away by his feelings and memories, he recalled the sad story of fifteen years ago that was told to Anthony through songs.

## 2) Climax

In the script "Sweeney Todd: The Hideous Shaver of Fleet Street", the climax begins to appear when Sweeney's revenge against Judge Turpin is almost avenged when the judge comes to shave but has to fail because Anthony enters while carrying Johanna's name so Turpin goes berserk and leaves. In dialogues nos. 188 to 198, it is seen that the turning point of Sweeney's revenge appears. His failure to kill Judge Turpin blinds him and feels that the world is so unfair that everyone deserves to die. This was seen as an opportunity for the opportunist and capitalist Mrs. Lovett, that the bodies of Sweeney's victims could not be left lying around, thrown away, in vain.

This is increasingly seen through a song titled 'Epiphany'. This is where the peak of Sweeney's anger begins. After seeing all the people he thought deserved to die, Sweeney began slaughtering customers who came to his barbershop, without exception and regardless of caste.

...

*Todd slowly brought the razor to the Judge's throat when he suddenly opened his eyes and began to squirm curiously.)*

188. TODD:

*Oh, it's okay, sir, it's nothing, can we continue? (starts shaving the Judge, singing)*



**The princess is beautiful, enchanting, like coffee, dancing beautifully, gracefully. Beautiful princess, beautiful princess, sitting at the window. Oh, with his smile, so awesome. Beautiful princess... he's yours... forever... Beautiful princess**

189. JUDGE :  
**dazzling... beautiful... Shared...**

190. BOTH:  
**Beautiful princesses, blowing out candles or combing hair, even if she is gone but she will always be there... The princess is beautiful, awesome, very beautiful, like a crown, like a flower, very sweet. Full of tenderness, like heaven in the world, beautiful princess, sir! Beautiful princess, yes! Beautiful princess her! Beautiful princess!**

*(Todd raises his arm to make a large arch and is willing to sharpen the knife shave it on Judge's throat when Anthony barges in)*

191. ANTHONY:  
The girl said she wanted to marry me on Sunday. We're leaving tonight!  
*(When Anthony retreats, Judge jumps on top of Anthony's body and grabs his arm)*

192. JUDGE :  
*(Jumps to his feet)* You!! Johanna ran away with you? Fraudulent slut – I'll lock her in a dark room where you or any other criminal won't be able to see her again.

193. ANTHONY :  
Judge Turpin!

194. JUDGE :  
What a great power that warned me in time!

195. ANTHONY :  
*(struggling to break free)* but, sir, I beg –

196. JUDGE :  
And as for you, barber, it is clear what your friends are like. Serve them well and make them your customers – because you won't get anything out of me.  
*(Goes down the stairs)*

197. ANTHONY :  
Mr. Todd!

198. TODD :

Out! Get out, I said!

*(Confused, Anthony left. The music began to accompany, very angry. Todd stood motionless, in shock. As the Judge rushed down the street, Mrs. Lovett, with a bottle of new beer in her hand, saw her. He glanced at it, then went to the back room in the safe Tobias was now sleeping. He looked at the boy, put down his bottle and rushed out and up the stairs to Todd)*

...



### 3) Conclusion

The script 'Sweeney Todd: The Vile Shaver of Fleet Road' is a complicated script and has a *plot twist* (a plot that suddenly changes, unexpectedly) so that the way it reaches the climax is unique. Towards the end of the story, Sweeney learns that the mad beggar, whom Mrs. Lovett often chases away, is his wife, Lucy. This made Sweeney angry and then put Mrs. Lovett in a living snuff furnace. It didn't stop there, Tobias, who had been suspicious and hated Sweeney from the beginning, appeared from behind and slit his throat like Sweeney had done to his victims.

...

*(Todd put his arms around Mrs. Lovett's waist, the woman began to calm down and didn't say much, and they swung to the rhythm of Waltz, her arms around Todd's neck.)*

326. TODD :

**History in the world, dear**

327. Mrs. LOVETT :

**Oh, Mr. Todd, Oooh, Mr. Todd**

328. TODD :

**Forget and forgive**

329. Mrs. LOVETT : **In the sea, Mr. Todd, we are happy, in the sea, Mr. Todd, we are married**

*(Todd brings the waltz dancing girl closer to the oven)*

330. TODD :

**It's about natural selection, to survive**

331. BOTH:

**To stay alive! Always alive**

*(Todd throws Mrs. Lovett into the oven. He screamed. Black smoke bubbles out. **The music exploded like an earthquake.** Todd moved back to the beggar woman and knelt down, holding her head in his arms.)*

332. TODD :

*(singing)* There used to be barbers, beautiful wives, very stupid shavers, women are the reason, to stay alive. And he's kind, and shaver... naïve.

333. TOBIAS :

*(see Todd talking) Mr. Todd... (Tobias looked at the beggar, saw the razor on the floor, picked it up, slicing Todd's throat. Todd died crossed over Lucy's body when the factory whistle sounded.)*

...

### E. Background

The setting is a tool for the reader to be able to imagine the picture of the events that occur in the script. The setting contained in the opera script of Sweeney Todd: The Vile Shaver of Fleet Street is as follows:

#### 1) Time

To determine the time setting in this manuscript, a deep analysis is needed because it is not mentioned directly through the writing, either from the dialogue or the kramagung. The author searches for the time setting of the incident in the mask through the timeline of the characters. It is mentioned in the explanation of Mrs. Lovett's Meat Pie Restaurant that the restaurant has been established since 1890 so the events that occurred between Lovett and Todd were around a few years later.

## 2) *Place*

The manuscript is located on a busy main street in London, Fleet Street, as evidenced in the manuscript through dialogue no. 6. The street runs from West to East, from *Temple Bar*, bordering the city of Westminster. Fleet Street is adjacent to the London Wall and the Fleet river. Fleet Street is a bustling location that was home to most of the media offices and newspaper printing until 1980. The street is close to central London so the area is densely populated and busy.

...

5. ANTHONY:

But surely we will meet again before I leave for Plymouth!

6. TODD:

If you want, you can look for me. Around Fleet Street.

...

## 3) *Atmosphere*

Sweeney Todd: The Hideous Shaver of Fleet Road is a complex script. The complexity and complexity of this manuscript can be seen from the atmosphere raised by the author in each event. The atmosphere that appears in the script 'Sweeney Todd: The Hideous Shaver of Fleet Street' is as follows:

### i. *Round 1*

This chapter is divided into several event venues, each of which has its own atmosphere.

#### 1) *Around Fleet street and pier*

This chapter tells the story of Todd's return to London. It was also told about the turbulence of his life in the past and its impact in the present era. The song also uses impressive figurative words that the city of London is not a good city. In addition, there was also a sad atmosphere when Sweeney told about his family. Then the scene moves towards Mrs. Lovett's meat pie shop. The atmosphere is a little complex, the tragic carefree atmosphere when Lovett sings about his worst pie in London, the sad atmosphere when Lovett tells the story of Lucy and Johanna, and the emotional atmosphere when Sweeney can get his razor back.

#### 2) *Judge Turpin's House*

Judge Turpin babysitters Johanna, Sweeney Todd's child, at his home. Instead of taking care of her like a child herself, Johanna was treated like house arrest. The atmosphere that emerged from this scene

was loneliness and sadness. In this scene, a romantic atmosphere is also created when Anthony admires Johanna's beauty and intends to free her.

3) *Market*

The atmosphere evoked by the scriptwriter in this scene is boisterous. The boisterous atmosphere was built from the bustle of the market, then Tobias, Pirelli's assistant, shouted to promote Pirelli's hair herb so that people swarmed together.

The screenwriter also brought out a tense atmosphere in this scene, especially when Todd and Pirelli had a shaving duel with Opas Bamford as the judge.

4) *Pie Shop/Barber Salon*

The scene begins with a tense atmosphere as Todd is in a rage and impatience waiting for Opas Bamford to come to his barbershop. Then the atmosphere changes when Anthony comes with a story about the woman he likes, who is also Sweeney's daughter, Johanna.

Then, the atmosphere turned tense and tense when Pirelli's signor arrived. Signor Pirelli is Sweeney's former assistant. He recognizes Sweeney as Benjamin Barker and threatens to spread his identity if he doesn't pay Pirelli so that Sweeney ends up killing him

ii. *Round 2*

In the second round, Sweeney was told to be more aggressive in carrying out his actions for revenge. This act is set in the Meat Pie Shop, which is also Sweeney's barber salon.

The atmosphere that emerged in this round began with a happy atmosphere when Mrs. Lovett reopened her pie shop with the help of Tobias.

F. *The Position of Sweeney Todd's Character in the Script*

The characters written in the drama script can be likened to spices when you want to make a dish, shallots will have a different function than pepper and salt. The same is true in the script. A manuscript has a special classification that functionally distinguishes one character from another. Therefore, the researcher discusses it in this sub-chapter, which is about the position of Sweeney Todd's character in the opera script 'Sweeney Todd: The Hideous Shaver of Fleet Street'. The position in question is the type of character about the character and the things related to it.

In this script, most of the characters have vicious and cruel attitudes, dispositions, and behaviors. Sweeney Todd with his tendency to be irritable, Judge Turpin who looks calm but behaves illegally, Opas Bamford is also a character who has no mercy, and Nyoya Lovett who looks patient but can perpetuate the practice of cannibalism for his benefit. The characters of these characters can be seen in the script, (1) dialogues no. 58 to 63, (2) nos. 122 and no. 124, (3) dialogue practice instructions no. 143 and no. 146, (4) dialogue no. 160 to 162, (5) dialogue practice instructions no. 186, (6) throughout the songs 'Epiphany' and 'A Little Priest'.

### G. Sociological and Physiological Analysis

To know the character of a character and how he behaves, it is necessary to know that his appearance and environment have a great influence. The physical form of the figure will show self-acceptance by oneself and by others. Self-acceptance then becomes a bridge to know how society treats it which becomes a sociological experience. The character of Sweeney Todd is said to have a mental disorder, so to get there it is necessary to know how his physiological and sociological experiences are.

#### 1) Physiological

In the script 'Sweeney Todd: The Vile Shaver of Fleet Street' Christopher Bond does not explicitly mention Sweeney Todd's physical form or age, but several other characters vaguely mention Sweeney's appearance in their eyes. In round 1, it was said that Mrs. Lovett was in her 40s so it could be assumed that Sweeney was the same age as her. If you look at the story that he was forcibly arrested and then exiled, then it is likely that his body is thin with a dull face. Mrs. Lovett also said that Benjamin Barker, Sweeney Todd before he changed his identity, was a handsome man.

...

11. Mrs. Lovett :

On top of that? Oh no one wanted to approach the room. People thought the room was haunted. You know – years ago, something bad happened up there. *(take the lantern and ride)*

*(singing)*

**In the past, there was a family... stay on top of me...**

**Happy family**

**Professional barber, who has a handsome face...**

*(talking, the music still accompanies quietly)*

Barker, his name is – Benjamin Barker

...

#### 2) Sociological

The figure of Sweeney Todd in his former life, as Benjamin Barker, did not have any significant problems from a social perspective. He lived well with his family. Benjamin Barker has a beautiful wife and a sweet baby girl, he is also very famous as a barber on Fleet Street.

But, as Sweeney Todd, he has to suffer in exile because of false accusations levelled at him by a person who is jealous and wants to usurp his wife. Even while in exile, he was not necessarily free from suffering until he had to flee and change his name to Sweeney Todd. These things became such traumatic experiences for Sweeney that his life became no longer the same. He holds a grudge and feels he has to avenge it. These things are compounded by her encounter with Mrs. Lovett, a widow of a butcher pie shopkeeper, who is just as crazy as Sweeney.

...

5. Todd :

*(singing)* You are still young. Life has been kind to you.  
You'll learn

My mind was very restless, because in these streets that  
I knew well, everywhere I felt the shadow of a ghost that  
made my hair stand up.

*(Todd sings quietly and intensely)*

There used to be barbers... beautiful wife

A very stupid shaver... women are the reason to stay  
alive...

he was kind... and that shaver, - naïve

Present an envious man... to them...

Ranked-ranking vultures. In an unwise law

Erase a reality. And everything has to happen

And that man, falls... go... vanished and disappeared...

...

From the physiological and sociological analysis above, a line can be drawn stating that Benjamin Barker was a very friendly person with good physical condition. There was no compelling reason for him to be treated unfairly by Judge Turpin which made him have to be imprisoned and exiled. In the absence of a reason underlying his judicial process and exile, Benjamin Barker, of course, felt that he was experiencing an injustice that greatly affected his perception of life, and affected his mental state.

#### H. *Psychological Analysis of the Character of Sweeney Todd*

Sweeney Todd is a man of about 40 years old. He had been imprisoned and exiled for 15 years, so it can be concluded that he had experienced unpleasant events since his mid-20s. Many medical journals, especially in the field of psychology, state that people begin to show symptoms of mental disorders in their 20s due to childhood trauma that is not properly treated. This trauma accumulates and appears when a person's mental state has reached a serious stage.

In some cases, traumatic events in adults do not occur in childhood. For Benjamin Barker, the trauma occurred when he was already married, coupled with the burden of responsibility for his wife and children that he had to leave behind during his imprisonment and exile. Whenever a person experiences a traumatic event, the brain creates a self-defense mechanism. The self-defense mechanism that emerged in Sweeney Todd was to create an alter-ego that separated him from his past. After returning from Australia, Sweeney refused to be identified as Benjamin Barker.

In addition, the researcher also described Sweeney Todd's psychiatric condition into several categories of psychopathology according to the symptoms he experienced. Sweeney Todd couldn't contain his anger. On the ship when he was about to set foot in London after exile, it can be seen in the lyrics of the song he sang full of anger that was restrained and directed inward. After

arriving in London, Sweeney Todd could no longer hold back his anger and the feelings were directed outward.

Act 1 of the script 'Sweeney Todd: The Vile Shaver of Fleet Street' shows that Sweeney's emotions were already shaken before he even entered London. Dialogue no. 4 says that his mind is very restless and he is like seeing a ghost that makes his hair stand up.

...

4. TODD:

... My mind was very agitated because in these streets that I had known well, everywhere I felt the shadow of a ghost that made my hair stand on

...

Anxiety that arises can occur due to fear. Many things triggered Sweeney's fear. When he saw the city of London for the first time in 15 years, he hoped to see his family, but it was undeniable that the bad events that befell his family, of course, came to mind. The images of these events appeared like shadows in Sweeney's memory, which is why he said that he felt like he was seeing a ghost.

Regarding aggression, the anger he held for 15 years was transformed into aggression. This behavior is characterized by events that occur due to impulsivity, events that are out of self-control. This, of course, was not realized by Sweeney. This impulsivity occurs when his plan to kill Judge Turpin and Opas Bamford must fail because Anthony comes suddenly.

Todd wants his revenge to be a pleasant event, so it must be done slowly. In the script, they sang the song 'Pretty Woman' which was dedicated to Johanna's beauty. However, suddenly Anthony arrives, not knowing that Judge Turpin is inside the barber salon, he says that he will take Johanna away with him. This angered Turpin, and he left the barbershop. This incident made Sweeney's anger soar. He who initially only wanted to kill two people, turned into a mass killer who killed all his customers. This is stated in dialogue nos. 199 to 201, in the song titled 'Epiphany'.

...

*(Todd raises his arm to make a large arch and is about to drive the razor down Judge Turpin's throat when Anthony barges in.)*

191. Anthony:

The girl said she wanted to marry me on Sunday.  
We're leaving tonight!

192. Judge:

*(jumps to his feet)* You!!

193: Anthony:

Judge Turpin!!

...

196. Judge:

*(to Todd)* and as you are, the barber, it is clear what your friends are like.

Serve them well and make them your servants – for you will not get anything from me!

*(goes down the stairs)*

...

*(Confused, Anthony left. **The music began to accompany**, very angry. Todd stood up, motionless, in shock.)*

...

199. TODD:

*(singing - Epiphany)* **his life in my hands, be still! He definitely won't come back! When? You told me to shut up? You told me to calm down? He won't come back!**

200. BU LOVETT:

**Calm down, Mr. Todd, calm down, he will definitely come back.**

201. TODD:

**There is a huge hole in the world, a black hole and it is huge. It is full of pests... It won't be long. They're going to die, ask Mrs. Lovett, ask. Because they threatened, Mrs. Lovett. There are two types of humans, some live in decent places, some live in slums. Behold, Mrs. Lovett, you! Everyone deserves to die, even you, even me, because life is so short and we will definitely die, we deserve to die. However, Johanna and I will not be able to unite our love. Satisfied? Alright, you, sir? Do you want to shave? Come on, come to Sweeney. You, sir, welcome to your grave, I take revenge, to save. Are you, sir? Are you, sir? Sit down, come on! Come on! Sweeney waited for fresh blood. Are you, sir? Anyone! Come on! One person... or ten... even a thousand... So that I am calm and happy.**



**Lucyku has left and will never see her again. There is  
a job that calms me down.  
(he threw himself on a barber chair, panting and  
sweating)**

...

In the above excerpt of the script, after dialogue number 196, it is written in the practice instructions that Sweeney was silent, motionless, and in a state of shock. For some people with mental disorders, before a big emotional outburst, a silent moment will appear. After the silent moment passed, his emotions were like a bucket full of water being spilled. In Sweeney's case, the emotion that arises is anxiety (dialogue number 199) and then followed by anger that is directed out in the form of aggression, in which he has the desire to kill everyone. The anxiety felt by Sweeney Todd is characterized by a skeptical attitude. At the end of dialogue number 201, it is also mentioned in the practice instructions that Sweeney fell sitting in a barber chair with a panting breath and a needy face, indicating that his poor emotional regulation had an impact on his physical condition that he reacted badly.

Anger turns into aggression, aggression gives rise to impulsivity and impulsivity gives birth to criminal behavior. The Criminal Acts committed by Sweeney Todd are not only murder, but also cannibalism and fraud. These events were not immediately carried out alone. In launching his action, he was assisted by Nellie Lovett, even Lovett who initiated the act of cannibalism. For Lovett, Sweeney's victims would be a waste if they were just thrown away or buried, they would only be waste. He also compared his shop to Mrs. Mooney's pie shop that uses cat meat. It is contained in the script, dialogue no. 203 and a song titled 'A Little Priest'.

...

203. TODD:

Later, when it gets dark, we will take him to a secret place and bury him.

204. BU LOVETT:

Well, of course, we can do it.

I don't think any relatives will look for her. But something is strange and...

(starts singing – A Little Priest) **seems strange...**

205. TODD:

Strange?

206. BU LOVETT:

**Terrible waste, I have to say, but you... Lim... Sump...  
people, business will be smooth, debt will be paid off,  
this is savings, maybe...**

Do you understand what I mean? (Todd is silent)

**Waste is terrible, so the price of expensive meat,  
presses me, suffocates me**

207. TODD:

(starts to come to consciousness, giggles giggling)  
Ah!

208. BU LOVETT:

**You get it. Let's take a look at Mrs. Mooney Pie Shop, mixing cats on pie cakes, until the number of cats is only a few, and the taste must be no different. Intelligent brains are brilliant, hear they will come shaving, and don't know about the composition of the pie they eat.**

209. TODD:

**Mrs. Lovett, that's a practical and charming idea, I won't waste it. Mrs. Lovett, I never imagined that clever idea, so tempting, so delicious, look, hear... hear the voices out there.**

...

Not only did they have the idea of making human flesh as a pie filling, they even discussed what kind of human beings were good or bad to eat, whether their meat was tender or not, whether it was more delicious and whether it was fatty or not (dialogue nos. 218 to 230).

...

218. BU LOVETT:

**Monk, the meat is tender**

219. TODD:

**Is it delicious?**

220. BU LOVETT:

**Of course, it's delicious. They rarely eat meat. Of course, it is still fresh.**

221. TODD:

**I'm more interested in writers like that**

222. BU LOVETT:

**Don't. Later you will be confused about how to eat it. Already! Nice monk, Mr. Todd. Oh, the host looks interesting.**

223. TODD:

**Too expensive**

224. BU LOVETT:

**It doesn't matter if the brain is thrown away, not cooked.**

225. TODD:

**Anything else?**

226. BU LOVETT:

**Perhaps the queen's bodyguard could be an alternative, the meat was clean, and the taste was also familiar.**

227. TODD:

**What about them?**

228. BU LOVETT:

**Don't, sir, they are corruptors**

229. TODD:

**If it's fatter?**

230. BU LOVETT:

**Don't sir, it's cholesterol**

All of Sweeney Todd's behavior is rooted in one problem, namely his past trauma. Trauma, usually, has a big impact when experienced in childhood but it is also undeniable that trauma will have a different impact on different people. In the case of Sweeney Todd, it is not said in the script what he experienced during his fifteen years in exile in Botany Bay, before he escaped with the help of Anthony, so it is possible that, after the pre-exile events in which he was slandered and separated from his family, he was traumatized.

The formation of mental disorders in the form of trauma, it is certain, will give rise to other mental disorders because trauma itself is a complex disorder and damages nerves in the brain. In some conditions, trauma can trigger *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder* /PTSD. The potential for trauma formed due to loss can trigger a response in the form of stress. Losing someone as a stressor contributes more generally to morbidity (the proportion of sick and healthy in a population), especially the 'mourning period' associated with the loss of a home and all personal belongings, and it seems that losing someone has such a profound impact that the different factors cannot be separated. The symptoms that appear in Sweeney Todd, according to the manuscript, related to PTSD are as follows:

1. Irritability

...

14. TODD:

(*Tense*) No!!

15. BU LOVETT:

(*stares at Todd*) Oh my gosh, you don't like good stories, do you?

16. TODD:

(*Wild shouting*) Is no one taking pity on him?

...

22. TODD:

He? Judge Turpin? Fifteen years of sweating in a hell of life on false accusations. Fifteen years dreamed that, perhaps, I could go home to my beloved wife and child. I'm going to kill them.

...

143. PIRELLI:

You don't remember me. Why? I used to be just a poor Irish man who worked for you for a few weeks – sweeping hair and stuff like that –  
(*lifting razor*)

But I remember all of them – and you, Benjamin Barker, were sent to Botany Bay for life. So, Mr. Todd – do you agree with my offer or should I go down the street to call my friend, Opas Bamford? You think you're smart, you're a fool. Tomorrow you start calling me master! You understand? You like my plan - ?  
*(Again he takes a high note and once again his words are cut off – Todd hits his hand until he falls and is sickly, as he prepares to lunge, suffocating Pirelli)*  
...

Dialogue excerpts from the script; In verses 14 to 16, 22, and 143, it is indicated that without much talk, Todd killed Pirelli instantly when he learned that Pirelli knew his old identity. He felt disturbed that his attempt to live as a new person, to leave his past, so that he could live freely, could be destroyed in the blink of an eye by someone. Anger overwhelms Sweeney and, without a second thought, he ends Pirelli's life.

2. Impulsivity (not thinking ahead)

As in the excerpt above, dialogue numbers 146 and 155, then continued with instructions for action, without thinking Sweeney immediately moved to lunge at Pirelli and kill him. Even when hiding Pirelli's body.

...

After dialogue no. 146

*(Above, Todd was surprised to hear Tobias's call. He looked wildly to the right and left, saw the crate, ran to it, opened the lid, then dragged Pirelli and put it in, slamming the lid just as Tobias entered. It was at that moment that one of Pirelli's hands hung out of the coffin.)*

...

After dialogue no. 155

*(Upstairs, Todd opened the coffin, grabbed the screaming Pirelli's hair, lifted him from the crate, and slice his neck. Below, Mrs. Lovett pours a glass of beer and gives it to Tobias.)*

...

3. Anxiety and fear arise.

When he saw Judge Turpin in front of his barber salon, Todd was overjoyed. He excitedly let the judge in and sat him down comfortably. However, when the judge named Johanna as the woman he wanted to marry, Todd felt fear.

...

183. TODD:

(bows) And who do you want, sir?

184. JUDGE:

My guardian child

(Todd is terrified; The judge closed his eyes, sitting comfortably.)

199. TODD:

**His life is in my hands, shut up! He definitely won't come back! When? You told me to shut up? You told me to calm down? He will not come back.**

200. BU LOVETT:

**Calm down, Mr. Todd, calm down. He will definitely come back**

...

After dialogue no. 201

(He threw himself on the shaving chair, panting and sweating)

...

#### 4. Derealization

A person who experiences derealization will see the world as a shadow or a dream, feeling unreal. Sweeney Todd described the world as a place like a big hole, like a cave, a huge black hole filled with pests.

...

8. TODD:

(Singing) **There's a hole in the world, like a big dark cave...  
and it's full of people covered in dirt and worms  
living there...**

...

201. TODD:

**There is a huge hole in the world, a black hole and a big one, full of pests...**

...

#### 5. Depersonalization

When experiencing depersonalization, a person will feel like they are separated from their body so that what they do, the events that befall them, feel like watching a movie that is directly acted by themselves. The script does not explicitly say that Todd feels separate from himself, but there is a wall separating reality from Sweeney's person. He deliberately created a new identity, separating Sweeney Todd from Benjamin Barker.

...

17. BU LOVETT:

Be you – Benjamin Barker

18. TODD:

Not Barker! Not Barker! Todd now. Sweeney Todd!

...

#### 4. CONCLUSION

"Sweeney Todd: The Hideous Shaver of Fleet Street" is an opera script by Christopher Bond, translated by Bakdi Soemanto, set in London, precisely on Fleet Street. The script has a linear plot with a dramatic structure that includes exposition, climax, and resolution, as well as themes of family and revenge. The story focuses on Sweeney Todd, a shaver who becomes a mass murderer. He used to be Benjamin Barker, a successful barber with a wife and daughter, who was thrown into prison by Judge Turpin on false charges. After escaping and returning with a new identity as Sweeney Todd, he finds his family destroyed by Turpin and Opas Bamford, sparking a vengeance that leads him to kill Turpin and his customers. The script centers on Sweeney's attempt to avenge the suffering of his wife and child as a result of Turpin and Bamford's machinations.

Sweeney Todd's psychiatric condition was influenced by the trauma he experienced. During his 15 years in exile, his feelings were pent-up and exploded when he returned to London to learn that his wife had died and that his child had been taken over by Judge Turpin. All of this makes him skeptical of life and filled with anger, especially after hearing the story about Lucy. He wanted revenge by killing Turpin and Opas Bamford. His anger turned into aggression and criminal behavior, including becoming a mass murderer. Together with Lovett, he turns the corpses of his victims into meat pie fillings, deceiving customers, and turning them into cannibals. His aggressive behavior is triggered by his past trauma and alienation, progressing to PTSD with symptoms such as irritability, impulsivity, anxiety, derealization, and depersonalization.

#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1 is a researcher who analyzes the character of Sweeney Todd in the script "Sweeney Todd: The Evil Shaver of Fleet Road" as part of the final project to complete the Strata 1 lecture. Author 2 is a supervisor as well as a provider of input, suggestions, and other viewpoints to researchers to be able to produce a good scientific paper.

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