

A Freudian Psychoanalytical Reading Of “Sharp Objects” and “Gone Girl”

By Gillian Flynn*

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This thesis aims to discuss psychoanalysis as a critical school applied on literary works. Psychoanalytic criticism is a critical school established in early twentieth century. This study tries to illustrate the striking analogies between psychoanalytic criticism and the concepts of the American novelist Gillian Flynn (1971).

Chapter one: *Psychoanalysis: A Theoretical Overview* examines a theoretical overview of psychoanalysis. Freud elucidates the role played by the unconscious in representing reality. He develops theories about the unconscious mind and the mechanism of repression. Freud divided the human mind to three premises: the id, the ego, and the super-ego; those premises should be working with a very tangible balance and

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any interruption happens will always cause a huge chaos that will be reflected on the human's behaviour. The ego stands for reason shaped by external world. The super ego is a part of the ego in which self-criticism is clear. Unlike them, the id is the dark hidden spot of human character. There is an inner battle, within each man, between the ego and the id that is trying to find a way against the repression of the superego.

In chapter two: *Defence Mechanisms and Childhood Memories in Sharp Objects: a Freudian Perspective*, Freud's theory of psychoanalysis is applied on one of Flynn's novels, *sharp objects* (2006), the characters of the novel are examined throughout Freud's view of the formation of the psyche and the three premises of the mind: The Id, the Ego, and the Super-ego, as well as the defence mechanisms. *Sharp objects*, a thriller novel, revolves around Camille the elder sister and a journalist who has to head back to her home town to investigate and write about recent crimes that took place lately there. Camille, a former psychopathy, finds it very difficult to visit her home town again after moving away when her young sister has died. Camille had a rough childhood; she did not get the love a mother should give to her own child which leads to a series of breakdowns and tragedies that eventually affected Camille psychologically leading her to self-distraction by cutting word out on her skin. Another main character is Amma, the 13 years old stepsister of Camille, who turned out to be the one who committed those crimes; she is also psychologically distorted; a fact that accounts for she commits those crimes

in cold blood. The last main character the mother Adora the source of all distortion. According to Freud, everything takes part in the human's childhood has a great impact and influences the formation of his/her personality and character while growing up. That is what happens to Camille and Amma while growing up in a sick and corrupted environment, raised up by Adore whom also had a tough childhood, which leads to an endless cycle of distortion and disorder.

Chapter three: *Gone Girl: A Psychoanalytic Reading, that covers an analytic over view on Flynn's other novel Gone girl*, proposes a psychoanalytic critical reading of Amy's mind and how she contrives with the events that she cannot accept and how she has to cope with, Amy's character is examined throughout Freud's theory of the battle between the two premises of the mind the id and the ego which is concluded by the major failure of the ego against the power of the id. Freud's explanation of the main purpose of the id is to mainly fulfil its needs and desires which on the other hand isn't acceptable by any ethics and morals, also by the society. Amy is the main character in the novel, whom Flynn combines brilliantly in her all the factors of creating a psychologically disordered woman. Amy the figure of the perfect woman from the outside but deep down she is the monster that no one would ever like to get it out. The opportunist who would do anything to fulfil her needs and desires, who is ready to put morals and ethics aside once they become an obstacle. In this chapter, Freud's theory of

psychoanalysis and defence mechanisms are applied on Amy, analysing the main motive behind her acts.

The aim of the study is to focus on the psychological side of Flynn's characters in her books "*Sharp Objects*" and "*Gone Girl*". All main characters in Flynn's books are females. Flynn wants to show that not only men are capable of any violent or aggressive actions but also women can do same or even more. Therefore, these characters are discussed from a different perspective, a psychological one. How these women were moved or pushed themselves to these kinds of actions. Many philosophers have tackled and discussed human's mental and psychological problems and to what extent it may drive them, to be violent or to shut themselves in their own shells. The approach that is followed in this paper is Freud's psycho-analysis and his preview of the ID as "The unconscious" and how it influences or stops the Ego "The conscious" from doing its job, personality disorder, psychopaths, syndromes, and criminology. As well as Freud's defensive mechanisms which are also a psychological reaction to some kinds of disturbances a human being may be exposed to.

قراءة في ضوء نظرية فرويد للتحليل النفسي في "آلات

حادّة" و"الفتاة المفقودة" للكاتبّة جلين فلين

ياسمين مصطفى أحمد عبد الله

موضوع الدراسة:

في هذا البحث يتم التركيز على ثورة فرويد في نظرية التحليل النفسي وبنیان العقل الشعوري واللاشعوري (الباطن). الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو دراسة روايتي فلين: آلات حادة" و"الفتاة المفقودة" من جانب نفسي.

إن هذه الدراسة توضح كيفية تأثر النفس وأن أي اضطراب أو تذبذب قد يتسبب في اضطراب الشخصية. لذلك ستتم دراسة روايتي فلين من جانب سيكولوجي عارضًا شخصيات الروايات وتحليلها.

في هذا البحث يتم عرض جوانب الشخصية وما يمكن أن يتعرض له الإنسان مما يجعله مضطربًا نفسيًا. وفقًا لفرويد إن العقل البشري ينقسم إلى ثلاثة أقسام وهم الأنا والأنا الأعلى وهو وهذه الجوانب الثلاثة لها تأثير تام في تحديد النفس البشرية وخلق التوازن بها وإذا حدث أي اضطراب أو خلل بها قد يتسبب ذلك في تكوين شخص مضطرب نفسيًا وغير متزن في تصرفاته.

يتكون الأنا في الأعوام الأولى للطفل عندما يكون هدفه الوحيد هو الأكل والشرب والتواجد بالقرب من أمه، ثم يبدأ تكون الـ(هو) منقسمًا من الأنا (مبدأ اللذة)؛ حيث يحرص على التوازن بين العقل والدوافع عند الإنسان وأخيرًا الأنا الأعلى الذي يمثل الضمير والذي يسعى دائمًا لأن يكون مثاليًا بشتى الطرق

لذلك يعمل الهو على خلق توازن بين الأنا والأنا الأعلى حتى يحرص على تكوين شخصية متزنة ونفسية مستقرة، لكن وفقاً لنظرية فرويد للاضطراب النفسي فإن الاضطراب النفسي يحدث وفقاً للخلل الذي يحدث في بنية العقل فالأنا يسعى إلى تحقيق أهدافه وإشباع رغباته وهكذا الأنا الأعلى، بينما على الجانب الآخر يحارب الهو كلى الأنا والأنا الأعلى حتى يحافظ على التوازن بينهما حتى لا يحدث أي خلل. إنما سرعان ما ينتصر الأنا ويستسلم الهو فاشلاً في الحفاظ على التوازن مؤدياً إلى تكوين نفس مضطربة وغير مستقرة نفسياً تسعى فقط إلى تحقيق أهدافها ودوافعها وإشباع رغباتها بدون مراعاة أي من الالتزامات الأخلاقية أو أي قوانين.

هذا البحث يسعى إلى دراسة شخصيات روايتي فلين وفقاً لنظرية فرويد للتحليل النفسي وما يمكن أن يصل إليه الشخص المضطرب نفسياً وما يمكن أن يفعله أو كيف تكون دوافعه وتصرفاته مع الأمور أو المواقف المحيطة.