The Interpretation of Psychology on Writing Victorian Literature

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Abstract— Sigmund Freud, who was often referred to as the "father of modern psychology," and was recognized by many as the father of psychoanalysis, revolutionized the understanding of the human mind. According to his theory, individuals are driven by an unconscious need to satisfy their wants for pleasure. The foundation of contemporary psychoanalysis was laid by Jung through the use of archetypes as universal symbols and themes that reside in the collective unconscious and Freud in The Interpretation of Dreams (1990) and Civilization and Its Discontents (1930). The concepts of conflicts, the unconscious mind, dreams as symbolic expressions, and conflicts between the id, ego, and superego resonate intensely with the writers seeking to explore the psychological depths of their characters and that writing is not only a creative means, but one that is based on science. In exploring the Victorian novels of Wuthering Heights and Jane Eyre, we are able to find specific Freudian concepts in relation to the texts, with a particular attention to the exploration of the main characters of the novels as they relate to psychoanalysis.

Keywords— Freud, Jung, Psychoanalysis, Victorian Literature

I. INTRODUCTION

Sigmund Freud, who was often referred to as the "father of modern psychology," and was recognized by many as the father of psychoanalysis, revolutionized the understanding of the human mind. According to his theory, individuals are driven by an unconscious need to satisfy their wants for pleasure. His well-known views on development, the unconscious mind, and defense mechanisms have had a lasting impact on literature. Freudian ideas were used by several well-known writers to develop complex characters, examine latent impulses, and highlight social problems.

II. THE ID, EGO, AND SUPEREGO IN WRITING

As a key figure in the making of consumer culture, deft architect of his own myth, modern plaything—spent a fair amount of his career exploring the psychology of dreams. In 1908, he turned to the intersection of fantasies and creativity, and penned a short essay titled "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming," eventually republished in the anthology The Freud Reader. Though his theories have been the subject of much controversy and subsequent revision, they remain a fascinating formative framework for much of the modern understanding of the psyche. Predictably, Freud begins by tracing the subject matter to its roots in childhood, stressing, as Anaïs Nin eloquently did—herself trained in psychoanalysis—the importance of emotional investment in creative writing:(Ego), and moral concerns (Superego).

Id, Ego, and Superego across multiple characters: Another approach is to create a cast of characters representing each of these aspects of the psyche individually. For instance, one character might act primarily on primal instincts (the Id). Another might operate on reason and reality (the Ego), while a third could be more concerned with morality and societal judgment (the Superego). The balance of these aspects' dominance could lead to clear character roles and dynamic conflicts, with readers eagerly anticipating how particular interactions might play out. Overall, applying Freudian Personality Theory to their writing can provide a deeper

understanding of the characters' unspoken backstories — the underlying traumas and attachments of characters.

III.   FREUDIAN THEORIES AND LITERATURE

The foundation of contemporary psychoanalysis was laid by Freud in The Interpretation of Dreams (1990) and Civilization and Its Discontents (1930). The concepts of conflicts, the unconscious mind, dreams as symbolic expressions, and conflicts between the id, ego, and superego resonate intensely with the writers seeking to explore the psychological depths of their characters.

The work of creative writers has a significant impact on our lives. Not surprisingly, creative writers elicits curiosity from their audience. Freud had already noted that:

We laymen have always been intensely curious to know […] from what source that strange being, the creative writer, draws his material, and how he manages to make such an impression on us with it, and to arouse in us emotions of which, perhaps, we had not even though ourselves capable (Freud).

To further stimulate our curiosity, Freud noted that when asked, writers often give no explanation, or no good explanation, for their creative behavior – shrouding the creative writing process in an intriguing veil of mystery. The seemingly mysterious nature of creative writing may at least partially explain the relative lack of scientific attention this central human activity has garnered from psychologists.

Creative writing is a complex, multifaceted endeavor that can only be adequately apprehended using an interdisciplinary perspective. Researchers may have therefore been discouraged by the necessity to take into account insights from other fields, and by the fact that creative writing may be harder to study, and harder to assess, than other psychological constructs Psychologists' interest in creative writing is therefore rapidly growing. The purpose of this chapter is to review what has been discovered in this small but growing field of research, and to point to directions for future investigations.

IV.   JUNG AND WRITING ARCHETYPES

Carl Jung's archetypes are a powerful tool for writers as they tap into universal symbols and themes that resonate with a broad audience. Using them can enrich your writing by connecting your story to universal themes and symbols. By understanding and thoughtfully incorporating these archetypes, you can create resonant and compelling narratives that engage readers on a deep, subconscious level.

The concept of archetypes was introduced by Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung in the early 20th century. Jung believed that archetypes are universal symbols and themes that reside in the collective unconscious, a level of the unconscious mind shared by all human beings that contains memories and ideas inherited from family. Jung proposed that archetypes are innate, universal prototypes for ideas, which may be used to interpret observations (See Figure 1). They are unlearned and function to organize how we experience certain things.

Fig.1: Jung Archetypes for Writing

Jung developed the idea of archetypes as part of his theory of the psyche. He posited that the psyche is divided into three parts:

- the conscious mind,
- the personal unconscious, and
- the collective unconscious.

The collective unconscious houses archetypes—innate, universal prototypes for ideas, which serve as the foundational structures of our thoughts and experiences. Jung's concept of archetypes has had a profound impact on psychology, literature, and the arts. It has influenced the study of personality, the interpretation of mythology, and the analysis of literature and art. His archetypes have been explored and expanded upon by numerous psychologists, writers, and scholars, contributing to a rich, multidisciplinary dialogue about the universal elements of human experience.

Today, Jungian archetypes continue to be a significant influence in storytelling, allowing writers to create narratives that resonate with readers on a deep, subconscious level. They serve as a bridge between the individual and the universal, the known and the unknown, enabling the exploration of timeless themes, moral dilemmas, and human complexities.

Jung identified several primary archetypes, including The Hero, The Mother, The Shadow, and The Anima and Animus, each representing different aspects of the human experience. These archetypes manifest in our dreams, myths, religions, and works of art, reflecting universal themes such as transformation, rebirth, conflict, and balance. It was Jung who believed that using archetype symbols and themes was about tapping into the universal human experience and the collective unconscious. It's about exploring the timeless and the transient, the individual and the collective, creating narratives that are rich in meaning, resonance, and emotional depth. By integrating archetypal symbols and themes thoughtfully and creatively, writers can elevate their work, connecting with readers on a profound level and exploring the myriad facets of human existence. It also lets readers connect with your work on a subconscious level.

Reflecting on the collective unconscious is a profound aspect of utilizing archetypes in writing. Jung's concept of the collective unconscious refers to the part of the unconscious mind shared by humanity, containing memories and ideas that are universal and archaic, inherited from our ancestors. It is populated with archetypes, universal symbols, and themes that have permeated human storytelling throughout history.

Reflecting on the collective unconscious is a journey into the heart of humanity. It's about exploring shared experiences, universal truths, and the eternal human condition. By tapping into the collective unconscious, writers can create deeply resonant, emotionally impactful, and universally relevant narratives, offering readers a profound exploration of what it means to be human. This exploration can lead to a richer understanding of ourselves, each other, and the world we inhabit, creating a sense of unity and shared humanity.

Archetypes, as timeless embodiments of universal patterns and experiences, offer writers a rich tapestry of elements to weave into their narratives. By understanding and integrating these archetypal elements—characters, journeys, symbols, themes, and situations—writers can create stories that resonate deeply with readers, tapping into the collective unconscious and exploring the multifaceted nature of human existence.

The process of integrating archetypes is both meticulous and creative, requiring a thoughtful balance between universality and individuality, tradition and innovation. It's about delving into the shared human experience while also exploring the unique nuances, conflicts, and complexities of characters and narratives. It's about creating stories that are not only entertaining but also enlightening, offering readers insights into themselves, the world, and the human condition. Writers have the opportunity to craft narratives that are timeless and timely, universal and unique. It's a journey of exploration and discovery, of reflection and expression, allowing writers to connect with readers on a profound level and contribute to the ongoing dialogue about what it means to be human and to illuminate the shared paths of human experience.

V.   CREATIVE WRITING AS A SCIENCE

The characteristics of creative writers constitutes the bulk of scientific knowledge about the psychology of creative writing. In particular, investigations of the personality and mood of creative writers have yielded interesting insights into the determinants of creative writing. Creative writers are often portrayed as unconventional and somewhat eccentric, a stereotype that has contributed to the fascination of laymen and researchers alike (Piirto). Can personality help us understand what distinguishes creative writers from non-creative types, or from creative individuals at work in other domains? Personality as defined by psychologists refers to traits that differ among individuals and present stability or consistency across time and situations.

Literature that is that creative individuals tend to be high in the personality trait of openness to experience as measured by the Five-Factor Model of personality (King, Walker, and Broyles). This trait involves active imagination, aesthetic and intellectual curiosity, as well as a preference for variety reflected by a willingness to try new things and experiences. What else do we know about the personalities of creative individuals? In a meta-analysis synthesizing results of numerous studies, Feist found that, overall, creative individuals tend to display more autonomy, introversion, openness to experience, questioning of social norms, self-confidence, self-acceptance, ambition, dominance, hostility, and impulsivity. The personality of creative individuals tends to remain stable over time, and that personality traits assessed early in life can predict future creative behavior. The openness to experience meant that they were more aesthetic, curious, imaginative, sensitive, and original, and less conventional, rigid, and socialized. Artists' lower levels of conscientiousness meant that they were less cautious, controlled, orderly, and reliable. In comparison to scientists specifically, artists appeared to be more anxious,

emotionally unstable, and rejecting of social norms. The relationship between nonconformity and the creativity of their works.

Beyond possessing particular individual qualities, creative writers succeed in their endeavors by engaging in specific behaviors that together constitute the creative writing process. Lubart summarized the existing body of scientific research on the creative writing process, pointing out that different stages and steps have been proposed by scholars. Writing, as proposed by Hayes, has three main stages. First, writers go through a reflection phase in which they plan out their writing, decide which themes they will emphasize, and start solving problems. Second, writers enter the production phase, in which they convert their ideas into written text. Third, writers go through a text interpretation phase, in which they read, listen, examine, and revise their text (Hayes and Flower). The creative writing process, two models have garnered the most attention. The first account is Wallas' four-stage model of the creative process: preparation, incubation, where no conscious work is done, illumination (the "a-ha" moment of insight during which ideas enter consciousness), and verification (Lubart). This model continues to serve as the main outline to understand how individuals find ideas and transform them into a creative output, including for example a phase of creative "frustration" before the illumination stage.

The creative process is Finke, Ward, and Smith's Geneplore model, provides further insight into the creative process, where creative work involves both generative processes (involving the production of original ideas), and exploratory processes (involving the examination, evaluation, and refinement of ideas produced) (Lubart). In addition, sub-processes are involved in both phases: for instance, writers begin by retrieving information from memory in order to generate ideas. Ideas generated can become original if individuals try to retrieve information beyond the path-of-least-resistance (i.e., beyond what comes to mind first). To do this, individuals can be encouraged to think abstractly, to think specifically, and to combine ideas that are not usually combined (Ward and Lawson). In keeping with this, creative writers must cultivate a strong sense of self-efficacy and confidence in their abilities.

VI.   IMPORTANT WORKS OF PSYCHOLOGY

Two novels of the English literature of the nineteenth century, Wuthering Heights and Jane Eyre, will be analyzed according to specific Freudian concepts in relation to the texts and with particular attention to the exploration of the main characters of the novels: Heathcliff and Catherine, Jane and Mr. Rochester.

VII.   FREUD, ID, EGO, AND SUPEREGO OF WUTHERING HEIGHTS

In Wuthering Heights, the parts of the mind theorized by Freud, the Id, the Ego and the Super-Ego, are represented by three characters, respectively: Heathcliff, Catherine, and Edgar Linton (Gold). The Id is characterized by being unconscious, chaotic, impulsive, energetic, and has no moral rules and is governed by aggressive impulses which need to be discharged regardless of any possible consequence. The peculiarities of the Id can be associated with Heathcliff's behavior, since he is described by Mr. Lockwood as "rather slovenly," "an aversion to showy displays of feeling – to manifestations of mutual kindliness" and "the tone ..... I no longer ... call Heathcliff a capital fellow." According to Gold, Heathcliff represents the Id, since he is wild and uncivilized and, as Nelly describes as an infant, he was "a dirty, ragged, black-haired child" and a "gipsy brat," likely a primitive or a person of brutish nature. Furthermore, he is soon judged in the novel as sinister: "it's as dark almost as if it came from the devil," with the use of the pronoun it likely to depict him as a thing rather than a human being. Such a description may be confirmed by the analogies where Heathcliff lives since Wuthering Heights is compared to "the atmospheric tumult" and also to the aggressive behavior of the dogs; both were similarities reflect the nature of the owner.

It is Edgar's nature is clearly the opposite since he is civilized, rich, and good-mannered and, as Gold argues, he represents the Super-Ego, an area of the mind which is distinctive for its morality, religiosity, parental and social prohibitions, and a disapproval of misconduct. Catherine, represents the Ego because of her rationality, her attachment to the real world and the efforts, apparently conscious, to control her natural disposition. Catherine is first described as similar to Heathcliff and, hence, as a person living her life according to her peevish nature as told by the words of Nelly as a: "A wild, wicked slip she was", "She was much too fond of Heathcliff," "wakened in her a naughty delight to provoke him" and "turning Joseph's religious curses into ridicule, baiting me". Catherine is, in part, aware of her true nature as shown in the famous quote: "I am Heathcliff!", an expression that underlines the strong likeliness between the two or, in a psychoanalytic perspective, it suggests the existence of an identification, a psychological mechanism by which aspects or parts of a person can be interiorized by another individual.

Catherine may or may not be completely aware of her analogy with Heathcliff, but what appears as astonishing and strange to Nelly is her decision to marry Edgar because "I shall like to be the greatest woman of the neighborhood..." which is in stark contrast with the assertion "...- in my soul, and in my heart, I'm convinced I'm wrong!". It is evident

that Catherine is ambivalent and smothers her true feelings by repression, a mechanism that Freud emphasized as being unconscious, and makes the decision to marry for convenience, an aspect that is likely driven by the Ego. It is possible to infer that her choice is linked to an identification with Edgar or to the influence of moral and social norms and, eventually, to her wish to increase in wealth, since a good marriage was a primary concern for many women in the Victorian age.

The apparently destructive nature of the novel is a topic that Heathcliff and Catherine were both responsible of the tragic quality that can be attributed to the composition. The conjecture is that both characters are egoistic and narcissistic, have an aggressive disposition towards the others, and display unrestrained animal impulses if not a diabolical conduct, which may confirm the association with the Id. As a consequence, they can never live in peace but repeatedly suffer and end up destroying their lives and the happiness of those who surround them, an example being Isabella's marriage with Heathcliff.

Hoeveler provides evidence that supports the contribution of Freud's theories to the analysis of Wuthering Heights. The first dream described in the novel is that of the quote, "I began to dream [...] to my unspeakable relief, they woke me." This dream can be interpreted according to the following psychoanalytical concepts: condensation, in which different elements of a dream may be united in a single image or context; displacement, a mechanism by which a latent content and the emotions attached to it are displaced to a manifest content that is more acceptable for the individual; representability, which is characterized by the transformation of thoughts or ideas into visual images. The discrepancy between these characters may reflect their true natures since they are depicted as rude and aggressive, aspects linked to masculinity, while Lockwood is rather inoffensive and gentle, traits, with many of the characters of Wuthering Heights being characterized by coldness and aggressiveness.

VII. FREUDIAN THEORY AND JANE EYRE

In Jane Eyre, the Freudian theories concerning the Oedipus complex can be taken into consideration to explain the relationship between Jane and Mr. Rochester. The

Oedipus complex concerns a peculiar stage of the individual psychological development.

In the novel, Jane can be compared to a little girl since she has positive feelings of affection for Edward, who is twenty years older. Dell'Olio highlights the fact that Jane's love for Rochester is a consequence of the absence of a father figure in her childhood (Dell'Olio). Little is told in the novel about

Jane's parents and the first family picture that appears in chapter I (Bronte), is characterized by coldness and solitude as shown by the weather conditions: "the dreary November day [....] a long and lamentable blast" and by the distance between Jane and Mrs. Reed who cannot be considered a caring and affectionate alternative mother. In fact, the following description of her aunt is worth mentioning: "She regretted to be under the necessity of keeping me at a distance" and again: "she really must exclude me from privileges intended only for contented, happy little children." The initial picture of emotional deprivation, unhappiness, and prolonged loneliness may explain the fact that a young girl is so in need of true love and of attachment to a parental figure.

It is the relationship between Jane and Edward is so strong and intense that no disagreement or argument between an idealized father and a hypothetical daughter can hinder or diminish the affection they have for each other. In fact, after many tribulations and much sufferance on both sides, the final consideration made by the author in the last chapter is: "No woman was ever nearer to her mate than I am: [...] flesh of his flesh", an intimacy which underlines the idea of blood relationships or gene sharing that is typical of family ties. The Oedipus complex is comparable to a love triangle in which a third person, intervenes to impede or mitigate the expression of the unconscious sexual drives by the child. Jane's rivals can be represented either by Blanche Ingram or Bertha Mason. However, it is not a matter of love, since Rochester does not have genuine feelings of attachment to Blanche, but the point here are Jane's beliefs about Miss Ingram which mainly concern their social discrepancy. She is a threat for Jane, as "the belle of the evening," "was certainly the queen.", "A very rich and powerful one: she sang delightfully". Therefore, Jane is overtly jealous and struggles with the fear of being neglected by Edward and makes sharp comments about Blanche, likely to emphasize the differences between them. Moreover, when talking about the Ingram sisters, Jane says that "Mary had a milder and more open countenance than Blanche; softer features too, and a skin some shades fairer.

An interesting work concerning the analysis of dreams and artistic production in Jane Eyre provides important insights into the psychoanalytic reading of the social condition of women in the Victorian age (Arnăutu). Firstly, Jane's dreams are used in the novel to express fears of motherhood since their manifest content and verbal description are frequently characterized by anxiety and a sense of failure and an incapacity to deal with little children. The elements that emerge in these dreams are likely connected to the events of Jane's life: her marriage to Rochester which can be interpreted as a sort of imprisonment for a young girl and a limitation of her freedom and independence. Other girls at

the time might have been overexcited by the idea of marrying a rich man and climbing the social ladder, but Jane goes against the tide, an attitude which is confirmed by her rather cold and ambivalent relationship with Adèle, her constant feelings of emancipation and lack of showiness.

Other areas, such as Jane's painting ability is the expression of an artistic quality, which allows the heroine to emerge from her social inferiority since she is much appreciated: "That is one of my paintings over the chimney-piece [...]. Well, that is beautiful, Miss Jane!" At the same time, it prevents her from being conformed to the upper classes as she is not trying to draw people's attention, unlike Miss Ingram: "Miss Ingram, who had now seated herself with proud grace at the piano [...] her air seemed intended to excite not only the admiration, but the amazement of her auditors." Exhibitionistic and voyeuristic drives are expressed also by Jane since her paintings may reflect an unconscious wish to show herself and to be watched by others, as Arnăutu argues, along with a need for admiration. It was Jane's self-gratification in painting is described in these words: "Were you happy when you painted these pictures? Asked Mr. Rochester presently. ".... Yes, and I was happy. To paint them, in short, was to enjoy one of the keenest pleasures..." Apart from personal satisfaction, it is important to consider that the heroine's artistic skills symbolize the opportunity to distinguish herself as she possesses noble and elevated qualities. It does not necessarily follow that she belongs to an upper social class, indeed she represents an alternative to the maternal role imposed on women by society.

The second rival for Jane's oedipal dream is that in the Victorian society, women who showed signs of psychological distress were commonly confined in an asylum or at home in a segregated area, an attic, and abandoned to the cure of a single assistant, typically another woman. Isolation was an experience that occurred also to Jane when, as a child, she was unjustly shut up into the Red room because of her tantrums and irritable behavior. It seems that antisocial attitudes along with madness or any other troublesome behavior that could emerge from the discharge of the Id and especially if expressed by women, had to be adequately dominated or kept under control because of the moral rules that governed society.

VIII.   CONCLUSION

It was Jung who believed that archetypes are universal symbols and themes that reside in the collective unconscious, a level of the unconscious mind shared by all human beings that contains memories and ideas inherited from family. Jung proposed that archetypes are innate, universal prototypes for ideas, which may be used to

interpret observations, but also had a profound impact on psychology, literature, and the arts. His archetypes have been explored and expanded upon by numerous psychologists, writers, and scholars, contributing to a rich, multidisciplinary dialogue about the universal elements of human experience.

In examining psychoanalytical theories, we are able to provide useful insights into the understanding of Victorian literature, in particular Wuthering Heights and Jane Eyre. However, there are many authors within this genre of writing that we are able to find the themes where characters are faced with the suppression of individual desires and wishes, either consciously or in an unconscious way. These themes allow for the writer to find a means of including conflict by understanding Freud and his development of energies found within the Id, Ego, and Super-Ego, along with the pressures women may encounter in a patriarchal and misogynous society. All these factors, taken individually or in association, can cause an intense emotional suffering and even a great amount of psychological distress. However, from a Freudian perspective can provide a better understanding of the characters of the novels as well as the reader's response to the text and the authors' lives and personalities.

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