



THE INFLUENCE OF PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY ON LITERARY ANALYSIS

Komilov Izzatillo Kabulovich

Chirchik State Pedagogical University Tourism faculty
The foreign language and Literature specialty stage 3
+998930797518

Scientific advisor: Ruzmetova Diana Kamilovna

PhD, act. Assoc. prof., CSPU

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ABSTRACT

Psychoanalysis is one of the modern theories that are used in English literature. It is a theory that is regarded as a theory of personality organization and the dynamics of personality that guides psychoanalysis. It is known that the closet connection between literature and psychoanalysis has always been deployed by the academic field of literary criticism or literary theory. The goal of psychoanalysis was to show that behavior which was caused by the interaction between unconscious and unconsciousness.

Introduction: The early 20th century marking the beginning of modern psychology and with the pace of this psychology the psychological analysis of literary texts evolved. This method of critiquing used the concepts advocated by noted sociologists, including Carl Jung, Alfred Adler and Otto Rank and above all Sigmund Freud. It was first used or developed as a method of therapy for neuroses by Freud, but very soon expanded it to account for many expanded developments and practices in the history of civilizations including warfare, mythology, religion, literature and other arts.

In the process of explaining literature psychoanalysis has been used and in the process literature has been used as a source for psychoanalytic conceptions. We noticed that literary criticism has used psychoanalysis theory to interpret literature and literature has also attempted to exploit and use psychoanalysis for creative purposes. Psychological criticism deals with the work of literature primarily as an expression, in fictional form, of the state of mind and the structure of personality of individual author.

If we look at the history of psychology we will find that psychoanalysis started from the medical profession. Entering into psychology, it spread into other fields of study and finally permeated literary studies as one of the different approaches to literature. The idea of psychoanalysis revolves round the concept that peoples' actions are determined by their prestored ideas of the recurrent events.

According to Monte (1977), "Psychoanalytic theories assume the existence of unconscious internal states that motivate an individual's overt actions". (Beneath the Mask, 8).¹ The Psychoanalysis movement is therefore championed by Sigmund Freud (1859-1939).²

¹ Monte, F. Beneath (1877) The Mask. New York: Praegar Publishers, Print.

² Freud, S. Interpretation of Dream.(1913) 3rd edition, Trans. Brill A. Macmillan. New York. Print.

A later student of Freudian psychology in the name of Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) re-directs his view to suit his own social milieu in the understanding of psychoanalysis. It is Jung who sees the basic human behaviors in myths and legends. A later development of psychoanalysis embraced Alfred Adler (1870-1937) who sees man as a social being. In the sense of Adler we are motivated by social needs, "we are self conscious and capable of improving ourselves and the world around us".³

Thus, we can begin to perceive that there is a mutual fascination between the field of 'Psychoanalysis and Literature' is the major 'mediator' between the two disciplines.

Psychoanalysis: Psychoanalytic therapy is the re-narratization of a person's life. It has given much importance on the significance between the unconscious and thought processes. They believed that an awareness of this is therapeutic and vital to a healthy mind. Psychoanalysis emphasized on motives, it focused on hidden or disguised motives which helps to clarify literature on two levels, the level of writing itself and the level of character action within the text. Psychoanalysis gives emphasis on the subject and tries to explain what are the relationship of meaning and identity are to the psychic and cultural forces. Psychoanalysis has a great importance in contemporary understandings of reading, meaning and the relation of literature to culture.

Psychoanalysis has been seen as a form of therapy which aims to cure mental disorders 'by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the minds'. Psychoanalysis examines the articulation of our most private anxieties and meanings to culture and gives us a perspective on them as cultural formations.

We live in a post-Freudian age; we cannot escape the fact that we think about human life differently from the way people in the past thought about it. Psychoanalytic approaches to literature may not always be rich enough, may tend to be reductive, on the level of theory psychoanalysis is of great importance.

The Basis Of Freudian Psychoanalysis: The modern theory that is used in literature has two accepted meanings. Firstly, it means a method of treating mentally disordered people. Secondly, it also goes to mean the theories on human mind and its various complexities.

Psychoanalytic theory was propounded by Sigmund Freud. Freud was originally a medical man who was engaged in the study and treatment of patients in his clinic. His long devotion to this sector makes him realize and he observed mental disease of his patients. Gradually he was more interested in the study of psychology and more particularly psychology of the unconscious mind.

Freud suggested that our mind has three distinct regions. On the basis of his first discoveries concern the psychology of psychoneurosis, dreams, jokes and what he called the psychopathology of everyday life, such as slips of the tongue, of the pens.

The second is a system of pre-conscious and a third a system of conscious. His ideas were first presented in "The interpretation of Dreams"⁴ (1900). It has often been assumed that the evidential basis for these theories came from his study of dreams. It is the mind in which all our pleasant and unpleasant experiences are accumulated, synthesized and organized.⁵

³ McConnell, James. V. (1980) Understanding Human Behavior. New York: Holt, et.al, Print.

⁴ Freud, S. Interpretation of Dream. (1913) 3rd edition, Trans. Brill A. Macmillan. New York. Print.

⁵ Das, Ritaman. (2014) "Psychoanalytical Study of Folktales", Vol. 19. 10, 13-18. Print.

Theoretical Discussion: There are different theories relating to psychoanalysis. The main theories that are related to psychoanalysis are Freudian theory, Lacanian theory and object related theory:

1. Freudian theory. Psychoanalysis is a psychological theory developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by Austrian Neurologist Sigmund Freud and others. Freud's psychoanalytic theory, coming as it at the turn of the century, provided a radically new approach to the analysis and treatment of 'abnormal' adult behavior. Earlier views tended to ignore behavior and look for a physiological explanation of 'abnormality'. The novelty of Freud's approach was in recognizing that neurotic behavior is not random or meaningless but goal-directed.

1.1. The Pre-Oedipal Stage. The Pre-Oedipal Stage Freud claimed that all human beings are born with certain instincts, i.e. with a natural tendency to satisfy their biologically determined needs for food, shelter and warmth. The satisfaction of these needs is both practical and a source of pleasure which Freud refers to as 'sexual'. Freud divides this stage into three stages: the oral stage, the anal stage and the phallic stage.

1.2. The Oedipus complex. Sigmund Freud introduced the term 'Oedipus complex' in his 'Interpretation of Dreams' (1899). According to him, the concept is a desire for sexual involvement with the parent of the opposite sex, which produces a sense of competition with the parent of the same sex and a crucial stage in the normal developmental process (Freud, 1913). The term Oedipus complex was indeed named after the name of Greek mythical figure. Oedipus who was the son of king Liaus and queen Jocasta of Thebes, and finally killed his father and married his mother unconsciously which according to the belief of the writer and people of that time, was designed by fate.⁶ But, according to Sigmund Freud, the accidents or incidents in the life of Oedipus happened because of sexual complexity between Oedipus and his mother. And on the basis of this story he invented the concept Oedipus complex which he attributed to children of about the age of three to five. He views that all human behavior are motivated by sex or by the instincts, which in his opinion are the neurological representations of physical needs. He firstly referred to those as the life instincts which perpetuate the life of the individual, initially by motivating him or her to seek food and water and secondly by motivating him or her to have sex.⁷ Freud's clinical experience led him to view sex as much more important in the dynamics of the psyche than other needs.

1.3. The unconscious. The unconscious is that part of the mind that lies outside the somewhat vague and porous boundaries of consciousness and is constructed in part by the repression of that which is too painful to remain in consciousness. Freud distinguishes repression from sublimation –the rechanneling of drives that cannot be given an acceptable outlet. The unconsciousness also contains what Freud calls Laws of transformation. These are the principles that govern the process of repression and sublimation. In general, we can say that the unconscious serves the theoretical function of making the relation between childhood experience and adult behavior intelligible.

1.4. Ego, Id and Super-Ego. Freud proposed three structures of the psyche or personality. Id, Ego, and Super-Ego. Id refers a selfish, primitive, childish pleasure – oriented part of the personality with no ability to delay gratification. Super-Ego refers internalized societal and parental standards of 'good' and 'bad', 'right' and 'wrong' behavior'. Ego refers the moderator between the Id and Super-Ego which seeks compromises to pacify both. It can be viewed as our 'sense of time and place'.

1.5. Problems. Some of the problems raised in response to education theory are: 1. Freud's hypotheses are neither verifiable nor falsifiable. It is not clear what would count as evidence sufficient to confirm or refute theoretical claims. 2. The theory is based on an inadequate

⁶ Safra, J. E. (1768). The new encyclopedia Britannica, 15th Edition, Vol. 8. Chicago, Print.

⁷ Boeree. DR. George C. (2006) 'Personality Theories, Print.

conceptualization of the experience of woman. 3. The theory overemphasizes the role of sexuality in human psychological development and experience.

2. Lacanian Theory. French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan has reinterpreted Freud's structuralist terms, bringing the theory into the second half of the Twentieth century. Like Freud, Lacan discusses the importance of the pre-Oedipal stage in the child's life when it makes no clear distinction between itself and the external world; when it harbors no definite sense of self and lives symbiotically with the mother's body. Lacan refers to this stage as the Imaginary.

2.1. The mirror stage. Lacan characterizes the period when the child begins to draw rudimentary distinctions between self and other as the mirror stage. This is the period when the child's sense of self and the first steps in the acquisition of language emerge. The 'I' finds and image of itself reflected in a 'mirror'.

3. Object relations theory. Another adaptation of psychoanalytic theory known as 'object relations theory' starts from the assumption that the psychological life of the human beings is created in and through relations with other human beings. Thus, the object relations theorist distinguishes between the physical and psychological birth of the individual. While the physical birth is a process that occurs over a specific and easily observable period of time, the psychological birth is typically extended over the first three years of life and can occur only in and through social relations. During this time, certain 'innate potentials and character traits' are allowed to develop in the presence of 'good object relations'. The quality of these relations affects the quality of one's linguistic and motor skills. The first years of life are characterized by the establishment of a close relationship to the primary caretaker and the subsequent dissolution of that relationship through separation and individuation. This psychological development of the child is a part of reciprocal process of adjustment between child and caretaker- both must learn to be responsive to the needs and interests of the other.

There are two important aspects of child development: self-identity and gender identity. In context of the nuclear family, the child must move away from the mother in order to achieve autonomy, the father offers an alternative with which to identify. Thus, the boy tends to develop strong self-identity but weak gender identity.

Literature And Psychoanalysis: Psychoanalysis is not simply a branch of medicine or psychology; it helps understand philosophy, culture, religion and first and foremost literature. In developing his theory of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud has often related it to art in general and to literature in particular.

In 'The Interpretation of Dreams, Freud analyzed Sophocles' Oedipus Rex and Shakespeare's Hamlet for their Oedipal elements and for the effects the plays had on their audience. In his 'Creative writers and Day-dreaming,' Freud further expanded the connection between literature and psychoanalysis. He compared fantasy, play, dreams and the work of art in order to understand creativity. In 'creative writers and Daydreaming' Freud first presented his theory on the structure of the literary work and made a psychoanalytic inquiry into the nature of literature. For Freud, a literary work is analogous to a daydream. Like a daydream, the literary work contains in its fantasy the fulfillment of an unsatisfied wish and thus improves on an unsatisfactory reality.

Psychoanalytic literary criticism can focus on one or more of the following:

- I. The author: The theory is used to analyze the author and his/her life and the literary work.
- II. The characters: This theory is used to analyze one or more of the characters, the psychological theory becomes a tool that to explain the characters' behavior and motivations.

- III. The audience: The theory is used to explain the appeal of the work for those who read it.
- IV. The text: The theory is used to analyze the role of language and symbolism in the work.

The authors and writers are influenced by the psychoanalytic concepts which are reflected in the characters of their works and also in their mind. The psychoanalytic concepts which were propounded by Sigmund Freud influenced the psychoanalysis of authors are:

- I. The primacy of the Unconscious.
- II. The Iceberg theory of the psyche.
- III. Dreams are an expression of our conscious.
- IV. Infantile behavior is essentially sexual and
- V. The relationship between neurosis and creativity.

Thus, we will observe some of the works of different author's where they have used psychoanalytic theories in their works.

Conclusion: In view of the above study, we came to understand that psychoanalysis is a powerful tool in the critical analysis of a literary text. Its influence on the literary production is to add 'legitimacy' to the text. This paper highlighted the application of Freudian concepts to the explication of literary texts' thereby equating the text with the 'psyche', perhaps of the writer and providing us with a profound insight into the unconscious of the writer.

Finally, this paper has attempted to establish the relationship between psychology and literature and then proved that 'Literature' uses 'Psychoanalysis' for creative purposes which, in turn, enriches the quality value and legitimacy of the literary text. Literature can help us alter our cognitions, the internal structures of the self and this transformation can be well explained through psychoanalytic criticism, in turn, this enables us to explore new possibilities for reading, studying and teaching literature.

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