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Option: Literature

The Power of the Written Word in Identity Construction: Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief*

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Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture**

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Dedication

I have never liked this dedication part for it is never enough to express gratitude to those supporting us, however, I would like to mostly dedicate this humble work to my dear parents first off.

Here I am father, mother achieving your dreams. I am what I am because of you.

To my brothers and sister, Abdou, Raouf, and Meriem. Thanks for your support and prayers.

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To those who never stop chasing their dreams, “You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream” C.S. LEWIS.

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Abstract

Growing up in Nazi Germany during Hitler's control, and coping with the terror of World War II has been one of the hardest matters Germans, specifically, young adults to handle. Interestingly, the Australian author Markus Zusak in his novel *The Book Thief* (2006), comes to present some of the incidents that really affect their growing up process, coming of age, and adjusting to situations that might define their identity construction. Therefore, the study attempts to address the theme of coming of age in such context with projection of all events that lead to such transition through tracing back the journey and process of growing up of the main protagonist Liesel Meminger, and how books, as a medium, helped her in forming her identity and having her own voice. The study makes use of the historical approach to develop a thematic understanding contemporary works seek to project about actual past events. Moreover, a psychoanalytic examination based on the theory of snowball effect to analyze her trauma that shaped and influenced her development is to be held, along with outlining all the phases of her coming of age.

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Introduction

The aging process has been always an issue wherever it takes place. Growing up in Nazi Germany, specifically, under Hitler's takeover and prior to the beginning of World War II never ceased to be one of the hardest matters Germans and more precisely young adults to handle. For its seriousness the coming of age as a sensitive period and interesting theme to be addressed in a such rigid environment following the growth of a protagonist from youth to adulthood, the Australian author Markus Zusak as overwhelmed by his parents' stories comes to embrace this world exploring all events that led with one way or another those young adults to be greatly damaged. However, what is defining to their situation is the ability to overcome their trauma, come of age, and adjust to their realities. Moreover, through a projection of actual past events harming the development of their character, Zusak's contemporary novel *The Book Thief* (2006), comes to comprise the theme of young adults coming of age to define their identities, through whatever any medium or a possible way like that of books, as instruments helping in outlining people's intellectual growth as well.

All literatures have a specific goal serving the same stream of creating a sort of identification in coming of age stories. Australian literature, specifically, with all its definite genres and classifications shows an interest in exploring these characteristics affecting and influencing the transition of a subject from innocence to adulthood, covers a wide range of different stories and contexts, and develops certain and global understanding of the harsh situations they have been through, with a person experiencing family, love and interest loss, any kind of traumatic episodes, war and the like, as portrayed in *The Book Thief*.

Zusak's novel centers around its main focal bildungsroman protagonist Liesel Meminger, also known as the book thief, who comes to experience a twist of

fate after having lost her brother on a train journey to Munich, Germany, in late 1930's during World War II to be adopted by the Hubermanns. The evil of letting go resulted by her biological mother's abandonment imprisoned Liesel in a lasting traumatic episodes that included bedwetting hysteria because of her repressed memories of her dead brother, foreignness, unhomness, and bleakness of war initiated by Germany's Fuhrer Adolf Hitler among many chain events. The nine years-old girl's first arrival to Himmel Street was characterized by the nothingness to her identity except having owned a small book, *The Grave Digger's Handbook*, she stole at the funeral of her brother. The book thief as she struggles to cope with all her misfortunes, she finds an escape and solace in the Hubermanns' basement the very moment her accordion-playing foster father begins teaching her to read. As she develops a genuine affection to books, she entails a life career as a book stealer from the Nazi-book burning, from the mayor's wife's library, and wherever there are books to be met.

Following an 8th edition MLA format, the study comprises three main chapters. The study makes use of the historical approach to examine Zusak's novel in reference to actual past events affecting the growth of the main protagonist Liesel's growth. Moreover; the present study seeks to tackle all developmental phases the book thief comes to experience during her growing up years at the Hubermanns in the midst of chaos and control. It aims at generating an understanding of her traumatic events exploring all obstacles that mainly damaged her life from a snowball effect perspective, and how her love of reading opened doors to book thievery the thing that effectively evolved into several acts of stealings mainly to feed her hunger for knowledge. Moreover, it provides a particular presentation of her behaviors and actions after she came of age after the incident of the Nazi book-burnings from a

butterfly effect broad view considering the fact that a hurricane of ignorance might hit the entire humanity if Liesel did not come to be defying the Nazis.

In terms of chapters, the first chapter represents a theoretical background that lies under providing an overall view about the general context of the novel. It is made up of two sections; the first covers the evolution of the Australian narrative from Aboriginal writings that started out being nationalistic to lately establishing young-adult writings to include juveniles' turmoils and their transitions in a very confined presentation that of the coming-of-age stories. The second section makes use of the historical approach, to trace the historical features found in the Australian author Zusak's contemporary masterpiece *The Book Thief* in which he projects the actual past events during World War II, specifically, in Germany, to testify his intentions from addressing such theme.

The second chapter develops a thematic understanding of the main protagonist's struggle after being left to be adopted by the Hubermanns the years Germany was inhaling Nazism. To better approach the main difficulties she went through during her growing up years, a psychoanalytic examination based on the theory of snowball effect is to be held. The chapter is divided into two sections, the first covers a wide range of the book thief's traumatic side effects she comes to encounter, her struggles, and how she finds it hard to cope, however, the second is definitely representing her recovery through reading and stealing along with the help of many contributing factors, that served a positive supply for a healthy-like process of maturation.

The third chapter, tackles all Liesel's transformational stages to reaching maturity, starting with knowing the reason behind the downfall of her family mainly because of Hitler the antagonist of the novel, her development from being idealist to

realist, from being indecisive to decisive among many. It seeks to interpret her coming of age actions as stealing books from the Nazis, which does not seem to be rebellious only, but preventing and saving the world from a dangerous illness that might hit humans that of ignorance from a butterfly effect viewpoint. Furthermore, it aims at showing how reading and writing, language and literature in general, not only saved her life the very moment she comes to write her narrative, but what made up her identity as well.

Most importantly, from an Australian lens this traditionality of projecting actual past events that was mainly determined by the newly impressive storytelling technique performed by the unusual narrator “Death” made the narrative highly explored and praised as well, however, from another angle this study does not only acknowledge the power of the written word in shaping, influencing, and constructing Liesel’s identity to what seems to be a common knowledge among many critics and researchers, but rather seeks to prove its conformity to the principles of the coming of age narrative. It aims through providing an alternative interpretation of her coming of age based on the theory of snowball effect, when it comes to understanding the difficulties she encountered, to demonstrate an affordable apprehension of one of the many matured actions she comes to portray which is stealing, that does not only chanced to happen to feed her hunger, but also to defend knowledge from the flames of ignorance from a butterfly effect landscape.

Chapter One: Theoretical Background

The first chapter aims at providing an overall view related to the study to be used as a contextualized reference. It traces the evolution of the Australian narrative from nationalistic Aboriginal writings to contemporary young-adult writings. It also, develops a general understanding within this category that of the thematic representation of coming of age narration. It further deals with the business of the Australian author Markus Zusak (1976) writing his contemporary worldwide story, *The Book Thief*, attributing it to the principles of the historical criticism, from tracing his literary inspiration, providing a historical and social context to have a closer confined understanding of the novel.

I- An Introduction to Australian Literature: The Coming of Age Narration

1.1. The development of The Australian Narrative

Australian literature has developed through centuries since the settlers' arrival from England¹(1788) to include different forms and classifications of literary works. It tangled between poetry as the first to appear then the novel, and later drama and theater. Moreover, with the whites altering the Aboriginals' lifestyle many changes happened breaking their silence to calls of resistance. To fully express their anger they turned to papers to heal their wounds, rise consciousness, and make a voice. Nonetheless, assimilating the British culture resulted in shaping and creating the Australian narrative.

Elizabeth Webby (2006) in her remarkable work *The Cambridge Companion to Australian Literature* has provided a detailed sketch of the evolution of Australian literature as drawn in H. M. Green's monumental two-volume framework entitled *A History of Australian Literature: Pure and Applied* (1961), where he denotes a

defining notion of the later as mainly the body of literature, both oral and written, produced by Australia's Aboriginals who took the pen as a form of endurance against the whites' colonization (Webby 1). It came to reflect the social and political viewpoints of a given society shown through realistic characters, and connections to current events, and expresses collective values even when the literature deals with the experiences of an individual, where those experiences are very likely to be favoured in terms of the ordinary, the typical, and the representative (Mitchel Britannica). Moreover, Green accounts in his work the historical development of the Australian book by providing exact periods as well as genre divisions to reflect the factors that brought it .

The luxury of tracing the fundamental development of the Australian literary work, as a matter of fact, is to trace the inevitability of its progress from "initial conflict" (1789-1850), through "consolidation" (1850-1890), and "self-conscious nationalism" (1923-1950), to "world consciousness and disillusion" (1923-1950). This classifications lie within the traditional representation of colonialistic spirit in the Australian narrative text that has been changed into a truly nationalistic one. This change constructed newfavourable pieces of art to mostly accomplishing literature's main purpose, which is introducing readers to social problems and rise people's consciousness.

Furthermore, there was a vast increase in creative writings with leading novelists like David Malouf during the 1950s-1960s. More marginal Australian types from poems and short stories had flourished by 1970s-1980s (Webby 16). The shift in Australian writings nature continued as Australia moved towards federation after the colonial period, by the last decade of the nineteenth century, where "fiction writers started to fully depart themselves from the generic conventions of romance and

melodrama, and from the construction of the reader as essentially a British consumer looking for exotic and colorful tales of the colonies” (Webby 105). Again, this shift was categorized by leading writers like Henry Lawson, Mike Franklin, and Joseph Furphy; where they succeeded in depicting what was “Australian” from an insider’s point of view. Typically, “the Australian landscape and ideas about the Australian national character moved from the foreground in fiction around the turn of the century” (Webby 105).

However, it was highly expected that the next twist would be for a new and exciting category like children’s by the twentieth century. Therefore, Australia by the time of peace and security gave birth to some overzealous writers who were mostly interested in presenting new concerns, problems, and struggles children might face. This century has been seen as “The Golden Age of Children’s Literature” not only in Australia but the world as a whole (Fadiman Britannica). The evolution of the Australian literary book continued to include different categories; biographical novels, gothic, thriller and mystery, historical, horror, adventure and romance, science-fiction, Juveniles or young- adult fiction. Within this context Nixon and Comber (2000) go asserting “at the beginning of the twenty-first century there was cause for optimism about the range and quality of youth literature, and the power of Australian authors to reach a mass audience within and beyond Australia” (Stevens and Bean 638).

Young Adult Literature was, definitely, the new genre that played a pivotal role in Australian literature by then. There was a need to understand other entity like adolescents; their world was worth exploring for that it allows creating identical links by and within other literatures (Egoff et al. 89). Moreover, it provides illustrative and representative models, and develops certain evaluation of some real-world facts and norms related to young adults (Stevens and Bean 638). Many representations has

specified this genre by the break of world war two paving the way to a new contemporary phase in Australian literature where “Australia eye-witnessed many political, social, and economical changes and as a result fiction attained the height, which it had never experienced before” (qtd.in Shodhganga 6). It has also produced many contemporary outstanding novelists like, John Masen, Matthew Reilly, Daniel O'Malley, Jackie French, and Markus Zusak who sparkled reflecting “cultural diversity of contemporary Australian society” (qtd.in Shodhganga 7). This natural growth, basically, “contributed in creating links between literature and society in a causal way; where it brought abstractions of society, culture, and literature to life to help generating a historical understanding” (Kiernan and Harvey 28).

1.2. The Coming of Age Narration in Young Adult Fiction

As a distinct literary category from adult's and children's (Coat 317), young-adult literature refers to the set of fictional works published mainly for young people between the ages of twelve and seventeen (Writersdigest). This category of fiction dates back to the first works of S. E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*² (1967) as stated by Michael Cart (2007), where suggestively it came to represent a darker side of adolescence that was not often represented in any work of that time (The Value of YAL YALSA). It has been broadly defined to be seen to Russell (1988) as “a relatively new phenomenon because people didn't really start thinking of young people between the ages of twelve and eighteen as young adults until the twentieth century” (58). It has thrived since the 1960's “ through critical recognition, and scholarly interest that has lagged a bit behind the inventiveness of authors in the field” (Trupe viii). Its “interrogation of the social constructions that foreground the relationship between society and the individual, creates a focused story around the

ambiguous situations of the drowning adult world teenagers come to experience” (Hill 7).

Narrowly, Hill (2014) defines it as “a fiction that immerses readers in the experiences, lived and imagined, of young adults aged 14-18. Frequently written in the first person, young-adult narratives across genres enable identification with the narrator and/or encourage empathy for the protagonist and/or other characters”(7); this literary identification holds within itself as Alsup on Gray Ward denotes “the conscious alignment of oneself with the experience, ideas, and experiences of others” (9).

It has widened itself to include variety of genres, where the main protagonist's quest of self-discovery, as faced by many challenges, is determined by finding answers to the internal and external questioning elements of, “Who am I?,” and “What am I going to do about it?” serves as a crucial theme in this category. Popular novel genres like the coming-of-age is the best known for this category. In terms of readership resulted in this luxurious area young-adults narratives can be divided into two categories “Problem novels,” and/or “Coming-of-age novels,” the focus within these two is always linked to specific challenges of youth in which personal and social issues are likely to be resolved by the process of growing up (Bildungsroman Britannica).

Coming-of-age novels or the *Bildungsroman* were first coined by the German novelist Johann Goethe in his memorial masterpiece *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (1795). Influenced by his narrative pattern, where the main character undergoes a troubled search for an adult identity through a process of trials, experiences, challenges, and revelations, many authors of the nineteenth and twentieth

century developed their own reference like Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, Charles Dickens with *Great Expectations*, *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield*, J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in The Rye*, and lately the phenomenon of *Harry Potter's Series* by J. K. Rowling (Literary Articles). As a genre of literature and film it focuses on the growth of the protagonist, mainly, boys and girls in their mid teens from childhood to adulthood (GlennonPrezi).

Millard in his work *Coming of Age in Contemporary American Fiction* (2007), defines the coming-of-age narrative as “a novel exploring adolescence where the loss of innocence is conceived of as the moment of coming of age, that coincides with locating the elusive point of the protagonist's origin where also he/she comes to understand themselves through this process of maturation” (Hill 14). As a genre depicting the development of the protagonist, from childhood to adulthood, to Snircová (2017) is determined by short periods of few months, or couple of years as the main hero/heroine achieves “a specific understanding of personal identity as unified national self in a period during which the construction of the self must be completed as a sign of individuals' ability to participate in a social process” (29). This kind of narratives reflects a great deal of contemporary issues, and mostly global concerns reflected in the character's behaviors or actions. Generating a precise criteria of a coming-of-age story is always challenging. However, by focusing on adolescence a time by definition of rebellion and resistance, and by foregrounding contradictory desires and discourses; it examines one's choices and decisions where identity is constructed in the context of human relationships (Rishoi 9-15).

The set of these qualities is what makes it a valuable genre within young-adult fiction categories. Moreover, young-adult coming-of-age novels in genre studies are most of the time referred to as a “bildungsroman” or “formation novel,” as they are

used interchangeably and serve almost the same definition. Nevertheless, many distinguishing elements might occur within this category. The Bildungsroman is a subgenre genre, where its main focus is on the psychological and moral growth of the main character from youth to adulthood. The main character starts his/her journey with loss or tragedy till he achieves maturity and comes to full realization of the world's governing elements (Literacle).

However, coming-of-age narrative focuses only on the social factors, the troubled family status, and the protagonist's change in the way of perceiving things at a giving turning point. Therefore, what differs them from one another among many factors is “the scope of story time covered by the respective genres and its relation to the differences in the narratives' endings,” for example, Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1861) or Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847) as a British Bildungsroman seems to be covering great spans of life time of the main protagonists not only focuses on the period of adolescence, like in coming-of-age narratives, rather the development of the character from childhood to adulthood (Snircová 26). On the other hand, “in coming-of-age narrative the scope of story time tends to be restricted to much shorter periods of a few months or couple year,” where the protagonist experiences some twisting points towards maturation. Moreover, “this journey is, however, rarely completed leaving the narrative more often than not, open ended which is sharp contrast to the classic bildungsroman” (Snircová 27), it is like maturing, but not yet becoming an adult (Lilelale), as in J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in The Rye* (1951), or more contemporary works like Stephen Chbosky's *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (1999), or John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars* (2012).

What characterises coming of age stories is the experiences that the protagonist undergoes where they result an inner growth, and development as a

person. The set of these experiences might include the death of a loved one, family loss, war, and the like. Moreover, the protagonist at beginning is most likely young and naive, and then the coming-of-age marks the transition into adulthood. The main character, if not always, by the end possesses a clearly defined personality, and exhibits growth during the course of the story, where again their growth of self-awareness usually comes with struggle and pain since growing up is not always easy matter of fact. The social and cultural context is another characteristic element, and usually the story takes place in the past -not that far past (Lilale). Furthermore, it addresses many themes of maturation, loss of innocence, the search for wisdom, the search for an adult identity exploring religion, social class, racism, gender, bullying and suicide, and sexuality (ScennaPrezi).

The protagonist who is socially or psychologically maturing, receiving an education in life, makes discoveries about the self and the world, according to author Deborah Brown, is by the end changed because of a set of events in the story. Such kind of stories follows a typical pattern; 1). The beginning: the character is introduced as youthful and immature, 2). The problem: the character encounters a challenge or a problem, 3). The struggle: the character struggles to overcome the problem, 4). Big decision: the character makes tough decision or choice; or overcome difficult obstacles, 5). Ending: the character is seen different or changed; significance of the learning is revealed (Characteristics of Coming of Age Stories Youtube). This growth or maturation is determined by the main character's adoption of strength, leadership, courage, kindness and perseverance; a global concern which might represent his/her representativeness and eagerness to be identified with (Bilz 2).

The crucial contemporary themes this genre covers makes it the most popular as contemporary young-adult authors seek to create works that contradict the

traditional classics. They use all of the literary elements in an effective and innovative way “to convey exquisitely, crafted, sophisticated and challenging stories” (Wadham and Ostenson 6). Moreover, contemporary coming-of-age stories come to represent unique qualities that differentiate them from other literary works, and genres where they seem to be giving a great deal about what the character thinks and feels (Mulhall 5). Contemporary young-adult’s international bestselling authors like John Green perfectly depicts the world of teenagers in what to be seen as a “quality”. His novel *Looking for Alaska* (2005) has been greatly hailed as the most significant coming-of-age literary work; it follows the journey of a young boy who must navigate the world of friendship, romantic encounters, and issues of death and guilt. In “its complexity and depth it rivals other classics of the same genre like *The Catcher in The Rye* (1951) or *To kill a Mockingbird* (1960)” (Ostenson and Watham 6).

II-Markus Zusak and *The Book Thief*: Literary and Historical background

2.1. Markus Zusak: Literary Profile

Markus Zusak is seen as one of the greatest novelists that Australia has yet produced. He was born in Sydney, Australia (1975), from an Austrian-German descents (Scholastic). He began writing fiction at the age of sixteen, during his teenagehood he was inspired by S. H. Hinton, Peter Hedges, and Joseph Heller. Such authors paved the way for young Markus to explore and invent in the world of literature. Generally, Zusak has acquired different qualities to be described as both a YA and Adult author, in his own words Zusak states, “I try not to think about categories anymore. My goal is simply to write a book that will, hopefully, become someone's favourite book” (Chipublib).

The New York Times magazine's international bestselling author for his masterpiece *The Book Thief* (2006), has written several novels that brought him fame since 1999. He is the author of six books; *The Underdog* (1999), *Fighting Ruben Wolfe* (2000), *Getting The Girl* (2001), *I AM the Messenger* (2002), *The Book Thief* (2005), and recently *Bridge of Clay* (2018) (Markus Zusak). He is an Award-winning, he got enormous awards like *A Michael L. Printz Honor Book Award*, *Los Angeles Times Book Prize*, *Children's Book Council Book of the Year Award of Australia*; all for his excellence in leaving a print, and contributing in young-adult literature (Chipublib).

Zusak is best known for his novel *The Book Thief*, the book gathered much appeal and rewards. Many reviewers acknowledged the fact of being a novel of breathtaking scope, masterfully told, brilliantly and hugely ambitious, it is the kind of life-changing and moving tale by *The Guardian*, *New York Times*, and *The Age*, among many. To date, his novel held the number one position at Amazon.com, Amazon.co.uk, *The New York Times* bestseller list in countries across South America, Europe, Asia, UK, and several territories. It was the only book to feature on both the UK and USA World Book Night Lists in 2012, and now a major motion picture, adopted into screen and directed by Emmy Awards-winning Brian Percival (2013), and received several awards as well (*The Book Thief* Zusak).

2.2. Historical Features in Markus Zusak's *The Book Thief*

As a contemporary Australian corpus *The Book Thief* represents one of the most important narratives in contemporary literature, however; it can be read from a historical lens due to its major historical events which take place during World War II, in Nazi Germany. Intended to answer the main question found within this

theoretical framework, which is the intention of the author for this contemporary narrative to mean in his present time and place, Zusak seeks to demonstrate the theme of war through the story of his main character Liesel, to project Germans' daily lives, and to help developing a general understanding of the actual past events, impressively through an exhausted and overworked storyteller who chances to be "Death" manifesting "the poignant story of Liesel Meminger, a young German girl coming of age in Nazi Germany" (Johnson 2).

This genuine idea was based on the assumption of a possible friendship between war and death which made no sense for him, therefore, he came up with another label which is war as being the boss and Death its loyal servant and then attributed the boss thing to Hitler and Death as his fatigued worker collecting human bodies during World War II (Coat 44). Moreover, "Death as a narrator has a memory of the traumatic events it sees and by fragmentary storytelling it is attempting to be the witness, the story-teller and the healer of the traumas" (Buràková 43), Zusak states:

It was a bit a nightmare, for quite a while, I moved from Death narrating- he was not the original narrator, it was Liesel, he even wrote in third person- but I was constantly called back. It just made sense to me, people often say that war and death are best friends, so who's better to be hanging around Nazi Germany and tell the story? (Random House).

It shows also another side to Nazi Germany along with people's ability to have both qualities of goodness and villainity at the same time, Zusak manifests the suffering Germans encounter from the Nazis, and then highlights the good behavior of

Liesel and her friends to stand for each other during crisis through the eyes of Death (De Oliveira and Maggio 3).

Overwhelmed by the world of his family who survived war, he comes depicting the massive extent of blind support of Hitlerism. This long term Hitlerism for Germany (Rosenfield 36) accounted the integration of children in the so-called group of Hitler Youth (1936); boys and girls aged 10-18 were enrolled compulsively in Boys' *the Hitler Jugend* (Hitler Youth), and Girls' *the Jungmadelbund or the BDM* (Young Maidens), where they are given different tasks to prepare them for military services and motherhood. As for the family if ever fulfilled one of the two purposes of the party that of spreading Nazism in family or helping in the rapid expansion of the German population, it was given special place (J. Lee 68-69). In a relation to this, the main protagonist Liesel comes to take a place in what was known the BDM for girls as she turns ten, nonetheless, in the novel she portrays her defiance against this compulsiveness.

By World War I's wrap up, Germany was hopelessly bankrupt and deeply in debt; the Treaty of Versailles had imposed crushing reparations requirements on Germans (Bradberry 214), causing drastic waves of poverty (Trost and Kravetsky 3). "This economic depression was not less worse than America's Great Depression to the point that Germans miserably struggled to earn some pfennings with which to buy food" (Bradberry 217-224), similarly, where in the novel Liesel and some friends from the neighborhood come to adopt stealing as a career to feed their hunger. Nevertheless, every nightmare has an end, with Hitler's accession to power (1933) Germany most likely returned powerful (Thompson 17).

The complex characterization of Molching inhabitants as Grace Lee goes asserting, provides an extended picture of Nazi Germany's troubled environment (4), where the chief restriction of the propagandists as another element comes to include culture and literature as well, "Hitler repeatedly stressed that in this world, human culture and civilization are inseparably bound up with the existence of the Aryan recognizing the importance of the printed word, the regime early on sought full control of both publication and the readership of books" (Lewy ix).

They aimed at getting rid of all ideological rivals and achieve preeminent National Socialist ideas through convincing Germans of the insignificance of un-German art, therefore, "it was not surprising that book censorship encompassed a large segment of German book production", where a total of 5485 were banned from 1933-1938 including books of moral corruption, Marxists, Pacifists, Confessional ideas, Jewish authorship, Communists, and the catch-all designation of failure to live up to what was expected in the new Germany (Lewy ix-19) except for Hitler's book *Mein Kampf*⁶ the only one essential book in addition to works of blood and soil literature" (Bendersky 122), for the main protagonist "Mein Kampf, the book penned by the Fuhrer himself. It was the third book of great importance to reach LieselMeminger... Some would say it was a miracle that she ever owned that book at all. Its journey began on the way home, the night of fire" (Zusak 125).

Under his Nazi leadership, the Nazis indoctrinated all sorts of racial discrimination and asserted the superiority of the Aryan race³, who were believed to be better than other races for that they had a pale hair with blue eyes (Corper); all which was promoted in his propaganda⁴ and his book *Mein Kampf*⁵, or my struggle, (1925)that was sometimes referred to as the bible of the Nazis (History).Supporting Nazism fell under serving the country if not other purposes; those who defied the

party were to be punished. Moreover, manipulation of public opinion was given a great deal, through the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda⁶ the media, press, broadcasts, art, theater, and education were restricted (Corper). Schools played an important role in spreading Nazi ideas as teachers were perfectly chosen to enforce the Nazi curriculum (J. Lee 66), “more than an intellectually constructed doctrine, Nazism was a flexible movement aiming at aggressive action, a kind of religion learning on blind faith, on internationality, and explanation of subconscious fear and basic instincts” (Lepage 10), furthermore, “instead of opening minds, it was designed to close them, all subjects were used as a vehicle for Nazi ideas, the whole purpose was to create Nazis” (J. Lee 68); and this was exposed to through Liesel at her Nazi-Lutheran Catholic run school under the supervision of Teacher Sister Maria.

Zusak thought of writing a biography but then, he created a personal story about a girl who turns to be a book and words stealer contrasting Hitler's powerful use of words “Zusak wanted to juxtapose the way Hitler used words. She would be a stealer of books and a prolific reader”(Arizpe and Smith 72). The Fuhrer's era was characterized by many remarkable events. A gigantic funeral pyre of intellect is what defines exactly his powerful impact on his people, where a group of students from the Hitler Youth come to burn books celebrating his birthday (Bosmajian 14). The 1939 Nazi book burning came to represent revolution, the symbolism of final conquest of intellectual decay, a sign of victory of the new values to Nazis claiming the right to throw the literary filth into the flames only to give birth to a truly German spirit (Lewy 11-14). Such event of worldwide historical importance in representing the hazardousness of the printed word proves only its power for existing authorities, however, this business of burning knowledge, undoubtedly, succeeded in achieving

decline of age worth rejecting for that it was applied not only to Germany by then, but the entire world (Tillich 33-34).

The novel eventually comes to explore the importance of the written portrayed by Liesel's love of books; how words can greatly inspire, construct or destruct. Zusak "definitely explores how people survived emotionally as well as physically, helped by experiences associated with books and reading" (Arizpe and Smith 73). Furthermore, a great deal was given to empower this quality of reading as "it is found in the fact that realities are entirely built on words alone" (Himelle et al 3). Words have also the power "to change the world by both establishing and defying the moral code of society, moreover, they can be responsible for the spread of great evil, but also have the power to comfort and save" (Bodden 44-49).

Furthermore, the Fuhrer's era was the most darkest period for Germans where they were forced to co-exist with his purging policy; the Nazis didn't target only Jewish people, but also Gypsies⁷, Communists, Poles, Homosexuals, Jehovah's witness⁸, Afro-German, and mentally disabled people who were believed to be not only enemies for Germans, but useless eaters and unfairly taking food from Germany which is already suffering from wartime conditions (Wagner et al. 879).

For Liesel's family case, "There was only one thing she knew about her father. It was a label she didn't understand. A strange word. "Kommunist." She had no knowledge about it, and when she would ask her mother about its meaning. "She was told it wasn't important, that she should not worry about such things" (Zusak 31). This is foreshadowing to everything troubled about her life. The Fuhrer's days would not have come to an end without his loss, Germany had to endure constant and very heavy bombings by the Allies aircrafts destroying Munich, Nuremberg, Cologne,

Essen, and Berlin (J. Lee 82). Hitler killed himself before he could be brought to justice unwilling to take another toxic burden of humiliation, where he paved the way to a process of denazification once the Allies occupied Germany and ended his war (1939-1945) (History).

The Book Thief (2006) has been highly praised as it celebrates the power of language and “tells a story in which books become treasure. And because there's no arguing with a statement like that, Zusak will be forever appreciated for his audacity” (Maslin 3). Moreover, for its contemporary nature in exploring the past events as based on witness accounts from his parents, his narrative comes to portray the historical principles as a reflection to the life and times of his characters, and to testify his purpose in an attempt to gain literary and historical feedback for better and deeper understanding of the content of the novel.

The theme of war, even as an over consumed topic, never cease to be interesting for authors from all around the world. From a contemporary Australian lens based on the historical thematic tradition, the first chapter explored the evolution of the Australian narrative through centuries as a first attempt. It aimed at providing insights concerning the coming of age theme within young-adult fiction. It also tried to project the literary contributions of the Australian author Markus Zusak's in the field of young-adult narratives, along with presenting confied representation of war within historical and social borders as portrayed referrencially to the setting of the novel.

Chapter Two: Liesel's Pursuit of Coming of Age: Enduring Trauma and Character Making

As typical of coming of age narrative, *The Book Thief*, centers around the journey of its main protagonist as she approaches into adulthood in a period restricted between 1939- 1945. Therefore, this chapter aims at tracing all the phases she goes through; starting from her trauma to understand the difficulties she comes to encounter during her aging process. To better understanding the struggle she faced, the challenges to recover, and stand on her character and identity, a psychoanalytic examination based on the theory of the snowball effect is to be held. It demonstrates how she starts adjusting to the new situation finally through reading and stealing.

2.1. Liesel's Trauma and its Side-Effects: The Snowball Effect of Paula

Meminger's Departure

Guy G. Kay once said “We are all shaped by where we grow up, though that shaping takes different forms” (qtd. in Brainyquote), as suggestive of coming of age stage; a child becoming an adult must experience a love and family loss, trauma, war, oppressive discrimination, and the like, marking a change where there is a focus most of the time on the set of factors leading to such transition. Such traumatic situations, as ever happening to individuals bring about two main concepts, “the concept of trauma as psychological event affecting roughly the individual, and the concept of social and collective trauma affecting societies, and groups” (McGinley and Varchevker xxvi). Its intensity might result greatly in shaping not only realities and paths of the subject, but also the way they perceive things as traumatised witnesses.

In the opening paragraphs of *The Book Thief*, the narrator “Death” introduces among many stories, the book thief's after he has come across her autobiographical

book, titled *The Book Thief*. Overworked and weary from witnessing human violence and tragedy, “Death narrates Liesel’s story in a desperate attempt to recuperate the redeeming qualities of the human race” (Gipson 10). Liesel Meminger the protagonist of the novel, is an extremely traumatized child-character whose upheavals start the day her mother, Paula Meminger, abandoned her, along with the death of her brother, Werner Meminger, on a train journey on their way to the Hubermanns to be adopted (Burková 41). This devastating occasion brings together all forms of misfortunes that will reduce her happiness, and make her suffer in life struggling to generate a bigger picture concerning all what is happening to her, and mainly leading her the years to come to a state of growing up.

The very moment Liesel reaches the Hubermanns in Himmel Street, Munich, Germany 1939, she is nine years old, falls to her traumatic life, “with the vision still stuck in her mind, Liesel Meminger could see without question that her brother, Werner, was now sideways and dead” (Zusak 23), and starts having difficulties in accepting this agonizing reality. To Death’s description there was the chaos of goodbye as she left the cemetery heading to her foster family, he associates it to Europe’s gray days where “somewhere in all the the snow, she could see her broken heart into two pieces. Each half was glowing and beating under all that white” (Zusak 24). Imprisoned in her first-to-be experienced trauma, she is interrupted by her frightened soul and finds it hard to get along with her new situation with Hans and Rosa Hubermann, Death points:

curtains of rain were drawn around the car. Nearly there, the foster care lady, Frau Heinrich, turned around and smiled. “*Dein neues Heim*⁹. Your new home.” Liesel made a clear circle on the dribbled glass and looked out... and the fact was this: Liesel would not get out of the car. “*Was ist los*

mitdem Kind?” Rosa Hubermann inquired. She said it again. “What’s wrong with this child?” She struck her face inside the car and said, “*Na, komm. Komm...*” She would not move (Zusak 27-28).

Lois Tyson once said, “the fact of being un-homed is not the same as being homeless. To be unhomed is not to feel at home even when you are in your own home because you are not home in yourself” (qtd. in IJHMS 54). Referring to Liesel’s case she made of herself a traumatic refugee incapable of allowing herself to be homed at the Hubermanns. Severe as it might seem, her beginning established a certain unbridgeable distance between her foster family, where any attempt to feign a normal interaction was depressing. Such feelings of loneliness and foreignness give credit only to one fact that she was unhomed herself.

Growing up traumatized was not worse than being forced into the Hitler Youth. “Ten years old meant Hitler Youth. Hitler Youth meant a small brown uniform. Being female, Liesel was enrolled into what was called the BDM” (Zusak 40). This enrollment in *Bund Deutscher Mädchen*, or Band of German Girls served different tasks that bothered Liesel, for it was barely a place to fit in where the *Fuhrer* was properly and blindly followed up through this band, swastika flags, Nazism and his NSDAP¹⁰ party. The agonizing fear they spread haunted Germans’ lives for families must grant membership in the Nazi party, have a copy of Hitler’s book, *Mein Kampf*, learn their “*heil Hitler*,” and a Swastika flag¹¹ must be falling down outdoors of Molching Streets, Munich. The *Fuhrer*’s serious reflection in his Nazi party keeps creating a melancholic fear and states of affliction to his own people, where Liesel was put forcefully in such rigid environment, and for this calamity a sort of snowball effect might take place affecting the development and growth of Liesel.

Doug Larson said once: “The aging process has you firmly in its grasp if you never get the urge to throw a snowball” (qtd. in azquotes), it becomes a sort of a snowball effect where a decisive or indecisive change after another might create an amazing calamitous or wholesome echo. The snowball effect can be said for; the process in which something starts off being relatively insignificant and grows into something much larger engulfing everything in its path (Authorhouse xix). In theory, it refers to a situation in which something increases in size or importance at a faster and faster rate (Cambridge). Moreover, it is a long-term process that starts from an initial state of minor differences and builds upon itself, just like a snowball rolling down the hill, then becomes larger and larger and comes to cause drastic outcomes (Quora).

This snowball effect can be an analogy to many life experiences, a simple action, behaviour, or an incident can affect positively or negatively the aging process of individuals as it accumulates. Enough consumed, one thing on the top of another can be vigorously serious in affecting identity construction as well, due to just one snowballed event. The projectionality of this notion can be found in Jay Asher’s worldwide masterpiece *Thirteen Reasons Why* (2007), whose main young adult protagonist, Hannah Baker, “after having detailed a thirteen reasons why in an audio diary mailed to her friends some weeks after her death,” (Wikipedia) explaining why she did commit suicide only creates a sort of testimony of one label to which this people or incidents she comes to experience started this snowball effect and led to her suicide (HeartinwarWordpress).

Teenagerhood is very sensitive period, where a young-adult’s identity must be constructed in a way they could be effective social members for their own sake and for others as well. However, with the sum of events damaging a soul, it probably

portrays the beginning of an end. Jay Asher's inclusion of this theory in his novel might have the same work to do in Zusak's *The Book Thief*. Liesel's damaging trauma, similarly, is not simply led by a single course, everything she comes to experience is rolled up together, as it descended it dropped itself heavily on her creating an inevitable snowball effect hindering her aging process, and affecting her life. Liesel has been through much where a destructive downhill boulder snowball ¹² effect established itself from all the negativity, anger, fear, blame, resentment, and harsh judgment (Authorhouse xix).

Family is what makes a human being, it is meant for developing a person the way parenting should take place in such process of educating them, embracing them with love and support, but the fact of its exclusion from their entire life could be just a pure mess. The exodus of Liesel's mother can be regarded a first step to the formation of this snowball which is based, mainly, on a sort of blame and harsh judgment, all of which is recording so much going-on in her head though still waiting for her return and reply,

Against all hopelessness, Liesel still checked the mailbox each afternoon, throughout March and well into April. This was despite a Hans-requested visit from Frau Heinrich, who explained to the Hubermanns that the foster care office had lost contact completely with Paula Meminger. Still, the girl persisted, and as you might expect, each day, when she reached the mail, there was nothing (Zusak 101).

Liesel starts having nightmares, the very first few months, where in her memories about the death of her brother staring at the floor; she would picture herself

digging him out of the frozen snow until her fingers bleed as a result screams fill the room and unconscious bedwetting takes place (Burkovà 41-42),

She would wake up swimming in her bed, screaming, and drowning in the flood of sheets. On the other side of the room, the bed that was meant for her brother floated boatlike in the darkness. Slowly, with the arrival of consciousness, it sank, seemingly into the floor. This vision didn't help matters, and it would usually be quite a while before the screaming stopped (Zusak 36).

This developed psychological battle keeps bringing about calamity, and “gradually become mixed with other traumatic images, her mother's face, Nazi brown shirts, and other fragmented symbols of her contemporary trauma” (Karpasitis 2).

It is taking another level based on resentment with Rosa's verbal and sometimes physical abuse even a positive interaction between the two ladies is a terrific failure, Liesel unwillingly experiences a physical abuse from Rosa's part, this mal treatment develops a sort of agonizing relationship, where typically a mother-daughter relationship is never this way; to be treated as a maid to a destructive bosslike mother as Rosa, and be cursed and called names like “*Saumensch*”¹³ or filthy pig would possibly threatens the traditionality of this beautiful relationship. More relatively, when Rosa hired Liesel to do the ironing she was in charge for collecting the money and hands it back to Mama, but because she was desperately in need for a reply from her mother as a present for her birthday she stole some of it, Mama's wrath by then had bad consequences to what it hints to establishing a sort of grudge towards Rosa,

She broke. "I spent it, Mama". Rosa came closer. This was not a good sign. She was very close to the wooden spoons. "You what?" Before she could answer, the wooden spoon came down on Liesel Meminger's body like the gait of God. Red marks like footprints, and they burned. From the floor, when it was over, the girl actually looked up and explained...The red marks grew larger, in patches on her skin, as she lay there, in the dust and the dirt and the dim light. Her breathing calmed, and a stray yellow tear trickled down her face...The floor was cold, especially against her cheek, but she was unable to move (Zusak 98-99).

The red marks kept snowballing her misery that started insignificantly from small act that of her mother's departure to be treated badly by her new foster mother making this destructive downhill boulder snowball gets bigger, "no matter how many times she tried to imagine that scene with the yellow light that she knew had been there, she had to struggle to visualize it. She was beaten in the dark, and she remained there, on a cold, dark kitchen floor. Even Papa's music was the color of darkness" (Zusak 100).

After having spent a year at The Hubermanns', back forward, September, 1939, marked the beginning of World War II where Hitler took over Poland, and England and France had made their declaration on Germany, and Munich Street where Liesel lived was alive with war (Zusak 74). The speedy- falling snowball is getting more mass affecting Liesel's life, in a nation plagued with fear, nuances, bleakness of the war, her second tragedy was in the loss of her family during the air raids by the Allies, and with the images of dead bodies as Death denotes, it destructively damaged her aging process. Moreover, her inability to read and write coincides with the fact she never been to school, having another snowball effect. Liesel never cease to be a subject to a frustrated life, and the Lutheran¹ full-time

schooling exposure was more than a hell with all the noises made about the new girl's stupidity, "the best Liesel could do was speak the alphabet under her breath before she was told in no uncertain terms to keep quiet" (Zusak 39). Sometimes she was punished and given what was known as "*Watschen*" which stands for "a good hiding", each time she fails at reading she was taken away, put in a chair at the side, and asked to keep her mouth shut by her teacher Sister Maria (Zusak 74-75).

Even when she was challenged by her unconscious will, Sister Maria showed no interest and shouted her with a "Cannot" expression, however, she went to the board and did the reading, "her blood lounded. The sentences blurred. The white page was suddenly written in another tongue, and it didn't help that tears were now forming in her eyes. She couldn't even see the words anymore" (Zusak 76). The result of this snowballing process was the grinning and laughing by her classmates but Rudy, where also in the break a boy named Ludwig Schmeickl came up to her with a book and challenged her to read, "Hey, Liesel," he said to her, "I'm having trouble with this word. Could you read it for me?" He laughed, a smugness laughter. "You *Dummkopf*- you idiot." The finality of this initiated a big fight.

Such snowball effect that inevitably started out being small, grew larger, gained more speed and mass destroying and damaging Liesel's life, and resulting by the end a negative process of growing up to include another act of bullying by Franz Deutscher, a boy from the neighborhood and the evil leader of the Hitler Youth, who keeps terrorizing Rudy and Tommy Muller (Shmoop). Bullying has the potential of bringing about negative outcomes that affect greatly those who are bullied; they are likely to experience teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, public embarrassment (Stop Bullying). The verbal abuse Liesel receives along with Rudy

and Tommy Muller from his part was countless if not harmful. He calls them apes, and freaks them with his meanness.

As a side effect Liesel would feel the urge of making a crime to him (Zusak 271), and to Viktor Chemmel as well, the new leader of small gang stealers, Liesel joined with Rudy because they were desperately hungry for food. Bullying took another level with Viktor calling her “*the little whore*”, and taking her possessions “Viktor Chemmel smiled. He spoke aimably. This could only mean that he was at his most dangerous. “Well, well, if it isn’t Rudy Steiner and his little whore.” Very smoothly, he met them and snatched *the Whistler* from Liesel’s grip” (Zusak 301), Viktor did not take the book only, but asked for a fifty marks to give it back, and eventually threw it in the Amper River making Liesel emotionally wreck.

2.3. Enduring Trauma and the Making of a Character through Reading and Stealing

Inexorable as death misfortunes never come singly with the sum of life’s ups and downs, however, what helps rising above them is one’s choices and determinations (Leadlife). Moreover, a decisive “letting go” action is not less than those who help in this actual change as in Liesel’s case. Her traumatic episodes finally came to an end with a positive snowball effect taking place. The positive spiral snowball ¹⁵ is mainly formed on a positive momentum where bad is turned to good, good to great, apathy to love, anger to calm, and sadness to joy (Authorhouse xx).

Prior to her arrival to Himmel Street, Molching, Liesel owned nothing but her small suitcase which contained a small black book she has stolen from snow at her brother’s funeral, that holds the title of *The Grave Digger’s Handbook: A Twelve-Steps Guide to Grave-Digging Success* (Zusak 29). The stolen book brought about

torment to her indeed for that it reminds her of her troubled past, nevertheless, it became such a comfort the very moment she started reading it with Papa. Meanwhile, Liesel adopts a sort of affection towards Rosa, when she urged the book thief to call her Mama and she promptly would agree mainly starting an improved relationship; even the cursing turned to be something favourable,

When Liesel finally had a bath, after two weeks of living on Himmel Street, Rosa gave her an enormous, injury-inducing hug. Nearly choking her, she said, "*Saumensch, du dreckiges-* it's about time!" After few months, they were no longer Mr. and Mrs. Hubermann. With a typical fistful of words, Rosa said, "Now listen Liesel- from now on you call me Mama."... "And him over there."... "That *Saukerl*, that filthy pig- you call him Papa, *verstehst?* Understand?" (Zusak 35).

Papa's relation serves a great deal in changing the torturing reality of Liesel, on many occasions she has a bed-wetting hysteria, he would come and change her sheets without informing Rosa, and plays the accordion for her to calm and soothe her, sometimes it is hard to be the parent of a teenager, especially when they do not open up even when they try asking help implicitly, but they cannot, however, Papa made it possible for troubled Liesel to give it a go, where at this defining moments he discovers the book she is hiding and starts teaching her how to read, "the excitement stood up in her visions of a ten-year-old reading genius were set alight. If only it was that easy" (Zusak 39-65). This coping mechanism is what initiates her intellectual growth, and it would develop to lead to another and second act of stealing at the Fuhrer's birthday,

Everything was in place to make April 20 magnificent. It would be a day full of burning and cheering. And book thievery...The book thief went and changed into Hitler Youth uniform, and half an hour later, they left, walking to the BDM headquarters. From there, the children would be taken to the town square in their groups. Speeches would be made. A fire would be lit. A book would be stolen (Zusak 106-107).

By the the time she takes the book from fire many episodic events chance to happen; the gates of thievery are opened, “as we’re both aware, she’d stolen books previously, but in late October 1941, it became official. That night, LieselMeminger truly became the book thief” (Zusak 292), a kind of hinting fact to starting her decisiveness about her actions, nonetheless, a paranoia would formulate itself as she was caught by the mayor’s wife,

Liesel as she encounters many difficulties making her disconnected, kind of isolated, and wreck; they are to be resolved with the sum of love she receives in addition to her new foster family, Frau Ilsa Hermann, the mayor’s wife who caught the book thief that day of the burning. Paranoid enough, Frau Ilsa’s reaction went beyond expectation. The founded-to-be genuine friendship between the two ladies is what actually serves another positive snowball effect in her growing up process. As she is invited,

Liesel craned her neck a little... “Jesus, Mary...”She said it out loud, the words distributed into a room that was full of cold air and books. Books everywhere! Each wall was armed with overcrowded yet immaculate shelving. It was barely possible to see the paintwork. There were all different styles and sizes of lettering on the spines of the black, the red, the gray, the every-colored

books. It was one of the most beautiful things Liesel Meminger had ever seen.

With wonder she smiled. That such a room existed! (Zusak 134).

This enchanting meeting, was beautifully magical for that the eagerness of this joyful moment to what really works out her character and identity, and develops authentically a portion of being cared of to what helps in educating her. Books as leading instruments to character development; may lead to relationship development as well.

The book thief was helped by her foster father to learn in the basement; the bubbled shelter where she finds solace reading her books, though his low educational grades, he realizes her illiteracy but he believes her spark and energy to read, he ultimately represents a mentor to truly developing her literary hunger “first he sees the girl’s book: *The Grave Digger’s Handbook, Faust the Dog, The lighthouse, and now The Shoulder Shrug*” (Zusak 127), and the basement would witness, “Papa saying a word and the girl would have to spell it aloud and then paint it on the wall, as long as she got it right. After a month, the wall was recoated. A fresh cement page” (Zusak 72). At The Hermann's,

Liesel would sit with a small pile of books next to her, and she’d read a few paragraphs of each, trying to memorize the words she didn’t know, to ask her Papa when she made it home. Later on, as an adolescent, when Liesel wrote about those books, she no longer remembered them the titles. Not one...Perhaps if had she stolen them, she would have been better equipped (Zusak 145).

Getting used to such atmosphere, Liesel would never think of leaving it, however, when a verbal fight started between her and Ilsa as she fired her mother

Rosa, Liesel was immediately deprived from such pleasure to become officially a book thief stealing from the mayor's window with the companionship of Rudy; "insane or not, Rudy was always destined to be Liesel's best friend. A snowball in the face is surely the perfect beginning to a lasting friendship" (Zusak 48), being her thievery companion by all means worked a great deal in defining her identity that of being a knowledge stealer,

All told, she owned fourteen books, but she saw her story as being made up predominantly of ten of them. Of those ten, six were stolen, one showed up at the kitchen table, two were made for her by a hidden Jew, and one was delivered by a soft, yellow dressed afternoon (Zusak 30).

Dreadful stealing though it might seem, the conditionality of its happening serves the creation of a prolific reader, and hungry girl for words. Three acts of stealing were the formula that had the potential of one justifiable way supplying the formation of her character. Moreover, Ilsa's steadier act of feeding Liesel with knowledge helped her to generate understanding over the power of words and depriving her from it would have stopped her learning and maturation process; these books, *The Whistler*, *The Dream Carrier*, *A Song in the Dark*, *The Complete Duden Dictionary and Thesaurus*, varied in meaning and importance as they greatly recorded a definite building up supplies.

Two other books, *The Standover Man* and *The Word Shaker*, given by Max Vandenburg, worked out her growing up process as well. Her family was obliged to keep him safe when Germany was grasping Nazism, the business of him must be a secret and Liesel would show eagerness for that trust Papa has given her. Max provides an intellectual companionship merged with the book thief's love of reading;

he acts like a mentor in educating her about the social obligations and expectation, that is mapped in the Fuhrer's book *Mein Kampf* (Litcharts). She would spend the high end of eleven till she reaches thirteen reading with and to Max in the basement (Zusak 218). Where "Hans had been the person to teach Liesel how to read, Max becomes the person to continue her literacy" (G. Lee 18).

All these characters were mainly important in Liesel's process of growing up; after experiencing a negative snowball effect that formed her trauma, it was endured through them again as they served a positive snowball effect, creating definitely healthy relationship to a healthy process through reading and stealing, and led her to be become a determined leading character.

The growing up process is never easy with the sum of challenges one might face; the set of which it might break and damage, or build and develop individuals. Therefore, in this chapter a great deal was given to explore the psychological and intellectual growth in the light of all bad conditions the main protagonist Liesel comes to witness and live. Based on the theory of the snowball effect, an attempt was made to greatly understand the chain traumatic events the book thief went through, and how truly books helped being her bubbled shelter, comfort, and strength leading to defining her character during her process of growing up at the Hubermanns from 1939 to 1945.

Chapter Three: Reaching Adulthood: From Immaturity to Making Decisions

The present chapter represents all Liesel's sequels of her coming of age starting with knowing the reason behind the downfall of her family to fully understand that words can be both constructive and destructive. It develops a certain projection of nations' destiny if ever they are hit by hurricane of ignorance caused by the Nazi act of burning knowledge from a butterfly effect perspective, and how Liesel unknowingly comes to prevent its unexplainable happening. Finally, this chapter aims at showing how words can function magically in making leading characters through penning their names as the best word shakers.

3. The Book Thief's Coming of Age Stages

Reaching maturation doesn't involve overcoming challenges and obstacles like traumatic episodes and building character upon it only, it rather endeavors the set of shifts marking this transition. These shifts can be summed up in the episodic changing chains from state of naivety to knowledge, inexperienced to experienced, from having a false world view to having more realistic view, idealism to realism, and from immaturity to making big decisions and responses. In the light of all the stated above characteristics Liesel finally documented typical understanding of her life and gained a psychological, emotional, intellectual, and social maturation. When fate wronged her she had not the wisdom to fully coexist with the ugly fact, she rather turned desperate. However, the merciful watchfulness of Papa increased her comfort, nerves, courage, developed her character, and worked out her fate where the result of it can be translated in her coming of age stages.

3.1. From Idealism to Realism

Liesel was first introduced by Death as an idealist girl believing that her mother gave on her because she is being poor and cannot look after her, however, the mysteriousness of Liesel's mother's departure is finally resolved at Hitler's birthday party recording a new state of realism. With all people surrounded by fire, the Hitler Youth, and the BDM gathering themselves the mayor announced that there would be an end to the disease that has been plaguing Germany for the last twenty years, "The immoral! *The Kommunisten!*"

Half away through the speech, Liesel surrendered. As the word communist seized her, the reminder of the Nazi recital swept by, either side, lost somewhere in the German feet around her. Waterfalls of words. A girl treading water. She thought it again *Kommunisten*... Not once, however, had the communists been mentioned until today, regardless of the fact that people of such political creed were also to be punished. Staring into it, Liesel revisited those dark rooms of her past and her mother answering questions made up of one word. She saw it all so clearly. Her starving mother, her missing father. *Kommunisten*. Her dead brother. "And now we say goodbye to this trash, this poison." (Zusak 110-11).

She also, comes to realize the political and social expectations, and to what extent did the ideology of the Aryan race purity that Hitler canvassed in his propaganda had served the spread of Nazism, where before no wisdom of awareness could have established itself.

The great deal of hopefulness, which she often hopes less of her parents, the imprudence of fate's arrangement, and the thought of Hitler of so much worth,

Liesel was so impressed by the degree of too much revelation that resulted infinitely in a severe resentment for it came clear now that her family was broken by the Nazis (G. Lee 8); a hint to coming of age state as she admits,

Is my mother a communist? Staring ahead. “They were always asking her thing, before I come here”... “Did the Fuhrer take her away?”... He said, I think he might have, yes. “I knew it.” The words were thrown at the steps and Liesel could feel the sluch of anger, stirring hotly in her stomach. “I hate the Fuhrer,” she said. “I hate him” (Zusak 115).

This marks that she started developing her own judgements and opinions over things (Syed Prezi), however, absurd though it might seem, her confessions were resumed into full acceptance of what was imposed on her by Hans not to dare saying it anywhere on streets, at school, or at the BDM for it could be that much risky (Zusak 155).

Liesel stood up and raised her arm. With absolute misery, she repeated it. “*Heil Hitler.*” It was a quite sight an eleven-year-old girl, trying not to cry on the church steps, saluting the *Fuhrer* as the voices over Papa’s shoulder chapped and beat at the dark shape in the background (Zusak 116-17).

The book thief had a false view of the world as she was put into a museum of contradicted lies that was formed to perfectly beautify her reality, however, by the end she owned a more realistic view documenting another transition,

Moreover, her coming of age come to include a collection of sequels; the boulevard of her broken dreams eventually documented waves of oblivion, “ flash forward to the basement, September 1943 a fourteen-years-old girl is writing on a

small dark-covered book. She is bony but strong and has seen many things” (Zusak 97). The continual disappointment she kept experiencing was resumed into nothingness as she accepts the fact of not seeing her mother Paula ever again, “ she would never see her mother again...when she wrote about that night, she held no animosity toward Rosa Hubermann at all, or toward her mother. To her they were only victims of circumstance” (Zusak 99-100).

Being an abandoned girl with nothing to her identity except the trauma of her dreams about her brother (G. Lee 9), the book thief eventually falls out of what haunted her from nightmares and repressed memories for years and learned that moving on must take place (Smith Prezi). Death point,

It was with great sadness that she realized that her brother would be six forever, but when she held that thought, she also made an effort to smile. She remained at the Amper River, at the bridge, where Papa used to stand and lean. She smiled and smiled, and when it all came out, she walked home and her brother never climbed into her sleep again. In many ways, she would miss him, but she could never miss his deadly eyes on the floor of the train or the sound of a cough that killed (Zusak 473).

3.2. From Indecisiveness to Decisiveness: The Butterfly Effect of Burning Knowledge

As a traumatic symptom the trauma of dreams went along with another trauma which is illiteracy, nonetheless, it was treated by Liesel’s obsession to steal books (Burakovà 42). “Although something inside told her that this was a crime – after all, her three books were the most precious items she owned – she was compelled to see the thing lit. She couldn't help it” (Zusak 109) , these three actual

acts of stealing vary in meaning from one hand, stealing to settle the score with life since a great deal has been taken away from her (Maslin 2), and to be defying the Nazis unknowingly and more actively for their manipulative use of words (G. Lee 15-16). On the other hand, The unpredictability of such behavior might have in its form a butterfly effect. Attributed to Chaos theory¹⁶; the butterfly effect is a key characteristic to a chaotic system (Carsperson 1), where it happens that if a butterfly flapping its wings at the exact same time and place could produce a tiny change in the atmosphere like triggering a series of changes, which could eventually lead to a hurricane on the other side of the world (Russell xix).

The metaphorical implication of everything affects everything on the demonstrated act of burning knowledge dignifies the Fuhrer being the butterfly fluttering its wings insignificantly causing a hurricane of ignorance whatever the reason he came to burn knowledge for. It is like knocking down a set of dominos in the darkness with one candle lit playing not only with one nation's future, but the course of the entire humanity. In reference to this Death points,

When the fourth game of dominoes was completed, Rudy began to stand them up in lines, creating patterns that wound their way across the living room floor. As was his habit, he also let a few gaps, in case the rogue finger of a sibling interfered, which it usually did... He made three separate formations that led to the same tower of dominoes in the middle. Together, they would watch everything that was so carefully planned collapse, and they would all smile at the beauty of destruction (Zusak 408-09).

These lying up dominoes might be compared to falling bodies as Janet Maslin in her article "*Stealing To Settle a Score With Life*" refers to it regarding the fact war

(1), however, it is just an evidence to falling humanities and cultures. The butterfly effect¹⁷ is not about butterflies themselves rather about the idea of saving something while destroying other thing, it is about how a tiny change that was performed by Liesel in a big complex system projected by Hitler could affect everything. In a possible way of preventing the spread of a hazardous illness that might affect nations that of ignorant minds, the book thief's business of stealing was favourable enough as it honored with more decisiveness, a lasting love to reading, made books worth preserving from the flames of ignorance, defied the Nazi culture (G. Lee 9), recorded a reference to a brighter future, and labeled her with rewriting others' destiny.

3.3. From Immaturity to Making Decisions

Another immediate manifestation of Liesel's coming of age transition can be resumed in her decisiveness defeating all forms of powerlessness (Arizpe and Smith 48),

At school during that time, there had been no more reading tests, but as Liesel gathered confidence, she did pick up a stray textbook before class one morning to see if she could read it without trouble. She could read every word, but she remained stranded at a much slower pace than that of her classmates (Zusak 87).

No wonder the book thief was a powerless girl without words before, once she came to terms with this trauma of illiteracy, she became able to demonstrate this power through reading aloud to her neighbors during the air raids of Molching in the bomb shelters, where as much loud it was it had a therapeutic effect (Karpasitis 1-2). Liesel was able through words to take their minds out of the idea of death, and leave their imagination working with the story she is reading from *The Whistler* (G. Lee 6-7).

By page three, everyone was silent but Liesel. She didn't dare to look up, but she could feel their frightened eyes hanging on to her as she hauled the words in and breathed them out. A voice played the notes inside her. This, it said, is your accordion. The sound of the running page carved them in half. Liesel read on. For the least twenty minutes, she handed out the story. The youngest kids were soothed by her voice, and everyone else saw visions of the whistler running from the crime scene. Liesel did not. The book thief saw only the mechanics of the words-their bodies stranded on the paper, beaten down for her to walk on (Zusak 381).

The act of reading marks her ability to comfort herself and others, and ultimately gives her control to perform other responsibilities (G. Lee 7), that is why she was asked by Frau Holtzapfel for extra reading sessions whom she is in pain for the loss of her son (Zusak 385-388). However, with Papa heading off to war it hardened her nerves again, "the book thief was feeling the effects. There was no desire to steal a book, no matter how much she tried to convince herself that it would cheer her up" (Zusak 425). She starts thinking for the first time of Hitler's use of words, with a tired heart she comes to the realization that he did not only broke her family, but he was doing the same with all Germans in the way he forced them into war through his propaganda (Zusak 427). This war of words that the Fuhrer initiated rewarded Liesel with full awareness of the power of words for its significance in both constructing and deconstructing streets of the mind (Litcharts),

Yes, the Fuhrer decided that he would rule the world with words. "I will never fire a gun," he decided. "I will not have to." Still, he was not rash. Let's allow him at least that much. He was not a stupid man at all. His first plan of attack was to plant the words in many areas of his homeland as possible. He planted

them day and night, and cultivated them. He watched them grow, until eventually, great forest of words had risen throughout Germany... It was a nation of farmed thoughts... Now the time had come. The Fuhrer was ready (Zusak 445).

Destroying things is always easier than making them; little did she know and evident to her surprise, the book thief has seen the Fuhrer ending the peace in the words she was hungry for. She definitely came to regret the pleasure of words,

And at the center of all of it, she saw the Fuhrer shouting his words and passing them around. Those images were the world, and it stewed in her as she sat with the lovely books and their manicured titles. It brewed in her as she eyed the pages full to the brims of their bellies with paragraphs and words. You bastards, she thought. You lovely bastards. Don't make me happy please, don't fill me up and let me think that something good can come of any of this (Zusak 521).

The book thief was hopelessly giving up words the moment she realized their beauty and ugliness, "she tore a page from the book and ripped it in half. Then a chapter. Soon, there was nothing but the scraps of words littered between her legs and all around her" (Zusak 522). Moreover, her determined transition was governed by her actual ill-judgment of words, and by her confrontations to Frau Ilsa as well,

As you can see, I have been in your library again and I have ruined one of your books. I was just angry and afraid and I wanted to kill the words. I have stolen from you and now I've wrecked your property. I'm sorry. To punish myself, I think I will stop coming here. Or is it punishment at all? I love this place and I hate it, because it is full of words (Zusak 522).

Regreting it all over was eased, however, with the justness of Ilsa's arrival to the Hubermann's doorsteps handing Liesel a small black book, mainly this move was to reestablish that love again through writing her narrative,

As it turned out, Ilsa Hermann not only gave Liesel Meminger a book that day. She also gave her a reason to spend time in the basement- her favourite place...She gave her a reason to write her own words, to see that words had also brought her to life. "Don't punish yourself," she heard her say it again, but there would be punishment and pain, and there would be happiness too. That was writing (Zusak 524-25).

The mayor's wife's small act of handing the book served a good deal to Liesel; not only gave her control over her narrative, helped her to recover, but also saved her life "the powerless becomes powerful through words, through language, through the courage to record both the source of pain and enlightenment" (Arizpe and Smith 78). It empowered Liesel to share her narratives, gave her voice, and helped her to stand up for herself for when she is powerless and suppressed (G. Lee 9), there was so much to consider with every attempt to write her story *The Book Thief* in the basement,

By the next raid, on October 2, she was finished. Only a few dozen pages remained blank and the book thief was already starting to read over what she'd written. The book was divided into ten parts, all of which were given the title of books or stories and described how each affected her life (Zusak 528).

The progress of her tragedies marked her eternity, she was the girl with the accordion after the Allies' bombs robbed her beloved ones, no tears left to cry after

seeing “the bodies of Mama and Papa, both lying tangled in the gravel bed-sheet of Himmel Street”, and no eternal love to be lived after losing Rudy, however,

She leaned down and looked at his lifeless face and Liesel kissed her best friend, Rudy Steiner, soft and true on his lips. He tasted dusty and sweet. He tasted like regret in the shadows of trees and in the glow of the anarchist’s suit collection... Their teeth collided on the demolished world of Himmel Street (Zusak 536).

Dr. Rebecca Hedrick, a child psychiatrist, on teenagers’ in such situations justifies such action by saying it is very common and normal for young adults not to speak their emotions, verbalize, or even put them into words, till approaching a scene where vividly they come to perform their feelings (13RW Youtube) as Liesel when did kiss Rudy. Wasted enough, nonetheless, her emotional determination came to define her by the end.

Moreover, the book thief comes to be seen “a fine heroine, a memorably strong and dauntless girl with every startlingly rebellious episode” (Maslin 3), with documentation of her social, and intellectual maturation she comes to hate the words because of the Fuhrer being the ultimate reason of her suffering. Nonetheless, the book thief “was girl with a mountain to climb” (Zusak 86), she worked out her fate and come to acknowledge the power of words in modeling lives to genuinely come to be distinguished as,

The best word shakers were the ones who understood the true power of words. They were the ones who could climb the highest. One such word shaker was a small, skinny, girl. She was renowned as the best word shaker of her region

because she knew how powerless a person could be without words (Zusak 446).

The small steps one ends performing has the effect of doing so much great impact in changing lives and future. It takes very bold confidence and determination to one standing their own fate, and pulling seriously themselves up from drowning as ever faced by accumulated past trauma damaging their identity construction process.

The last chapter aimed specifically at projecting all sequels of Liesel's coming of age, where she develops from being powerless ignorant girl along with other traits to become an ultimate leading character responsible for her actions, learning, and protecting others through the power of words. It also embraced the insignificance of the Nazi book burning to its significance in what might lead to the downfall of nations from a butterfly effect perspective, and how the book thief's unwillingness comes to preserve knowledge from the flames of ignorance. It sought to show the importance of words as well their power in building Liesel's identity though the hardships she comes to encounter.

Conclusion

Literary representations of growing up protagonists in a very troubled place like Nazi Germany varied from one author to another regarding the affliction caused by its Fuhrer under his control. Even as an over consumed topic, World War II never cease to be a fertile setting affecting the development and the journey of any given character to writers to explore. Inspired by his parents' world and stories, the Australian novelist Markus Zusak in a well crafted writing style characterized by Death's commentary gives "a brilliant look at the wartime lives of ordinary decent people", to be distinguished as "the most highly anticipated coming of age young-adult books in years" as stated by many reviewers. Such genuine work is definitely the best cultural and historical manifestation of that era documented by unglamorous reality, where Zusak through his main character Liesel Meminger from the eyes of his narrator Death sought to portray the amount of the melancholic pressure Germans had to endeavor; inhaling huge portions of Nazism ending up traumatized along with the psychological uncertainties they grow up with. Nevertheless, Liesel in the light of all bad conditions, she grew up self-contained against her twist of fate to be distinguished as a the best leading character who eventually penned her name through writing her narrative *The Book Thief* representing a life motto in what does it mean to struggle, stand up a fate, and become stronger to speak a voice on one's behalf through language and literature.

Based on the theory of snowball effect, the study aimed at analyzing Liesel's struggles from that broad view in a way the sum of her traumas comes to represent a kind of accumulation hindering her aging process and mainly affecting it. It sought to investigate her emotional, intellectual, and social growth along with her transition from an ignorant, naive, and powerless nine years old girl to an ultimately

responsible, much caring for others' pain, and independent mature young lady capable of defining her character through writing her story, and understanding the power of the written word for the nothingness it serves a person without embracing it. The study also acknowledged the power of books, reading, and writing in creating a sort of leading character as she came of age to defend knowledge from flames ignorance caused by Hitler's war on the un-German intellect in the so worldwide historical event that of the Nazi-book burning from a butterfly effect perspective, where the outcomes would have been drastic for it foreshadows dark ages caused by intellectual decline.

From an Australian lens, the first chapter was condemned to provide a historical and social overview based on the historical approach and related to the setting of the novel, where basically the protagonist Liesel is to be experiencing harsh conditions within such microcosm of Germany in the following chapters. It also developed an understanding of the evolution of the Australian narrative from being the literature of nationalistic people to a more realistic concerned with young adults discovering themselves in a world documented by their misunderstandings. The Australian corpus can be said for a coming of age narrative lying basically under the category of young-adult fiction whose main protagonist is a nine years old seeking maturity in a such chaotic world that of Nazi Germany where Hitler as a very charismatic Fuhrer took over it aiming at spreading his Nazi ideologies portrayed in his propaganda and book *Mein Kampf*, where also his hatred to un-German race had broken many families and created traumatized people living under his shadow. As typical of coming of age narratives, there is always a sort of invitation to fully understand the growth of characters through several stages making a transition from naivety to knowledge, from having a false world view to being realistic, also the shit

from indecisiveness to making big mature decisions the thing that characterizes them as being mature adults having their own identity.

The second analytic chapter analyzed the book thief's struggle, and all obstacles she faced during the years at the Hubermanns after being left abandoned. The orphaned status created a chain sequels of traumatic episodes involving the trauma of nightmares, a bedwetting hysteria, being unhomed, being a subject to humiliation at school and the neighborhood, because firstly she does not know how to read and write, and secondly being the new kid in town, and bullied eventually to be called names like Saumensch and the little whore, also she had been a subject to physical abuse by her new foster mother Rosa, all of which resulted an echoing snowball effect. From this lens, it is proved that Liesel gained this negative snowball that greatly damaged her life, made her submissive and wreck, to growing up holding a grudge towards her life with unawareness of the main reason behind her family's breakdown. She is naive at the very beginning, immature and ignorant, however, the watchfulness of her foster father Hans erased her pain and introduced her to the world of literature where she can find solace, and develops a certain affection towards reading to the point she comes to steal, a matter that might seem immoral, but in Liesel's is was favourable because it worked her intellectual growth. It also demonstrated that trauma can be endured through one of the most powerful tools which is reading; books at a certain point prove its significance in creating a healthy process of nurturing people along with creating positive relationships which centered around Rudy Steiner, Ilsa Hermann, and Max Venderburg, the thing that served a good deal in developing the book thief's character and enhancing her world resulting a positive snowball effect.

As her coming of age approaches the edges, the third chapter came to explore all the book thief's shifts in a three different stages, the very first marked a shift from naivety to knowledge, which by means a twist from idealism to realism, where she generate an awareness of the main reason behind her family's break down. All the waitings for her mother's return proved its uselessness after having accepted the fact of not seeing her again. Liesel changed after this circumstance to prove her flexibility to adapting to new situations, she took off her idealist veil to wear one more realistic determined by overcoming the trauma of her nightmares, and illiteracy. As a traumatic syndrome being illiterate it was resolved by her mastery of reading with the help of her loved ones, this leading power worked effectively her determination to make another leap in her growing up stages to making big decisions. The book thief was given this title after several acts of stealing from various settings, foregrounding the idea of everything affects everything, her act of stealing from the Nazi-book burnings empowered her responsibility to defend knowledge from flames of ignorance as Hitler being the butterfly flapping its wings making an expected hurricane of ignorance that might hit nations, in case different set of books are still to be banned and burned.

Moreover, her maturation was determined by the harshness of war that has embraced her, leading ultimately to her recognition of the ugliness of words, she came to hate words because words are the reason depriving her from living a normal life, furthermore, the act of toring Ilsa's book and regretting the pleasure of reading is by the end was eased with Ilsa urging her to write her own story instead of giving up on them. This act proved Liesel's decisiveness and responsibility over her narrative the very moment she started writing to making an emphasis on her ability to overcome her troubled past, and build a colorful tale after experiencing the grayness of the

world as demonstrated by the narrator Death. Liesel's tale by the end documented that readers are leaders, readers are survivors, readers are the ones holding the burden to enlighten realities through the power of the written word.

This humble work is only an attempt to acknowledge the power of the written word, where books come to be considered a treasure and ultimate powerful instrument influencing, shaping, and creating identities. In reference to the historical approach, and being treated from a different broad view that of the snowball and butterfly effect perspectives along with the main characteristics of the coming of age, the study proved its conformity to the principles of the genre. The results of the analysis, also, demonstrated the uneasiness of individuals' transition from childhood to adulthood if ever merged with the sum life's ups and downs where Zusak genuinely came to present "the kind of book that can be life changing" through his ambitious and triumphant leading character Liesel Meminger. Masterfully told, Zusak's narrator "Death" through exploring the book thief's tale succeeded to generate an understanding of humans' capabilities of overcoming tragedies, turning pages, and writing destinies albeit fate's twist.

Notes

1. Australia was first inhabited by the Aboriginals who originated from South East Asia till its invasion by the whites, 1786, under the rule of Captain James Cook. The British settlement was originally used for convicts banished from England, and between 1788 and 1839, approximately 160,000 convicts were sent to Australia and became a workforce to establish new country ending the Aboriginal culture and traditions (Australiance).

2. Written by a teenager, for teenagers, and about teenagers, S. E. Hinton's iconic masterpiece *The Outsiders*, comes to inspire many authors for its significance in documenting Juveniles' turmoils, and still used as reference today. Under the category of YA fiction, and the coming of age genre, it addresses mainly a fourteen years old boy's troubled life, where he comes to see himself an outsider within his society (Goodreads).

3. The term Aryan was set by the Nazis to refer to the nobles of the upper class, which come to meet the meaning of honorable people. The Nazis believed that the Aryan had the most pure blood of all people on earth after being reinforced by Hitler. With a pale skin, blond hair, and blue eyes the Aryan race had a duty to control the world. Non-Aryans came to be seen as impure evil, and inferior threat to the purity of the German nation (Sahboss).

4. Merriam Webster defines the word propaganda as mainly the set of spreading ideas information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person; Nazi propaganda, on the other hand, can be regarded as the classic example of how to achieve political ends, a vehicle of political salesmanship in a mass market, and a way of conveying a message to the bulk of the German people, not intellectuals, and that is how Hitler made it to power during 1930's (BBC).

5. Often called the Nazi bible, *Mein Kampf* or my struggle (1925), Adolf Hitler's book documents his life, frustrations, ideas, and dreams. Moreover as a controversial book, it is seen as the blueprint for Hitler's political and military compain, where he describes his strategy for rebuilding Germany and conquering Europe (Goodreads).

6. An organization established in 1933 with the purpose of instilling Nazi ideologies, and to ensure nobody in Germany could read or see anything that was hostile or damaging to the Nazi Party under the control of Dr, Joseph Goebbels (History Learning).
7. Romany or Gypsies, an ethnic group of traditionally itinerant people who originated in northern India but lived in modern times, particularly in Europe. In Germany were seen as inferiors, and this exotic stereotype of the nomadic Gypsy was categorized by a purging policy ended their lives during Hitler's era (Britannica).
8. Members of a Christian-based religious movement (BBC).
9. The novel makes use of German vocabularies and phrases that is followed by its English equivalent accordingly.
10. German: Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei. Translated: National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nazi Party).
11. A very ancient symbol representing wealth and peace. From a graphic design point of view, one of the coolest logos ever created, to represent Hitler's reign later on (Urban Dictionary).
12. A snowball that has been taking negative momentum. It is born small exponentially at as swift pace, engulfing and destroying everything in its path. Built on negativity, resentment, ill-judgement, blame and has difficulty adapting to change (Authorhouse xix).
13. A German insult to women, translated to sow, and used in modern leetspeak to show affection to a girl you want or love (Urban Dictionary).
14. Lutherans are Christians, were given this name for following Martin Luther in the reformation of the Church who was believed to be having the right of interpreting the bible. It had a great deal in supporting Nazism and was reflected perfectly in the educational domain (Gardner Synonym).

15. A snowball that is built on positive experiences, gaining positive momentum and cutting free of the friction that was holding it back, it helps in overcoming adversity, improve relationships, and creates joy in life (Authorhouse xx)

16. Attributed to the meteorologist Edward Lorenz, it refers to the study of apparently random, or unpredictable behavior in systems governed by deterministic laws. It is based on a circumstance he calls the butterfly effect which suggests that the mere flapping of a butterfly's wings can change the weather or cause drastic outcomes (Britannica).

17. More than of a physics/chaos theory, it is related to psychology as well. It serves a metaphor for life in a chaotic world. Specifically, it suggests that small events can have very larger effects (Alley Dog). It is a phenomenon that has evolved from Chaos theory, where in metaphorical language, it means a small change can give rise to big tidal wave (Psychologie).

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المخلص

من أصعب الأمور التي واجهها الألمان ، وتحديدا ، الشباب البالغين في ألمانيا النازية خلال سيطرة هتلر نشاتهم مع رعب الحرب العالمية الثانية التي دمرت عملية نموهم. ومن المثير للاهتمام أن المؤلف الأسترالي ماركوس زوساك في روايته، **سارقة الكتب (2006)** يأتي لتقديم بعض الأحداث التي تؤثر حقا على عملية نموهم ، بلوغهم سن الرشد ، والتكيف مع المواقف التي قد تحدد بناء هويتهم. لذلك ، تحاول الدراسة معالجة موضوع بلوغ سن الرشد في مثل هذا السياق مع إسقاط كل الأحداث التي تؤدي إلى هذا الانتقال من خلال تتبع رحلة وعملية نمو بطلة الرواية الرئيسية "ليزل ميمنغر" ، وكيف أن الكتب ، كوسيلة ساعدتها في تشكيل هويتها و تجسيد صوتها الخاص. تستفيد الدراسة من المنهج التاريخي لتحصيل فهم مواضيع تسعى الأعمال المعاصرة التطرق اليها. ايضا تعتمد الدراسة على إجراء فحص تحليلي يستند على نظرية تأثير كرة الثلج لتحليل صدمتها التي شكلت ، وأثرت على تطورها ، مع تحديد جميع مراحل قدمها.

Résumé

Grandir dans l'Allemagne nazie sous le contrôle d'Hitler, et coexister avec la terreur de la Seconde Guerre mondiale a été l'une des choses les plus difficiles à gérer pour les Allemands, en particulier pour les jeunes adultes. Fait intéressant, l'auteur australien Markus Zusak dans son roman *La Voleuse de Livres* (2006), vient présenter certains des incidents qui affectent vraiment leur processus de croissance, de maturité, et d'adaptation aux situations qui pourraient définir leur construction identitaire. Par conséquent, l'étude tente d'aborder le thème de la maturité dans un tel contexte avec la projection de tous les événements qui conduisent à une telle transition en retraçant le voyage et le processus de croissance du principal protagoniste Liesel Meminger, et comment les livres, comme moyen, l'a aidée à former son identité et à avoir sa propre voix. L'étude utilise l'approche historique pour développer une compréhension thématique que les œuvres contemporaines cherchent à projeter sur des événements passés réels. Un examen psychanalytique basé sur la théorie de l'effet boule de neige pour analyser son traumatisme qui a façonné et influencé son développement doit être tenu, en soulignant toutes les phases de sa maturité.