

TRANSITIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN FAULKNER'S EMILY

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ABSTRACT

The present study is aimed at exploring certain psychological aspects in the protagonist of the story. Specifically it deals with the transitional development of the characters that what are the social barriers and restrains, which contributed in the disorderliness of Emily. This transitional development in the character is analyzed in the light of Jacques Lacan's theory of psychoanalysis which is further narrowed down to "The mirror stage" and Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis which is further narrowed down to "Id, Ego and Super Ego" because they deal with the character developments and its relevant aspects. The research is about the stages of the psyche and stages of character presented by the writer in the story which are also further elaborated on the basis of different features in the character of Emily. Furthermore Freud's theory of psychoanalysis provides insight to the mind, psyche and psychosexual stages of the protagonist. Disruption in these elements leads to the disruption in the character's personality that is reflected throughout the story. This research will help in understanding the female character and factors affecting the character from every dimension of life and society.

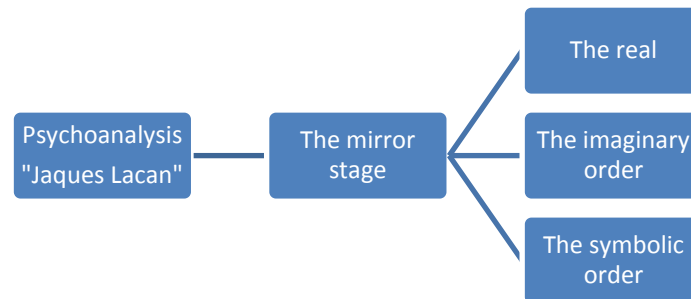
Keywords: Transition, the mirror stage (the real, the imaginary order, the symbolic order), Lacan, Freud, psychosexual stages, id, ego, super-ego, psychoanalysis.

INTRODUCTION

In this research it is explored that what is the outcome of social and psychological conflict. Basically, this research deals with the protagonist of the story who's character changed drastically in the story. William Faulkner portrayed a mysterious character in his story which seems to be a psychologically abnormal. Emily Grierson the protagonist of the story she is very mysterious and deep. It seems through the story that she is a weak character who has a sense of deprivation of independence in her life. Her life was driven by others and this reason makes her mysterious enough in the story.

Theoretical framework of Lacan

Throughout in this research main focus is to conclude the individual behaviour. The psyche can be divided into three major structures that control our lives and our desires. Most of Lacan's many terms of the full complexity of the psyche's workings can be related to these three major concepts, which correlate roughly to the three main moments in the individual's development, as outlined in the Lacan module on psychosexual development:



The Real

This concept marks the state of nature from which we have been forever severed by our entrance into language. Only as neo-natal children were we close to this state of nature, a state in which there is nothing but need. A baby needs and seeks to satisfy those needs with no sense for any separation between itself and the external world or the world of others. For this reason, Lacan sometimes represents this state of nature as a time of fullness or completeness that is subsequently lost through the entrance into language. The primordial animal need for copulation (for example, when animals are in heat) similarly corresponds to this state of nature. There is a need followed by a search for satisfaction. As far as humans are concerned, however, "the real is impossible," as Lacan was fond of saying. It is impossible in so far as we cannot express it in the language because the very entrance into language marks our irrevocable separation from the real. Still, the real continues to exert its influence throughout our adult lives since it is the rock against which all our fantasies and linguistic structures ultimately fail. The real for example continues to erupt whenever we are made to acknowledge the materiality of our existence, an acknowledgement that is usually perceived as traumatic (since it threatens our very "reality"), although it also drives a Lacan's sense of *jouissance*.

The Imaginary Order

This concept corresponds to the mirror stage and marks the movement of the subject from a primal need to what Lacan terms "demand." As the connection to the mirror stage suggests, the "imaginary" is primarily narcissistic even though it sets the stage for the fantasies of desire. Whereas needs can be fulfilled, demands are, by definition, unsatisfiable; in other words, we are already making the movement into the sort of lack that, for Lacan, defines the human subject. Once a child begins to recognize that its body is separate from the world and its mother, it begins to feel anxiety, which is caused by a sense of something lost. The demand of the child, then, is to make the other a part of itself, as it seemed to be in the child's now lost state of nature (the neo-natal months). The child's demand is, therefore, impossible to realize and functions, ultimately, as a reminder of loss and lack. (The difference between "demand" and "desire," which is the function of the symbolic order, is simply the acknowledgement of language, law, and community in the latter; the demand of the imaginary does not proceed beyond a dyadic relation between the self and the object one wants to make a part of oneself.) The mirror stage corresponds to this demand in so far as the child misrecognizes in its mirror image a stable, coherent, whole self, which, however, does not correspond to the real child (and is, therefore, impossible to realize). The image is a fantasy, one that the child sets up in order to compensate for its sense of lack or loss, what Lacan terms an "Ideal-I" or "ideal ego." That fantasy image of oneself can be filled in by others who we may want to emulate in our adult lives (role models, et cetera), anyone that we set up as a mirror for ourselves in what is, ultimately, a narcissistic relationship. What must

be remembered is that for Lacan this imaginary realm continues to exert its influence throughout the life of the adult and is not merely superceded in the child's movement into the symbolic (despite my suggestion of a straightforward chronology in the last module). Indeed, the imaginary and the symbolic are, according to Lacan, inextricably intertwined and work in tension with the Real.

The Symbolic Order (or the "big Other")

Whereas the imaginary is all about equations and identifications, the symbolic is about language and narrative. Once a child enters into language and accepts the rules and dictates of society, it is able to deal with others. The acceptance of language's rules is aligned with the Oedipus complex, according to Lacan. The symbolic is made possible because of your acceptance of the Name-of-the-Father, those laws and restrictions that control both your desire and the rules of communication: "It is in the *name of the father* that we must recognize the support of the symbolic function which, from the dawn of history, has identified his person with the figure of the law" (Écrits 67). Through recognition of the Name-of-the-Father, you are able to enter into a community of others. The symbolic, through language, is "the pact which links... subjects together in one action. The human action *par excellence* is originally founded on the existence of the world of the symbol, namely on laws and contracts" (Freud's Papers 230).

Whereas the Real concerns need and the Imaginary concerns demand, the symbolic is all about desire, according to Lacan. Once we enter into language, our desire is forever afterwards bound up with the play of language. We should keep in mind, however, that the Real and the Imaginary continue to play a part in the evolution of human desire within the symbolic order. The fact that our fantasies always fail before the Real, for example, ensures that we continue to desire; desire in the symbolic order could, in fact, be said to be our way to avoid coming into full contact with the Real, so that desire is ultimately most interested not in obtaining the object of desire but, rather, in reproducing itself. The narcissism of the Imaginary is also crucial for the establishment of desire, according to Lacan: "The primary imaginary relation provides the fundamental framework for all possible erotism. It is a condition to which the object of Eros as such must be submitted. The object relation must always submit to the narcissistic framework and be inscribed in it" (Freud's Papers 174). For Lacan, love begins here; however, to make that love "functionally realisable" (to make it move beyond scopophilic narcissism), the subject must reinscribe that narcissistic imaginary relation into the laws and contracts of the symbolic order: "A creature needs some reference to the beyond of language, to a pact, to a commitment which constitutes him, strictly speaking, as an other, a reference included in the general or, to be more exact, universal system of interhuman symbols. No love can be functionally realisable in the human community, save by means of a specific pact, which, whatever the form it takes, always tends to become isolated off into a specific function, at one and the same time within language and outside of it" (Freud's Papers 174). The Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic thus work together to create the tensions of our psychodynamic selves.

ANALYSIS

Emily Grierson is the protagonist of the story; she is very mysterious and deep character in the story. She seems to be a weak character that has sense of deprivation of independence in her life. Her life was driven by others and this reason makes her mysterious enough in the story.

On the one level she was like a stereotype that is just muter and has unbalanced behaviour. Overall the whole story developed in such a dramatic way while bearing shocking realities of the protagonist of the story. She is necrophiliac which is proved at the end of the story. One other thing is presented through the story that is social class difference and biasness of a writer when at the end Miss Emily goes to buy Arsenic to kill Homer, it mentioned on the package “for rats”. As it is described in the story that Emily belonged to a family that is well respected in the society on the other hand Homer is a labourer belonged to lower class a construction worker that is why she was more upset that Homer did not marry her. “Because Homer himself had remarked he liked men and it was known that he drank with the younger men in the Elk’s club that he was not a marrying man.”

The story also reflects Emily as social rebel as she makes relation with Homer and faced a lot of criticism and taunt as a reaction of the town people.

According to the story if we draw the sketch of the character there can be five stages of transition in her life which are as followed:



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF FREUD

In order to explain the protagonist’s psychological condition in another perspective Freud’s theory of psychoanalysis helps explore the mind of Emily Grierson. The Freudian psychoanalytic theory provides a framework to study the human mind and the way it works. He divided it into three different parts; the conscious, the preconscious and the unconscious.

The Mind

The dimension of our mental processing that is concerned with how we rationally think and talk is known as the *conscious mind*. It includes all the things that we are aware of.

The part of mind that is concerned with our memory is known as *preconscious*. Although it is not essentially a part of the conscious yet it can easily be extracted and brought to our awareness when needed.

The concealed part of our mind that contains our feelings, thoughts, urges and memories that are beyond our conscious awareness form the *unconscious mind*. This may contain unacceptable and unpleasant hidden thoughts and feelings of pain, anxiety and conflict. These feelings and thoughts may be self-destructive and sexual in nature thus they remained repressed from our conscious. Freud suggests that they have an underlying influence on our personality.

Psychosexual Stages

Freud (1905) proposed a series of fixed stages of psychological development. He believed that throughout life the development of a human was surrounded by tension and pleasure built up by *libido*. Libido is known to be sexual energy. Thus he named the developmental stages as *psychosexual* stages as they involve the fixation of libido. As a human grows, the fluctuation in libido contributes to frustration as well as pleasure. He considered the first five years of childhood to be the most crucial.

Name	Age	Principal task
Oral stage	Birth – 18 months	Weaning
Anal stage	18 months – 3-4 years	Toilet-training
Phallic stage	3-4 years – 5-7 years	Sexual identity
Latent stage	5-7 years – puberty	Learning
Genital stage	From puberty on	Genital intercourse

Oral Stage (Birth to 18 months) In this stage the child is dependent on the oral feeding by sucking or chewing. Fixation in this stage may lead to habits like thumb sucking, nail biting, chewing edges of objects and later on even smoking.

Anal Stage (18 months to three years) In this stage the child learns through social pressure and mainly through his parents how to eliminate and retain faeces. Fixation in this stage may lead to obsession with control, cleanliness and obsession. If the child adapts the opposite then he may be messy and disorganized.

Phallic Stage (ages three to six). During this stage the child tends to develop unconscious sexual association with the opposite gendered parent. In extreme cases Freud suggested the mental disorder known as Oedipus complex. This happens when the son affiliates and associates sexual desires with his mother and competes with his father for his mother's affection. Similarly Electra complex is concerned with the sexual attraction of the daughter towards her father. Fixation in this stage may lead to sexual indulgences.

Latency Stage (age six to puberty) Throughout this stage the child represses his sexual urges and interacts with his peers, mostly of the same gender.

Genital Stage (puberty on). This is the final stage in which the human's sexual desires resurface. He finds himself attracted towards the opposite sex with sexual intentions.

THE PSYCHE

The psyche develops throughout the development of a human's life. Freud divided the human psyche into three parts; id, ego and super ego. These divisions are not physical in nature but rather more systematic. The understanding of human thought process and behaviour can be done by examining the psyche.

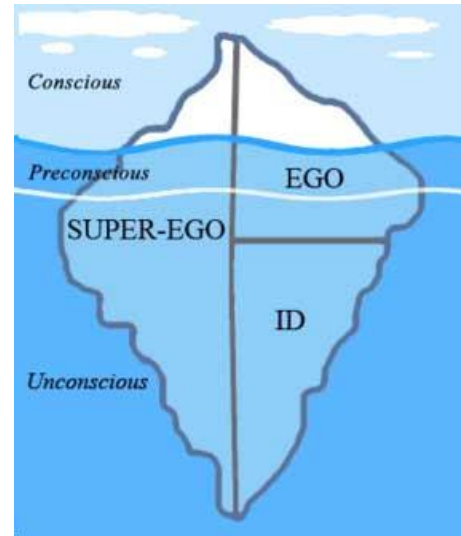
Id

Sigefried (2014) describes the Id as the unorganized part of the psyche that contains a human's instinctual drives. The Id is present at the time of birth thus a reservoir of our physical needs, wants, desires and impulses that are particularly sexual and aggressive in nature. The Id lies somewhere in the unconscious and the human is unaware of the drives. It majorly contributes to the personality and according to Freud it provides a "source of all

psychic energy”. He suggested the *pleasure principle* in which a human unconscious follows his instincts in order to attain pleasure. The Id seeks gratification of all needs, wants and desires, immediately. If this is not complete, it results in psychological tension.

Ego

Freud claims the Ego to be “a coherent organization of mental processes”. Ego is the component of the psyche that controls and regulates the Id in a way that it is expressed in an acceptable way. It acts as a censor that sifts through the Id before presenting before the real world. It works according to the *reality principle*. It distinguishes between the fantasy that lies in the unconscious and the reality of the conscious. It represents common sense, rationality and reason. According to Siegfried (2014), the ego serves to three masters: the external world, the Id and the Super-Ego.



Super Ego

The Super-Ego constitutes the internalization of cultural rules that are learned by the human through external guidance and influence mainly from the parents. The aim of Super-Ego is to attain perfection. The organized structure of a personality including Ego ideals, spiritual goals, values, norms and conscience are all dealt by the Super-Ego. It is the psychic authority that provides criticism and restricts the impulses, fantasies, drives and unconsciously desired actions. The Super-Ego has to mediate between the Id and the Ego's demands in a manner that is socially appropriate. This may sometimes directly contradict the Id.

Analysis

Emily Grierson projects the persona of someone who shields their life from all external involvement. The Gothic impact of the short story by Faulkner adds to the mysterious inside world of Emily that is constantly speculated by the townsmen. The limited direct interaction with her shows her eccentric tendency in which her behaviour which is often bizarre. Ultimately she becomes pitiable and even tragic. In the light of her inability to cope with the aristocratic society of Southern America it may be concluded that she suffered from schizophrenia as defined by the American Psychiatric Association's DSM-IV criteria (American Psychiatric Association 159).

In Freud's perspective of psychoanalysis, Emily's character can be reviewed especially in the light of her relation with her father and her lover Homer Barron. These two relations are the most vital ones that seem to hold a very strong impact on her personality. The death of both led to disintegration of Emily's mental state.

It can be assumed that Emily's life lacked a motherly figure and she completely associated herself with her father. As mentioned by Faulkner in the short story, her father was also very close and protective of his daughter. He would disregard the prospect of any suitor for his daughter. This close association was limited to her father till his death. Such close associations are considered to be socially awkward and after a certain extent they are

considered to be socially unacceptable. The narration depicts the scepticism of the townspeople. But Emily seems to disregard almost all social norms, values and traditions. Her instinct to remain associated with her father seems to rise from her Id. Her Ego and furthermore Super-Ego are unable to control this.

As he was the only person who Emily had truly been intimate with, she seemed to seek a replacement in Homer Barron. This was her first experience of interaction outside the circle of her father. Here another thing seems to dawn upon us that is her obsessive tendency. At first she is obsessed with her father and in order to replace him, she becomes obsessed with Homer. The latter takes its toll up to a psychopathic path where her obsession leads her to the extent of her poisoning Homer and remains intimate with his corpse for years after his death. This act is again socially unacceptable and abnormal. Yet she submerges in her Id's instincts and gives in to her desires of sexual attraction formerly associated with her father and latter with Homer Barron.

Another important contribution to her social unacceptance is her appearance. Although she once used to be beautiful, she lets her physical appearance deteriorate up to an extent of being obese with yellowed skin. She retreats from all social contact as maybe her Ego restrains her. She is unable to cope with daily life tasks and routines.

She seemed to have not developed her Ego and Super-Ego up to a healthy extent. Her unstable and socially anomalous association with her paternal parent, her Ego's development was faulty. Where the parental agency trains the Ego, Emily was not trained but moreover dependent on her father to be the controlling censor like a barrier. Due to being trapped in a limited circle at first by her father and later on by herself, she remained unacquainted with social customs. The internalisation of cultural norms and values were unknown to Emily and her Super-Ego was too weak to mediate between her Ego and Id. Thus her Id tended to overthrow not only her Super-Ego but also her Ego.

In the light of Freud's Psychosexual stages, Emily seems to have fixated at various stages. Fixation in anal stage seems to have led to obsession, lack of hygiene and grooming. Fixation at Phallic stage is evident due to the affection she shares with her father. Due to this it might even be assumed that she had Electra complex. Furthermore her fixation at the Genital stage can be seen throughout her relation with not only her father but also Homer Barron up to the extent of being unable to cope with their deaths.

CONCLUSION

The social implications trigger certain psychological impacts on a human. Through Lacan and Freud's theoretical framework, we can examine this in the protagonist of Faulkner's short story. As this character was remained suppressed and cordoned off from the society and after the family shelter, she was unable to adjust herself in the common society. Differences of status also force her to remain within the specific strata. This caused mental sickness and to somehow a disorder which lead her to necrophelia. In common routine life, human need to interact with different people at the same time, but when a person starts living in solitude it affects the psyche and behavior as it can be observed vividly in the character of Emily.

Both the models are applied in order to get a clearer picture of that character under certain circumstances. This is one of the main drawbacks of a male chauvinist society. Under this research it is proved that human can not live in solitude either a male or a female, both need

each other at every stage of their lives and solitude is one of the main reasons of mental sickness and disorder which develops through certain levels and ultimately can cause a hazard in the social lives and in the entire society.

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