A PSYCHOANALYTIC READING OF ANITA BROOKNER'S NOVELS IN THE LIGHT OF LACANIAN THEORIES

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Ph. D. Dissertation
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Prof. Dr. Mukadder ERKAN
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İÇİNDEKİLER

ÖZET

DOKTORA TEZİ

LACANCI PSİKANALİTİK YÖNTEM IŞIĞINDA ANİTA BROOKNER'IN ROMANLARI

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Anita Brookner önemli çağdaş Britanya romancılarından biridir ve bu çalışma Brookner'ın yarattığı roman karakterlerinin doğasının irdelenmesini, onların öznelliklerine odaklanarak ve üç seçilmiş romanının, *Hotel du Lac* (1984), *The Next Big Thing* (2002) ve *The Rules of Engagement*'ın(2003) detaylı incelenmesini hedefler. Brookner'ın bilindik roman karakterlerinin bilinçaltının Lacancı bakış açısıyla okunması uygundur, çünkü romanlar bilinçaltının izleriyle saplantılıdır. Çalışmanın birinci bölümünde psikanalitik eleştirinin önemli figürlerinden Jacques Lacan'ın teorileri ele alınmaktadır. İkinci bölümde Brookner'in tipik kahramanları, genellikle kadın olan kahramanlar incelenmektedir. Üçüncü bölüm Lacan'ın üçlü modeline göre ana karakterlerin ve ikinci karakterlerin öznellik inşasına odaklanmaktadır. Karakterler öznelliğin sınırlarını geçmeyi başaramazlar. Bastırılmış ve terk edilmiş kadınlar, tanınma eksikliğinden muzdariptir ve sürekli olarak sembolik düzene olması gerektiği gibi uyamazlar. Babanın/Kanunun-adının otoritesi altında boyun eğen ve itaat eden özneler olarak yaşadıklarından, sessiz ve ilgisiz aileleriyle sevgisiz çocukluk çevrelerinden ve acımasız, soyutlanmış hatıralarından ıstırap duyarlar. Dilin kurallarına tam olarak cevap veremediklerinden, Brookner tarzı ana karakterler mekanik bir şekilde sınırlarda yaşamayı kabul eder ve kendi kurgu dünyalarını yaratır. Dışlanmış ve bölünmüş figürler ayrıca yerinden edilme duygusundan muzdariptirler ve bütün bunlar Lacan'ın öznellik üzerine teorileriyle örtüşür.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Anita Brookner, *Hotel du Lac, Making Things Better,* and *The Rules of Engagement*, Jacques Lacan

ABSTRACT

Ph. D. DISSERTATION

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Brookner is one of the important contemporary British novelists and this study aims to investigate the nature of the characters she creates by focusing on their subjectivity throughout a close examination of her three selected novels including *Hotel du Lac* (1984), *Making Things Better (The Next Big Thing)* (2002) and *The Rules of Engagement* (2003). Reading Brookner's typical character's unconscious through a Lacanian lens is suitable since the novels are obsessed with traces of unconscious. Chapter one of the study deals with Jacques Lacan as one of the conspicuous leaders of psychoanalytic criticism and his theories are discussed. In chapter two, Brooknerian typical heroes and mostly heroines are debated. Chapter three focuses on the subjectivity construction of main and minor characters in her novels corresponding to Lacan's tripartite model. Brooknerian characters are illustrated as Lacanian subjects imprisoned under the impact of the symbolic order living in an exile. The characters are unable to break the boundaries of subjectivity. The repressed abandoned isolated women suffer lack of recognition and are consistently unable to fit into the symbolic order properly. Living as submissive obedient subjects under the authority of the Name-of-the-Father/Law, they suffer disaffectionate childhood environment with uncaring mute parents and harsh isolated memories. Being unable to respond to the orders of language accurately, Brooknerian protagonists mechanically accept living in the margins and construct their own world of fantasy. The alienated split figures also suffer a sense of displacement that all correspond to Lacanian theories on subjectivity.

Keywords: Anita Brookner, *Hotel du Lac*, *Making Things Better*, and *The Rules of Engagement*, Jacques Lacan

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Ec.	*: Écrits*
E.	*: Écrits: A Selection*
SI	*: The Seminar. Book I.*
S II	*: The Seminar. Book II.*
S III	*: The Seminar. Book III*
S IV	*: Le Séminaire. Livre IV.*
S VII	*: The Seminar. Book VII.*
S VIII	*: Le Séminaire. Livre VIII.*
S XI	*: The Seminar. Book XI.*
S XVII	*: Le Séminaire. Livre XVII.*
SXX	*: Le Séminaire. Livre XX.*
FLP	*The Language of the Self: The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis*
HDL	*: Hotel du Lac*
MTB	*: Making Things Better*
ROE	*: The Rules of Engagement*

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PREFACE

The correlation between literature and psychology is elaborately complex and undeniable and has a long history. Jacques Lacan is one of the most controversial and influential psychoanalysts ever since and the present study attempts to present the significance of Lacanian concepts in both the unconscious and conscious of Anita Brookner's characters. The present study intends to provide close readings of Brooknerian novels including *Hotel du Lac* (1984), *Making Things Better (The Next Big Thing)* (2002) and *The Rules of Engagement* (2003) through the lens of Lacanian Psychoanalytic Criticism. Henceforward, the applicability and practicality of analyzing literature based on Lacan's psychoanalysis in detail paves the way to unraveling the psyche of individuals once more.

I would first like to express my special appreciation and thanks to my kind supportive supervisor, Prof. Dr. Mukadder ERKAN, for her patient assistance, inspiration, and guidance throughout my study. I have been exceptionally fortunate to have her as my supervisor who has responded to all my problems and queries very promptly. In addition, I would like to thank Dr. Seda ARIKAN for her valuable contribution during the process of writing and revising my dissertation. I would also like to thank all the staff members of English Language and Literature Department at Ataturk University.

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Erzurum – 2016 **Arezoo ASSEMI**

INTRODUCTION

Anita Brookner (1928-2016) is a contemporary famous British novelist. She is unique in the current fiction since she ignores the present motifs of popular fiction. Brookner presents the inescapable fact of getting old, being isolated, and the lack of family affection in Britain. She insists on illustrating the difficult consequences of getting old and the courage that everyone needs to face it alone. She avoids the current anxieties such as fashion or fascinating scenes of violence or sex, rather she prefers to focus on the real life when it is through to an end. Her 83rd birthday, 16 July 2011, was celebrated as International Anita Brookner Day.

Anita Brookner born in London in a Polish-Jewish family, the Bruckners, is a British novelist, critic, and French Romantic Art historian. Anita was the only child to Newsom and Maude (Schiska) Bruckner. As a reaction to anti-German feelings in Britain, they changed their name to Brookner. Displacement is what she herself experiences from her own childhood. Although she was Jewish, she never learned Hebrew. Feelings of "being displaced in some measure from her Jewishness are echoed in interviews where she confesses to have no religious faith but wishing she had" and she suffers "a sense of being a part" of or "apart" from two cultures.[1]

She studied French literature, then received her Ph.D. in art history at the Courtauld Institute and endowed Slade Professorship at Cambridge University. She has been a Reader at the Courtauld Institute of Art, a Fellow of King's College, a Fellow of New Hall, Cambridge, and a CBE (Commander of the British Empire). She has worked as an art critic for *Times Literary Supplement* and as a book reviewer for *Spectator*.

Brookner never married and after the loss of her parents she dedicated all her life to teaching and writing. Being an international scholar in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century French art, she published many books such as *The Genius of the Future* (1971) and *Greuze in Greuze: The Rise and Fall of an Eighteenth-Century Phenomenon* (1972).

Brookner's own life can be read as a story of success, first due to her accomplishments in art history and then for being a novelist. Her first novel *A Start in*

[1] Cheryl Alexander Malcolm, *Understanding Anita Brookner*, South Carolina Press, Columbia 2002, 1.

Life was published in 1981 when she was 53. Since then, she has published a novel almost every year. *Hotel du Lac* was her fourth novel and won her the Booker Prize in 1984. In 2002, *Making Things Better* was long-listed for the Booker Prize.

Her literary career includes the novels of *A Start in Life* (1981, US title *The Debut*), *Providence* (1982), *Look at Me* (1983), *Hotel du Lac* (1984), *Family and Friends* (1985), *A Misalliance* (1986), *A Friend from England* (1987), *Latecomers* (1988), *Lewis Percy* (1989), *Brief Lives* (1990), *A Closed Eye* (1991), *Fraud* (1992), *A Family Romance* (1993, US title *Dolly*), *A Private View* (1994), *Incidents in the Rue Laugier* (1995), *Altered States* (1996), *Visitors* (1997), *Falling Slowly* (1998), *Undue Influence* (1999), *The Bay of Angels* (2001), *The Next Big Thing* (2002, US title *Making Things Better*), *The Rules of Engagement* (2003), *Leaving Home* (2005), *Strangers* (2009), *At The Hairdressers* (2011).

Brookner's novels get the tag of autobiographical, and her personal life comes most under scrutiny that might be a kind of "devaluing the creative integrity of the writer".[2] Usandizaga claims that unlike many contemporary women's writings, Brookner does not exhibit "positive and optimistic" heroines or perspectives in her late 20th and early 21st century experimental novels; she avoids glorifying women's empowerment instead her heroines are often proficiently "engaged in activities connected to writing and literature" or at least reading novels or overwriting letters.[3]

Her characters, mostly female, are seeking "moral and literary truth" yearning for the "ever unfulfilled human need for love". By offering "new version of the love plot in the contemporary novel," Brookner prefers to "go back to the ever unfulfilled human need for love, and to explore its sources and tragic limits".[4] She is opting for analyzing and interpreting the "half truths our culture lives by" and Brookner makes a distinction between "the personal expectations and actual experience".[5]

About the dominant trends of the 20th century literature Moglen compares realism and fantastic writing as follows:

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[2] Malcolm, 9.
[3] Aránzazu Usandizaga "Love That Kills: Anita Brookner's Revision of The Romance in *The Rules of Engagement*", *Revista Canaria De Estudios Ingleses*, 48, 2004, 90.
[4] Usandizaga, 2004, 90- 91.
[5] Usandizaga, 2004, 90- 91.

> While realism takes the individual's accommodation to society as its subject, the fantastic reveals the psychic costs of social deformation […] While realism poses the possibility of the self's union with another, the fantastic insists on the self's alienation from others and itself. While the realist struggles for textual intelligibility and coherence, the fantastic gestures towards an affectivity that lies outside of language and outside the text […] The modern form of self-awareness born of individualism was articulated through two narrative modes that represented distinct, but related, ways of knowing and telling. These modes constituted each other through diverse genres that were shaped by changing cultural assumptions and shifting relations of desire. Together they suggest the interpenetrability of fantasy and reality, and the mutual dependence of the unconscious and the social. [6]

Thus, the differences between realism and fantastic writing are integral and undeniable. While realism shows the subject in the society and her/his relationship with other members of a community, fantasy reveals the hidden psychic or alienated aspect of an individual. Moglen believes that individuals have to match themselves to the predestined gender role and have to repress any aspects of their character that does not submit to and this process leads to a feeling of loss and fear. Therefore, any attempt to fit in the defined gender roles results in lack and loss.[7]

Brookner's novels present alienated subjects who dream of autonomy but in fact are victims of the gender system. Typical Brookner protagonists, male or mostly female, are bookish, passive or obedient, all apparently devoid of or lacking sexual passion and suffer the perception of having neglected the best possibilities of life. They cannot escape the unsatisfied and unfulfilled desires and they suffer childhood memories of loss. She often focuses on female characters and attempts to reinterpret new issues for women and their destiny in the contemporary postmodern era. She refuses to offer utopian women and presents her heroines fighting against the changes in new generation's thoughts and culture; moreover, their inability to match to such new shifts leads Brookner to

[6] Helene Moglen, *The Trauma of Gender: A Feminist Theory of the English Novel,* University of California Press, California 2001, 9, 10.
[7] Moglen, 10.

present them in the process of survival. Brookner's novels and her repeated themes, characters, motifs, and settings either seem to be an attempt to self-therapy or appear to be approachable within psychoanalytical theories of Sigmund Freud and especially of Jacques Lacan.

Jacques Lacan's theories are one of the recent intricate and sophisticated approaches in the field of criticism and the resolving nature of his concepts help readers to find hints and solve the tensions existing in literary works. Following the theories offered by the father of modern psychology, Sigmund Freud, Lacan starts his own contribution to psychoanalysis by defining a close link between language and the unconscious. Accordingly, Lacan does not define the unconscious as "merely the seat of the instincts"[8] as most followers of Freud did; rather he claims that it is through language that the subject's unconscious is shaped. Therefore, one of the main distinctions that literary critics must regard is this basic difference and deviation from Freudian approach to Lacanian.

Lacan offers a new approach and stresses that from the moment that the child recognizes itself as a lacking subject, it exits from the illusionary world of unity and wholeness with the mother and enters into a void, namely the world of lack and desire. In other words, the child considers itself as a lacking entity that leads to creation of an unbridgeable gap at the heart of the subject. However, the child is pushed by its ego to fill the gap but it cannot be achieved because any attempt of the subject to fulfill the demand becomes disturbed as s/he realizes that there is always something left over. Bruce Fink states that "*Object (a)* is the leftover of that process of constituting an object; the scrap that evades the grasp of symbolization".[9] In other words, we always desire for something that we cannot identify or detect precisely but we know that it exists. In this sense we understand Lacan's real as void at the center of our being that we always try to fill in.

Parveen Adams claims "the object is not part of the signifying chain; it is a 'hole' in that chain. It is a hole in the field of representation, but it does not simply ruin representation. It mends it as it ruins it. It both produces a hole and is what comes to the

[8] Jacques Lacan, *Écrits. A Selection*, (Trans. Alan Sheridan), Tavistock Publications, London 1977, 147. From Now on *E*.
[9] Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*, N.J Princeton University Press, 1995, 94.

place of lack to cover it over". [10] So *objet a* is not the object itself rather it is the practice of guising or veiling the lack. The *objet a* is in fact the left-over of the real; it is that which is free from symbolization and is above representation. Thus, the child is pushed by its ego to fill the gap but it cannot be achieved because any attempt of the subject to fulfill the demand becomes disturbed as s/he realizes that there is always something left over.

Through the imaginary order, the child recognizes the initial lack both in itself and in the mother. In the symbolic order i.e. the realm of language, s/he experiences a sign-system consisting of signifier and signified. So Lacan theorizes the relationship between the signifier and signified different from Saussure and there is descend from the Lacanian real to the symbolic. For him, language fails in expressing subject's passions and desire. The Lacanian real is unknown and cannot be thoroughly uncovered or expressed by language. Since the child is born into the symbolic order, it falls inside a chain of signification. When the boy child recognizes its phallus, he thinks it as a kind of Lacanian master signifier but the father symbol interrupts him and the child enters the symbolic order. So, he changes the imaginary phallus with the symbolic phallus that disillusions the primal sense of unity the child imagined before.

For Lacan castration complex- that will be discussed in detail in chapter one- is of great significance and unlike Freud who offers two different complexes for boys and girls, Lacan claims that the castration complex always signifies the ending moment of the Oedipus complex in both sexes. In other words, Lacan mentions the Oedipus complex appears three times[11]: First, in the preodepial phase the child notices that the mother yearns for something beyond the child or the imaginary phallus, so s/he tries to be the phallus of the mother. Then, the father interferes and by introducing the incest taboo denies the mother of her object. The third time, the father proves that he is the one who really has the phallus and here the child recognizes that s/he cannot be the phallus of the mother. [12] When the child has to abandon trying to be the phallus of the mother, then s/he has to renounce a never-attainable *jouissance* so "castration means that

[10] Parveen Adams, *The Emptiness of the Image: Psychoanalysis and Sexual Differences*, 1st Ed., Routledge, 1995, 151.
[11] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar, Book V, The Formations of the Unconscious 1957-8,* (Trans. Cormac Gallagher from unedited French typescripts), Seminar of 22 January 1958, 14-16.
[12] Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire. Livre IV. La relation d'objet, 1956–57,* Le Seuil, Paris 1994, 208-9, 227. From Now on *SIV*.

jouissance must be refused so that it can be reached on the inverted ladder of the Law of desire".[13] And it similarly is relevant for both boys and girls as Lacan says "[This] relationship to the phallus […] is established without regard to the anatomical difference of the sexes".[14]

For Lacan, entering the symbolic order is a form of castration for both sexes and this symbolic castration represents each person's loss of wholeness. In this phase, one must observe the society's rules dominated by the symbolic father, the power symbol. Besides, the symbolic order is the realm of language. Language in itself is lacking and consequently leads its subject to a constant lack. In other words, the Lacanian language masters the subject and one must subject itself to the order imposed by language on the humankind. However, if there happen a lack of establishment of language in the world of the subject, then s/he is forced into the world of psychosis. The absence of a master signifier that would hold the system of signification together makes the subject's world meaningless. In other words, "when the paternal metaphor does not allow the subject to evoke the signification of the phallus, when the response to the call of the Name-of-the-Father is a lack of the signifier itself" then the subject becomes a psychotic one.[15] So the operation of foreclosure of fatherly authority does not stop the existence of the unconscious. In psychosis the unconscious does not function but in fact is present.[16]

Zizek analyzes Shakespeare and says that "Richard II proves beyond any doubt that Shakespeare had read Lacan" and adds that according to Lacan "truth is structured like fiction".[17] Unlike his forerunner critics, Lacan does not define a set of rules to apply on literary texts. When Zizek says Shakespeare had read Lacan, he probably aims to emphasize some hidden aspects of Lacan's philosophy. Unlike Freud's traditional criticism that observes literature as a rich ground for the application of systemized theories of psychoanalysis, Zizek claims that Lacan has found a new way to understand human psyche instead of forcing a pre-set framework.

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[13] *E.*, 324.
[14] *E.*, 282.
[15] http://www.lacan.com/seminars1.htm
[16] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book III: The Psychoses 1955-1956*, (Trans. Russell Grigg), W.W. Norton, New York and London 1997, 208. From Now on *SIII*.
[17] Slavoj Zizek, *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge 1992, 9.

Rabate believes that Lacan's wide readings from Sophocles's *Antigone*, Dante's *The Divine Comedy* to Valery's poems, Holbein's *The Ambassadors* and Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* has a pre-defined aim: "He reads them in order to understand something of human nature".[18] So it was Lacan who purposefully read literature in order to learn how human psyche operates. For Lacan there is no opposition between the realm of reality in literary world and the real world. In other words, Lacan focuses on literary works to understand some symptoms, for instance it is asserted that in *Hamlet* Lacan comes to learn that "a man's desire can remain determined by the wish to solve the riddle of his mother's desire".[19] It is also mentioned that through *Antigone* Lacan gets "a surprising reversal between ethics and aesthetics that provides him with a motto, a tragic vision and radically new formulations of human desire".[20]

Unlike many who have read literature to teach or apply critical theories, Lacan reads literature to expand his findings on human, her/his nature and his psyche. Therefore, this type of reading can be regarded as an experience of psychoanalysis. For Rabate this experience is as follows:

> It consists of two persons interacting through language only, engaged as they are in a certain pact (one pays and speaks, the other listens and often remains silent) aiming at resolution of certain personal difficulties or the transformation of certain inhibitory situations. This experience is an experience of language as living speech, a fundamental factor Lacan always puts to the fore…. Lacan's practice is based on a fresh rereading of Freud's texts, not simply because the analysand's symptoms are organized like a written text […] but because the 'experience' of psychoanalysis introduces the two agents into a very complex enmeshing of speech and writing. Lacan's main tenet is that literature provides uniquely significant models that allow both the psychoanalyst and the patient to understand new configurations in dreams, symptoms, parapraxes.[21]

Thus, if you write or read or speak, there is an audience; in other words, there is an interaction between at least two people. Literature as a source of language allows both the psychoanalyst and perhaps the patients to go through model experiences and learn

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[18] Jean-Michel Rabate, *Jacques Lacan: Psychoanalysis and the Subject of Literature*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2001, 3.
19 Rabate, 2001, 2.
[20] Rabate, 2001, 2.
[21] Rabate, 2001, 2-3.

them such as dreams and symptoms. Focusing on interactions through language or dialectical relationships existing between different characters can be a supply to discover the dark side of the human psyche and can be a proper alternative for real cases under analysis. As a result, the effects of reading great literary works using Lacanian approach and theories cannot be denied. It can be said that out of *Hamlet*, Lacan's attention turns to the issue of the significance of Other's desire in the constitution of the subject's own desire. Therefore, what Zizek says about Lacan seems reasonable. In fact, Lacan's theories and principles are not kinds of revelation but are the result of close readings and analyzing literary works.

The purpose of this dissertation is to apply Lacanian approach on three selected novels of Anita Brookner *Hotel du Lac*, *The Rules of Engagement*, and *Making Things Better*. Brookner's protagonists are usually lonely single women, accompanied by married lovers with beautiful wealthy wives. Disaffection, disappointment, and displacement are common characteristics of the main characters. The three selected novels share the mentioned features along with unhappy childhood memories, indifferent and not devoted mothers besides mute and silent fathers who have passed away and we read about them through the flash backs. In every age those women have great desire for love but are unable to gain the affection they yearn for from the opposite sex. They all use long monologues to reveal their troubled feelings leading to troubled nights and sleeplessness. They usually are good novel readers and surprisingly interested in Freud and his theories but neither are able to live a satisfying happy life.

These widowed, divorced or single characters suffer childlessness and prefer to be listeners rather than speakers. The only significant difference is that the hero of *Making Things Better* is male not female. These solitary displaced protagonists with common attitudes and common characteristics are suitable cases for applying psychoanalytical concepts of Lacan. Since novels and other literary works are fruits of imagination, we can claim that they belong to the realm of dreams.

Freud in his *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) points to the unconscious language of the dream functioning on displacement, condensation and the fact that they depart the language of the consciousness. So any attempt to analyze the dream content objectively leads to failure. In other words, for analyzing symbols in a dream, the

personal life and experiences of the subject must be considered. Further, a novel can be said to have a structure like that of the dream and needs careful and close reading. As an appropriate approach, Lacan's psychoanalysis can unmask the motives and causes behind Brookner's characters and their lives and motives.

Consequently, Anita Brookner's selected novels will be analyzed in the light of Lacanian psychoanalytical theories by focusing on the role of language and the process of the subject's development. Brookner mainly illustrates female protagonists that suffer a kind of lack due to the life they have to live in a patriarchal society. At first glance her novels may seem routine because they present the constant and changeless lives of silent, subdued, obedient and mostly aged protagonists in the contemporary society. However, since the novels involve long monologues, streams of consciousness, flash backs, displacements, and very short conversations, it is possible to examine the language of the individuals and interpret their psychological transformation through Lacan's perspectives.

This study is divided into three main sections including a chapter on Jacques Lacan, his theories, and principles. The terms will be defined in detail and sometimes will be compared to Freud's principles. Chapter two will deal with Anita Brookner's characteristics and will offer a short summary of the selected novels of *Hotel du Lac*, *The Rules of Engagement*, and *Making Things Better*. Other related features of the novels will be illustrated. The last chapter will deal with applying Lacanian theories and principles on Anita Brookner's own life and the main characters' lives in detail.

CHAPTER ONE

JACQUES LACAN AND HIS THEORIES

My discourse proceeds in the following way: each term is sustained only in its topological relation with the others.

Jacques Lacan[22]

1.1. FREUD AND HIS THEORETICAL LEGACY

Undoubtedly the most prominent investigator of the unconscious and its activities is the Viennese neurologist and psychologist Sigmund Freud. After publishing *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900, Freud lays the foundation of a topographical model to explain how our minds operate. By comparing the mind to an iceberg, Freud emphasizes how the unconscious plays a large part in our actions and governs our behavior to a great degree. Psychoanalysis aims to examine and "cure the disturbances caused by the pressure of the unconscious upon conscious existence as manifested by neurotic symptoms, dreams, etc".[23] According to Freudian principles, the unconscious is "chaotic, primordial, instinctual, pre-verbal"[24], center of dark passions, hidden desires, and suppressed wishes. Freud did not exactly discover the idea of the conscious opposed to the unconscious mind but he viewed the unconscious as the source of motivations and neurotic compulsions. Freud believed that people could be cured by making their unconscious thoughts and motivations understandable. Therefore, the goal of psychoanalysis for Freud is to reveal the unconscious in the most general sense.

1.1.1. A Return to Freud

The whole works of Jacques Marie Émile Lacan (1901-81) can be read and understood under the light of the theories of Freud. Lacan was trained as a

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[22] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar, Book XI. The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, (Trans. Alan Sheridan), Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, London 1977, 89. From Now on *S XI*.

[23] David Lodge, Nigel Wood, *Modern Criticism and Theory*, 2nd Ed., Pearson Education, Inc., New York 2000, 184.

[24] Lodge, 184.

psychoanalyst in International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA) that was founded by Freud to present Freudian theories. There, Lacan criticizes the way analysts interpreted Freud's theories and consequently he is excluded from this organization in 1953. Then he clearly declares that three schools in IPA that have betrayed Freud are: Ego-Psychology, Kleinian Psychoanalysis, and Object-Relations Theory. So he reads Freudian texts in German and notices that poor translation has ignored some basic elements. Lacan's "Return to Freud" is:

> What such a return [to Freud] involves for me is not a return of the repressed, but rather taking the antithesis constituted by the phase in the history of the psychoanalytic movement since the death of Freud, showing what psychoanalysis is not, and seeking with you the means of revitalizing that which has continued to sustain it, even in deviation.[25]

Of course Lacan does not accept all Freudian theories, rather like other post-Freudians he selects and develops certain concepts in Freud's texts.

1.2. LACAN AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO PSYCHOANALYSIS

By the 1970s, psychoanalytic criticism has been largely energized by the impact of the French neo-Freudian psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. He is a main critic in Parisian academic life and his ideas have become central to the various receptions of psychoanalysis in Continental philosophical circles principally.[26] Lacan believes that Freud founded a new science that is the science of a new object i.e. the unconscious. He also reread Freudian theories from the perspective of structuralist theory, placing central emphasis on the role of language in structuring both the conscious and the unconscious. Lacan described himself as a Freudian but his works depart from Freud in several crucial ways.

For Lacan "the unconscious is structured like the structure of language" and like language it can be analyzed systematically and methodically; hence, psychoanalysis "as a discipline must borrow the methods and concepts of modern linguistics but he

[25] Jonathan Gottschall, David Sloan Wilson, *The Literary Animal; Evolution and the Nature of Narrative*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston 2005, 68. See Also *E.*, 116-117
[26] M. Keith Booker, *Practical Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism*, Longman Publishers USA, New York 1996, 35.

also aims at a critique of modern linguistics from his psychoanalytical vantage point".[27] Such an analysis makes it clear that all individuals are fragmented; and no one is whole. Lodge mentions:

> Lacan questions Saussure's assumption that there is nothing problematic about the bond between the signified and signifier in the verbal sign, by pointing that the two signifiers 'Ladies' and 'Gentlemen' may refer to the same signified (a WC), or be interpreted in a certain context as apparently contradictory place name. In short language, the signifying chain, has a life of its own which cannot be securely anchored to a certain world of things. 'There is a perpetual sliding of the signified under the signifier'. 'No meaning is sustained by anything other than reference to another'.[28]

Lacan attempts to change Saussure's theory on the "arbitrary relationship of signifier and signified" and proclaims "the primacy of the signifier" asserting that "the signifier determines the signified, and not the other way round".[29] Thus, for Lacan "no signifier will have any definite signified before being combined with other signifiers, until the point where a period retroactively and provisionally seals the meaning of the sentence".[30] Consequently, principally no word can have a meaning by itself and other words are needed in order to describe what one word can be; no meaning is completely autonomous of other meanings and words rely on each other to gain a meaning. However, through Saussure's model of the signifier and signified, Lacan created his theory of development of an objectified self by focusing on the role of language and its interactions in thought that were central to his formulations, particularly the symbolic. In this sense, the ideal concept of a wholly unified and psychologically complete individual is not attainable to Lacan.[31]

Like Freud, Lacan develops a tripartite model of human psyche and sees it functioning through the operation of three different orders or registers which he labels the imaginary, the symbolic and the real with which the majority of Lacanian concepts are defined in connection. Like Freud's model each of the orders interact with each

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[27] Lodge, 184.
[28] Lodge, 184,185.
[29] André Nusselder, *The Surface Effect: The Screen of Fantasy in Psychoanalysis*, Routledge, New York & London 2013, 21.
[30] Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen, *Lacan: The Absolute Master*, Stanford University Press, California 1991, 181.
[31] Charles E. Bressler, *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*, 5th Ed., Longman, New York 2011, 133.

other. Moreover, intellectuals sometimes classify Lacan's evolution into three main phases distinguished by the priority of one of the orders: the early Lacan of the imaginary (1930s and 1940s), the middle Lacan of the symbolic (1950s), and the late Lacan of the real (1960s and 1970s). Salman Akhtar writes:

> (1) real pertains to that which lies outside of representability, especially by the means of language; it is linked to physicality and corporeality; (2) symbolic pertains to what is most crucial to psychoanalysis, namely representation and communication (with the self and/or the Other) by literal (e.g., a gift) or abstract (e.g., words) means; (3) imaginary pertains to the ego's identification with its specular image during the 'mirror stage' (see separate entry) and is thus the locale of both narcissism and identification. Hence, it is also the source of the subject's 'alienation' (see separate entry) from himself. According to Lacan, psychoanalysis should penetrate the 'imaginary' order and get down to the 'symbolic', which is where the possibility of authentic growth resides.[32]

The theory of the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real orders is the main framework for different perceptions and concepts of Lacan. His characterizations of each of these orders endure some revisions over the many years. In 1970s, Lacan in Seminar XX laid emphasis on the joint dependence and simultaneous existence of the orders on one another using the topological figure of the Borromean knot since his knotting of three rings is set in a way that if one ring is broken all three become free and disconnected.

The Borromean knot- so called because the shape was on the coat of arms of the aristocratic Borromeo family in Italy- is a group of three rings which are set in such a way that if any one of them is detached, all three become separated and the unraveling of the Borromean knot is a main process of analysis. Lacan illustrates the interdependence of the three orders of the real, the symbolic and the imaginary, and each ring denotes one of the three orders, and definite elements can be placed at intersections of these rings. The linkage between the orders is stressed when illustrated through knots. The symbolic records the construction of language; the imaginary

[32] Salman Akhtar, *Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*, Karnac Books, London 2009, 240.

registers the fantasy and imagery in our lives and the real completes the pattern with what is impossible to symbolize or express.[33]

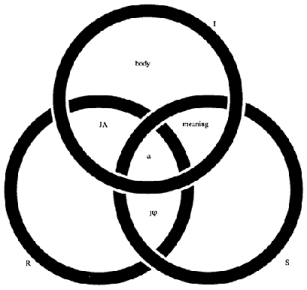

Figure 1.1. The Borromean knot

1.2.1. The Imaginary Order

To Lacan, from birth until about 6 months old, human psyche functions mainly in the imaginary order that contains our wishes, fantasies, and most importantly our images which has great importance for the study of literature. In this pre-verbal infantile phase, one is united with one's mother joyfully receiving food, care, and comfort from her. The imaginary order is loosely related to Freud's pleasure principle. In this phase of psychic development, one relies on images as a means of perceiving and interpreting the world.

Somewhere between the age of six and eighteen months, human being enter what Lacan calls the looking glass or mirror stage. In this stage, the infant begins to gain a sense of its own existence as a separate entity and establish an awareness of its own body through literal mirror image or through outside objects notably mother.[34] The imaginary order is the realm and field of images, imagination, illusion and deception; and the principle task of this register is to form and construct the ego in the mirror stage.

1.2.1.1. The Mirror Stage and Imaginary Identification

This mirror image of human being as complete and whole is an illusion because unlike the actual image they are not in full control of us. Arikan emphasizes that in

[33] Dylan Evans, *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis* , Taylor & Francis e-Library, London and New York 2006, 19.
[34] Booker, 35, 36.

order to understand an imaginary thing, one needs to apply to the concept of mirror stage.[35] As well Benevuto says:

> At a certain point ….and presumably when the perceptual apparatus has reached a certain stage of development, the infant becomes aware through seeing his image in the mirror of his own body as a totality, a total form of Gestalt. The mirror image is held together, it can come and go with a slight change of the infant's position, and his mastery of the image fills him with triumph and joy.[36]

When an infant sees itself in the mirror, it starts to recognize the counterpart or the specular image, then the imaginary identification occurs and the ego is formed.

Lacan's structuralist method figures the development of "an infantile sense of selfhood as a process of selfhood principally as a process of differentiation" that is the infant gradually understands "what he is" by increasing the "understanding of what he is not".[37] In addition, in the process of differentiation "certain key objects" such as "mother's breast" or "mother's voice" that were the "experiences as parts of the infant's own self come in the mirror stage" to be noticed as being detach or separate from infant's self. [38] So the ego is formed as it is identified with the specular image in the mirror stage and here the subject becomes alienated from itself by transforming itself into the specular image.[39] For Lacan the ego is "the seat of illusions" and is formed in the imaginary order that is the realm of imagination.[40] The dual relationship between the ego and the counterpart- what the infant sees as wholeness in the mirror stage in contrast to the non-coordinated disunity with its real body are essential parts of imaginary identification process.

As a result, for Lacan our mother's voice and breast, our own speech sounds, etc. becomes *objet petit a*. When we grow up, these objects or sounds are not present, so we yearn for them. These key objects function as symbols of primordial lack and even at

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[35] Seda Arikan, *Lacancı Psikanalitik Yöntem Işığında Iris Murdoch'un Romanları*, Çizgi Kitabevi, Konya 2014, 67.
[36] Bice Benvenuto, Kennedy Roger, *The Works of Jacques Lacan: An Introduction*, St. Martin's, New York 1986, 55.
[37] Booker, 36.
[38] Booker, 36.
[39] *E.*, 20.
[40] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar. Book I. Freud's Papers on Technique, 1953-54*, (Trans. John Forrester), Cambridge University Press, 1988, 62. From Now on *SI*.

"this pre-linguistic stage of selfhood of the infant becomes intimately bound up in a sense of lack of these objects"[41]. That is such objects become symbols of lack for us and this sense of lack will continue to plague us for the rest of our lives that has its roots in the imaginary order and the mirror stage. In imaginary identification process, the imaginary order and the ego are accompanied by alienation. However, the dual relations of the imaginary order will be calmed down later in the symbolic order that is the realm of the big Other.

1.2.1.2. Alienation or Synthesis

The mirror stage designates the development of the ego through the process of identification; and the ego is the consequence of identifying with infant's specular image. For Lacan alienation is an essential aspect of the subject and is not an accident; the subject is basically split, alienated from itself, and there is no escape from this division or there is no possibility of "wholeness" or "synthesis".[42] The mirror stage designates the construction of "the Ego via the process of objectification, the Ego being the result of a conflict between one's perceived visual appearance and one's emotional experience" and Lacan calls this identification as alienation.[43]

The ego is formed in the mirror stage of which main illusions are synthesis, autonomy, duality, and similarity. In this process, s/he comes to recognize the conflict between her/his emotional experience and perceived visual appearance and understands that "the initial synthesis of the ego is essentially an alter ego, it is alienated".[44] Therefore, one becomes alienated from itself through the introduction of an imaginary register to the subject. Lacan claims: "Alienation is constitutive of the imaginary order. Alienation is the imaginary as such".[45] So, alienation is observed in the imaginary; however, it is also one of the main mechanisms of the symbolic.

Though alienation is an indispensable characteristic of every subject, psychosis embodies a more thrilling form of alienation. The mirror stage confirms that the ego is

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[41] Booker, 36.
[42] Evans, 9.
[43] Wikipedia contributors. "Jacques Lacan". Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 13 Jan. 2016. Web. 19 Jan. 2016
[44] *SIII*. 39
[45] Evans, 9. See Also *SIII*, 146.

formed with misinterpretation and misunderstanding and here the subject becomes alienated from her/himself. The speaking beings are subject to alienation that is enforced by language. Even the adults that breed the child are the products of the symbolic order and they have been subjected to alienation before.

1.2.2. The Symbolic Order

Once we learn that we are individual beings who are separate from our mothers, we are ready to enter Lacan's second developmental phase, the symbolic order. The symbolic order is loosely related to "Freud's notion of reality principle [that] is associated with the use of symbols and symbolic system".[46] The symbolic order is significantly central throughout Lacan's theories. The symbolic plays a very crucial role for psychoanalysts who are in fact "practitioners of the symbolic function".[47]

Lacan partly has taken the term symbolic from Claude Levi-Strauss because he believed that "the social world is structured by certain laws which regulate kinship relations" but Lacan has added two main essential concepts of gift and exchange.[48] As the primary form of exchange is by communication and this exchange occurs through the gift of speech, the law and structure are inseparable parts of language. The symbolic is in fact linguistic and it is the realm of language-as-representation. Whereas the mother dominates the imaginary order, the Name-of-the-Father, dominates the symbolic order in which we learn language.

In the symbolic order of Lacan, we learn to differentiate between male and female. This process of learning gender identity is based on difference, division, and loss. Thus "the distinction between the sexes brought about by the castration complex and the different positions that must subsequently be taken up, confirms that the subject is split and the object is lost".[49] Now, the father appears to embody and represent cultural norms and laws. He stands between the child and the mother and enforces cultural rules threatening to castrate the child if s/he disobeys. Since the castration

[46] Booker, 35.
[47] *E*., 72
[48] Evans, 203. See Also *SIV*, 153-4,182.
[49] Juliet Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, Oenguin, Harmondsworth 1974, 25.

complex is noticeably different for boys and girls, the process of completing the symbolic order is obviously different for each sex.

Furthermore, the gender identity or sexuality is created culturally and it is the father, the power symbol, who enforces these cultural rules and ensures that the child will follow them. Both sexes come to understand their own sexuality by observing and detecting what they are not. For Lacan, entering the symbolic order is a form of castration for both sexes and this castration is symbolic not literal and represents each person's loss of wholeness and her/his acceptance of society's rules dominated by the father who possesses phallus that is a master signifier.

When a child enters the symbolic order, s/he experiences loss and the feeling of being limited. When the young boy admits the Law of the Father, his sexual desire for his mother is disturbed. On the other hand, the young girl needs to accept the masculine authority and supremacy in order to enter the symbolic order. Entry into the symbolic order equals giving up the original happiness of the joyful union with the mother in the pre-oedipal phase. Neither males nor females can ever possess the phallus symbolically and can never be complete or whole.

Subsequently, this entry to the symbolic order is embodying and representing the introduction to language and the acceptance of the rules and regulations according to which society functions.[50] For Lacan, it is the language that masters us because it is the language that shapes our identity.[51] Using linguistic principles of Ferdinand de Saussure, Lacan declares that we differentiate between individual sounds and words on the basis of difference. One must subject oneself to the order imposed by language on the humankind. In other words, the symbolic is the field of language and law, and the law regulates desire in the Oedipus complex.

1.2.2.1. Absence and Presence

Binary opposition for Lacan is significantly important since the symbolic order is characterized by absence and presence. For Lacan in the symbolic order "nothing exists except upon an assumed foundation of absence. Nothing exists except insofar as it does

[50] Booker, 37.
[51] Susan A. Ross, *Anthropology: Seeking Light and Beauty*, Liturgical Press, Collegeville 2012, 72

not exist".[52] A fundamental difference between the symbolic and the real lies here as "There is no absence in the real. There is only absence if you suggest that there may be a presence there where there isn't one".[53] In his seminars Lacan states that "nothing is in itself an object (a partial object)".[54] For instance sexual difference is perceived by a child when s/he symbolically recognizes the absence or presence of phallus.[55]

1.2.2.2. Death or Being for Death

The term death plays an important part in the symbolic order, as Lacan asserts "the symbol is the murder of the thing" that means when a symbol stands representing the thing that it symbolizes, in fact it equals the death of the thing.[56] He also points out that the "first symbol" in the history of human being is the tomb.[57] Death of the subject occurs by virtue of the signifier i.e. "It is in the signifier and insofar as the subject articulates a signifying chain that he comes up against the fact that he may disappear from the chain of what he is".[58]

Death in the symbolic order is associated with "the death of the Father (i.e. the murder of the father of the horde in *Totem and Taboo;* Freud, 1912-13)"; the symbolic father is a dead father.[59] Lacan distinguishes between the first death -that is the physical death of the body that terminates one's life that does not give an end to "the cycles of corruption and regeneration"- and the second death- that avoids the regeneration of the dead body. About the second death he says "the point at which the very cycles of the transformations of nature are annihilated".[60]

Lacan draws on Hegel and Heidegger's concept of death in psychoanalysis. He takes the idea that death is constitutive of man's freedom and the absolute Master from Hegel. Struggle to death refers to struggling for being recognized, for "pure prestige", in

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[52] Evans, 58. See Also Jacques Lacan, *Écrits,* Paris, Seuil, 1966, 392. From Now on *Ec*.
[53] Evans, 1. See Also Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar*. *Book II. The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis, 1954–55*, (Trans. Sylvana Tomaselli), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1988, 313. From Now on *S II*.
[54] Evans, 1. See Also *S IV*, 184.
[55] Evans, 1.
[56] *E*., 104.
[57] *E*., 104.
[58] Jaque Lacan, *The Seminar, Book VII. The Ethics of Psychoanalysis, 1959–60, (*Trans. Dennis Porter), Routledge, London 1992, 295. From Now on *S VII*.
[59] Evans, 32.
[60] *S VII*, 211, 248.

other words one can really prove his being by risking his life.[61] The struggle ends when one of the two competitors gives up and yields and recognizes the winner as his master and becomes his slave. Instead of fighting that may lead to real death, many accept to live as slaves because it is impossible to live in a world of all masters. For Lacan, the master only confirms himself for others through a desire for death.[62]

Also from Heidegger Lacan takes the idea that "human existence only takes on meaning by virtue of the finite limit set by death, so that the human subject is properly a 'being-for-death'",[63] therefore the analystic process should lead the analysand to accept his own mortality.

1.2.2.3. Lack of Being or Lack of Having

In Lacanian perspective, lack has mainly three dimensions that are lack of desire, lack of being, and lack of object. For Lacan, lack (*manque*) is a notion that is constantly related to desire. In his seminar *Le Transfert* (1960–61) he states that lack is what causes desire to arise.[64] The idea of lack of being appears in 1955, and points to that what is desired is being itself: "Desire is a relation of being to lack. The lack is the lack of being properly speaking. It isn't the lack of this or that, but lack of being whereby the being exists"[65] and also "this lack is beyond anything which can represent it. It is only ever represented as a reflection on a veil".[66] Lacan declares that "desire is the metonymy of the lack of being"[67] and the subject's lack of being is "the heart of the analytic experience" and "the very field in which the neurotic's passion is deployed".[68] Lacan translates manqué as want-to-be. He distinguishes between lack of being that is related to desire, and lack of having that is related to demand.[69]

In 1956, lack mostly refers to lack of an object, and by considering the nature of

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[61] Alexandre Kojève, (1947 [1933–39]) *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, (Trans. James H. Nichols Jr.), Basic Books, New York and London 1969, 7. See Also *SI* 223.
[62] *E.*, 105.
[63] Evans, 32-33. See Also *E.*, 104-5.
[64] Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire : Livre VIII. Le transfert, 1960–61*,Le Seuil, Paris 1991, 139. From Now on *S VIII.*
[65] *SII*, 223.
[66] *SII*, 223
[67] *E.*, 259.
[68] *E.*, 251.
[69] *Ec.*, 730.

the object, he proposes three kinds of lack as illustrated in Figure 2:

AGENT	LACK	OBJECT
Real father	Symbolic castration	Imaginary phallus
Symbolic mother	Imaginary frustration	Real breast
Imaginary father	Real privation	Symbolic phallus

Figure 1.2. Table of Three Types of Lack of Object[70]

Despite the importance and significance of these types of lack, castration is the most central one in Lacan's analytic curing practice, and "the term 'lack' tends to become synonymous with castration".[71]

In 1957, Lacan adds another meaning to the term lack and refers to the lack of a signifier in the Other and innovates the barred Other $(\mathbb{A})$, to show the lack of a signifier in the Other. Lacan also "introduces the symbol $S(\mathbb{A})$ to designate 'the signifier of a lack in the Other'. No matter how many signifiers one adds to the signifying chain, the chain is always incomplete; it always lacks the signifier that could complete it. This 'missing signifier' (written −1 in Lacanian algebra) is constitutive of the subject". [72] Lack becomes an inseparable part of the subject.

1.2.2.4. Construction of the Subject through Castration

At the heart of Lacan's theory and his understanding of the human psyche are lack and fragmentation. All of us have longing for love, physical pleasure, and for countless objects, but nothing can fulfill our desire to return to the imaginary order and to be a whole with our mother. Lacan uses the term castration to refer to two different operations: Castration of the mother and Castration of the subject**.** In the first, "the

[70] Evans, 98. See Also *SIV*, 269.
[71] Evans, 98.
[72] Evans, 99.

mother is considered, by both sexes, as possessing the phallus, as the phallic mother,"[73] but the imaginary father is perceived to deprive her of this phallus. And for Lacan "this is not castration but privation".[74] However, in castration of the subject, there is "a symbolic act which bears on an imaginary object". [75] Being abandoned to be the object of the mother's desire, the subject gives up a certain *jouissance* which will be never regained; and "[c]astration means that *jouissance* must be refused so that it can be reached on the inverted ladder of the Law of desire".[76] This is the only way that an individual can become independent and have a relationship with the real Other.[77]

Castration refers to "a state of lack which already exists in the mother prior to the subject's birth".[78] Then the subject realizes at an early stage of life that the mother is incomplete or not autonomous and is not satisfied with the child, yet desires something else. And this is the first time the subject recognizes that the Other is lacking and is not complete. Anyway, in both forms of castration the subject has to make a choice to accept castration or to refuse it. Lacan believes that only when the subject accepts this symbolic castration, s/he returns to a normal condition considering psychopathology – including clinical features and signs- and sexual identity. In addition, at the moment of castration, the child is to choose between the father and the object of desire and if the child chooses the object of desire not the father the neurosis appears.[79]

Consequently, "the refusal of symbolic castration" is the origin of "all psychopathological structures" and because "it is impossible to accept castration entirely, a completely 'normal' position" is never accomplished. As a result only by accepting castration, the subject can adopt a normal "sexual position as a man or a woman" but the different modes of denial of castration is expressed in "various forms of perversion".[80] For that reason, this symbolic castration results from the individual's

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[73] Nancy Tuana, William Cowling, Maurice Hamington, Greg Johnson, Terrance Macmullan, Eds. *Revealing Male Bodies*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington & Indianapolis 2002, 7.
[74] Evans, 23.
[75] Evans, 22-24.
[76] Evans, 95. See Also *E.*, 324.
[77] Constanz Thierfelder, "Desire and Visions", (Eds. Reinder Ruard Ganzevoort, Rein Brouwer, Bonnie Miller-McLemore), *City of Desires a Place for God?: Practical Theological Perspectives*, Lit, Wien Zürich Berlin 2013, 41.
[78] Evans, 23.
[79] Renata Salecl, The *Spoils of Freedom: Psychoanalysis, Feminism and Ideology after the Fall of Socialism (Opening Out: Feminism for Today)*, Routledge, London 1994, 101.
[80] Evans, 24.

obedience to the Other or the society and in the neurotic structure the subject still defends her/himself against the lack in the Other by repressing awareness of castration.[81]

Nobus claims that for Lacan, every society forces human beings to postpone the satisfaction and pleasure of some of their drives and prohibit the expression of some drives altogether, which implies "that *jouissance* [enjoyment] is forbidden to him who speaks as such"[82]; castration in its Lacanian version is "parcel of leading a law-abiding life" and not merely a fleshly experience as Freud believes.[83] As a result, symbolic castration has a vital function in construction of the subject.

1.2.2.4.1. Castration Anxiety

Freud builds up two theories for anxiety the first of which refers to "neurotic anxiety" which is "a transformation of sexual libido that has not been adequately discharged" and second the anxiety as "a reaction to a traumatic situation—an experience of helplessness in the face of an accumulation of excitation that cannot be discharged", thus such "traumatic situations are precipitated by situations of danger such as birth, loss of the mother as object, loss of the object's love and, above all, castration".[84] However, Lacan links "anxiety primarily to the threat of fragmentation" during the mirror stage, and "long after the mirror stage […] these fantasies of bodily dismemberment" give rise to "castration anxiety" along with the fear of being swallowed up by an avid mother which is in contrast with Freud's separation from the mother theory. Lacan argues that it is quite "a lack of such separation" which provokes anxiety.[85] So anxiety is always linked with a kind of loss that is hard to bear.

Castration anxiety is caused by castration complex and is very central in psychoanalysis. Freud first described the castration complex referring to the child detecting the bodily and physical difference between the sexes by noticing the existence

[81] Evans, 24. See Also *Ec*., 852.
[82] Evans, 94. See Also *E*., 319
[83] Dany Nobus, *Jacques Lacan and the Freudian Practice of Psychoanalysis,* Routledge, London 2000, 28.
[84] Evans, 10.
[85] Evans, 10-11.

or lack of the penis.[86] Freud, in 'On the Sexual Theories for Children' (1908), for the first time discusses penis envy and castration complex explicitly. In other words, "the boy fears that his own penis will be cut off by the father (castration anxiety), while the girl sees herself as already castrated (by the mother) and attempts to deny this or to compensate for it by seeking a child as a substitute for the penis (penis envy)".[87] For Freud castration complex is closely associated with the Oedipus complex.[88]

For Lacan castration is a form of "lack of object" and frustration is "an imaginary lack of a real object; and privation is a real lack of a symbolic object", nevertheless, "castration is defined as a symbolic lack of an imaginary object"; therefore, castration does not focus on the penis as "a real organ", but on "the imaginary phallus".[89] So "the phallus that is the symbol of all longing and desire"[90] symbolizes the lost synthesis and integrity with the maternal body that is forbidden by the "name of the father" given that it is the father who is to be the rightful "phallus" of the mother. Thus, through the name of the father, the law order prohibits incest and parricide which means symbolic castration.[91]

1.2.2.5. What is a Father?

Father has a very vital role in psychic structure for Lacan. For him, the significance of Oedipus complex is due to the fact that it "combines in the figure of the father two almost conflicting functions: the protective function and the prohibitive function" and believes that in the contemporary social life the cause of many psychopathological problems are "paternal imago (clearly visible in the images of absent fathers and humiliated fathers)".[92] Unlike Kleinian psychoanalysis and object-relations theory that lay the mother-child relation at the center of their psychoanalytic theory, Lacan focuses on the vital role of the Father in his theories.

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[86] Sigmund Freud, *On the Sexual Theories of Children (1908)*, The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, (Trans. J. Strachey), Hogarth Press, London 1962, 215.
[87] Evans, 22.
[88] Freud, 1908, 215.
[89] Evans, 22-23.
[90] Thierfelder, 41.
[91] Douzinas, 303.
[92] Evans, 62.

So it is the father who meditates the dual relations between the mother and the child by helping the child to enter the symbolic order. In other words, the father represents social order and law that the child should accept. Lacan's question "'What is a father?' forms the central theme which runs throughout Freud's entire work" and in order to define it clearly, he offers the concepts of the symbolic father, the imaginary father, and the real father.[93]

The symbolic father "is not a real being but a position, a function, and hence is synonymous with the term 'paternal function'. This function is none other than that of imposing the LAW and regulating desire in the Oedipus complex, of intervening in the imaginary dual relationship between mother and child to introduce a necessary 'symbolic distance' between them".[94] Lacan asserts that "the true function of the Father…is fundamentally to unite (and not to set in opposition) a desire and the Law".[95] While the symbolic father is only a position in this order- not a real subject-, no other person can play his role.[96] The symbolic father uses a means and does not interfere directly, for instance meditates the discourse of the mother.[97]

The symbolic order of culture inscribes "male descendence. By structuring descendence into a series of generations, patrilineality" establishes an order "whose structure is different from the natural order".[98] The symbolic father whom is referred as the name-of-the-father is the basic component in the constitution of the symbolic order.[99]

Evans claims that "the presence of the imaginary phallus as a third term in the preoedipal imaginary triangle indicates that the symbolic father is already functioning at the preoedipal stage; behind the symbolic mother, there is always the symbolic father", so the absence or presence of the symbolic father has an essential feature in psychotic construction.[100]

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[93] *SIV*, 204-5.
[94] *SIV*, 161.
[95] *E*., 321.
[96] *SIV*, 205, 210, 219.
[97] *SIV*, 276.
[98] Evans, 63. See Also *SIII*, 320.
[99] *SI*, 259.
[100] Evans, 63.

The imaginary father is an imago who creates the entire imaginary construct and this imaginary construction usually does not have much association with the father in reality.[101] The imaginary father can be an ideal father representing a powerful protector and supporter.[102] It can also be the horrifying father "the father who has fucked the kid up"[103] and "the agent of privation whom the daughter blames for depriving her of the symbolic phallus".[104] In both manners, the father has unlimited power to do anything, he is the omnipotent.[105] If the symbolic father is reduced to the imaginary father, perversion and psychosis will be followed.

The real father for Lacan does not refer to the biological father or to the man living with the mother. The real father, who desires the mother and at the same time is the object of her desire, performs the operation of symbolic castration.[106] However, the real father is "the man who is *said to be* the subject's biological father. The real father is thus the effects of language, and it is in this sense that the adjective real is to be understood here: the real of language rather than the real of biology".[107] So the real father intervenes in the castration complex and prevents castration anxiety. If not, the child needs a disturbed object as a symbolic alternate for the absent real father.

1.2.2.5.1. Foreclosure of the Father

There are two constant notions in identifying special psychical reason for psychosis. The first cause of psychosis is the exclusion of the father that occurs when the father is eliminated from the structure of the family and only mother-child relation remains; Lacan refers to this reason in his early works. The second one is taken from the Freudian concept of *Verwerfung* that means repudiation. Freud used it in different ways but Lacan focuses on particular defense mechanism distinct from repression "the ego rejects the incompatible idea together with its affect and behaves as if the idea had never

[101] *SIV*, 220.
[102] *SI*, 156. See Also *E.*, 321.
[103] *SIV*, 98. See Also *SVII*, 307.
[104] Evans, 63. See Also *SVII*, 308.
[105] *S IV*, 275–6
[106] *S VII*, 307
[107] Evans, 63. See Also *Le Séminaire: Livre XVII. L'envers de la psychanalyse, 1969–70*, Le Seuil, Paris 1991, 147-8. From Now on *S XVII*.

occurred to the ego at all".[108] So, when something is rejected outside the symbolic order, the defense mechanism behaves as if it did not exist.[109] Finally Lacan translates *Verwerfung* to foreclosure in French. In 1957, he suggests that the Name-of-the-Father is the object of foreclosure.[110]

When the Name-of-the-Father is foreclosed or repudiated, it creates a gap in the symbolic order which cannot be filled; in other words, "the subject can then be said to have a psychotic structure, even if he shows none of the classical signs of psychosis. Sooner or later, when the foreclosed Name-of-the-Father reappears in the real, the subject is unable to assimilate it, and the result of this 'collision with the inassimilable signifier' is the 'entry into psychosis' proper, characterized typically by the onset of hallucinations and/or delusions".[111]

The gap that is caused by the foreclosure of the symbolic father leads to psychosis. Lacan claims "whatever is refused in the symbolic order[…] reappears in the real.[112] In other words, when the father's function is foreclosed from the symbolic order, the territory of the symbolic is poorly and inadequately bound to the imaginary order and it may lead to failure in meaning. Deficiency in supremacy of the Oedipus sets the subject "under the regime of foreclosure or non-distinction between the symbolic and the real",[113] and psychotic illusion or hallucinations are the following result of what the subject tries to experience.

1.2.2.6. Lacanian Phallus

The phallus has a fundamental role in Lacan's theories especially on the Oedipus complex and his theory of sexual difference. Lacan commonly prefers to use the word phallus instead of penis because he prefers not to emphasize the male genital organ and its biology rather he focuses on the role that this element has in fantasy. That's why, Lacan usually uses penis for the biological organ, and the term phallus in terms of its imaginary and symbolic roles.

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[108] *S III*, 58.
[109] *Ec.*, 386-7. See Also *SI*, 57-9.
[110] *E.*, 217.
[111] Evans, 65-66. See Also *SIII*, 321.
[112] *SIII*, 13.
[113] Anika Lemaire, David Macey, *Jacques Lacan*, Psychology Press, 1979, 246.

The imaginary phallus refers to an imaginary object,[114] the "image of the penis", the imagined penis "may be detached from the body by castration".[115] The imaginary phallus in the preoedipal phase is the object of the mother's desire and the child as a result tries to identify with this object. The imaginary phallus flaws between the mother and child. The castration complex and the Oedipus complex turn round the imaginary phallus.

The symbolic phallus is the most substantial one. Lacan in his paper *The Signification of the Phallus* (1958) states:

> The phallus is not a fantasy, if by that we mean an imaginary effect. Nor is it as such an object (part-, internal, good, bad, etc.). It is even less the organ, penis or clitoris, that it symbolises…. The phallus is a signifier…. It is the signifier intended to designate as a whole the effects of the signified.[116]

For Lacan the phallus is a signifier;[117] the phallus is a principal element because it is "the signifier of the desire of the Other", and is therefore the signifier of *jouissance*.[118] Lacan claims that "the phallus is a symbol to which there is no correspondent, no equivalent. It's a matter of a dissymmetry in the signifier".[119] So, the sexual difference is created by virtue of the symbolic phallus; in other words, both male and female subjects accept their sex via the symbolic phallus.

The binary oppositions of presence and absence play an important role here. Both an absence and presence can be positive; even "the woman, who lacks the symbolic phallus in one way, can also be said to possess it, since not having it the symbolic is itself a form of having".[120] However, the child believes that the father satisfies the mother's desire and has the phallus.

For Lacan the Oedipus complex includes substitution of one signifier to another one that means the desire of the mother is substituted for the Name-of-the-Father. This

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[114] *S IV*, 31.
[115] *E.*, 315, 319.
[116] Jacques Lacan (1958) "The Signification of the Phallus," (Trans. Alan Sheridan), *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, (Ed. Vincent B. Leitch), New York, W.W. Norton & Company 2001, 685-95. See Also *E.* 281-91.
[117] *S IV*, 191
[118] *E.*, 290, 320.
[119] *SIII*, 176
[120] Evans, 145, See Also *S IV*, 153

initial and primary function of substitution starts on the signification act and the child enters into the symbolic order as a subject of lack. Therefore, Lacan expresses the course of symbolization as phallic, and in the course of the Name-of-the-Father the phallus is set as the fundamental signifier that forms the unconscious. The phallus is "the original lost object, but no one possessed it in the first place. The phallus, therefore, is not like any other signifier; it is the signifier of absence and does not 'exist' in its own right as a thing, an object or a bodily organ".[121]

Castration is accompanied by two elements: first anxiety of losing the penis, second the recognition of lack and absence; and the latter one occurs when the child distinguishes that the mother has no penis. Therefore, Lacan asserts that phallus is "the penis plus the recognition of absence or lack", hence castration is not the fear of having lost or the possibility of losing the penis- in girls and boys respectively-, rather it refers to "the symbolic process of giving up the idea that one can be the phallus for the mother".[122]

When the father intervenes by distancing the child from the mother, he "places the phallus forever beyond its reach" and if the symbolic father possesses the phallus, "then the child can only become a subject itself in the symbolic order by renouncing the imaginary phallus".[123] Lacan represents this lack using the idea of the veil to show that something exists but is veiled. The phallus remains behind a veil for both boys and girls and therefore is out of reach.

Homer clarifies that the phallus "provides the vital link between desire and signification".[124] Lacan assumes that "the symbolic phallus is that which appears in the place of the lack of the signifier in the Other".[125] Hence, it is desire that drives the process of symbolization, so the phallus is the final object of desire that all of us have lost and constantly look for it but in fact "never had in the first place".[126] Later he states that the symbolic phallus is "the signifier which does not have a signified".[127]

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[121] Sean Homer, *Jacques Lacan*, Routledge, London & New York 2005, 56.
[122] Homer, 56.
[123] Homer, 56.
[124] Homer, 56.
[125] Evans, 145. See Also *S VIII*, 278-81.
[126] Homer, 56.
[127] Evans, 145. See Also Jacques Lacan, *Le Séminaire: Livre XX. Encore, 1972–73*, Le Seuil, Paris 1975, 75. From Now on *SXX*.

To sum up, "the phallus stands for that moment of break when the child is forced to recognize the desire of the other" that is the mother; and then the mother "is refused to the child in so far as a prohibition falls on the child's desire to be what the mother desires".[128] As a result, the phallus initiates the order of symbolic substitution by violating the mother and child bond. This notion of the phallus is both imaginary and symbolic together. As it stands for the object supposed to satisfy the mother's desire, it is imaginary phallus. At the same time, it represents the exploration that desire cannot be satisfied and is recognized as symbolic phallus. So the phallus represents the lack in being and leads to the basic splitting of the subject.

1.2.2.7. Sexual Difference

Lacan deals with sexual position, sexual relationship, the differentiation of the sexes, and feminine sexuality.[129] The child in the beginning ignores sexual differences and cannot occupy a sexual position but for Freud the sexual difference depends on the castration complex and on having or not having a penis; and also its sexual position is constructed by the sex of the parent with whom the subject identifies itself in the Oedipus complex, i.e. "if the subject identifies with the father, he takes up a masculine position; identification with the mother entails the assumption of a feminine position".[130] But castration, for Lacan, is a symbolic process that involves not removing one's penis, but cutting the subject's *jouissance* that leads to the identification of lack. So the subject's relationship with the symbolic phallus creates the sexual position. To be masculine or feminine are not biological rather they are symbolic positions, and standing on these two positions is essential in the construction of subjectivity; "the subject is essentially a sexed subject".[131] Lacan says:

> To characterize this lack, one has two ways that is to have the phallus or to be the phallus. Being male involves the having or pretending to have the phallus, while femininity involves the masquerade of being the phallus.[132]

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[128] Homer, 57.
[129] *S IV*, 153.
[130] Evans, 181.
[131] Evans, 181.
[132] *SIII*, 177.

So the difference between the sexes can only be considered on the symbolic level.[133] So subjectivity is formed in the symbolic order and every speaking subject is a sexed subject defined by "the phallic signifier" in the symbolic order; the masculine subject possesses the phallus and the feminine subject is the phallus. The phallus plays a pivotal role in "sexuation".[134] Although the biological characteristics of the body play important role on what sexual position the subject will gain, the only signifier of sexual difference for Lacan is still the phallus. He claims "strictly speaking there is no symbolization of woman's sex as such…the phallus is a symbol to which there is no correspondent, no equivalent. It's a matter of a dissymmetry in the signifier".[135]

Lacan's very offensive theory is that "Woman does not exist for the man as a real subject, but only as a fantasy object, the cause of his desire"[136] and his logic is that if the woman was to exist then she would exist at the symbolic. Lacan, however, "leaves open the possibility of there being something - a feminine *jouissance* - that is unlocatable in experience that cannot, then, be said to exist in the symbolic order".[137] Homer asserts that when Lacan says that the woman is not-whole, it means that "defined as not wholly hemmed in. A woman is not split in the same way as a man; though alienated, she is not altogether subject to the symbolic order".[138]

1.2.3. The Real Order

The real order is hard to define. Lacanian reality is the realm of consciousness and communicable significance but Lacan's earliest definition of the term real refers to material being(s) or to physical existents; however, later Lacan speaks of the real "as an absolute fullness, a pure plenum devoid of the negativities of absences, antagonisms, gaps, lacks, and splits. Portrayed thusly, the symbolic is primarily responsible for injecting such negativities into the real. For instance, only through the powers of language can material being in itself be said to be 'missing' things, since, on its own,

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[133] *SIV*, 153.
[134] Kirsten Campbell, *Jacques Lacan and Feminist Epistemology*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London & New York 2004, 85.
[135] *SIII*, 176.
[136] *SXX*, 58.
[137] Homer, 102.
[138] Homer, 102.

this dimension of being always is simply whatever it is in its dumb, idiotic presence as never more and never less than sheer, indifferent plenitude".[139]

The real is associated with the symbolic and the imaginary order and it can be defined as "what is neither symbolic nor imaginary, and remains foreclosed from the analytic experience which is an experience of speech".[140] So the Lacanian real should not be confused with reality.

1.2.3.1. Adaptation

The concept of adaptation that has a harmonious relation between "the *Innenwelt* (inner world)" and "*Umwelt* (surrounding world)" plays an absolute role here. The focus is usually on "the adaptive function of the ego" that is based on a simplistic and unproblematic view of reality; however, the ego's alienating function is ignored. Reality is not a simple, objective thing to which the ego must adapt; but reality is itself a product of the ego's fictional misrepresentations. Therefore, for Lacan "it is not a question of adapting to it [reality], but of showing it [the ego] that it is only too well adapted, since it assists in the construction of that very reality".[141]

In order to deal with alienation, Lacan coins the term extimacy by applying the ex- to "intimacy", he coins "extimacy" in English, to express the existence of binary oppositions such as inside and outside to emphasize that the real is just as much inside as outside, and the unconscious is not a merely interior psychic system but "the unconscious is outside" and as well "an intersubjective structure".[142] Additionally, for Lacan "the center of the subject is outside; the subject is ex-centric".[143]

1.2.4. Nothingness and Desire

It is essential to distinguish need, demand, and desire as Lacan develops a chief distinction between these three terms. Need is a purely biological concept close to

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[139] Adrian Johnston, "Jacques Lacan", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2014/entries/lacan/>.
[140] Aniket Jaaware, *Simplifications: An Introduction to Structuralism and Post-structuralism*, Orient Longman, India 2001, 356.
[141] Evans, 4. See Also *E.*, 236.
[142] Evans, 59. See Also *S VII*, 71, 139.
[143] Evans, 59. See Also *E.*, 165, 171.

Freud's instinct. Lacan argues that while the infant is unable "to satisfy its biological needs", it must express its needs in a preverbal "vocal form (demands) so that another (the mother)" helps it satisfy them and does what is required such as feeding.[144] The term demand means request or ask for. First, there is a being or a subject of "pure need" that tries to express her/his needs through language, so the need must be articulated in demand.[145] Demand is thus closely associated with "the human subject's initial helplessness".[146]

The presence of an Other to satisfy the needs of an infant symbolizes the Other/mother's love. However, the Other can only provide some material objects to satisfy the subject's needs and cannot provide the "unconditional love which the subject craves", subsequently, the remaining unsatisfied "craving for love" is desire. [147] Desire is a constant force which can never be satisfied, it is the constant pressure which lies beneath the drives. "Desire is neither the appetite for satisfaction, nor the demand for love, but the difference that results from the subtraction of the first from the second".[148] For Lacan, lack is always associated with desire because lack causes desire to start. When the infant recognizes its lack, it faces desire which urges the infant to go back to the primal union and become the symbolic phallus for the mother which is catastrophic and tragic.[149] But the rules are determined by the Name-of- the-Father that prohibits the mother to the infant. Lacan claims that sexual desire is structured around the mother that is the "lost signified". [150] This prohibition forced by the Other/father creates subjectivity as well as creating desire.[151] In Azari's words, Lacan creates a relationship between nothingness and desire. Through nothingness Lacan means something that is never-here and desire can be defined as such.[152] Therefore, desire neither can be expressed through language nor can be satisfied in the symbolic.

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[144] Evans, 35-6.
[145] Evans, 125.
[146] Evans, 36.
[147] Evans, 38.
[148] Evans, 38. See Also *E.*, 287.
[149] Douzinas, 303.
[150] Stavrakakis, 45.
[151] Salecl, 101.
[152] Azari, 9.

Hence, desire is "alienated from need and demand" and the desired object represents "the loss that gives rise to desire".[153] The subject is an outsider or alien to her/his own desire and at the same time, "man's desire is the desire of the Other".[154] Desire is "a social product" and takes its roots from the separation of the being from the real and is formed by the emergence of the subject i.e. the subject of lack. The concept that is the very center of Lacan's thought is the concept of desire.[155] Finally, need can be satisfied, but desire can by no means be satisfied; it is constant, undying, and eternal.

1.2.4.1. *Objet (petit)* a: The Object Cause of Desire

Another essential concept is *objet (petit) a* translated into English as *object (little) a* in which the symbol *a* stands for small other. Eidelzstein links the term of *objet a* with x in mathematics to illustrate that *objet a* is an unknown variable.[156] Lacan uses the Greek term aglama in 1960 to clarify *objet a* that means glory, the term is extracted from Plato's *Symposium*. In other words, *objet a* is similar to agalma since it is "a precious object hidden inside a relatively worthless box, so the *objet petit a* is the object of desire which we seek in the other".[157]

Douzinas says it has no specific name because it does not address to a specific need.[158] For Lacan, *objet a* is the object of desire and everyone looks for it in the other; it is the cause of desire.[159] Lacan "calls it 'the object-cause' of desire" therefore *objet a* refers to any object that "sets desire in motion, especially the partial objects which define the drives. The drives do not seek to attain the *objet a*, but rather circle round it".[160] *Jouissance* can never be achieved completely and *objet a* is the substitute for unattainable *jouissance.*

In 1963, *objet a* progressively acquires connotation of the real order but it does not lose its imaginary position, even in 1973 Lacan again claims that *objet a* is

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[153] Azari, 10.
[154] Evans, 38. See Also *SXI*, 235
[155] Evans, 36-37.
[156] Alfredo Eidelzstein, *Graph of Desire: Using the Work of Jacque Lacan,* Karnac Books, London 2009, 19.
[157] Evans, 128. See Also *SVIII*, 177.
[158] Costas Douzinas, *The End of Human Rights*, Hart Publishing, Oxford 2000, 307-308.
[159] Evans, 128. See Also *SVIII*, 177.
[160] Evans, 149, See Also, *SXI*, 179.

imaginary.[161] Azari claims that *objet a* is the cause of desire and comes from the separation of the being from the maternal body.[162] *Objet a* is labeled as the leftover and the remains left following the introduction of the symbolic order in the real order. For Douzinas it is the reminder of the primal union to which subject turns in order to forget the separation and lack so here *objet a* stands as a bridge between the real and the symbolic; it refers to the wish of the subject to become complete again by filling his lack.[163] However, as mentioned before, the lack cannot be removed since the lack is an inseparable part of the Other;[164] desire is essentially desire of the Other's desire, for instance s/he wants to be desired or loved.

The subject's desire is directed to this object in the symbolic, not to the impossible Other and Lacan underlines the importance of the mediation of the *objet a* for the subject as the only way to the Other.[165] Lacan, cited in Nobus from Seminar V, expresses that as *objet a* is not something that satisfies need of the subject, it is essentially relative and refers to what the subject is symbolically deprived of.[166] In fact, *objet a* actually prevents any object from really filling the lack and desire is left unsatisfied.[167] Additionally, desire that is a social product emerges in the unconscious that is the field of Other and Lacan prefers to focus on the unconscious desire. When demands are satisfied by capturing the intended objects, the subject no longer needs them. But desire can never be completely satisfied. In other words, the *objet a* is a bridge that lies towards the desire, and it is impossible for a subject to attain her/his desire by just walking on a nearby bridge or a substitute of *jouissance*.

1.2.4.2. Renunciation of *Jouissance*

Jouissance is a French word that chiefly means "enjoyment, but it has a sexual connotation (i.e. 'orgasm') lacking in the English word enjoyment"; therefore, the term *jouissance* is used untranslated in most English publications on Lacan. In different

[161] Evans, 128. See Also *SXX*, 77.
[162] Ehsan Azari, *Lacan and the Destiny of Literature: Desire, Jouissance and the Sinthome in Shakespeare, Donne, Joyce and Ashbery*, Continium International Publishing, London 2008, 11.
[163] Douzinas, 307-8.
[164] Yannis Stavrakakis, *Lacan and Political*, Routledge, London 1999, 42.
[165] Azari, 12, 19.
[166] Nobus, 29.
[167] Douzinas, 307-308.

seminars, Lacan defined the term from the perspective of "the Hegelian dialectic of the master and the slave" to provide "objects for the master's enjoyment (*jouissance*)" or to refer to "the satisfaction of a biological need such as hunger" or uses the term to deal with "the enjoyment of a sexual object and to the pleasures of masturbation".[168] For Lacan, the "pleasure principle functions as a limit to enjoyment" and forces a law commanding the subject to enjoy as less as possible and never go "beyond the limits of pleasure principle", and at the same time, the subject constantly attempts to disobey the prohibitions imposed on his enjoyment and attempts to go "beyond the pleasure principle".[169]

Hence beyond this limit, pleasure grows to be pain, and this is Lacan's impossible *jouissance* or "*jouissance* is suffering".[170] Malone claims that this misleading term that seems to refer to heightened degree of pleasure is paradoxical since *jouissance* associated with experience leads the subject to deny finding pleasure in it. Malone states "[p]resenting problems typically hide *jouissance* in a mask of pain and helplessness. Self-image furnishes the accoutrements of (rationalizations for) maintaining ways of life that preserve *jouissance*. The fundamental implication of *jouissance* is that some aspect of psychic life outside of and antecedent to socialization is in play". [171] Lacan in his 1966 lecture on "Psychoanalysis and Medicine" says:

> What I call *jouissance* – in the sense in which the body experiences itself is always in the nature of tension, in the nature of a forcing, of a spending, even of an exploit. Unquestionably, there is *jouissance* at the level at which pain begins to appear, and we know that it is only at this level of pain that a whole dimension of the organism, which would otherwise remain veiled, can be experienced.[172]

When the subject enters into the symbolic structure of language s/he must accept the prohibition of *jouissance* by the pleasure principle. So "castration means that *jouissance* must be refused" then the subject can reach "the inverted ladder of the Law of

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[168] Evans, 94.
[169] Evans, 94-95.
[170] Evans, 94-95. See Also *S VII*, 184.
[171] Kareen Ror Malone, Stephen R. Friedlander, *The Subject of Lacan: A Lacanian Reader for Psychologists*, State University of New York Press, Albany 2000, 363.
[172] Jacques Lacan, "Psychanalyse et m´edecine" (1966), *Lettres de l''ecole freudienne 1*, Paris 1967, 60.

desire".[173] When the subject enters the symbolic order, s/he has already experienced the castration complex and therefore has renunciated the *jouissance* i.e. the subject has accepted that s/he is not the imaginary phallus of the mother. The "prohibition" itself "creates the desire to transgress" and disobey; therefore, *jouissance* expresses the paradoxical suffering that the subject gets from her/his own satisfaction.[174]

The opposition between desire and *jouissance* is that desire refers to a lost and absent object; it is lack in being and its expression is the fantasy. *Jouissance* points to nothing because it is "an unpredictable experience" and the subject finds her/himself "split by the polarity *jouissance*/desire. This is why desire, fantasy, and pleasure are barriers on the way to *jouissance*. As is satisfaction the source of pleasure, and [*jouissance*] blocks the way of the drive, which is closer to pain".[175] Lacan holds that "desire comes from the Other, while *jouissance* is on the side of the Thing".[176]

1.2.4.3. Drive

For Freud, the concept of drive is fundamental for his theory of sexuality. For Freud, "the distinctive feature of human sexuality, as opposed to the sexual life of other animals, is that it is not regulated by any instinct (a concept which implies a relatively fixed and innate relationship to an object) but by the drives".[177]

Lacan attempts to retain the Freud's distinction between drive and instinct and defines the difference by saying that the term instinct refers to a "pre-linguistic need" but drive is "completely removed from the realm of biology"; however, unlike biological needs, "they can never be satisfied, and do not aim at an object but rather circle perpetually round it" that means to keep on the circular way around the object in a closed circuit and this repetition process is the true source of *jouissance* or of pleasure.[178]

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[173] Evans, 95. See Also *E*., 324.
[174] Evans, 95.
[175] Jean Michel Rabate, *The Cambridge Companion to Lacan*, Cambridge University Press, 2003, 107.
[176] Azari, 107.
[177] Evans, 47. See Also *E*., 301.
[178] Evans, 47. See Also *S XI*, 168.

Freud defined "the drive as a montage composed of four discontinuous elements: the pressure, the end, the object and the source".[179] Thus drive cannot be defined as "some ultimate given, something archaic, primordial" rather it is actually a "cultural and symbolic construct" and Lacan disagrees with Freud's "the lingering references" of the drive "to energetics and hydraulics".[180] Lacan includes

> "Four elements for the drive's circuit in which the drive initiates in an erogenous zone and then is structured by the three grammatical voices:
> The active voice (e.g. to see)
> The reflexive voice (e.g. to see oneself)
> The passive voice (e.g. to be seen)"[181]

The active and reflexive voices are "autoerotic i.e. they lack a subject" but in the passive voice, after "the drive completes its circuit does 'a new subject' appear" in other words before "this time, there was no subject".[182] Unlike the title of the passive voice, the drive is "essentially active"; therefore, Lacan prefers to say that the third phase refers to "make oneself be seen rather than to be seen".[183] For instance the seemingly passive phases of masochism involve activity and "the circuit of the drive is the only way for the subject to go beyond the bounds of the pleasure principle".[184]

Lacan classifies four partial drives as follows: "the oral drive, the anal drive, the scopic drive, and the invocatory drive" and each of them is manifested by a different "partial object and a different erogenous zone", as illustrated in Figure 1.3.[185]

	PARTIAL DRIVE	EROGENOUS ZONE	PARTIAL OBJECT	VERB
D	Oral drive	Lips	Breast	To suck
	Anal drive	Anus	Faeces	To shit
d	Scopic drive	Eyes	Gaze	To see
	Invocatory drive	Ears	Voice	To hear

Figure 1.3. Table of Partial Drives

[179] Evans, 46.
[180] Evans, 47.
[181] Evans, 47-8. See Also *S XI*, 178, 200.
[182] Evans, 47-8. See Also *S XI*, 178, 200.
[183] Evans, 47-8. See Also *S XI*, 178.
[184] Evans, 47-8. See Also *S XI*, 178.
[185] Evans, 48.

The first two partial drives are connected to demand, but the second two are related to desire. As well, the drives are "closely related to desire; both originate in the field of the subject as opposed to the genital drive, which (if it exists) finds its form on the side of the Other".[186] While desire is "one and undivided", the drives are "partial manifestations of desire" in other words desire is revealed and recognized. [187]

1.2.4.3.1. Death Drive

Although rejected by many, Freud sets up the controversial concept of the death drive in his *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) and defines it in opposition between "life drive" (Eros) determined to tend to "cohesion and unity", and the death drive (Thanatos) on the other hand "undo connections and destroy things".[188] Lacan reclaims the concept of the death drive as central to psychoanalysis and adds "[t]o ignore the death instinct in his [Freud's] doctrine is to misunderstand that doctrine entirely", even though Lacan at first expresses it as a longing to go back to "the preoedipal fusion with the mother's breast".[189]

Later, he links the death drive to the "suicidal tendency of narcissism".[190] However, after Lacan begins to build up his concept of the three orders of the imaginary, the symbolic and the real, in the 1950s, he situates the death drive in the symbolic order in order to "produce repetition", and says that "the death instinct is only the mask of the symbolic order".[191] Lacan adds that "every drive is virtually a death drive"[192] because first "every drive pursues its own extinction", second "every drive involves the subject in repetition", and third "every drive is an attempt to go beyond the pleasure principle, to the realm of excess *jouissance* where enjoyment is experienced as suffering".[193]

In contrast to Freud who opposed the death drive to the sexual drives and defined life drives as including cohesion and harmony and in contrast death drives, Lacan

[186] Evans, 48.
[187] Evans, 48.
[188] Todd S Presner, *Mobile Modernity: Germans, Jews, Trains*, Colombia University Press, New York 2007, 242.
[189] Evans, 33. See Also *E*., 301.
[190] Evans, 33. See Also *E*., 301.
[191] Evans, 34. See Also *SII*, 326.
[192] *Ec.*, 848.
[193] Evans, 34.

asserts that death drive is not a detached drive, rather it is a part and portion of every drive. Therefore, for Lacan, "all drives are sexual drives and every drive is a death drive since every drive is excessive, repetitive, and ultimately destructive".[194]

1.2.5. The Lacanian Subject

The term subject or *sujet* has a fundamental role in Lacan's work. Since it is not a Freudian term, it distinctively belongs to Lacan and is linked with philosophy and discourse in linguistics. Firstly, he uses the term subject to refer to "human being" and also to refer to "an analysand".[195] Later in 1945, he continues to classify three types of subjects:

1. The impersonal subject, the one that is independent of the other, in other words it is the pure grammatical subject
2. The anonymous reciprocal subject that recognizes oneself according to the other and in correspondence with any other
3. The personal subject is defined by self-affirmation that leads to his uniqueness[196]

Lacan usually focuses on the third type that is the subject in her/his uniqueness.

Lacan claims that the conditions of the function of signifiers related to each other are what permit the subject to be, in other words, "the appearance of the subject is determined by the relation between two signifiers so that when a signifier is there and representing the subject for another signifier, the subject, in being represented, is not in fact present".[197]

1.2.5.1. The Autonomous Ego

Lacan argues that the ego is not self-determining or free rather it "is determined by the symbolic order".[198] When the ego "becomes autonomous by achieving a harmonious balance between its primitive drives and the dictates of reality" it is called

[194] Evans, 49. See Also *Ec*., 848.
[195] *Ec.*, 83.
[196] Evans, 197-198.
[197] Barry O'Donnell, "Lacan and the Sophist- Indications of the Logic of the Subject*", Psychoanalytische Perspectieven*, Vol 18 (3/4) 2000, 102.
[198] Evans, 15.

autonomous ego that is synonymous with "the strong ego", "the well-adapted ego" or "the healthy ego". Lacan believes that the autonomy of ego is a mere illusion because it is "the symbolic order and not the ego" that is autonomous.[199]

Therefore he uses "the barred subject" $\$$ to illustrate "the division of the subject by language, the split" and from 1957 on S was assigned to the signifier and $\$$ represents "the divided subject". He also uses "the barred Other" A that is "castrated, incomplete, marked by a lack, opposed to the complete, consistent, uncastrated Other" so "un-barred A, […] does not exist".[200]

1.2.5.2. The Subject and the Ego

Lacan makes a primary "distinction between the subject and the ego". He claims that "the subject is part of the symbolic" but the ego is "part of the imaginary order".[201] Therefore, the subject is not an agency of the conscious but of the unconscious.[202] Lacan states that the distinction between the subject and the ego can be followed back in Freud when he says "[Freud] wrote *Das Ich und das Es* in order to maintain this fundamental distinction between the true subject of the unconscious and the ego as constituted in its nucleus by a series of alienating identifications".[203]

In order to offer a clear definition for the subject, Lacan uses linguistics. In order to emphasize the aspect of human being, he says that the subject is opposed to the object therefore the subject cannot be objectified or reduced to a thing. Lacan says "What do we call a subject? Quite precisely, what in the development of objectivation, is outside of the object".[204] Lacanian subject is the subject of the unconscious and psychoanalysis functions on this subject.

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[199] Evans, 14-15.
[200] Evans, 16.
[201] Evans, 197.
[202] Todd McGowan, *The Real Gaze: Film Theory after Lacan*, State University of New York Press 2007, 12.
[203] Evans, 198. See Also *E*., 128.
[204] Evans, 198. See Also *SI*, 194.

1.2.5.3. Destruction of the Subject

Accordingly, aphanisis that means disappearance is a Greek term. Later "disappearance of sexual desire" was coined by Ernest Jones in 1927 and was considered as a basis for neurotic disease that is strongly related to fear after "castration complex in boys and to penis envy in girls".[205] For Lacan, "aphanisis does not mean the disappearance of desire", rather "the disappearance of the subject" that means the subject becomes split. Therefore, the aphanisis of the subject is "the fading" and "disappearance of the subject in the process of alienation".[206]

Lacanian subject can never be anything other than divided, split, alienated from her/himself and "the split is irreducible, can never be healed; there is no possibility of synthesis" and wholeness.[207] And such split or alienated subject is represented by the Lacanian bar which passes through the S to produce the barred subject ($) that illustrates the unavailability of the ideal and fully present self-consciousness i.e. the subject will never know her/himself completely.[208]

1.2.5.4. From the Little other to the Big Other

For Lacan the goal is to move from the little a, "the little other" to the big A, "the big Other".[209] Evans writes that:

> The little other is the other who is not really other, but a reflection and projection of the Ego […] The little other is thus entirely inscribed in the imaginary order. The big Other designates radical alterity, an other-ness which transcends the illusory otherness of the imaginary because it cannot be assimilated through identification. Lacan equates this radical alterity with language and the law, and hence the big Other is inscribed in the order of the symbolic. Indeed, the big Other is the symbolic insofar as it is particularized for each subject. The Other is thus both another subject, in his radical alterity and unassimilable uniqueness, and also the symbolic order which mediates the relationship with that other subject […] the Other must

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[205] Colman, Andrew M. "aphanisis". *Oxford Reference*. 2009. Oxford University Press ,15 Dec. 2014, <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199
[206] Evans, 12. See Also *S XI*, 208.
[207] Evans, 195.
[208] Evans, 195. See Also *E.*, 288.
[209] Thierfelder, 39.

first of all be considered a locus, the locus in which speech is constituted.[210]

The little other is an ideal-image of the ego that is created in the mirror stage; it is a reflection of the ego. This ideal image becomes an other inside the subject. The little other is depicted in the imaginary order as the counterpart and the specular image.

The big Other embodies other people, language, law and the traditions of social life. In other words, language and the rules and principles of human societies do exist before an infant's birth and they must employ the predefined codes of the society where s/he is to live. Subjects become internally alienated by yielding to these rules in order to interact with other subjects.

For Lacan speech has its origins neither in the ego nor in the subject, but "in the Other […] speech and language are beyond one's conscious control; they come from outside consciousness", so "the unconscious is the discourse of the Other". [211] In other wods, "the mythical complete Other (written A in Lacanian algebra) does not exist…. Lacan illustrates this incomplete Other graphically by striking a bar through the symbol A, to produce Ⱥ: hence another name for the castrated, incomplete Other is the barred Other".[212]

1.2.6. Introduction to Language

In the mirror stage the child recognizes that her/his dependence on others is inevitable for survival. The child observes that appearance and disappearance of objects such as mother's breast or other objects of desire are not in her/his control. The child also is unable to distinguish between real and imaging objects and therefore is imprisoned by her/his inability to discriminate between them or has no control on them. Here the child must learn the language to acquire other rules and conventions of Law. When the child transits from the mirror stage via oedipal resolution, s/he undergoes loss and fragmentation. However, at the oedipal resolution the three orders of imaginary, symbolic and real merge and intermix. But it still is the symbolic that provides a language for the imaginary and real orders.

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[210] Evans, 135-136. See Also *SIII*, 274.
[211] Evans, 136. See Also *Ec.*, 16.
[212] Evans, 136.

1.2.6.1. Lacanian Unconscious and Structure of Language

Lacan also has different attitude to language compared with Saussure. The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) believes that language is composed of signs including signifier and signified. The signifier refers to the word, or the sound uttered; and the signified refers to the concept, the meaning, or the thing illustrated by the signifier. This Saussurian understanding is the two-side model of sign. Saussure aims to create a science of language at the outset of his *Course in General Linguistics* (1916) and claims "[l]anguage at any given time involves an established system and an evolution […] At first sight, it looks very easy to distinguish between the system and its history, between what it is and what it was. In reality, the [connection] between the two is so close that it is hard to separate them".[213]

For Saussure the linguistic phenomena, for example, can begin with a study of children's language. However, for Saussure it's quite illusionary to believe that "where language is concerned the problem of origins is any different from the problem of permanent conditions" and "there is no way out of the circles". [214] Young interprets that Saussure deals with primary qualities of language "qualities which can be treated mathematically and which are thought not to vary according to subjective bias". [215]

Later, Saussure distinguishes between *la parole* (speech acts) and *la langue* (the system of a language) in other words, *la langue* is formulated by the community but *la parole* depends on the will of the individual. For Saussure langue "refers to the system of rules and conventions which is independent of, and pre-exists, individual users" in other words it refers to systematic rules of a signifying system that pre-exists its users.[216] While langue includes the rules and doctrines of language, parole refers to any meaningful statement or speech. Parole is the "concrete instances of the use of langue" i.e. any individual speech uttered by the subject.[217] Seemingly, Lacan and his

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[213] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, (Trans. Wade Baskin), McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York 1915, 9.
[214] Saussure, 1915, 8-10.
[215] Robert M Young, "the Mind-Body Problem", (Eds. R.C. Olby), *Companion to the History of Modern Science*, Routledge, London 1990, 702-11.
[216] Vincent M. Colapietro. *Glossary of Semiotics. Paragon House Glossaries for Research, Reading, and Writing*, Paragon House, New York 1993, 102.
[217] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, (Trans. Roy Harris), Oxford, Ducworth, 1983, 9, 15.

psychology take Saussure's object to be his own and attempt to construct his science on it. For Lacan the year 1920 is a symbolic date referring to the transformation that occurred in psychoanalysis leading to a more humanist approach to subjectivity when Freud proposed his "dual drive theory of sexuality and aggression"[218] in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920). Lacan claims:

> The present disdain for research into language symbols which can be seen by a glance at the summaries of our publications before and after the 1920s-corresponds in our discipline to nothing less than a change of object, whose tendency to align itself at the most commonplace level of communication, in order to come into line with the new objectives proposed for the psychoanalytic technique, is perhaps responsible for the rather gloomy balance sheet which the most lucid writers have drawn up of its results.[219]

In addition, Lacan seems to worry whether psychoanalysis will be accepted as a science and declares "if psychoanalysis is to become a science for it is not yet one, and if it is not to degenerate in its technique- and perhaps that has already happened -we must get back to the meaning of its experience".[220] When Lacan asks if Freud's results "form the basis of a positive science", he answers "if the experience is verified by everyone".[221] Considering the ability of all experiences to be verified by everyone, Lacan says that "psychoanalysis has a single intermediary: the patient's Word".[222]

Brennan also believes that

> Ego psychology is a product of its times. So was Freud's preoccupation with reality-testing and his mistaken emphasis on the perception consciousness system which, like ego psychology, stems from the mirage of objectification, inherited from classical psychology […] that mirage is part of an enormous objectification constituted in and through science […] Positivism forms part of objectifying assault on reason through its focus on experimentation. Positivism reverses [and …] blocks off truth, psychoanalysts as practitioners of the symbolic function[…] return to a

[218] Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle, XVIII,* (1920) (2nd Ed.), Hogarth Press, 1955, 5.
[219] Jacques Lacan, (1953), *The Language of the Self: The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis,* (Trans. by Anthony Wilden), John Hopkins, Baltimore, 1968, 34. From Now on *FLP*.
[220] *FLP*, 30.
[221] *E.*, 9.
[222] *FLP*, 9.

> conception of true science […] in a tradition beginning with Plato's *Theaetetus"*.[223]

Besides, Lacan states that he attempts to create "a new order of the science" that is a kind of going back to the "age old" i.e. to the logical tradition of Plato in *Theaetetus.*[224] Theaetetus was a mathematician and younger contemporary of Plato. Both of them in the work *Theaetetus* highlight the need for clear definition in both reason and science. The *Theaetetus* insists on the "broad Platonic rejection of surface, sensory reasoning, and is one of Plato's main works on epistemology".[225]

For Plato the good life equals love of reason and as well soul's health lies in its quest for dialogic knowledge, therefore a healthy subject can go beyond his fixed or present position. And this subject is what Lacan stresses in his findings. Lacan attempts to develop the concept of the subjective positions of being and is concerned with the relation between the subject and the signifier that can be structured around the source of the expression. Concerning the understandings of Lacan via Plato "true science…. is a science where connections are made in a dialogic process. These connections are made through the symbolic; we could say that they are made from the position of I which is the reverse of the *moi*".[226]

Structural system is of great significance for Lacan in psychoanalysis and understanding the deeper meaning. First, Lacan prefers to use Saussure's structural analysis of signs for psychoanalysis like considering the words uttered by the analysand, and this way learn about the patient's family structure and one's position in this Structural system. Nusselder believes that

> *Arbitrariness then means that the 'effects* of signification' (*effets de signifié*) have the appearance of having nothing to do with what causes them.227 The signifier is first; the signified is only its effect. Therefore, the signified inevitably 'slips beneath' the signifier resisting our attempts to delimit it. However, he does think that there are some 'anchoring points' (*points de*

[223] Teresa Brennan, *History after Lacan*, Taylor and Francise, 2003, 33-4.
[224] *FLP*, 47.
[225] Brennan, 33-4.
[226] Brennan, 34.
[227] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan*, (Trans. Alan Sheridan), New York, Norton & Co, 1999, 23.

caption, translated by Fink as 'button ties') 'by which the signifier stops the otherwise indefinite sliding of signification'.[228]

In Lacan's early writings, signification connotes both meaningfulness and importance.[229] However, later (after 1950) it kept vague associations with meaning and language, and is placed in the symbolic order.[230]

1.2.6.2. Metaphor and Metonymy

From 1957 Lacan uses signification referring to Saussure's signifier and signified and moves from the symbolic to the imaginary order. Unlike Saussure who believes there is a stable relationship between signifier and signified, Lacan emphasizes on the priority of the signifier. Lacan uses slip and slippage to refer to the unstable but fluid bond between the signifier and the signified. In other words, signification for Lacan is not a stable bond between signifier and signified, but it is a process through which the signifiers create the illusion of the signified via metonymy and metaphor.

For Lacan signification is metonymic because "signification always refers to another signification".[231] He also adds that "[I]t is in the chain of the signifier that the meaning insists, but none of its elements consists in the signification of which it is at the moment capable".[232] Thus, meaning is created in the play between signifiers in the signifying chain and consequently is fluid and unstable. In other words, metonymy embodies desire or another signifier that is unreachable; it is a kind of substitution.

Lacan had to reconsider Freud's Oedipal complex and transforms this romance through language. For Lacan, signification can be metaphoric and includes the "passage of the signifier into the signified".[233] The metaphor is shaped from the primordial repression and is created in the "emergence of signification".[234] Since the subject and knowledge are constantly barred from each other, the unconscious expresses itself via the metaphor .The main difference between metaphor and metonymy for Lacan is that

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[228] Nusselder, 21.
[229] *Ec*., 81.
[230] *SIV*, 121.
[231] *SIII*, 33.
[232] *E.*, 153.
[233] *E.*, 164
[234] James M. Mellard, *Using Lacan, Reading Fiction*, Illini Books Edition, 1991, 24.

metaphor acts to suppress, while metonymy functions to combine. He writes: "it is in the word-to-word connection that metonymy is based",[235] and "one word for another: that is the formula of metaphor".[236]

Human beings must communicate through a metonymic chain of signifiers of substitutions and displacements. The child is a speaking subject that uses language which is symbolic; it is a substitute for the real that can never be identified. Language both substitutes and symbolizes and there is therefore an activity of double symbolization. Unlike Freud's penis, Lacan's phallus is crucial in the development of the symbolic and the phallus is a parental metaphor that is the symbol for authority and power. The Name-of-the-Father is also a metaphor and the child must admit that the mother lacks the phallus and does not have the father's authority and all significance is consequently phallic.

Above all, that the unconscious is structured like a language is Lacan's most significant contribution to psychoanalysis, accordingly the unconscious is conducted by the rules of the signifier so the unconscious can be unraveled through speech and language. As discussed, the unconscious is created through the subject's "articulation" in the symbolic order.[237] Unlike Freud, the Lacanian unconscious is not an individual unconscious; rather it refers to the influence of a beyond individual symbolic order on the subject.

Fink states that "Lacan did not assert that the unconscious is structured in exactly the same way as English, say, or some other ancient or modern language"; for Lacan "language, as it operates at the unconscious level, obeys a kind of grammar, that is, a set of rules that governs the transformation and slippage that goes on therein".[238] Language, for Lacan, describes not merely oral speech or written text but any signifying system that is constructed on relations such as encoding and decoding.

The unconscious that is constructed in the symbolic order among signifiers and signifieds is the outcome of the trans-individual symbolic order, and the result is that the

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[235] Nigel Wood, David Lodge, *Modern Criticism and Theory*, (3rd Ed.), Routledge, New York 2008, 193.
[236] Wood, 2008, 194.
[237] No Subject contributors. "Jacques Lacan". *No Subject- Encyclopedia of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, 10 Jan. 2016. Web. 20 Jan. 2016
[238] Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1995, 8-9.

unconscious should be decoded. In other words, the unconscious is considered textual and it is the text of the unconscious that is available for linguistic study, especially, those of the analysand in the curing process.[239] Besides, the images in dreams are the signifiers to unravel the puzzle behind it so the "unconscious is 'like' a language" or a language that must be interpreted by "the agencies of the letter" and this textual unconscious must be interpreted as any other text.[240]

1.2.6.3. Algebra and Lacanian Symbols

Lacan uses Algebra and algebraic signs to produce his symbolic expressions. Lacan challenges to "formalize psychoanalysis" and starts to use algebraic symbols in 1955. The algebraic symbols used by Lacan which appear principally in "the mathemes", "schema l" and "the graph of desire" together with their most meanings are as follows:[241]

Symbol	Translation
A	the big Other
A	the barred Other
a	(see *objet petit a*)
a'	(see *objet petit a*)
$\mathcal{S}$	1. (before 1957) the subject
	2. (from 1957 on) the signifier
	3. (in the schemas of Sade) the raw subject of pleasure
$\$$	the barred subject
S_1	the master signifier
S_2	the signifying chain/knowledge
s	the signified (in the Saussurean algorithm)
$S(\mathcal{A})$	the signifier of a lack in the Other

[239] James M. Mellard, *Beyond Lacan*, State University of New York Press, 2006, 15-17.
[240] Mellard, 17
[241] Evans, 7-9.

s(A)	the signification of the Other (the message/symptom)
D	Demand
d	Desire
m	the ego (moi)
i	the specular image (schema R)
i(a)	1. the specular image (graph of desire)
	2. the ideal ego (optical model)
I	the ego-ideal (schema R)
I(A)	the ego-ideal (graph of desire)
Π	the real phallus
Φ	the symbolic phallus [upper-case phi]
(-φ)	castration [lower-case phi]
S	the symbolic order (schema R)
R	the field of reality (schema R)
I	the imaginary order (schema R)
P	the symbolic father / Name-of-the-Father
p	the imaginary father
M	the symbolic mother
J	*Jouissance*
Jφ	phallic *jouissance*
JA	the *jouissance* of the Other
E	the statement
e	the enunciation
V	the will-to-enjoy (volonté de *jouissance*)

Figure 1.4. Multiplication Table

In the algebraic system, italicization, upper or lower case symbols, capitalization, or the use of the bar etc. plays a vital role in the interpretation process.

1.2.6.4. Language and the Subject

The process of the subject's evolution is interrelated with lack. Here castration is so important that lack is likely to become identical with castration. As the infant enters into the symbolic order of language, it acquires an existence and becomes the subject; and after the symbolic castration, the being is fragmented. It is because of this loss that the subject identifies the lack with being a subject. Then the subject wishes to turn back and recover her/his lack of being which is both prohibited and impossible and the subject remains being-less.[242] For Salec, the real and the existence of the subject exclude each other.[243] For Douizanas when language is introduced, the real is killed: "language in its arbitrary connections between signifiers and signifieds and between words and things destroys, kills reality".[244]

The process of the constitution of the subject occurs through language and within the realm of the symbolic. Hence, Lacan identifies the impossible subject with "non-lacking" in the real order, the impossibility comes from the fact that the subject is always a subject of lack. Therefore, the real and the symbolic are "mutually exclusive" in each sense.[245] The real is absent from the level of signification and cannot exist in the symbolic and resists any kind of symbolization; the real is constitutive through its absence in the subject.[246] Thus, whatever the subject attains is associated with "something" absent. It is because of this absence the subject appears as a subject of lack.[247]

Later Lacan proposes the algebraic symbol for the barred Other $(\mathbb{A})$, and lack designates "the lack of a signifier in the Other".[248] Lacan introduces the symbol $S(\mathbb{A})$ to refer to "the signifier of a lack in the Other". For Lacan "no matter how many signifiers one adds to the signifying chain, the chain is always incomplete; it always lacks the

[242] Azari, 16.
[243] Salecl, 132.
[244] Douzinas, 302.
[245] Stavrakakis, 44.
[246] Salecl, 125.
[247] Stavrakakis, 130.
[248] Evans, 99.

signifier that could complete it. In Lacanian algebra missing signifier is constitutive of the subject".[249] Therefore, the subject is always a subject of lack, and s/he is equivalent to lack and can never be removed.[250]

Barnard believes that there is a shift in psycholinguistics because the study of sociolinguistic phenomena has led to "the emergence and consolidation of 'socially oriented' sub-disciplines such as discourse analysis and pragmatics".[251] Nevertheless, Lacan displaces the Cartesian *cogito* and reworks the Saussurean sign and signification. Unlike Chomsky who is criticized for reducing language to "social interaction", idealized realm of communication within conscious thought, or to "inter-subjectivity", Lacan mainly focuses on the unconscious and the role of symbolic functions in constituting the relation between language and the subject.[252] The vital reality emphasizing Lacan's significance is that he bases the real object of his psychoanalytic investigations on language. Lacan cares for the "speaking subject".[253]

Benveniste claims that the language that Lacanian psychoanalysis deals with is totally different from "formal object-system that la langue represents for modern linguistics" and also defines this language as "the act of speech (parole), converted into that expression of elusive and instantaneous subjectivity which forms the condition of dialogue".[254] Lacan in "The Agency of the Letter, or Reason Since Freud" asks

> [H]ow could a psychoanalyst of today not realize that speech is the key to that truth (the truth of psychoanalysis), when his whole experience must find in speech alone its instrument, its context, its material, and even the background noise of its uncertainties?.255

Therefore, for Lacan the psychoanalyst can complete his psychological course by focusing on an individual's speech. Bernard also claims that if psychoanalysis is considered as a "science" then language is its "object" and the individual or the subject

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[249] Evans, 98.
[250] Stavrakakis, 38.
[251] Suzanne Barnard, "Socializing Psycholinguistic Discourse", (Eds., Kareen Ror Malone, Stephen R. Friedlander), *The Subject of Lacan: A Lacanian Reader for Psychologists,* State University of New York Press, 2000, 69.
[252] Barnard, 63-64.
[253] Barnard, 66-75
[254] Emile Benveniste, *Problems in General Linguistics*, (Trans. M. E. Meek), University of Miami Press, Coral Gables 1971, 67.
[255] *E.*, 147.

is its "subject".[256]

As well, Nancy and Labarthe state that "the shifter, a singularly remarkable property in linguistics, is . . . diverted into an irremediable gap between statement . . . and enunciation, which is the impossible identification of the speaking subject".[257] In other words, Lacan attempts to show that the subject is a speaking being and therefore s/he focuses on the subject of enunciation rather than the subject of statement. The actual words uttered are statement; however, the act of uttering them is the enunciation. After the acceptance of the Other of language, Lacanian subject is obviously divided, castrated, split and in other words the subject is an effect of language.[258]

1.2.6.5. Language as an Other

Developing algorithmizing the sign, Lacan reestablishes the relation between the signifier and signified as a heterogeneous one and introduces a bar as barrier to predefined Saussurean one-to-one association within a sign system. Lacan creates a shift and instead of marking a difference between signs he deals with nonidentity or lack of the sign with itself. He puts great emphasis on the process of signification whose basis lies on the relationships between signifiers. Thus, one signifier does not depend on one signified but to another signifier in a chain of signifiers present in the process of signification. In other words, the I in Lacan's idea directly depend on the chain of signifiers along with their own rules and regulations and this is what Tallis calls "the dance of signifiers".[259]

Bernard quotes that for Kristeva the Lacanian subject is involved in the production of "a secondary signifying system" and is condemned to submit to the symbolic order that includes preinscripted syntax in "the ideal speaker- hearer" discourse; and "one must generally and simply described as an appropriation and transformation of the symbolic that in its divergence from the symbolic marks the

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[256] Bernard, 69.
[257] Jean-Luc Nancy, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *The Title of the Letter: a Reading of Lacan*, (Trans. F. Raffoul & D. Pettigrew), State University of New York Press, Albany 1992, 116.
[258] *Bernard*, 74-5.
[259] Tallis, Raymond, *Not Saussure: A Critique of Post-Saussurean Literary Theory,* Macmillan, London 1988, 153.

presence of the subject".[260] Lacan characterizes language to be outside of or other to the psychological subject when he says "[we must] set out from the conception of the Other as the locus of the signifier".[261] In addition "for Lacan, the symbolic order is both the particular linguistic system into which the subject is born (the language of others) and, more abstractly, language defined by its basic algorithmic and "lawlike" functioning (language as Other)".[262]

Therefore, language is the discourse of the Other and Lacan simply refers to language as Other. When a baby is born s/he is given a proper name to identify its place that is inscribed for it; and the traditions or structures of culture hidden under discourse start to build subject's being that are sometimes referred to as "slave of language".[263]

Hence, marked by a "proper name", the subject is condemned to submit to the Other of language and is positioned in a reserved place for one in the symbolic order that one is predestined to but has not chosen. This accepting and adopting to the pre-inscribed position within the Other of language forms the original division or split in subjectivity that is between "the subject in language (the ego, in psychoanalytic parlance) and the subject of language (the subject)".[264] Since the subject comes to life through the structure of language, s/he will have a kind of lack or alienation and the knowledge of such being is never absolute. In conclusion, language is a preexisting structure that produces subject.

For Lacan, language is praxis; language is not reduced to synchronic structure serving consciousness rather language makes the subject speak beyond her/his consciousness and speak from the transpersonal space of the Other. Kristeva states:

> Psychoanalysis renders impossible the habit commonly accepted by . . . linguistics of considering language outside its realization in discourse, that is, by forgetting that language does not exist outside the discourse of a subject, or by considering this subject […] as equal to himself […] The

[260] Bernard, 71.
[261] Bernard, 72
[262] Bernard, 72.
[263] *E.*, 148.
[264] Bernard, 73.

> subject is not; he makes and unmakes himself in a complex typology where the other and his discourse are included.[265]

The psycholinguistic approach to language as a praxis refers to the study of the process of constructing meaning through language within which both the subject and meaning are produced and reproduced.

1.2.7. Lacan and Literature

Surprenant claims that "Psychoanalytic literary criticism does not constitute a unified field. However, all variants endorse, at least to a certain degree, the idea that literature […] is fundamentally entwined with the psyche".[266]

Lacan was an avid reader of literature and used literary works to illustrate what his concepts revealed, for example, Lacan debated with other critics such as Jacques Derrida about the analysis of literary examples, for instance Poe's "The Purloined Letter" or Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Ousby believes that "Lacan's theories have encouraged a criticism which focuses not on the author but on the linguistic processes of the text".[267] Nonetheless, Lacanian researchers sometimes claim that Lacan read literature to demonstrate how psychoanalytic methods or concepts work and he was not very interested in literary criticism by itself.[268]

Barthes defines literature as

> From Ancient times to the efforts of our avant-grade, literature has been concerned to represent something. What? I will put it crudely: the real. The real is not representable, and it is because men ceaselessly try to represent it by words that there is a history of literature, that real is not representable, but only demonstrable…with Lacan, as the impossible, that which is unattainable and escapes discourse. [269]

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[265] Julia Kristeva, *Language, the Unknown: An Initiation into Linguistics*, (Trans. A. M. Menke), Columbia University Press, New York 1989, 274-5.
[266] Celine Surprenant, "Freud and Psychoanalysis" (Ed. Patricia Waugh), *Literary Theory and Criticism*, Oxford University Press, 2006, 200.
[267] Ian Ousby, Doris Lessing, *The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English*, Cambridge University Press, 1995, 767.
[268] Gottschall, 38-55.
[269] Roland Barthes, "'from Of Lover's Discourse'", (Eds. Susan Sontage), *A Barthes Reader*, Vintage, London 1993, 465. See Also Azari, 7.

The real is "the dimension of human experience which is both before and beyond language and logic".[270] Lacan's work, as a result, has a special relevance to literature not only because of his central emphasis on language but also because of the possibility that art and literature may offer some satisfaction of the desire. Like Freud, Lacan himself frequently appeals to examples from literature to illustrate his theses; for instance he had some seminars to teach Joyce and claims that Joyce's writing gains its special power from an unusual ability to reflect pressure from the real order.

Literature illustrates and dramatizes human subjectively; and psychoanalysis analyzes how one's subjectivity is formed. Lacan concerns fragmentation or divided self when he examines a literary text. In order to examine a text, Lacan looks for elements of the third part of the human psyche i.e. the real order. On the one hand, the real order consists of the physical world including the materials and any other thing; and includes "countless *objet petit a*, objects that continually function for us as symbols of primordial lack"; because "these objects and indeed the entire physical universe are not and can never be parts of ourselves", the only way of experiencing them is throughout language.[271]

Literature and language use letters and texts. Lacan "rejects the study of literature by means of the unconsious, and instead sees writing, desire, *jouissance* and sinthome at the heart of the narrative, poetics and textual inscription".[272] For Lacan, "literary texts hold the possibility of capturing at least for a moment our desire to return to the imaginary order and to regain that sense of pure joy when we were once whole and united with our mothers".[273] This absence at the heart of human existence places the subject within an ongoing dynamic or impossible longing for all apparent objects of desire being merely metaphoric stand-ins for the true object of desire, which is always lost.

Hence, the subject is committed to "a perpetual metonymic movement" from one object of desire to another in search of a satisfaction that can never come.[274] In a

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[270] Raul Moncayo, *Evolving Lacanian Perspectives for Clinical Psychoanalysis: On Narcissism, Sexuation , and the Phases of Analysis in Contemporary Culture*, Karnac Books, London 2008, 240.
[271] Bressler, 136, 155.
[272] Azari, 60.
[273] Bressler, 155.
[274] Rabate, 2003, 184.

lifetime individuals "continually change objects and goals in their desiring quest […] but no object- be it person, thing, sexual activity, or belief- will finally and permanently quell Desire".[275] Leonard quotes from Ragland-Sullivan and writes "It is sorrowful, Lacan has said, that the loved person onto whom one projects desire and narcissism serves to give proof of the image and pathos of existence.

The other reveals the gap of human desire but cannot permanently close it".[276] To Lacan then desire is driven by a sense of fragmentation of the self and even the physical body and by a longing for a return to a primordial condition of wholeness in which the infant felt fused with the *objet a*. Therefore, Lacan states that language is determinant of both the human subject and literature. Lacan contends that it is language that causes our fragmentation in the first place.

For Lacan an author enjoys his unconscious and converts the symbolic world into a site of *jouissance* and the unattainable real. It is of significant importance to mention that

> Lacan highly values literature, and he accepts its mastery over psychoanalysis. Literature by means of repetition, enables the symptom to present itself through and through. This repetition on its part breaks the signifying chain, supplies *jouissance*, and creates the possibility of experiencing the real of the unconscious beyond the law of desire and the phallic economy and limiting the role of the Name-of-the Father as a precondition for entry into the symbolic.[277]

So literature is a medium of *jouissance*, in Lacan's theory literature has the particular ability to capture *jouissance*. Lacan finds these instants of joy in the literary works of authors such as Poe, Shakespeare, and Joyce. Briefly, what can be said for the moment is that we exist in the symbolic order since we are the speakers of the language; therefore, we can communicate with each other. To say this is also equivalent to say that we do not live in the real.

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[275] Ellie Ragland- Sullivan, *Jacques Lacan and the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis*, University of Illionis Press, Urbana 1986, 81.
[276] Garry Martin Leonard, *Reading Dubliners Again: A Lacanian Perspective*, Syracuse University Press, New York 1993, 222. See Also Ragland- Sullivan, p, 81.
[277] Azari, 70.

CHAPTER TWO

ANITA BROOKNER AND HER LITERARY LIFE

I started writing because of a terrible feeling of powerlessness: I felt I was drifting and obscure, and I rebelled against that

Anita Brookner [278]

2.1. BIOGRAPHY

British award winning novelist and art historian, Anita Brookner was born and brought up in a large Victorian villa in Herne Hill, a suburb of South London on 16 July, 1928. Her father Newson Bruckner, was a Polish immigrant to Britain and her mother, Maude Schiska was a refugee from Germany. Maude's family emigrated from Poland and founded a tobacco factory. Anita Brookner's father worked in the Schiska family's tobacco factory after immigrating to England; they frequently offered shelter to Jewish refugees during World War II. She was the only child of the family and lived with her parents, grandparents, uncle, and cousins - who were unhappy fragile immigrants- in a suburban home. There was a lot of pressure and stress among them that Brookner mentions:

> I thought it was ridiculous at the time. Now I think it's enviable, that sort of closeness- though it can also be imprisoning. It wasn't entirely harmonious either. By the time the firm had been inherited by my bachelor uncle, he and my father hated each other. My father was a very good son-in-law, but his status in the firm was slightly subordinate, and my bachelor uncle was a horrible man: short-tempered, frustrated, very spoilt. And this created tensions in the family, of which, though they were invisible, I was very aware. And then the aunts, a sister-in-law and cousins, greedy gossiping women, who visited frequently and whom I disliked.[279]

Brookner tried to escape from this repressive family by going to school and enjoying art. Brookner was educated at the private James Allen's Girls' School. In

[278] Olga Kenyon, *Women Writers Talk*, Oxford, Lennard Publishing, 1989, 11.
[279] Blake Morrison, "A Game of Solitaire", *The Independent*, 19 June 1994, 1.

1949, she received her B.A. in History from King's College London, and in 1953 her doctorate in Art History from the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London.

In 1959, she began teaching art history at the University of Reading, returning to teach at the Courtauld in 1964. *J.A. Dominique Ingres* (1965), her first book, was published the next year. Brookner was the first female Slade Professor of Art at Cambridge University and held this position from 1967 to1968. She published *Greuze in Greuze: The Rise and Fall of an Eighteenth-Century Phenomenon* (1972), a study that grew out of her doctoral dissertation on which she researched for three years in Paris[280]. She was elevated to the post of Reader in the history of art at the Courtauld Institute of Art in 1977 and she worked there until her retirement in 1988. All the way through her years in academia, Brookner produced valid books of art history, including studies on *Ingres*, *Watteau*, *Jean-Baptiste Greuze*, and *Jacques Louis-David*. In 1990, she was named the Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) that is order of chivalry of British democracy in 1990.

She is a Fellow of King's College London and of Murray Edwards College, Cambridge. She retired from academia in 1988 and started to fill her time writing fiction. She published her first novel *A Start in Life* (1981) at the age of 53. After publishing her first novel she has almost published novels at a rate of one novel each year. However, she became more known as a novelist after winning the Booker Prize in 1984 for *Hotel du Lac*. Since 1981, she has published twenty-five novels, with the latest of these appearing in 2011, and every one of them is popular all around the world.

2.1.1. Distinctive Family Life

On her mother's side, her grandfather was a native Polish as was her father. Her maternal grandfather immigrated to England at the end of the nineteenth century and her father immigrated before World War I at the age of sixteen and served in the British army during the war. After the war, he worked in the Schiska family's tobacco factory where he met Brookner's mother, Maude. Her father first changed his first name to Newsom and then they changed their last name to Brookner in a reaction to anti-

[280] Cheryl Alexander Malcolm, *Understanding Anita Brookner*, Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2002, 4.

German feelings in Britain. Brookner's mother, Maude Schiska, who was a concert singer, gave up her job to marry Anita's father. In her own words: "she was inclined to melancholy and when she sang at home my father used to get angry, with good reason-it was only in her singing that she showed passion. I would start to cry and be taken out of the room by the nanny. She, not I, should have been the liberated woman".[281] Brookner recollected her mother's singing as "Sentimental stuff - but there was enormous passion behind it".[282] She states that her parents were mutually unfortunate and hopeless because her mother "thought she married the wrong man".[283] Therefore, Brookner did not live a happy childhood and always felt she had to protect her family. About her parents Brookner assumed:

> I loved them painfully, but they were fairly irascible and unreliable people. They should never have had children; they didn't understand children and couldn't be bothered…they were mismatched, strong-willed, hot tempered, with a very great residual sadness which I've certainly inherited. We never had much fun.[284]

She believes she grew up too early; however, her father's attempt to help his daughter overcome the sense of displacement is worth mentioning, which directed Anita to read the novels of Charles Dickens when she was just seven years old as her father thought Dickens gave a true picture of England. She says "I still read a Dickens novel every year and I am still looking for a Nicholas Nickleby!".[285] Although Anita was born and then grew up in London she confesses that she was "never at home, completely".[286] She herself describes she is a sort of "Jewish exile"; despite growing up in London and having privileged private education. She felt like an outsider.[287] She tells in an interview "I have never learned the custom of the country […] because we were Jews, tribal and alien".[288] It caused a sense of displacement in Anita Brookner which is very clear in her

[281] Shusha Guppy"Anita Brookner, The Art of Fiction", *The Paris Review*, No. 98, 1987, 149.
[282] Morrison, 1.
[283]Mick Brown, "A Singular Woman", *The Telegraph*, 19 Feb. 2009, 1.
[284] John Haffenden, "Anita Brookner", *Novelists in Interview*, Methuen & Co. Ltd, London 1985, 60.
[285] Guppy, 1987, 147.
[286] Guppy, 1987, 149.
[287] Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Exile and Creativity: Signposts, Travelers, Outsiders, Backward Glances*, Duke University Press, Durham and London 1998, 47.
[288] Kenyon, 1989, 1.

novels and works. Displacement is something she has experienced from childhood as she was brought up as Jewish without learning Hebrew.

She confesses that she was not a believer but wishes she would be. She herself regrets that she could never be an insider or "join in fully".[289] Brookner's family had the experience of being part of two cultures. She states that her maternal grandfather completely adopted every possible English manner and European habits of thought. For Brookner, the combination of these two cultures was not positive. On her mother's side she learned the sense of disparity between expectation and actuality.

Brookner tells Olga Kenyon in an interview: "She [her mother] wanted me to be another kind of person altogether. I should have looked different, should have been more popular, socially more graceful, one of those small, coy, kittenish women who get their way".[290]Her sense of protection toward her family is caused by the fact that her family was not a happy one. "[A]ccording to her parents' wishes it was their daughter's duty to look after them" and her parents were "a virtuous couple and very unhappy".[291] Although her parents lived together their lifespan, Brookner supposed:

> Everything was kept under control. [My mother] was well behaved. They both were: silent, stoical and I think very unhappy. They made each other lonely, because they were ill-matched. But everyone remarked on their devotion to each other. And their loyalty and their piety are indeed object lessons.[292]

Her parents' gift to her seems to be isolation, passiveness, and a hard unhappy childhood that has affected Brookner's life deeply.

Brookner's mother Maude Schiska, a concert singer, has to quit her career when she gets married. She is described as being disappointed with Anita Brookner and is said she had different hopes for her life. Brookner had to take care of her parents but, she "felt that her own needs and fears were neglected.

Brookner was not permitted to be a child; she was not allowed to be frivolous, silly, or irresponsible. As a result, she feels that she was neglected by her parents and

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[289] Guppy, 1987, 148-149.
[290] Olga Kenyon, *Women Writers Talk: Interviews with 10 Women Writers*, Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc., New York 1988, 9.
[291] Robert McCrum, "Just Don't Mention Jane Austen", *The Observer*, 28 Jan. 2001, 1
[292] Morrison, 1.

paradoxically deprived of both childhood and adulthood".[293] Consequently, Brookner "displaces her fears of disappointing her own mother onto her fiction"[294] and her heroines are obsessed with "the loss, or betrayal, or absence of the mother".[295] Brookner confesses that "I am one of the loneliest women in London". [296]

Anyway, Brookner shifts her attention on academic studies and wins a scholarship in Paris that becomes very influential on her life, as she described:

> It was the beginning of the world for me, leaving behind this contentious atmosphere at home and discovering a great city. But also a tremendous wrench. My mother wept. It was decided I was ungrateful and all the rest of it. There was that awful longing: Please Come Home. And every time my mother got ill after that, it was blamed on my having gone away. They were restless in that respect.[297]

Although Brookner left her parents to pursue her studies on 18th and 19th Century French art as a post-graduate student in Paris for three years, she was usually blamed. Brookner said: "I felt cut off from them, and I was very unhappy about that. I just knew I wanted to do it. There, it's the original conflict – what you want and what you're told to do are two different things"[298].

Nevertheless, she insisted to stay away from her parents. Her parents worried that if she stayed in Paris, she would not get married. When her father died and her mother got ill, she had to look after her mother. She told Guppy, "I had no choice, I was not free until she died too"; Brookner took care of her mother for ten years until she died in 1969.[299] Anyway, Brookner did not marry and spent her life reading, writing and acting as surrogate parent to her mother and father. Her background and relationship with her

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[293] Ann K. McClellan, *Mind Over Mother: Gender, Education, And Culture In Twentieth Century British Women's Fiction,* (PhD Thesis), Division of Research and Advanced Studies of the University of Cincinnati, 2001, 185.
[294] McClellan, 185.
[295] Fisher-Wirth, Ann, "Hunger-Art: The Novels of Anita Brookner", *Twentieth Century Literature*, Vol. 41, No 1, 1995, 10.
[296] Haffenden, 164.
[297] Morrison, 1.
[298] Boyd Tonkin, "Anita Brookner: You Should Play Russian Roulette with Your Life", *The Independent*, 29 June 2002, 1.
[299] Shusha Guppy, "The Secret Sharer: An Interview and Profile of Anita Brookner", *The World and I*, 13(7) , July 1998, 1.

parents led her to publish *A Start in Life* (1981), her first novel that mostly reflects her own life.

2.1.2. Brookner's Literary Life

Brookner's literary career begins in the summer of 1980 when she is on vacation away from teaching at the Courtauld Institute. "It was most undramatic," she explains. "I just wrote a page, the first page, and nobody seemed to think it was wrong. . . . So I wrote another page, and another, and at the end of the summer, I had a story".[300] So at the age of 53 Brookner publishes her first novel, *A Start in Life* (1981), known as *The Debut* in the United States. It is labeled as a semi-autobiographical novel and illustrates the life of a university literature professor trying to deal with the troubles of middle age and caring elderly parents. The book has caused Brookner to be compared with Jane Austen, Henry James, and Edith Wharton. Each page of her novel represents her elegant style in writing. The next year Brookner writes *Providence* (1982) and approximately since then she has published a novel each year. However, *Hotel du Lac* (1984) the winner of the Booker Prize has made her the best seller writer and *Making Things Better* (2002) long listed for the Booker Prize is of significance.

Here comes a complete list of the author's works in all genres:

An Iconography of Cecil Rhodes (1956), *Chinoiserie in French Painting* (1957), *Utrillo* [translated from the French of Waldemar George by Brookner] (1960), *Gauguin* [translated from the Italian of Maximilian Gauthier by Brookner] (1962), *The Fauves*, by Jean-Paul Crespelle; trans. Anita Brookner (1963), *J.A. Dominique Ingres* (1965), *Jacques-Louis David* (1967), *Watteau* (1967), *The genius of the Future: Studies in French Art Criticism: Diderot, Stendhal, Baudelaire, Zola, the Brothers Goncourt, Huysmans* (1971), *Greuze: the rise and fall of an eighteenth-century phenomenon* (1972), *Jacques-Louis David, a personal interpretation: lecture on aspects of art, Henriette Hertz Trust of the British Academy* (1974), *A Start in Life* [published in America as: The Debut] (1981), [Contributor to] *Great Paintings*; ed. Edwin Mullins (, 1981), *Providence* (1982), *Look at Me* (1983), *Hotel du Lac* (1984), *Family and Friends*

[300] Robert E. Hosmer, "Anita Brookner," (Eds. J. M. Brook) *Dictionary of Literary Biography Yearbook 1987*, Gale Bruccoli Clark Layman, Detroit 1988, 297.

(1985), *Summer in the Country*, by Edith Templeton; *New Introduction by Anita Brookner* (1985), *A Misalliance* (1986), *A Friend from England* (1987), *Latecomers* (1988), *The Stories of Edith Wharton* [ed. Brookner] (1988), *Lewis Percy* (1989), *Brief Lives* (1990), *A Closed Eye* (1991), *Fraud* (1992), *A Family Romance* [published in America as: Dolly] (1993), *A Private View* (1994), *The Reef* [ed. Brookner] (1994), *Incidents in the Rue Laugier* (1995), *Altered States* (1996), *Soundings* (1997), *Visitors* (1997), *Falling Slowly* (1998), *Madame Bovary: Life in a Country Town, by Gustave Flaubert*, trans. Gerard Hopkins; introduction by Anita Brookner (1999), *Romanticism and its Discontents* (2000), *Undue Influence* (2000), *The Bay of Angels* (2001), *The Next Big Thing* (US title: *Making Things Better*, 2002), *The Rules of Engagement* (2003), *Leaving Home* (2005), *Strangers* (2009), *At The Hairdressers* (2011).

2.1.3. An Overview of Some of Her Early Novels

In order to get familiar with plots, protagonists and major qualities of Anita Brookner, here short overviews of some of her novels are offered to present her progress and characteristics in general.

Her first novel named *A Start in Life* (1980), published as *The Debut* in the United States, was written in 1980 during a long summer vacation. Ruth Weiss is the heroine of this novel who is a moralistic and introspective student of literature who tries to realize her dreams and goals without her parents living in London and are reminders of their unpleasant European past. Ruth does not have ample confidence in herself as an attractive and lovable woman; however, on the other hand, she believes that with her proper and unselfish behavior she will attain the promised romance in fictions. While she writes her dissertation in Paris, she falls in love with a middle aged married professor at Sorbonne University. This attraction makes her doubt the moral code of literature. Finally, she is summoned to go back home to take care of her sick parents, and this puts an end to her could-be affair and she continues her life as a single and lonely middle aged woman.

In *Providence* (1982), her second novel, Brookner recounts the story of a woman who wants to establish a new life for herself. Kitty Maule, the heroine, is a smart, reserved, and self-possessed person; however, she desires to be a totally unreasonable,

unfair, demanding and at the same time very beautiful person. She is a self-composed, fastidiously-groomed and clever woman whose grandparents were immigrants from France. Hence she had a French upbringing that made her feel alienated in England. She teaches romantic literature at a university in London. She always feels a familiarity between the themes of Benjamin Constant's novel *Adeolphe* and her own obsession with romantic love and moral conduct. Although she is always cautious about herself, her longing to be more like English people leads to her falling in love with an appealing and attractive history professor, named Maurice, at the university. Maurice, on the other hand, is indifferent to her love and exploits her feeling that leads to her repeated disappointment. Her last disappointment is when she realizes the fact that she has not just been a victim of Maurice's deception, but victim of her own self-deception and fantasies.

Brookner likes to present moral puzzles in her novels. Her third novel, *Look at Me* (1983) published one year later presents Frances Hinton, a lonely young woman, and a dazzlingly charming couple, Nick and Alix Fraser. Like most of Brookner's heroines, Frances is wealthy, but she works in a research medical library with her own choice. She sorts and archives prints and photographs of works of art depicting disease; in fact her job is to classify these images of despair. She is also a satirist who writes stories in the evenings based on events of the day to fill her evenings. Writing amusing satires about her gloomy life is her technique to prevent its bad effects. The cruel and dishonest Frasers abuse her isolation and take her up as a sort of plaything in a project about her social and psychosexual development. Frances is introduced to James by Nick and Alix, and she believes she has a chance to have a real relationship. But when Frances realizes that Nick and his wife Alix have treated her as a subject to be studied, she decides to take revenge by writing mercilessly about them, and this way, by putting a barrier between herself and the truth, she saves herself.

In *A Misalliance* (1986), Blanche Vernon is the heroine of the story. Unlike in Brookner's other novels, she has enjoyed a happy marriage for twenty years until her husband, Bertie, abandons her for a young, unscrupulous computer expert called Mousie. After being left she starts spending her time wandering National Gallery and in the evenings she spends time with a bottle of wine thinking about the reasons why her husband left her alone. She believes that it had been her own fault that her husband has

left her since she was not the right kind of woman. This belief in itself is tragic since she had dedicated herself and her marriage to become the kind of person her husband always wanted. Patrick was her former suitor and when she asks him for advice on a friend named Sall, he falls in love with her who is much younger than he is. In fact Blanche is the victim of male behavior and she realizes that she cannot rely upon the males in her life.

Rachel Kennedy is the narrator of *A Friend from England* (1987) who is part-owner of a bookshop. She has a feeling of strong attraction towards bourgeois and people who value their comfort more than culture. She has no friends and spends most of her time thinking about Heather, the daughter of her deceased father's accountant, Oscar Livingstone. He asks Rachel to give regular visits to his house every week and have tea and talk with his wife and daughter Heather. Later Heather marries and leaves her parents. Rachel fails to return her home. Then, the mom dies and Heather comes to London for the funeral and finally returns back to Italy. At the end of the story Rachel realizes that Heather had the right idea all along and it was she who has lost her life.

There has been a change in Brookner's heroines in her novels of 1990s. All of the heroines in her novels after that period are not the middle-aged women as in her former novels, but women who are growing old and aging. As Kate Fulbrook has stated:

> "If Brookner's first heroines seemed prematurely middle-aged, the widows who tend to populate her novels of the 1990s are all concerned not only with growing old but with ageing as the signpost of pleasures missed, chances not taken, dangers not risked".[301]

The new characteristic of using older lonely women starts.

A Family Romance (1993) tells the story of the narrator's, Jane, life-long involvement with Marie-Jeanne Schiff, known as Dolly. Dolly is Jane's aunt. Dolly is a lively but poor French-Jewish who keeps in touch with Jane's family for money. Jane is fascinated by her exotically European aunt. Dolly is a lot different from the way her parents are and is an interesting and at the same time frightening person to them. It is apparent that Jane and Dolly have nothing in common; Jane does not love Dolly and

[301]Kate Fulbrook, "Anita Brookner," (Ed. Merritt Moseley), *Dictionary of Literary Biography: British Novelists Since 1960*, Gale Bruccoli Clark Layman, Detroite 1998, 39.

Dolly hates children. Dolly is Jane's antithesis, but by the end of the novel they make a connection of their own that has a great value for them.

In *A Private View* (1994), the story is told from George Bland's point of view. George is a retired bachelor businessman in his seventies who is mourning for his lifelong friend who has passed away. He feels lonely and life has lost meaning for him. In his youth he had worked day and night to make money and never enjoyed his time and money, and now that he has money and enough time to spend it, he is lonely and lost. Katy Gibb, a young woman who is living next door, changes his life by suggesting her possibilities that can help him change his dull life. Katy is a lively American girl who has plan for befriending old George. She needs money for her business projects and sees George as a possible sponsor for her business. George is also aware of this; however, he is very attracted by her behavior and the unpredictability and inappropriateness of his relationship with her. Their relationship makes George better understand himself and how he has deceived himself until now. The story keeps a suspenseful tension about the couple's relationship and their future. When the novel ends with a satisfactory resolution of George's life the reader gets surprised, as they anticipate a tragic and sad end for George. With his new understanding of himself, he learns to accept himself and improve small pleasures in his life. In this novel we can see the storytelling skills of Brookner, since she tells George's heartrending life story in way that does not make him a hero experiencing a dramatic change or a pitiable man who has lost everything in his life. The reader feels George as an ordinary and amiable man.

Incidents in Rue Laugier (1995) is a novel about a classic love triangle. Maud Gonthier, a French girl who has studied in a convent school who lives with her mother. Every summer they go to stay with Maud's aunt during the holiday in the country. There she meets two Englishmen who are college friends, Edward Harrison and David Tyler. David is rich, self-possessed, and seductive, while on the other hand, Edward is a kind young man who has big dreams but is too timid to realize them in real life. The three young people, Maud and the two friends, go on a trip to Paris where Edward is a spectator of David and Maud's love. David seduces Maud and leaves her pregnant and breaks up with her, but Edward is there for her and offers to marry her. They marry, although it was somehow unnecessary because of her miscarriage. Their lives are in fact

tragedy of passivity. Edward wants her to love him with passion, but he does not have anything to make her love passionately; Maud on the other hand, is still in love with David and mourns for him.

Falling Slowly (1998) is about the Sharpe sisters. Although the novel opens with Miriam after Beatrice's recent funeral, it soon focuses on the years leading up to that death. After an unhappy childhood, two sisters, Miriam and Beatrice, move to London and live uneventful lives. The sisters grow up in London. Their parents are compassionless and full of complaints. After their parents die, they move to an apartment in a good London neighborhood. Beatrice, the older sister, is a pianist and works as a professional musician and is of some repute. She always lives in a world of romantic fantasy.

Miriam, on the other hand, is smart, university-educated, and practical. She works as a translator at the London Library. Both sisters experience more vivid and satisfying relationships in their imaginations than in reality. Miriam, after a short-lived marriage and a series of unhappy romances, is unwilling to get involved with an attentive journalist and prefers to have an affair with a married man. Beatrice always dreams about marrying with her former agent but rejects his real attempts to start a relationship. Although the sisters try to resist their dependency on each other, in the end, it is the only precious thing all they have.

Brookner has continued writing novels after the year 2000 and has written five novels so far. Her later novels' plots are not complicated and move forward very slowly. They revolve around the thoughts and recollections of the protagonists.

This part presented an overview on her early novels, the next chapter will deal with Lacanian analysis on three selected novels *Hotel du Lac* (1984), *Making Things Better* (2002), and *Rules of Engagement* (2003) with a detailed introduction.

2.2. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THREE SELECTED NOVELS

Brookner's novels are obsessed with lonely characters especially single ones, mostly women accompanied by married lovers who have children and beautiful wealthy wives. The heroes or heroines are not the priorities for their parents rather they are victim of disaffection. Their mothers suffer disappointment and fathers are poor mute

creatures. Though they are Jewish, no strong religious bounds are seen. The harsh childhood memories are repeated in most parts of the novels. They are usually lonely and suffer solitude. As the setting and the weather change, the characters have to change. They have captured the English characteristic of indifference and incuriosity. In their old age they still yearn for love but are usually unable to attract the opposite sex.

They usually have Victorian names and read Victorian novels such as Elizabeth, Edmund David, Isabella, and so on. They usually spend troubled nights with nightmares or are unable to sleep well. The characters are usually not introduced at the beginning of the novels and start to gain names or identities almost in the mid novel. The heroines are not professional in taking care of their appearance and are not good at attracting the opposite sex. The married lovers usually go on holidays or are absent for long time leaving these lonely characters on their own thoughtfulness with long monologues and troubled feelings. Therefore, the main characters usually write constant letters that remain unsent and no one will be able to read them since they are torn up after just being finished. In contrast, the male minor characters are usually cheating on their wives without caring for moral principles and focus on pleasure and these uncaring characters are apparently both successful and satisfied.

The main characters are usually sad and artless who are seeking to learn how to enjoy the life they have to live. The long monologues usually contain pale childhood memories of scornful mothers and almost mute fathers. Thus, in adulthood they usually envy those who have kind family bonds or envy other women with children. They usually are academics and read novels in order to fulfill the unreachable fantasies of their life in books. Even on their wedding day, if they marry, they do not enjoy the feelings of a pleased bride. They usually are widowed, divorced or single at the end of novels and still childless. The novels mostly lack communication and are shaped on the stream of consciousness of the protagonist narrators.

2.3. STYLISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORKS BY ANITA BROOKNER

It is believed that literary texts imply that middle-age can offer a significant “creative turning point” and Anita Brookner is a good example who has turned to

writing fiction in her fifties and her knowledge in the field of art history has been a great effect in her successful writing.[302] Despite her success and reputation in her academic life, she felt displeased with her life and turned to fiction in order "to control rather than be controlled, to ordain rather than be ordained, and to relegate rather than be relegated".[303] Her early novels are mostly autobiographical and "self-blaming" and those heroines illustrate passive women waiting for a man to rely on.[304] Both she and her protagonists are fond of Victorian novels from which she acquired perennial myth of English fiction in which victory is for good and decent person at the end of story.

Through the mental journeys, detailed descriptions of the still, silent, mute life, it is exposed that Brookner's protagonists signify anxiety, desire, disappointment, and frustration caused by social and cultural dominant rules. These exiles signify the personal and cultural characteristics of the protagonists trying to survive.

The role of women in that society- London during the 20th century- is defined as being wife and mother, and women can only perform these two roles; unmarried women- called spinsters- do not gain a respectful position. Of course being a married woman would be accepted if she gave birth to children. Otherwise, it conveys a certain lack of womanliness; in case of childlessness the wife is to be blamed not the husband. So childless couples are considered more accepted than unmarried women. It is believed that both God and society require women to fulfill their wifely and womanly duties. So every woman has to be so feminine in order to be able to attract a man and sign a marriage contract. Either living as a spinster or a childless wife is not accepted. In such a society, remaining unmarried is not a positive option for a woman.

For instance, Taeker points out that "Women in novels were consigned the role of love interest. Usually a minor character, woman was the prize awarded to the hero, the male protagonist, on the successful completion of his quest. When women's roles in stories became larger, their sphere of influence did not change. They could still only exist in a romantic context".[305] Women were physical entities predestined to live under

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[302] Anne M Wyatt-Brown, "Creativity in Midlife: The Novels of Anita Brookner", *Journal of Aging Studies* Vol. 3, No. 2, 1989, 176.
[303] Haffenden, 59.
[304] Janice A Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill 1984, 45.
[305] Martina Taeker, *Romantic Ideals and Disappointing Reality in the Fiction of Anita Brookner*, (Master's Thesis), University of Adelaide, 1992, 2.

the power and support of men. In such a society Anita Brookner remains single to look after her parents; but she creates heroines who are educated, holding a career, and able to live on with financial independence; however, their sincere aspire is to find a lover, then be promoted to married position with children to breed. They suffer that the society does not regard them as complete women. In other words, though an educated heroine survives, a woman "without a man is nothing; she has no identity, or, at least not one that society acknowledges" and by the fact that there are "equal opportunities" in education and career for women, the unmarried ones are still "lacking some essential ingredient of womanhood".[306] For instance, Kitty in *Providence,* says:

> [T]he woman whom Maurice would deliver would be saved from the fate of that grim daughter would be spared the humiliations that lie in Wait for the unclaimed woman.[307]

They usually live an unhappy, boring, isolated life envying the married joyful couples. They usually have big expectations of attracting a romantic wealthy man, but as it does not happen they undoubtedly do accept their inability and lack as an insufficient female.

Wyatt-Brown claims that Brookner writes to "assert some control over her emotional life. Her plots have strong autobiographical elements; she writes about powerless middle-aged women, whose aging forces them to realize that they will never find the fulfillment of their youthful romantic ideals".[308]

Accordingly, in order to show the feeling of solitude and isolation, Anita Brookner has used touchy and sensitive women whose concepts of love and marriage are ideal and farfetched. Her writing on everyday life and desperation which stems from her own life in childhood is clear in her novels accompanied by selfish parents who are dominant to their children. A vain search for love and sense of displacement are very obvious in her characters.

Brookner's reflexive novels that are replete with "deceptiveness of recollection" are in fact "profoundly concerned with the problematic relationship between the individual and the wider social realm that conditions, transforms, and, sometimes,

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[306] Taeker, 3.
[307] Anita Brookner, *Providence*, Reissue Edition, Vintage 1994, 91.
[308] Wyatt-Brown, 1989, 175.

threatens to overwhelm them", and these characters are despised and ignored by the society and live a solitary life.[309] The issues of loyalty and collective identity are easily recognized in her novels such as *Look at Me* (1983). Brookner's symbolic way of dealing with the concept of conversion is worth mentioning in this novel. For instance, she presents the concepts of locality showing the friendship between a lonely woman with an English couple who are mostly upper-class and they try to convert this woman. In her interview, Brookner differentiates between "the English" and herself, hence, Brookner's writings mostly deal symbolically with the notion of conversion. [310]

Brookner's narration is far from the traditional plotting and there are no parent-child relationships or clear family bonds between members. Contrarily, she points up displacement, disturbed memories, and their emotional response to these troubled recollections. Brookner's main character is the narrator who remembers and writes visual details of any picture or mental images such as childhood memories. There are numerous flash backs to the protagonist's childhood, it is disclosed that "their childhoods did not prepare them adequately for the competition of adult life" and emphasizes that the parent of her heroines "should never have had children" exactly like the parents of Brookner.[311] Many of Brookner's characters are the children of European immigrants to Britain; a number of them appear to be of Jewish descent. Brookner is aware that she is unable to prevent her own childhood feelings penetrate into her novels. She mostly uses themes of emotional loss and difficulties associated with fitting into society.

Her narrative, however, more exhaustively and less decisively analyzes humanity's limited comprehension and consciousness, reflecting an uncertain postmodern world. Along this, it is worth mentioning that Henry James (1843-1916), the well-known American-born English novelist of the realism movement wrote many novels such as *The Ambassadors* (1903), *The Turn of the Screw* (1898), and many other novels. With a bird's eye view on the characters of Brookner and James, it is stated that "they are victorious in their opinion to an astonishing end in her works of art as they are

[309] Tom Penner, *Performing Liminality: Kazuo Ishiguro's The Remains of the Day and Anita Brookner's Look at Me*, (Master's Thesis), Department of English University of Manitoba Winnipeg, Manitoba 1999, 45.
[310] Malcom, 2.
[311] Haffenden, 60.

the incarnation of their own whims and fancies but they are not allowed to be victorious in their social life and career forever by their inborn nature, which pervade around them against their initial idea of life so as to reveal themselves as Vanquished Victors".[312]

Anita Brookner creates innovative multicultural protagonists and claims that "[these main characters] who make their Creator to be recognized as one of the eaglets in the most popular novelist of nineteenth century, James' multicultural *iroko*. It is well known to those who read the novels of African Literature by Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka and so on that Eagle is the king of the birds and *iroko* is the strongest and tallest tree among the strong trees in the African forests".[313] In other words, Brookner sometimes explicitly refer to James in her novels for instance in *A Misalliance* (1986), Blanche Vernon, the heroine, says: "I might make an injudicious remark or start raving on about Henry James", or Blanche complains her ex-husband Bertie by saying "I think we have heard quite enough about Henry James", he replied.[314]

Also Skinner asserts Brookner is Jamesian due to her wealthy characters in "leisured Anglo-Saxons in a continental setting"; and adds it is "more obviously different from its predecessors by virtue of its foreign setting: the main events of the narrative- or, more properly, the events of the main narrative- occur in a Swiss hotel, although a long series of flashbacks to London, and occasionally beyond, acquires increased significance as the story progresses"[315]. In her novels, she portrays her protagonists as people with inheritances or with property.

Simultaneously, Anita Brookner is also compared with Jane Austen. Alienated characters, usually female, quiet, lonely lives are punctuated by hardship and dissatisfaction in love. Her style causes her to be compared with Jane Austen and Henry James. Her novels, especially the later ones have happy or rather a fair end.

Ann V. Norton mentions that Brookner questions morality along with social and gender matters in an uncertain postmodern world and criticizes the limited

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[312] B. Lakshmikantham , "Anita Brookner's The Bay of Angels and Her Innovative Twist", *Language in India*, Vol. 13, 6 June 2013, 538.
[313] B. Lakshmikantham, *Brookner as an Eaglet in James' Multicultural Iroko*, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, 1990, 1.
[314] Anita Brookner, *A Misalliance,* Reprint Edition, Vintage, 2005, 68.
[315] John Skinner, *The Fictions of Anita Brookner: Illusions of Romance*, St. Martin's, New York 1992, 67-68.

consciousness of protagonists who are dreadfully trying to survive and unfortunately they are upset because outmoded virtue is not dominant any longer; instead Darwin's survival principles and ethics are winning.[316] So she feels her sophisticated protagonists are losing to others ruled by instinctive desire. Her characters believe that their moral and ethical codes of life have led them to live a solitary life and these strict definite rules defeat them. Though it is said that her novels resemble those of Wharton and James, they are not appreciated for decency and virtue like the reaction the former novelists benefited from.[317]

The protagonists in her novels are people who observe moral rights and are conscientious but lead an unhappy life and desperately seek their own survival out of this situation. But they always miss the opportunities to people with opposite characters who do not follow moral or ethical principles.

There is a distinction between morality and religion in her novels. The protagonists in her novels have some specific characteristics and their Jewish identities are related to Anita's own life. As Aránzazu Usandizaga claims "Jewishness is very rarely referred to directly in her novels. It is mostly introduced in disguised and oblique ways, but like Brookner herself, most of her heroines and heroes are the children or grandchildren of central European Jewish exiles, and Jewish culture plays a central role both in her characters' destinies and in Brookner's artistic purposes".[318] Using such characters again focuses on displacement that is dominant in most of her novels.

In order to emphasize the feeling of displacement, Brookner sometimes creates characters with two names. In *Providence* (1985), the protagonist "goes by the name Kitty Maule with her English university colleagues and by that of Therese with her foreign born grandparents" and the outcome is that she "feels fully at home with neither".[319] Or in *Hotel du Lac* (1984) Edith Johanna Hope which is "[a]n unusual name for an English lady. Perhaps not entirely English. Perhaps not entirely a lady.

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[316] Ann V. Norton, "Anita Brookner Reads Edith Wharton and Henry James: The Problem of Moral Imagination", *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, Vol 29, No 1, Spring 2010, 19-33.
[317] Norton, 19-33.
[318] Aránzazu Usandizaga, "Motifs of Exile, Hopelessness, and Loss: Disentangling the Matrix of Anita Brookner's Novels," (Ed. Claire M. Tylee), *"In the Open": Jewish Women Writers and British Culture*, University of Delaware Press, Newark 2006, 110.
[319] Malcolm, 3.

Recommended, of course. But in this business one never knew,"[320] and her pen name is Vanessa Woolf, but her first name implies the fact that she does not fit to English society and people. These displaced characters have to survive. Or in *The Rules of Engagement*, the narrator's friend is Elizabeth Newton but later she is Betsy de Sainte-Jorre.

Another outstanding characteristic is that Brookner uses photographic images to control the reader's understanding. Photographs and photo albums are a means of narrating, for instance in *Family and Friends* (1985), the wedding photos of three successive generations help the readers to recognize the history of this family and demonstrate the structural pillars of the narrative. Or *Making Things Better* (2002) is another story in which Herz, the protagonist, watches her childhood photos remarking a single smile that he has only in one of the pictures and analyzes his tough cruel parents through the photographs representing a sad harsh childhood followed by a terrible teenage hood.

Since Anita Brookner is an eighteenth-century French paintings art historian with many significant critical art works, it is therefore not surprising that her later novels include many visual images represented as paintings. Pictorial images in Brookner's novels have a didactic, metaphorical, and allegorical purpose. Brookner's novels are rich in references to the paintings and visual arts and they can be seen as a "textual art museum" or "museum of words".[321] The impact of the painters and schools of painting from the 15th century to the present is quiet clear in her novels. These references are made in the characters' visits to the local or foreign museums, an act which is prevalent for the characters in her novels. In almost all of Brookner's novels, a painting, a photograph, or a photograph of a painting either forms the story or frames the structural and metaphorical outline of the novel. In writing *Providence* (1982) the protagonist made a lecture on literature similar to Brookner who delivered a lecture on the eighteenth-century French painter Jacques-Louis David.

Hence, Brookner's central characters in her novels, like Brookner herself in her art criticism, refer to artistic pieces to obtain information about the world in two

[320] Anita Brookner, *Hotel du Lac*, 1st Edition, Vintage, 1995, 17.
[321] Laurence Petit, "Between Iconophilia and Iconophobia: Anita Brookner's museum of words, Word & Image", *A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry* , Vol 30, No 1, 2014, 7-8.

methods. The first types of characters are not usually experts in their interpretations and they fail to get what they need from the visual illuminations. In particular, they are unable to understand the meaning and find the relation with the paintings with which they feel close and familiar. For instance, in *A Friend from England* (1985) the protagonist, Rachel Kennedy, while wandering in the galleries of Academia in Venice, Bellini's "Madonnas" catches her attention. She describes the painting of Bellini's Madonnas with turned cheeks and shadowed with grief by heads unfolding an arc of grief; however, she is unaware that the painting is a resemblance of her near future, as Rachel says "on this journey, I seemed to have entered a zone of loss".[322]

So the characters in Brookner's novels always have an emotional relationship with the art pieces they study. Furthermore, the second type of characters' love for the pieces of art work never leads to the building of their own art collections. Some of these characters in her novels, such as Frances Hinton, sort and catalogue reproductions of art pieces to earn their living. Also the central characters in her novels are good observers and have the gift of saving the images of these art pieces on which they draw later.

Undoubtedly, the setting and world of her novels are distinctively visual as if Brookner writes the details of precious paintings. Brookner offers many references to the places the characters move; streets, gardens, everywhere; she topographically refers to precise locations. For instance, Edith Hope describes the scenery she sees standing at the window as follows:

> "It was to be supposed that beyond the grey garden, which seemed to sprout nothing but the stiffish leaves of some unfamiliar plant, lay the vast grey lake, spreading like an anaesthetic towards the invisible further shore, and beyond that, in imagination only, yet verified by the brochure, the peak of the Dent d'Oche, on which snow might already be slightly and silently falling" (*HDL*, 7).

Patricia Waugh stresses that "Edith experiences the greyness of the Hotel du Lac as an objective correlative for her own state of mind".[323] So the sceneries the narrator describes foreshadow the events and give a hint about the characters' states of mind.

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[322] Anita Brookner, *A Friend From England*, Reprint Edition, Vintage, 2005, 192.
[323] Patricia Waugh, *Feminine Fictions: Revisiting the Postmodern*, Routledge, London 1989, 143.

Surprisingly, Brookner has always refuted the existence of a link between her being an art historian and a novelist. In one interview when she is asked about the connection between her job and novels she replied that she did not see any connection between them. The only connection for Brookner is that she does them in the same place in her office.[324]

Also frequent references to pan-European historical familiarity of a religious and ethnic society can be noticed in Brookner's novels. However, she has been clearly able to shape these references by her membership in academic community of art historians. Brookner tells Rubin "All my life […] I have read fiction; for instruction, for information, and, of course, for moral improvement" and about her own novels she states "I like to think of them as casting a moral puzzle".[325] Her novels are sometimes moral allegories, and illustrate it by "visual means" such as the landscapes both "figuratively and literally" drawn from the visual arts "enacting scenes that suggest Renaissance paintings of moral conflicts embodied in static tableaux".[326]

Since Brookner is an art historian, her works are surrounded, moreover, by objects that announce their own allegorical standing, such as the apples that shining on the trees in the first part of *Hotel du Lac* (1984); "the fruit sparkling with emblematic significance".[327] Moreover, the settings she has used in her novels are so artistic that they are more like a resemblance of exhibition catalogues and art galleries. When the story line requires, the characters and the setting act like the paintings to show anything the author aims to present.

The protagonists sometimes look at some pictures and travel back in the time, also some pictures in galleries or museums resemble the ideal or happy life. Then the protagonist's dreams are in their position such as Herz who travels to Paris to watch the wrestling of two men; the thing he is unable to do i.e. he cannot struggle to win what he desires. The characters are usually not British in origin, and the protagonists or their parents are immigrants and unconsciously illustrate the multicultural behavior. For

[324] Haffenden, 64-65.
[325] Merle Rubin, "Casting Moral Puzzles: A Novelist on her Craft," Interview with Anita Brookner, *Christian Science Monitor* 1 Mar. 1985, B3.
[326] Margaret D. Stetz, *Anita Brookner's Visual World*, *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, Vol 29, No 1, Spring 2010, 36.
[327] *Hotel du Lac*, 7.

instance Lakshmikantham claims that in *Making Things Better* (2002), "Herz receives a letter from Fanny, who is now alone and has support, and enters into an unusual courtship by mail" as they are Multiculturalists.[328] Julius Herz had emigrated from Berlin to London and even after he buys a flat there in his old age, he never feels to be a real member of the British Community and has to follow their indifferent characteristic. Also in *The Rules of Engagement,* Elizabeth is alert of the big shift in her life from Paris to London and writes:

> For the sense of exile I had experienced in Paris had a maturity about it which I had begun to recognize at the time: perhaps adulthood is a sense of exile, or rather that in exile we are obliged to act as adults. Here in London…I could no longer summon any enthusiasm for my preparations, though these were as careful as ever.[329]

After a long boring life, Elizabeth ends the novel by becoming a volunteer in a hospital and gives an end to her solitary life with her female friends in the hospital. These multicultural characters signify displacement in every event. They have to make a decision and are usually unable to create a normal relationship with originally English characters all around.

2.4. BROOKNER'S POSITION AS A CONTEMPORARY CANON

Anita Brookner, the eighty eight year old novelist who has published her first novel about thirty five years ago, has usually been classified as a psychological realist, novelist of manners, and writer of comedy. However, she is more than and beyond all of these categories.

Regardless of her being an academic professional and winner of Booker Prize, and "the diverse audiences" she has drawn, she is often "described in print, by journalists and critics" for following narrow concerns and being a miniaturist. These classifications are "borne with a taint of gender bias" so using titles such as "limited" and even "spinsterish" are means of attacking women novelists.[330]

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[328] Lakshmikantham, 2013, 537.
[329] Anita Brookner, *The Rules of Engagement: A Novel*, 1st Us Edition, Random House, 2003, 27.
[330] Phyllis Lassner, Ann V. Norton, Margaret D. Stetz , "Introduction: Anita Brookner in the World", *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, Vol 29, No 1, Spring 2010a, 15-18.

Although she is labeled a novelist of manners, a psychological realist, and a creator of tragic-comic romances, she comprehensively addresses moral issues, social justice, and the contemporary position of art. Taking into consideration the realist and comedy genre of these novels and their historical position, they are somehow political. She does not use minimalistic language and references to show the political language; instead she makes use of major and large references to the catastrophes in a communal scale on survivors of WWII. In other words, her novels do not illustrate the war itself rather they show the refugees of WWII as alien displaced isolated characters. The more they try to get close to the British community, the lonelier they become.

As Brookner has witnessed World War II, her novels have a touch of her British Jewish identity. Consequently, the protagonists' sense of alienation, their separation from the people around them and their surroundings, and their feeling of fear are dominant themes. For instance, Rachel the narrator in *A Friend from England* (1987), says: "fearful, like a subject nation, waiting to be overcome by a stronger power".[331]

In contrast, Stetz criticizes affixing labels such as miniaturist, and believes that she is "more than merely a psychological realist, more than merely a novelist of manners and more than merely a writer of English domestic 'spinster' comedy in the tradition of Barbara Pym" [332]. Brookner has lived through WWII and her narratives by no means miniature, rather they are "large with references to secrets, terrors, exiles, and losses that are not only personal but communal".[333]

Walia in her research on three contemporary women novelists, Jean Rhys, Barbara Pym and Anita Brookner asserts that

> [I]n the mode of a realistic self-appraisal, the novels of these contemporary women writers illumine the inability of feminist reform and women's liberation, [sic] to change some of the fundamental ways in which some women persist in viewing themselves. The images of women projected in their novels, [sic] reveal the continued hold of the eighteenth and nineteenth

[331] *A Friend from England*, 193.
[332] Stetz, pp, 35-36.
[333] Stetz, 36.

> century concepts of femininity in the shaping of their consciousness, and their notions of themselves.[334]

Waila carefully analyzes Brookner's *Hotel du Lac*, its themes, characters, plot, and narrative technique and affirms that the novels of these novelists are "portraying their own aspirations, longings and emotions"[335] and this characteristic should not be confused with autobiographical writing rather they emphasize the notions and principles the author is really interested in.

Along this, Lassner believes that Brookner's readers accompany her realism by secrets, concerns, exiles, and failures, frustrations that are prevailing in her novels.[336] Also, Norton asserts that Brookner's psychological realism and her means of experiment is different from her contemporary writers; her narrative represents interior stream of consciousness to explore selfhood .[337]

Brookner's position in modern literature modifies many theories about modern and contemporary fiction. In 1924, Virginia Woolf offered her own proposal for writing about life; she pointed out "Life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelop surrounding us from the beginning to end",[338] she did not mean to be surreal, unreal, or magically real rather she preferred to portray her understanding of reality more precisely. Michael Harper declares "[t]he high modernist position is manifestly not rejection of realism but a demand for a new realism, for a novelistic rendering of a specific ally modern experience".[339] Brookner attempts to create a new experience of literature and by insisting on the themes or style she tries to magnify what she has intended to convey.

Lassner writes that Brookner departs "from modernism's renderings of consciousness, surrealism's symbolic images, and expressionism's clashing colors and

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[334] Rajni Walia, *Women and Self: Fictions of Jean Rhys, Barbara Pym, Anita Brookner*, Books Plus, New Delphi 2001, 16.
[335] Waila, 21.
[336] Phyllis Lassner "Exiles from Jewish Memory: Anita Brookner's Anglo-Jewish Aesthetic", *Tulsa Studies in Women Literature*, Vol 29, No 1, Spring 2010b, 47-61.
[337] Norton, 19-33.
[338] John Baxendale, *Priestley's England: J. B. Priestley and English Culture*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York 2007, 14.
[339] Michael F Harper, "Margaret Drabble and the Resurrection of the English Novel", *Contemporary Literature*, Vol. 23, 1982, 151.

angles of unconscious desires".[340] She writes crossing and distorting national and cultural limits; "so her formal, moral, and psychological concerns interact with new conceptions of realism, modernism, and postmodernism".[341] Richardson places Brookner along with Graham Swift, Nadine Gordimer, Edna O'Brien, Anita Desai, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Eva Figes in the latest neo-modernist.[342] She is sometimes classified as a realist but Bowen asserts that Brookner is not a mere realist rather she is a postmodern realist who uses the "apparent but deceptive security" of photographs; the postmodern novel, then, revolve around simulacra, optical illusions, and anamorphic images, pictures of an empty world in which "the image appears to have effectively replaced that which it represents".[343] Postmodern novels are rich in images and they "destabilize power to challenge representation and perception, as well as endlessly deferring their meaning".[344] Anita Brookner can be read as postmodern realist full of images she creates.

Laurence believes that

> [P]hoto-fiction is a technique which is widely used in the postmodern novel, for purposes ranging from the mere illustration of a narrative, to the incorporation of the photographs in a complex narrative framework. …an increased visualization of the referent for the reader, as the descriptions contained in the narrative, which are, by definition, aimed at making one 'see'…as it were, duplicated, precisely by being descriptions of photographs which already belong to the domain of the visual. Such a strategy denies the irreducibility of the text to the image, for the reader is, from the outset, invited to shed his status of reader for that of spectator.[345]

With this strategy, textual images or visual writing present the photograph. On the other hand, the reader becomes a passive audience that is to believe or observe a scene manifested before her eyes. Brookner's narratives lead the readers to "a veritable game of hide-and-seek with regard to the act of seeing, and consequently of making meaning"

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[340] Lassner, 2010b, 49.
[341] Lassner, 2010a, 15.
[342] Brian Richardson, "The Genealogies of Ulysses, the Invention of Postmodernism, and the Narratives of Literary History ELH", *The Johns Hopkins University Press*, Vol 67, No 4, Winter 2000, 1045.
[343] Deborah Bowen, "Preserving appearances: photography and the postmodern realism of Anita Brookner", *Mosaic: A Journal For The Interdisciplinary Study Of Literature*, Vol 28, No 2, 1995, 145.
[344] Petit Laurence, "Deceit and Anamorphic Images in Anita Brookner's Family and Friends", *West Virginia University Philological Papers*, Vol. 47, Fall 2001, 5.
[345] Laurence, 2014, 2.

that leads the reader in a predestined descriptive and explanatory journey.[346] The readers travel on the wings of complex images through the eyes of the narrator protagonist. Bowen declares that

> More recently, moreover, realism has begun to be revisioned in the purlieus of postmodernism itself, particularly among the growing number of critics who are tired of a certain kind of postmodern ethical vacuum in which writing is responsible only to be compelling about writing. […] a "postmodern realism" which will involve "a recovery of the world of eloquent things" and will be characterized by "focal realism, patient vigor, and communal celebration" […] a postmodern worldview is not necessarily at odds with a realist ethic, and an understanding of the textuality of the real does not automatically eliminate all referentiality. […] Even in the recognized absence of the possibility of absolute objectivity, a relative objectivity is worth aiming for, in which the culturally constructed nature of postmodernism is recognized and the language of social action can be restored.[347]

Additionally, photograph which is a creation of both nature and artifice is a "perfect postmodern vehicle" to express the life exclusively throughout representations.[348] Besides, Brookner presents her self-made mental images so fluid and brightly expressed that they are comparable with material photos. *Making Things Better* refers to childhood photographs and using the layered nature of photographs help readers penetrate into the psychological depth of protagonists.

A postmodernist approach declares that when a photograph is understood to reveal facts, it is not neutral rather it includes social semiotic process.[349] Brookner either by photographs or mental images emphasizes the distorted and vague subjectivity of her protagonists. She creates surface life of protagonists like her novelist protagonist Edith Hope and disguises or hides her painful empty and chaotic memories.

Bowen also claim that

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[346] Laurence, 2014, 2.
[347] Bowen, 123-148.
[348] Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism*, Routledge, London 1989, 153.
[349] John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories,* Macmillan, London 1988, 4.

> The postmodern is 'not so much a concept as […] a problematic, a complex of heterogeneous but interrelated questions' (End 1 63-64); Brookner situates: this problematic within the moral life of her protagonist, and demonstrates that to act upon the notion that the real is constituted by representations can be a power-move necessitated by the negative effects of a prior representation. If the truth hurts as it has been constructed, then reconstruct it, represent it - in effect, change it; postmodernism replaces the concept of truth with one of legitimation (Burgin, End 49), so that 'the past as referent finds itself gradually bracketed and then effaced altogether, leaving us with nothing but texts' (Jameson 18).[350]

Thus, Brookner presents concerns of ethics and realism in a postmodern context by focusing on her mental images, photographs and recollection of memories on which readers must depend as the only touchstones; they observe what the narrator allows them to see. Brookner plays on the borders of photographing painting mental images She also violates traditional orders of realistic narration and constantly shows that controlling life is a mere illusion. In a postmodern realist approach, it can be said that Brookner's mental painful images indirectly refer to how the protagonists are morally constructed as individuals in multicultural settings.

Brookner's novels are so broad that they cannot be restrained to a single literary school. Her novels combine or question canonical borders that cover different historical outlines. Lassner believes that Brookner's works question the borders "of the 'new modernism' and the transnational through her characters' peripatetic and climactic moments in European settings, offering a dramatic demonstration of the cultural tensions that mark Britain's relationship with the new Europe and its porous borders".[351] These critical differences are repeatedly emphasized novel after novel. *Hotel du Lac* (1984), *Making Things Better* (2002), and *Rules of Engagement* (2003) signify the steady condition of identicalness and sameness of female characters who cannot escape from their boring lives in brief break. There is a change from one place to another, from England to other countries, from one city to another but the protagonists cannot get rid of the tiresome dull life they are destined to live; they are dislocated in this sense.

[350] Bowen, 7-8.
[351] Lassner, 2010a, 17.

Brookner's outstanding ability to create skillfully formed portraits of ordinary, abandoned, lonely people trying to accept and bear their failure in life along with her prominent visual description, portraying intricate psychological reflections in simple but well-expressed language makes her a distinctive contemporary novelist.

Brookner represents transnational displaced refugees or immigrants living in an unfamiliar cold exile of human relations that illustrates postcolonial characteristics. These characters try their best to fit in to the society they have to live but there is no success. These displaced characters are aliens and never a member of such an indifferent community.

CHAPTER THREE

LACANIAN APPROACH TO THREE SELECTED NOVELS OF ANITA BROOKNER

3.1. BROOKNER'S GENERAL VIEW

Anita Brookner and loneliness are intermingled; she has had a lonely life both in her early life and after her retirement. Brookner explicitly claims that "I have said that I am one of the loneliest women in London. People have resented it- it is not done to confess to loneliness, but there it is".[352] Her protagonists follow an inevitable movement toward more loneliness and loneliness may lead to despair. Being alone Brookner rethinks any issue and writes mostly about the contemporary life, women's destiny, and above all aging. On the other hand, Anita Brookner argues that a woman's desire for liberation and independence needs a heavy price.

> It is the otherness that fascinates me. As for feminism, I think it is good for women to earn their living and thereby control their own destinies to some extent. They pay a heavy price for independence though…The self-fulfilled woman is far from reality it is a sort of Shavian fantasy that you can be a complete woman[…] The ideal woman, on the other hand, is quite different: She lives according to a set of principles and is somehow very rare and always has been. As for the radical feminism of today, the rejection of the male, I find it absurd. It leads to sterility.[353]

About applying feminism on her works, Brookner says: "you'd have to be crouching in your burrow to see my novels in a feminist way. I do not believe in the all-men-are-swine programme".[354] She confesses that otherness interests her. So for Brookner all women, even the educated sophisticated ones, do want to marry and have children. Brookner says:

> I meant that writing is a very lonely activity. You go for days without seeing or talking to anyone. And all the time out there people are living happy, fulfilled lives

[352] Guppy, 1987, 148.
[353] Guppy, 1987, 162.
[354] Haffenden, 70.

> or you think they are. If I were happy, married with six children, I wouldn't be writing. And I doubt if I should want to. But since I wrote that sentence I have changed. Now I write because I enjoy it. Writing has freed me from the despair of living. I feel well when I am writing; I even put on a little weight!.[355]

She very explicitly confesses that if she were a mother she would stop writing. In other words, Brookner considers writing as a source of pleasure that frees her from despondency, loneliness, and grief.

The basis of human psychological characteristics remains hidden deep within the unconscious mind but they are interpretable through psychoanalytic theories. As mentioned, Brookner states that otherness fascinates her, then Lacan and his theories come to the mind automatically. The main features of her characters and the detailed process of becoming subjects have many identical points. In the first part of this chapter, *Hotel du Lac*'s central character, Edith Hope and her parents will be analyzed from Lacanian perspective. Then Julius Herz the male protagonist in *Making Things Better* (*The Next Big Thing)* and the basic components underlying his evolution and subjectivization will be explored in detail. And the last part will deal with main characters in *The Rules Of Engagement* and their repressed desires.

3.2. *HOTEL DU LAC*

Hotel du Lac won the Booker Prize in 1984 and includes 12 chapters. It was also a bestseller with a commercial success "nothing short of phenomenal".[356] This eminent work was also adapted by BBC television.

Hotel du Lac (Hotel of the Lake) is narrated through the eyes of thirty nine year old Edith Johanna Hope, a pseudonym, who has just arrived to Hotel du Lac beside Lake Geneva in Switzerland that is a long established traditional place. She spends her time in her room writing to David, her married lover. The first letter reveals her unwilling arrival and being forced to take the trip that is like an exile. The specific reason of spending her time at that place is not defined but is revealed as the story progresses. Edith is the writer of romantic fiction who is apparently there to finish her

[355] Haffenden, 62.
[356] Malcolm, 9.

novel *Beneath the Visiting Moon.* She suffers solitude and is not satisfied with the lonely life she is doomed to live. She recalls her last meal with her agent, Harold Webb, who has attacked Edith to consider the change in the new world and illustrate sex for the new generation of audiences that he calls cosmopolitan readers. Edith believes that her readers are in fact virtuous so other authors can deal with multi-orgasmic girls. Her novels revolve around the question of what behavior leads to become a real delicate attractive woman and she confesses her failure in finding an answer. She is in love with one man but receives marriage proposals from two other men. She rejects both and continues her solitary life in despair.

3.2.1. Edith's Lacking Identity

Jacques Lacan figures all his notions on the essential assumption that language has its own processes and is fundamentally linked to the access to the discourse. So every speaking subject must try to place her/himself in the symbolic order. Since language pre-exists the subject, therefore one has to subdue to its rules. The speaking subject in the symbolic order has to learn the principles of language that controls him/her once one is born.

In other words, language is the structure of the symbolic order. Any subject who wants to hold a position in the world should break the tie between the mother and him/her; and undergo the castration by accepting the Name-of-the-Father. Accessing language with all its scopes is mandatory for Lacan. Provided that the subjects "define themselves in language, by the Word and through the Law", then accordingly they will gain name and identity in the process of their lives.[357] Marc Silverstein mentions

> the subject must undergo a continuous and inescapable subjection to the power of a destiny that works through, without being irreducible to, the symbolic order […] for Lacan, the subject remains enveloped within a determining structure of cultural codes that maps the trajectory of its existence; that allows 'its' empowerment only if such empowerment leaves

[357] Méira Cook, *Text into Flesh: A Lacanian Reading of Selected Short Stories by I. B. Singer*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt 1992, 2.

> the cultural order intact; that leaves it, like Sartre's characters, in a state of impasse from which there is no exit. [358]

If identity formation processes are not passed correctly, the subjects fail to join into the symbolic order properly. There is no escape from these codes and principles.

Brookner's protagonists are usually not able to fit into the symbolic order appropriately and cannot respond to the orders of language properly. These characters unconsciously tolerate living in the margins and build their own world of fantasy. Edith Hope, the protagonist of *Hotel du Lac*, introduces herself as

> a householder, a ratepayer, a good plain cook, and a deliverer of typescripts well before the deadline; I sign anything that is put in front of me; I never telephone my publisher; and I make no claims for my particular sort of writing, although I understand that it is doing quite well. I have held this rather dim and trusting personality together for a considerable length of time, and although I have certainly bored others I was not to be allowed to bore myself. (*HDL*, 8)

Edith plays the role of a completely subjugated subject in the world predestined for her, accepting all its rules and regulations without any complaint. Edith feels she is "doomed for a certain time to walk the earth […] until she thought it time to be allowed to stop. Then she turned and retraced her steps (*HDL*, 22). By retracing her steps, it is revealed that she lives a repeated and boring unsatisfactory life.

Her ironical name, Hope, masks her disappointed character. As a romance novelist who lives in the world of her novels, she resists to accept the reality of change and says "The facts of life are too terrible to go into my kind of fiction. And my readers certainly do not want them there […] my readers are essentially virtuous […] and [not concerned with] those multi-orgasmic girls with the executive briefcases" and she believes that "the meek will inherit the earth" (*HDL*, 28). It is clear that Edith's cotemporary world is not concerned with all virtuous characters and readers, instead the commercial books and stories do contain explicit love affairs. Edith is, in fact, isolated and lacks communication and fears beautiful successful women; not those who succeed in academic life or career, rather she envies those attractive married women

[358] Marc Silverstein, *Harold Pinter and the Language of Cultural Power*, Associated University Press, London 1993, 157.

with children. Using Lacanian concepts, her character can be analyzed in terms of her hard childhood. Izenberg states that:

> In Lacan's general account of development the child is not sexed. And in principle, given the ontological bearing of Lacan's basic categories, there is no reason that the little girl could not identify herself in the imaginary stage with the phallus and later with the name of the father. Adult women, as Lacan said with typical double entendre, 'are free to situate themselves' at the 'pole where man is situated. Everyone knows there are phallic women'[359]- just as men can situate themselves on the side of woman. But these are exceptions, because from the beginning, the ontological meaning of the phallus has been falsely identified by parent and child alike with its concrete signifier, the male sexual organ.[360]

Therefore only male children can be identified with the father and rules and obligations that Name-of-the-Father defines. The boys are the subjects not the objects in the social life. Izenberg declares that "Men may not 'be' the phallus, as they fantasized in the imaginary stage but by virtue of having a penis they alone exercise the 'phallic' function" in the symbolic stage.[361]

Every person should undergo a psychological process successfully to gain a normal identity. As a child moves into the symbolic order, s/he experiences loss and being limited. When the young boy accepts the Law of the Father, his sexual desire for his mother is troubled. Although girls also have to accept the masculine authority to pass in to the symbolic order, they preserve more access to the imaginary order than boys. Accordingly, they must give up the original happiness of the joyful union with the mother in the pre-oedipal phase to enter the symbolic order of language. In the castration process the father intervenes and the child gives up trying to be the phallus of the mother. Then s/he has to abandon a *jouissance* that will never be attained so "castration means that *jouissance* must be refused so that it can be reached on the inverted ladder of the Law of desire".[362]

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[359] Quoted from Ivan Hannaford, *Race: The History of an Idea in the West*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1996, 5.
[360] Gerald Izenberg, *Identity: The Necessity of a Modern Idea*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016, 314.
[361] Izenberg, 314-315.
[362] *E.*, 324.

It's clear that the role of parents, both mother and father, is vital. Lacan differentiates between the real, symbolic and imaginary mother. The real mother takes care of the helpless infant. The mother offers objects to satisfy the needs of her infant and these objects are considered as symbolic signs of the mother's love and affection. Therefore, "The mother is first of all symbolic. She only becomes real by frustrating the subject's demand".[363] Even if she does not offer any objects, her presence affirms the love. On the other hand, her absence is traumatic and proves being rejected or having lost her love that creates lifelong troubles for the child. The child tries to cope with this kind of loss by "symbolizing the mother's presence and absence in games and language".[364] These are the first steps a child has in to the symbolic order.

A common motif for Lacan is "the view of the mother as an engulfing force which threatens to devour the child";[365] he refers to Melanie Klein's work to explain the "cannibalistic fantasies of devouring, and being devoured by, the mother".[366] Jung also claims

> On the negative side the mother archetype may connote anything secret hidden, dark; the abyss, the world of the dead, anything that devours, seduces and positions, that is terrible and inescapable like fate.[367]

So the devouring mother is another image in the imaginary order that is source and root of anxiety. In any case, the child must cut off from the imaginary order and remove imaginary relations with the mother in order to enter the symbolic order or social life. If a subject fails to complete the process completely, then abnormalities such as phobia or perversion appear.

Edith's mother is not the kind supportive traditional mother. The problem with Edith lies in the fact that she remembers her strange mother not as a source of pleasure but as a

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[363] Evans, 121.
[364] Peter Guy, *As Mirrors Are Lonely: A Lacanian Reading on the Modern Irish Novel*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014, 32.
[365] Guy, 31.
[366] Rina Kim, Claire Westall, *Cross-Gendered Literary Voices: Appropriating, Resisting, Embracing*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
[367] Jung, Carl Gustav, *Four Archetypes: Mother, Rebirth, Spirit, Trickster*, (Ed. Adler Gerhard), (Trans. R.F.C. Hull), Princeton University Press, 1971, 15.

> [H]arsh disappointed woman, that former beauty who raged so unsuccessfully against her fate, deliberately, wilfully letting herself go, slatternly and scornful, mocking her pale silent daughter who slipped so modestly in and out of her aromatic bedroom, bringing the cups of coffee which her mother deliberately spilled. And shouting,
>
> 'Too weak! Too weak! All of you, too weak!.' (*HDL*, 48)

Edith says:

> Annoyance and frustration blazed from their every pore; in their mother's dark drawing room the air was filled with dissension, with ugliness. They were now heavy women, punishingly corseted, with badly pencilled eyebrows, and large, hard bosoms. They whipped themselves into a blaze of retrospective fury, voices raised, coffee spilling from their cups.
>
> 'Schrecklich! Schrecklich!' they shouted. 'Ach, du Schreck!.' (*HDL*, 49)

Edith's Viennese mother, speaking Viennese German, has left unpleasant memories for Edith. Little Edith, even unable to understand her speech, suffers such tough manners.

As well it is recalled that the "seven-year-old Edith, hiding behind Grossmama Edith's chair" (*HDL*, 49) only feels relief when her father's key opens the door and little Edith runs to him. It is revealed that Edith's mother is a stranger in London and this fact facilitates the displacement of both the mother and Edith in the English culture/symbolic order. The mother's displacement means her inability to understand the codes of the Name-of-the-Father in British culture that leads to her repression and loss, and she passes her own bewilderment to little Edith.

The only good memory Edith has goes back to the time when her father took her to Kunsthistorisches Museum trying to explain the pictures to her, "but she pressed her wet red face against his hand and would not listen" (*HDL*, 49). Unfortunately, her kind father dies in his early fifties and not long after Edith's mother, Rosa, dies too. So there is probably a big gap in her psychological progress.

Edith remembers the time she was seven. It seems that she has not properly progressed into the symbolic order. When the castrated subject enters into the symbolic structure of language, s/he must accept the prohibition of *jouissance* because castration

means that *jouissance* must be rejected i.e. the subject has accepted that s/he is not the imaginary phallus of the mother. She lacks the love giving mother that is the prerequisite for accepting the unattainable *jouissance*, that is, her mother does not treat her in a way to allow her miss the joyful union with mother instead she is afraid of her. In fact, she has hardly ever experienced the real joyful union in her infancy. In other words, Edith has not been capable to go through the stages of the Oedipus complex properly. She lacks the interrelated must-to-pass stage that is detaching herself from her imaginary identification with her indifferent mother; before experiencing any love from her mother, she has had to experience the loss or the separation from the mother adopting the state of otherness by entering into the symbolic order/Law.

Consequently, the first phase of becoming a subject in language must be accompanied with admitting the father's Law. On condition that the father's position in the symbolic order is not affirmed, then the child will be stuck between the imaginary and the symbolic. For Lacan, the Name-of-the-Father is the major signifier. It both grants an identity to the subject and places the subject within the symbolic order. It indicates the familial and social prohibitions including ethics. Edith's father due to his early death and weakness is not able to define her position in the symbolic order properly. Aydin mentions

> The position of an infant in the symbolic triangle that Lacan draws is explained by Lacan as such: 'I' plays the role of the ego-ideal in the imaginary order, the primordial object signifier is the m(O)ther, and the Father is situated in the place of Other as the Name-of-the-Father. This chain of signifiers refers to a crucial Lacanian signifier 'Other.' Accordingly, Anthony Wilden translates this concept of Lacanian Other in different ways: sometimes it is used to mean 'Otherness,' sometimes 'the Other.' It signifies both parents as the mother stands for the 'real Other' and as the father occupies the 'Symbolic Other'.[368]

Little Edith should first break her bond with her mother but unlike normal children not intending to lose *jouissance*, she is afraid of her, and this painful feeling creates a deep gap.

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[368] Türkan Aydin, *Renunciation of Language in Harold Pinter's "The Homecoming," "The Caretaker" and "The Dumb Waiter:" a Lacanian Analysis*, (Master's Thesis), Ankara, 2006, 64.

Edith's identity is structured on an inverted latter: a devouring autonomous mother who never cares for her daughter and a kind but weak father, who is unable to confine his wife's desire and dies in Edith's early life. The problem with Edith lies in the fact that an incomplete castration has not prepared her for entering into the symbolic order. Edith identifies herself with her father more than the mother. Her law-maker mother castrates Edith's desire for the father and then she experiences lack. Desires essentially depend on lack. Due to Edith's weak father she is hardly exposed to any strict law defined as the name-of-the-father; if there was such authority she would feel safe as a shelter and would become a normal subject. Edith then quests to get the father's desire through other men.

Edith's mother is a real symbol of lack with unfulfilled desires, and Edith is the inheritor of this kind of lack. Like her mother she is all silent; her mother lived in her past reminiscence without uttering much. Also Edith, usually mute, utters her secret feelings in never-to-be-sent letters she writes to her lover David. The life she has inherited from her devouring neglectful mother lacks magnificence, luxury and above all happiness. She has problems in treating others especially women:

> And thought with shame of her small injustices, of her unworthy thoughts towards those excellent women who had befriended her, and to whom she had revealed nothing. I have been too harsh on women, she thought, because I understand them better than I understand men. I know their watchfulness, their patience, their need to advertise themselves as successful. Their need never to admit to a failure. I know all that because I am one of them. I am harsh because I remember Mother and her unkindnesses, and because I am continually on the alert for more. But women are not all like Mother, and it is really stupid of me to imagine that they are. (*HDL*, 88)

While Edith tries to unravel her own position in the symbolic order and identify her relation with other female members of the society, she is confused. As her mother has been her model to imitate from, she cannot clearly recognize what the Law expects her to do. The interventions of the-Name-of- the- Father helps any child find the correct path. However, Edith's Father usually says "think a little. You have made a false equation" (*HDL*, 88), nevertheless, the permanent problematic traces her mother has carved in her psyche are difficult to be healed.

Even when Edith compares herself with her only close friend Penelope, who has sent her on this exile, again she reaches the traces of a Mother. Although Penelope's Mother is dead, she has left a heritage as "Mother's exacting standards" (*HDL*, 88) about which Edith has heard so much. Here Edith wishes:

> I wish that I had had a mother who handed down maxims on tablets of stone, and who was never without a wise saw or a modem instance. I never knew my poor mother to do much more than bark with derision. And yet I think of her as my poor mother. As I grow older myself I perceive her sadness, her bewilderment that life had taken such a turn, her loneliness. She bequeathed to me her own cloud of unknowing. She comforted herself, that harsh disappointed woman, by reading love stories, simple romances with happy endings. Perhaps that is why I write them. (*HDL*, 104)

The recollection of Edith's Mother is accompanied by passivity, derision, bafflement, solitude, isolation, and disappointment. Edith never accompanies her mother instead she is usually an ignored one. Rosa, the Mother, attempts to fulfill her lack by reading romances. Edith's mother, after the early death of the Father, is described as:

> In her last months, she lay in bed, wearing the silk peignoir that my father bought her on their honeymoon in Venice, not caring, perhaps not noticing, that the lace was tom, the pale blue faded to grey, and when she raised her eyes from her book, her eyes too were faded from blue to grey, and full of dreams, longings, disenchantment. My mother's fantasies, which remained unchanged all her life, taught me about reality. And although I keep reality in the forefront of my mind, and refer to it with grim constancy, I sometimes wonder if it serves me any better than it served my mother. (*HDL*, 104)

Stetz claims that Brookner's world in *Hotel du Lac* is visual and its details "serve as representations of the psyche".[369] The depressing gray setting and clothing foreshadows her dark manner and psyche. She has already died before the real death. Both her blue eyes and blue dress have faded to grey. Also Waugh claims, "Edith experiences the greyness […] as an objective correlative for her own state of mind".[370] Living as a subjugated woman, though married, again has not fulfilled her dreams. Edith follows the unchanged and unfulfilled dreams of her mother, and exactly like her Edith lives in

[369] Stetz, 43.
[370] Waugh, 143.

the world of romance. Edith's baffled state leads to her failure in creating appropriate relationships. In fact, Edith experiences mothering her neglectful displaced mother. She is alienated due to experiencing this kind of sad mothering at her childhood.

When other girls adore their mothers, Edith confesses to Monica:

> I just occasionally get the feeling that I must be an unnatural daughter. My mother is dead and yet I find that I hardly ever think of her. And when I do, it is with a wistfulness that I never felt for her in real life. Pain. And I think that that is probably how she thought of me. But I only miss her in the sense that I wish she could have lived long enough to see that I am like her in the only way she valued: we both preferred men to women. (*HDL*, 146)

Edith suffers lack and displaces her pain onto fiction. She wishes her mother would live long enough to see that she is following all her footprint on the real life.

It can be stated that Edith has become a romance writer to write what her mother desired to read. In Edith's case she tries to become the desire of her dead mother. Reading novels with happy endings was the only motif of Rosa's life and she probably dies with a novel in her hand. Probably if she were alive, she would have read Edith's romances and possibly would have finally been satisfied and there would have been a shift from her devouring state to a supportive mother. Then Edith would heal her psychological wounds and stop equalizing her mother with mere pain. Edith desires the love she has never received from the mother.

Father's namelessness, mother's being a foreigner and consequently her displacement, and Edith's having two names indicate her confused psyche incapable of determining the appropriate path to move on. It points to the fact that she has not fully been able to integrate into the symbolic order because her mother misrecognized her father's protective role and identity. Edith is trapped in the symbolic. She still desires to become the phallus for her lacking displaced mother. So, Edith's desire for recognition from her mother can never be satisfied.

Edith Hope envies all mothers accompanied with their daughters and automatically remembers her own devouring mother Rosa who "would have curled her lip, not out of contempt, but out of vengeful regret for her own wasted years, which

should have been filled with lovers and their intrigues but which had instead been monopolized by an increasingly mute husband and a silent child". (*HDL*, 84)

Edith has been neglected by her mother. It is as if she tried to forget Edith's existence. In the hotel, Edith is invited to the luxurious birthday party of 79-year-old Mr. Pusey accompanied by her daughter Jennifer, of the same age with Edith, who seems twenty years younger than her. At the end of the party, Edith is too bored and not interested in what that mother daughter do. She tries to analyze the reasons for not enjoying such celebrations and recalls her own birthdays:

> For her birthdays in her parents' house, Edith herself had made the cake and her father had brought it in, ceremoniously, with the coffee. Those occasions had been brief and timid excursions into family life as she had supposed they might ideally live it; her mother was stimulated into reminiscences of the coffee houses of her youth, and had talked vividly and amusingly, before falling once again into the sorrow of reminiscence. By that time the coffee had been drunk and on the plate the cake lay in ruins, and when Edith carried it back into the kitchen, her birthday had been over. And there had never been any mention of weddings. (*HDL*, 116)

Edith misunderstands the mother-daughter relations and by seeing such strong bonds feels the deepness of her psychological wounds. Edith has not been allowed to enjoy her childhood. She suffers low self-confidence, and desires others to approve her in order to fill her lacking identity. Anyway, losing mother or the absence of mother leads to Edith's loss of identity.

3.2.2. Edith the Subject

The fact that the child is always already trapped up in the symbolic is confirmed by the fact that the child already exists in the speech of its family even before one's birth. When the child is born, the language of the society starts to construct her/his identity. [371]

Lacan argues that there is no such thing as Woman and clarifies that he means woman with capital W does not exist; moreover, he denotes that there is no universal

[371] Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance*. Princeton UP, 1995, 36.

identity for woman.[372] Since woman is not whole, and is distanced to the phallus, she is only subject to the symbolic order. A normal woman must accept the authority of the society. Edith is 39 years old and the Law/Other does not value unmarried women.

Lacan refers to woman as a symptom of a man who can only "enter the psychic economy of men as a fantasy object (a), the cause of their desire".[373] So women are reduced to the *objet a* in the male dominated university of Lacanian world. According to the Other principles in the novel any woman is to be identified with a husband by giving birth to his children or bear the lacking incomplete position as a spinster all her life.

That Edith's mother did not recognize the Father's Law leads to Edith's failure. Edith seems to have the same fate like her mother Rosa, Aunt Anna, and cousin Resa that were not satisfied with the Law. In spite of the fact that they all were married, they were not pleased with their position in the symbolic order as limited objects. Their desire is boundless and they are not content to view life as confined to their husbands and children.

It is of significant importance to mention that Edith's father remains nameless in the novel that emphasizes his weakness as a father in a male dominated society. Therefore, he, as a nameless father, seems unable to complete the symbolic castration, subjectivization and identification for his daughter Edith. In order to gain a symbolic identity as a subject in the society, the child must internalize the-Law-of-the-Father and accept it as the reality of life. Lemaire clarifies that

> The function of the Oedipus is also to ensure a cultural normalization. The child in effect comes to realize that he is the third member of the family and that he is still in the making. He thus directs himself into the struggle for recognition on the basis of work, sublimating his lack of being in an ever more perfect quest for accomplishment. In this search, the child will make a series of identifications with different ideals, from the classic ideals of childhood (the champion, the hero, the aviator) to the ideals of the adult. The child who is conscious of his title 'member of society' will assume the norms of society, its laws, taboos and ideals.[374]

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[372] Izenberg, 316.
[373] Jacques Lacan, 1974-5: Seminar of 21 January 1975. See Also Allister Mactaggart, *The Film Paintings of David Lynch Challenging Film Theory*, Intellect Bristol, UK, 2010, 172.
[374] Anika Lemaire, *Jacques Lacan*, (Trans. David Macey), Routledge, London & New York 2010, 180.

Edith also as the third member of her family needs the norms to be identified with. Although the symbolic order is the realm of standards, Edith has experienced the absence of a supportive loving mother and is devoured by her harshness. As well she has suffered deficiency of family members who are the main sources to illustrate what Social/Cultural Order expects. She says:

> Penelope […] has refused offers of marriage because in her opinion few of the men she meets come up to Mother's exacting standards, of which I have heard so much. Penelope quotes Mother as the final authority on every subject, and sometimes I envy her this certainty, this piety. (*HDL*, 104)

The only words we read Edith's mother utter are "Schrecklich! Schrecklich! […] Ach, du Schreck!" meaning "Terrible! Terrible! Oh my goodness!".(*HDL*, 49) None of Edith's parents attempt to internalize the principles of the symbolic order in her.

Edith's main inner conflict reveals when she utters

> The result of all this was to re-open in Edith's mind the question of what behaviour most becomes a woman, the question around which she had written most of her novels, the question she had attempted to argue with Harold Webb, the question she had failed to answer and which she now saw to be of the most vital importance. The excitement she thus experienced at being provided with an opportunity to study the question at first hand was if anything heightened by the fact that everything that Mrs Pusey had said so, far was of the utmost triviality. Clearly there were depths here that deserved her prolonged attention.

Eventually, "the subject is constituted in and through the encounter with an Other".[375] She is in quest of her identity as a woman that is quite consistent with psychoanalytic notion that true human resides in some deep, largely inaccessible, inner place hidden somewhere within the psyche that is indirectly affected by the Other.

Edith is unable to establish distinct, constant identity. For instance when she, puzzled, faces emotional demands of her lovers, she pursues an alternative source

[375] Van Haute, Philippe, *Against Adaptation: Lacan's "Subversion" of the Subject*, (Trans. Paul Crowe and Miranda Vankerk), Other Press, New York 2002, 71.

of structure and consistency in holding a literary career. However, this is only a transitory solution because she won't be able to write successfully all her life and attract the attention of her audience. After becoming totally disappointed of being a wife and a mother in her real life, Edith rewrites and overwrites traditional romances about rescue and happy lovers. Edith has been deserted by her mother emotionally and has not completed the pre-Oedipal relationship; she suffers deep, inner hidden psychological troubles. Therefore, she misunderstands the norms of the symbolic order.

The symbolic order is the realm of culture. Due to the lack of uninternalized principles and her confused mind, Edith feels the heavy burden of everyone gazing at her loss.

The gaze for Lacan "constitutes castration anxiety, and the gaze functions to determine the subjectivity of the human being within the scopic field, the field associated with the scopic drive".[376] Lacanian gaze plays an important role in the subjectivization process:

> The drive indicates that the subject is seen, that there is a gaze which aims at the subject, a gaze we cannot see because it is excluded from our field of vision. This gaze gives us the distinction between what belongs to the imaginary order and what belongs to the order of the real where the drive manifests itself.[377]

Edith as the subject is decreased to the status of the object via the gaze; consequently, the gaze leads to desire, whose cause is related to the development of *objet a*. To Lacan the gaze is the gaze of the Other and Edith is gazed at by Penelope/Other who imposes the Law by using the dominant phrase "Everyone says". Edith's ego, as Lacan claims, is a construct based on the gaze of the Other. Freeman states that

> Lacan Follws the tradition in French philosophy that regards the ego as an objectified phenomenon that is outside of and alienated from the human subject. For Lacan, the ego is, above all, a construct produced by 'the gaze

[376] Jacques Lacan, "The Split between the Eye and the Gaze," (1964), *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, (Trans. Alan Sheridan), Norton, New York 1978, 73.
[377] Antonio Quinet, "The Gaze as an Object", (Eds. Richard Feldstein, Bruce Fink and Maire Jaanus), *Reading Seminar XI. Lacan's Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, State University of New York, 1995, 139-140.

> of the other' and is not in any way the seat of subjectivity, judgement, reality testing, or the like […] It is, rather, a narcissistcs construction utilized by the subject to provide him or herself with a false and alienating sense of coherence and value"[378]

Therefore, the gaze alienates Edith/subject from herself and her own values. It leads her to be reduced to an object of others' desire doomed to behave as expected. Lacan defines the gaze as:

> I can feel myself under the gaze of someone whose eyes I do not even see, not even discern. All that is necessary is for something to signify to me that there may be others there. This window, if it gets dark, and if I have reasons for thinking that there is someone behind it, it is straightaway a gaze. From the moment this gaze exists, I am already something other, in that I feel myself becoming an object for the gaze of others. But in this position, which is a reciprocal one, others also know that I am an object who knows himself to be seen.[379]

Edith is being stared at and must accept it, and in this process she tries to behave well to be appreciated but her lacking identity prevents and she is alienated from herself and lives as a bewildered subject.

Edith's attempt to write novels her mother loved and read is a challenge to recover an imaginary order sense of fusion with the Lacanian *objet a* that always fails in exchange to the subject's entry into the symbolic order of language. Edith looks at literature and romances as a guide for her life. Edith, as a lonely woman, struggles with her independence throughout the development of the novel. Edith hopes to gain the kind of recognition and reception she has been lacking in her childhood. Novels, especially romances, become her life and provide her with the language to express herself. On the other hand, Edith knows that she must possess the phallus or be the phallus but she has not properly leant how to behave or attract men. She has become a writer considering her pen to play the role of phallus but she is mocked by her friends as:

> 'In a dream, half the time,' observed Mrs Dempster, 'making up those stories of hers. I sometimes wonder if she knows what it's all about.'

[378] Arthur Freeman, Mark H. Stone, Donna Martin, *Comparative Treatments for Borderline Personality Disorder*, Springer Pub, 2005, 201.
[379] *SI*, 215.

> Penelope laughed, and Edith, seeing this through the open kitchen door, wondered if she might be allowed in to share the joke. 'My dear, I'm the one with all the stories,' she was in time to hear Penelope say. 'I wonder she doesn't put me in a book.' (*HDL*, 127)

Even by writing she cannot stop others gossip. From another perspective, being a novelist or holding the social position as a writer implies both an escape and a prison for Edith. For Lacan "the center of the subject is outside; the subject is ex-centric"[380] and must adopt herself to the Other that commands from outside. Edith is divided, split, alienated from herself and for Lacan "the split is irreducible, can never be healed",[381] besides such split or alienated subject is the barred subject ($). Even the women who are of identical sex mock her.

Edith under the pen name of Vanessa Wilde states that "several people have remarked upon my physical resemblance to Virginia Woolf" (*HDL*, 8) and struggles to attract recognition but is still a lacking identity. Unlike Virginia Woolf who committed suicide due to depression by confessing that "I can't fight any longer"[382], Edith is not brave enough to rebel against the Law that enslaves her as an obedient subject. Barred Edith lacks communication, she is usually mute. Galef states "Edith Hope quietly sits at the elaborate meals served in the hotel dining room as an observer rather than a participator at life's feast".[383] Her isolated passive mute life is repeated every day.

Edith unable to define her role in the symbolic order, due to her father's weakness and her deep concerns with her mother's unsatisfied life, is not able to fill the lack in her own existence and admits the gaze. In other words, the pre-existing gaze stares at Edith as an inadequate confused subject in need of recognition.

3.2.3. The Unfulfilled Desire

One of the characteristics of Brookner is her selection of Victorian names. Edith, both fond of and a writer of romance novels, is surrounded by characters with Victorian

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[380] Evans, 59. See Also *E*., 165, 171.
[381] Evans, 195.
[382] Wikisource contributors. "Virginia Woolf suicide note." *Wikisource* , Wikisource , 14 Dec. 2014. Web. 19 May. 2016.
[383] David Galef, "You Aren't What You Eat: Anita Brookner's Dilemma", *Journal of Popular Culture*, Winter, 1994, 3.

names such as Phillip, David, Geoffrey, Penelope, and Iris that foreshadow they all have time-worn values and beliefs. Edith is an unusual old name for a lady, maybe it conveys that she belongs to a former generation with out-of-date ethical values. Like her unpopular name and outmoded beliefs, Edith writes outdated romance novels that repeat their themes and characters.

If we consider the three men that Edith has emotional relationship, we may unlock the mystery Brookner creates by the name choice. Edith with a troubled childhood is to accept the principles predestined for every woman and is convinced to marry Geoffrey Long because he is probably the last one who proposes her. Geoffrey is described with "mouse-like seemliness" (129) but "the soft alliteration and assonance in this name should alert us to how he is flawed".[384]

It is numerously stated that "Everyone had said how good he had been to his mother […] how impressed everyone had been, […] Everyone said how lucky his wife would be, […] Everyone said how lucky Edith was Penelope said" and Edith is persistently reminded of her good fortune (*HDL*, 119). She finally confesses "I am lucky, she reminded herself, looking at that drawn face in the glass of her dressing table…And I was always a reasonable woman, she thought. We are all agreed on that" (*HDL*, 118). But who are these nameless every one? Due to the lack of a law model for Edith, Penelope defines her that a normal reasonable life means to be in the service of men. Edith is convinced to become enslaved and perform her role as *objet a*. Penelope convinces her to accept Geoffrey's proposal. Thus she performs her role as *objet a*.

On the day of her wedding, the morning light is "hard, white and uneasy, harbouring surprises of an unpleasant nature" (*HDL*, 118) that suggests a hard uneasy day and future for Edith. Geoffrey is a lonely man who lives alone since his mother is dead and he generously offers his mother's gloomy opal ring as a symbol of enslaving Edith under his name. The mother's ring also hints that he is looking for a woman to fill his mother's missing position in his home:

> In any event, the marital bed in Montagu Square, where Geoffrey had formerly lived with his mother, had already been installed, and soon she would take her place within the confines of a handsome bedroom, the

[384] Malcolm, 58-59.

> colours of which she secretly found a little too insistent. (*HDL*, 122)

Geoffrey, before his mother's death, probably was the phallus of his widowed mother, of course, with no father to intervene. Geoffrey is a traditional man but for Edith he is "old-fashioned in his views: he did not, for example, approve of women working, and he teased her about the amount of time she gave to her books" (*HDL*, 119). When Geoffrey laughs "at her old spreading creaking wicker chair" and replaces it kindly with an "uncomfortable wrought-iron bench" (*HDL*, 121), it is a metaphor that foreshadows the hard painful life waiting for Edith under a man's irresistible tough iron codes. Geoffrey's already installed marital bed metonymically hints Edith's duty to prove her feminine side as his *objet a* and ease Geoffrey/the Master's *jouissance*.

Edith's "white and plain and not quite big enough" bed is compared with Penelope's bed which "would have accommodated four adults and which, when not in use, was heaped with all manner of delicate little pillows covered in materials" (*HDL*, 122) that illustrates and compares how feminine they are. It metonymically indicates the reasons of their acceptableness considering the element of being able to please men in a male dominated society and culture. Taking the mother as a model, Edith follows her track in not being capable to attract men and enjoy life.

Before the wedding day, Edith tries to convince herself that if she gets married to Geoffrey then she will be awarded by "maturity: pleasant companionship, comfort, proper holidays […] [and] a reasonable prospect" in case of becoming an object of desire for Geoffrey (*HDL*,118). Edith knows that after becoming a married woman her career will decline

> She would not be writing. Perhaps she would never write again. She would have that life that she supposed other women have: shopping, cooking, arranging dinner parties, meeting friends for lunch. […] I have not paid my dues, she said to herself, on a day when she had looked with timid pleasure at her new and spacious kitchen. I must have seemed like a foundling to them. That will have to change. (*HDL*, 123)

But will Edith be able to desert her career as a novelist and get into her new role as a house wife? The spacious kitchen is a metonymy of the importance of nourishing the appetite of the Master on any social occupation. Geoffrey as the male figure can block

Edith's creativity as a romance novelist.

It is worth mentioning that on her wedding day, Edith wears

> "fine stockings and the beautiful grey satin slip […] a very creditable Chanel copy, the jacket bound with a dark blue and white silk braid…a plain round-necked blouse […] with her Aunt Anna's pearls, [her only dowry, the only token of her family's presence] […] Her shoes were blue and white, […] her white gloves […] refused to wear a hat, […] twisted her hair up a little higher than usual…when she looked in the glass she was pleased with herself. She looked elegant, controlled. Grown-up, she thought. At last". (*HDL*, 126)

She has rejected Penelope's offer to help her in choosing her wedding dress and she wears a confused combination of blue, grey and white. Although the symbolic order proposes the bridal dress as a temporary ornament for the bride, Edit's missing bridal gown is a metonymy of her lost alienated baffled identity. On the other hand, Penelope

> was wearing an obviously expensive dress of printed silk and an enormous red straw hat, the brim of which curved round her head and skimmed down the side of her face nearly to her shoulder. (*HDL*, 126)

Edith feels:

> She [Edith] should be wearing something warm and shabby - a dressing gown would be ideal - and sipping a nourishing milky drink. (*HDL*, 128)

Penelope and her enormous red hat with her luxurious dress makes Edith look like an idiot wearing simple formal clothes on her wedding day. Nonetheless as mentioned before, Edith's mother died "wearing the silk peignoir that [her] father bought her on their honeymoon in Venice, not caring, perhaps not noticing, that the lace was tom, the pale blue faded to grey and when she raised her eyes from her book, her eyes too were faded from blue to grey, and full of dreams, longings, disenchantment" (*HDL*, 104), and Edith's wedding outfit all in blue and grey signifies her indifference and uninterestedness in being a subjugated subject of the law by marriage. Her mother's bachelorhood is narrated as

> the fascinating Schaffner sisters, her mother, Rosa, her aunt Anna….

> preparing their theses on Klimt or Schnitzler or the Jugendstil, or on all three […] married promptly, and young, they were soon bitterly disappointed […] when the sisters found each other again, many years later, together with their cousin Resi, it was to outbid each other with stories of horrific boredom, of husbands become too puny to interest them. (*HDL*, 49)

Edith due to her mother's memories has observed that getting married leads to boredom but Penelope, still unmarried but in numerous love affairs, is the female reciter of the Other reminding her to obey the obligations of the symbolic order.

Penelope has already accepted the position of a woman as *objet a* and feels that every woman must be attractive to prove her feminine side and be used as an object of desire and not care about ethics. Unlike other women around, Edith resists the change the Law requires her both in her personal life and in her books. Edith knows that she must stop her career as a writer and live as a rule-bound confined subject taking care of her upcoming master Geoffrey. However, she leaves Geoffrey on their wedding day and calls back her lover David.

The next important man is Mr. Philip Neville. Phillip means lover of horses. Symbolically horse is a sign of life force, power, nobility, strength, and freedom that foreshadows his tendency to be an owner. He is always referred to as Mr. Neville that metaphorically signifies the kind of importance he has in the eyes of Edith as her probable Master. His name may remind us the word Devil but his devilish thoughts are hidden behind his sociable good-looking appearance. In the male dominated symbolic order, Mr. Neville is the all powerful male figure imposing his selfish attitude on women. He is Lacan's male model of the norms in the symbolic order.

Malcolm claims "When he proposes to the protagonist, what comes to mind is the Faust legend. Like Mephistopheles, he comes not with a suitor's flowers, but proffering a new life"[385] and deals with marriage as a business matter exchanging social position with one's life and emotions and directly reveals his dark and despoiled attitude. He says:

> "I am proposing a partnership of the most enlightened kind. . . . If you wish to take a lover that is your concern, so long as you arrange it in a civilized manner".

[385] Malcolm, 59.

> "And if you . . ".
>
> "The same applies, of course. . . . Think, Edith. Have you not, at some time in your well-behaved life, desired vindication? Are you not tired of being polite to rude people? . . ".
>
> Edith bowed her head.
>
> ". . . You will find that you can behave as badly as you like. As badly as everybody else likes, too. That is the way of the world". (166-67)

His selfishness is clearly stated but Edith, still trying to prove her being a good obedient subject, is unable a to see his true harsh nature since she is Edith Hope i.e. still hopes to find a man and prove every one that she is able to attract a male and define her as a married woman with an identity. Mr. Neville probably has recognized her from her pictures on the cover of her romance novels and attempts to enslave her:

> 'Good women always think it is their fault when someone else is being offensive. Bad women never take the blame for anything.'
>
> […]
>
> 'What you need, Edith, is not love. What you need is a social position. What you need is marriage.'
>
> 'I know,' she said.
>
> 'And once you are married, you can behave as badly as everybody else. Worse, given your unused capacity.'
>
> 'The relief,' she agreed.
>
> 'And you will be popular with one and all, and have so much more to talk about […]' (*HDL*, 101)

Edith admits whatever Mr. Neville as the speaker of the patriarchy says. She is the listener whose duty is to confirm what he says. For Lacan "in the Other […] speech and language […] come from outside consciousness", therefore "the unconscious is the discourse of the Other".[386] Mr. Neville is the indicator of the Other/Law from now on. Mr. Neville's language exactly is what the discourse of the Law expects women to follow. Social position and marriage are the rewards for good women.

[386] Evans, 136. See Also *Ec*, 16.

His policy of selfishness is remarkably against Edith's principles revealed in her unsent letters. The selfishness of male dominated society that underlies everything on man's desire is what Mr. Neville conveys as the Other. In Lacanian terms Mr. Neville can show performative effectiveness and corresponds to Zizek's definition of the master: "the Master is the subject who is fully engaged in his (speech) act, who, in a way, 'is his word,' whose word displays an immediate performative efficiency".[387] He openly gives his ideas on people without concerning about the probability of hurting them:

> And when you think you are alone, your expression is full of sorrow. You face a life of exile of one sort or another….out of fashion …Unmarried, I'm afraid you will soon look a bit of a fool. (*HDL,* 165)

He explicitly tells that unmarried old women look foolish and Edith does not protest. When Edith refers to him as Mr. Neville instead of Philip, it reveals the influence he has on her as a Master but in fact aiming to enslave her.

Lacan uses Hegel's master/slave dialectic from his *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807). Generally speaking, Master and Slave relation is based on the desire for recognition. It is life-and-death fight but ends when both parts are still alive. One of the parties gives up to the other and yields to his authority and recognizes him as the Master. The Slave is to satisfy the desires of the Master and in doing so the Slave has to suppress his own instincts. So this process is merely for recognition. It is of significance to mention that the slave desires to be enslaved and the Master cannot practice mastery without the slave's wish. Therefore, without the desire of Edith nobody can exercise power on her. Due to her lack in her subjectivity and unconscious she herself desires to undergo such process hoping to gain identity, autonomy and social position under the name of a male figure. Mr. Neville also speaks with such authority as if he is the master signifier. His logical explanations and interpretations make Edith accept his words as the Master's discourse. But suddenly everything changes.

Mr. Neville disappoints Edith by coming out of Jennifer's room a day after proposing marriage to Edith. Edith, shocked, thinks

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[387] Greg Forter, Paul Allen Miller, Desire of the Analysts: Psychoanalysis and Cultural Criticism, State University of New York Press, 2008, 91.

> Jennifer was no doubt one of those trivial diversions of which he spoke so dismissively. And that door, opening and shutting, in her dreams, in her delusive waking moments, had been a real door, the reality and implications of which she had failed to take into account. (*HDL*, 183)

From the beginning of Edith's arrival to the hotel, Mr. Neville and his looks, smiles and noble words to attract Edith coincide with his affairs with Jennifer. But Edith unconsciously visions her father:

> She saw her father's patient face. Think again, Edith. You have made a false equation. (*HDL*, 183)

The father's visionary intervention calms her down:

> She sat down slowly on the bed, feeling a little faint. And if I were to marry him, she said to herself, knowing this, knowing too that he could so easily and so quickly look elsewhere, I should turn to stone, to paste: I should become part of his collection. But perhaps that is what he intended, she thought; that I should replace the item that was missing. (*HDL*, 183)

As an obedient subject, a woman must ignore such issues and continue her life in the cost of gaining a respectable and acceptable social position.

In Master/Slave relationship, the master gains *jouissance* or paves the ways to *jouissance* by enslaving more female figures but he does not achieve his goal in Edith's case. Mr. Neville, Mrs. Pusey, Jennifer and the door opening and closing every night all turn to phobic objects of Edith's anxiety and loss. No one is trustable for Edith then. She continues to live her alienated solitary life under the bothering gaze of the Other seeing her as an insufficient subject. Then she decides to leave the hotel to London.

Most male names have negative connections but David is a name that Brookner favorably uses in her novels frequently that has positive meaning and association. David means friend and beloved. It is a religious name and in the Bible David is selected to be the king. In the novel, David is explained as a sensitive man who never dares to hurt Edith's heart when they meet. Malcolm mentions:

> Extracts from her letters to her married lover, which interrupt the narrative, serve most of all to remind us that this is not a sexually inexperienced or repressed woman. Would the latter, after canceling her wedding, have her

> married lover back to the house to help her finish the party champagne before making love, as Edith Hope does? It may seem old-fashioned to believe in the supremacy of romantic love over casual sex or marriages of convenience, but it increasingly makes sense coming from as unflinching a realist as this protagonist.[388]

Edith writes many unsent letters that gives variety to the narrative structure by revealing her psychological attitude on motherhood, family, life, feelings of loss and absence. *Hotel du Lac* and Edith's story begins with writing a letter to David and continues writing to him:

> Just what I wanted, Edith reminded herself, but what she suddenly longed to do was to speak to David; the intrusion of a man into her consciousness, however parodic, had the painful effect of awakening her longing. She glanced at her watch, calculating the time anxiously; if she rushed upstairs now, she might just catch him before he left. At the Rooms, she thought, with a pang of love and terror. (*HDL,* 56)

Why Edith prefers David to both Geoffrey and Mr. Neville might be in accordance with Zizek's liberation concept:

> That is to say, 'liberation' always implies a reference to the Other qua Master: ultimately, nothing liberates as well as a good Master, since 'liberation' consists precisely in our shifting the burden onto the Other/Master.[389]

Edith is looking for a man to fill the place of her kind father and probably David is the good master here. David is both a married man and a father. Edith recognizes him as a kind man with more sensitive manner. Edith directs her desire on David but as a secret mistress cannot find a position in the social life and the members of the symbolic order are not aware of the existing relationship as a proof of her feminine side. For Edith it is catastrophic to encounter with the reality that David is possessed by someone else. Edith describes their relation in her fantasy as follows:

> They were sensible people. No one was to be hurt…She prided herself on giving nothing away, so that he never knew of her empty Sundays, the long eventless evenings, the holidays cancelled at the last minute. Cursing

[388] Malcolm, 58.
[389] Slavoj Zizek, *Enjoy Your Symptom!: Jacques Lacan in Hollywood and Out*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, New York & London 2012, 59.

> inwardly, as he loaded the car for the long journey back from Suffolk, after another crowded and inharmonious weekend, he thought of her little house, its quality of silence, the green dimness of her drawing room. She, too early in bed, thought of him with his family, their habits, their quarrels, their treats. Of his children. (*HDL*, 61)

David's role as the kind Master interrupts Edith's happiness because she is unable to complain and should yield as an *objet a*, but envies David's family. Edith feels the relief of being able to attract a lover but still not a husband. She is still a lacking subject in the symbolic order.

As mentioned before, she has been identified with her father more, therefore, the lacking Edith desires a man to resemble her kind father. David seems to possess all his characteristics but he does not love her as Edith magnifies. Edith is blind to see her own one sided love because during her stay no letter, telephone or even telegram is received from David. His love is nothing more than illusion. Edith's lacking unconscious constructs her as a mute longing subject yearning for love, value, and recognition. She desires to be valued in her community but it scarcely occurs.

3.2.4. Tired of Women

Edith nags "But women, women, only women, and I do so love the conversation of men. Oh David, David" (*HDL*, 21). Edith's mother is also presented with "vengeful regret for her own wasted years, which should have been filled with lovers and their intrigues" (*HDL*, 84). Both mother Rosa and daughter Edith prefer to be accompanied by men to receive the attention they desire from the Other. The real for Lacan is full of absences, gaps, lacks, splits, it does not mean reality; rather reality is a part of the Real. Edith is unable to adapt herself to reality, she is alienated. Reality is not a thing the ego must adapt; however, reality is itself a creation of the ego's fantastic misrepresentations. For Edith, the reality of David's life is his wife and his children, so Edith as his mistress has no position. Nevertheless, David is the only man who shows recognition and approval of Edith from time to time.

It is expected from Edith as a romance writer to be able to predict the characters of the hotel correctly but she is too optimistic. At the end all her guesses turn to be

wrong. Mrs Pusey, at first seems to be "woman so gentle, so greedy, so tranquil, so utterly fulfilled in her desires […] she was […]an embodiment of the kind of propaganda no contemporary woman could, stoop to countenance" (*HDL*, 39). For Lacan the truth must be pursued deep under the disguising veil of surface appearance. Later Edith utters:

> But Mrs Pusey, for whom I was beginning to feel something like pity, horror, compassion, is an old hand at this game. (*HDL*, 107)

She is easily distracted. Due to her isolated nature, the alienated barred Edith is living in an exile as a prisoner:

> Penelope drove fast and kept her eyes grimly ahead, as if escorting a prisoner from the dock to a maximum security wing. (*HDL*, 10)
>
> She retraced her steps back to the hotel, returned to the melancholy of exile. (*HDL*, 52)
>
> She stretched uneasily, a prisoner of her troubled sleep. (*HDL*, 65)
>
> In any event, she was anxious to escape, for the room had become a prison (*HDL*, 136)
>
> She sat down once more like an exile (*HDL*, 179)

She is metaphorically living an exile. Unable to complete her imaginary order properly and lacking family members to help her through the symbolic, she is unable to face the real. Edith faces aphanisis that appears when the subject has to ignore one's desire. Then the subject disappears. Edith has become split and divided. The barred Edith (S) will never know herself completely. Her only weapon is writing due to her lack of caring people to company her or to converse with.

3.3. *MAKING THINGS BETTER*

Making Things Better (2002) (also published under the title *The Next Big Thing)* is one of the important novels of Anita Brookner which has been long-listed for Booker Prize in 2002. It includes 18 chapters and illustrates the life of elderly Julius Herz' troubled psyche revealing his past life through flashbacks. Merle Rubin states that:

> The engaging seventy-three-year-old Julius Herz confronting mortality in *Making Things Better*, Brookner has also ventured beyond her original dichotomy between the innocent, gentle, altruistic soul doomed to romantic failure and the coarse, shallow, self-indulgent sybarite who enjoys undeserved success.[390]

The melancholic Herz and his sad life are full of unavoidable disappointments. A Brooknerian typical is that mostly her "protagonists, female or male, invariably suffer from a pained awareness that they have missed out on the fullest possibilities of life" and due to "some unforeseen change in their circumstances" new discovery emerges at the end of the novels.[391] Herz's inner feelings are disclosed through his long internal thoughts and the letters he writes to Fanny, his lifelong love, in the last chapters. He lives in the exile of unfulfilled desires and disappointed expectations. He resides in the present but in fact lives in his past.

3.3.1. The Insufficient Parents

Lacan's theories are applicable on Brookner's characters and can reveal the psyche of these characters that live in the margins as stranger misplaced isolated figures instead of holding a position in the community they live. Lacanian theory of entering into the symbolic order and being introduced to language with all its extent is essential for everyone. Julius and Freddy Herz, the sons of Trude and Willy Herz, unconsciously have chosen to live a life in the margins of the world created for them by a devouring mother. The reason why Trude has become a devouring mother and then why Freddy has turned from a genius to a neurotic patient are of significant importance.

Bruce Fink claims that according to Lacan "a woman's position in our culture is either automatically defined by the man she adopts as partner or is defined only with great difficulty".[392] To be precise, looking for another way of being defined is hard and full of barriers. In the dominant patriarchal culture a woman must be under the authority of a man and recognizes his word as Law and after giving birth to children must be an

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[390] Merle Rubin, "The Distinctive Voice and Vision of Anita Brookner," (Ed. Jeffrey W. Hunter and Farmington Hills), *Contemporary Literary Criticism,* Vol 237, 2007, 5.
[391] B. Lakshmikantham, *Ms. Lonely and Mr. Lonely* in *Leaving Home* and *Making Things Better* of Anita Brookner, *The Criterion: An International Journal in English*, Vol. IV. Issue III, June 2013, 4.
[392] Fink, 116.

obedient subject under the-Name-of the-Father. In the pre-oedipal and mirror stage, the mother seems to be complete for the infant and it has no concept of itself as a distinctive individual and perceives itself as a fragment of the mother's body. Later the child recognizes its misunderstanding and dreams of wholeness by joyful fusion with the mother. Here the child recognizes the lack and also the significance of the phallus. Then the father interferes and the phallus is considered of critical fullness since "the phallus is…the signifier intended to designate as a whole the effects of the signified [the other, the world], in that the signifier conditions them by its presence as a signifier".[393] So the phallus is considered as the master signifier that influences the child. When the child has to accept the separation from the mother and undergoes castration, s/he is tempted by phallic desire to be complete. It is stated that "children set themselves the task of excavating the site of their mother's desire, aligning themselves with her every whim and fancy. Her wish is their command, her desire their demand".[394]

As mentioned earlier, the importance of father and the role he plays as an obstacle leads to settling the subject in the symbolic world of order and cultural principles. Unconsciously the desire for wholeness integrates into every aspect of the human experience and forms subjectivity. Therefore, Lacanian subject consists of lack and idealizes the phallus. Consequently, the father is defined as the starting point of Law. So denial of the maternal and association with paternal Law establishes access into the symbolic order of cultural norms and social principles.

Julius' mother is Trude and her German name means fighting woman. A glance at her own childhood and parents reveal the complexes evoking her lacks and signify her psychological struggle with authenticity of motherhood. When Julius looks at her mother's record of photos he sees

> The grim couple who put their faith in every religious prohibition and who observed even more rules than were theirs by inheritance. They had an appearance of worthiness which was fallacious, a photographer's compliment, the formally dressed man standing respectfully behind his wife's chair, and that wife, monumental in black, staring forward without the trace of a smile, never once, in the lifetime that Herz dimly remembered,

[393] "The Signification of the Phallus," 1306.
[394] Richard Feldstein, Bruce Fink, Maire Jaanus, *Reading Seminars I and II: Lacan's Return to Freud*, State University of New York Press, 1996, 81-82.

> ever showing an instinctive affection towards any member of her family, yet undoubtedly mourning the defection of one daughter while grappling the other to her side. It had somehow been decreed that this remaining daughter should never leave home. (*MTB*, 121)

Trude has lived and grown up in excessively religious family with no trace of pleasure and has been confined to strict rules and prohibitions to observe and stiff formal clothes to wear with no relief or fun. The only lucky escape for girls, for Trude and her sister Anna, was getting married. Being able to be defined with a man means starting life under a new authority with probably simpler rules. The strict law of Trude's father has led both she and the children she gives birth to believe in "God's irritability" (*MTB*, 122). Trude's parents lack a son to inherit the Law of the father; and the lacking cold mother's heritage to her daughters is envy and lack of recognition. This lack will lead to excessive ambitions that will ruin the lives of their daughters, their husbands and also their upcoming grandchildren. Julius describes them through another photo as

> Here was his mother as a child, posing with her sister, their arms entwined, as he never remembered them being in adult life. They had the stricken consumptive look that children had in such posed photographs, their eyes enormous, their abundant hair loosely tied back, condemned to sit at home until released by some man or other, for in those days liberation came in the form of a husband, subsequent on a meaningful introduction by a third party, in this case their mother, or more probably their father, who would know about such matters. (*MTB*, 119)

Trude needs to escape the strict rules of her German father and simply meets her future husband crossing the street as a schoolgirl when she is eighteen. After enduring the father's temper and blame, she marries Willy Herz. After the exodus from Germany, Trude, Willy and their two sons Freddy and Julius experience a new different era.

The conventional mother figure, that is obedient and dutiful preserving the fundamental ideology/Law with submissive determination, does not fit his mother. She has masculine characteristics by being patriarchal and powerful through whom masculine cultural codes are communicated, legitimated, and continued. As mentioned, for Lacan the child is represented as a substitute for the symbolic phallus of the mother.

However, even after giving birth to children, she is not contented and desires to fill the lack. The primary prey of mother's dissatisfaction is the child.

According to patriarchal order, marriage and childbirth must lead one to be a modest wife but Trude turns to a devouring mother. She is afraid of everything and dreams of escaping from the difficulties married life has offered her. Trude "rather than her husband, put her diminishing faith in Hubertus; he rather than her too humble partner would know what to do" (*MTB*, 5). Hubertus is her sister's wise wealthy husband and her distrust on weak impoverished Willy will be repeated over the course of the novel. Trude now displaced in London as an alien cannot probably fix herself in the symbolic realm since the language and culture have changed. Moreover, her contradictory childhood memories prevent her to accept the change. Therefore, she fails to manage her symbolic maternal position as an obedient wife and affectionate mother. Bijou Frank was her only German friend and their conversation mostly revolves around "Bijou's marital experiences" and Trude's "hypochondria" (*MTB*, 17).

Bijou is the only woman who recognizes Trude's existence in London. When they meet, Trude dresses as if acting as a Berlin hostess. Julius says "The tea-table, like Bijou's hat, which was never removed, reassured them both that standards were being maintained, that worldliness had not entirely deserted them" (*MTB*, 18) that clearly foreshadows the excess of solitary life they live in a displaced symbolic realm trying to upkeep the rules they have born with in Berlin.

Willy is too humble and insufficient in his role as the father of two sons. According to Lacan the father must castrate his sons symbolically and prepare them to live a normal life under the concept of Law/ the Name-of-the-Father. Willy is not the castrating agent to enculturate his children or strong enough to support the symbolic purpose as the figure of Law. Also Trude is not the Lacanian mother to lead her sons to be identified with the father's power and weight as the one who fills her lack. Instead of a maternal feeling she reveals to be their master and the rule maker who does possess the three men, her husband and two sons, as her missing phallus. She ruins them all; especially Freddy to achieve her *jouissance*. Hegelian dialectic of the Master and the slave states that a slave must provide "objects for the master's enjoyment (*jouissance*)"

or must satisfy his need for instance hunger.[395] Her word is the Master's discourse that must be obeyed. Lacanian slave must assist the master's *jouissance* by producing stuff for the master. In order to satisfy the mother, they suppress their own wishes.

It is already discussed that according to Lacan need is biological and is satisfied easily by the infant's mother. When a subject tries to express his needs through language, it is expressed in demand.[396] The presence of an Other to satisfy the needs of an infant represents the Other/(m)other's love. Though the Other can merely provide objects to satisfy the subject's needs, the unrestricted love of mother that the subject yearns for will not be provided by another person.

Trude as a mother is a disappointed woman constrained by religious parents and she has married for emotional survival and above all is envious of her worldly sister Anna; besides she is embarrassed about her probably successful marriage. Desire is a steady force that cannot be satisfied, it is the constant pressure which lies beneath the drives.

3.4.2. Freddy's Neurosis or Freedom

Trude is a mother who lacks recognition and desires for compliment due to her failure as a pianist. Julius, the younger son and the only survivor of their family, gazes at the remaining photos and utters:

> She had survived the transition to England rather better than any of them, writing to her sister Anna to tell her how comfortably they were situated in their new home in Hilltop Road, and purposefully ignoring his father's drastically reduced circumstances. By that time she had placed all her hopes in Freddy, whose virtuosity would eventually elevate her to a position that would enable her to triumph once more. All this fantasizing was, he knew now, directed against her sister, the thorn in her side, whom she suspected of enjoying the happiness that had always eluded her. (*MTB*, 118)

She lacks the happiness, pleasure, and compliment she has always desired. Unable to gain satisfaction in married life, she changes her plans. As a failed pianist, she places her excessive attention on her elder son Freddy and hopes to gain her lost recognition

[395] Evans, 94.
[396] Evans, 125.

through his achievement as a violinist. In the photo, her hand is on Freddy's shoulder foreshadowing the feeling of possession she has, not as a mother but as a Master. Julius thinks

> How alike they were! Large-eyed, solemn, as if they were obeying some occult instruction, whereas in fact his brother's reputation had foundered as soon as his health gave way, so that in England he remained unknown, a fact overlooked by his mother who perceived a sublime future for them both as soon as he recovered from the illness which she ascribed to his delicate nerves, but in the lightest possible sense. (*MTB*, 118)

The Master/mother even ignores his declining health to achieve the *jouissance* of becoming prominent and also be adored by her sister Anna. Julius remembers

> Freddy's gift, though phenomenal, had been unsettling. It seemed a kind of autism rather than a genuine passion. Audiences had watched, fascinated, as different emotions chased themselves over Freddy's face, as if the unconscious were visibly at work. He had seemed totally unconnected to what he was feeling or experiencing, as if those experiences were taking place in another dimension, remote from everyday circumstances. Attendance at his recitals was always eager, but as if in response to a phenomenon, a fairground spectacle. (*MTB*, 26)

Behind this fascination Julius remembers his painful hard practices forced by the mother accompanied by vomiting, and being translated into English that has led to his drastic break down. Freddy tells Julius

> I was too young […] I didn't know how to refuse. I was sick before and after every performance. Even so my mother forced me to practice, sat in the front row-in the middle of the front row- whenever I performed. My father went along with it, although he could have saved me. But he had no character. And my mother always overruled him. A terrible woman. (*MTB*, 22)

Willy is not the privileged Lacanian father and Trude is not the incomplete obedient mother, rather she degrades the father and rules as the rule maker master.

Denial of the mother in the process of castration, necessarily, completes the acquisition of language. In *Making Things Better*, the acquisition of the language and

castration complex is presented by the devouring mother and Willy is too weak to take the position of the symbolic father. Freddy hopes the father may save him, but since he is the priority of the mother he is castrated by her; then Freddy loses his hope to be saved by the father.

Freddy has been a talented musician forced by the mother to excessive hard practices in order to become a famous violinist but turns to be a chronically depressed neurotic who lives and dies in a nursing home. The dual relation between the mother and son is revealed when Freddy cannot refuse the mother's devouring ambition and vomits to signal the father to use his power in the Law and save him but he is a fragile weak figure. The father is remembered as a poor creature to take care of his disappointed wife. Here the mother is the terrible one who sacrifices her son for her deadly ambitions.

Desire for recognition emphasizes a lack in the subject, that is, Trude's manner indirectly refers to the lack she herself has experienced in fusion with the rigid mother. Julius's grandparents are remembered as grim and extremely religious and rule-bound all in black with no trace of smile or experience of pleasure. Lacanian subject always inquires the Desire of the Other that "is both the desire for the Other's desire and desire for the Other".[397] *Objet a* is what causes desire to appear. Trude and her son Freddy experience an inverted form of desire. The devouring mother, Trude, and her preliminary failure of satisfaction in her childhood as well as her not being recognized by the parents is transferred on her older son Freddy and he becomes her primary *objet a*. Trude aims to devour her children therefore they cannot position themselves in the symbolic order properly. They are not allowed to accept the name-of-the-father appropriate to the Law. The dual relation between the mother and Freddy has its negative outcomes. He is forced to remain his mother's desire and cannot resolve the Oedipus complex. Consequently he cannot recognize the real Law/Name-of-the-Father. Freddy looks for an escape and rebels then becomes a neurotic figure to rebel against the subverted law his mother always imposes. Freddy's failure to be positioned properly in the symbolic order causes a serious psychological and developmental disorder. Freddy suffers from the kind of neurosis that Lacan sees as "inversion,

[397] Sarup Madan, *Jacques Lacan*, Hertfordshire, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992, 69.

isolation, reduplication, cancellation and displacement".[398] He lives as a neurotic in the nursing home:

> all traces of his mother's ambition eliminated, as if by will alone. Taken by someone unknown, […] Freddy was happy! […] He had somehow escaped blame: the move to England had effaced his nascent reputation, after which he had lapsed into an illness that was sufficiently unspecific to allow him a breathing space. He had also escaped his parents' disappointment, since they were so anxious to believe him on the verge of a miraculous cure, a new maturity that would raise them all to eminence, would wipe away their tears. […] The illusion was shared only by his parents, a *folie à deux*, in which the husband was implicated largely by fear of his wife. (*MTB*, 122-123)

Finally, Freddy escapes the hard life predestined by his terrible mother. The nursing home is a shelter where he can smile. There he finds a motherly figure to trust on and enjoys his freedom:

> "Don't you get bored?" he [Julius] would ask, in an effort to break the monotony of the afternoon. Boredom and discomfort were the essence of the place. "Don't you want to do some sort of work?" At this Freddy looked evasive. "I help out here," he said. "In the kitchen sometimes." "You could do that at home."
>
> "I couldn't leave Mrs. Walters." He looked agitated. "I could never leave Mrs Walters." "You will have to at some point. We can't afford […]"
>
> "They'll give me a job here. That way I can keep my room." (*MTB*, 23)

His new parent, Mrs. Walters, is the religious owner of the nursing home who fills the place of the lacking kind mother. Freddy has given up his life as a musician and receives small earnings as a cleaner enough to pay the nursing home and keep him stay away from his parents. His hands are rough and swollen due to washing and cleaning. Julius recalls

> Freddy had always been regarded as a genius, largely by his parents, […] and was easily persuaded to perform. His youth and his poetic looks had prevailed easily on agents and concert promoters, and soon Freddy's engagements became a priority in their little household. He played well, but

[398] Lacan 1977, 5.

> confined himself to easier popular pieces—Sarasate, Saint-Saëns—acquired a certain wider prestige, was a name, a prodigy, whose gifts might or might not last. It was not his gifts that let him down, but rather his temperament. He was unequal to the concert platform for which his parents destined him, developed nervous trouble, a tremor in his right hand, and with the collapse of his future willed himself into a kind of invalidism which in time became ineluctable. (*MTB*, 10)

His disposition accompanied by excessive ambitions of the mother leads him to his final habitat. It is not revealed how he is treated there but he tries to become a member of the nursing home. Unlike typical neurotic patients who yearn to feel better to go back home, Freddy prefers to stay in that place. He does not even think of improvement because it means going back to home and being overruled by the mother. Only there, the mother must submit to being denied and rejected. Freddy's castration is double layered; first he is castrated unsuccessfully by the father then is castrated by the mother consuming him as her *objet a.*

The neurotic Freddy is captured in a place between the real, the imaginary and the symbolic or probably is trapped in any of the orders. His uncertain position among the orders doubles his trouble. He is bewildered, as Julius says:

> He seemed to be kept going by the fantasy that he was still a performer, a prodigy yet at some point in their conversation the fantasy broke down and he would dissolve into tears. That was when Julius himself felt tears rising, not merely for Freddy but for the wreckage of his family.
> "Don't cry," he would say. "You look so much better. Here, have some of this chocolate." And the shaking hand would reach out eagerly for the offer of sweetness that he thought was still his due. (*MTB*, 22)

Freddy's identification with the mother to be her object of desire causes his misrecognition either.

Phobia is usually defined in psychiatry as "an extreme fear of a particular object […] or a particular situation. Those who suffer from a phobia, experience anxiety if they encounter the phobic object or are placed in the feared situation", and such experiences

leads to developing some strategies to avoid the phobic things and consequently to restricting their life.[399]

For Lacan, "anxiety appears first, and the phobia is a defensive formation which turns the anxiety into fear by focusing it on a specific object".[400] Unlike Freud who identifies the phobic object as a representative of the father, Lacan argues that the phobic object can "represent different people in turn".[401]

Freddy does not experience the loss or the separation from the mother to enter the Law. The terrible mother has turned to be his phobic object. Phobia is an excessive fear of a particular object or a particular position. Freddy experiences anxiety of facing both the mother and art because their combination has destroyed his existence. So another phobic object is art

> Art was surely the key to a better world, yet Freddy had renounced it as if his engagement with it had been a mere flirtation, and moreover a flirtation which had failed to develop into a mature relationship. His mother still listened to music on the radio, beating time with her hand, and they were, after all, surrounded by music in the shop, but for his father and himself it held no message. What held a message was Freddy and his rebellion, which had ended in an almost willing acceptance of defeat. (*MTB*, 24)

Freddy's simultaneous defeat and rebel pave the way to his ambiguous freedom in the nursing home. This way he avoids the phobic things i.e. the mother and playing on platforms. Freddy is free from preceding life attachment and lives all his life in a hospice and dies there "with only himself in attendance. As he had hoped, the parents had died before him" (*MTB*, 27). Julius remembers that

> Freddy's nervous breakdown […] had more to do with rebellion than with genuine suffering. That he had become ill was not in any doubt, yet in his mother's desire to attribute the illness to Freddy's artistic temperament, to nothing more fundamental or more radical, to discontent, in a word, was part of her blindness, and of her continued favour. This made Freddy's incarceration bearable, acted as an interval in which she could make new plans for him. It was also part of her blindness that she could not see that

[399] Evans, 147.
[400] Evans, 148. See Also *SIV*, 207, 400.
[401] Evans, 148. See Also *SIV*, 207, 283, 400.

these plans were no longer necessary. (*MTB*, 21)

Freddy's mother still believes that he will improve and she makes plans for him. Lacanian aphanisis refers to the disappearance of the subject and here Freddy's disobedience leads to the disappearance of the mother's desire. Freddy has become split and disappears in the process of excessive alienation. Lacanian destruction of the subject is experienced explicitly by Freddy. Freddy becomes neurotic even to protect himself from her desire and the extreme aphanisis of Freddy means the eclipsing of Freddy behind any signifier in the Law. He manages to escape from both the (m)other and the Other. Freddy prefers to stay "in his barely furnished room [and] show[s] no disposition to leave" (*MTB*, 19).

Freddy's current condition also becomes the phobic point of his parents as Julius writes "Those parents (and Freddy too knew this) were too fearful of confronting the shipwreck of their hopes, and lived an obstinate illusion of normality in absolute denial of the facts of the case" (*MTB*, 24). Freddy resists to be enslaved by becoming the *objet a* of the mother since he is denied freedom. Freddy is not "unhappy with his fallen status" and "had eclipsed himself" (*MTB*, 118). He takes his revenge by distress destroying their plans and becoming their phobic object though the mother is his phobic object either.

He is alienated from his own image either. He constitutes himself as a subject waiting to die; he yearns for his death to grab him. Freddy has not internalized the Other properly and does not dare to face the reality. Both Freddy and Julius absolutely lack important points on the way to their subjectivity.

3.4.3. Displaced Characters

Lacan asserts "language imposes being upon us and obliges us, as such, to admit that we never have anything by way of being".[402] According to Lacan language pre-exists the infant's birth and has great impact on her/his formation. Lacanian subject must be able to position oneself in language/symbolic order. Both Freddy and Herz fail to occupy a position in language, in other words they are trapped in the imaginary order

[402] Seminar XX, 44

and suffer misrecognition and displacement. This incompetence undermines their selfhood. They lack language and conversation. Very little is uttered for the purpose of conversing. Julius recalls his past memories. Freddy has discarded questioning the parents' forcing him to abandon his life, desire, and freedom. Language is a means of dominating other subjects and the mother is usually the one who rules through giving commands. Lacan states

> Thus the subject, too, if he can appear to be the slave of language is all the more so of a discourse in the universal movement in which his place is already inscribed at birth, if only by virtue of his proper name.[403]

The family of Herz has immigrated to London and they are dominated and surrounded by two languages. They are bewildered between two languages: born and grown up in German culture and survive in English. So they are double-enslaved. They are always aliens and outsiders to London. Julius says

> Had we stayed in Germany, I should have studied, enjoyed a professional life, become a gentleman, as my father was originally. I can't help thinking of my landlords as dispossessors: the shadow of the past, I suppose. And yet this country has been good to me. It's just that I never quite manage to feel at home. That's why I'm so hesitant now: the small matter of a permanent address seems immeasurably problematic. Not that anything could be really permanent at my age. (*MTB*, 170)

The feeling of misplacement and not feeling at home is created by how the language of the Other treats them. Julius that is referred as Herz in the novel to signify that he is the only survivor of Herz family carrying their proper name "had grown to value English incuriosity, which perhaps- native colouring-accounted for the indifference he now felt" (*MTB*, 108). He is being taught to follow every rule of the Law. Julius complains:

> After years of dutiful obedience, of deferment to the will of others, he saw this timid examination of ideas as a permitted emancipation. He no longer had to make things better for everyone; that was his conclusion. He could read, speculate, entertain impious thoughts. He could reach conclusions that would have seemed unwise in the days of his obedience, for it had been obedience rather than servitude, and therein lay a certain residual sweetness.

[403] Jacques Lacan, "The Agency Of The Letter In The Unconscious" in *Ecrites*, 1977, 148.

> He was not sorry that it had come to an end, but the contrast between his life as a worker and this disturbing freedom was hard to assimilate, to manage. (*MTB*, 92)

Clark quotes Lacan that "it was certainly the Word (*verbe*) that was in the beginning and we live in its creation …It is the world that creates the world of things […] Man speaks, then, but it is because the symbol has made him man"[404]. As well, Lacan highlights the prominence of the Law: "No one is supposed to be ignorant of the law […] No man is actually ignorant of it, since the law of man has been the law of language since the first words of recognition presided over the first gifts …. Uniting the islets of the community with the bonds of the symbolic commerce".[405]

Every subject is community bound and must follow the principles of social contract. However, Julius Herz remains somewhere between Berlin and London. Unable to distinguish a clear position in a misplaced city, lives as an isolated outsider.

> He would, as always, have liked to discuss the matter, in the interests of genuine enquiry, with one or other of his elderly companions in the sun, and regretted, as always, that the thing was impossible. He would be looked on as an outsider, and worse, someone whose eagerness to make friends revealed him as no more than an ageing schoolboy. Yet if he had had the courage to break through that invisible barrier how enriching the revelations might be! But it seemed to be agreed, in this small space, that the utmost privacy should be observed. (*MTB*, 93)

The invisible barriers restrict him and he is put aside by the excuse of keeping privacy. Although he has grown up and aged in London, he is not born there. When he is seventy three his ex-boss gives him money to buy an apartment. For the first time he feels he can be a Londoner

> He was a Householder! He was entitled to Requisites! He felt the same thrill in the supermarket, where he had shopped for years with massive indifference. 'Traditional Afternoon Tea' and 'Breakfast Coffee' convinced him that he was at last part of the community. (*MTB*, 69)

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[404] Michael Clark, *Jacques Lacan An Annotated Bibliography*, Vol. I., Garland Publishing Inc, New York & London 2014, 282.

[405] Jacques Lacan, "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis" (1965, The Rome Discourse"), *Ecrites: A Selection*, (Trans. By Alan Sheridan), W.W.Norton, New York 1977, 105.

The illusion of becoming a member in the wrong country resolves later. Julius suffers various lacks. First of all, he suffers from not being the priority of the family while Freddy has been at the center of all the attention and attendance of the family. Even if he ends up in a nursing home as a neurotic figure, he still has been the desire of the mother. Second, Julius Herz suffers a weak father. As a normal subject he should internalize the father's culture and law and must accept that the phallic wholeness cannot be provided by the mother.

3.4.4. The Weak Incomplete Father

Julius looks at the photos and describes his father as

> Here was his father as a young man, also solemn, extremely handsome, long before marriage had condemned him to worship at one impossible shrine, obedient to both parents and parents-in-law, never allowed to enjoy his life as a man, his spirit already broken by excessive obedience, willing, by virtue of that same obedience, to be inducted into a marriage which was to be proved unhappy throughout its tortuous evolution. That handsome young face had mutated early on into something a little too anxious to please, growing careworn under the strain of contributing to his wife's fluctuating moods, and already bearing the burden of knowing that the family's safety was compromised, and that exile was inevitable. His stifled fears had made him excessively indulgent towards his children, particularly towards Freddy. Sometimes tears would come into his eyes as he contemplated the boy practicing. (*MTB*, 119)

His father is bearing the heavy burden of obedience especially after marriage. He lives in an exile and is not able to stop his wife from forcing Freddy to practice.

The crying father is not a Lacanian figure who must possess the phallus/power. The father sinks in his silence due to the responsibility of keeping his family tied together. Therefore, both Julius and Freddy has never undertaken the castration period appropriately and cannot identify themselves with the father, or establish their own subjectivity sufficiently. The lacking father has placed Julius caught between the symbolic and the imaginary order. Julius tells his opinion about his failure as:

> Yet in that young handsome face of his twenty-year-old father Herz could

> see no foreknowledge, no doom. He had never known his father in that guise, an unknown future before him. He remembered him as a haggard figure, obliged to sleep a lot, remembered with a dreadful pity his father's grateful relinquishing of the daytime hours as he went heavily up the stairs to the flat above the shop in Edgware Road for his nap, to reappear some two or three hours later, dishevelled and unkempt, the very image of a failure. […] his father's eager smile […] soon to be lost forever, and hardly remembered in the maelstrom of their changing fortunes. (*MTB*, 120)

The father is tortured for an unhappy mismatched marriage but he is indulgent towards his children and obediently contributes to his wife's fluctuating mood.

3.4.5. Consuming the Younger Son's Life

Josie Burn, Julius's ex-wife, is described as a woman with no prevarication, but an outspoken one; and this characteristic has led to their separation because Herz has always minded for the comfort of others not his. Julius long ago has married to Josie "with her bushy hair and unadorned face, […] although part of him was comprehensively disappointed that she did not resemble the pampered women he had been used to in his youth, with their painted nails and faces" (*MTB*, 30). Julius is married to obey the law and has been hopeful to get a position as a Londoner but Josie is far from his ideal woman; Aunt Anna, the sister of Trude, is his perfect model. Julius says

> His aunt Anna, for example, was always perfectly dressed and coiffed, and if the continued effort made her seem a little bad-tempered he appreciated that too. Instinctively he preferred women who made much of themselves, were capricious, flirtatious even, though he knew that such behaviour had gone out of style. (*MTB*, 30)

Julius recalls "the nights he had spent with his wife, but without a flicker of desire […] He was as idealistic about marriage as any young girl" (*MTB*, 31). Julius compares himself with any young girl not man because his father was unable to prepare them to play the role of the symbolic father in the future as well as causing them not to identify with their symbolic father who possesses the symbolic phallus to occupy a place in

language. Julius does not inherit power, fascination, authority, and ability to exercise law on his children.

He remembers their first unexpected meeting in a car crash and their marriage. The father becomes retired and Josie becomes the daughter of the family. But his misrecognized mother desires her attention. The role she plays in their divorce is of great significance. The Lacanian mother-as-crocodile only cares for her own completeness and attempts to satisfy her desire. After Freddy turns to a neurotic subject left in a nursing home, Julius is her only choice to make things better for the mother. She turns also to Josie:

> Josie seemed to enjoy her new position as daughter of the house, and was good- hearted enough to play her part when his mother, relapsing into one of her former malaises, required her attention. They got used to hearing her cry, "Josie! Josie!" from her bedroom, even as they were preparing to go to bed themselves. Everyone's health seemed to improve, despite his mother's protestations. Despite his mother's efforts Josie still looked slightly unkempt, but Julius found this oddly attractive, […] His mother's former good humour faded, his father absented himself as much as he could, though he did not tell them what he did with his free time[…] Josie complained of the lack of fresh air. […] Their nights were more disturbed, […] Julius was embarrassed by his mother's appeals for help, for a remedy, for consolation. Josie would get up with a sigh, her good humour in abeyance. They would settle down again, but not for long. 'Josie! Josie!' would come the cry, the endless solicitation. (*MTB*, 42)

His selfish mother desires everything for herself; even Josie can be a fragment to offer recognition and love. Julius is to make things better and consequently leaves the brief renaissance of his life. His mother demands his full attention and Josie also leaves them, in return Julius does not request her stay. Josie is the one who proposes divorce and for Julius they are of incompatible needs. Julius demands to be valued and recognized in peace, he says

> And he had wanted someone to be kind to him, to look after him, and to allay the sadness he seemed still to feel, a sadness which had nothing to do with hardships and disappointments but was rather an inheritance he did not fully understand. (*MTB*, 31)

His duty is to restore peace to everyone especially to the mother but receives no gratefulness in return.

While Julius lacks the powerful father as his model, he has learned defeat. This has led to Julius and Josie's divorce as he utters "it was she who had demanded the divorce he knew that the fault was his, the original fault, like original sin, which might not have been detected at first glance. They were mismatched" (*MTB*, 32). Julius's duty is to make things better and Josie has got married to experience a happy change. They get divorced due to different needs. So, when Josie proposes to get divorced, he yields and accepts. Julius and his incomplete castration have caused uncertainty in him as an excessively obedient subject not an autonomous masculine figure. She gets disappointed of graceful intimacy and decides to leave him so he kissed her goodbye. The short married life ends and Julius continues to perform his only defined duty to make things better by repressing his own desires.

3.4.6. Discourse of the Name-of-the Father

The characters' speech exposes how language dissolves in their life. Ostrovski is called "a god fatherly character" (*MTB*, 16) by Julius and in fact he plays the role of the Father/Law because he is wealthy and powerful. Julius says "but it had the advantage of belonging to Ostrovski, who had taken on something of a god-fatherly role" (*MTB*, 16) or utters "The shadowy godfather, having brought them together, functioned as an ancestor, without whom their relations would have remained more formal" (*MTB*, 168). The Herz family has had to escape to London in order to survive. Ostrovsky is his sharp and observant employer and patron and they have had no way except trusting on him. Old Ostrovsky has sold all his property and plans to live in Spain waiting for the next big thing that probably is his death. In fact, he is the Master they all depend to. Trude, Willy and Julius Herz are under his authority despite their unwilling submission.

Unlike the father, Ostrovski is the man who can change their destiny. The father will work in a shop owned by Ostrovski, a fellow German. He is Willy's first and last patron and friend. They live in his small flat and work in his shop. Julius points out

> Again there was no way in which to point out that a move would not be entirely desirable. They were dependent on the kindness of strangers, even if

> this kindness took the form of decisions over which they had no control. (*MTB*, 16)

Living as strangers metaphorically refers to subjects wondering in the realm of the imaginary and symbolic orders since none of the members of the Herz family have been symbolically castrated. They live as enslaved members under the authority of Ostrovski who resembles the Name-of-the-Father. They all know that Ostrovski's "accommodation was inferior-dark, dusty, up a creaking staircase- did not seem to be negotiable" (*MTB*, 34) but his father is too polite to nag, or to utter disappointment and cannot solve his wife's unhappiness. Julius mentions

> His [father's] secret wish was to be a bachelor again, for it was only as a bachelor that he could have confronted this new life. The task of making his beloved wife happy was beyond him, as it was beyond everyone now. He dreaded the day when his unhappiness would break cover, was grateful to Julius—not his best-loved son—for his tact, realized sorrowfully that Julius had been sacrificed, and, short of a miracle, would continue to be sacrificed, by virtue of a family bound together by grief and with no prospect of rehabilitation. (*MTB*, 35)

Being positioned in a strange country doubles the vague effects of the Law on the subjects. They are all sacrificed but the father's weak figure adds to the burden of their otherness. Ostrovski has been "the provider, as if he were the unlikely convenor of their destinies" and Herz always has greeted him "with his usual mixture of deference and resignation" (*MTB*, 59). He is

> [n]either liked by the mother nor father and his last visit to Julius occurs after his retirement. Ostrovsky says 'You've been a good son, I've never doubted that, too good, perhaps […] I'm giving you what I paid for this outfit in the first place. Of course prices have gone up since then. I've taken this into account[…] You can look for a flat of your own. Take what you want from here, not that you'll want any of it. Truth to tell I always had a bit of a bad conscience about you. They favoured that brother of yours, didn't they? Well, now you can make up for lost time'. (*MTB*, 62)

Even Ostrovski has recognized the priority of Freddy over Julius. He rewards him for being an obedient son and as a master who wants to satisfy his enslaved offers him a

portion; he will give him the amount of money he has paid to this place ,may be sixty or seventy years ago, to help him buy a small flat and invest the rest of the money. As the master, he gives him a chance to be his own man and live freely or allows him to buy a property. The excessively obedient rule-bound bewildered Julius "did not feel free. He felt bereft" (*MTB*, 66). However, Julius totally unprepared gains freedom.

3.4.7. Born to Make Things Better

Julius's last name is Herz that literally reminds the word Hers that metaphorically refers to the fact that they all are the assets of the devouring mother i.e. they are all hers. Trude, Julius's mother, resembles to the Lacanian mother-as-crocodile. Her desire for recognition and completeness leads to devouring and sacrificing his older son Freddy and then Julius, the unfavorable son. The only thing Julius has inherited from his father is sadness, despair, and pain. When Julius looks at their family photos, he recognizes that the album has inconsistency and Julius Herz' boyhood and adulthood are not recorded. He knows that his mother has kept the parts she has preferred. It symbolically emphasizes mother-as-crocodile that even devours their past memories by removing the parts she has disliked. She has kept the photos that are presentable to "public consumption" because "she too had required an audience" (*MTB*, 124). Julius complains

> No one had said, "Over here! Smile!"; he was as absent from other lives as he was from his own. What he was looking at was what had been laid down for him: a life of patient attendance and no less patient study. He had inherited his father's sadness, as that father had made his dutiful way to work every day, returning every evening to his myth-making wife. Yet he, Herz, had schooled himself into pragmatism, and in so doing had acceded to a condition which was not quite enviable though no doubt necessary. (*MTB*, 125)

The desire to be recognized companies Julius, exactly like her mother. His absence in the photos signifies the amount of his worth in their family especially for his mother. If Freddy would not become a neurotic, Julius probably would never be detected. He has lived an invisible life. Julius's happiness and freedom have been devoured by the desire and tyranny of the mother. He has been prisoned by his mother from the beginning of

his life and later, metaphorically, through his bequest of his father to make things better.

The parent/name-of-the-father has internalized the feelings of duty and responsibility to make things better for others and never cares about his life. The weak father figure of Willy has taught him the ways towards slavery. According to Lacan, the function of signifiers related to each other is what allows the subject to be. Julius is accompanied by lack, the burden of responsibilities to hold. Under the title of making things better, that is the most vital signifier, Julius must visit his neurotic brother, Freddy, every Saturday. Saturdays are a metaphor of melancholy for him. Even at his old age he still feels terrible on Saturdays as he utters

> But even those exhausted Saturday evenings were a relief after the day that had preceded them. Those Saturdays! Even at the age he had become, even on the verge of extinction, as he supposed himself to be, Herz hated weekends. …Saturdays, therefore, were surrounded by melancholy. He would make his way, by bus, by train, and by another bus, to the outpost where his brother now had his being. (*MTB*, 19)

Being forced to spend his free time on Saturdays to visit his vanishing brother is the most painful part of his submissive life. He regrets that

> He was not as brave as Freddy had been in opting for the temporary, the unsuitably restrictive. He still cherished his small comforts, felt disturbed at the thought of having to uproot himself once more. At the same time he knew that his restlessness would enable him to deal with new demands if they should present themselves. (*MTB*, 152)

The neglectful parents represent Julius as a victim ready to be sacrificed and he, as a subject, is fading in the exile predetermined for him.

After the death of both his parents and Freddy, Julius buys the house. He struggles with the new life of freedom and cannot guess how he will spend so much free time. Herz does not feel free rather he feels deprived and bereft. After a couple of months, having nothing much to do, he envies the ideal families around with children playing in gardens. He lives an uneasy present since the neighbors are uncaring and Herz is again enveloped with preoccupied memories and dreams in his solitary life.

3.4.8. Fading of Desire

The lacking illusion of freedom is what encourages Julius to seek to satisfy his desire and feel the pleasures of life that may be accompanied by free will and independence. A new good looking neighbor called Sophie Clay makes his desire revive. The entrance of Sophie Clay as a neighbor creates great changes. She is in her late twenties or early thirties and Julius starts to love her as her grandchild but later he falls in love with her. Sophie regards him as a fussy neighbor but he wants "the image of a lover, an almost abstract lover, to keep him company" (*MTB*, 151). He has never been as free as now. The absence of Sophie is accompanied by Lacanian presence of longing. Julius due to his improper castration identifies himself with weaker sex. the elderly Julius is still bewildered about his own position in the symbolic order. As generations change their languages and the signals they show differ. He is unable to decode and complains about his inability to interpret Sophie:

> Her mind was impenetrable: he simply did not know how her particular generation operated. He was now a member of the weaker sex, missing the signals to which he had previously responded, those slight alterations of attention, those more willing smiles and acknowledgements, those graceful signs of physical accessibility that he had been used to decode. Now all was arranged differently; men had to be on their guard against purely natural impulses, advances, even gestures. …. Inviolate, women dressed severely, invaded, even conquered male territory, made love without compunction, gave no hostages to fortune, would grow old differently, knowing that they had made no mistakes, had suffered no loss of pride, had not encumbered themselves with outworn methods or procedures, had remained free. (*MTB*, 155)

Both the women and men of his time were easier to read, but the women of Sophie's generation make love easily and do not suffer to think as being abused or endangering their pride and innocence. The Law of his days taught men "to accept compromise, saw its wisdom, married, settled down, perhaps with a partner who fell below their fantasy of the ideal, whether lover or companion" (*MTB*, 156) and normality can be achieved as becoming a member of the majority. For the first time in his life he attempts to follow his desire as a totally free one. When he sees Sophie in her toweling robe, he tries to grasp her hand but her reaction gives an end. The illness that

overtakes is a psychic shock, where no one can reach. When he looks at the mirror he sees “his mother’s disdain” and “his father’s bitter mouth” (*MTB*, 161).

Julius decides to change and finally accepts his position as a misplaced outsider and also accepts that old age is always accompanied by loneliness. Therefore, as an elderly there are no need for words. Simple smile and nod is enough for his daily wordless communication. Due to his desire’s imploding after the illusion of freedom, he falls into a state of crisis and shame. He also aims to remove his desire and says “his desire had gone, leaving behind only a taste of bitter weariness. He would no longer look at a woman with appreciation, with approval” (*MTB*, 160). His mistake is that he does not recognize the change in the Law and interprets his present life with the standards of the past. He lacks recognition and pleasure and as well suffers ignorance. He cannot escape solitude because it is the reality of his life. His deep change removes his desire because as an outsider he has no position in London. His only way is to continue passivity and wait for his own next big thing that is death. Along with his relief his desire fades.

3.4.9. Julius’s Iconic Woman

The only property Julius has for himself is his dreaming and no one can interfere or interrupt it as he says “Dreams were his only reward, his only birthright” (*MTB*, 13). His unsatisfied love to Fanny continues with him till his last moments of life. In one of the photos he sees himself as

> The boy in the check trousers, with his hand held so poetically to his heart, foreshadowed the ardent lover he was willing to become, foreshadowed Nyon and his absurd adventure. These days his hand went to his heart for other reasons, to make sure that his pills were still in his breast pocket. (*MTB*, 125)

Fanny, her iconic woman, is the love of his childhood but remains unresolved. At the beginning of the novel, Julius sees a dream that makes him more excited and impressed as

> He dreamed that he had received a call from his cousin, Fanny Bauer, the love of his life. He was to take her to the cinema, she ordained. Eager to

> conform to her wishes, as he always had been, he shrugged on his coat, and within seconds was elsewhere, as was the norm in dreams of wish-fulfilment. […] Fanny […] petulant, with the petulance of a spoilt pretty woman, demanding and discontented […] she had clutched his arm and declared that she felt unwell. […] Fanny had recovered somewhat but looked uncharacteristically dishevelled, with a large camel-hair coat slung over her shoulders […]This feeling had something to do with the coat, which he recognized as his own, the coat he should have been wearing. He had no memory of having offered it to her. The coat, and Fanny's malaise, remained closely associated in his mind. It was only when he understood that it was he who had been taken ill that the dream attained its peak of significance. Ailing, smiling, he had offered her his remaining health and strength, and she, not in the least grateful, had carelessly dispossessed him, not noticing that she had done so. (*MTB*, 3-4)

The dream foreshadows a help or assistance he will offer to Fanny. Probably he will spend what is left for him to help and protect Fanny but the exact end of the novel is not written by Brookner.

Freudian unconscious language of the dream focuses on displacement and condensation. In order to analyze symbols in a dream, the personal life and experiences of the subject must be considered. The heaviness of the unconscious upon conscious existence is illustrated by neurotic symptoms and dreams. The unconscious is the source of motivations and neurotic compulsions. The unconscious that is constructed in the symbolic order among signifiers and signifieds is the outcome of the trans-individual symbolic order and the result is that the unconscious should be decoded. The images in dreams are the signifiers to unravel the puzzle behind it. His iconic Fanny and his duty to make things better are discovered by metaphorically offering his coat and health to Fanny. It unravels the immeasurable love he has buried in his unconscious ready to sacrifice his life for her but she not being thankful dispossesses and deserts him. He has not seen her for more than thirty years. He is seventy three and Fanny is a year older. But her unavailability makes her of more significant to Julius. Julius feels:

> Therefore he was more than happy to have encountered her in his dream, intact, unchanged. Even in the dream he had not possessed her, yet, untouched, innocent, he preferred it so, or was conscious of having decreed that this should be. At heart he was still a young man, a boy, even, to whom

> adulthood had come as a surprise and had never ceased to be a burden. (*MTB*, 8)

His dream that arises from his deep unconscious makes him excessively pleased. However, Fanny's refusal and the reasons behind it are revealed though two letters she writes to Julius in the last days of Julius' life. Fanny writes

> I relied on Mother's experience to guide me […] It was Mother who encouraged Mellerio, […] but I disliked her way of showing me off, almost of proposing me. I had never needed a sponsor to attract men, and the looks that I intercepted from some of the people in the hotel offended me. Fortunately Mellerio, who was twenty years older than myself, was a courteous man and a gentleman. He was also pleasant to Mother, for which I was grateful. I could not blame her for her manoeuvres. She thought she was making provision for my future. I thought I was making provision for hers. (*MTB*, 245)

The identical problem of dominant mother is observed in Fanny's case, too. The mother chooses a man who is pleasant to her, not to Fanny, in order to make sure that both of them will financially be supported. Fanny's victimization is doubled as she must be under the authority of both a husband and the mother. Her mother's way of consuming her daughter differs. The mother survives through choosing husbands without considering her emotion. Fanny is enslaved. She lacks the language to resist and is totally repressed. She refers to her Mother using capital M. Fanny's Mother is an agent of power using men to gain power and wealth by sacrificing her daughter. Fanny confesses:

> When Mellerio died he left enough money for us to live quite comfortably […] when Mother became unwell. I was older, and that was my tragedy. I had thought that my looks would last me all my life, […] Your visit to Nyon occurred just before I had had such a revelation. I was still confident, you see, confident enough to wait for a better offer […] I knew that sooner or later something or someone would turn up. And so I sent you away. I have regretted it ever since. (*MTB*, 245-246)

She is the victim of her mother's ambitions waiting for better offers means better higher identities. Fanny has accepted that the only way for a woman to survive is to be called with the name of a man. She writes about her second husband as:

> Alois, in Nyon, where he was taking a holiday. […]Mother thought it a good match, since he appeared to be a man of property, and we married shortly afterwards. […] Alois Schneider was an unattractive man whom we both thought wealthier than he actually was. […] made a series of unwise decisions about the future of his firm. I came quite quickly to dislike him, but once again I had Mother to think of. At least I managed to look after her, but at a price. I hated my husband to touch me, which he did at every opportunity. I simply could not respond. Perhaps I never have. And yet I have always longed for love, romantic love, the kind of love that strengthens a woman against misfortune. I am convinced that with another man I would have had the courage to accept my situation. (*MTB*, 184)

Fanny as the only daughter of an adoring father for the first time experiences hardships caused by her husband. Hating a husband is burden she should bear for being the desire of the mother. For Lacan woman is the symptom of man, because "she cannot promise him the unity that he expects from her and that he hopes to reach through her. Her status as category of the absolute makes the illusion of a possible union shimmer before our eyes. The fusion of another with her would realize the One".[406] Fanny's encounter with her feminine side as wife is traumatic since her fusion with Alois is hateful.

Fanny writes to Julius that "You were the one whose attitude most resembled his, but remember, I had so many choices in those days. Such choices ended pitiably, in two husbands who failed to bring me to life. As for you and me, we should have been lovers in Berlin, when we were young and perfect" (*MTB*, 247) so Fanny also dreams of her fusion with Julius. As well Fanny mentions

> Perhaps I was not as lovable as I thought, though men found me so. But it is part of my sad inheritance to be loved only once, by Father, or perhaps twice, by you. If only you had been more forceful I might have relented, but that is what I tell myself today, when I am in such sad circumstances. Even the idea of seeing you again both tempts and frightens me. And the only way I could return to the Beau Rivage would be with a man at my side. Even then I know I might be subjected to sidelong glances, for it seems that I still possess some elements of style. Or maybe I still have the manners and gestures of one who was once thought beautiful. You will find this too among women, a kind of natural confidence that causes envy, even

[406] Liora Goder, "What is a Woman and What is Feminine *Jouissance* in Lacan?" (Trans. Mary Jane Cowles), *(Re)-Turn: A Journal of Lacanian Studies*, Volume 5, Spring, 2010, 118.

> resentment. And yet I never exploited my looks. It was Mother who did that for me. (*MTB*, 247)

Fanny also, unsatisfied with the men her mother chooses, looks for her father figure even at her old age. Like Edith Hope, Fanny is castrated by the mother and misses her father. She, as well, looks for a man to resemble her father's honest love. Fanny wants to renovate her infant relationship with her kind supportive father who adored her. So, she takes Julius as a representative of her father. She hopes to achieve the mythical union and the unattainable *jouissance*. Like many girls who look for the fatherly love and Fanny feels Julius' love is like that of his father honestly and from the bottom of his heart.

Fanny's identification with the mother to be her *objet a* is similar to the condition of Freddy. The only main difference is that Freddy rebels against both the mother and the father and escapes the destiny pre-set for him. But Fanny keeps up "some sort of pretence" (*MTB*, 247); and living a life full of pretending leads to her gradual fading. But at the same time, Fanny says "I confess that the greatest loss has been Mother …We had never been apart from each other and I miss her dreadfully. Since her death everything has gone wrong. I am sure that if she were still here she would know what I should do" (*MTB*, 184). Therefore, Fanny has not been able to detach herself from the imaginary identification with her mother; she depends on her excessively as an infant depends on the mother. Her father Hubertus is presented to be a man following all Lacanian codes of authority but his early death changes her life. Fanny adds

> It seemed fated that I should end up with Mother as my only company, and now with no company at all. I wonder now at the cruel practicality of parents who seek to discharge their own duties onto a third party, or parties. I would guess that you, who were always faithful, were a faithful son, doing duty for your father, whom I remember as fatally mild, unable to sustain a household already riven by problems. There was a brother, I remember, whom I was not allowed to frequent. That was another maternal edict, on your side this time. It was thought that I would distract him from his music, but in fact your mother was jealous of anyone who approached him. (*MTB*, 249)

The two sisters, Trude and Anna, share the same characteristic of living on their

children. Trude has enslaved her sons Freddy and Julius and Anna has dominated her daughter Fanny. It leads to a missing unattainable *jouissance* between these two lovers. Both born in Berlin but misplaced- one in Switzerland the other in London- are unable to recognize the signifiers of loving or being loved. Therefore, they are doomed to live a life of alienation in exile. However, her main purpose to find Julius after so many years is explained as

> I have always relied on men in my life, and on Mother, of course, so I am hoping that you will be able to advise me. I am not happy in Bonn, though it is a pleasant town, and I find myself thinking back to Berlin, where I had such a happy childhood. Do you remember our marvellous children's parties, which Mother organized so beautifully? She of course is the greatest loss, for she always had my best interests at heart, and I am adrift without her advice. And when Mother died I had no heart for anything. (*MTB*, 186)

The absence of mother is accompanied by presence of problems. She is bewildered in misplaced conditions having no man to rely on. There is no supportive mother and no identifying man. Fanny always needs to be identified due to her excessively obedient subjectivity. Besides needing a supportive body such as Julius, Fanny also refers to upcoming pleasure of visiting him after thirty or more years and says

> It may comfort you to know that I think back to the respect in which you once held me with genuine emotion. It would have given me great pleasure, enormous pleasure, to have seen you again. As matters stand you will not be surprised if I decline your invitation. I must accept the fact that the time for love is past, but this is very bitter. I can only end this letter by sending you my belated regards, not only for the compliment you pay me now in asking for a meeting, but for the compliment you paid me once before, in asking me to be your wife. No woman could ever forget such a compliment. Even now I am grateful. (*MTB*, 249)

Pleasure and *jouissance* are of great importance. They are both at their late seventies, but Fanny looks for a man to be identified with and this time he is the one who loves her honestly not for sexual purposes. But Julius, even in his dreams, cannot see Fanny "clinging to his arm" because he feels she is "married to her mother" who performs as "her agent, her manager" and if "Fanny were to marry again it would be to someone who would make her mother part of the bargain" (*MTB*, 183). Psychic trauma occurs

between an outside motive and the subject's powerlessness to recognize and master these stimulations. Fanny and her mother have refused Julius' marriage proposal and it has created a deep unhealable trauma in his unconscious. Being married to one's mother metaphorically refers to victimization, enslavement, misuse, obedience, pretense, pain, and isolation.

3.4.10. Death Drive

Lacanian death drive is a "suicidal tendency of narcissism".[407] The turning of Anna and Trude's sisterly love into unlimited jealousy and hatred is a pure illustration of the death drive. Trude aims to sacrifice all the objects around to prove the illusion of her better life over that of Anna. She sacrifices Freddy, doomed to live the life of a prisoner and composes a constant threat to his life and subjectivity through maternal delusion. Nonetheless she is punished by his loss. Freddy's life and death can be considered as a suicide because he escapes the terrible mother and destines himself to isolation, exile, and a tragic death with no relative besides. For Lacan "Every drive is a death drive"[408] and Freddy's escape is a metaphor of leaving all worldly pleasures and objects such as wife, children, and any other worldly values. He becomes a lost subject living his death.

From another perspective, the death drive is also considered as a desire to go back into the womb. Like "Oedipus [who] pursues his desire to literally return inside the mother's womb, which of course fulfills the prophesy of his death[…] in order to get back to ecstatic unity with the mother (in order to 'crawl back into the womb')".[409] Fanny's missing her mother and confessing that mother is the greatest loss of her life metaphorically alludes to her tendency to the death drive.

Fanny and Julius are the only survivors of their families. They have both observed the real death of their family members and undergone their own symbolic death under the burden of misrecognized standards of the Law/Other. When he remembers his parents deaths, he utters "his father's death from cancer, his mother's decline, had no

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[407] Evans, 33. See Also *E.*, 301.
[408] Evans, 49. See also *Ec*., 848.
[409] Allia Larissa Borowski, *Sartre's 'Secret Face' as Factical Imago: A Lacanian-Existentialist Conception of Death Drive Desire*, (Master's Thesis), George Mason University, 2009, 16.

need to be dressed up in mournful colours: they both knew, in their different ways, that those deaths were a release" (*MTB*, 49). Death itself is considered as a means of release from the strictly rule bound Law. Julius "regrets for their lives rather than death" (*MTB*, 12) because living a life of despair with no trace of pleasure is worse than death. When Julius buys a small flat on Chiltern Street with only eight year lease, he thinks he will be dead before the lease runs out. He lives a life waiting for the next big thing of his life that is death. Death is a means of escape from a life of exile.

Finally Julius and Fanny plan to meet. Herz has booked the flights, and a car to take them to Nyon; they'll meet at Geneva the next day. But a sudden event occurs in the airport on his way:

> The pain began quite suddenly, unlike anything he had experienced before. When his flight was called he got up, fumbled for his pills. His shaking hand sent them flying, rolling across the dirty floor. Making an effort not to gasp he lurched forward, crushing the pills beneath his feet. Then, with the empty box still clutched in his hand, the ghost of a smile still on his face, he struggled mightily, exerting his last strength to join the other travellers on their journey. (*MTB*, 275)

The desire for union and living the life long fantasy of joyful attendance end with dropping and losing his fateful pills. Undoubtedly, he won't catch the flight and Fanny will be waiting with no one to tell her what he really desired or what has happened to him.

No one is totally free, after a life of obedience he cannot emancipate the legacies. All his life he has observed duties, taken care of his parents and brother, and have upheld all standards; he has given up his pleasure, desire, and wishes that tempt him and his unlived life is melancholic. The only way to get rid of all strict internalized rules and principles is to die. Even at his last moments of his life he is anxious about assisting Fanny and Josie; he still is submissive to his duty of making things better for Other and sacrificing his own needs, demands, and desires.

3.4. *THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT*

Brookner's writing is typically experimental in considering and illustrating women in the twentieth century. Unlike many writers who observe women's authority, Brookner presents the development of heroines and infrequently heroes by focusing on subjectivity, devotion, being devoured and indifferent attitude of people around, especially parents, with lack of communication and emotion. The protagonists usually are occupied with reading novels especially of the Victorian era. They are in need of love and they quest for happiness, pleasure, and truth but are usually dissatisfied. In the process of survival they experience alienation as what they desire and what they experience are different. Her slow, unhappy protagonists waste their lives taking care of ungrateful parents or friends. Brookner's female characters are more treated as insufficient passive subjects and are oppressed by the patriarchal society and there is no way out for the women except accepting these regulations.

The Rules of Engagement (2003) is Brookner's twenty-second novel and starts with introducing two school friends who have same names, Elizabeth. The narrator remains Elizabeth, who reveals her name in the middle of the novel, but her submissive friend changes her name to Betsy as an alternative. Elizabeth is cautious, thoughtful and she values social correctness but her orphaned friend Betsy is raised by her spinster aunt and remains naive, innocent and she yearns for affection. After growing up in different situations, they rejoin later in life. Elizabeth marries Digby but remains childless while Betsy quests for love and family.

3.4.1. Elizabeth a Brooknerian Typical

The novel presents the reflections of middle aged Elizabeth Weatherall born in 1948 who remembers: the events of her childhood with her school friend Betsy; one year in Paris taking cooking courses; her marriage to an old man called Digby, and some other occasions. She is passive, submissive and more an observer than an actor during the course of the novel. After several years, the two friends meet at Elizabeth and Digby's wedding ceremony. Betsy's initial name has been Elizabeth Newton and now she has become Betsy de Sainte-Jorre. It is revealed that Betsy is not married; she seems to be unfortunate since she did not have a mother and has been brought up by her aunt

and her widowed father who has died of heart attack in her childhood. Betsy has a kind of social awkwardness that the narrator's mother dislikes. The narrator, Elizabeth, has a harsh mother who encourages her to accompany an appropriate social circle rather than motherless poor Betsy. However, Betsy always appreciates Elizabeth's parents.

Elizabeth is a Brooknerian typical heroin who again suffers childlessness and disaffectionate parents. Her childhood has not been a peaceful one, she mentions

> My parents did not get on, and that I had become used to hearing angry voices issuing from their bedroom far into the night. My one desire was to get away, and to live my life far from the contamination of these adult matters. I valued a sort of innocence, or more probably ignorance, which I feared might be destroyed. […] Instinctively I resisted my mother and her plans, thinking, perhaps correctly, that they did not have my best interests at heart. In this I was probably wrong, but I did not know then that two people could hate each other and still live together. I was aware that my father had a friend, but a girl is more likely to forgive her father than her mother. My mother, as far as I knew, was faithful, but fidelity had merely sharpened her tongue, her powers of criticism. Her scornful bitter voice in the bedroom filled me with horror, even with terror. (*ROE*, 12)

Instead of sweet-natured parents, Elizabeth has always had plans of escape due to her fears of their scornful harsh arguments. Even the mother's fidelity turns to a negative characteristic when she misuses it as a rebuke. It seems that Elizabeth has passed from Lacanian imaginary to the symbolic realm. Although her scornful mother terrifies her, the feeling is not excessive. She has grown up under the Name-of-the-Father and is ruled by the codes of her middle class life. Although her mother has been her phobic object in her childhood, Elizabeth does not complain much and suffers internally. The mother sends her to Paris to take a cookery course for one year as a prestigious act. Elizabeth adds

> But I feared her instincts, which had always been sharp. She was the kind of woman whose main attention is given over to other women, as if to calculate their assets, and if possible their disadvantages, with regard to herself. She had been expert at the subtle insinuation, the laughing dismissal, as if these matters were crucial to a woman's success with men. I now saw why my father had looked for love and comfort elsewhere. (*ROE*, 63)

Elizabeth's mother is the one who tries to survive at any cost. She is not the traditional typical devoted mother and prefers to live for her own self. She prescribes her daughter a life like her own in a proper social circle. Elizabeth mentions "[s]he envisaged a life for me exactly like her own, marriage to a professional man, a comfortable establishment, licensed idleness, licensed amusements" (*ROE*, 8). The reason why Elizabeth's mother dislikes Betsy is due to her "general lack of all these prospects" (*ROE*, 8).

Elizabeth the subject must undertake a constant and inevitable subjection to the power of a destiny by being reduced to the symbolic order and the Law. If she rebels she will lose her normal existence in the society/culture. Therefore she obeys the commands of Law despite her will. Elizabeth says that

> We had assumed, perhaps wrongly, that safety lay in stability, that love and desire could have only one true end: marriage, and no doubt children. That this certainty was being attacked from all sides had not yet taken us over, changing us from what we had been and were still destined to be. We were innocent, like girls at school, waiting patiently for fulfilment, which would come to us in the guise of another person, and not a series of more or less random persons who might or might not have our wellbeing at heart. (*ROE*, 40)

Brooknerian world, along with Lacanian regulations, accepts married women and gives them identity and respect. The characters are the prisoners of the symbolic order. Elizabeth accepts her first marriage proposal from her father's friend who is twenty seven years older than her just before her parents get divorced. No evidence of sad separation is observed between the daughter and parents. Marriage and Digby have prepared the means of escape from harsh parental arguments to a peaceful cozy life. She recalls her wedding day as

> I should have liked to have sat down with her, but my mother, whose own wedding it seemed to be, kept calling me to order, to greet another of her friends, to whom I had to repeat my mantra of Venice and Melton Court. In a way the extreme tedium of the occasion was a blessing in disguise. (*ROE*, 18)

Even on her wedding day, her mother is the dominant authority. Absent or present in all

three novels, fathers cannot establish the masculine ideologies to be followed by their children. Elizabeth's father has a very pale role in her life and nothing much is heard about him. After the divorce of parents, the father does not even give her daughter a call. Elizabeth is lacking a supportive father. However, Digby is described as

> His size, his breadth, his expansive smile, would have drawn me to him in any circumstances; when he asked me to marry him (with tears in his eyes) I responded instinctively, although until then I had only thought of him as a family friend for whom my father acted as solicitor. And because without him, or someone like him, I had no future. I had drifted into the fatal habit of falling in with my mother's plans. (*ROE*, 18)

Wealthy Digby fills the position of Elizabeth's father especially after the divorce of her parents. The mother moves to Spain and abandons her daughter to her fate. Elizabeth feels: "I seemed to have been returned to my origins, the only difference being that my father's place had been taken by my husband" (*ROE*, 67). She is abandoned to her destiny under the authority of a tired but sympathetic man. Again Lacan's the Name-of-the-Father theory is not functioning properly in this novel, because the problematic father leaves or escapes due to the anxieties aroused by the devouring mother. Digby is Elizabeth's savior; if she were not married she would be enslaved by her devouring mother like Freddy or Julius Herz in *Making Things Better*. The mother agrees with their marriage because she has estimated his property but young Elizabeth and Digby are separated by more than a generation. After the wedding Elizabeth feels

> My own marriage, with its tediums, and the solitude it inevitably brought in its wake, had given me one inestimable gift: the assurance of affection. I knew that Digby would never be unfaithful, would never torment me. In a sense I had the upper hand, though I had never desired this. (*ROE*, 40)

Elizabeth remains behind the bars of the symbolic realm of Law. Due to the lack of communication and speech, she is obsessed with solitude. After two isolated people like Digby and Elizabeth get married, they still feel desolate and have the fantasy of liberation. Elizabeth says

> I would be free of her [mother's] scorn and her disparaging ways, free of what I thought of as my father's indiscretions, and secure, if rather sad, in the knowledge that no more reasonable outcome could have been found to

> mark a change of status which I was convinced was necessary, both for their sakes and for my own. At the time I did not identify this instinct as fear. (*ROE*, 19)

She is expected to undertake her gendered roles within the restrictions of symbolic cultural codes. Her escape through marriage is not satisfying and Elizabeth still looks for other ways in quest of desire.

3.4.2. In Search of Unattainable Jouissance

But after the relief of separation from her parents, Elizabeth wishes to gain pleasure and yearns for something afar, for *jouissance*. She wants to create a new, alternative communication to express her own self freely. She is so young that wishes for something beyond the life that is settled for her. When she sees Edmund Fairly at one of the dinner parties, he gives the key to his secret apartment. The key is symbolically referring to the illusion of experiencing the *jouissance*. Elizabeth says "The day he gave me a key to the flat was the happiest of my life" (*ROE*, 46) and says

> I knew very little about him. I knew that he was a welcome ten years younger than my husband. I knew that he had three children, twin girls, Julia and Isabella, and a boy, David, and that he was devoted to them. […] I was stoical enough to look the situation in the face, and at no point was I tactless enough to ask him if he loved me. His attitude was simple: his sexual confidence demanded that he employ that confidence in the most natural way. He was a man of pleasure, and I was a means of ensuring that pleasure. Nor did he give much time to rationalizing his behaviour, or indeed my own. 'Incredible,' was all he said.

Edmund is in quest of pleasure and fun. He is not a moral character and pursues pleasure principle. Elizabeth's mother has taught her a strange rule: "I had wanted what my mother had assured me was priceless: fidelity" (*ROE*, 40). Infidelity to Digby does not bother her since she interprets it as the adventures of life. Elizabeth's love is described as "I loved him, while never completely suppressing the knowledge that love was something quite different, that it was steadiness, constancy, familiarity, even availability. But I dismissed this knowledge, as I had to. […] I no longer thought in

terms of lifelong allegiance" (*ROE*, 47). Then, love making and satisfying desire turns to be her main purpose.

On the other hand, Edmund acts as the carrier of authenticity and power. His language is careless to women around her. Despite his pleasure seeking appetite, his wicked character is anxious about Constance's reactions. Wealthy Constance is his wife and the mother of three children. For him the women's inferior subjectivity in the symbolic order is reduced to fulfilling the desire of men. Elizabeth's affair with Edmund emphasizes on her attempt to break the Law and attain freedom. She tries to explore her repressed desire under the norms of the Name-of-the-Father and commit adultery as a means of gaining *jouissance* by allowing herself as a free subject/object of desire. Marriage has been the first stage of being liberated from the authority of parents and adulterous tendency is the second stage to prove her existence. The flat is a symbol of freedom on the way of experiencing the adventure toward prohibited fantasies. The flat is described as

> Edmund's flat was in a small street bounded on one side by a public garden, where I would spend the afternoon, almost innocently, with a book. There was a church, to which I turned my back, as I might not have done at an earlier stage in my life, for I knew that Dickens had married there. […] I would get up, put away my book, and cross the garden to the flat in Britten Street, let myself in with my key, and wait for Edmund, who would join me shortly after five. Our time together was brief, too brief, for he always telephoned his family, or was telephoned by his wife in the country at the same time every evening. (*ROE*, 48)

Her metaphorical turning back to the church reminds Lacanian theory that "the moral law, the moral commandment, the presence of the moral agency, is that by which, in our activity in so far as it is structured by the symbolic, the real makes itself present".[410] She is aware of the standards of the culture but the pleasure of committing sinful deeds is beyond her control. Her desires are stimulated in the patriarchal society and she starts to experiment with her own sexual desires. She aims to explore herself and her desires. Although she knows that Digby is in many ways better than the worldly Edmund, who acts to entertain she prefers to follow her strong desire. Elizabeth utters

[410] Boothby, 171.

> I knew that his voice would power me for the rest of the day. I might go to the flat in any case: those afternoons in the garden were now a part of my life, perhaps the part I most treasured. They had an enchantment, a stillness of their own after the adjustments of the morning. They constituted a time in which I was free to contemplate my emerging and authentic self, a self which had been obscured by the years of careful living which I could now see for what they had been: erroneous, fallacious, and with a stifling quality I was ready to condemn unreservedly. (*ROE*, 52)

When she is with Edmund, the passing of time is not felt rather is treasured by Elizabeth. Her careful mute obedient life in the symbolic order is practicing a new era of self-discovery. She is aware of the events occurring to her ego and says

> Or would my preoccupations more properly be identified as obsessions? My own nature must have held dark secrets, which were dark only because they were not shared. In the course of those evenings with Edmund all conscience dissolved and I possessed a conviction that I was acting in accordance with my true nature. In the intervals I was conscious of a fall from grace which I was obliged to register, though to condemn it seemed not to be within my power. (*ROE*, 57)

She is aware of her disgrace and knows that she has been obsessed with unfulfilled desires and many codes to follow but she sacrifices her honor and dignity in search of pleasure. Lacanian *jouissance* is in the realm of the real. Elizabeth tries to rebel the symbolic realm and plans to go beyond. She wants to live "according to [her] own rules, rather than by rules imposed on [her] by other people" (ROF, 70). She is dispassionate about the dictated moralities and virtuous acts. Her adventurous journey to the depth of her desires leads to her better self-discovery. She confesses that "love is a matter of pure solipsism", (*ROE*, 88) so her main objective is self-satisfaction and she positions Edmund as pleasure seeking subject desiring her desire. Elizabeth feels

> I was willing to pay the price. That there was a price to be paid I had read too much, and had been too indoctrinated to ignore. But part of Edmund's gift to me had been to make me seem so fortunate that I might escape the penalties altogether. In short he had lent me some of his own glamorous freedom from the pangs of conscience, and I took this as further proof that I had matured in a way that had not hitherto been possible. (*ROE*, 94)

Her desire to enjoy the sense of freedom and pleasure is unlimited. Elizabeth's betrayal along with her descriptions of Digby's unending exhaustion conveys that her repressed desire is not satisfied by the old husband who spends his life at the office or on the sofa watching TV.

Jouissance for Elizabeth is limitless sexual enjoyment. Lacan defines the term from the viewpoint of Hegel's dialectic of the master and the slave to offer "objects for the master's enjoyment (*jouissance*)".[411] Elizabeth attempts to satisfy her need through playing the role of *objet a* to Edmund as the Master signifier. She encounters her hidden courage in realization of her liberated self in experiencing happiness that has been denied from her through her recently awakened desires. She has inherited her father's infidelity and the courage of her mother. Elizabeth believes that "in giving me access to my own license, my own lawlessness, Edmund had made me know myself, and in doing so I had gained a liveliness and even a courage that had not previously been within my reach"(*ROE,* 100).

Elizabeth regrets that the Name-of-the-Father/Law has offered "the wrong instructions, had thought that marriage was the answer" and is disappointed since "it be love or a vision of love which has somehow failed to materialize" (*ROE,* 101). The culture and society force women to marry by focusing on the issue of naming not pure love or pleasure. She is alienated and split but wants to enjoy the every moment of her sense of awakening. However, there is a lack that she can never fulfill and it is childlessness. Her sexual accessibility is assured by her childlessness, and her status is not enhanced by the kind of respect paid to mothers.

Due to Elizabeth's lack of communication and indifferent people around her, she lives with Victorian novels and internalizes the obligations in the novels of Jane Austen and Charles Dickens instead of the Name-of-the-Father's principles of her harsh mother. Her codes of life spring from the novels she has read from Dickens or Jane Austen not from the real life and real people. Elizabeth says:

> I did not love Digby. What I felt for him was the gratitude that unmarried women in Jane Austen feel for a prospect that might, if fortune favoured them, bring about the sort of resolution considered to be appropriate. At that

[411] Evans, 94.

> dormant stage of my life I hardly knew what love was. …. On the contrary, the attraction of this marriage was its utter seemliness. I was perhaps unduly influenced by my parents' growing hostility to each other, and also by the fact that they had entered with something like grim enthusiasm into the destruction of their marriage. I viewed the flat in Melton Court as a place of sanctuary. Its lack of poetry I could easily accommodate. (*ROE*, 20)

Even when she decides to break the norms and has affair with Edmund she focuses on Gustave Flaubert's *Madam Bovary*. She internalizes Emma Bovary whose romantic expectations are not lived up by marriage and her careless husband.

Reading *Madam Bovary* more than other novels presents her own desire for adultery as she tells "That was why, like Emma Bovary, whose story does indeed seem to touch the lives of most women" (*ROE*, 93) or says "Therefore I might not be able to read at all, or not until a time when I could draw the line under my own life with a feeling of gratitude that I had done no real harm. This might be the most conclusive loss of all. I put the books back tidily on the shelves. Madame Bovary was the last to be cancelled in this way" (*ROE*, 118). It metaphorically clarifies Elizabeth's own desire to live a liberated life rebelling against all virtues. Even after she determines to select a moderate way of life, she keeps *Madam Bovary* as an imaginary way of fulfilling her repressed desire to be *objet a.*

Elizabeth's adulterous relationship can be an unconscious motivation to compensate her lack and it may be an unconscious reaction against her mother.

3.4.3. Abandonment of Desire

Out of a sudden, Elizabeth encounters Digby's unexpected death within three days. Elizabeth betrays but metaphorically the Law punishes by her husband's passing away and her lifelong isolation. She feels "a sadness so pure, so untainted by immediate concerns, that it was as if I had joined him in his new condition, and that this would be my inheritance, not only in my waking hours but for the rest of my life" (*ROE*, 104). After losing her father, she loses her loyal supportive husband who has been a fatherly substitute. Now she is really free but says

> I no longer thought of disappearing to Paris; the thought of greater isolation

> intimidated me. The only protection would be another man, not the kind of man to whom my thoughts all too naturally turned, but someone mild, respectable, well thought of -rather like my husband, in fact. I should be warmly accepted back into the mainstream so long as the idea of passion were rigorously absent. What I desired would not be relevant. I should be re-admitted if I exhibited all those marls of benign normality. (*ROE*, 109)

Elizabeth finally recognizes that though she needs a company of a man, Edmund is not a trustable one. Her isolation is doubled under the burden of public gaze observing her as a widowed childless woman.

Her mother calls from Spain and is anxious about her property, interestingly the mother's advice is "Even today, in this liberated age, married women have more prestige" (*ROE*, 110). The indifferent mother does not attend Digby's funeral. However, Elizabeth won't undergo the principles of the Law for the second time. She has learnt to be independent and solitary from childhood. Elizabeth is aware that marriage poses social duty limitations that she dislikes. Marriage prevents her from seeking the satisfaction of her own needs and desires. Through her steady awakening, she has discovered her strength and her own hidden desires. After Digby, she has enough property to live independently. On the other hand she thinks

> In the mirror I looked haggard and unkempt, the result not only of my vagrancy but of my recent obsession. I felt genuine shame on my own behalf, as if I had woken up after a period of madness. I saw that I had behaved badly, and also that I had behaved out of character. For surely I was not a bad person? I had accepted what had been offered; now I saw that what had been offered had been insufficient, and worse, that I had over-invested in something that was intrinsically worthless, or at best of no consequence. (*ROE*, 112)

Shame shatters her and she starts to dislike Edmund. Giving the key of the secret flat back to Edmund metaphorically refers to her rejecting her own longing to be the desire of Other. Her self-discovery is someway finalized by Digby's death. She comes to recognize that

> In truth these had only occupied the few days when nothing appeared to be happening, but they had felt enormous, as if establishing a pattern that I should be obliged to follow for the rest of my life. Now, in this brief

> interlude of lucidity, I saw that I must behave differently, that my safety, and indeed my sanity, depended on a change of course. I should have to obey the rules, observe the social norms, not those whose pleasure it was to defy them. I saw the rules as safeguards. (*ROE*, 112)

The repressed Elizabeth cannot be a rebellious character in the symbolic world, she must be moderate and must avoid going to excesses. She will miss her past days with Edmund and says

> The memory of my emancipation was still too vivid in my mind for me to disallow it. The memory might fade, had, perhaps, already faded, but it would not disappear. These two ideologies, goodness and freedom, were difficult to reconcile. The conundrum had never been resolved. Certainly I could not resolve it. Yet, strangely, both imposed a loyalty, an obligation. It would be difficult to see how such an obligation could be met. (*ROE*, 115)

It is not possible to enjoy both freedom and goodness. However, she is aware that she must give an end to her wrong excessive deeds or she will vanish.

She gives up Edmund, the flat, and the fantasy of *jouissance* in final strategy as the outcome of her final awakening. Elizabeth loses both her husband and lover at the same time but Edmund shows no sign of curiosity to understand the reason behind her rejection to continue their secret relationship. Elizabeth herself confesses that "the ability to deal with loss is perhaps as important, or rather as significant, as the loss itself" (*ROE*, 205). The illusion of loss will bother her psyche but she is determined to resist it.

Despite Elizabeth's struggle to pretend constructing a kind of different attitudes, she cannot escape the Lacanian subjectivity. As mentioned for Lacan, "man's desire is the desire of the Other"[412] and originally parental authorities mirror the Other's role.[413]Elizabeth confesses that she is able to reproduce her mother's harshness, in spite of her efforts to move it from herself; she says "Now I see that I have not quite managed it. My only victory is that the harshness has been internalized. My judgments even now are sometimes less than charitable" (*ROE*, 5). Children are the mirrors of their parents

[412] Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, (Trans. Alan Sheridan), Norton, New York 1977, 235
[413] *Ec.*., 688.

and it cannot be resisted. Elizabeth remains unmarried for the rest of her life leading a passive submissive life with a boyfriend called Nigel Ward.

3.4.4. Betsy's Bewildered Attitude

Freud claims "no one possesses more than one mother, and the relation to her is based on an event that is not open to any doubt and cannot be repeated".[414] Freud also summarizes the mother's mission as "teaching the child to love".[415] Lacan on the other hand refers to the significance of the maternal function but insists that the mother must accept her passivity in the realm of the Law and must spread the codes defined by the Name-of-the-Father. For Lacan "the true function of the Father…is fundamentally to unite (and not to set in opposition) a desire and the Law".[416] Every subject must experience death of subjectivity, must accept the un-attainability of maternal *jouissance*, and illusion of freedom.

Betsy is a parentless child whose mother has died shortly after her birth. She lives with her spinister aunt Miss Mary Milsom, the narrator says

> She longed to be superficial, with the sort of ease that I and my particular coterie took for granted. Adult responsibility, of an altogether unwelcome kind, had already come her way, in the shape of her widowed father and the faded aunt who kept some sort of primitive life going in that flat above the surgery in Pimlico Road. She was unfortunate: that was generally agreed, and it made her something of an anomaly in our midst. (*ROE*, 5)

Betsy is said to be unfortunate and the fact that she lacks a mother has deep effects on her childhood and adult life. Nothing is heard about the name or characteristics of her mother as Elizabeth, the narrator, remembers

> Her father's negligence, or incompetence, had led indirectly to the death of one of his patients […] Pity and dislike, first manifested by my mother, affected Betsy even more than her father's disgrace, which she inherited. It seemed ordained to follow her through life, for there was nothing she could

[414] Sprengnether, Madelon, *The Spectral Mother: Freud, Feminism, and Psychoanalysis*, Cornell UP, Ithaca 1990, 1.
[415] Sigmund Freud, "The Sexual Aberrations," *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Basic Books, New York 1975, 89.
[416] Richard Boothby, *Death and Desire: Psychoanalytic Theory in Lacan's Return to Freud*, Routledge, New York 1991, 168.

> do to rectify it. […] I thought him completely inadequate to fulfill the role of father, but I think he was simply indifferent to children. (*ROE*, 5)

Betsy is influenced by the perspective of the public to her father. Even little Elizabeth recognizes his inadequacy and carelessness as a father. Later Betsy "took it in her stride, thinking it gave her permission to assume an altogether different character, someone more lighthearted, skimming the surface, responding always with a smile" (*ROE*, 4). Her seemingly smiling face hides the dark memories affecting her life.

For Lacan the mother "is first of all symbolic. She only becomes real by frustrating the subject's demand",[417] and simply her presence affirm the love. The absence of the mother is traumatic and proves being rejected or having lost her love that creates lifelong troubles for the child. The child tries to cope with this kind of loss by "symbolizing the mother's presence and absence in games and language".[418] Betsy experiences none of Lacanian imaginary, symbolic and real mothers and his biological father fails to play the role of the symbolic father. Her lack of maternal warmth and desire and her inability to establish a primary identification with her mother become the basis for her unstructured desire. Due to the impossibility for Betsy to share her mother's desire, she yearns for the desire of the Other, thereby becomes totally alienated. The result of this massive lack in the Other's desire leads Betsy to start a lifelong quest to fill the gap in the Other. Betsy even attempts to win the attention of Elizabeth's harsh mother.

However, Elizabeth's mother dislikes her and observes her as an awkward being. The only real person who teaches her the instructions of the Law, society and culture has been her virgin aunt who "was even less promising than her brother-in-law" with "little show of love between the aunt and the niece, neither of whom had been able to envisage an alternative to their present arrangement, but they were both loyal and obedient people" (*ROE*, 7). Their mutual lack of communication and understanding is apparently solved by their weekly visit to the cinema, where "they enjoyed a timid contact with the crowd" (*ROE*, 7). The narrator says

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[417] Evans, 121.
[418] Peter Guy, *As Mirrors Are Lonely: A Lacanian Reading on the Modern Irish Novel*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014, 32.

> Those evenings at the cinema, watching the fabled lives of others, had done nothing to persuade her of the necessity of dissembling, of holding back her assent, of flirtatiousness and unreliability, such as attended the heroines of those Hollywood romances her aunt favoured, and whose trickiness, whose feistiness always brought about the desired, the honourable result. Betsy never mastered that art. Her eyes would widen with something like shock if she encountered anything less than the plainest of speech, the slightest deviation from the truth. I could see that this might make her something of a burden; I could even see that there might be some things one would have to conceal from her, but at the age of fifteen, of sixteen, I put it down to lack of a mother who could instruct her in what was appropriate. (*ROE*, 12)

The characters of these romances were either purely good or totally wicked and she prefers to become the good winning one. Betsy's reading of books and romances have caused her to adopt good faith. When Elizabeth sees Betsy many years later on her own wedding day she feels:

> And I could see from her untarnished gaze that she was still the girl who had declaimed Racine's lines -'Que le jour recommence, et que le jour finisse ar Sans que jamais Titus puisse voir Bérénice'- and that she would, in the same exalted spirit, accept all love's challenges, and remain just as faithful as if she had committed herself from the moment her eyes had met those of her lover, whoever he was, and however unsuitable he might turn out to be. (*ROE*, 24)

Betsy is as innocent as the heroines she appreciates in the books. Her deep longing for love has its own reasons. Betsy lacks her parents' love and concern and the only available option she has is her books. Books become her *objet a* and she relies on them as her only friends giving her the fantasy of holding the life she wishes. This is the beginning of her misunderstanding of literature in her real life. Due to her lack and fragmentation, Betsy develops enthusiasm for the drama in quest of a life model in her fantasy and all her life she remains faithful to playwrights and their heroines. Her favorite figure is described as follows:

> Even so, something in her disciplined soul responded, whereas Betsy remained faithful to the grander concepts in her favourite Racine. 'Que le jour recommence, et que le jour finisse ar Sans que jamais Titus puisse voir Bérénice […]' These lines became prophetic, so that at the very end, when I

> visited her in the hospital, I would see her eyes widen in her thin face, and hear her murmur, '[…] sans que de tout le jour […],' and then fall silent (*ROE*, 8)

Berenice is a five-act tragedy by the French 17th century playwright Jean Racine and at the end of the play the heroine has no way except for accepting her duty and not marrying to Titus. The unhappy separation of the lovers causes her to quest for a loving happy man. Betsy internalizes the characteristics of heroines of literature and is repressed by their unhappy endings. Nonetheless, Elizabeth mentions: She has always been "painfully honest, rather more so than prudence might advise. That quality made itself felt when we were still children; her desire to explain herself, to be known, was perhaps really a desire to be loved"(*ROE*, 4). Yet, Betsy's longing to be appreciated usually remains unsatisfied.

For Lacan lack causes desire to initiate and "desire is the metonymy of the lack of being"[419] and the subject's lack of being or lack of object must be gratified. Betsy desires for recognition and true family love. The development of Betsy's psyche from infancy to adulthood is companied by different gaps, disregards and lack of care, so she is the lack itself. Her subjectivity is devastated under the norms of the undefined symbolic society and is caught in the symbolic process. Betsy's split subjectivity, excessive honesty, and the gaps in her life destroy her life when she grows up.

3.4.5. Daniel's Loss

Objet a refers "to anything that puts [us] in touch with [our] repressed desire for [our] lost object".[420] Since *objet a* is principally an absent element, desire aims to achieve it and the subject constantly searches for it in the Other. The aim of this repetition and constant quest is to re-practice the illusion of the primary satisfaction with the mother. However, the multiplicity of desires is kind of a remedy for the primary lack that will permanently remain lost. The Law/The Name-of-the-Father will never be fulfilled because Lacan believes in a kind of limitation or law in the direct satisfaction.[421]

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[419] *E.*, 259.
[420] Lois Tyson, *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide. 2nd Ed.*,Routledge, New York 2006, 28.
[421] Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book VI Desire And Its Interpretation 1958-1959*, (Trans. Cormac Gallagher) from unedited French typescripts, 12-13.

Unlike many orphans to be pitied, Elizabeth feels Betsy has had the sort of courage facilitating her to look towards the future, but she still yearned for the lacking maternal and family love. She finds a young lover named Daniel de Saint-Jorre in France. She struggles to gain a new identity by changing her names from Elizabeth Newton to the aristocrat name of Betsy de Saint-Jorre. Having been indulged in literature, she trusts him because

> […] it was true that in appearance Daniel had fitted the stereotype of a young hero of legend, and whatever inner darkness he managed so successfully to conceal merely added an intriguing complexity to what was in reality a series of aberrations, to which no one meeting him for the first time could have access. (*ROE*, 86)

She then falls in love and changes her name to Betsy de Saint-Jorre, but she still is an improper Lacanian figure because

> Woman is introduced into the symbolic pact of marriage as an object of exchange along basically androcentric and patriarchal lines. Thus, the woman is engaged in an order of exchange in which she is an object: indeed, this is what causes the fundamentally conflictual character of her position- I would say without exit. The symbolic order literally submerges and transcends her.[422]

Lacanian family is a patriarchal one and women gain identity and value under such entity. Betsy's first mistake is falling in love with young and handsome Daniel. They are in the 1970s and it is revealed that Daniel is a Marxist and a member of Zeitgeist movement who considers himself a leader of a sort with no thoughts of earning a living. He spends his energies on impossible utopian goals. And Betsy unaware of his deep lack and gap aims to go under his authority. The twenty four year old Daniel dies unexpectedly and Betsy reveals the story of his death as follows:

> 'One night he wouldn't stop talking, refused food. I tried to get him to calm down, but it merely made him more agitated. Then we had a row, our first. And our last. He ran down the stairs- I could hear him all the way to the street.' She became silent. 'He was run over by a police car. I heard it. Or rather I heard a woman scream.' She was silent again. 'The police were very

[422] *SII*, 262.

> kind. They took care of everything. I think they thought I might bring charges. The worst thing was when they asked me about him, and I realized I knew next to nothing'. (*ROE*, 81)

Betsy has trusted a man she knows less. After she quests to learn about his real life she recognizes an unbelievable past:

> Daniel de Saint-Jorre was a fabrication from start to finish. His name was Petit- jean. Saint-Jorre was one of his mother's lovers […]. The child had fantasized that this man was his father and had appropriated his name. As the real Saint-Jorre had disappeared he had no knowledge of this. In any case he would have been anxious to leave no trace, and there had been no further contact. It had been easy to assume that Daniel was an orphan. In fact his mother still lived in the room in Asnières where she had brought him up, had earned her living as best she could, no doubt in the most banal way possible. (*ROE*, 83)

He is an orphan and has grown up with a mother who offers localized *jouissance* to any man who desires her and pays for. Even his real father is not aware of Daniel's existence. The lack of both biological and symbolic father leads him to fantasize that Mr. Saint-Jorre who buys the only boat toy of his childhood is his father.

Lacan emphasizes on the paternal function and refers to essential ethical truth. The lack of a father to castrate him properly and save the mother from the amount of abusive lovers causes him to be such a bewildered character that sinks in idealistic impractical theories and utopian goals. A motherless female orphan takes refugee under a fatherless male orphan's wings.

Daniel is also victimized under the patriarchal culture. His subjectivity is suppressed in male-dominated community that abuses his mother. Daniel's mother is a public commodity and source of pleasure for any lover. No one has defined free will and self-determination for him. His symbolic castration is improper. He knows that his mother belongs to everyone except her son. This awareness has distracted his life. Daniel's unbalanced viewpoint and life along with the lacking character of Betsy illustrate real deprivation and victimization. Their destinies in life are manipulated by their parents and the society. They are innocent figures. As Lacan says every drive is a

death drive and his early ambiguous death is the only means of escaping a life he has been doomed to tolerate.

3.4.6. On the Path to Destruction

Since Betsy has not experienced maternal love, therefore, she lacks the primary union with the mother. So her unfulfillable lack of *objet a* and her strong unending desires are hard to satisfy. Her good faith and loyalty is described as follows by Elizabeth:

> Betsy's loyalty, which extended to everyone she knew, including my parents, was no doubt the result of a truncated childhood, but it was no less impressive for that reason. In time that loyalty turned into a form of desire, as I was to witness. There was not then, and never would be, a wish on my part to damage that bright trust, even when it took on a damaged quality, or rather a dimension of longing, of distress, which at last revealed the original wound. (*ROE*, 14)

Due to her turbulent childhood, she trusts everyone to gain a portion of love as a remedy to her psychic wounds.

Betsy sells the inherited old house and buys a dark depressing flat but cannot get rid of the old bulky stuff. The ugly surrounding and her bulky outdated furniture metaphorically refer to her past and present condition of living compulsory lost life with no trace of love or affection. Bewildered in the symbolic order, she quests for a family. Still unmarried and unable to bear a child, she yearns to devote herself to others selflessly.

After Daniel, Betsy's second mistake is trusting Edmund Fairly, Elizabeth's ex-lover, and his family with his harsh wife Constance, their two daughters and son. Betsy is introduced to Edmund on Digby's funeral day but is not aware of the secret love affair of Elizabeth and Edmund. Once Elizabeth gives an end to their relationship, Edmund looks for a new prey. After analyzing Betsy's life condition, he proposes her to take a voluntary job as Constance's assistant in running her small charity. The narrator mentions

> [T]he Fairlie household would be the target for all Betsy's ardour, the loyalty that should have made her the ideal partner, and indeed had already done so. I also knew that both Edmund and Constance would be expert at deflect that ardour, or rather those elements of it for which they would have no use. I knew something of their cast of mind: they were in control, and determined to remain so. […] Edmund, whose will had always been superior to my own. And as for Constance, whom I hardly knew but whose cruelty had always seemed to proceed from supreme confidence, I now saw that Constance might even be superior to her husband in this respect. (*ROE*, 123)

The selfish and monstrous Edmund and Constance regard themselves as masters who can devour any weak person around treating them as their slaves. Due to their sole purpose that is their own self-satisfaction and self-preservation, the couple signifies cruelty and egotism. The harsh history lying in Betsy's past is mentioned as

> A woman like Betsy, with her desire to become part of a family, would strike him simply as odd. […] Betsy, who asked only to lay her life at some man's feet, would be regarded as quaint, anomalous, by Edmund, by any man prepared to make war, not love. …yet threatening to break through, to break out, was the girl who had proclaimed tragic soliloquies as if they alone could express the weight and pressure of her longing. […] the slightly discredited father, […] The most crucial figure- the mother- was entirely absent […] Perhaps the mother had been eclipsed in other ways, mentally, emotionally […] she had also been the victim of her husband's diagnostic inadequacy. (*ROE*, 125-126)

Betsy as a subject has experienced a painful life. The childhood catastrophic events that have influenced her life increases Betsy's desire to be part of a feasible family. Her childhood lacks are of considerable intensity. Her inadequate aunt has not been able to offer real love to little Betsy. In addition, the father is probably the one who has caused her mother's death. If her mother has died due to misdiagnosis of her father, then the orphaned Betsy is a traumatized subject whose only aim is to restart a living by filling the gap of her parents. The father's supportive and authentic figure is replaced by an inadequate father who has caused the mother's death. Unlike other traumatized subjects who reveal the sad events, Betsy keeps them as secret.

The Lacanian real refers to "what escapes the symbolic" that cannot be "spoken or written"; it is associated with "the impossible, defined as 'that which never ceases to write itself'".[423] Therefore, the real is not reducible to meaning, or symbolization. However, inspired by literature, Betsy lives with fantasy of gaining *jouissance* in the real life after joining the family of Edmund. It means, to attain the Lacanian real or in other words Lacanian jouissance, she searches for a kind of wholeness with the Other; here Edmund. However, Lacanian real is not tangible external reality rather it is something "outside the structuring symbolization of the subject that which is not symbolized".[424] The real is as well linked to Lacan's unattainable *jouissance* that is most distant of the realms accessible to consciousness just in enormously brief and short-lived moments of joy and terror. The distressing and traumatic status of the real is due to its connection to the impossible in the symbolic realm. Lacan also expresses trauma as a "missed encounter" with the real.[425] Thus, "the real is not synonymous with external reality, but rather with what is real for the subject".[426] Moreover, Lacan believes that "*jouissance* is forbidden to him who speaks".[427]

Betsy's excessively good-heartedness and simplicity is not comparable to the villain side of Edmund. The truth about Betsy is that she "was so clearly above board that she was a victim of her own good faith" (*ROE*, 86). The real is interconnected to "the death drive and *jouissance* as the ultimate, unspeakable, limit of human existence".[428] Thus, when Betsy encounters with the unattainablity of what she desires to gain in the real, she becomes ruined and dies. Betsy confuses the reality settled in the novels with the unattainable Lacanian real. To encounter with the real, meanwhile the impossibility to gain *jouissance* that exists in the real, is traumatic for Lacan and Betsy who feels courageous to face the real is significantly fragmented and bewildered.

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[423] Martine Lerude, "Real, The (Lacan)." *International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis*. 2005.*Encyclopedia.com.* 15 May 2016 <http://www.encyclopedia.com>.

[424] C. Patrick Hogan, Lolita Pandit, , *Criticism and Lacan: Essays and Dialogue on Language*, The University of Georgia Press, Athens and London 1990, 79.

[425] Malcolm Bowie, *Lacan*, Fontana, London 1991, 110.

[426] Wilden, Anthony, *Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1968, 161.

[427] *Ec.*, 319

[428] No Subject Contributors, "Jacques Lacan: Real", No Subject - Encyclopedia of Lacanian Psychoanalysis. 2006. *nosubject.com*. 7 June 2016 <http://nosubject.com/Jacques_Lacan: Real>.

Lacan significantly claims that "desire is the essence of man".[429] The child's parents originally play the Other's part and the child's desire is constructed according to the desire of the Other.[430] So, the subject form her/his own desires upon the desires of the parental Other. The subject and her/his life becomes an attempt to interpret and satisfy the parental Other's desires. The one who lacks the model of her desire is double-split and more bewildered. Betsy has no way except trusting the desire of others around her. The innocent Betsy lacks family and paternal love and is in need of protection. However, she is seduced both sexually by Edmund and emotionally and physically by Constance. She is enslaved and is not paid for her assistance for the charity and their house.

Betsy never realizes the hidden forces at play and she voraciously spends her love, emotion, and power on her seemingly lover Edmund and his wife Constance but is abandoned to death in the hospital. Betsy is a victim who is misused as an object, who is subjecting in socioeconomic system both physically, and mentally. Betsy's lacking model destines her to get lost and destroyed.

Usandizaga comments that

> The Fairlies end up by destroying Betsy to the point of her death. Given the demands of literary coherence, Betsy must pay with her own life for her romantic innocence. There is no possible salvation for Betsy[…]. Though having defended passion as the necessary source of survival, its excess is defined by the narrator at this stage as incomprehensible madness. [431]

After learning about Betsy's hospitalization, Elizabeth feels that she knows about the roots of her illness, and this "awareness completes and confirms her version of the story, its tragic outcome understood to be inevitable at this stage. But Betsy dies as a romantic literary heroine, and her tragic end reenacts her favorite text, Racine's tragedy Bérénice".[432] Betsy's naiveté and innocence is also betrayed by literature. She has internalized literary discourses so effectively that she is imprisoned in them. The real and literary codes have become identical for her. She becomes a living Victorian

[429] *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, 1977, 275.
[430] *Ec.*, 688.
[431] Usandizaga, 2004, 99.
[432] Usandizaga, 2004, 99.

heroine whose devotedness and love is not practical in her contemporary society. Her excessively obedient subjectivity is a matter of her childhood memories and learning, as the narrator comments

> And then that fortuitous concatenation of high and low drama, of Racine and Hollywood, the lines learned and declaimed to indifferent friends and classmates, and the cinema on Saturday nights, and the mystifying behaviour of those who obeyed different codes, […] those heroic players in the eternal game of love and loss. 'Dans un mois, […] jamais Titus puisse voir Bérénice […]'. (*ROE*, 127)

Betsy has internalized "virtue as those prototypes represented" (*ROE*, 127) as her typical to gain the ideal conclusion. Unlike the symbolic order, Betsy lives to find "her very own hero" who "might materialize and escort her to a future which would unite them both" (*ROE*, 127).

> Betsy might have been created by Dickens. She was Little Dorrit, whose goodness, even on the page, grows a little tiresome. There were unusual intervals of silence in our conversation, of which I think only I was aware. Betsy had retrieved some kind of authority from her recent turn of fortune, and I could see that in some mysterious way our positions had become reversed. (*ROE*, 129)

She has incarnated literature. She sees Edmund as a source of pleasure and is destroyed by literature. She attempts to gain "inclusiveness that she had always craved" (*ROE*, 128). Her aim to play as the heroine of her romance turns to a tragic one. Unable to define a stable position in the realm of the symbolic order and language, she is victimized by the devilish Edmund as the authentic power/Law.

Lacan borrows this inspiration of Other's desire from Kojève and Hegel that claims:

> Desire is human only if the one desires, not the body, but the Desire of the other…that is to say, if he wants to be 'desired' or 'loved', or, rather, 'recognised' in his human value…. In other words, all human,

> anthropogenetic Desire…is, finally, a function of the desire for 'recognition'.[433]

Then the subject also "must risk his own life in a struggle for pure prestige"[434] in order to get the desired recognition. The Other observes Betsy as violating the symbolic ideals of patriarchal society.

After being hospitalized and operated, Betsy requests Elizabeth to go to her flat and telephone the girls to tell them where she is. She misses the girls and son of Edmund because she lives with the fantasy of being a member of their family, probably she recognizes herself as their mother. After Elizabeth goes to her flat, she recognizes the plants are quite dead that metaphorically refers to Betsy's gradual fading and death. Then she plans to contact Julia and Isabella in order to arrange a meeting plan in the hospital. Elizabeth calls Edmund's house and office, but there is no answer. She decides to go to the Fairies but is shocked as she recognizes he has sold everything and left no trace of where they have moved. Edmund's case is closed.

It is not Betsy's good heartedness or her other intrinsic excellence that leads to her death. She is desired by Edmund and Constance/Other and the wicked couple enslave her. She is diminished to be their *objet a* and after losing all her energy and life, she is abandoned to death. Betsy never achieves what she herself desires that is to be a member of a loving family. Her quest to satisfy her profound lack is prompted by her death. In other words, the traumatic situation of losing both Edmund's love and the illusion of family cause an anxiety that destroys Betsy. The victimized Betsy is sacrificed under patriarchal culture; she is sacrificed in this realm. The principles of Lacanian psychoanalysis used above indicate how her subjectivity is suppressed in Victorian cultural traditions. Edmund who has seemed to offer the promise of escape paves the way to her death. Elizabeth's dissatisfaction with the Law remains in disguise and she starts a voluntary life at hospital but Betsy rebels openly against the dominant principles and dies.

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[433] Kojève, 6. See also Evans, 38-39.
[434] Evans, 39.

CONCLUSION

This study has attempted to investigate the nature of the characters of Anita Brookner who focuses on their subjectivity throughout a close examination of her three selected novels. *Hotel du Lac* (1984) is one of her early novels and *Making Things Better* (2002) and *The Rules of Engagement* (2003) are her later works. As Brookner claims that there are traces of unconscious in her works, applying Lacanian psychoanalysis to her works is of great significance. Jacques Marie Émile Lacan is one of the prominent leaders of psychoanalytic criticism. Lacan expands a tripartite model of the psyche labeled as the imaginary, the symbolic and the real, and most of Lacanian theories are defined in association with them. Lacan believes that language is the structure of the symbolic order and accessing language with all its scopes is mandatory. If the subjects "define themselves in language, by the Word and through the Law", then they will achieve name and identity.[435]

Brookner mentions that she has written her first novel, *A Start in Life* (1981) "in a moment of sadness and desperation. My life seemed to be drifting in predictable channels and I wanted to know how I deserved such a fate". [436] She is fond of the unconscious in characterization. Brookner both in interviews and in her novels confesses her fondness of Freud and unconscious processes claiming that "all of his conclusions are correct".[437] Brookner says that her novels are determined according to some "unconscious source".[438] Her fiction usually creates an unconscious psychological journey of her obedient submissive subjects enslaved in the patriarchal society. In this sense, writing unsent letters is a way of unraveling their unconscious. The male characters are usually deceitful and tempt and search for pleasure. The more immoral they are, the more successful they become.

Caldin claims that her detractors imply that autobiography is the disguised genre of her novels.[439] It can be stated that Brookner's novels are a depiction of her own distinctive life story. Along this, Skinner implies that "the earlier novels were […]

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[435] Cook, 2.
[436] S. Guppy, 1987, 1.
[437] M. Brown, 1.
[438] Tonkin, 1.
[439] Laura Caldin, *Daugters Leaving Mothers: Family Bonds as Structural Patterns in Anita Brookner's Novels*, (Master's Thesis), Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, 2013, 11.

consciously mediated autobiography".[440] She confesses that "one has to use one's own life; one has no other material".[441] It is not aimed to label her novels as simply autobiographical or to merely search for autobiographical aspects in them. Her protagonists progress in age and understanding. She repeats her themes novel after novel to emphasize human's subjectivity and exile.

Brookner's novels focus on neglected isolated women who are accompanied by married lovers who have children and beautiful wealthy wives. The main characters suffer the gap of affection and happiness. Their unsatisfied mothers are usually harsh and the fathers are usually mute individuals who try to keep the family tied. They are not religious but try to follow the rules of moral correctness. Brookner believes "that all of us face choices minute by minute and moral choices at least hour by hour".[442] They are usually lonely and suffer solitude. As the setting and the weather change, the characters have to change. Even in their old age they still yearn for love but are usually unable to appeal the opposite sex.

Brookner's central characters are habitually unable to fit into the symbolic order properly and consequently cannot respond to the orders of language accurately. Unconsciously they accept living in the margins and build their own world of fantasy. The characters live as marginal, submissive ones that listen or watch rather than communicate or act. The main characters are bewildered about how to enjoy the life they are doomed to live. The long internal speeches usually cover dark childhood memories.

Sense of displacement, virtuous but unhappy parents or mismatched couples, unsympathetic childhood memories, devouring harsh mothers, living an exile of isolation, childlessness, and very unhappy fathers are the distinctiveness of her characters. The sad hopeless couples tolerate each other painfully all their lives. Grown up children quest for a means of escape from troublesome parents through marriage but are not liberated. The unhappiness of parents is passed to their next generations and makes them reluctant for marriage. The married lovers usually are gone and the collection of memories is presented to the remaining mistresses.

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[440] Skinner, 35.
[441] Haffendon, 18.
[442] Lynn Sadler Veach, *Anita Brookner*, Twayne Publishers, Boston, 1990, p.x.

According to Lacan, every person should go through a psychological development successfully to gain an identity. When a child gives up the original happiness of the joyful union with the mother in the pre-oedipal phase to enter into the symbolic order of language, s/he experiences loss. In the castration process the father intervenes and the child gives up trying to be the phallus of the mother. According to Lacan the father must castrate the child symbolically and prepare them to live a suitable life under the concept of Law/ the Name-of-the-Father.

Edith Hope, the main character of *Hotel du Lac,* is a disappointed romance novelist who lives in the world of her novels. Edith is isolated and lacks communication and fears attractive flourishing married women. As a Brooknerian typical character, she has been analyzed through Lacanian concepts by going back to her childhood. The tough childhood memories are repeated in most parts of every novel. It can be stated that mostly all of her novels have similar form and style. Edith's nameless father is a very conservative man. For Lacan the mother's presence affirm love. Also another common motif for Lacan is "the view of the mother as an engulfing force which threatens to devour the child";[443] that is another image in the imaginary order. Edith's Viennese mother lacks the love giving quality so Edith is afraid of her.

Edith's personality is structured on an inverted ladder: a devouring self-sufficient mother who never cares for her daughter and a kind but weak father who is unable to confine his wife's desire and dies in Edith's early life. The law-maker mother castrates Edith's desire and then she experiences lack. Edith's mother is a symbol of lack and is accompanied by passivity, derision, bafflement, and solitude and Edith is the successor of this kind of despair and lack. It can be stated that Edith has become a romance writer to write what her mother desired to read. Her mother voraciously read romances. In Edith's case she tries to become the object of desire of her dead mother. Stetz claims that Brookner's world in *Hotel du Lac* is visual and its details "serve as representations of the psyche".[444] Her dark psyche is represented by the gray setting and clothing

[443] Guy, 31.
[444] Stetz, 43.

foreshadows the events. As Waugh claims, "Edith experiences the greyness […] as an objective correlative for her own state of mind".[445]

For Lacan women "enter the psychic economy of men as a fantasy object (a)".[446] Brooknerian typical character's true self is revealed through psychoanalytic notion that resides in some deep, largely inaccessible part of the psyche. Edith's quest for a man to fill the place of her father leads her to David, Edith remains the secret mistress of married careless David. The alienated barred Edith ($\mathbb{S}$) is in an exile and looks for self-discovery and recognition. Writing becomes her only means to fill her lack of communication.

Lacan focuses on the origins of man's helplessness and Brookner emphasizes human's impotence novel after novel. There is an eternal journey between the symbolic and imaginary in Brookner's novels. In *Making Things Better*, Trude, the mother of the hero, has escaped from her excessively religious family by getting married but she herself creates a more rigid and inflexible world for her sons Freddy and Julius Herz and the novel mainly focuses on the psychological struggle with authenticity of motherhood. For Lacan, the child is symbolically a substitute for the mother's symbolic phallus but Trude desires to fill her lack by victimizing her children.

In *Making Things Better*, language acquisition and castration complex is interfered by the devouring mother and Willy, the father, is the insufficient castrating agent unable to enculturate his children or to support the symbolic purpose as the substitute of Law. The mother's history of failure as a pianist motivates her desire to force excessive hard violin practices on her favorite son Freddy. His inability to stand against his mother's devouring side and his failure to be positioned properly in the symbolic order cause a serious psychological and developmental disorder. Freddy gives up his life as a genuine musician and dies as a cleaner in a nursing home, of course, as a neurotic figure.

After Freddy's neurosis, Julius becomes the mother's only choice whose duty is defined as to make things better for the mother, for others, and not for his own life. As well, Julius Herz suffers misplacement, he remains somewhere between Berlin and

[445] Waugh, 143.
[446] Jacques Lacan, 1974-5: Seminar of 21 January 1975. See Also Mactaggart, 172.

London. His weak father figure is a model for slavery. Julius' brother dies in a nursing house and his wife gets divorced, but Julius is to make peace so he remains mute. He desires to live whatever has been neglected for him but the lacking illusion of freedom bothers him. Memories and dreams in his solitary life are his only birthright means of escape.

Dreams and unsent or torn letters unravel his infinite love buried in his unconscious to his cousin Fanny. His unthankful beloved has neglected and deserted him almost thirty years ago. The unconscious language of the dreams that is the source of repressed motivations and neurotic compulsions reveals that the seventy three year old Julius is still in quest of Fanny's love. When a letter is received from Fanny, it is disclosed that Fanny has suffered the identical problem of being under the authority of a dominant mother.

Fanny's victimization is twofold as she must remain under the authority of both an unloving husband and a devouring mother. Fanny like Freddy is the *objet a* of the struggling mother. Fanny is enslaved and lacks the language to refuse to go along with and is totally subdued and split. Her Mother is referred to using capital M. Fanny's Mother is an agent of power who uses men to gain power and wealth by sacrificing or devouring her daughter. Fanny, a Brooknerian typical, is unsatisfied with the men her mother chooses and she is in quest of a father figure even at her seventies.

Similar to Edith Hope, Fanny is symbolically castrated by the Mother and yearns for her father. She looks for a man to resemble her dead father's honest love. Fanny wants to renovate her infant relationship with her kind supportive father who adored her. Julius is a substitute of her father figure. Despite her yearning for the mythical union between lovers, she has a more fateful need of being protected and advised by a man. Again Julius recognizes that she has sent the letters in order to survive. Fanny's confessing that the greatest loss of her life has been her mother metaphorically refers to her inclination to Lacanian death drive. Julius's death is a means of escape and is considered as the signifier of strictly rule bound Law and thus their *jouissance* of union remains unattainable.

The endings are unhappy but include a kind of self-discovery or determination. Brookner does not present optimistic perspectives of life rather she deals with depressed

middle aged or elderly heroines who hope to find love. Brookner claims she has "no desire to be taken over" by a man.[447] She also clearly admits that there has been many incompatible proposals but says "I chose the wrong people, and the wrong people chose me".[448] Brookner emphasizes that "women will never get rid of just waiting for the right man"[449] and therefore she overwhelmingly repeats women waiting to find the proper man in all her novels that is hardly resolved. A Brooknerian typical female character usually desires to hold a family with children; the main characters are usually widowed, divorced or single at the end of novels and of course still childless. The novels mostly lack communication and are shaped on the stream of consciousness of the protagonist's narrators.

Evidently, Brookner's own writing is a form of self-analysis and self-discovery of either her own self or her protagonists. She has recognized "sad truths quite early and never really got out of those coils- that life is a serious and ultimately saddening business"; she also states "I feel I could get into the Guinness Book of Records as the world's loneliest, most miserable woman".[450] The female displaced protagonists, simple slow plots, same settings in London, and the novels are narrated through the mental reflections of narrator protagonists. The protagonists are not skilled in taking care of their appearance. But journeys to Paris are happy and adventurous.

Brookner's main characters, mostly female, are imprisoned in the world of novels created for them while Brookner, consciously or unconsciously, writes in the prison of the Lacanian symbolic order. Brooknerian world, along with Lacanian regulations, accepts married women and gives them identity and respect. The characters are the prisoners of the Other/Law.

The middle aged Elizabeth Weatherall is both the narrator and main character of *The Rules Of Engagement*; she is a Brooknerian typical heroin who suffers childlessness and disaffectionate parents. Elizabeth wishes to gain pleasure and yearns for something far-off, for *jouissance*. She wants to create a new, alternative communication to express her own self freely and her love affairs with Edmund Fairly, again a Brooknerian figure

[447] Morrison, 1.
[448] Brown, 1.
[449] O. Kenyon, 1989, 15.
[450] Haffenden, 62, 75

married with children, gives her sufficient courage to quest for illusion of experiencing the *jouissance* that ends in her self-discovery.

Edmund acts as the carrier of the supremacy and power of the Name-of-the-Father. His language is careless to women around and their inferior subjectivity in the symbolic order is reduced to fulfilling the desire of men. He turns to show his wicked and evil side at the end. Elizabeth is obsessed with unfulfilled desires and sacrifices her honor and dignity in search of pleasure, as *jouissance* is only in the territory of the Real. Elizabeth tries to rebel the symbolic order and plans to go beyond. Her major purpose is self-satisfaction and she observes Edmund as pleasure seeking subject desiring her desire. She willingly plays the role of *objet a* to Edmund as the Master signifier. The Law obliges women to marry by emphasizing being identified under the Name-of-the-Father regardless of pure love. The alienated and split Elizabeth tries to enjoy every moment of her sense of awakening. Elizabeth is punished by the Law and her loyal supportive husband dies leaving her in a state of bewilderment. Digby's death and her infidelity lead to a shameful status where she observes Edmund's unreliableness and gives an end to their love affair.

Another quality of Brooknerian characters is that they are obsessed with reading or writing literature in order to escape from their oppressive family atmosphere and fulfill the unreachable fantasies of their life via books. They all prefer Victorian novels and Dickens is a model for all goodness or wickedness of characters. Seriousness and morality are inseparable features of Brookner's writing; and her characterization originates both from her religious parents and her favorite nineteenth-century novels that care for virtues and respect. Brookner's protagonists are handicapped and bewildered by the standards of the Law that is again inspired by Dickens's fiction in which the virtuous always wins. According to Brookner, "[t]o remain pure a novel has to cast a moral puzzle. Anything else is mere negotiation".[451] Even Victorian names such as Iris, Edith, David, Elizabeth, Betsy, Constance Isabella, Edmund and many others are very commonly used.

Due to Elizabeth's lack of communication and indifferent people around her, she lives with Victorian novels and internalizes the obligations of the nineteen century

[451] Guppy, 1987, 1.

novels. She learns the codes of the Name-of-the-Father from Dickens but desires and appreciates Emma Bovary. Elizabeth is repressed and selects a moderate attitude rather than going to excesses; she encounters the inaccessibility of *jouissance.*

Brookner illustrates dissatisfied aging/aged women in the twentieth century by focusing on their subjectivity, lack of communication, and muteness who try to fill their lacks by reading nineteen century novels with love at the center of their themes that end happily. These oppressed alienated solitary characters suffer unmindful parents and remain passive on the process of survival in the patriarchal society. Their unconscious and inner feelings are unveiled through extensive internal thoughts or unsent letters. They are destined to an exile of frustrated desires and dissatisfied expectations. Brookner's typical characters mirror Lacanian speaking subject trying to position themselves in the symbolic order. They are governed by pre-existing Lacanian principles of language. Brooknerian heroes and heroines undertake an endless and inescapable subjection process and remain enveloped within a formative structure Law/society. Since Brookner's central characters are typically unable to fit into the realm of the symbolic order/language properly, they unconsciously accept to live in the margins of the community and construct their own realm of fantasy. These subjugated and displaced subjects never complain, they are physically in the present but in fact live in the past. They are lacking subjects who simply desire for recognition and love, but are never satisfied.

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