

INTEGRATION OF PSYCHE IN KATHERINE MANSFIELD'S "MISS BRILL": A JUNGIAN APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Less than hundred years ago, C. G. Jung theorised that all humans carry archetypes in their collective unconscious. Archetypal criticism therefore, seeks to identify and analyze the presence and variance of these universal images and patterns in works of literature. Among archetypes, persona and shadow are of great importance to the salient process in analytical psychology, namely, the individuation process. Katherine Mansfield's "Miss Brill" is one of those works of literature that is capable of being analyzed through the aforesaid critical approach. By proving the assumption that a neglected shadow and a persona with which the individual is identified reside deep inside the protagonist's psyche, this paper provides an insight into the aforementioned process as it gets fulfilled to accomplish Miss Brill's psychological wholeness. Accordingly, it is argued that the state of chaos which Miss Brill experiences at the end of the story, is in fact the sequel of integration of psyche after she goes through the individuation process which in turn leads to a different reading of the story inasmuch as it urges the reader to study the work as though the protagonist is there to admire for what she goes through and not to sympathise with.

Keywords: archetype, collective unconscious, individuation process, persona, shadow

INTRODUCTION

Providing us with a way to reach the inner side of personality, psychoanalysis has shed light on psychological state of characters in order to resolve some ambiguities they once embodied and explain their behavioural pattern through a particular analytical framework. Among psychoanalysts, C.G. Jung had a great share in developing this field of literary criticism. His contribution to literature gives rise to the archetypal criticism. As Jung (1956a) puts it, one of the well-known expressions of the archetype is myth and fable. Perhaps this is the reason why archetypal criticism has been paid more attention in the field of psychoanalysis in the recent decades.

In his psychology, Jung (1956a) believes that the unconscious mind consists of two distinct layers. The first layer which is called the personal unconscious, contains temporally forgotten information as well as repressed memories. Second layer or the collective unconscious is a segment of the deepest unconscious mind which is genetically inherited and is not shaped by personal experiences, but common to all human beings. According to Jung:

The collective unconscious contains the whole spiritual heritage of mankind's evolution, born anew in the brain structure of every individual . . . [which] is the source of the instinctual forces of the psyche and of the forms or categories that regulate them, namely the archetypes. (1960, par. 342)

Among these primordial images or the so-called archetypes, persona or the social face the individual presents to the world, shadow which is the unknown dark side of personality, and also the correlation between these two play a significant role in developing the individuation process. That is to say, to reach self-actualization as a consequence of integrating the conscious and unconscious mind,

the individual in the first place, needs to divest the self of the false wrappings of the persona which Jung (1956b) believed it to be the aim of the individuation process (par. 269). In the second place, the individual needs to face his or her shadow. That is to face the very contents that have been suppressed. This is why Jung (1980) asserts that "if we are able to see our own shadow and can bear knowing about it, then a small part of the problem has already been solved" (par. 44).

Katherine Mansfield is one of the prominent authors whose writings have always been the most emblematic of the modernist movement. Indeed, it is for her celebrated short stories that she has been assumed as an illustrious pioneer of modernist fiction. To name a few of her works which concern the psychological aspect of the modernist fiction we can allude to "The Garden Party", "The Fly", and "Miss Brill" that have interested many critics and scholars in Mansfield's psychological characterisation.

Mansfield's "Miss Brill" is one of those works of hers which is closely allied to psychological elements of the foregoing movement in literature. Borrowing a modern narrative method called stream of consciousness to represent Miss Brill's thoughts including her comments on other people and the way she sees the outside world, the story attempts to depict the protagonist's development of inner feelings, thoughts, and consequently psyche. Mansfield's story captures Miss Brill as she is spending her leisure time in park alone and yet happy. Her happiness despite her being aged and alone results from the fact that she is living in her fantasy, an imaginary world. This situation does not last however, because as the story proceeds, we have the central character who is dramatically marked down by a young couple who make fun of her which in turn leads to a chaotic state that she undergoes after the story's climax.

This paper applying Jungian approach to psyche, aims to track the protagonist's persona and shadow to ascertain the significance of individuation process which she undergoes, in our conception of the story. That is to say, although the protagonist's loneliness and more specifically the chaotic state she experiences at the end of the story brings about feelings of sympathy in the reader, the fact that she is taking steps to fulfil the aforementioned process must be appreciated as it leads to having an integrated personality or so to speak, a healthier mind. Accordingly, this study in the first place attempts to provide evidence to corroborate the significance of the work's narrative method in developing the ongoing psychological process in the story. In the second place, it will prove the assumption that Miss Brill has suffered from becoming identified with her persona. Afterwards, it will clarify how the darkest side of her personality or the so-called shadow has been neglected. Finally, it will walk the reader through the individuation process in the light of the aforementioned archetypes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since its emergence in 1920, "Miss Brill" with regard to the protagonist's behavior pattern, has been studied by a remarkable number of scholars; trying to dissect the work through psychoanalytic approaches to the leading character's psyche. In her paper, Wilany (2015) attempts to study Mansfield's work by applying the third and more specifically the fourth Freudian models of human psyche. This scholar suggests that the protagonist enjoys living in isolation and her weird behavior is there to attract other people's attention. Another study pictures Miss Brill as isolated and alienated in this literary work as it manifests the protagonist's split psyche. As a conclusion, Koseman (2016) considers Miss Brill's mental state as anomic since she leaves the world and consequently every social norm behind and detests social gatherings. One study uses the concept of illusion to depict the socio-psychological state of the protagonist since she is affected by the aforesaid disorder until she faces the reality of the world through the process of disillusionment (Subianto 2000). Nayeypour (2017) with a focus on Cognitive narratologist David Herman's concept 'what it's like', or 'qualia' aspect as a basic narrative element, helps us with analyzing both the constructive and disruptive impact of external events and situations on Miss Brill's mind. The scholar suggests that Herman's concept can also help us to explain our sympathetic concern for Miss Brill. As a result of

its textual qualities, he argues, "Mansfield's narrative creates a sympathetic bond between the emotions of its protagonist and those of the narrative reader" (p. 110). In his paper, Xiao-yan (2014) aims to show us the character from the inside, in order to disclose why Miss Brill could be made so unhappy by the young lovers' remarks. The scholar comes to this conclusion that "Miss Brill's misery is caused not only by Miss Brill's personality of herself but also by the cruelty of the unfeeling external world, represented by the young couple" (p. 4).

Although the abovementioned scholars delineate the protagonist's mental state in different ways, the presupposition that she is molded by a particular psychological disorder from beginning till the end of the plot, seems to be the cornerstone of their studies. As it was previously mentioned, this study's aim is to capture the protagonist while initiating in the process of individuation which in turn leads the individual to overcome her mental disorder and achieve a certain degree of mental health. In this regard, this study differs from the ones which were mentioned above as it suggests that Miss Brill through the course of the story is taking steps to have a healthier mind.

NARRATIVE METHOD

The discussion of narrative method seems to be preliminary to the main discussion of the study since it has a significant role in exposing Miss Brill's psychic state to reader which in itself is something relevant to the psychological approach of the paper. This narrative method not only influenced Mansfield's profession as an author in a significant way, marking her as a modernist author, but also it has led the readers to have a different kind of reading experience resulted from this specific style of writing. Furthermore, it has also led the critics to view this work as a suitable case for their psychological studies. The narrative method she has used in this work is called stream of consciousness which not only can be another sign of psychological process which the protagonist undergoes but also it helps develop a specific kind of the aforementioned process, namely, the individuation to which Mansfield exposes her main character. Cuddon (2013) observes this literary technique as:

Stream of consciousness: A term coined by William James in *Principles of Psychology* (1890) to denote the flow of inner experiences. Now an almost indispensable term in literary criticism, it refers to that technique which seeks to depict the multitudinous thoughts and feelings which pass through the mind. (p. 682-3)

Accordingly, Mansfield through the use of this special kind of narrative, exposes the readers of her work to Miss Brill's flow of thoughts. It should be noted that the story is told in the third-person point of view and this as was previously mentioned can be significant to a psychological process that the readers witness in this work. That is to say, with the aid of the dramatic irony that the third person point of view provides, the reader realises the fact that Miss Brill has been fantasising another world to live in for a long time and that she has not been aware of the existence of this fantasy world she has created for herself in her lifetime. In other words, this specific type of stream of consciousness shows the readers how Miss Brill has been alienated from her reality and through this way Mansfield has matched the story's structure to its psychological context.

PERSONA

The word persona is derived from Latin, where it originally referred to a theatrical mask, worn by an actor or an actress to play different roles. According to Jung's *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology* (1956b), the term persona represents a mask of the collective psyche which is just a compromise between the individual and society as to what a man should appear to be (par. 246).

Accordingly, with putting on this mask or persona the individual simply plays a role through which the collective psyche speaks.

This archetype consists of both positive and negative sides. On the one hand we can claim that its positive side provokes the public to obey and respect the laws of society and it also helps them to adapt themselves to different norms of society and to act based on them. It is worn with the purpose of hiding traits belonging to the individual which are considered negative, immoral, and unlawful to the society. Therefore, one can claim that with this mask, the individual wants to move others and receive admiration. On the other hand, if the individual becomes closely identified with this segment of the collective psyche and thinks of it as his or her real personality type or behavior pattern and consequently acts based on this strong ego which relates to the outside world through the flexible persona, he or she will be inhibited from whatsoever psychological developments that an individual with a normal psychic state can experience. This is so, since to fulfill the individuation process, such persona that the individual has taken for his or her real self must be removed, otherwise the aforementioned process will be impeded. In other words, identification with persona is not in solidarity with individuation process and its steps such as meeting one's shadow. Accordingly, as long as the individual continues in the process of becoming identical with his or her persona, the shadow gets more strength to take over the individual's psyche and consequently this directly affects his or her perception of the external reality which in turn leads to a particular behavior pattern featured by the darkest side of human psyche. In such circumstances, the individuation process is interrupted which in turn will lead to a damaged individual and consequently a blemished society. Given Jung's view that the persona is a semblance, the dissolution of this archetype is therefore absolutely necessary to further the individuation process. Nevertheless, its disintegration may lead initially to a state of chaos in the individual: "one result of the dissolution of the persona is the release of fantasy... disorientation" (Jung, 1956b, p. 277).

In Mansfield's work we can see that the protagonist's strong persona makes her believe that this is her real self, nevertheless she is acting a role. At the very beginning of the story, Miss Brill is glad that she has decided on her fur (Perrine, 2014, p. 175). She does not seem to be aware of the fact that what she is wearing is not originated from her real self, but from the false wrappings of her persona. Forasmuch after having found her real self, she is sad at the end of the story and not happy with her fur and the fact that she is using the negative side of persona, we can conclude before meeting with her real self she is living a persona-based life. Furthermore, trying to depict the protagonist as someone who is greatly influenced by the persona and being identified with it, the story provides another evidence. By way of illustration, we have Miss Brill responding to the question of whether she is an actress or not by saying yes. She is like an actress to the point that someone would have noticed if she even had not been on the stage (p. 177). Therefore, Miss Brill is playing a role which can depict the aim of persona.

To elaborate more on the existence of this image that the individual represents to the world and the way the character has become identified with it, we can allude to one of the famous quotes of Jung (1975) upon which "who looks outside dreams; who looks inside awakes" (p. 33). In "Miss Brill" what the protagonist does is a depiction of Jung's aforementioned phraseology. That is to say, by constantly looking at the other people, thinking about them, and commenting on them, Miss Brill is in fact looking at the outside world and therefore she is not psychologically awake. Looking at the inside world necessitates bringing the unconsciousness to consciousness which in Jungian approach to psyche, is meeting the shadow's contents, meaning the reality of oneself and putting away the social mask. But Miss Brill, not only has not put away her persona for a long time but also is identified with it which in turn will inhibit the process of becoming aware of oneself. With regard to the aforementioned explanations, we can come to this conclusion that the external factor of the persona is more important than the internal one. There is always some element of pretense about the persona. It is actually in our interactions with other people that we pretend to be who we are not. This is why one does not need his or her persona when one is alone. In the story, while the protagonist is seated

alone on a bench in the park, she still seems to be acting since through use of projection mechanism she projects her dark realities onto others and therefore neglecting the fact that her persona or so to speak her secondary reality is not her real self. Each week in a particular time, Miss Brill is said to be going to the park to sit on a bench so as not to be late for the performance (p. 177). Accordingly, every week Miss Brill does the same thing she has done the week before; to play her role and that is to say to exercise her persona. The fact that Miss Brill is used to pretend even when she is alone, substantiates the fact that she is closely identified with her persona.

SHADOW

Another archetype which is of great importance is called the shadow. In literature, to mention well-known characters that embody a strong shadow archetype which affects the plot in a tangible way, we can refer to the protagonist of Mary Shelley's outstanding work, *Frankenstein* or that of *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare's most famous play. In such works the shadow archetype is considered as the darkest side of character's personality, representing their negative traits which they possess but have repressed onto their unconscious mind.

According to Jung (1951), of those archetypes which have the most influence on the ego, shadow is the most accessible one. It is a moral problem which challenges the whole ego-personality and therefore to become conscious of it requires considerable efforts. Due to the aforementioned facts, the shadow archetype has always been one of the salient parts of Jungian psychotherapy and psychoanalysis which has a lot with the individual's psychic state and developing the so-called individuation process. In realizing one's shadow, ego plays a significant part. The most tangible ego's way of dealing with shadow is through the mirror projection. In Freudian psychology, projection refers to a defence mechanism in which the human ego defends itself against some unconscious urges or characteristics by denying their existence in themselves while attributing them to other people (Freud, 1950). Projecting shadow's contents onto other people instead of coming to terms with it, as a matter of fact lead the individual to have a shadow archetype of more strength which in turn by making the individual identify with his or her persona it would influence the individual's perception of external reality and consequently the way he or she behaves.

In two ways we can claim that Miss Brill encounters with her shadow within the story. The first way is that the young couple are projecting their own deficiencies onto the protagonist. The couple remark on Miss Brill as a stupid old thing who does not keep her silly old mug at home and whose fur is like a fried whiting (p.178). Considering the fact that young lovers' comments lead to the epiphany or so to speak the moment where a character achieves awareness and realization after a series of pertinent events, we can say that in fact Miss Brill should have possessed those features or has had an awareness of the reality of herself by which as a result, these comments has made her meet her shadow's contents and negative traits. Accordingly, the psychological response which is quite tangible in Miss Brill, signifies the existence of a neglected shadow which in turn is a symptom of identification with persona. While undergoing this way of meeting one's shadow, the protagonist's role seems to be passive as she is an object of some events, in this case some comments which lead to meeting the shadow. In the second way, based on the abovementioned quote that whoever looks outside dreams; who looks inside awakes, we can say that there is a hypothesis of dreaming by which the protagonist can be faced with her shadow. We can suggest that the couple represents Miss Brill's shadow which she is facing with. Accordingly, in this way the character is actively engaged in the process of self-realization.

Based on the previous illustrations on the presence of strong shadow in the protagonist, now we can allude to other examples to delineate the influence of shadow on the behaviour pattern of Miss Brill through the story. "An Englishman and his wife, he wearing a dreadful Panama hat and she button boots" (p. 176). It is clear that the way Miss Brill comments on other people have a tinge of teasing which in turn is derived from a projection factor. From the beginning of Mansfield's work, it

is quite obvious that clothing is a serious matter concerning the protagonist. She seems to be denying her bad taste in clothes by projecting it onto other people including the Englishman and his wife. This excerpt that "two peasant women with funny straw hats passed..." (p. 176), is another example which depicts the protagonist while projecting unpleasant reality onto other people which in this case are two peasant women. At another point in the story, the narrator reveals Miss Brill's thoughts as she is making fun of an old man with funny whiskers (p. 177). This time by projecting her own qualities onto another old character she attempts to deny the ugliness she has felt in her lifetime and to negate the funny features that have been attributed to her by other people or those humorous characteristics she has witnessed in herself for a long time. By projecting it onto another old character. Through a number of scenes in which Miss Brill is denying the existence of some negative traits in herself by projecting them onto others, the significance of projection in making one's shadow strong to such degree is revealed.

INDIVIDUATION

Individuation is considered one of the most important psychological processes in analytic psychology which seems to be the cornerstone of Jung's studies as an aim of psychotherapy to cure a large number of patients, suffering from a variant number of archetype-related psychic disorders. This process is more and less fulfilled during one's lifetime, but it is more likely to be fruitful in one's old age. In her book, Munitz (2019), trying to delineate the importance of this process, alludes to one of the most famous quotes of Carl Gustav Jung that, "until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate" (p. 27).

In line with what is stated above, the furtherance of Individuation process greatly deals with persona and shadow archetype. Accordingly, to fulfil the aforesaid process, the individual must come to a realization with his or her situation regarding the possession of a strong social image which means to divest the self of the wrappings of this archetype. Subsequently, by meeting the shadow's contents, the individual initiates in the process of integration of psyche; that is to integrate unconscious mind and conscious mind. In "Miss Brill", the narrator while narrating about the protagonist and introducing her as being a part of the performance or so to speak playing a role, remarks: "How strange she'd never thought of it like that before" (p. 177). Accordingly, this was the first time in her lifetime that as a matter of fact she was subconsciously pondering about the fact that she has always been playing a role and that she has been identified with her persona. After realizing the fact that she has been closely identified with her social mask for a long time, she confronts the repressed contents of her shadow with the arrival of young couple representing Miss Brill's darkest side of psyche. In fact the couple can be Miss Brill's shadow incarnate.

As it was mentioned, the dissolution of persona and meeting the shadow's contents may lead to a chaotic state which the individual experiences. In addition to this chaotic state that Miss Brill experiences as a part of the individuation process at the end of the story, there is also her personality type which engenders feelings of pity in the reader for the protagonist. This important socio-psychological concept introduced by Jung is that of personality type. There are two dominant personality types: introversion and extroversion. Elaborating upon Jung's theories of personality types, Daryl (1987) suggests that "the distinguishing feature of introversion, as opposed to extraversion, is that whereas the latter relates primarily to the object and data originating in the outside world, introversion finds its orientation in inner, personal factors" (p. 65). According to Daryl (1987), there are some features concerning these personality types that individuals possess, making them an introverted or extroverted character. It is obvious that belonging to a specific type of personality, leads to having a specific mindset, behaviour pattern, and psychic state. Mentioning those features that belong to introverted characters, we can allude to the fact that they have a distinct dislike of society and in large gatherings they feel lonely and lost. In Mansfield's work, the protagonist is portrayed as an introverted character as she possesses the most important characteristics of the introversion

personality type. The protagonist in the story is seated in the park lonely and it seems that she avoids talking to strangers. The fact that she seeks loneliness as an introverted character appears to have influenced her life in a great way, as she is yet to be married although she is an old woman.

Accordingly, the chaotic state at the end of the story exacerbates the situation concerning the protagonist's introverted personality type which can be quite agonizing to the reader of the work. Nevertheless, as Jung (2012) asserts, if an individual "follows through his intention, he will not only discover some important truths about himself but will also have gained a psychological advantage: he will have succeeded in deeming himself worthy of serious attention and sympathetic interest" (p. 63). Jung hereby would suggest that an individual who is furthering in the process of individuation for whatever chaos s/he experiences, s/he is not there to sympathise with but the individual shall be admired for engaging oneself in an arduous task of fulfilling the integration of psyche.

CONCLUSION

Focusing on the focal point of Jung's analytical psychology called the individuation process, Katherine Mansfield's "Miss Brill" highlights the developing sense of individuality that the protagonist undergoes throughout the plot. The individuation process is fulfilled through the integration of the conscious and unconscious mind through the agency of various archetypes, or figures and patterns which constitute the collective unconscious. The archetypes most pertinent to Miss Brill are the shadow or embodiment of the instinctual, intuitive region of the psyche, often grotesque or terrifying in nature and persona that represents a public image of the individual. Accordingly, disintegration of persona and assimilation of shadow are the major steps that Miss Brill takes to integrate the unconscious and conscious mind which in turn lead the character to achieve self-actualization. Although these two interrelated steps initially lead the protagonist to experience a state of chaos, both are absolutely necessary for the individuation process. This chaotic state followed by integration of psyche, engenders feelings of sympathy in the reader since it exacerbates the dramatic nature of the story, resulting from the protagonist's loneliness and introverted personality type which is in turn highlighted by the narrative method upon which Mansfield set down "Miss Brill". Be that as it may, this study by providing a new insight into the story, urges us to read this work not to sympathise with Miss Brill but to appreciate what she does as she goes through a demanding psychic process, leading her to have an integrated psyche which in turn wakes her up to reality.

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