

A FREUDIAN STUDY OF THE GRASS IS SINGING, AYLAK ADAM AND  
THE WHITE HOTEL

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A FREUDIAN STUDY OF *THE GRASS IS SINGING*, *AYLAK ADAM* AND  
*THE WHITE HOTEL*

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **A FREUDIAN STUDY OF *THE GRASS IS SINGING*, *AYLAK ADAM* AND *THE WHITE HOTEL***

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The thesis analyses the relations of psychology with literature by applying Freudian theories, and brings these relations into light in the novels of Doris Lessing, Yusuf Atılgan and D.M. Thomas. The first chapter clarifies the aim of the study and gives an overview of the relations between psychology and literature in the past and the present. It, then, provides brief background information about the theories of Freud and the relations of these theories with the themes, which are dealt with in the novels of the writers in question. The following chapters treat the novels according to the theories of Freud such as “the Oedipus Complex, death and life instincts, unconscious, id, ego and superego”, and therefore the thesis primarily focuses on the hidden feelings of the protagonists as well as their struggle in the twentieth century world. Through the analyses of the protagonists, the study asserts that Freud has been influential on the works of different authors in different cultures, which reinforces the idea of the universality of his psychoanalytical theories.

Keywords: Freud, psychoanalysis, unconscious, individual, society

## ÖZ

### ***THE GRASS IS SINGING, AYLAK ADAM VE THE WHITE HOTEL* ADLI ROMANLAR ÜZERİNE FREUDIAN BİR ÇALIŞMA**

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Tez edebiyat ve psikoloji arasındaki ilişkiyi Freud'un teorilerini uygulayarak incelemekte ve bu ilişkiyi Doris Lessing, Yusuf Atılgan ve D. M. Thomas'ın romanlarında ortaya koymaktadır. İlk bölüm tezin amacını belirtip, geçmiş ve günümüzde edebiyat ve psikoloji arasındaki ilişki üzerine kısa bir giriş yapmaktadır. Daha sonra, çalışma, Freud ve teorileri hakkında, ve bu teorilerin söz konusu olan romanlardaki kullanımı üzerine bilgi vermektedir. Bunu takip eden bölümler Freud'un "Oedipus Kompleks, bilinçaltı, yaşam ve ölüm içgüdüleri, id, ego ve süperegö" gibi teorilerini uygulayarak romanları inceler ve bu amaç doğrultusunda öncelikle başkarakterlerin bastırılmış duyguları ve onların yirminci yüzyıldaki mücadeleleri üzerinde durur. Analiz sonucunda, tez, Freud'un farklı kültürlerde farklı yazarlar üzerindeki etkisini ortaya koyarak, psikanaliz teorilerinin evrenselliğini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Freud, psikanaliz, bilinçaltı, birey, toplum

To my family and Levent

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to analyse Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing*, Yusuf Atılgan's *Aylak Adam*, and D.M. Thomas' *The White Hotel* from a psychological point of view, and to point out the authors' use of Freudian theories of psychoanalysis in their protagonists to display their repressed past experiences and struggle against the twentieth century materialistic world. As the works in question belong to different cultures and periods in the twentieth century, the thesis emphasises the universality of Freud's theories in the literary world.

Literature encompasses numerous branches such as anthropology, psychology, sociology, philosophy and politics. Yet the most remarkable relations can be established between literature and psychology.

Throughout centuries, men of letters have tried to analyse the human being, his motives and relations with the external world. Man's motives have played a specific role in the formation of society in all cultures. The mystery in the nature of the human being has been, thus, the main concern of most writers due to the fact that this has great significance in the continuation of life and the world in general. Moreover, the reason for the popularity of most literary works, which are labelled as "classics", lies in the representation of man's conflicts with himself and his environment, which appeals to the reader in any age and in any culture. Man has been the same as far as his nature is concerned. The only thing that is changed about him has been his perspective towards life and the universe. Hence, the role of psychology in literature is understood better by modern man in the twentieth century owing to the fact that the more progress has been made in the field of psychology, the better the reader has realised the hidden motives and repressed emotions of the characters in most of the literary works. The developments in science and psychology led man to have a much deeper concern about himself; thus, the novelist

also turned his focus onto the individual in the light of the teachings of particular psychologists such as Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung.

Besides, there is the fact that the starting point for the researches of most psychologists has been literary characters. Sigmund Freud, who paved the way for psychology and for literature, states: "The poets and philosophers before me discovered the unconscious. What I discovered was the scientific method by which the unconscious can be studied" (qtd. in Gekoski 186). The studies of the darkest sides of the human psyche led to the discovery of the hidden motives in the "unconscious" which have been apparent in the literary works for ages, yet it is labelled as a scientific word by Freud in the twentieth century. Hence, the studies of Freud opened a new door for all mankind both in psychology and literature. The writers have altered their focuses from plot to the character, and have plunged more into the unconscious of the protagonist and the darkest side of his soul. The claims of Freud about the conscious, unconscious and the psyche of the human being became the essential steps for the psychological criticism in the literary world. Therefore, especially in the twentieth century, the characterisation altered and light was shed onto the inner world of the protagonist. Hence, in the first chapter of this thesis, the relationship between psychology and literature is dealt with and the influences of psychological theories of Freud are presented, elucidating such theories as "the unconscious, id-ego-superego, the Oedipus Complex and the death and life instincts".

After the theoretical background, the thesis continues to analyse the novels of Doris Lessing, Yusuf Atılgan and D.M. Thomas. In the second chapter, *The Grass is Singing* by Doris Lessing is analysed, and the Freudian aspects in the novel are demonstrated via the protagonist Mary Turner, who fails to reconcile the requirements of society with her own repressed personal desires. Finally, she deteriorates day by day being dragged into her own catastrophe. While applying the theories of Freud to the analysis of Mary Turner, the thesis focuses on human kind in the

modern world as well, and it shows the discrepancy between the individual and society.

In the next chapter, a Turkish novelist, Yusuf Atılgan, and his novel, *Aylak Adam* (1959), is studied. The novel shows the latent motives of a perverted individual and his inescapable past that stuck into his mind. The childhood of the protagonist in the novel is a significant clue to understand his psychological upheavals. So the background of the protagonist is also analysed according to Freudian theories of psychoanalysis. Besides, this novel is vital in indicating the gap between the individual and society in the modern world, hence the inevitable alienation of modern man. In the fourth chapter, a post-modern novel, *The White Hotel* (1981) by D.M. Thomas, which brought forth controversy when it was first published owing to the highly erotic language used in the first two parts of the novel, is discussed in detail. In fact, the novelist points out the latent motives lying in a neurotic young mind, and displays a psychoanalytical approach in the later parts of the novel. *The White Hotel*, like the previous novels, highlights the repressed mind not only on the individualistic base but also in a universal dimension. Consequently, it broadens the topic from the psychological problems of a neurotic mind to those of the mankind in the twentieth century.

The rest of the thesis focuses on the comparisons and contrasts among the novels in question, and tries to show how the novelists in different cultures and periods of time have employed certain theories of psychoanalysis in their novels practising similar methods. Although the writers in this study did not know each other, it is possible to detect similarities in their works in terms of the psychological problems of the protagonists and their conflicts in the mechanised modern world.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

#### ii.i. Psychology and Literature

In the twentieth century, the nature of the novel commenced to change with the transformations in the philosophical, scientific and political spheres. The social-realist nineteenth century novel, which aimed at being the mirror of the external world, diverted its focus towards the internal one. Once, the novel was the spokesman for society; however, the ongoing world with its changes prompted it to lead a new path into the psyche of the man. Thus, the novel has moved through a process of socialisation to individualisation, and the concept of society, moral values and collective experiences have been left behind in the modern world due to the fact that the new world has been now composed of the individual's own interests.

The effects of mechanisation, industrialisation, two big wars, technology and scientific developments on the human psyche led man to be concerned with only himself. Man turned inward examining himself in relation with religion, his environment and the universe. The destructive power of technology and its inhuman outcomes caused him to lose his belief in human values. Thus, modern man has become alienated and isolated from his environment and is wrapped up in himself (Josephson 1-5). In fact, the century was determined by "the collective anxiety" due to the wars and negative sides of technology. Granofsky explains in his book titled as *The Trauma Novel* that: "The advent of television and its relatively rapid spread in the industrialised world so soon after World War Two is a major factor in increasing the sense of a collective anxiety" (2). Furthermore, he continues:

The collective disasters of the contemporary world- Nazi death camps, nuclear weapons, the dehumanizing Soviet Gulag, catastrophic environmental pollution and others- have inspired a variety of novelistic responses

(3).

Therefore, art, which has always reflected man's world, now focused on modern man's dilemma, his conflicts and all in all, his inner world. The need to reflect this world prompted writers to be concerned with psychology.

In fact, the interrelation between literature and psychology is not something new; on the contrary, it dates back to the ancient times. The relation can be detected in the works of Plato and Aristotle in their views of aesthetic experience as "inspired 'phrensy' or emotional 'catharsis'" (Schwartz 205). Furthermore, the concern over the unconscious was also an area of interest for the Greek philosophers. Gekoski explains in his article "Freud and English Literature" that Galen is said to have realised that in the perceptions of the human being, unconscious plays some role. Moreover, Plotinus (c. 204-70) claimed that "feelings can be present without awareness of them" (qtd. in Gekoski 187). Later on, during the Renaissance, psychology and its effects on literature were revived along with the classics, and the emphasis on the human individuality with his dilemma was unified with these effects. The characters were individualised by some playwrights such as William Shakespeare, and such protagonists as Hamlet were created with cryptic nature. However, there was not still the deep understanding of the individual, and it was only in the last century that man became more and more interested in his consciousness.

It is possible to see in the development of the novel genre that changes depending on time and environment have taken place. The relations with other fields of study such as philosophy, science and psychology cause literature to follow new directions. Malcolm Bradbury emphasizes that "the novel by now appear a traditional genre, but it is and always has been different in every age" (*The novel* 3). Virginia Woolf explains this change in novel as: "All human relations have shifted- those

between master and servants, husband and wives, parents and children. And when human relations change there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics and literature" (Woolf, "Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown" 71).

Hence, certain conditions in English literature regarding the character and the social world started to change throughout the centuries with the novelties in the external world. The novels which concentrated on the "aristocrats, issues of class and status, love, marriage, courtship" were abandoned as the years passed, and the modern world has left man alone with his own problems on which the novels focused in modern literature (Spurgin 1).

In the twentieth century, the modern novel stayed away from traditional realism and its concern about character, plot and setting was reflected in a different way. Novel freed itself from the limits of external world and "flat realism"; hence, it has become the novel of consciousness. Malcolm Bradbury expounds it in his article as: "It escapes the conventions of fact-giving and story-telling; it desubstantiates the material world and puts it in its just place; it transcends the vulgar limitations and simplicities of realism so as to serve a higher realism" ("Introverted" 408). Therefore, the novel has become deeply involved in the consciousness of the individual and looked at the external world which "seemed less a clear material substance than a place of random time and chaotic history, and the novel pluralized awareness, multiplied perception, ironized narrative and looked directly into its formal nature as art" (Bradbury, *The Novel* 4).

In the modern world, the more alienated man has become from his society, the more he has turned inwards. The mechanisation of the modern times has caused man to lead an automatic life-style and have a tough life in big cosmopolitan cities where no one knows each other. Thus, he has become isolated from his environment. Moreover, destroying nature for the sake of mechanisation created a world of stone for man in which he became an everlasting prisoner. Man in this world became more doubtful and uneasy towards life and himself. Muller explains in his book



*Modern Fiction* that “in the novel, despite all the new insights, the preoccupation with the whys and hows of the behaviour is another symptom of the disintegration of modern society” (57). Man does not take anything for granted any more. The more he questions, the more doubtful he gets as he loses his faith in everything. Thus, modern novel provides variety of chances for the reader to have speculations and interpretations. Muller continues to explain the reason for this as:

With the extraordinary diversity of interest and occupation, the constantly shifting surface and periodic upheavals, the uncertainty about the future, the death of the old gods and multiplicity of new ones, the whole painfully confused and confusing process of valuation, conduct has naturally become more and more individualized. ... Each man must work at his own salvation, each becomes fair game for all specialists or partizans

(58).

Therefore, the novelists began to reflect the intricate workings of the mind of the individual rather than deeply dealing with his deeds. In addition to these, styles of the traditional novel were not enough for modern novelists to project the chaotic mind of the human being. Thus, they adapted their style to their topics and there came out the “stream of consciousness” technique. Novelists discovered that life is not formed in a chronological order and thus, since the novelist’s aim is to display the world of the individual, they found the new technique more applicable to their demands. Virginia Woolf explains this in her famous article as:

Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of the consciousness to the end. Is it not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this known and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible?

(“Modern Fiction” 161).

Hence, the emphasis on the havoc of the mind, puzzling and inconsistent impulses of the characters were taken into consideration with this technique.

The interest in the consciousness of the human being grew stronger with the progress in the area of psychology owing to the fact that it reveals the intricacies of the individual's mind. The revolutions in psychology with the commencement of psychoanalysis in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries greatly affected the interpretation and formation of literary works.

The characters, themes or the symbols the writers applied to their works in the twentieth century have been influenced by major changes in the intellectual world.

Psychoanalysis provided literature with certain symbols and themes along with characters and characterisation. Radford and Wilson listed some elements of psychoanalytic system, which were mostly used in literary works as “an unconscious (or unconscious mental acts), instinctual drives, the psychic demand for drive reduction, the mechanism of repression, psychic conflict between the opposed demands of drive reduction and repression, self-censoring psychic powers, the existence of an internal embodiment of external values (a superego) and the diagnostic potential of symptoms, errors, word association and dreams” (317). Nonetheless, the biggest advantage of psychoanalysis has been for the critics and the readers, who have learned to adopt a new approach towards literary works. They transcended the established beliefs owing to the psychologists who have shed light on the dark side of human mind. Consequently, in order to have a psychological approach to literary works, it is essential to comprehend certain theories in psychology and psychoanalysis.

## ii.ii. Sigmund Freud and Psychoanalysis:

Psychoanalysis started in the nineteenth century with the discoveries of Sigmund Freud, and it still continues though it was divided into different subgroups. The main two schools of thought at the time were Vienna School represented by Sigmund Freud of Vienna and Zurich School represented by Carl Jung. Nevertheless, psychoanalysis changed its form and each group focused on distinct subjects such as the individual and society, and language. Eric Fromm explains in his book *The Revision of Psychoanalysis* that;

Revised psychoanalysis will examine the psychological phenomena that constitute the pathology of contemporary society: alienation, anxiety, loneliness, the fear of feeling deeply, lack of activeness, lack of joy. These symptoms have taken over the central role held by sexual repression in Freud's time

(20).

Terry Eagleton explains in his book on literary theories that today psychoanalytical literary criticism is divided into four groups: "depending on what it takes as its object of attention. It can attend to the *author* of the work; to the work's *contents*; to its *formal construction*; or to the *reader*" (179). Freud focused on the first two kinds of these as exemplified in his essay on Michelangelo's statue "Moses" and some literary analyses (Eagleton 179). However various schools of thought exist today in psychoanalysis, they all emphasise the "split personality" of the individual (Muller 54). They revealed that there is slight difference between the unconscious of the sick and that of the normal person. The basic difference can be detected only in the reactions towards the external world. The sick mind loses control over the repression of his/her desires and wishes; on the other hand, the normal mind has almost a perfect mechanism to repress his/her instincts.

Psychoanalysis created serious repercussions with the discoveries of Freud not only in literature but also in the intellectual world. Today,

Freud is deemed to be the father of psychoanalysis owing to the fact that his revolutionary remarks shattered the established views about childhood, sexuality and femininity. He revealed the darkest tunnels, and unveiled the mysteries of the human mind. Gekoski calls Freud an “abundantly brilliant thinker” and the one who has “radically changed the language and concepts with symbolisation” (195-96). Freud enabled writers from diverse cultures to use particular themes and images in their novels such as the “Oedipus Complex, unconscious, dream imagery, libido, transference and repression”.

Erich Fromm elucidates that Freud was a rationalist since he saw the power of reason as “solving the riddles of life” (14). What Freud stressed was the “presence of powerful irrational forces motivating man, unconscious nature of these forces”, their “pathogenic consequences” and the “curing effect of making the unconscious conscious” (16).

Freud delivered two important lectures in his life-time, one of which was the “Clark Lectures of 1909” and the other was the “Vienna Lectures of 1915-17”. Furthermore, he had several books on psychoanalysis and hysteria, which played a key role in the development of psychoanalysis (Gekoski 188).

When Freud delivered his lectures to the Society of Medicine in Vienna, they were received with disgust by most of the intellectuals (Hoffman 4) since he explained that children are not as pure as man generally thinks in terms of sexuality. His analyses disclosed the veil of the world of the unconscious of all humanity including children.

Freud divided our consciousness into different parts. According to him, there are two kinds of unconsciousness; one of which can be transformed into the consciousness easily and this is called the “preconsciousness”, and the other is “a bit difficult to” pass into the conscious level and remain as the repressed for all time, that is the “unconscious” (Freud, *An Outline* 32-34). Man’s life is chiefly formed by the drives that are mainly unconscious and these drives are most of the time in conflict with his reason and the values of the society. Freud came

to this conclusion with the inexplicable distresses of his patients and he went on with his studies finding out that most of his patients seemed to have forgotten the reasons of their distresses. In fact, forgetting was repressing, and any attempt to bring it to the awareness of the individual by Freud was received with a kind of “resistance”. Moreover, most of the time this forgotten material was related to the childhood of the patient. Hence, Freud reached a conclusion that man’s development is highly determined by his/her childhood experiences (Hoffman 6; Fromm 14). The experiences in the childhood are repressed in the unconscious of man and if they are in conflict with his conscious mind, they can come to the surface as “a neurosis, depressiveness, anxiousness, diffused listlessness and so on” (Fromm 14). So, Freud asserted that no repressed desire is forgotten in the dark well of the mind, but it rests in the unconscious.

The line between normality and abnormality lies in stabilising one’s repressed desires. The more a person represses his/her wishes, the more he/she is open to the possibility of facing depression or neurosis. The severity of repression prompts extreme psychic distress owing to the fact that the desires are active in the unconscious which lead to the peculiarities of behaviour.

Freud is especially famous for his theories about the different sides of human psyche as “id, ego and superego”, which are commonly used in literary works to show the conflicts of characters. These three parts of human psyche determine certain attitudes, emotions and conflicts in life. Freud clarifies that “id” is the “chaotic part” of human psyche. It is the “cauldron of seething excitement” (“The Structure”). “Id” is related to man’s “somatic processes”. It has a world of its own, wrapped up with instinctual needs and it obeys the “inexorable pleasure principle” (Freud, *An Outline* 85). “Id” does not obey the laws of logic, which means that there is “no organisation and no unified will” in its nature. It is like a child who only insists on its desires and demands without any care for the outside world. It is the primitive side of human psyche, where there are “no values, no

good and no evil, no morality". Furthermore, it does not hold any concept of time, space or syntax (Freud, *An Outline* 85). Freud claims that;

[I]d and unconscious are as intimately linked as ego and preconscious... If we look back at the developmental history of an individual and of his physical apparatus, we shall be able to perceive an important distinction in the id. Originally, to be sure, *everything was id*<sup>1</sup>

(Freud, *An Outline* 35-36).

The second part of the psyche, "ego", developed out of "id" as the human being became aware of the moral values and standards of the external world. Some of the content of the "id" were taken into the "ego" but some of them were not and remained as "unchanged"; thus, they remain as "repressed id" (Freud, *An Outline* 36). "Ego" is in direct contact with the external world, that is, reality. Freud explains this as: "the sense-organ of the whole apparatus, receptive, not only of excitations ... but also of such as proceed from the interior of the mind" (Freud, "The Structure"). "Ego" is in between the needs of "id" and the standards of the external world. It decides "whether the attempt to obtain satisfaction is to be carried out or postponed or whether it may not be necessary for the demand by the instinct to be suppressed altogether as being dangerous" (Freud, *An Outline* 86). While "id" is determined by the pleasure, "ego" is defined by "the consideration of the safety". "Ego" stands for "reason" and "circumspection" while "id" stands for the "untamed passion" (Freud, "The Structure"). "Ego" fights against the two enemies: first, it has to defend itself against the external world which threatens it with excessive demands. At the same time, it has to control the demands of "id", which is more dangerous because the defence against the internal world is not adequate. Hence, Freud states that "they persist as threats, even if they can be temporarily held down" (Freud, *An Outline* 8).

At a certain age, "portion of the external world has, at least partially, been abandoned as an object and has instead, by identification, been

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<sup>1</sup> The italics are mine.

taken into the ego and thus became an integral part of the internal world" (Freud, *An Outline* 94). This new world is called "superego", which controls the "ego" with its orders, judgements and threats. The "ego" is warned against the possible punishments if it does not obey the rules of the "superego"; that is the "conscience". It is just like the parent which always holds the authority over the "ego". There are two aspects of "superego"; one is "conscience", which punishes and warns "ego" against "id" and the other is "ego ideal", which "derives from rewards and positive models presented to the child". Both of these indicate themselves to the ego through feelings like "shame, pride and guilt" (Freud, "The Structure"). Therefore, "ego" faces various anxieties; "reality anxiety in the face of the external world, normal anxiety in the face of the superego and neurotic anxiety in the face of the strength of the passions in the id" (Hoffman 25).

In fact, the chief conflicts among "ego", "id" and "superego" lie in the "pleasure principle", which was put forth by Freud as the basic object in the lives of the human beings and according to him, it is this principle which "id" works on. He expounds that the main aim of the human being in life is happiness, which is one of the two instincts that determine the life of man. However, the impositions of the external world cause the reduction of the happiness by force under the influence of the reality (Hoffman 22). With the effect of the "ego's instincts of self-preservation", the "pleasure principle turns into reality principle" (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure* 7). Moreover, he explains that all the behaviour of the human being is shaped by certain instincts. He continues to state that there are two basic instincts in the human psyche: "Eros and the destructive instinct" (Freud, *An Outline* 18). These two instincts can be detected in the character analysis of Lisa Erdman in *The White Hotel*, so it is necessary to give brief information about this theory of Freud. He explains:

[T]he aim of the first of these basic instincts is to establish ever greater unities and to preserve them- thus- in short, to bind together; the aim of the second is, on the contrary, to undo connections so as to destroy things

(18).

The second one is called the “death instinct”. At first, Freud only defined the “life instinct”, which perpetuates the life of the individual by motivating him for food and water, and to have sex. He calls this motivation “libido”, which is “sexual energy”. So, Freud emphasises the importance of sexual energy and sexuality in most of his theories. According to Freud, in organisms, there is the “tendency to return the inorganic”, so the aim of life is “death”. Under the life instinct there is a death instinct, which means “every individual has a death wish” unconsciously. (Freud, “The Structure”) Freud stresses that “the aim of all life is death” and he adds that “inanimate existed before living one” (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure* 46).

Nonetheless, not all instinct behaves in this way; the reproductive cells struggle to keep their immortality of their own species, which are deemed to be the “life instincts”. When Freud defined sex instinct, he did not necessarily mean simple sexuality, yet he implied deeper meanings. The sex instinct includes “process of selection” and the coupling enables the organism to live. For this reason, the sex instinct is defined as “Eros”, Love, which overcomes “Death” (Hoffman 26-27). The concept of sex as the pure love can be found in *The White Hotel* in Lisa’s fantasies.

Sexuality was the main point in Freud’s theories, which shocked most by saying that most of man’s repressed wishes are sexual. Furthermore, he continued that all “sexual normalities and abnormalities spring from the very earliest stages of the human being; that is, infantile sexual life” (Hoffman 14). This was shocking for most of the intellectuals due to the concept of the purity of childhood.

Freud’s theories about the sexual development of the individual were used by the writers in question. Freud divided the sexual development of the human being into certain stages. It starts with “cradle” and lasts till the “adolescence”. For him, infant sexuality begins with unconscious activities via the inquisitiveness of the child. He defined the stages with certain names such as “oral, anal, phallic and latency”. The oral stage begins in the very early stages of childhood; 0-18 months, and



in this period, the focus of the infant is on the mouth. Afterwards, the child passes to another stage, which is called “anal phase”. After this stage, the “phallic stage” comes, which is significant in the development of the human being owing to the fact that it consists of Freud’s famous theory; the “Oedipus Complex”, which includes “the ages between three and six” (“Psychosexual”; Freud, *An Outline* 23-27). The “Oedipus Complex” plays a vital role not only in the construction of sexuality but also in the “superego” and later in the behaviour of the individual. Freud claims that “it underpins not only infancy of every person but the infancy of humanity itself” (qtd. in Sue Vice 19). The “Oedipus Complex” is named after the Greek drama written by Sophocles *Oedipus the King*. The major concern underlying this complex is the desire of the little boy for his mother, and the feelings of fear unified with jealousy towards his father. He grows affection and love towards his mother especially in the absence of his father. This feeling towards his mother gets intense along with hatred towards his father, who builds a barrier between the mother and the boy. His hatred creates the idea of getting rid of the father figure to unite with the mother forever (Freud, *The Id and The Ego* 75-80). Freud claims that;

There can be no doubt that Oedipus complex may be looked upon as one of the most important sources of the sense of guilt by which the neurotics are so often tormented. But more than this: in a study of the beginnings of human religion and morality which I published in 1913 under the title of *Totem and Taboo* (Freud 1912-13). I put forward a suggestion that mankind as a whole may have acquired its sense of guilt, the ultimate source of religion and morality, at the beginning of the history, in connection with the Oedipus Complex

(Freud, *The Standard Ed. Vol. XVI* 331-32).

However, the child does not completely withdraw from his father. He also identifies himself with his father. For this reason, feelings towards the father remain ambivalent. This complex is resolved for the boy by “castration complex”, which means that the boy fears being castrated by his father. This fear comes out with the possibility of a punishment and this

leads to the identification of the boy with his father and getting away from his mother as the sexual object (Young 16-7).

Furthermore, Freud explains that this process is also apparent in little girls with the change in the object of affection; the little girl is fond of her father and sees her mother as a rival (Young 20-21).

From about six to the eighth year of life onwards, there is a “halt and retrogression” in sexual development. It is a kind of “lull” period, which Freud calls “latency period” (Freud, *The Standard Ed. Vol. XXII*. 326). Forgetting is the major characteristic of this stage and there is a kind of cover over the earlier sexuality. Freud expounds that this forgetting is in fact a result of “repression”. This period lasts till puberty when sexuality becomes active again.

Hence, Freud saw it as a big error to consider children innocent in terms of sexuality. In his lecture about the sexual life of human beings, he explains that the reason for this lies in the idea that we were once children, too. So, the claims of Freud about children and their sexuality become hard to accept then. Furthermore, it is seen as the duty of society to tame the sexual instincts of the individuals and to postpone “the full development of the instinct till the child shall have reached a certain degree of intellectual maturity” (Freud, *The Standard Ed. Vol. XVI* 310). For this reason, all sexual activities are forbidden to children and they are deemed to be asexual. The children are also taught to be asexual and to repress their instincts. However, these repressed feelings come out at later stages of the individual life either in neurosis or in dreams. Freud worked on dreams and their mysterious natures during his life-time, and he compiled his views in his book *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), which created great controversies about dreams and their functions. Dreams have been significant for writers to reveal the unconscious of the character to the reader, which can also be seen in the novel of Doris Lessing, *The Grass is Singing*.

For Freud, dreams are formed by two features; “wishing and dreaming”. The first one is unconscious and the second one indicates the

fulfilment of the wish. Freud focused on the “latent dream”, which is in disguised form, rather than “manifest dream”, which is remembered by the dreamer. He explained that the interpretation of dreams is in a way the interpretation of the unconscious. Dreams reveal one’s deep feelings that lie in the consciousness, which are normally suppressed by the individual due to the external world since the psychic self withdraws itself from the external world and the “reality principle” during sleep. According to Freud, memory works in a more relaxed way in dreams and this enables it to bring up the recollections of the individual, which are forgotten in daily life. Furthermore, symbols play a vital role in dreams, which indicates the usage of the earlier phases in the development of speech. The dream has a specific language with its certain rules. This function of the dream especially attracted the novelists and poets throughout the centuries. The repressed wish and desires of the characters in fictitious works are revealed to the reader through dreams and the symbols seen in these dreams. Apart from these, Freud explicates that the impressions of the childhood are mostly seen in dreams, which are normally forgotten or suppressed. Moreover, Freud continues that dreams sometimes shed light on the experiences shared with all mankind, which the child brings to the world as part of “archaic heritage”. This means that some of the experiences of the individual are influenced by his ancestors (Freud, *An Outline* 38- 42).

In short, all these characteristics of dreams gave Freud and the followers the opportunity of analysing the behaviours of the human being and understand his attitudes in general. Nonetheless, while Freud emphasises sexuality as the core of all problems which are repressed and then come to the surface in dreams, psychoanalysts such as Jung focused on different issues like “collective experience”.

In fact, Freud influenced the literature of his time and the following generations in many ways. Besides, since Freud is considered to be the father of psychoanalysis and the forerunner of certain theories, this thesis

will focus on Freudian analyses in some distinguished Turkish and English works.

The influence of Freud on English writers might have begun with the publication of the *Interpretation of Dreams* in 1915 and this led the usage of Freudian jargon in literary works. Furthermore, the London Psychoanalytic Society was founded in October of 1913, which encouraged the application of psychoanalytical thinking. Furthermore, the analogy between the interpretation of dreams in psychoanalysis and the analyses of literary works might have appealed a great number of writers at the time (Gekoski 212). In his treatments, Freud paid close attention to the ambiguities and hidden feelings in dreams while interpreting them as if he had been analysing a literary work.

All of these are also valid for the Turkish authors after 1940s, who may have read the works of Freud and the following psychoanalysts. In fact, the modernism started in the Turkish literature in the second half of the nineteenth century, yet a significant revolution can be detected in the twentieth century literature. In the 1970s, the Turkish authors, like their European counterparts, realised that the content and the form are inseparable; therefore, the Turkish novelists adopted such modern techniques as “the stream of consciousness” to display the inner world of the protagonists. Though there are not so many writers who made use of psychoanalysis in their works, the translations of the works of Freud might have influenced certain Turkish novelists in terms of characterisation. Especially, in today’s literature it is possible to use psychoanalytical criticism for the characters and characterisation with the interest in the individual. However, the concern of the most Turkish writers were previously the pastoral life and the peasants, yet the changing modern world led some Turkish authors closer to the conflicts of modern man in the twentieth century Turkey as well (Aksoy 27-29).

The close connection between literature and psychology in any culture and time can be best perceived with the present given to Freud on his eightieth birthday. A letter was delivered to Freud, which was signed by

one hundred ninety seven European writers including Virginia Woolf, H.G.Wells, Jules Romain and Thomas Mann. The letter displays the gratitude to Freud for his enormous contribution to the world of literature in general with the words of Mann:

[I]n every important sphere of his activity, as physician and psychologist, as philosopher and artist, this courageous seer and healer has for two generations been a guide to hitherto undreamt of regions of the human soul. An independent spirit, 'a man and knight, grim and stern of visage' as who knew how to stand alone and then draw many to him and with him, he went his way and penetrated to truths which seemed dangerous because they revealed what had anxiously been hidden, and illumined dark places. Far and wide he disclosed new problems and changed the old standards; in his seeking and perceiving he extended many times the field of mental research, and even his opponents indebted to him through the creative stimulus they derived from him. Even should the future remould and modify one result or another of his researches, never again will the questions be stilled which Sigmund Freud put to mankind; his gains for knowledge cannot permanently be denied or obscured. The conceptions he built, the words he chose for them, have already entered the living language and are taken for granted. In all spheres of human science, in the study of literature and art, in the evolution of religion and prehistory, in poetry itself his achievement has left a deep mark; and we feel sure, if any deed of our race remains unforgotten it will be his deed of penetrating into the depths of the human mind.

We, the undersigned, who cannot imagine our mental world without Freud's bold life-work, are happy to know that this great man with his unflagging energy is still among us and still working with undiminished strength. May our grateful feelings long accompany the man we venerate

(qtd. in Gekoski 214-15).

This letter demonstrates the everlasting relations between literature and psychology from the mouth of the well-known writers, and all the

remarks in the letter are totally valid for today and will probably be in the future regardless of culture and age.

## CHAPTER III

### ***THE GRASS IS SINGING* (1950) - DORIS LESSING**

The changing social and political conditions all around the world in the twentieth century provided writers with innumerable sources. Besides; the philosophical and ideological transformations brought innovations to European literature. However, these changes in literature were not apparent in most of the English works owing to the fact that English writers preferred to be wrapped up within their traditional writing styles and themes ignoring the modern themes such as alienation, isolation of man and the dehumanising effects of the wars and technology in the modern world. Yet, there were a few authors in the twentieth century English literature who were highly concerned with deeper psychological analyses of their characters. These writers were the ones who welcomed the “continental literature” with its novelties in terms of theme, character and characterisation. James Joyce, D.H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf were among these writers who reflected the complicated mind of their characters not only in their themes but in their styles as well. Doris Lessing, who adopted the literary innovations in the post-war of English literature, is also one of these writers.

Although Lessing is an English author, her novels are distinct from most of her contemporaries due to her growing up away from her country. Born in Persia, Lessing spent her youth in Southern Rhodesia because of her father’s intentions to be rich through the plantation of a maize farm. She spent most of her childhood in Rhodesia, where she witnessed the discrimination against the natives of the country, and this was reflected in her early novels. Lessing left school at an early age and preferred to educate herself by reading world literature such as the works of Dickens,

Scott, Stevenson, Kipling along with those of D. H. Lawrence, Stendhal, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. All these authors provided her with a wide perspective on life in terms of human relations. After her second marriage, Lessing moved to London in 1949 with her first novel *The Grass is Singing*, which was published in 1950. The novel proved to be a masterpiece and established Lessing as one of the remarkable post-war writers in English literature. Her following novels contain a wide range of topics from gender to politics, role of family to space, society and the problems of the individual. Owing to her treatment of the woman characters in her novels, Lessing has been considered to be a feminist though she never claimed to be one. She successfully juxtaposed the individual against the society and pictured the conflicts of the individual struggling to survive in the modern world ("Biography").

Likewise, *The Grass is Singing* displays the suffering of an individual in a world which she finds hard to fit in. When it was first published, the book created a great deal of controversy due to the demonstration of the inequalities and injustices practised upon the black by a "civilised country" in the twentieth century. The novel embodies certain dichotomies such as "farm and city, dream and waking life, feeling and reason, sound and silence, name and character; the divisions which have been frequently used by Lessing throughout her literary career" (Sprague 20). Furthermore, the work fuses diverse genres ranging from detective to mystery and romantic to realistic novel. Nevertheless, the most important aspect of the novel is that it is psychological and it focuses on the crises of an individual who is caught up in contradictory feelings and desires (Rowe14).

The novel begins with a newspaper headline that points out the murder of Mary Turner, the protagonist of the novel, by her black servant, Moses, and it continues to unfold the mysteries about the murder and the deep layers in the character of Mary Turner. The first chapter of the book focuses on this murder and the general atmosphere in the white world in Zimbabwe, where the whole action of the novel is set. In the first part, the



omniscient narrator takes the role of the collective conscious, that is, the white British settlers in South Africa, and the narrator reflects the opinion of these colonisers about the mysterious murder of Mary Turner. In the following chapters the point of view shifts from the collective to the individual and gets into the mind of Mary Turner. The novel begins to tell the life of Mary in a chronological order focusing on her unhappy childhood, and then the happy days in town, her desperate marriage at the age of thirty, coming to the village as a result of her marriage to Dick, the broken illusions of both, Mary's brutal treatment towards the natives, the economic collapse of the couple and the sale of the farm to Charlie Slatter, her mental breakdown and lastly her murder by Moses in the end where the circular structure of the novel is completed.

In the background of the novel, there is the brutal discrimination practised against the black by the white British settlers and it is possible to read the novel as a social critique; however, Lessing explained in the preface of *African Stories*: "When my first novel, *The Grass is Singing*, came out, there were few novels about Africa. That book, and my second, *This was the Old Chief's Country*, were described by reviewers as about the colour problem... which is not how I see, or saw them" (qtd. in Pickering 18-9). Thus, she displays that she had much deeper intentions while constructing the novel, which cannot be taken simply as a depiction of racial conflict. It is obvious to detect the clash between the white and the black, yet this forms a background in the novel for an individual who deteriorates day by day owing to her failure of balancing her own desires with the intentions of the society.

The conflict between the society and the individual can be noticed from the beginning of the novel. First of all, it is essential to comprehend the features of the society in South Africa. It is a white coloniser society in which there is such a great discrimination against the African people that the English do not accept these black people as human beings and all their laws are set up according to this dogma. The rules are so rigid that any kind of relation between a black and a white person is seen as

impossible except for the role of a master and that of a servant. For instance; Moses is not allowed to ride in the same car even with the dead body of Mary Turner since she is a white woman (28-29). The narrator reflects the negative attitude to the blacks by the words, “niggers, animals and swine” among other humiliating terms. Moreover, the blacks do not have any individuality in the book and they are drawn as types called only by their Christian names such as “Moses and Samson”. They interpret the murder as if it were done for robbery, which is the reason they always give when they want to blame any black person. Even when an English man, Tony Marston, wants to explore the darkness behind the murder, his questionings are received as if he were doing something illegal:

“Look”, he [Tony Marston] said, “I’ll tell you what I know from the beginning, only it will take some time, I am afraid...”

“You mean you know why Mrs. Turner was murdered?” The question was a quick, shrewd parry.

“No, not just like that. Only I can from a theory”. The choice of words was most unfortunate.

“We don’t want theories. We want facts. And in any case, you should remember Dick Turner. This is all most unpleasant for him. You should remember him, poor devil.”.

....

“Do you or do you not want to hear what I have to say?” he asked, irritably.

“Go ahead. Only remember, I don’t want to hear your fancies. I want to hear *definite* which would throw light on this murder? For instance, have you seen this boy attempting to get her jewellery, or something like that? Anything definite. Not something in the air

(26).

The white want to interpret the murder according to their prejudices. They are conditioned to think that the blacks are guilty by birth. Individual judgment is out of the question. The silent agreement at the beginning of the chapter marks this fact in this society where there is no right for any individual to live and question on his own: “The most interesting thing

about the whole affair was this silent, unconscious agreement. Everyone behaved like a flock of birds who communicate- or so it seems- by means of a kind of telepathy" (10). The reader can easily comprehend that in such a society, the individual cannot survive if he/she wishes to live according to his/her interests. This is the chief flaw in the tragedy of the Turners, especially for Mary Turner, who refuses the demands of the collective, which causes her to suffer from alienation, isolation and an inevitable madness that comes out as a result. The narrator tells:

The Turners were disliked, though few of their neighbours had ever met them, or even seen them in distance. Yet what was there to dislike? They simply 'kept themselves to themselves'; that was all. They were never seen at district dances, or fetes or gymkhanas. They must have had something to be ashamed of; that was the feeling. It was not right to seclude themselves like that; it was a slap in the face of everyone else; what had they got to be so stuck-up about? What, indeed!

(11).

Nevertheless, the society does not prefer to explore the reasons for their alienation. They prefer to look at their life-style superficially unlike a young man called Tony Marston, who has just arrived from England and who has not yet developed a deep prejudiced attitude towards the natives. Tony Marston takes the role of the reader who also wonders about the real motives behind this tragedy and thinks thus:

But the important thing, the thing that really mattered, so it seemed to him, was to understand the background, the circumstances, the characters of Dick and Mary, the pattern of their lives. And it was not so easy to do. He had arrived at the truth circuitously: circuitously it would have to be explained

(26).

Hence, the mystery in the tragic life of Mary Turner, the protagonist, can only be perceived better through the analysis of her background and her character. Thus, the novel turns back to the childhood of Mary Turner

displaying all her conflicts and the motives hidden unconsciously even from herself.

In the following chapters, the narrator takes Mary's point of view and demonstrates her psychological development beginning from childhood, which is described with the adjectives as "chilly and dusty" for the most part of the novel. It is shaped with poverty and rage, which follows her like a shadow till her death. Her father, who always drank alcohol and had failures in life, has been the most significant figure in Mary's life which she cannot get out of her mind. As a child, she was doomed to listen to the strife between her mother and father about his drinking habit and the bills, which the family had difficulties in paying. Mary had to witness the suffering of her mother because of the unsuccessful life that her father led. Nevertheless, when Mary was sent to the boarding school, she was happy for the first time in her life and she covered a veil over all those miseries of her childhood: "She was extremely happy, so happy that she dreaded going home at holiday-times to her fuddled father, her bitter mother, and the fly-away little house that was like a small wooden box on stilts" (40).

After the boarding school, Mary seems to lead a placid life as a secretary in town. She starts a new life in town with her girlfriends living in a girls' club, going out with men without indulging into any sexual relationships. She is depicted as a "type", whose voice is "one of thousands: flattened, a little sing-song, clipped. Anyone could have worn her clothes" (43). Thus, Mary is a woman who seems to have fitted in society since she does not have any interests and desires of her own. "She seemed impersonal, above the little worries" (43). She has almost an automatic life like most modern people in society:

She got up late, in time for office (she was very punctual), but not in time for breakfast. She worked efficiently, but in a leisurely way, until lunch. She went back to the club for lunch. Two more hours' work in the afternoon and she was free. Then she played tennis or hockey or swam...

(44).

So, leading a life with certain daily routines prevent Mary from thinking and questioning much about her life and herself. Furthermore, her happiness increases with the death of her father due to the fact that she seems to break the last link with her past: "There was nothing left to connect her with the sordid little house on stilts, the screaming of trains, the dust and the strife between her parents. Nothing at all! She was free" (Lessing 42).

Mary regards herself as absolutely free since she is totally unaware that her unpleasant childhood experiences are hidden in her subconscious. Eventually, she tries to make a safe life and create an ideal for herself.

In *Man Alone*, Frederic A. Weiss explains the most serious problem of man in the twentieth century as alienation of the individual, and states that "alienation from the self, unconscious rejection of personal and sexual identity and the wish to be the other, the ideal self, are basic aspects of the neurotic personality of our time" (Josephson 479). Therefore, trying to construct an ideal for the society causes self-alienation since the individual denies or represses his/her own desires. This can be seen in Mary as well when she tries to adapt to the society escaping from herself and her past. Her constant repression causes her self-alienation, which later results in total alienation from the outside world as well.

Mary's pseudo-blissful life shatters when she hears her friends gossiping about her and her way of life. Her monotonous life has hindered her to question herself, yet upon hearing her friends talking about her childish behaviour and asexuality, she faces the first breakdown of her illusions. She has not known herself so far and she has had a "slight idea" about her way of life till that time (Lessing 47-49). It is the first time she questions herself: "Why did they say those things? What is the matter with me? What did they mean when they said that I am *not like that*?" (49). Nonetheless, her questioning does not last long inasmuch as she looks for someone to marry immediately. If she had questioned more, she would have probably found out her problem and faced with these, yet she does not have that power to challenge against her repressions.

Mary desperately searches for someone to marry just to obey the social norms and at last she marries Dick Turner to prove that she is like the others as well. Before her marriage, she always wanted an ideal life for herself, but her marriage to Dick has been a sheer mistake, which is doomed to go into a catastrophe in the end on the grounds that the couple have diverse expectations from marriage. While Mary thinks “how nice it will be to get close to the nature” (Lessing 61), Dick expects a farm wife, worker and a mother. Their different expectations cause “mutual disintegration” (Sprague 21).

At first, Mary is happy in the village though she feels disappointed when she gets into the farm house which has the “tiny stuffy room, the bare brick floor, the greasy lamp” (Lessing 64). She tries to busy herself with daily activities such as doing housework and creating an environment for herself. In fact, in all these activities, she tries to divert her attention from her childhood, which was shaped with the same poverty. However, day by day, their marriage gets worse and Mary finds herself living in a desert where she is suffering from extreme hot weather, which almost suffocates her, and this physical pain symbolises her struggle against her repressed memories which try to get out of her unconscious. Her biggest fear has been to become like her mother and ironically day by day she becomes so. The moment she gets into the farm house, she smells the odour of the room and goes back to her unhappy childhood. What she escapes actually haunts her. After some time, she hears the voice of her mother in her talking and shouting. During an argument, she noticed that:

She was speaking in a new voice for her, a voice she had never used before in her life. It was taken direct from her mother when she had had those scenes over money with her father. It was not the voice of Mary, the individual, but the voice of the suffering female, who wanted to show her husband she just would not be treated like that. In a moment she would begin to cry, as her mother had cried on these occasions, in a kind of dignified, martyred rage

(96).

Thus, this marriage takes Mary back to her past, which she has suppressed for a long time. Each day, her unconscious comes to the surface with the poverty she has to live with in the village. The struggle against the economic situations and the failure of Dick as a farmer force Mary to face with her latent fear, which is to lead a life like her mother. Besides, the kaffir shop where Dick insists on working forces the hidden feelings to burst in the dark halls of her mind. She resists against the idea of working there, however, she cannot explain the reason to Dick due to the fact that she thinks he will not be able to understand her. It is like a nightmare for her from which she cannot escape. Therefore, in spite of fighting against her fate, Mary is trapped in her loneliness and depression. Her unsuccessful marriage reminds her of the unhappy experiences in her childhood which were suppressed deep in her subconscious.

Mary's condition is similar to what Freud defined as "repetition compulsion". According to the Freudian theory, "only self-knowledge can prevent the neurotic repetition of an unhealthy family pattern" (qtd. in Pickering 26-7), which cannot be detected in Mary's case owing to the absolute failure of Mary in understanding herself. Moreover, it is possible to detect Freud's theories about the neurotics and the "transference", which has been the heart of psychoanalytical therapy for years, in the character of Mary. "Transference" refers to "any distortion of a present relationship because of unresolved (and mostly unconscious) issues left over from early relationships, especially with the parents in childhood". Any kind of distortion of the interaction between "doctor-patient, teacher-student or any hierarchical relationship" in the behaviours is meaningful in the childhood of the patient and these distortions are forms of "transference". Something in the present time may take the patient to the past or his/her repressed feelings, and this may influence his/her behaviour in certain personal relationships. Freud aimed at indicating how neurotic tendencies from "earlier life are distorting relationships in *the here and now* (Davis, "Glossary"). In fact, Freud associates the "transference" issue with the "repetition compulsion", which he explains in his famous

book, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. He claims that in the mind of the human being there is a sense of compulsion to repeat the thing “which overrides the pleasure principle”. Patients repeat all “the unwanted situations and painful emotions” in the transference and revive them with the “greatest ingenuity” (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure* 22-23). Furthermore, Freud elucidates that this transference and compulsion of repetition are not only common in the neurotics, but also in normal people. He explains that “the impression they give is of being pursued by a malignant fate or possessed by some “daemonic” power; but psycho-analysis has always taken the view that their fate is for the most part arranged by themselves and determined by early infantile influences” (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure* 22-23).

Thus, this is the case for Mary Turner as well. Mary married Dick out of desperation, which led to her downfall. The small town and the tiny, poor house take Mary to her childhood memories and fears which she always wanted to escape from. When Dick wants a kaffir shop, Mary thinks:

How that store smell made her remember the way she had stood, as a very small girl, looking fearfully up the rows of bottles on the shelves, wondering which of them her father would handle that night, the way her mother had taken coins out of his pockets at nights ...

(Lessing 115).

Mary's weakness lies in her failure of facing these repressed feelings and in her fear of having a similar life as her mother's. It seems as if she were in the hands of an inescapable destiny. Thus, Mary thinks it is her “malignant fate” that she has to bear till she dies.

Through experiencing “the repetition compulsion”, Mary gets into deeper depression and she realises that her marriage has been an enormous mistake. She leaves her husband and goes back to the town again where she thought she was happy to bring all those past years back; yet, when she is there, all her illusions are broken since she is not



the same young, single woman anymore to be accepted to the girls' club. After being rejected by her old boss, she has to yield to her fate, and returns to the village with Dick.

Mary's situation deteriorates with the arrival of Moses, the black servant, to work for them. Moses is the man whom Mary hit on the farm just because Moses was resting for a while. She has great hatred towards the natives, yet interestingly her feelings for Moses get ambivalent each day. Although she hates all the blacks, and thinks that they have "cheeky faces", her feelings to Moses are composed of hatred and attraction at the same time. When Moses begins to work as a servant in their house, Mary feels under threat since she is afraid of any kind of revenge that Moses might take on her. The narrator states: "She was unable to treat this boy as she had treated all the others, for always, at the back of her mind, was the moment of fear she had known just after she had hit him and thought he would attack her" (174-5). Whenever Mary looks at Moses' face, the scar on his face wakens the unfortunate memory of Mary when she hit Moses on his cheek.

However, Mary cannot help being attracted by Moses' manly body, which Dick lacks. She feels "uneasy at his presence" (175), yet she "used to sit quite still, watching him work. The powerful, broad-built body fascinated her" (175). She feels a growing sexual attraction towards Moses day by day:

She had given him white shorts and shirts to wear in the house, that had been used by her former servants. They were too small for him; as he swept or scrubbed or bent to the stove, his muscles bulged and filled out the twin material of the sleeves until it seemed they would split

(175).

So, her fear of his physical power and sexual attraction combined with her frustration at Dick's failure in his job make her challenge against the native at home (Pickering 27). Mary has vague feelings towards Moses, which even she herself cannot understand. Her feelings fluctuate

between fear, “submission, superiority and humiliation”. On the one hand, there is the collective idea that she has to keep herself away from the black servant and be his master; on the other hand, her instincts force her to form a close relationship with Moses. She is trapped between her superego and id. Remembering the scene when the black boy was having a shower, Mary forces herself to divert her attention by trying to assume the expected attitude from a white person towards a black one. Nonetheless, she has also become aware of the fact that she has already broken the social code. She thinks:

What had happened was that formal pattern of black-and-white, mistress-and-servant, had been broken by the personal relation; and when a white man in Africa by accident looks into the eyes of a native and sees the human being (which it is chief preoccupation to avoid), his sense of guilt, which he denies, fumes up in his resentment and he brings down the whip. She felt she must do something, and at once, to restore her poise

(178).

In fact, Moses gets into the life of Mary when she is completely “broken, listless, indifferent” and at the time when she has not totally got over her “failed flight” back to the town to go back to her old job and life (Sprague 22). The more Mary tries to repress her instincts, the worse she becomes since she has lost all her power to suppress her feelings. Thus, she cannot hold her repressed instincts in control anymore, and inevitably she remembers her sordid past experiences, which she has managed to control till that time. Moses reawakens in Mary certain “incestuous feelings for her father” and day by day Moses becomes one with her father. Mary’s contradictory feelings for Moses can be best apprehended in her dreams.

Lessing employed three important dreams to show the unconscious of the protagonist. Dreams are significant in Freudian psychoanalysis since the patients’ latent motives come to the surface during dreams owing to the lack of the threats of “superego” about the social norms and values. This happens because sleeping is a condition in which “the

psychic self renounces the external world and the principle of reality which dominates it". Dreams express the wishes which cannot be revealed in normal life because of the social norms. Also censor is more relaxed in dreams, which helps the workings of hidden motives (Hoffman 11). So, "a dream is the disguised fulfilment of an unconscious wish" (12). Apart from these, Freud explains that memory is "far more comprehensive in dreams than in waking life. Dreams bring up recollections which the dreamer has forgotten, which are inaccessible to him when he is awake." Furthermore, he adds the importance of dreams in recollecting memories from childhood, which are not forgotten, but become "unconscious owing to repression" (Freud, *An Outline* 39-41).

However, Freud expounds that the censor in dreams is relaxed, but not completely absent; therefore, dreams are mostly "confused and blurred", and they are hard to be comprehended by the dreamer. As mentioned before, the "manifest dream" is complicated and is composed of "censorable wishes". The "latent dream" thoughts are the chief sources for dream construction, and they are part of the unconscious in the form of wishes, which appear in the "manifest dream" in innumerable distorted forms. This distortion is the work of the "ego", which resists illogical wishes and tries to prevent them to get into the consciousness. For this reason, dreams are full of symbols (Freud, *An Outline* 39-41).

Freud's theories about dreams have provided opportunities for writers to use them in their works to light the mysteries in the nature of their characters. Besides, dreams are useful for the authors to go beyond the limits of the narration. So, in this novel, any limit for the characterisation of the protagonist is avoided with the dream technique. Dreams play a very essential role in demonstrating the realities about the protagonist, Mary Turner. It is only in dreams where Mary can fully unite the past with the present, which supplies significant clues for the reader as to the suppressed feelings and experiences of Mary.

However, these dreams do not openly reveal her past experiences. They seem to be absurd and meaningless, yet they have deep meanings

considering the symbols. Mary does not reflect these hidden thoughts in her normal life, yet the deeper she sinks into depression, the more latent thoughts explode in her dreams. Moses is the crucial figure in her dreams. Her diverse feelings towards Moses - hatred, anger, sexual attraction and fear - inhabit in her dreams.

In her first dream, she sees herself as a child in playing in the “dusty” garden, which symbolises her parents’ poverty. There she is the leader in a group of children who are faceless. Then she hears her mother calling her inside and she goes into the house with a sense of terror. Upon going inside, she stops at the bedroom door “sickened”, where there is her father whom she has hated all her life. He holds her mother in his arms giving the signs of a sexual affair; thus, Mary feels disturbed and she runs away (200-01).

In her second dream, Mary sees herself playing with her parents, brother and sister. It is a kind of “hide-and-seek” play in which it is her turn to cover her eyes, and her mother hides herself. It is only Mary who takes the play seriously and this causes her to be mocked by the others including her father. Then, her father holds her head in his lap laughing and mocking. She “smelt the sickly odour of beer and through it she smelt too- her head held down in the thick stuff of his trousers- the unwashed masculine smell she always associated with him” (201). She tries to escape since she feels half-suffocated, but her father forces her while mocking at her.

This nightmare is followed immediately by another, which is as disturbing as the previous ones. In this dream, Dick is dead and Mary feels extremely under menace about something mysterious at home. There is something cryptic in her dream, which creates the atmosphere of fear, threat, tension and curiosity. She sees Dick as “ugly, yellow-faced” and she feels “relief” and “exultation” about his death. Moreover, she feels “guilty because of her gladness and tries to arouse in herself the sorrow

she *ought to feel*<sup>2</sup>. Afterwards, her main problem becomes apparent towards the end of the dream where she unites her father with Moses:

He [Moses] approached slowly, obscene and powerful, and it was not only he, but her father who was threatening her. They advanced together, one person, and she could smell, not the native smell, but the unwashed smell of her father. It filled the room, musty, like animals... he came near and put his hand on her arm. It was the voice of the African she heard. He was comforting her because of Dick's death, consoling her protectively; but at the same time it was her father menacing and horrible, who touched her *in desire*

(203-04).

Mary's psychological problems become obvious after analysing the dreams. In her first dream, there is Freudian "wish fulfilment" of the protagonist, which has been repressed all her life. First, Freud explains that dreams are formed in two ways, which are similar to each other:

Either, on the one hand, on instinctual impulse which is ordinarily suppressed (an unconscious wish) finds enough strength during sleep to make itself felt by the ego or on the other hand, an urge left over from waking life, a preconscious train of thought with all the conflicting impulses attached to it, finds reinforcement during sleep from an unconscious element

(Freud, *An Outline* 39).

So, Freud stresses that dreams stem from either "ego" or "id". In Mary's first dream, it is clear that her dream arises from her "ego". Mary sees herself in a game where she is the leader among faceless children. This reflects her desire to be the leader and superior to the others. The children are faceless because it does not matter for her to whom she will be superior. It is obvious throughout the novel that Mary has tendency towards authority and mastery. She likes being dominant over Dick and also the natives. She enjoys power; however, in a society where women are treated similar to the natives, it is impossible for Mary to gain supreme

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<sup>2</sup> The italics in the quotations are mine.

power over men. When Dick gets unsuccessful in his business and also has malaria, Mary takes the control, and she likes giving commands to the natives. She can only do this when the male figure is weak for some reason; otherwise, it is difficult for a woman to take over the business and all the control. In addition to these, Mary is an authoritative figure at home and she is like a dictator while ordering the native servants. Her treatment towards the natives not only demonstrates her hatred for them but also it reflects her unfulfilled wish for the superiority over the male in the white patriarchal society.

Nevertheless, since Mary cannot satisfy herself in terms of her desires in normal life, she represses her wish which comes out at night when her “ego” is in its relaxed condition being away from all the norms of the white society. Thus, as Freud explains, Mary’s dream stems from her preconscious thoughts which cannot find enough strength to be put into practice in daily life because of the restrictions imposed on her.

Besides, Mary has always been afraid of being like her mother, who reminds her of the suffering woman figure under the suppression of male authority. In her first dream, as Mary is the leader, she hears her mother’s calling and she has to leave the game to go back home. This indicates that even in her dream Mary’s wish is unfulfilled through her mother, who symbolises the traditional woman type and who reminds Mary of her traditional role as a woman.

When Mary goes into the house, she has a mysterious feeling of terror. It is not explicitly stated why Mary is terrified, yet finding out Mary’s desire for authority, the reader can easily perceive that it is her fear of being and living like her mother. Nonetheless, the dream later diverts from her preconscious to her id. In terms of Freudian psychoanalysis, the dream comes out as a repressed instinct which has been unconscious before.

Mary feels “sickened” upon seeing her beer-smelling father at the door. She sees him holding her mother, who is struggling in “mock protest” and at this sight Mary runs away. The sexual allusion in this dream is

obvious, which is a prelude to the following latent thoughts. Mary feels troubled about seeing her father and mother almost in a sexual scene, which later clarifies her attempt to repress infantile sexuality. Freud expounds in his lecture called “The Sexual Life of Human Being” that children, who are supposed to be the most innocent creatures in terms of sexuality, are in fact aware of sexual life and they unconsciously repress their experiences. He continues to explain:

Strangely enough, the people who deny the existence of sexuality in children do not on that account become milder in their educational efforts but pursue the manifestations of what they deny exists with the utmost severity- describing them as “childish naughtiness”. It is also of the highest theoretical interest that the period of life which contradicts the prejudice of an asexual childhood most glaringly- the years of a child’s life up to the age of five or six- is afterwards covered in most people by the veil of amnesia which is only completely torn away by an analytic enquiry, though it has been permeable earlier for the construction of a few dreams

(Freud, *The Standard Ed. Vol. XVI* 312-13).

Therefore, the veiled experiences may be revealed in Mary’s dreams as well. Her following dreams reinforce the symbolic meaning of the first one. In her second dream, Mary plays “hide-and-seek” with her family, yet Mary is the only one who takes the play seriously. In this dream, Mary has contradictory feelings towards her father, which are composed of attraction and repelling at the same time. During the game, her mother is hiding and her father holds Mary’s head between his legs. It is possible to interpret this dream as reflecting Mary’s incestuous feelings. In the absence of her mother, Mary, unconsciously, wanted to be close to her father. However, she has ambiguous feelings for her father, which is the fusion of hatred and desire. On the one hand, she unconsciously desires her mother’s absence, which is a common situation in “the Oedipus Complex”. Unlike Jung, Freud did not exclude girls from “the Oedipus Complex”, and he applied all features of “the Complex” for “the

little girls” as well. Hence, he states that in “the Oedipus Complex” “the little boy” desires his mother and wants to get rid of his father, the “rival”, which is similar to the experience of “the little girls” who desire their fathers and want to get rid of their mothers (Freud, *The Standard Ed. Vol. XXII* 127-29). Therefore, it is possible to detect this in Mary’s case when her mother disappears in her dream, and she is left alone with her father. Thus, this demonstrates that Mary could not overcome “the Oedipus Complex” and fulfil her sexual development, which is revealed in her dreams.

On the other hand, at the same time Mary hates her father, which shows itself in her attempts to get rid of him. This negative emotion implies an experience Mary had to live when she was a child, because all through the novel, Mary has an unclear anxiety towards sexuality; moreover, when she remembers her past and her father, she shivers with terror. In one part of her memories, it is stated that: “she had a profound distaste for sex; there had been little privacy in her home and there are things she did not care to remember, she had taken good care to forget them years ago” (46). This quotation suggests that there were some moments in Mary’s life about sexuality, which she refrains from recollecting as they give pain to her.

Freud discovered that extreme sexual child abuse was common in the nineteenth century Vienna. So, he introduced the “Seduction Theory” of neuroses, which was received with hostility; thus, he had to withdraw his claims. For Freud, most of the reasons for neurosis lay in the realm of sexuality, so he did a deep analysis of sexuality and neurosis. He put forth the idea that women who suffer from anxiety have some sexual frustration, which can be seen in the form of impotence, or anxiety over sex or pregnancy. Douglas Davis expounds Freud’s findings about sexuality and childhood in his article “A Theory for the 90s: Traumatic Seduction in Historical Context” as:

Freud suggests two arguments about the relation of the childhood to adult sexual experience: first of children as the object of adults’ perverse assaults



and later of children as subject to oedipal desire and hostilities directed at their parents' (Davis).

In the former, fathers or other male relatives are claimed to have “raped their children” and in the other one, children are claimed to have had fantasies about their parents. According to the first theory, girls who are seduced by their fathers and who cannot get over this trauma become anxious about sexuality in their later years. Freud gave up this theory later due to some reasons, and some critics suggest that he left it owing to the fact that it created great conflicts in the intellectual arena. It would be shocking for the nineteenth century society who regarded the father as an essential figure in the family. Displaying the father as the seducer was unacceptable in a traditional patriarchal society; therefore, Freud gave up his claims. However, it was revived in the twentieth century psychology (Davis, “A Theory”).

In *The Grass is Singing*, Mary's neurosis can be related to her experiences about sexuality with her father, which she is reluctant to admit. The implication of the narrator and Mary's dreams, where her father threatens her by touching and holding her tightly, suggests such a seduction. This clarifies her hatred for her father and her childhood. Moreover, this event might have caused Mary to be afraid of sexuality and become frigid in her relations. Mary sees sex as “a silly business” (47) and she has a great “distaste” for it (46). This prevents her from the idea of marriage. Furthermore, when Dick tells her that he cannot afford a honeymoon, Mary feels “relieved to escape a honeymoon” (60). After their first night at home, Mary thinks: “it was not so bad, she thought, when it was all over: not as bad as *that*” (Lessing 66). The emphasis on “*that*” implies her fears and anxiety about sex and her possible experience in her childhood. Her dreams and especially her last dream, when her father and Moses become one and approach her, may reveal her subconscious very well.

In the last nightmare, Mary feels a menace in “the shadow” and the things coming from “the shadow”. This can be taken as a symbol of her long-term controlled feelings, which become apparent in this last dream. She dreams Moses approaching her, yet Moses becomes one with her father. Thus, one can say that Mary associates Moses with her father and this explains all her fears and at the same time her attractions towards Moses. It is not, then, surprising that Moses has a name from the Bible, which connotes both “paternity and deliverance” (Sprague 23-24).

First in her dream, Mary kills Dick unconsciously, who has been the object of irritation for Mary for a long time. Dick has been a weak, unsuccessful and unfortunate man for Mary. The death of Dick also shows the unconscious wish of Mary, which is normally improper to reveal in daily life. When she sees Dick dead, she feels “relief” and “exultation”. Nonetheless, her conscience activates even in her dream giving her a sense of guilt and she remembers she “ought to feel” sorrow for his death, which is the expected feeling in society from a woman whose husband is dead.

With Dick’s death, Mary and Moses are left alone, which Mary wishes unconsciously. However, Moses embodies another figure: Mary’s father. He touches her protectively as if he were her father. She can smell the “unwashed” odour of her father in the native. This union reminds the reader of the time when Mary allowed Moses to comb her hair, undress her and bring her food as if she were a little child who needed affection and care.

When these two men become one, and touch Mary, the narrator states: “it was her father menacing and horrible, who touched her in *desire*” (204). The word “desire” reinforces the previous idea about seduction, which cannot be revealed in daily life, but in dreams only when the superego is not working strictly and the id is free to expose the latent thoughts. Moreover, Mary’s feelings for Moses are disclosed in her dream, which demonstrates her sexual appeal to him. Any revelation of these feelings would not be received as something normal in the society she

lives in; all in all, Mary has no other choice than throwing these thoughts back to her unconscious, which causes her to sink into madness each day.

In daily life, Mary exposes her repressed feelings in several ways. Her anxiety about sex, marriage and motherhood are transformed into a sense of hatred, which she projects on the black women. She is disgusted at the sight of black women who feed their babies “with their breasts hanging down for everyone to see,” and she thinks “there was something in their calm satisfied maternity that made her blood boil” (116). Mary tries to suppress her thoughts and reveals them in a distinct way in daily life. The more she avoids her own fears of sexuality, the more she loathes the natives who symbolise maternity. Her dichotomy about sexuality prevents her from the idea of motherhood and she refuses to have children. Thus, she feels “hollow”. Like the dusty and dry land of South Africa, Mary’s energy is dried up.

The title, *The Grass is Singing* was taken from T. S. Eliot’s famous poem, *Waste Land*, suggests spiritual sterility as a theme in the work since it is one of the main themes of the long poem. The novel starts with an excerpt from the poem, which has some parallelism with the essence of Lessing’s work:

In this decayed hole among the mountains  
In the faint moonlight, the grass is singing  
Over the tumbled graves, about the chapel  
There is the empty chapel, only the wind’s home.  
It has no windows, and the door swings,  
Dry bones can harm no one.  
Only a cock stood on the roof tree  
Co co rico, co co rico  
In a flash of lightning. Then a damp gust  
Bringing rain

Ganga was sunken, and the limp leaves  
Waited for rain, while the black clouds  
Gathered for distant, over Himavant  
The jungle crouched, humped in silence.  
Then spoke the thunder.

The poem demonstrates the atmosphere in the last chapter of the novel when Mary is killed by Moses. It also clarifies Mary's condition throughout the novel, which is defined by hollowness, sterility and dryness. It is obvious that the village has become the waste land of Mary with its unbearably hot weather and "harsh" landscape. All through the novel, Mary longs for rain owing to the fact that she feels suffocated by the extreme heat. This represents the dryness of her life, which has no meaning and vitality. Since she cannot face her conflicts, she is doomed to descend into madness. Her madness grows out of her latent thoughts she is afraid of confronting. Hence, she cannot face herself and refrains from comprehending her own problems. The more she gets away from herself, the more she becomes alienated from the others around her including her husband Dick. She feels passive and apathetic; thus she yields to her death (Schlueter 18-19).

Apart from these, Mary is isolated from her environment and she has external conflicts with the society she lives in. She cannot balance her desires and this collides with the demands of the society. When she has a close relationship with Moses, she realises that she breaks the social code. Therefore, she forces herself to behave according to the social rules; nevertheless, she has to repress her own desires and this causes her to have an emotional explosion at her weakest moment.

The conflict between Mary and the society is shown through Charlie Slatter and Mary. Charlie is a typical colonial white man living comfortably in South Africa since he has always behaved in an expected way obeying the social rules of the white patriarchal society. Charlie symbolises the survival of the fittest in the novel whereas Mary and Dick stand on the opposite side. Therefore, it is inevitable for them to fail in such a community. Charlie is highly disturbed by the behaviours of Mary towards the native and he warns Dick about this (221). Furthermore, Tony Marston, who comes from England on business, is also shocked with the unusual attitudes of Mary towards a native. When he sees Moses dressing Mary, he cannot believe his eyes as this is completely against the social

codes. The moment Mary notices Tony, she states: "They said I am not like that, not like that, not like that" (Lessing 232) as if she were stuck into a particular moment of her life. These words remind the reader of the moment when Mary hears her friends gossiping behind her about her lifestyle and her lack of maturity. Owing to the gossips, she feels she has to get married and she chooses a wrong way of life just for the sake of conforming to social values. Thus, her collapse follows her unfortunate marriage. She has always cared to be an ideal member in the society and when she obeys her "superego", she thinks she is very happy because she does not know what she really is. Nevertheless, once she is left alone and she remembers her repressed past, she loses her control of her desires and loses herself in madness. Consequently, the moment her "id" comes out, she loses her "superego" completely.

Towards the end, Mary reaches a kind of self-awareness, but it is too late. It is the only time when she gets up "peacefully" and happily. She questions herself constantly:

What had she done? Nothing, of her own volition. Step by step, she had come to this, a woman without waiting for the night to come to this, a woman without will, sitting on an old ruined sofa that smelled of dirt, waiting for the night to come that would finish her. And justly- she knew that. But why? Against what had she sinned?

(241).

She is aware that she is ill, and she states: "Of course, I am ill"; addressing the English man. 'I've always been ill, ever since I can remember. I am ill *here*' She pointed to her chest" (251). However, as in classical tragedies, her *anagnorisis* comes late and she has no chance of fighting against her illness.

She associates the mysterious nature of Africa with threat and her approaching death. She regards the bush as a menacing power killing first her and then the whole house:

Panic plucked at her; already, before she was even dead, the bush was conquering the farm, sending its

outriders to cover the good red soil with plants and grass; the bush knew she was going to die!  
(245-6).

The last chapter is likened to her last nightmare where she feels tense against the approaching “shadow”, which she regards as a threat. It is the shadow of Moses, and here again the narrator gives a clue stating “*he* is waiting” (240) and “*he* is there” (249). She waits for him patiently so that he can kill her. She yields to her fate and thinks it is unnecessary to fight against it. For her, death is the only resolution:

And then, she had felt this emptiness when, at last,  
she had known there was to be no release and that  
she would live on the farm till she died. There was  
nothing new even in her death; all this was familiar  
even her feeling of helplessness  
(248).

Hence, when she is killed by Moses, she hears the thunder growling and only after her death it starts raining. Metaphorically, rebirth in nature comes later than it is expected and the novel ends hopelessly. Mary’s childless and sexless life corresponds with the sterility depicted in *Waste Land*.

Thus, Lessing pictures the tragedy of a woman who falls owing to her indifference to and ignorance of herself, and her inability to listen to her needs rather than conforming to social values. Moreover, Lessing wrote a novel whose surface layer indicates a simple conflict between the black and the white, yet showing, on the deeper level, the complex mind of an individual who is unaware of her own problems because of having suppressed them for years and not being able to confront herself with integrity and courage.

## CHAPTER IV

### **AYLAK ADAM (1959) – YUSUF ATILGAN**

Yusuf Atılgan, who applied such modernist themes as alienation, isolation and lack of communication to his works, was a twentieth century writer. Unlike previous Turkish authors, who wrote about village life, Atılgan focused on the individual and his problems in the modern world. In an interview about his style, Atılgan explained that he was interested in the works of Joyce, Camus, Gide and Sartre, who also wrote about the existential struggle of the modern man (qtd. in Kolcu 22-23). Atılgan dealt with these themes by using modern techniques such as the interior monologue and the stream-of-consciousness technique, which help the reader see and understand the feelings and thoughts of the protagonist.

Atılgan wrote three novels; *Aylak Adam* (1959), *Anayurt Oteli* (1973) and *Canistan* (1989). Among these novels, only *Aylak Adam* is studied in this chapter since it is possible to analyse the novel in the light of Freudian theories of psychoanalysis.

*Aylak Adam* was different from the novels of its time since the protagonist in the novel is unusual with his way of life. The novel is about a superfluous man, C., who does not have a profession, but lives on the money which he has inherited from his father. The novel focuses on the repressed feelings and unpleasant past experiences of C.; thus, such Freudian theories as “the Oedipus Complex, mother figure and transference” are applied in the analysis of the protagonist.

The novel is divided into four parts: “winter”, “spring”, “summer” and “autumn”. The work has a linear structure in which nothing is resolved. It begins with C.’s search for his ideal woman and love, and when the novel ends, nothing changes since C. has not found that woman. Nevertheless, he does not give up and even in the end of the book, he runs after a woman with blue eyes whom he considers as the right person.

Berna Moran, a Turkish literary critic, defined C. as an “anti-hero” due to the fact that C. wastes his life doing nothing and stands against anything conventional. He has only one aim in his life; that is, to find his ideal woman and love (qtd. in Kolcu 19).

Throughout the novel, C. rebels against everything such as marriage, family and having a proper job. Most of the time, he criticises society and mocks its values. Furthermore, C. thinks that hypocrisy and superficiality in relations shape the lives of people; therefore, he does not want to be a part of such a society. For instance; he thinks about the New Year’s night<sup>3</sup>:

I know you. You let it go with little rubbings against others. You are afraid of the big ones. You return home with packages in your hands. There are people waiting for you. You are untroubled. Besides, how quick you become untroubled. You don’t feel hollow inside. Why can’t I be like you? Is it only me who thinks? Is it only me who is alone?<sup>4</sup>  
(39).

Ali İhsan Kolcu describes him as a “protest individual” (52). Besides, C.’s thoughts about the idea of family and marriage are also unconventional. He believes in the meaninglessness of marriage and he expresses his views about man and woman as:

What do they have in common? Apart from flesh rubbing against the other one on certain days in a week. They still tolerate it. Because they have believed in the obligation of living together. Not believing in this is the point which separates me from them. This is the source of both of my grief and joy. Instead of bearing it, I would escape into my loneliness. One person is enough for me. A society formed by two loving people. Since we are social

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<sup>3</sup> All the translations of *Aylak Adam* in the thesis belong to me as there is no published translation of the book.

<sup>4</sup> Biliyorum sizi. Küçük sürtünmelerle yetinirsiniz. Büyüklerden korkarsınız. Akşamları elinizde paketlerle dönersiniz. Sizi bekleyenler vardır. Rahatsınız. Hem ne kolay rahatlıyorsunuz. İçinizde boşluklar yok. Neden ben de sizin gibi olamıyorum? Bir ben miyim düşünen? Bir ben miyim yalnız?(39).



creatures, isn't the best society this poky,  
unproblematic, two-person one?<sup>5</sup>  
(112).

Owing to his different way of life, C. is alienated from society. However, his isolation is not completely related to the struggle of modern man but to his personal problems and unhappy childhood experiences.

C.'s never-ending search for pure love and his reactions against social rules can be better understood through the analysis of C.'s childhood. According to Freud, the childhood of an individual is the turning-point in his/her development, which depends on the success of the completion of such stages as "anal, oral, phallic and latent". If an individual cannot complete any of these stages, he might have problems when he grows up. Freud states, "in every one of our patients, analysis shows us that they have been carried back to some particular period of their past by the symptoms of their illness or their consequences. In the majority of cases, indeed, a very early phase of life is chosen for the purpose" (Freud-*The Standard Ed. Vol. XVI* 274).

The protagonist, C., is also obsessed with a particular period of his past experiences, and he constantly remembers those moments in his present life. Freud continues to explain, "these patients regularly repeat the traumatic situation in their dreams" (274). C. goes back to his childhood and the painful experiences in his mind, which are presented to the reader either through flashbacks or interior monologues.

C.'s obsessions with blue-eyed women, his habit of scratching his ear, his hatred for his father and men who have moustaches are all rooted in his childhood. Furthermore, it is possible to detect Freud's theory, the "Oedipus Complex" in all of these problems.

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<sup>5</sup> Ortak neleri var? Haftanın belli günleri et ete sürtünmekten başka? Gene de dayanıyorlar. Çünkü birlikte yaşama zorunluluğuna inanmışlar. İşte benim onlardan ayrıldığım buna inanmamam. Sıkıntımın da, sevincimin de kaynağı bu. Gücün dayanmaktansa yalnızlığıma kaçırım. Bana tek insan yeter. Sevişen iki kişinin kurduğu toplum. Toplumsal yaratıklar olduğumuza göre, insan toplumlarının en iyisi bu daracık, sorunsuz, iki kişilik toplumlar değil mi? (112).

C.'s mother died when he was only one year old; thus, he was brought up by his aunt, Zehra, whom C. has regarded as his mother. C. has a strong devotion to his aunt. When he tells Ayşe about his childhood, he states:

Aunt Zehra brought me up. I used to love her with a jealous and selfish love. Things were either good or bad depending on whether they spoiled our loneliness or not. I used to get angry with the neighbours who came to our house<sup>6</sup>

(126).

As in the “Oedipal” case, C. as a “little boy” was jealous of his aunt and he wanted to keep her for himself. Even the neighbours, who visited Zehra, disturbed him since he did not want to share his aunt with anyone else. Moreover, C. always preferred to stay at home and refused to go out to play with the children. Home was the only place where he could spend all his time with his aunt, and these were the happiest moments in his life. In fact, his alienation started in his childhood. Even as a child, C. isolated himself from the outside life, and created a world in which only he and his aunt were able to live.

On the other hand, C. had a great hatred for his father. When his father came home, C. felt uneasy because his father was the intruder for him. C. has regarded his father as an enemy, who was taking Zehra from him. Furthermore, his father was an authoritative figure and he was threatening C. with his presence. C. tells Ayşe about his father as:

When I was little, I don't know whether I would feel again disgusted fused with fear for the black moustache of the man who used to come near to kiss my cheeks, or whether I thought this afterwards ... [I] mostly remember him with his words, “put the kid to bed” ... The boring silence at the dinner table in the evenings when he ate at home! When I

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<sup>6</sup> Beni Zehra teyzem büyüttü. Onu kıskanç, bencil bir sevgiyle severdim. Olaylar onunla yalnızlığımızı bozup bozmadıklarına göre ya iyi ya da kötüydüler. Eve gelen komşu kadınlara kızardım. (126).

started to talk forgetting the prohibition, he used to scowl at me. I would shrink back<sup>7</sup>

(125).

C. thought that his father separated him from his aunt and he felt nervous owing to the fact that his father entered his own territory. He states:

Almost ever night, whenever my father came home, he would separate me from the games I played with my aunt, and from the happiness of the fairy tales ... I was learning the immediate transition from great joys into a great grief. Because while I was in her lap, I used to have forgotten my father's existence. In my bed, I thought about the injustice of his separating me from her<sup>8</sup>

(125-6).

Due to his jealousy, C. unconsciously wanted to kill his father just like the "little boy" in the "Oedipus Complex", who wishes the death of his father so that his mother and he can be together. C. tells Ayşe: "Some nights in my dreams, I killed my father several times with dreadful killings"<sup>9</sup> (127).

C.'s jealousy and his dislike grew when he realised that there was a sexual relationship between his father and his aunt. He saw his father holding Zehra in his arms, and C. describes this event to Ayşe as:

My father was hugging my aunt with one hand lifting up her skirt, and with the other one, he was fondling her naked legs.

-“Zehra, ...your legs!”, said he. I was about to faint. When I flung onto them, the legs were still naked.

-“Leave her alone, leave!”, shouted I ... I bit his hand. Immediately, he held my left ear. I felt a foul

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<sup>7</sup> Pek küçükken yanaklarımı öpmeye yaklaşan adamın kara bıyıklarından gene o korkuyla karışık öğrenmeyi duyar mıydım, yoksa bunu sonradan mı düşündüm, bilmiyorum ... ben onu daha çok, “çocuğu yatır” sözüyle hatırlıyorum ... Yemeği evde yediği akşamlar sofradaki o sıkıcı sessizlik! Yasağı unutup konuşmaya başladığım zamanlar, kaşları inik, bana bakardı. Büzülürdüm (125).

<sup>8</sup> Hemen her gece babam eve girer girmez beni, teyzemle oynadığımız oyunlardan, masalların mutluluğundan ayırırdı ... Büyük sevinçlerden büyük kederlere birden geçişi öğreniyordum. Çünkü onun kucağındayken babamın varlığını unutmış olurdum. Yatakta, beni ondan ayırmasındaki haksızlığı düşünürdüm (125-6).

<sup>9</sup> Kimi geceler düşümde babamı korkunç ölümlerle birkaç kere öldürdüm (127).

and smarting pain. My aunt, -“What have you done?  
His ear’s torn off” ...The voice in my head was  
continuously saying: -“His ear’s torn off”. His ear’s  
torn off, his ear’s been torn off, his ear’s torn off<sup>10</sup>  
(127).

This quotation displays the reasons for C.’s habit of scratching his ear and also his obsession with women’s legs. C. cannot get rid of his past experiences and from time to time, his aunt’s or his father’s talks echo in his mind: “When the jam is thickened, you can take it down’, said my aunt to that woman. – ‘Zehra ... your legs!’ My ear! You know I will kiss your legs tonight”<sup>11</sup> (86).

The image of his aunt’s legs and his father’s attack on him are stuck in C.’s mind. Although he is twenty-seven years old in the novel, he has never forgotten that unfortunate day of his childhood. Moreover, he cannot overcome his hatred for his father even though he lives on his money.

C.’s disgust for his father is also related to his father’s interest in women and sexuality. His father had sexual relationship not only with his aunt but also with all the maids at home. C. tells Ayşe:

Now, I could understand why the maids were frequently changing. Oh, the women with inviting femininity! My father’s playing with his moustache! Secret pinches and hugs in the kitchen with humps in the back? My father had a terrible lust for women. I must have given the decision of not being like him after I’d seen these disgusting things. I was intruding on them just to disturb him. He used to slap me. How I desired these beatings!<sup>12</sup> (126).

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<sup>10</sup> Babam bir koluyla teyzemin etekliğini kaldırıp sarmış, öteki eliyle çıplak bacaklarını okşuyordu.

-“Zehra, şu bacakların yok mu?”, dedi. Çevrem kararır gibi oldu. Fırladım. Üstlerine atıldığımda bacaklar hala çıplaktılar.

-“Bırak onu, bırak!”, diye bağırdım... Elini ısırdım. Birden sol kulağıma yapıştı. Pis, yakıcı bir acı duydum. Teyzem, -“Ah, ne yaptın?” diyordu.-“Kulağı yırtıldı” ... Kafamdaki ses durmadan, “Kulağı yırtıldı”, diyordu. Kulağı yırtıldı, kulağı yırtıldı, kulağı yırtıldı (127).

<sup>11</sup> “Reçel kıvamına gelince indirirsin’ demişti teyzem o kadına. –‘Zehra şu bacakların yok mu!...’ Kulağı! Bu gece bacaklarını öpecem, biliyorsun” (86).

<sup>12</sup> Artık evde neden sık sık hizmetçi değiştiğini anlıyordum. Ah, bu kadınlardaki sıvışkan, arka sallayışlı dişilik! Babamın bıyık buruşları! Kaçamak çimdikler, mutfakta, sırtları kambur sarılmalar? Babamda korkunç bir kadın düşkünlüğü

When he challenged his father and was beaten, C. felt victorious since he succeeded in disturbing him.

Moreover, C. has associated all men who have moustaches with his father; therefore, he hated all of them. C.'s attitude is an example for the Freudian theory, "transference", according to which something in present takes the neurotic to his/her painful memories and influences his/her present life and relationships. Throughout the novel, men with moustaches are shown as evil by C. For instance, he emphasises that one of the tailors who beat him had a moustache (9). Furthermore, C. witnesses an accident in which a man almost drives over a little boy and C. states that he has a moustache: "A face coming out of the front window of the car was shouting. –'They will make us murderers! Who is the mother of this bastard?' He was with a moustache"<sup>13</sup> (64).

C. categorises people whether they have moustaches or not. Moreover, the moustache is used as a symbol of patriarchy and masculinity in the novel, so this is one of the reasons for C.'s reaction against the patriarchal society he lives in (Kolcu 156).

C.'s fixation with women's legs has influenced his relationships with his girlfriends. The scene when he saw his father touching the legs of his aunt destroyed the idea that his aunt belonged only to him. Throughout the novel, he cannot touch the legs of his girlfriends. In his relation with Güler, the narrator states:

First, they went into a cinema and kissed each other wetly and madly for two hours. It was hot. He didn't touch only her legs. Why did she use to bring her legs with her whenever she came? It was always the same. As he desired to fondle and squeeze them, his ear would burn. He couldn't touch them<sup>14</sup> (83).

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vardı. Onun gibi olmama kararını, bu iğrençlikleri gördükçe vermiş olacağım. Salt onun rahatını kaçırmak için üstlerine giderdim. Tokatlardı beni. Nasıl istiyordum bu dayakları bir bilsen! (126).

<sup>13</sup> "Arabanın ön penceresinden uzanmış surat bağıırıyordu. ' - Katil olacağız be. Yok mu bu piçin anası?' Bıyıklıydı" (64).

<sup>14</sup> Önce bir sinemaya girip iki saat, ıslak ıslak, deli deli öpüştüler. Sıcaktı. Yalnız bacaklarına dokunmuyordu. Neden ona her gelişinde bacaklarını da

C. cannot help looking at women's legs, but when he remembers the painful event, he starts to scratch his ear: "When they started to walk again, he would always look at her legs. His father was also like him; besides, he [his father] was playing with his moustache. His ear would itch"<sup>15</sup> (50).

C. hates the idea of becoming like his father. One of the maids, who worked at their house, likens him to his father, which enrages him:

THE MAID. I thought you were your father. I was a maid in your house. You're just like your father. You only lack a moustache.

C. Go away; I am not like my father.

THE MAID. Why do you get angry? Is it something bad to resemble one's father? Your father was a real man.

C. Go away. I don't want to.

THE MAID. Whether you want or not, you're like him. Look, how you stare at my legs.

C. No, no, shut up!

The woman is laughing. A hellish anger is flourishing in him<sup>16</sup>

(22).

Although most boys associate themselves with their fathers, C. hates to have any similarities with his father. He confesses to Ayşe in the following way:

On the days when I returned from school with bruises and scratches on my face, my father said, "You will see, this boy will never amount to anything." I wouldn't talk. I would become happy. If my father amounted to anything, then I wouldn't ... When my aunt scolded him, I decided not to be a

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getirirdi? Hep böyle olurdu. Onları okşama, sıkma isteğiyle avcu karıncalanmaya başladıkça bir kulağı yanardı. Dokunamazdı (83).

<sup>15</sup> "Yeniden yürümeye başladıkları zaman hep onun bacaklarına bakıyordu. Babası da öyleydi. Üstelik bıyıklarını burardı. Kulağı kaşındı" (50).

<sup>16</sup> "Baban sandım seni. Sizin evde hizmetçiydim ben. Tıpkı baban gibisin. Bir bıyıkların eksik."

"Defol, babama benzemem ben." "Niye kızılıyorsun? Babaya çekmek kötü bir şey mi? Yaman adamdı senin baban." "Defol. İstemiyorum." "İstesen de istemesen de onun gibisin sen. Bak nasıl bakıyorsun bacaklarıma." "Hayır, hayır, sus!" Kadın gülüyor. Korkunç bir öfke kabarıyor içinde (22).

businessman. Sometimes my aunt would ask me what I would become when I grew up. “I don’t know”, said I, “I won’t be a commission agent.” She would laugh. “You”, said she, “will suffer because of this evil man.”<sup>17</sup>

(126-7).

Consequently, C. has become a superfluous man. He likes wandering around and finding unusual occupations for himself such as counting the names of streets and then thinking on them:

I would collect street names and then think upon them. The proof is here (he patted on the pocket where there was the notebook). I worked for three days in this job; I gave it up yesterday afternoon. Whichever street I went, there was that man with fallen shoulders. Now I am again a loiterer<sup>18</sup>

(14).

Thus, his aunt, Zehra, foresaw that C. would suffer because of his father. C.’s attitudes show that he has not overcome the “Oedipus Complex”; hence, he has not developed fully in personality. Freud explains in his lecture about “The Development of Libido” that man sees his mother as his first “love object”. He continues:

The little boy’s conduct arises from egoistic motives and gives no grounds for postulating an erotic complex: the child’s mother attends to all his needs, so that he has an interest in preventing her from looking after anyone else

(332).

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<sup>17</sup> Okuldan suratımda çürükler, tırnak yaralarıyla döndüğüm günler babam,”- Görürsünüz, adam olmayacak bu çocuk”, derdi. Konuşmazdım. Sevinirdim. Babam adamsa ben olmayacaktım ... Teyzem ona çıkışırken, ben işadımı olmamaya karar verdim. Bazı kere teyzem bana büyüünce ne olacağımı sorardı. “-Bilmiyorum”, derdim. “Komisyoncu olmayacağım ben.” Gülerdi. Başını salları, “- Sen”, derdi “bu kötü adamın yüzünden azap çekeceksin” (126-7).

<sup>18</sup> Şehrin sokak adlarını toplayacak, bunlar üstüne düşünecektim. İspatı burda. (eliyle defterinin bulunduğu cebin üstüne küt küt vurdu). Üç gün çalıştım bu işte, dün öğlen bıraktım. Hangi sokağa gitsem ardında hep o bir omzu düşük adam vardı. Şimdi yine aylakım (14).

This causes the “little boy” to demand sleeping with his mother or “he may force his presence on her while she is dressing or may even make actual attempts at seducing her” (333). When the “little boy” grows up, he has to learn how to direct his love to another woman:

For the son this task consists in detaching his libidinal wishes from his mother and employing them for the choice of a real outside love-object, and in reconciling himself with his father if he has remained in opposition to him, or in freeing himself from his pressure, if, as a reaction to his infantile rebelliousness, he has become subservient to him  
(Freud, *The Standard Ed. Vol. XVI* 337).

However, this process happens when a boy completes the “phallic stage” successfully. For those who cannot overcome this stage, Freud explains:

By neurotics; however, no solution at all is arrived: the son remains all his life bowed beneath his father’s authority and he is unable to transfer his libido to an outside sexual object ... In this sense, the Oedipus Complex may justly be regarded as the nucleus of the neuroses

(337).

This quotation displays C.’s condition owing to the fact that he has not been successful in directing his love to another woman. He has always sought for the affection of his aunt Zehra and the blue eyes of his mother. He reveals to Ayşe:

I don’t know my mother. She died when I was one year old. Because my aunt used to tell me about her beautiful eyes, I had a feeling that I saw her eyes. I have always liked blue eyes. Maybe her having blue eyes was the reason why I could tolerate that girl, whom I told you about, for three months<sup>19</sup>

(126).

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<sup>19</sup> Annemi bilmiyorum. Ben bir yaşındayken ölmüş. Belki de teyzem, onun güzel, mavi gözlerinden bahsettiği için, bu gözleri gördüğümü sanıyorum. Mavi gözlerden hep hoşlandım. Belki sana anlattığım o kıza üç ay dayanabilmem mavi gözlü oluşundandı (126).



C. has two love relationships in the novel, yet he cannot find in them what he has been searching for. He falls in love with Güler because of her blue eyes. Then, he has a relationship with an artist called Ayşe. She is the only woman whom C. feels close to. In the third part of the novel, which is titled as “Summer”, C. and Ayşe live together in a coastal town. C. seems to get over his fears when he is with Ayşe. He kisses her legs and does not scratch his ear. He confesses that he is not afraid of her legs:

Kneeling down, he kissed her legs feeling that he wasted six and a half-month. There was neither his father’s face with a moustache nor his itching ear. He took her down embracing<sup>20</sup>

(108).

Furthermore, C. explains his repressed feelings and unpleasant childhood memories to Ayşe. Thus, the “summer” symbolises the revelation of the unconscious of C. Nevertheless, C. still thinks that Ayşe is not suitable for him. His concept of love is determined by selfishness. He wants to own his girlfriend completely and he expects the same behaviour from her as well. When C. reads Ayşe’s diary, he remarks: “There were only two words near July 23, ‘I love him.’ He didn’t believe this, either. Lie! If you loved me, you wouldn’t know that day was July 23”<sup>21</sup> (133). Besides, C. is afraid of becoming a traditional male figure, whom he calls “the ones with packages”<sup>22</sup>. At the beginning C.’s and Ayşe’s lives resemble the lives of a married couple. They do everything together, which, after a while, alienates C. from Ayşe. He has left Güler for the same reason. Güler has wanted a blissful family life composed of a mother, father and two children. However, C. has mocked her thoughts:

Don’t you look around? Even the ones who seem to be the happiest? All of these start with a dream of

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<sup>20</sup> Boşuna harcanmış altı buçuk ayın ivcenliğiyle diz çöküp bacaklarını öptü. Aralarında ne babasının bıyıklı suratı vardı, ne de kulak kaşıntısı. Onu bacaklarından kucaklayıp yanına indirdi (108).

<sup>21</sup> “Temmuz 23’ün yanına yalnız iki kelime yazılmıştı: ‘Onu seviyorum’. Buna da inanmadı. Yalan! Beni sevseydin o günün 23 temmuz olduğunu bilmezdin” (133).

<sup>22</sup> “eli-paketliler”

three rooms, one kitchen and two children. Then? Come on ladies and gentlemen! Don't miss this chance. Come in and watch it. A tragedy with three acts. The First Act: Flat mountains. The Second Act: How many hills! The Third Act: Marshes on the plain<sup>23</sup>

(78-9).

C. splits up with all his girlfriends not to lead a routine life like the other members of the society. He cannot stand the concepts of marriage, family and children. Ali İhsan Kolcu interprets C.'s reaction against the institutions of family and marriage with his hatred for his father again. C. has associated all fathers with his father, and he is against a system in which fathers dominate (42). Furthermore, this also indicates that C. is still under the authority of his father as Freud explains in the "Oedipus Complex". C. sees his father's image in every man with a moustache and this irritates him. In such a society, C. cannot have healthy relationships with women, because every time the image of his father follows him and threatens him just like the father in the "Oedipus Complex". So, C. rebels against society by isolating himself. He transfers all his hatred to the society he lives in. Although his past is the source of his problems, C. blames society for everything he dislikes. He never faces himself. When C. reads Ayşe's comments on his problems and his father, he gets extremely angry as he does not want to see the reality:

Turning another leaf, he read the last three lines where the writing was about to finish. "He can't stand the existence of my father and mother. Why does he expect everything from me while he even can't get rid of the memory his dead father!..." He looked for somewhere to hold on as if he had been hit over the head. She must have written this last night ... Was it the reality of these remarks which darkened his soul?<sup>24</sup> (133).

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<sup>23</sup> Çevrene bakmıyor musun? En mutlu görünenlerine bile? Bütün bunlar üç oda, bir mutfak, iki çocuk düşü ile başlıyor. Sonra? Haydi bayanlar, baylar! Bu fırsatı kaçırmayın. Siz de girin, siz de görün. Üç perdelik dram. Birinci kısım: Dağlar dümdüz. İkinci kısım: Ne çok tepe! Üçüncü kısım: Ova bataak (78-9).

<sup>24</sup> Bir yaprak daha çevirip yazıların bittiği son sayfadaki üç satırı okudu: "Anamın, babamın varlığına dayanamıyor. Neden her şeyi benden bekliyor? Kendi ölü babasından bile kurtulamazken!..." Başına sopayla vurulmuş gibi

After C. breaks up with Ayşe, he searches for the affection he felt for his aunt in a prostitute, who always waits in front of a cinema. He takes the woman to his house just because she looks like his aunt. At home, C. wants the prostitute to stroke his hair when he lies on her lap. He tries to recollect his memories with his aunt:

C. Tell me 'take it down when the jam is thickened'.  
THE WOMAN. I didn't understand- What was that?

He repeated. Then the woman moved her lips. A rough, exhausted voice:  
Take it down when the jam is thickened.

There was only one thing left for the game to be completed.

C. Bow. Bow and kiss the tip of my nose."

The woman bowed. As she leaned down, he noticed distress behind the sparkling of her squinted eyes ... "She is bored with me". He got embarrassed. He'd forgotten that she was a human being who could also get bored and lived hard, and he'd used her like an instrument in an experiment<sup>25</sup>  
(146).

This event shows C.'s helpless condition due to his fixation with the mother figure. He needs the warmth and love of a mother and in fact, of his aunt. He lives with the idea of finding his ideal lady; thus, he searches for her constantly.

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tutunacak bir şey aradı. Bunu dün gece yazmış olacaktı. ... İçini böylesine karartan yoksa bu sözün gerçekliği miydi? (133).

<sup>25</sup> -Bana "reçel kıvamına gelince indirirsin" desene.

-Anlamadım- Neydi?

Tekrarladı. Kadının dudakları oynadı. Pürüzlü, yorgun bir ses:

-Reçel kıvamına gelince indirirsin, dedi.

Oyunun tamamlanması için yapılacak artık bir tek şey vardı.

-Eğil, dedi. Eğil de burnumun ucundan öp.

Kadın eğildi. Yüzüne yaklaşırken daha da şaşılacak gözlerinin pırıltısı ardında bir sıkıntı fark etti. ... "Yanımda canı sıkılıyor." Birden utandı. Onun da sıkılabilecek, güç yaşayan bir insan olduğunu unutmuş, bir deney aracı gibi kullanmıştı (146).

Although C. has not got over the “Oedipus Complex”, he is not a depressive character. He still has hopes about finding his ideal love. This hope helps him continue living. When he talks to Sami, C. states:

SAMİ. The woman you search for doesn't exist in this world.

C. She does! If she didn't, I wouldn't be. She lives in this city. I'll find her one day.<sup>26</sup>

(133).

In the end of the novel, C. sees a blue-eyed woman, whom he considers his ideal woman: “He'd seen this uneasy face, these frightened blue eyes somewhere in the past. All of a sudden, his headache has gone away. He stood up with a strange joy and madly excitement. It was her he had searched for”<sup>27</sup> (157). He runs after her, but she gets on a bus and C. misses the bus as a result of causing a traffic accident. When the policeman asks why he is running, C. prefers to remain silent and he thinks: “It was useless to talk. He won't mention her to anyone from now on. He knows they won't understand anything”<sup>28</sup> (159).

In *Aylak Adam*, the novelist depicts man's problems in the modern world, such as alienation, isolation and lack of communication along with the pressure of society on the individual. However, in the novel, the personal problems of the individual overweigh his problems with the social institutions. People are usually attached to their habitual ways of living. As there is almost no one in this world to understand the protagonist completely, there is nothing else for him to do but to isolate himself from the outer world.

Consequently, in *Aylak Adam*, Yusuf Atılgan pictures a neurotic man, who is conditioned to rebel against any traditional way of living due

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<sup>26</sup> -Senin aradığın kadın bu dünyada yok, dedi.  
-Var! O olmasaydı ben olmazdım. Bu şehirde yaşıyor. Bir gün bulucam onu.  
(132).

<sup>27</sup> “Bu gergin yüzü, bu ürkek mavi gözleri eskiden bir yerde görmüştü. Birden başının ağrısı kesildi. İçinde acayip bir sevinç, delice bir telaşla kalktı. Aradığı oydu” (157).

<sup>28</sup> “Konuşmak gereksizdi. Bundan sonra kimseye ondan söz etmeyecekti. Biliyordu; anlamazlardı” (159).

to his resentment against his father. Besides, he is against any traditional values because of his bitter feelings he suffered from in his childhood, which he is unable to overcome and reach the status of a mature man.

## CHAPTER V

### ***THE WHITE HOTEL* (1981) – D.M.THOMAS**

In the second half of the twentieth century, a new movement, which is called “postmodernism”, started in many fields such as “architecture, literature, photography, film, painting, videos, dance and music” (Hutcheon 1). Just like the other movements, it was a reaction against the previous conventions. Linda Hutcheon explains in her book that: “it takes the form of self-conscious, self-contradictory, self-undermining statement” (1). Postmodernism demanded the questioning of the conventions in literary activities, such as realism. Geoffrey Lord states in his book on postmodernism that: “Postmodernism is generally considered subversive of established order and old universalities” (10). This movement began in English literature in the early 1970s. With the emergence of postmodernism, a new type of novel was born called “metafiction” in which all the conventions of literature were inverted. Brian Shaffer describes this new type of novel as: “This novel rejects the antimodernist backlash; indeed, it internalizes many of the attitudes and perspectives of modernism’s tenets” (5). These novels draw the attention of the reader to its fictitious nature by employing such techniques as “intertextuality, pastiche and paradox” since its aim is to show the slippery nature of reality.

Although the perspective of the novelists towards reality has changed over time, the influence of Freud and psychoanalysis can still be found in the post-modern works. D.M. Thomas is one of the post-modern writers of English literature, who has applied Freudian psychoanalysis into his works. His novel *The White Hotel* (1981) is an example of a post-modern work with Freudian effects.

*The White Hotel* did not become as popular in Britain as it did in the Continent and the U.S.A. The highly erotic language of the first two parts of the novel may shock the reader; however, it is understood in the later parts of the novel that the writer tries to display the power of the unconscious of the human being, which can control one's life completely.

The novel encompasses different viewpoints and forms of writing such as letters, diary and poetry. Also, the point of view changes almost in each chapter. First, the novel starts with the letters of fictional Freud, Jung and Ferenczi. This part is followed by "Don Giovanni" section, which is composed of a long poem written in first person point of view. The next chapter includes the prose version of the poem and this time it is narrated by the third person. Then another section comes which contains the psychological treatment of Lisa Erdman, the protagonist, by the fictional Freud and this section is narrated by Freud himself. The rest of the novel is told by the third person, yet the narrator shifts his focus from the protagonist to the minor characters. Granofsky claims in his article that the variety in the point of view is related to the subject of the novel. He states:

[T]he structure serves to broaden the depiction of individual trauma to encompass a sense of a cultural response to ... collective disaster in a way that has as much to do with modernist conceptions of life and art as postmodern ones.

(147).

The novel is about a perverted young woman, who suffers from some physical and emotional pains, and ends up in Freud's clinic for treatment. The writer applies some Freudian theories of psychoanalysis into the fictional treatment of Lisa Erdman and he gives some real accounts of Freud from his lectures or books on psychoanalysis.

The novel demonstrates the struggle of an individual first against her unconscious and then against the cruelty on earth. The work broadens its focus from an individual to the whole public as it pictures the Babi Yar genocide, which took place in 1941 in Ukraine and caused the death of 33.771 Jews in two days. So, *The White Hotel* is a novel "which attempts

to come to grips with the collective trauma of genocide by showing its effect on an individual” (Granofsky 132). Besides, through presenting the troubles of both the individual and the society, the novel highlights the question of who is more innocent: the individual or the “civilised world”. Shaffer explains, in his article, that this was the ultimate question in the mind of the twentieth century man. He states:

The realization that “civilized” Europeans were capable of perpetrating the most atrocious barbarities underwent something of a renaissance in the British novel of our period. In particular, the Holocaust of European Jewry captured the imagination of much British writing after 1945; genocide could no longer be dismissed as the practice solely of “primitive” tribes but rather was to be understood as the deliberate policy of “civilized” European peoples

(12).

To mirror both the individual and collective disasters to the reader, the writer used such theories of Freud as the “unconscious, repression, resistance, Oedipus Complex, and death and life instincts”. Thomas makes it easier for readers by creating a fictional Freud as a psychoanalyst in the novel. Freud studies the case of Lisa Erdman in the light of her poem and prose.

The novel begins with the letters of Freud, Jung, Sachs and Ferenczi, who were famous psychoanalysts at the time, and this creates a realistic atmosphere for the reader since the letters reveal some truth about the events between Freud and Jung (10). Freud prepares the reader for the case of Lisa Erdman by giving some background information, and states that this example strengthens his theory of man’s “death instinct” (12-13).

The next part, “Don Giovanni”, includes the poem of the protagonist, who reflected her fantasies and fears in the poem. She tells her love affair with the son of the “professor”, which becomes clear that it is Freud, and some confusing incidents full of death, blood and sex at the White Hotel. One complexity of the poem is its timeless structure. There is



not a logical time order as well as cause and effect relationship between the events. In fact, it is not unusual that the poem lacks coherence on grounds that it reflects the unconscious of the protagonist, which has also no order at all. In the later parts of the novel it is apparent that the poem also foreshadows the incidents that happen in the Babi Yar genocide. Throughout the novel, Lisa has some clairvoyant experiences and she can foresee what will happen in the future.

The part, "Don Giovanni", is followed by the "Gastein Journal", which is just the prose version of the poem, yet this time, a third person narrates the events. All the events, which remain ambiguous for the reader, are clarified by the analysis of the fictional Freud in the next section titled as "Frau Anna G.".

Freud claims that his patient has pains in her left breast and pelvic region, and suffers from breathlessness from time to time. Furthermore, she has "anorexia nervosa", and she lives by eating only oranges and drinking water. It is understood that these physical problems are all caused by some psychological reasons. The aim of Freud is to comprehend the causes of these pains, so he tries to encourage the patient to talk about her past, mainly about her childhood. As it is one of the fundamentals of psychoanalysis, the childhood of the patient is the key for most of the problems. Therefore, through talking, Lisa turns back to her past experiences, and all her memories are reawakened.

Nevertheless, as Freud always states in his works, there is the tendency of the patient to "resist" the treatment and unconsciously hide some experiences from the psychoanalyst. Lisa, named as Anna by Freud in this section not to reveal the real name of his patient, had a happy childhood. She comes from a Jewish father and Catholic mother. Her mother died when she was five years old; hence, she was left alone with her father and brother. Her only relative is her aunt, who is the twin sister of her mother. Since her mother's death at a hotel which was burnt down, Lisa has had some hallucinations of "fire or a storm at sea" (84-86).

With the help of Freud, the reader can now understand the repressed feelings of Lisa in this section. Freud assumes the role of the reader and he tries to interpret the symbols in her poem and journal. Thus, he unveils most of the ambiguities in Lisa's mind.

As Freud explains in the novel the White Hotel can be interpreted psychologically as the "mother's womb" since Lisa has a wish for her mother and motherhood throughout the novel. The hotel is reflected in the poem as a place, which is far away from "sins, selfishness" and it is pure that is the reason for its whiteness. It is almost a counter world since it is just "the opposite of the real world, where people feel isolated, lonely and guilt-ridden" (Weibel 51). Besides, the hotel is a place of protection to which an individual can escape from the brutal world; so it which can be likened to the state of babies who are blissful in their mothers' arms.

In addition, Lisa is obsessed with a particular period of her childhood and thus, she has hallucinations and physical pains. She has been searching for her mother as she cannot understand some mysteries about her mother and needs to know more about her. Freud, as a fictional character, explains that Lisa had strong association with her mother before the "Oedipus phase", and this caused her to identify herself with her mother. Due to the sins of her mother, Lisa also feels guilty. As a child, she witnessed a sexual affair between her mother and her uncle, which Lisa preferred to repress as she could not solve what was happening. When Lisa realises her mother's adultery, she shares her mother's sin and feels guilty towards her father.

During the treatment, Lisa does not tell Freud everything at once, but she sometimes remains silent or wants to go home. Furthermore, when she tells a lie to Freud, she plays with the crucifix on her neck, which shows her guilty conscience. The fictional Freud tells:

She was unreliable, evasive; and I became angry at the waste of my time. To be just to her, I should add that I soon learnt to distinguish her truth from her insincerity: if she was hiding something, she fumbled with a crucifix at her throat, as though asking for God's forgiveness (92).

The reader later learns that the crucifix belongs to her mother, which reinforces the idea that Lisa seems to share the guilt of her mother. Furthermore, throughout the treatment, Lisa resists Freud as her “superego” is at work. Although Lisa knows that her mother was having an adulterous relationship with her uncle, she does not tell this to Freud immediately since it is difficult for her to admit that her mother is immoral. Apart from her mother’s adulterous relationship, Lisa also hides some facts about herself. She refrains from telling him her sexual affairs with men. Even though she wrote everything without censor in her poem, Lisa is too shy to admit it. The narrator tells:

The more convinced I grew that the “Gastein journal” was a remarkably courageous document, the more ashamed Anna [Lisa] became of having written so disgusting work. She could not imagine where she had heard the indelicate expressions, or why she had seen fit to use them. She begged me to destroy her writings, for they were only devilish fragments thrown off by the “storm in her head”

(106).

Lisa’s “id” was revealed in her fantasies and since it was free from the threats of the “superego”, she wrote anything that appeared in her mind. In reality, however, Lisa’s “superego” suppresses her desires as they are against moral values; thus, she feels ashamed of herself for having written such immoral things.

Another Freudian aspect in the novel is the “Oedipus Complex”. Though Lisa reflects her father as indifferent and cold towards her, she later admits that he, in fact, was affectionate and loving. When her mother left for long trips, Lisa used to become happy as she was left alone with her father. Moreover, she confesses in the “Health Resort” section that once she kissed a Japanese maid in their house, who was also having an affair with Lisa’s father. Lisa writes to Freud: “By getting her to kiss me, that one time, I must unconsciously have been both ‘touching’ him and also paying him out for his neglect of me” (169).

However, Lisa's "Oedipus Complex" did not last long and she alienates herself from her father. She accuses him of his passivity in his relationship with her mother. She claims that her father was aware of everything about her mother and her uncle, yet he did not do anything to stop them. Lisa, therefore, blames him for his indifference. Her father was quite busy with politics, and maybe he did not regard this event as important as politics. Lisa writes:

I blamed him for not having been *there*. I blamed *him* for mother's death. And it's true to the extent that, if he'd been with us more, none of it might have happened

(166).

Consequently, Lisa has felt closer to her mother and she has gradually identified herself with her. Freud elucidates in his lecture, "Femininity", that the first love object of a girl is her mother. He says that the "little girl" passes to the "Oedipus" phase and alters her object of focus to her father after some time. Nevertheless, in some situations, the girl might turn back to her "pre-Oedipal" phase and Freud states: "... as a result of her inevitable disappointments from her father, she is driven to regress into her early masculinity complex" (*The Standard Ed. Vol. XXII*. 130). Freud explains that there are frequent cases for girls who have indecisions between masculinity and femininity. He continues:

[I]n the course of some women's lives there is a repeated alternation between periods in which masculinity or femininity gains the upper hand. Some portion of what we men call 'the enigma of women' may perhaps be derived from this expression of bisexuality in women's lives

(131).

In the novel, the fictional Freud asserts that Lisa may have some homosexual tendencies although she severely rejects it. According to Freud, Lisa feels closer to women than men. He states in the book:

-So you didn't want *a* child, you wanted Madame R.'s child- if only Nature had made such a thing possible.

She complained of the most frightful pains and made a desperate effort to reject the explanation. ... I confronted her with inescapable facts. Was it not significant that she suffered her destructive hallucinations during the only sexual activity permitted by her conscience? That her only sexual long-lasting and fruitful relationships had been with women? That she was strongly maternal in her instincts yet, when it came to the point, was filled with revulsion by the permanent domestic tie which motherhood would entail? That her journal gave a far livelier sense of Madame R.'s personality (in the guise of "Madame Cottin") than of the young man's? (122).

Thus, Lisa in *The White Hotel* experiences a similar case to the women in Freud's theory and she regresses to her "pre-Oedipal" stage. There is a longing for her mother and motherhood in her life. Furthermore, Freud explains that women's identification with their mothers is strengthened "under the influence of a woman's becoming a mother herself" (133). Lisa cannot succeed in becoming a mother throughout the novel. Her fantasies in her poem and journal demonstrate her wish as there are several images and symbols about motherhood. The poem is full of such words as "womb, breast and sucking". The poetic persona says:

I gave a birth to a wooden embryo  
Its gaping lips were sucking at the snow  
As it was whirled away into the storm,  
Now turning inside-out, the blizzard tore  
My womb clean out, I saw it spin into  
The whiteness have you seen a flying womb  
(24).

Moreover, there is the image of suckling, which symbolises the wish to be a mother and to feed a baby:

I opened up my dress, and my ache shot  
A gush out even before his mouth had closed  
Upon my nipple, and I let the old  
Kind priest who dined with us take out the other,  
The guests were gazing with a kind of wonder  
But smilingly, as if to say, you must,  
For nothing in the white hotel but love  
Is offered at a price we can afford,

The chef stood beaming in the open door  
(25).

The fictional Freud states that Lisa is jealous of mothers even though they are her friends. For instance, Lisa was envious of Madame R. when she had a child and thus, Lisa's pains got worse once she heard the news about the birth of the child. Moreover, when Vera, Lisa's friend, tells her that she is expecting a baby, Lisa cannot stop being jealous of her as well. The narrator tells:

Lisa was suffering. She had found it hard to stay in the room while Vera sang, because she had been overcome by a really bad attack of breathlessness. She thought she was going to die. ... She was not jealous; she knew she could not match that voice, which was as close to perfection as she ever hoped to hear, this side of paradise and perhaps even beyond. ... But more than that, it had something to do with Vera's announcement about expecting a baby; for she had started to become breathless during Vera's rapturous unburdening of her secret. For some reason it disturbed her greatly  
(146).

Breast and pelvic region symbolise the feminine sides of a woman. Lisa has frequent pains in these areas, which may suggest her obsession with not being able to become a mother herself. She may unconsciously feel half female due to her incapability of bearing a child.

Another Freudian theory in the novel is the "death and life instincts". Freud mentions this theory in his book, *Beyond the Pleasure*, and he states that man's life is shaped by two main instincts; the "ego instinct" and the "sexual instinct". The former of these is related to the "death instinct" and the latter is to the "prolongation of life", which Freud connects with "love" and calls it "Eros". Freud claims that one of the main problems in psychoneuroses is the conflict between the "ego instinct" and the "love instinct" (Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure* 62). So, Lisa in the novel experiences a similar conflict between her "love" and her "death instincts", which is especially clear in her poem. She, on the one hand, desires to fulfil her sexual desires and reflect all these in her highly erotic poem; on

the other hand, she struggles against her hallucinations about death. Her mind is filled with morbid thoughts of death, and frequent deaths and destructions by air, water, earth and fire can be detected in her poem. Freud, in the novel, connects the death by fire with the death of her mother, who also died in a hotel fire. Furthermore, the hotel symbolises the mother womb, which represents a “regression to pre-natal state, a return to the inorganic”, and thus, to death. Although the hotel is a place of love, it is also a place of death (Weibel 51).

These forces are expressed in Lisa's life through her fantasies where death and sex dominate. According to Freud, “love instinct” is not pure sexuality, yet it is something beyond it and almost spiritual. Lisa in the novel seeks for this love as well, which dominates the White Hotel. Lisa's mind is busy with these opposing feelings and contradictory thoughts, which materialise in the image of Christ holding his hands on his genitals. Hence, the idea of dead Christ is closely linked with the idea of sex: Christ's genitals (Weibel 64). Furthermore, Lisa's mind is preoccupied with Kürten, who is a serial killer. When he is decided to be executed, he gets lots of love letters from women. So, even though he killed many people, Kürten evokes love at the same time.

Besides, Weibel explains in his article that the train journeys in the novel also stand for the “death and love instincts”. There are several train journeys throughout the novel. First, Lisa leaves her house for Petersburg and then for Milan and lastly for Palestine. All these journeys mean “new life” to her and at the end of each journey, Lisa is united with someone. In St. Petersburg, she unites with her lover A. and meets Madame R., in Milan she meets Vera and Victor, and in utopian Palestine she unites with her mother. In addition to these, Lisa dreams of a train journey, which Freud interprets as “death” (95). Furthermore, her last journey also takes Lisa to her death. So, the images in the novel are also composed of the two instincts of the human being (Weibel 51-2).

Freud's theory of “repetition compulsion” can also be employed in the interpretation of Lisa's hallucinations, which are about fire, death and

storm. These take her back to the moment when she got the news of her mother's death. As the fictional Freud explains, there is "repetitive compulsion" in Lisa, which is a "self-injuring behaviour" for her (116). The writer uses Freud's own statements and explanations about his theories and he gives an example of Freud's grandchild:

I observed, for example, a game played by my eldest grandson, who kept carrying out over and over again actions which could only have had an unpleasant meaning for him- actions relating to his mother's absence

(116).

Lisa has the hallucinations of death especially when she has a love affair with a man, which indicates her unconscious association with her mother since her mother died while she was committing adultery. Thus, Lisa has constant nightmares as she cannot face her problems and her past life.

Freud in the novel has interpreted Lisa's repressed feelings; however, Lisa later confesses in her letter, which she writes later to Freud, that she has hidden some facts from him about her past. Her tendency to keep some facts secret explains why Lisa cannot fully recover from her pains. In fact; Lisa preferred to hide her past not only from Freud but also from herself since she did not want to confront it. However, in her letter to Freud, she decides to write everything and clarifies some ambiguities in her poem for the reader as well. She confesses that she saw her mother, her aunt and her uncle in an intercourse, and since she was just a child, she could not understand what they were doing. Besides, she had forgotten that event until Freud forced her to go back to her childhood. In her poem, Lisa wrote about a sexual relationship among herself, her lover and Madame Cottin, which demonstrates that Lisa has not forgotten that memory but just repressed it. As her "id" is relaxed in her poem, all her suppressed ideas are revealed. Another instance which shows that Lisa is obsessed with that unfortunate scene is about her lover A. She tells Freud that A. was having an affair with another woman in her presence.



Nonetheless, she later confesses that A. did not deceive her, but it was her own image in the mirror:

After we had made love, I *believe* I woke up, in the middle of the night (but it was still quite light in our cabin), and I caught sight of my face in the wardrobe mirror. I *believe* I must have recollected then that childhood scene of my uncle with the twin sisters  
(167).

As it is understood from the quotation, Lisa, in fact, has unconsciously repressed her memory, which was later transferred to her own desires and experiences. She later develops a mirror phobia, which Freud in the novel cannot explain. Nonetheless, this fear might be related to her fixation with her past again.

Freud explains that human beings embody both “Ceres and Medusa”: the contradictory natures, symbolising good and evil respectively. Lisa concludes in her letter to Freud that her mother had a frightening and her aunt had a smiling expression when Lisa saw them in a sexual intercourse. However, she states that her mother must have been “joyful” at that time while her aunt must have been “grimacing” (171). So, the human being has conflicting characteristics; “good and evil” at the same time. Therefore, her mirror phobia might be related to her thought about the good and the bad sides of the human being, and Lisa may be afraid of seeing her other side in the mirror.

The novel enlarges its topic in the last parts. The writer contrasts the individual history with the public history. Thomas applies Freud’s theories of “death and life instincts” as well as the two discrepant sides of the human being to explain the situation of man in general. In the part, titled as the “Health Resort”, Lisa gets over her pains since she faces her past and accepts it as it is. She marries Victor and becomes the mother of Kolya, the son of Victor and Vera. Therefore, Lisa achieves her unconscious wish of being a mother, which brings her happiness. Nevertheless, in this section, although Lisa solves her personal problems,

she becomes the victim of others' unconscious desires. Thomas said in an interview that:

I wanted to contrast humanism and the deep study of the mind with the Holocaust, to depict one man studying an individual with great love and care and then another man, a madman, thirty years later, killing off millions with no thought at all  
(qtd. in Weibel 61).

In this section, Lisa has to struggle with millions of people against an individual who brought a catastrophe over the world. Therefore, the basic instincts of "death and life" are reflected in this fight of all human beings. The fictional Freud connects Lisa with the whole humanity and states:

I began to see Frau Anna, not as a woman separated from the rest of us by her illness, but as someone in whom a hysteria exaggerated and highlighted a universal struggle between the life instinct and the death instinct  
(116-17).

Weibel states in his article that Lisa's symptoms become "typical for the age and the society she lived in. She is the image of a world mutilated and torn between antagonistic forces" (Weibel 63). The two instincts of the human being, the "death and life", create the good and evil sides in man. While one side is constructing, the other side is destroying the world since the beginning of life on earth. Freud states in the novel:

But the civilian populace, if I may so term the healthy, were also only too familiar with the constant struggle between the life instinct (or libido) and the death instinct. Children, and armies, build towers of bricks only to knock them down. Perfectly normal lovers know that the hour of victory is also the hour of defeat; and therefore mingle funeral wreaths with the garlands of conquest, naming the land they have won *la petite mort*  
(117).

Lisa in the fourth part of the novel realises these contradictory feelings in mankind and she can see the events in the world clearly as she

gets rid of her own problems. She writes to Freud: "What torments me is whether life is good or evil ... Good and evil coupling, to make the world" (171).

Hence, the writer displays the pains of all mankind through an individual. The death instinct of mankind is the main reason for his tendency to destroy the universe and kill millions. Freud wrote a response to Einstein, who asked why there have been wars throughout the centuries, and Freud says:

You express astonishment at the fact that it is so easy to make men enthusiastic about a war and add your suspicions that there is something at work in them- an instinct for hatred and destruction- which goes halfway to meet the efforts of the warmongers. Once again, I can only express my entire agreement  
(*The Standard Ed. Vol. XXII* 209).

Therefore, the Second World War, which forms the background of the novel, is the outcome of the "destructive instinct". In the novel, "both the collective history and personal history are shown to be determined by a continuous struggle between the two forces of death and life instincts" (Weibel 63).

In terms of all human beings, the "destructive instinct" comes out when the Nazis kill the Jews at Babi Yar for the self-centred passions. D.M. Thomas also contrasts psychoanalysis with politics. While psychoanalysis requires one to know himself by looking back to his past, politics causes man to escape from his past by denying his identity. Lisa had psychological and physical pains as she was afraid of confronting her own past. Nonetheless, Freud helped her fight against her fears and repressed feelings. On the other hand, the Nazi soldiers ignore Lisa's past and send her to death. Even though Lisa is Christian by her mother, this fact is disregarded by the Nazis. Furthermore, while psychoanalysis helps the individual unveil the suppressed feelings, the Nazis cover them all. When the German soldiers kill thousands of the Jews at Babi Yar, they bury these people:

Engineers constructed a dam across the mouth of ravine, and pumped water and mud in from neighbouring quarries, creating a green, stagnant and putrid lake. The dam burst; a huge area of Kiev was buried in mud ... no one, however, saw fit to placate the ravine with a memorial. It was filled in with concrete and above it were built a main road, a television centre, and a high-rise block of flats. The corpses had been buried, burned, drowned and reburied under concrete and steel.

(222).

The burying process of the Germans can be psychologically interpreted as repressing the realities. Thus, a period of history was closed down forever. This also indicates that man will most probably go on being the victim of his death instinct since he does not face his past and learn from it.

The novel alters its genre from real to fantasy in the last part, "the Camp". Lisa is in a utopian world in which she unites with her mother at last. Weibel describes the last part of the novel as "mythic" and he explains the function of this section as:

Although contemporary man does not usually consider himself primitive, he nevertheless feels the need to think in mythical terms in order to account for his predicament in a world which sometimes does not make sense. *The White Hotel* may be regarded as such a myth, and hence it does not come as a surprise that it so much resembles a dream or a fantasy

(65).

So, the last part of the novel introduces a world which is like the White Hotel in the poem. This part shows Lisa's reunion with her mother and it may be taken symbolically as returning to the womb. As Freud states, the aim of man is to turn back to the "inorganic state"; that is, the mother's womb.

Besides, the utopian world in this section shows the power of the unconscious. The individual escapes from reality, which he cannot bear or accept, and he creates an alternative world in which he can live happily. Although Lisa recovers and learns to see reality by the help of Freud, she

creates an imaginary world again to run away from the cruelty of the Nazis. Lisa gives a quotation from Heraclites: "The soul of man is a far country, which cannot be approached or explored" (220), which demonstrates the difficulty in completely grasping the unconscious of man.

Lisa continues:

If a Sigmund Freud had been listening and taking notes from the time of Adam, he would still not fully have explored even a single group, even a single person

(220).

Therefore, the writer creates a fictional Freud just as a guide, yet it is man himself who should understand his nature first. Sometimes man needs to repress and divert reality; thus, he escapes to his unconscious as if it were a shelter to avoid the outside life.

Hence, Thomas demonstrates through these two worlds that man's mind is so powerful that it can either cause madness or protection for him. Trying to conceive the deep layers of the unconscious is hard since even Freud has some limits in uncovering the hidden feelings and thoughts of his patient in the novel.

Moreover, Thomas displays that the theories of Freud can be applied not only to the individuals but also to the public. Nevertheless, it is comparatively easier to cure an individual of his problems than to cure the collective. Lisa gets well after she dares look at her past courageously, on the other hand, it is quite difficult to be optimistic about the public.

## CHAPTER VI

### **A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF *THE GRASS IS SINGING*, *AYLAK ADAM* AND *THE WHITE HOTEL***

The affinity between literature and psychology can be detected in the three novels, which were analysed in the previous chapters. The novels in question deal with the predicament of the human being not only in the unconscious but also on the social level. In all these three novels, the writers applied Freudian theories of psychoanalysis to present the struggle of man against his/her problems along with the atrocious world outside. Furthermore, all these writers are the twentieth century novelists, and they pictured the twentieth century man, who is trapped in a world which is hard to explain. Nevertheless, the protagonists are all perverted individuals, who are separated from typical modern man in that they all have extreme psychological disorders. In the analyses of the novels, it is possible to apply some Freudian theories about “repression, unconscious, repetition compulsion, the Oedipus Complex and id-ego-superego”, and their employment in the works reveal the influence of Freud in the twentieth century English and Turkish literature. However similar the novels appear to be, the novelists used the theories in diverse ways in the creation of their characters.

#### **vi. i. Childhood of Mary Turner, C. and Lisa Erdman:**

The protagonists, Mary Turner in *The Grass is Singing*, C. in *Aylak Adam* and Lisa Erdman in *The White Hotel*, are depicted as neurotic individuals who struggle to live in a mechanised world. Not only do they feel entrapped in a harsh world, but they are also stuck into a particular period of their past experiences, which determined their fate.

As emphasised in psychoanalysis, the childhood of these protagonists shape the development of their characters, which is the essence of their dilemmas in their future lives. They all encountered unfortunate incidents in their past lives, which were unconsciously repressed. The unawareness of their plight, which lies in their subconscious, has resulted in both physical and psychological pain.

As mentioned in Chapter III, Mary Turner in *The Grass is Singing* is obsessed with her poverty-stricken past and she has great fear of becoming like her mother, who was destined to live in poverty with her alcoholic husband until her death. Mary has suppressed her poignant memories as they cause her pain. Yet her controlled thoughts explode when she enters into a weaker psychological state. Her only aim has been to lead a life completely opposite to the life of her mother, which, ironically, cannot be achieved by the protagonist. Besides, Moses, the slave, evokes some memories for Mary about her father and infant sexuality, which may suggest an incestuous relationship that Mary has repressed. Furthermore, Mary cannot forget her friends' gossips about her asexuality and childish behaviour, which brought about her unfortunate marriage. In her psychologically worst moments, Mary recalls her miserable childhood and the mocking remarks of her friends. So, there is no chronological order in her mind since the past and the present are blended together. She goes back and forth in her thoughts and cannot realise her presence from time to time.

Similarly in *Aylak Adam*, C. is stuck into a particular moment in his past, which determined his whole life. His deep love for his aunt, Zehra, and his idea of possessing her was shattered by the moment when he caught her with his father. Like the other protagonists in question, C. cannot get over his past experiences, especially the moments he spent with his aunt. The memories do not leave C. alone as well; and he often remembers the conversations he had with his aunt. Another way in which C. is similar to the other protagonists is that his mind, in which thoughts stream at random, is also extremely chaotic.

Correspondingly, Lisa Erdman in *The White Hotel* has problems related to her childhood. Lisa associates herself with her mother as she has not overcome the “pre-Oedipal stage”, and this causes her to fail in the transference of her love object from her mother to another person. Moreover, her witness to the adultery of her mother and her uncle has been unconsciously repressed by Lisa, which prompted her to share the guilt of her mother towards her father.

#### **vi.ii. Repression and Resistance:**

Another similar aspect among the novels is the reaction of the protagonists towards their past experiences. They all unconsciously repress the unhappy or dejected moments of their childhood. They prefer to forget these moments since they feel hurt and cannot bear the burden of their past worries. The characters seem to forget those past incidents; however, they are not aware of the fact that the memories are just in the depths of their mind and these are revealed once the protagonists feel weak enough to yield to their subconscious. Moreover, neither Mary nor C. talks about their problems to anyone else as they think that no one can understand their feelings; thus, they prefer to keep them to themselves.

Both of these characters resist any cure that may probably be beneficial for their disorder. Mary ignores Dick's advice about going to a doctor; likewise, C. refuses to listen to Ayşe, who wants to help him to get over his hatred for his father.

By the same token, Lisa in *The White Hotel* does not tell all her hidden feelings to the fictional Freud. Although Freud thinks that Lisa has told her past experiences in detail, Lisa still keeps some parts to herself, and she confesses everything about her past only when she recovers completely. She writes to Freud:

Reading your beautifully written and wise case study has moved me more than I can say. But I don't think I need to say it. It has been like reading the life story of a young sister who is dead- in whom I can see a family resemblance yet also great differences:



characteristics and actions that could never have applied to *me*

(163).

In fact, as mentioned before, one of the most significant reasons of not telling others about their unfortunate pasts is the ignorance of the characters about their own problems. All of the protagonists in the works are afraid of confronting the memories, and this causes the continuation of their symptoms, either physical or psychological.

#### **vi. iii. Dreams and Fantasies:**

As the characters in each novel repress the painful experiences of their childhood, their hidden feelings come to the surface at the time when their “superego” is in its most relaxed form; that is, either in dreams, fantasies or at nervous breakdowns. This is especially apparent in the case of Mary and Lisa, who have dreams and fantasies quite often. Mary has several dreams in the novel, which reveal her repressed desires and unhappy experiences. The reader gets a great deal of information about the protagonist through her dreams. As studied in detail in Chapter III, Mary’s dreams reveal her desires and fears about her father and Moses, the slave. Briefly, Mary’s dreams are the expressions of her “id”, where live all her repressed feelings and thoughts.

In *The White Hotel*, in the same way, Lisa has some dreams and fantasies, which according to Freud are another form of uncovering the hidden feelings as the “conscience” is not working to punish the “ego”. Lisa reflects all her desires in her poem titled as “Don Giovanni”. It is composed of Lisa’s unconscious fears and passions, which she later regrets writing since it is against her “superego”. As in *The Grass is Singing*, the reader gets plenty of information about the character and her past ordeals through her poem and fantasies. In addition to these, the function of dreams and fantasies provided the writers of both novels with the opportunity of bringing into light the unconscious of the protagonists.

The reader is able to see the conflict between the “ego and superego” through the hidden feelings and the daily activities of the characters.

In *Aylak Adam*, the reader does not see C.’s dreams or fantasies, but he later confesses to Ayşe that he kills his father in his dreams. Besides, his mind is constantly fluctuating between the past and the present, and the writer shows C.’s unconscious to the reader through inner monologues or “stream of consciousness technique”. The reader can easily get into the mind of the protagonist and see his covered past:

In his arm, Güler walked without staggering just like a beautiful woman who gets out of such a place. However, now, her head in his lap, she was lying having crouched. “If only she vomited!” Asphalt and rubber seemed to be communicating through whispering under them. Vomiting on the asphalt; this is the twentieth century! It is the day of concrete nylon and neon! We are moving towards a dull blue light. “Take it down when the jam is thickened”, said many aunt to that woman. “Zehra, ... your legs!” My ear! You know I will kiss your legs tonight. You have the thickness of a jam I will take you soon...<sup>29</sup>

(86).

As the quotation above shows, the mind of the protagonist lacks coherence and unity due to a lack of a sense of time. Therefore, in this novel, C.’s daydreaming unveils his repressed thoughts; that is, his “id”.

#### **vi. iv. “The Oedipus Complex” and The Outcomes of “the Complex”:**

As the dreams or fantasies reveal, in all the works studied in this thesis, the basic problem lying in the unconscious of the protagonists is

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<sup>29</sup> Güler onun kolunda, bir güzel kadın böyle bir yerden nasıl çıkarsa öyle, sendelemeden yürümüşü. Oysa şimdi başı kucağında, büzülmüş yatıyordu. “Bir kussa, açıl!” Altlarında, asfaltla kauçuk sürekli bir fısıltıyla anlaşıyor gibiydiler. “Asfaltla kusmak, işte yirminci yüzyıl. Katı katı naylon, neonların yapma gündüzü...” Donuk, masmavi ışığa gidiyoruz. “Reçel kıvamına gelince indirirsin” demişti teyzem o kadına. “Zehra, şu bacakların yok mu!..” Kulağım! Bu gece bacaklarını öpecem, biliyorsun. Reçel kıvamındasın; az sonra indirecem seni... (86).

their failure in the sexual maturation. As mentioned before, Freud categorises the stages that a child passes through in his/her sexual development as “the anal, oral, phallic and latency”. The novels in this study show that all the protagonists had some ordeals in their “phallic stages” and thus, they experience Freud’s “Oedipus Complex”, which is the “nucleus of their neuroses”.

In *The Grass is Singing*, Mary Turner associates her father with Moses and her dreams show that she has some sexual attraction for her father. Furthermore, Mary regards Moses as a father figure, who provides not only protection but also love. As love for the father and a black man by a white woman is considered perverted, Mary represses her desires. Moreover, Mary unconsciously wishes that her mother should not be with them as she wished she would be alone with her father. The reader may reach this conclusion through the analysis of Mary’s dream in which she sees that her mother is hiding leaving her alone with her father:

Her father caught her head and held it in his lap  
with his small hairy hands, to cover up her eyes,  
laughing and joking loudly about her mother hiding  
(201).

As stated before, Mary’s wish for the absence of her mother might display Freud’s theory of “wish-fulfilment in dreams”.

Similarly, the reader can infer that Yusuf Atılgan made use of Freud’s theory of “the Oedipus Complex”. The protagonist C. feels great hatred for his father owing to the fact that he adores his aunt, whom he has considered to be his mother. Normally, as a “little boy”, C. should have diverted his “love object” from his aunt to another girl, yet he failed in this and it caused his fixation with his aunt. C. has always sought a girl who resembles his aunt and his mother. Besides, C. unconsciously gets rid of his father in his dreams as Mary wishes the absence of her mother. C. feels disturbed at the cinema with the shouts of the actress: “A woman shouted on the stage: ‘What have you done my son? You killed your

father!' He felt his muscles were frightfully swollen!"<sup>30</sup> (123). He feels uneasy as he also wishes unconsciously the death of his father as well.

In the same manner, Lisa in *The White Hotel* experiences "the Oedipus Complex", and like the other protagonists she unconsciously wishes the death of her mother to be alone with her father. When her mother left home for long trips, Lisa used to be content as she regarded her mother as an intruder.

Consequently, the protagonists psychologically collapse at some point in their lives because of not fulfilling "the phallic stage" in their sexual development, which results not only in unhealthy relationships with the opposite sex, but also in failure in individuation.

In the first novel, Mary is always afraid of having sexual relationships, and she avoids having close relations with the opposite sex until she gets married. In fact, this fear is transferred to her marriage in which she even tries to keep herself away from her husband, Dick. Besides, Mary is not a strong individual as she is defeated easily by any difficulty. The poverty in her new life weakens her, which lead to the uncovering all her hidden feelings and causing her nervous breakdown.

In the same way, C. in *Aylak Adam* does not have healthy relationships with the opposite sex on the grounds that he searches his aunt in other women. Besides, he cannot touch the legs of his girlfriends since his past experiences are reawakened. C., like Mary, is not a strong character as he cannot face his fears and loathing for his father. When C. is reminded of his obsessions such as scratching his ear, he feels embarrassed. In addition to this, he escapes from responsibilities such as marriage and job, which he thinks will turn him into a conventional figure. He prefers to wander around dealing with trivial issues and seeking for his ideal love. As a matter of fact, these are the remnants of the unsuccessful "phallic stage".

Likewise, Lisa in the last novel has psychological problems due to her failure in one of the stages in her development. Rather than her

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<sup>30</sup>" Perdede bir kadın bağırdı: 'Ne yaptın oğlum? Babanı öldürdün!' Kollarındaki kaslar korkunç bir gerilmeye şıştiler" (123).

“phallic stage”, her “pre-Oedipal phase” plays a more significant role in impeding her development. As she associates herself with her mother, Lisa shares the guilt of her mother’s adultery, which she reflects in her hallucinations and nightmares. She has frequent hallucinations of fire and storm when she has a sexual intercourse with men. Besides, her failure of the completion of the phase mentioned above caused Lisa to be bisexual since she could not divert her attention from her mother and thus, she feels closer to women.

Hence, the protagonists suffer not only from psychological pains but from some physical disturbances as well. The world they live in give them only pain and distress. Mary suffers from extreme heat and she feels suffocated. The infertility of her marriage is reflected in the physical world as well and therefore, she always complains about the lack of water. Besides, she feels like sleeping all the time, which shows that she is psychologically deteriorating. She becomes like a ghost aimlessly wandering in the house. Moreover, her speech becomes broken day by day as her health deteriorates. The narrator explains the thoughts of Tony Marston about Mary as:

He was disturbed by her, when he had time to think about the strange, silent, dried-out woman who seemed as if she had forgotten how to speak. And then, it would appear that she realised should make an effort, and her manner would become odd and gauche. She would talk for a few moments with a grotesque sprightliness that shocked Tony and made him uncomfortable. Her manner had no relation to what she was saying  
(227).

In the same way, as it is stated before, C.’s pain in his ear and his habit of scratching it are the physical reflections of “the Oedipus Complex”. Similarly, in *The White Hotel*, Lisa has frequent physical pains in her left breast and pelvic regions, which symbolise her problems about motherhood. As Lisa cannot be a mother herself, her obsessions about this are also reflected in the sexual parts of her body. Besides, her asthma

and anorexia nervosa can be regarded as the further symptoms of her psychological problems.

#### **vi. v. The Conflicts between the Individual and Society:**

The similarities in the novels are not restricted to the psychological problems that the protagonists face. Yet, the characters are alike in terms of the society they live in. It is the twentieth century world, where all people are alienated from one another and there is a lack of communication. The world is shaped by such “primitive” feelings as cruelty, hypocrisy, inequality, barbarity and violence, which are supposed to be repressed in the “id” of mankind as he lives in a “civilised” world. However, the conflicts between the “ego and the superego” seem to capture the whole twentieth century world. For this reason, all the characters in the novels fight against not only their inner conflicts but also their external world.

*The Grass is Singing* is set in South Rhodesia, where racial discrimination is at its peak. Although it is their homeland, the African people have no rights in society. The English go there to bring civilisation; however, ironically, the natives are subjected to the inhuman and degrading treatments practised by the English. The narrator describes the feelings of the newcomers from England as:

Most of these young men were brought up with vague ideas about equality. They were shocked, for the first week or so, by the way natives were treated. They were revolted a hundred times a day by the casual way they were spoken of, as if they were so many cattle; or by a blow, or a look. They had been prepared to treat them as human beings. But they could not stand out against the society they were joining. It did not take them long to change. It was hard, of course, becoming as bad oneself. But it was not very long that they thought of it as ‘bad’. And anyway, what had one’s ideas amounted to? Abstract ideas about decency and goodwill, that was all: merely abstract ideas.

(20-21).

Hence, the race-oriented thinking of the English created a very strict structure of the master-servant relationships. Anyone who did not fulfil the expectations of the society would be alienated from social life as it was in Mary's case. She made a grave mistake by forming a close relationship with Moses, the black young man. The narrator states:

But, in the interval, there would be a few brief moments when he would see the thing clearly, and understand that it was 'white civilisation' fighting to defend itself that had been implicit in the attitude of Charlie Slatter and the Sergeant, 'white civilisation' which will never, never admit that a white person, and most particularly, a white woman, can have a human relationship, whether for good or for evil, with a black person

(30).

Therefore, as the study has showed in Chapter III, Mary is doomed to be defeated in such a society. She cannot adapt to the strict rules of this racist world since she feels sexual attraction for Moses. Anyone in this world has no opportunity of survival unless he obeys the collective and treats the natives in a cruel way; otherwise, he cannot survive.

In the next novel, C. lives in a rather different world; yet, similarly society is formed by hypocrisy and superficiality. People are isolated from one another, and the relationships are deprived of warmth and sincerity. Every individual is expected to obey the social norms; otherwise, they are regarded as unusual or abnormal. C. is such an individual who refuses to be the part of society. He describes the people in the outside world as "the ones with packages" since he regards all of them as identical and conventional. All people in this world prefer to wear masks in their relationships, which leads to insincerity and hypocrisy. They pretend to be the most decent creatures; nonetheless, they can lead an immoral life like C.'s father, who had several sexual relationships even with the maids at home. Thus, C. escapes from the impositions of such a society choosing to live according to his own principles.

The last novel, *The White Hotel*, presents a world with extreme atrocity. The second part of the novel demonstrates the outcomes of an ill-minded individual, Hitler, who causes a catastrophe all around the world. The genocide of the Jews at Babi Yar displays the brutality of the so-called civilised world. All the inhuman feelings get out of the Nazis suppressed feelings and are practised over the Jews. As in the previous novels, the majority of society expects the individual to behave like the collective. Moreover, similar to *The Grass is Singing* and *Aylak Adam*, the individual interests are not considered important in this novel. Besides, the individual is forced to refuse his/her identity in order to survive just like Lisa does in *The White Hotel*. Furthermore, the immorality in family life is represented through Lisa's mother, who committed adultery with the husband of her sister. Such hypocrisy should have conflicts with the Catholic morals of Lisa's mother.

Therefore, all the protagonists in these works alienate themselves due to the lack of communication, affection and love in the outside world. There is no one around the characters to share their feelings. Mary isolates herself more towards the end of the novel. In fact, she has no friends in the village, and even her husband, Dick, cannot communicate with her. Correspondingly, C. in the next novel alienates himself from society. He is considered to be strange just like Mary in the previous novel as he prefers to be alone most of the time. Another way in which these two characters are similar is that they have no friends at all. Similarly, Lisa, in the last novel, is also alienated and while she is ill, she is reluctant to see or talk to anyone.

#### **vi. vi. The Use of Freudian Theories in Characterisation:**

Although the protagonists are neurotic in all the works in question, the novelists applied Freudian theories differently in characterisation.

Mary's case is the most extreme one among the others. Her unconscious fears come into being day by day, which leads to her



psychological catastrophe and then causes her death. Mary's death is almost in the form of a suicide in that she intentionally waits for Moses to come and kill her.

Furthermore, in *Aylak Adam*, C.'s alienation differs from that of the other protagonists due to the fact that he consciously rebels against society and rejects its values. Moreover, he is happy with his loneliness, and he never loses his hope of finding his ideal lady. This belief enables him to survive despite his serious psychological problems.

Unlike the previous novels, Lisa, in *The White Hotel*, recovers and she learns to confront all her problems. When compared to Mary and C., Lisa is lucky enough to have the psychoanalytical treatment of Freud. With the help of Freud, Lisa gets over her psychological and physical pains. In the second part of the novel, Lisa is aware of herself since she dares look at her past courageously; thus, she is stronger than Mary and C. in character. Apart from this, the protagonist in *The White Hotel* is the only one among the other two to reach happiness at the end.

Moreover, the novels are distinct from each other in terms of some Freudian theories. Although the first two novels focus on "the Oedipus Complex", the last novel is more concerned with "the pre-Oedipal stage" of the protagonist, where she remains fixed with her first love object; that is, her mother.

Besides, in the first novel, Mary has the feelings of disgust as well as love for her father, which may mean a possible incestuous relationship with him. As it is implied in Mary's dreams, it is possible to deduce "the Seduction theory" of Freud in this first novel. As in *Aylak Adam*, the reader has to make inferences in this novel through the dreams and fears of Mary.

In addition to these, the last novel, *The White Hotel*, includes the theory of "the death and life instincts", which is shown as the keystone in man's life. Moreover, the novelist expands the topic from the personal interest to the public one, and demonstrates the two conflicting sides of

the human being, the evil and the good, as the ruling forces to construct or destroy his world.

While showing these, Thomas created Freud as the fictional character, who clarifies the ambiguities of Lisa for the reader. In the previous novels, the reader takes the role of Freud and analyses the characters on his own whereas in the last novel Freud takes the role of the reader and tries to solve the riddle of the protagonist.

Besides, the novels belong to different periods of time, so the writers used different kinds and techniques in their works. The first novel, *The Grass is Singing*, is the blend of realistic and modern novel. On the one hand, it presents a colonial world within a realistic frame; on the other hand, the novelist used modern techniques such as “stream of consciousness” to present the thoughts of the protagonist. Nevertheless, the novel still maintains its realism in that it pictures the psychology of a perverted individual in a realistic way.

*Aylak Adam* is a modern Turkish novel, which is composed of thoughts and feelings of the protagonist. Unlike the other two novels, it does not focus on the outside world and does not picture a particular period of time. It takes place some time in the twentieth century in Turkey.

However, *The White Hotel* is different from the previous novels in terms of its kind. It is a post-modern novel, which blends diverse techniques and forms. It is composed of verse and prose. Furthermore, the fictional Freud and some other psychoanalysts provide a realistic atmosphere for the reader; nonetheless, the novel moves to a fantasy towards the end. All in all, the novel fuses realism with fiction, which helps the reader to look at the reality from a different angle.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

The thesis has aimed to analyse *The Grass is Singing*, *Aylak Adam* and *The White Hotel* in terms of Freudian theories of psychoanalysis. While doing so, the protagonists, who have several psychological problems owing to their repressed childhood experiences, have been taken into consideration. In addition to this, the thesis has displayed the struggle of the protagonists not only against their personal plight but also the society they live in.

After giving an overview of psychoanalysis and the theories of Freud, the next three chapters have analysed the novels separately. In the first chapter, the thesis has showed that Doris Lessing applied several Freudian theories in the character, Mary Turner, who has suppressed her desires and fears all her life. The childhood of Mary plays a traumatic role in her life, and due to the “repetition compulsion”, Mary “repeats” the life of her mother, though she has always evaded it. The study has demonstrated that the protagonist lacks the courage to face her problems; thus, she is driven to a tragic end. In summing up the case of Mary, the analysis has showed that her state of mind is deteriorated with the pressure of the society.

The next chapter has analysed *Aylak Adam* by Yusuf Atılgan, and the analysis has displayed the use of Freudian theories of psychoanalysis in the protagonist. Similar to the previous novel, the childhood of the protagonist is the turning point in his life. The application of the Freudian theory of “the Oedipus Complex” has showed that the protagonist is obsessed with the love he feels for his aunt and the hatred for his father. In addition to these, it has been stated in the chapter that owing to this obsession, the protagonist cannot develop into a mature manhood.

Even though C.'s problems are caused by his inner conflicts, the society he lives in is also indifferent to the interests of the individuals, which triggers his isolation. The study has indicated that the individual is left alone with his troubles in the twentieth century world.

In the following chapter, *The White Hotel* by D. M. Thomas has studied and some Freudian theories have been applied to the analysis of Lisa Erdman. It is again seen that the childhood experiences of an individual play a significant role in his/her development. Thomas focused on the theories of "death and life instincts" of Freud in his protagonist. Moreover, the study has revealed that these theories cannot only be detected in the individual but also in society.

Furthermore, the study has focused on the similarities and differences among these three works and demonstrated the influence of Freud in the twentieth century literature in different countries. Although there are several differences in the application of Freudian theories, the novels studied are concerned with the repressed personal problems along with the predicament of the individual in a world, which lacks love, communication and affection. The thesis has pointed out that it is not only their unconscious which the protagonists have to struggle against but society as well. In all these novels, the society stands for the opposing force, and the protagonists are left alone to solve their problems. In some cases, society represents the "superego", which threatens and forbids the individual from letting out his "id" as exemplified in *The Grass is Singing* and *Aylak Adam*, and in other cases, it witnesses the outburst of the "id" of a particular group, which is composed of primitive feelings such as violence and destruction as exemplified in *The White Hotel*. To sum it up, as it is understood from the analyses of the novels, life is determined by the conflicts between the "superego" and the "id".

In conclusion, the study has demonstrated the close relation between psychology and literature through the works of different writers of the twentieth century. As seen from the analyses, the novelists who belong to different periods of time and countries are all affected by the

psychoanalytical theories of Freud, and used these theories to display the helplessness of the individual who is immersed in traumatic experiences in a world which is deprived of sympathy and compassion.

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