



**LOUIS ZAMPERINI'S TURNING POINTS OF LIFE IN  
THE *UNBROKEN*  
(PSYCHOANALYSIS APPROACH)**

**A FINAL PROJECT**  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement  
For S-1 Degree in American Studies  
In English Department, Faculty of Humanities  
Diponegoro University

**Submitted by:**  
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**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
DIPONEGORO UNIVERSITY  
SEMARANG**

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## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

The writer states truthfully that he compiles this final project without taking any results from other research in any university, in S-1, S-2, and S-3 degree and in diploma. In addition, the writer ascertains that he does not take the material from other publications or someone's work except for the references mentioned.

Semarang, July 2019

Kurniawan Adi Wicaksono

## MOTTO AND DEDICATION

*Victory belongs to the most persevering*

—**Napoleon Bonaparte**

*A minute of pain is worth a lifetime of glory*

—**Peter Zamperini**

*This paper is dedicated to*

*My Mother, Father, Brother and*

*to everyone who helped me accomplish this paper*

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Praise to Allah SWT, who has given strength, blessing and guidance so this final project on “Sigmund Freud’s Id, Ego and Superego Represented in the Turning Points of Louis Zamperini’s Life in the *Unbroken*” came to a completion. On this occasion, the writer would like to thank all of those people who have contributed to the completion of this final project.

The deepest gratitude and appreciation are extended to Retno Wulandari, S.S.,MA., the writer final project advisor, who has given her continuous guidance, helpful correction, moral support, advice, and suggestion in completion of this final project. The writer’s deepest thank also goes to the following:

1. The writer’s beloved parents, S. Hadi Wibowo and Rida Indriyani, for giving their continuous support, love, and patience.
2. Dr. Nurhayati, M. Hum., as the Dean of Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
3. Dr. Agus Subiyanto, M.A., as the Head of the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
4. All of the lecturers in the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University for their sincere dedication and guidance.
5. All of the staffs of Faculty of Humanities.

6. The writer's colleagues and best friends: Dhianika Bhayangkara, Richie Adi Syahputra, Abdul Rohim Indra, Adityo Widhi Nugroho, Ulin Nuha Al-Haris, Muhammad Faisal Hira, Muhammad Abirzaim Veraldy, Erzal Pratomo Kurnianto, Rizal Yunianto, Risky Hendra, Nicodemus Johan, Michael Advendri Pradipta, Rifqi Adzani, Muhammad Saiq Hussein, Hilman Rasyid, Genjit, Aldi Imam F. and Septyan Adi Prabowo.

The writer realizes that this final project is still far from perfect. Thus, he will be glad to receive any constructive criticisms and recommendation to make this final project better.

Finally, the writer expects that this project will be useful to the reader who wishes to learn something about psychoanalysis.

Semarang, June 2019

Kurniawan Adi Wicaksono

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## ABSTRACT

*Extended essay* ini ditulis untuk membahas tentang kejadian-kejadian besar yang mengubah hidup dari karakter utama film *Unbroken*, Louis Zamperini. Dalam pembuatan *project* ini, penulis menggunakan *psychoanalysis* dari Sigmund Freud untuk memahami tentang kesulitan yang dihadapi oleh karakter utama selama hidupnya. Penulis menggunakan metode penelitian berupa pendekatan *psycholanalysis* agar dapat memahami maksud dari tindakan dan juga alasan dibalik pilihan Louis Zamperini. Hasil analisa ini adalah dapat disimpulkan bahwa *Id*, *Ego* dan *Superego* dalam alam bawah sadar Louis Zamperini memiliki peran besar dan mempengaruhi pengambilan keputusan.

Kata kunci : Psychoanalysis, Personality Structure, Id, Ego, Superego.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Visual and audio are significant to portray the nuance of the movie. A correct depiction on the situation in the movie is able to improve the viewer perception and increase attention to the movie. Watching a movie may give us the entertainment, pleasure, and other emotions that cannot be found in other form of media. However, ideal movie is not only about entertainment, but also a good source of information.

According to Brown in *Cinematography Theory and Practice*:

When we create a film project, one of our primary task is to create a visual world for the characters to inhabit. This visual world is an important part of how the audience will perceive the story. How they will understand the characters and their motivations (2012:2).

In the movie *Unbroken*, Louis Zamperini is able to endure the torture in his war prisoner days because of his unbendable spirit and perseverance. Even in a dire moment, he refuses to succumb to his fate and endures the harsh situation. This form of unyielding character and tenacity is rooted from his subconscious and able to guide him to survive the torment.

Consciously or subconsciously, people are always seeking for pleasure and avoiding pain, yet they also need to contain and limit themselves or they will commit transgression against the regulation. The society people live in, currently also takes part in shaping an image how a good person should be and by following these rules, people will mold themselves to make a good respectable human in the society.

In this project, the writer will explain about the turning points of the main character, Louis Zamperini in the story using psychological approach. By using psychological approach, writer will be able to comprehend the situation and his hardship throughout the movie. The writer will observe Zamperini's behavior and decision-making in the movie in order to examine his personality based on psychoanalysis approach. In the turning points of the main character's life, writer will limit the scope of study timeframe; starting at the main character's childhood period to his time as a war prisoner in Japan.

### **1.1. Director Biography**

Angelina Jolie, born June 4 1975, is an actress, film maker and American celebrity. She starts her acting career at early age of seven, starring as a cameo in *Lookin' to Get Out*, and continues polishing her acting talent in several movies.

She lands on a big role in *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* as the main character Lara Croft, which solidifying her place as one of the major face in celebrity. After that major role, she also had another big role in *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* (2005), *Wanted* (2008), *Salt* (2010) and *Maleficent* (2014). Angelina Jolie also has another talent such as directing and screen writing. In 2011, she directed *In the Land of Blood and Honey*, *Unbroken* (2014) and *First They Killed My Father* (2017). Beside acting, directing and screen writing, she is also a humanitarian and activist promoting in nature conservation and human right. <<https://www.tribute.ca/people/angelina-jolie/2133/>> (21<sup>st</sup> June 2019)

## 1.2. Movie Summary

The movie is a 2014 Historical World War II movie, *Unbroken*. It takes place in U.S. in 1940s and Japan in 1943 until the war is over. The movie main character, Louis 'Louie' Zamperini is a U.S. Olympian athlete and war veteran. In his childhood, he is bullied and beaten by other kids because of his Italian heritage. Young Louis is the second son of Italian immigrant couple who try to make a living in the United States. One day, young Louis is in another trouble and makes a run for it. His elder brother, Peter, seeing how fast he can run and the potential in Louis, decides to train him to become an athlete. Persuaded yet still half-hearted, Louis Zamperini decides to train under his brother. He undergoes intensive training day by day, but then eventually enjoys his time running. He even reaches his way to become one of the U.S. representatives in Olympic, but then cancelled due to the outbreak of World War II.

In his active service time in World War II, he is assigned in a bomber plane and on a rescue mission, but unfortunately his plane's engines are down and he is forced to make a crash landing to the ocean. Only three of them survive the crash and they have to live on two inflatable rafts in the middle of ocean for more than a month and half. In the end of his stranded days in the ocean, Japanese Naval Army finds them. Louis then is taken into Omori War Prison in Japan and becomes a prisoner of war. In the prison, he meets other war prisoners being captived by Japanese Prison Warden, Corporal Mutsuhiro Watanabe, the main antagonist in this movie. He treats all prisoners extremely harsh, especially Zamperini.

He lives a hard life in the prison, even though his prison mates are nice to him, but Corporal Mutsuhiro Watanabe always finds a reason to beats him. The warden once beats him with a bamboo sword just because he is looking at him. He orders other prisoners to punch Louis Zamperini in the face in order to break his spirit and to remind the rest of the prisoners that the warden is in control.

Despite all of those harsh treatments, Louis Zamperini never holds grudge against the warden, he thinks that although he is treated poorly in the prison, it is still better than dying in the middle of the ocean.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Psychoanalysis

Initially, psychoanalysis is made to diagnose a person from psychological disorder, but it is gaining popularity and able to assign itself in numerous places such as psychology, literature or even in the pop culture. According to Myers in *Psychology*, psychoanalysis is a theory of personality that attributes thoughts and actions to unconscious motives and conflicts (2008:554). Therefore, psychoanalysis is used as a bridge to achieve better understanding about human nature.

The theory of psychoanalysis describes that human personality arise from collisions of impulse and restraint. It is the result of collisions between the aggressive and pleasure-seeking biological urge against the social control above the mentioned urge. According to Myers, Freud's view that the human personality is formed through conflicts and collisions from three elements in human consciousness (2008:587). The three elements of Freud's human personality are *Id*, *Ego* and *Superego*.

*Id* is a primal force that seeks pleasure and avoids pain. It is related to the impulsive action of human, contributing in the urge to fulfill human basic needs and ignoring the demands of the society. According to Guerin et al, on *Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*, The *Id* is source of human basic desires, it operates to fulfill our needs for pleasure and ignores social conventions, ethics, morals and regulations (2005:157). According to Laplanche in the *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, the activity of human is to avoiding unpleasant stimulus such as pain and

seeking for pleasant one (1988:322). Someone with strong *Id* will seek temporary and immediate amusement over a brighter prospect in the future.

*Ego* is a rein that keeps the *Id* in check. It rationalizes the urge and shapes the person needs in a manner that is feasible and socially acceptable. *Ego* is also mediating the *Id* as part of subconscious of self and the reality. According to Myers, the ego operates on the reality principle, satisfying the *Id*'s desires in ways that will realistically bring pleasure rather than pain (2008:588).

*Superego* is internalized ideals and provides standard for judgments. *Superego* focuses on how a person should behave, projects the ideal image to strive for. According to Guerin et al, acting directly or through the *Ego*, the *Superego* serves to either suppress or block the impulse of *Id*. Being failed in fulfilling the *Superego* will condemn the *Ego* with guilt and shame, while succeeding in doing so will reward the person with sense of positive feeling such as pride and self-worthiness.

If *Id* dictates on how a person should act on the impulse and instinct, *Superego* is a moral compass and virtue that is learned in the environment. The *Id*, *Ego* and *Superego* are a unity to shape a person personality.

## **2.2. Ego Defense Mechanism**

*Ego* Defense Mechanism is a psychological maneuver that allows the mind to cope and handle a difficult mental situation. When the mind is threatened by an event or external situation that is too extreme to manage, or when the *Id* and *Superego* are too demanding, the mind will subconsciously performs *Ego* Defense Mechanism.

According to Myer, Defense Mechanisms are psychological strategies that are unconsciously used to protect a person from anxiety arising from unacceptable thoughts or feelings (2008:588). In its development, *Ego* Defense Mechanism is divided into more specific variation such as Repression, Regression, Projection, Isolation and Sublimation. For example, Ego Defense Mechanism-Sublimation is a psychological maneuver that satisfying the impulse with other object as a substitute, and the action is socially acceptable.

### **3. RESEARCH METHOD**

#### **3.1. Method of Data Collection**

In analyzing the movie *Unbroken*, The writer uses library research as a means of collecting the required data to support the analysis. According to Sarwono, library research is a study of various books and results of previous similar studies as references. The references then will be used as theoretical frameworks to solve problems that is being studied through a research (Sarwono: 2006). The required data such as records, supporting theories and other information will help the writer to increase the understanding about the problems the main character facing in the movie.

#### **3.2. Research Approach**

The writer also uses psychoanalysis as research approach to comprehend aspects that influence the main character. To investigate it further, the writer utilizes Sigmund Freud's theory of personality. In the theory of personality, a person mind's does not fully unite as one consciousness, but rather, it consists of three main elements that influencing each other. The three elements that form the consciousness is *Id*, *Ego* and *Superego*. According to Freud in Bressler in his psychoanalysis theory, Freud views person consciousness as three entities interacting with each other and boils down into a personality (1994: 165).

In the study, writer will examine the turning points of the main character to analyze his action according to psychoanalysis approach. It will help the readers to understand the reasons and factors that influence the main character to make decision.

## 4. ANALYSIS

### 4.1. Louis Zamperini's Turning Point in Childhood

In his youth, Zamperini is a delinquent and troublemaker. He steals, drinks and smokes, chasing only temporary pleasure without regards of the surrounding, doing whatever he wants without restraint.



Picture 1 (00:09:57)  
Young Zamperini takes out the wooden box hidden in deserted house.



Picture 2 (00:10:04)  
The wooden box contains all his stolen goods.



Picture 3 (00:10:13)  
After hiding his goods, he then smoking and drinking alcohol from the bottle.

In doing so, he follows his *Id* and completely disregards the *Superego*. According to Keough et al., —think of people with a present rather than future time perspective—those who often use tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, and would sooner party now than sacrifice today's pleasure for future success and happiness (1999:88). Because of his mental immaturity, young Zamperini will not feel the backlash from his *Superego* in form of guilt and embarrassment, but it does not mean that he is free from society judgement. The punishment is in the form of his father whipped his back with a leather belt. That form of punishment teaches young Zamperini that there will always be consequences to every decision.

After reprimanded for his action, Peter guides him to a more constructive activity, in this case, running. While reluctant at first, young Louis finds running enjoyable and gradually left his old lifestyle behind. We can analyze this action as an example of *Ego* Defense Mechanism-Sublimation. In that situation, young Louis substituting his impulse to find immediate pleasure (cigarette, alcohol) to a physical activity that is acceptable by society. Unbridled *Id*, which is not controlled by the *Ego* and ignores norms and values in society, only operates to satisfy its needs. It will only seek pleasure and avoids pain. His *Ego* is unable to manage the *Id* because the *Superego* as a moral compass still not fully developed in the early stage of life.

#### 4.2. Louis Zamperini's Turning Point when Stranded at Sea

The next turning point in Zamperini's life is when he is stranded after his plane engine fails. He and two comrades must live on the life raft for weeks with only minimum rations. When Zamperini find the rations, he shares it fairly between his two comrades.



Picture 4 (00:35:00)  
Zamperini is stranded in the middle of the ocean with his two comrades.



Picture 5 (00:35:41)  
He only manages to find some rations.



Picture 6 (00:35:47)  
Zamperini shares the rations.

Different from young Zamperini who is still impulsive, the adult Zamperini is able to judge the situation calmly. Even though they are stranded with minimum provision, he is still able to make right call and did not panic. The action of sharing the precious ration is an indication that his *Superego* dominating the *Id*. He suppresses his *Id* to take possession of all rations for himself and secures his mean of survival; instead, he opts to share the rations and aims for all three of them to survive the ordeal together.

Mac : We are gonna die.  
 Zamperini : No we're not, Mac.  
 Mac : The don't know where we are.  
 Zamperini : They'll find us.  
 Mac : They'll never see us.

*Unbroken* (2014) (00:35:11 – 00:35:22)

In the dialogue, Zamperini tries to calm Mac, who is afraid and pessimistic about the situation. While Mac treats Phil's head wound, Zamperini tells Mac that the rescue will arrives soon. In such dire situation, Zamperini is able to stay collected and think positively. The action of calming the comrades is necessary because if one is panic, he will lose the objective and only lives by his impulse. Zamperini's action indicates that rather than following his *Id* and act on impulse, he decides to follow his *Superego*. By following his *Superego*, he is able to take control of the situation. He then initiates small talk among them to keep their mind occupied and to maintain the morale. Unfortunately, one of his comrades eats all of the rations in the middle of the night. Upon learning this event, he is only angry for a moment and forgives him immediately. Rather than detests the comrade for stealing his ration, he focuses on

saving his energy and thinking about how to get sustenance. Louis Zamperini lets his *Id* burst out for a moment when he lost his ration, but after that, he calms down. In this situation, the *Ego* is unable to maintain control over *Id* when he lost something valuable to him, something important for his survival, but then the *Superego* is able to restore his composure and try to look a way out instead of blaming his comrade.

#### 4.3. Louis Zamperini's Turning point when Becomes Prisoner of War

After the Japanese Navy discovers and captures him, Zamperini then sent to Japan. In Japan, he is separated from his crew and Zamperini then sent to Omori War Prison. Omori War Prison is a facility that puts war prisoners and extracts information out of them. In the prison, Zamperini is tortured and beaten, he must also endures the cold winter night with only a flimsy blanket. However, the prisoners are not watching silently, they are still fighting their battle by collecting any useful information. One day, the warden finds out about this activity and punishes the prisoners.



Picture 7 (01:24:40)  
Zamperini watches as the prisoners are beaten for collecting information.



Picture 8 (01:24:44)  
Fitzgerald, the one who acting as Zamperini's voice of reason.



Picture 9 (01:25:29)  
Fitzgerald and Zamperini talk about surviving the war prison.

The warden beats him with the bamboo sword and leaves this prisoner standing half-naked in the open field in the winter.

Zamperini: I'm gonna kill him.

Fitzgerald: Then they gonna shoot you.

Zamperini: I don't give a damn, Let them shoot me.

Fitzgerald: That's not how we beat them.

We beat them by making it to the war alive.

That's how we do it. That's our revenge.

*Unbroken* (2014) (01:24:42 – 01:25:03)

The furious Zamperini is planning to kill Warden Watanabe because of his ruthless conducts toward the prisoners, but one of the prisoners, Fitzgerald, admonishes him. Fitzgerald tells him that killing the warden is not the right way to do his revenge; the real payback is by surviving the war and comeback alive. In this scene, Zamperini is clearly angry about the pain the warden inflicted toward the prisoners, to the point that he resorts to a cruel method, such as killing. His *Id* dominates him and he lost his reason, he would rather kills and be killed afterward than ensures his survival and comeback to United States after the war over, this reckless thinking and does not considering the future is the characteristic of *Id*'s impulse. The impulse cannot be rationalized by *Ego* and thus generates this plan. However, Fitzgerald as a voice of reason tells him that it is not the right way to win this fight. Fitzgerald informs Zamperini that they will win by endure this torture and come back safely. This action is able to give Zamperini new outlook and calms him down, he realizes that killing the warden is not the solution to this problem. Not only it is wrong solution, but killing the warden is only endangering his own life, not to mention that action is also endangering the safety all the prisoners in the war prison.

After the dialogue, he becomes more determined and able to endure the beating. In this scene, Louis Zamperini is able to suppress his *Id* and calls off the plan. With the Fitzgerald's help, he is able to recover his true objective, which is staying alive and comeback safely. Even though he lost his composure due to the warden's action, Zamperini's *Superego*, with the help of Fitzgerald is able to take control in the end.

On the later day, he, like other prisoners, is treated poorly like always. However, when he is discovered as an Olympic athlete, he is invited to radio broadcast office in Tokyo, he is permitted to tell his family that he is alive and well.



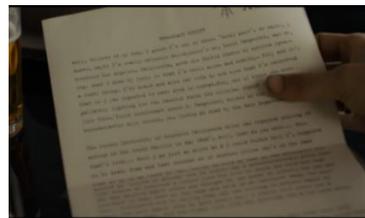
Picture 10 (01:28:56)  
The entrance of JOAK  
Hotel and Broadcasting  
tower.



Picture 11 (01:29:38)  
Zamperini's first broadcast.



Picture 12 (01:31:37)  
Radio Official is  
offering a scripted text  
for Zamperini next  
broadcast.



Picture 13 (01:31:43)  
The content of scripted  
text.

This is a first radio contact after several years missing and deemed dead on duty. The Radio Official agrees to give Zamperini full rein of the broadcast.

Zamperini : I'm only saying my own words.

Radio Official : Of course.

*Unbroken* (2014) (01:28:59)

In this dialogue, the Radio Official promises Zamperini that he will broadcast with his own words and without interference from anyone. True to his words, Radio Official does not intervene during this broadcast and the content of the broadcast is straight from Zamperini's. However, on the second time, Zamperini is offered a scripted text in exchange to live comfortably in the hotel.

Radio Official : You were good. Very good. You can speak on radio again.

*(hands over the scripted text)*

Zamperini : I can't say this.

Radio Official : Why not?

Zamperini : Because it's not true.

What it says about America, I can't say that.

Radio Official : They say that. American like you.

*(hand pointing at another group of American soldiers)*

They live here, very comfortable. Good food.

Zamperini : *(taking a deep breath)*

Radio Official : You want to go back to camp?

*Unbroken* (2014) (01:31:34-01:32:30)

If he agrees to do that, he will give false reports to the country; hence, he refuses to do that and immediately sent back to war prison camp in Omori. When he come back to Omori War Prison, the warden orders every prisoners to punch Zamperini in the face as hard as they can to break his spirit.

Louis Zamperini is able to suppress his *Id* that seeking for safety, tasty foods and comfortable place and trades this chance for the wellbeing of others compatriots in the United States. The *Superego* wins against his *Id* in this situation. Unlike the *Id*'s drive to seek pleasure and avoids pain, *Superego* able to rationalize the pain taken as a part for greater purpose. With little regard of his condition, Zamperini make the decision out of the best interest of U.S., even if it means that he lost his chance to broadcast his voice to his family and the good accommodation the hotel has to offer.

Zamperini is finally transported to the Naoetsu War Prison. Unlike Omori War Prison that functions as an information extracting facility, Naoetsu War Prison is a prison and coal mining facility. The prisoners in Naoetsu War Prison are forced as work labors to carry coals into the Japanese ships and anyone who refuses to work will be executed. Without proper safety measures, the condition on the Naoetsu War Prison is concerning. They are sleep in the boiler room, the bed is only wooden planks covered in soot, the work hours is long and if the prisoner is too tired to stand, the guard will whips him back to work. Zamperini, exhausted and taking a little break, is punished as an act of insubordination against commanding officer and is ordered to lift a wooden log. With great difficulty, he lifts the wooden log for half a day before the warden beats him again.



Picture 14 (01:53:46)  
Zamperini, who is exhausted from hauling coal, takes a short break.



Picture 15 (01:55:41)  
With great difficulty, Zamperini lifts the wooden log as a form of punishment.



Picture 16 (01:59:45)  
Watanabe beats Zamperini again with the bamboo sword.

In this scene, his *Superego* dominates and able to conquer his urge and impulse. He is able to hold the log even though this action will surely bring pain, something that *Ego* avoids. By following his *Superego*, he is able to endure and persevere in dire situation. He finds strength in his moral and honor.

Zamperini: (*lifts the wooden log high over his head and shouts*)

Watanabe: (*trembling and his voice braking*)

Don't look at me.

Don't look at me.

Zamperini: (*maintains the log while stares at Watanabe*)

Watanabe: Don't look!

(*beats Zamperini with bamboo sword*)

*Unbroken* (2014) (01:58:33-01:59:50)

In that situation, Zamperini who is exhausted from carrying the coal, shouting his lungs out to raise his spirit. In his rebellion, he stares at Watanabe with eyes full of determination. Despite knows the fact that looking at the Warden is prohibited, he is still doing this as a form of protest against his cruelty. Although Zamperini is silent, but his action is a representation of *Superego* dominates the *Id*. He resists the punishment and takes the beating in order to protect his honor as a soldier. Similar to earlier scene where Zamperini ignores his impulse in *Id*, he able to take control of himself and doing something he believes is right.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The main character of the movie *Unbroken*, Louis Zamperini encounters several major turning points in his life. In these major turning points, he always faces difficult choice. The choice he makes is influenced by his *Id*, *Ego* and *Superego*. In his youth, when his *Superego* is still budding, his *Id* takes control and makes young Louis do whatever he wants. Young Louis steals, smokes and drinks without cares about ethics and rules. In the childhood turning point, he is unable to hold back his *Id* and acts only to fulfill his basic needs.

There is a time when he lets his *Id* outburst for a moment as a result from unexpected event when he is stranded at sea. He also let his *Id* dominates when he watches the warden tortures his comrades. After reached adulthood, Zamperini internalizes the moral value, virtue and ethic from his surrounding and strive to become respectable man and live proudly as his *Superego* dictates.

In the prison, Zamperini's perseverance is tested. The Warden abuses him for any trivial reason and beats him with bamboo sword and even leather belt. For more than two years, he endures the torture before Japan surrenders and the war is over. From the several turning points the writer observes, he is able to control his *Id* and able to shows a better judgement by following his *Superego*. Although in occasions his *Id* slips and takes control, but it is as a result of external factors, such as losing his rations and the Warden's cruelty towards his prison mates.

The writer concludes that Zamperini has strong moral and in almost any turning point in the story is able to suppress his urge and impulse. In the prison, his integrity as a man and soldier is tested numerous times. Not only he does not succumb to the pain, but he also does not bend his knee to sweet bribery. The three elements of personality structure (*Id*, *Ego* and *Superego*) are able to describe the factors that influence his decision-making and provide a better understanding regarding Zamperini's action. The *Id* is Zamperini's primal impulse and base aggressive urge, the *Ego* is his part of personality that controls his *Id* and mediates it, and the *Superego* is Zamperini's aspiration to become respectable man and soldier.

## REFERENCE

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