

Introduction.

The aim of this thesis is to analyse and compare the works of Robert Fry and the novel by Virginia Woolf entitled *To the Lighthouse* on the basis of psychoanalysis with use of tools provided by Comparative Literature. Throughout this research I am going to explore the influence of psychoanalysis on interpretation of a work of art. The output of the chosen artists is filled with psychological background. There is a noticeable relation between psychology and art, as well as psychology and literature. With this comparison I am intending to provide conclusions concerning the creative force in general. Another reason is to define how important the development of psychology is and what is its impact on understanding artistic works and human personalities.

In the first chapter I am going to introduce the definitions and functions of Comparative Literature, what is its historical background and what is the relation between literature and psychology. Through this means I want to explain the tools I shall use for my analysis.

Afterwards, it is essential to define psychoanalysis and provide its historical background. I shall then focus on the biographies of Sigmund Freud, its founder, his prolific follower, Carl Gustav Jung whom I personally admire, and a contemporary psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, whose findings are also crucial for understanding some aspects of this thesis.

Next, I shall bring forward details about the modern artist, Robert Fry, on the basis of the critics' opinions published so far. I will explore his work as a painter, the inspirations, styles and techniques used and their purposefulness in context of psychoanalytical understanding. He is an author of elaborate, sometimes controversial compositions full of psychological background and symbolic meaning. I shall intertwine the analysis with the painter's personal opinions published in the interviews.

Another part of my research will be dedicated to the renowned British writer, Virginia Woolf, and her personal novel *To the Lighthouse*. I am going to present biographical information about the author as it is of great importance in order to understand her literary works. Then I shall delve into presentation of the characters and

the specific technique of writing which is of the equal importance as the contents of Woolf's novels. Her works are perfect examples of inseparable relation between psychology and literature considered in all bearings. I shall focus particularly on the painting described in the novel for it shares much resemblance to Fry's works on canvas.

Finally, I am going to analyse psychological relations between the works of the chosen artists as examples of two different branches of art and forms of expression: painting and writing. I shall draw conclusions from the material presented in particular chapters, developing the relationship between the artists personal lives and their output. While gathering conclusions, my intention is to discover how knowledge of psychoanalysis changes points of view and interpretation of art.

Chapter 1.

The bases of Comparative Literature.

Dealing with two different genres of artistic disciplines in this thesis, it is essential to trace the origins and historical background of Comparative Literature itself and to explain its definition.

History of Comparative Literature.

The roots of Comparative Literature as an intellectual field reach the nineteenth century, when it appeared as a counterpart of the group of new fields of knowledge, such as comparative anatomy, law and philology. The aim of these disciplines was to establish some wholeness uniting various aspects of specific sciences.

However, the first notices of Comparative Literature can be found in the Ancient times when Greeks and Babylonians wrote about the difference of their literatures, just as the mythographers compared texts from various myths to create their own stories. Virgil and Homer were compared by the writers in Ancient Rome, and thus the first international comparison appeared. They established the first dialogue between the texts, and then separated them in order to see what stood in opposition. The Ancients have arrived at a conclusion that comparing the different texts made sense only in case of a global project which required examination and explanation.

The philosophers and scholars of Ancient Europe developed a doctrine of imitation, which enhanced the importance of comparisons and search for influences. The Ancients and the Moderns have always argued on philosophical matters and so they did in case of literature, its general definitions, roles and origins. We have heard about the artistic quarrel which took place in 1690s in the French Academy.

Going further along the historical path, it is necessary to mention the figure of the French writer and professor Abel-François Villemain who gave the first *comparative literature course* at the Sorbonne in 1828-29. His research was based on parallels and he underlined that without comparison comparative literature would be an empty science. It was Villemain who first named *comparative literature* as a discipline.

During the 19th century, the broad interest in Comparative Literature was flourishing. Among those who studied and confronted different literatures were: Herder, Goethe, Lessing, Henry Hallam, and Sismondi and Madame de Staël who is often called the godmother of comparative studies. There was also a famous French literary critic, Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve who had many followers.

The Italian scholar Mazzini wrote in his *Scritti* (1865-67) that “*no literature could be nurtured by itself or could escape the influence of alien literature.*”¹ The first work considered as the gathered foundation of the discipline was *Comparative Literature* published in 1886 by Hutcheson Posnett.

Definitions and functions of Comparative Literature.

Comparative Literature is a vast field that requires a broad consideration and a simple description is irrelevant to depict the whole background of its range of studies in reference to the issues that are to be presented further in this thesis. Thus, many attempts at describing it can be found, and at least some of them ought to be presented here.

A. Owen Aldridge states that:

“*Comparative Literature (...) provides a method of broadening one’s perspective in the approach to single works of literature – a way of looking beyond the narrow boundaries of national frontiers in order to discern trends and movements in various national cultures and to see the relations between literature and other spheres of human activity (...). Comparative Literature can be considered the study of any literary phenomenon in conjunction with another intellectual discipline.*”²

Another renowned scholar, Henry Remak, gives a definition with regard to other disciplines: “*Comparative Literature is the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationships between literature on one hand and other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts*

¹ Tötösy de Zepetnek, Steven *Comparative Literature and Comparative Cultural Studies*, Purdue University Press, p. 165.

² Aldridge, A. Owen, *Comparative Literature Studies*, Illinois Press, Illinois, 1969, p. 36.

(e.g. painting, sculpture, architecture, music), philosophy, history, the social sciences, (e.g. politics, economics, sociology), the sciences, religion, etc., on the other. In brief it is the comparison of one literature with another or others, and the comparison of literature with other spheres of human expression.”³

*"Comparative literature is the laboratory or workshop of literary studies, and through them, of the humanities. Comparative literature compares literatures, not only as accumulations of primary works, but as the languages, cultures, histories, traditions, theories, and practices with which those works come."*⁴

Therefore, we notice that Comparative Literature embraces the whole field of language, literature, and culture, it is an exploration of human imagination and the overall condition of humanity, for it encompasses many artistic disciplines and traditions. Its aim is to establish a new form of global consciousness, which makes it a very up-to-date subject of study.

The term *Comparative Literature* derives from the Latin word *comparativus* used by scholars to describe something “*pertaining to or depending on comparison*,” or referring to the ablative case. The name *comparative* resulted from contrasting literatures with each other, as well as with different genres or movements. Today, comparative literature means comparing, researching, identification, or reconciliation of authors and literatures. The discipline of comparative literature begins to be a separate science unified by a method.

There are two fundamental principles of the comparatist’s activity: a free choice of the methodology to be used and the will to be open to other literatures belonging to different linguistic fields. Considering the whole literature, in order to make comparisons it is essential to begin with defining literature in general. Consequently, Comparative Literature examines and constitutes all laws and systems functioning in

³ Manzon Maria, *Comparative Education: The Construction of a Field*, Hong Kong: Springer, 2011, p. 189.

⁴ Greene, Roland, *Their Generation, Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995, p. 40.

general literature with awareness of a constant exchange. We can speak about a comparison of forms, genres or themes.

Comparison.

During the first half of the 20th century comparatist scholars avoided the term *comparison*. They used other terminology, such as *frontier*, *relation*, *passage*. Some other scholars also spoke about a methodological art: looking for analogical, similar, and influential links in order to collate literature to other fields of expression and literary texts.

Gathering all cultural charge, the comparatist must search for the differences but only if they lead to a better and a broader understanding of each and of each other. Indeed, the effect of comparison should be a process of transformation instead of an imitation.

The multicultural perspective requires a detailed examination of cultural identity of an author and its impact on the interpretation and evaluation of the text. On the other hand, it is desired to pay more attention to the literary work rather than on the social background. Anna Balakian draws the attention towards an important matter – intertextuality:

*“In a study that juxtaposes two such canonical works the comparatist can demonstrate similarity, difference, and something additional that distinguishes comparative literature from other types of criticism dealing with intertextuality: the highlighting of the complementary character of such works, both tested for their universal appeal. (...) For these creative artists and receivers, language recuperates from the Tower of Babel to create rather than to convey thought; (...) The comparatist who engages in literary studies of this acultural nature demonstrates the interchangeability of such writers. (...) We see concordances, connections, correspondences regardless of ethnic separations.”*⁵

This attitude makes Comparative Literature a universal discipline.

⁵ Balakian, Anna *Theorizing comparison: the pyramid of similitude and difference in World Literature Today*, March 25, 1995.

Concordances and correspondences among different literatures could be, and are indeed, easily found in the study or research of resurgences of myths, themes, and motives in different texts.

Myth and literary myth.

Originating from the Greek *mythos*, “myth” means a story or word. The study of myth is known as mythology. As stories, myths are narrative wholes which serve to relate between the basic level of life known to humans with a form of transcendental fields and discuss their imaginary limits. Myths have been investigated by many psychologists in history, including Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung. I shall relate to them in a broader sense in the next chapter. The term myth describes a particular genre of stories, including legends and folk tales. There are many definitions of myth however, generally they all agree that myths involve a symbolic character, they often refer to the ancient or even primordial past, they attempt to explain the origin and nature of the universe. This means we cannot speak about myths without references to systems of belief, which use these stories to serve social and spiritual values. The myth reveals and explains some higher truths, it moves human imagination beyond the common understanding. Many renowned scholars dealt with origins and nature of myths, among which there were M. Eliade, P. Ricoeur, or G. Bachelard. Thus contemporary literature cannot be analysed without mentioning explanation of myths.

The literary myth is born from literature, it can be assigned to a given author and a given time. But literature is not merely creator of myths as it can picture characters that really existed in history and give them a new universal, symbolic nature as it happened in the case of Julius Caesar.

When the comparatist comes across several myths, he or she should first identify the funding story by identifying all the specific constants of the myth used in order to present and reconstruct the whole original background that would exist prior to the time when all its literary alterations appeared.

Theme and thematic studies.

The term theme is defined as “*the salient abstract idea that emerges from a literary work’s treatment of its subject-matter; or a topic recurring in a number of literary works.*”⁶ The term “theme” can be explained as *what is given*, it can be a question or a notion, used on purpose to make the reader immediately interested in a given subject and to enable its understanding. Thematic studies deal with the gathering of themes in a given text. We can distinguish different kinds of themes, such as: *personal themes* – images or symbols which refer to the person of the author, *historical themes* – explaining the historical background and mentality in a given time of the past, or *archetypal themes* – explained deeply by the psychologists and referring to the images or motifs reoccurring in every human culture on Earth. The myths can generally reflect the nature of humanity and gather all its experience. The archetypal images play an important role in the process of artistic creation.

Motives.

A motive is the smallest element of the theme and it has a returning nature. Motives are concrete elements which can form a basic part of a myth. In glossary of literary terms we find definition that it is

*“a recurring object, concept, or structure in a work of literature. A motif may also be two contrasting elements in a work, such as good and evil. (...) A motive is important because it allows one to see main points and themes that the author is trying to express, in order that one might be able to interpret the work more accurately.”*⁷

⁶ Baldick, Chris *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, Oxford University Press, 2008.

⁷ Abrams, Meyer *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Denver: Thomson-Wadsworth, 2005.

Laws in Comparative Literature.

For further discussion of the issues and works to be presented in this thesis, it is necessary to mention certain rules which function in this literary discipline. There are three notions that makes it possible for the critic to define an influence in literature. These are called emergence, flexibility and irradiation. *Emergence* can be described as presence of a foreign term, a literary, artistic or a mythological element in a text. *Flexibility* indicates adaptability of a particular foreign element in the text, the way it varies and intensifies throughout a critical reading. The limits of flexibility can be dependent on the imagination.

Irradiation comes from the use of a foreign element in the text.

Besides the above, one must be aware of two other concepts: *fortune* and *image*, where the first one means the importance of a particular work and the traces that the author may have left after his or her death. Times of *Fortune* are the times when the work is admired. The taste changes in time and the comparatist's task here is to trace it. For the comparatist *image* means seeing his or her own culture as the others do.

Additionally, I must mention two other notions important for the study of Comparative Literature; *reception* and *intertextuality*. The *reception* means that the text stays with the reader in a continuous relationship. The aesthetic reception matters much, so the comparatist must examine communication with the reader and the influence of the written work. Intertextuality was introduced and explained by Julia Kristeva:

*"The fundamental concept of intertextuality is that no text, much as it might like to appear so, is original and unique-in-itself; rather it is a tissue of inevitable, and to an extent unwitting, references to and quotations from other texts. These in turn condition its meaning; the text is an intervention in a cultural system."*⁸

The awareness of these few notions mentioned above determine the overall understanding of the comparative literary work, therefore they needed to be presented at first.

⁸ Allen, Graham. "Intertextuality". *The Literary Encyclopedia*.
[<http://www.litencyc.com/php/stopics.php?rec=true&UID=1229>]

Interrelations of literature.

From all the above analysis, we can say that literature is very complex and cannot be studied without relations to other disciplines, thus literary theorists encourage broad learning, both from books and from experience. All the disciplines of science interrelate with each other, thus many critics claim that none of them should be examined separately. We must explore at least three major relations between: literature and science, literature and psychology, and literature and politics. According to Jonathan Culler:

“the whole of what the French call human sciences is being more or less rapidly transformed into something called theory, which encompasses not only literary criticism but also philosophy, history, art history, musicology, architecture, psychology and social and political theory as well.”⁹

Literature and the Fine Arts.

The very special connection of literature to the fine arts was noticeable from the Ancient times. In Greece, Simonides defined painting as ‘silent poesy’ and poetry itself as spoken painting. The ancient painters pictured dramatic scenes from Homer’s epics on walls and vases.

Later in time and up till now, fine arts have inspired the creation of literature in different ways. Often it is the poem that inspires a work of art: William Blake, who was himself both writer and painter, created his own impressions of scenes from the Bible, Dante, and Milton. The tight relation between literature and arts was vividly recognized during the Romantic period. Some poets believed that they were working with a common medium with the artists. Both art and literature fruitfully developed in the equal time through the successive aesthetic movements in Europe from humanism to dadaism.

⁹ Koelb, Clayton, Noakes, Susan *The comparative perspective on literature, Approaches to theory and practice*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1988, p. 6.

Similarly, the same thing happened the other way round, a vast amount of novels concentrated on art or artists, including *The Unknown Masterpiece* by Balzac, or *Dorian Gray* by Wilde. Therefore, literature and fine arts may be seen as a measure of culture's highest achievements.

Literature and Psychology.

Both literature and psychology focus on the relationships between a text and a reader. They emphasise and evoke emotion and affect. The complexity of human psyche has always fascinated writers as much as psychologists. Even common psychological terms derive from the Ancient literature, such as in case of the Oedipus complex, which I am going to explain in the next chapter. Also, it was the development of Western literature that enabled psychology to spread out. Before psychology became an independent science, the writers often themselves functioned as the first psychologists for they were examining and exploring the inner terrains of the mind. Even now modern psychologists study the great literary prototypes and they often actually find an intuitive analysis of motivations, behavioural responses, and so on.

To sum up, psychology is a useful tool of understanding and interpreting both art and literature. Literary works can be a treasury of the knowledge gathered and researched by the great psychologists.

In the next chapter I shall move forward into psychological explorations and I will introduce the definition and historical background of psychoanalysis and its founders, in order to focus on a deep interpretation of the chosen works further on.

Chapter 2.

The history of Psychoanalysis and its basic terminology.

In this chapter the aim is to present brief history of psychoanalysis and its basic foundations, focusing on the figures of its two greatest representatives and creators, Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung. I shall also mention the most important ideas of a modern psychologist, Jacques Lacan, whose view may be crucial for the right understanding of this thesis.

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, **psychoanalysis** is “*a highly influential method of treating mental disorders, shaped by psychoanalytic theory, which emphasizes unconscious mental processes and is sometimes described as depth psychology*”¹⁰ However, the term refers also to the whole branch of mental processes, conscious and unconscious, which take place in human psyche. The psychoanalytic movement has its roots in clinical observations performed by the renowned Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud. Starting from the end of the XIXth century Freud cooperated with his scientific partner, Josef Breuer, studying cases of patients suffering from neurosis, whom they were hypnotising in order to find the remedy. They noticed that when the hidden cause of patients’ trauma was revealed in consciousness during the process of hypnosis, the patients’ conditions started to ameliorate.

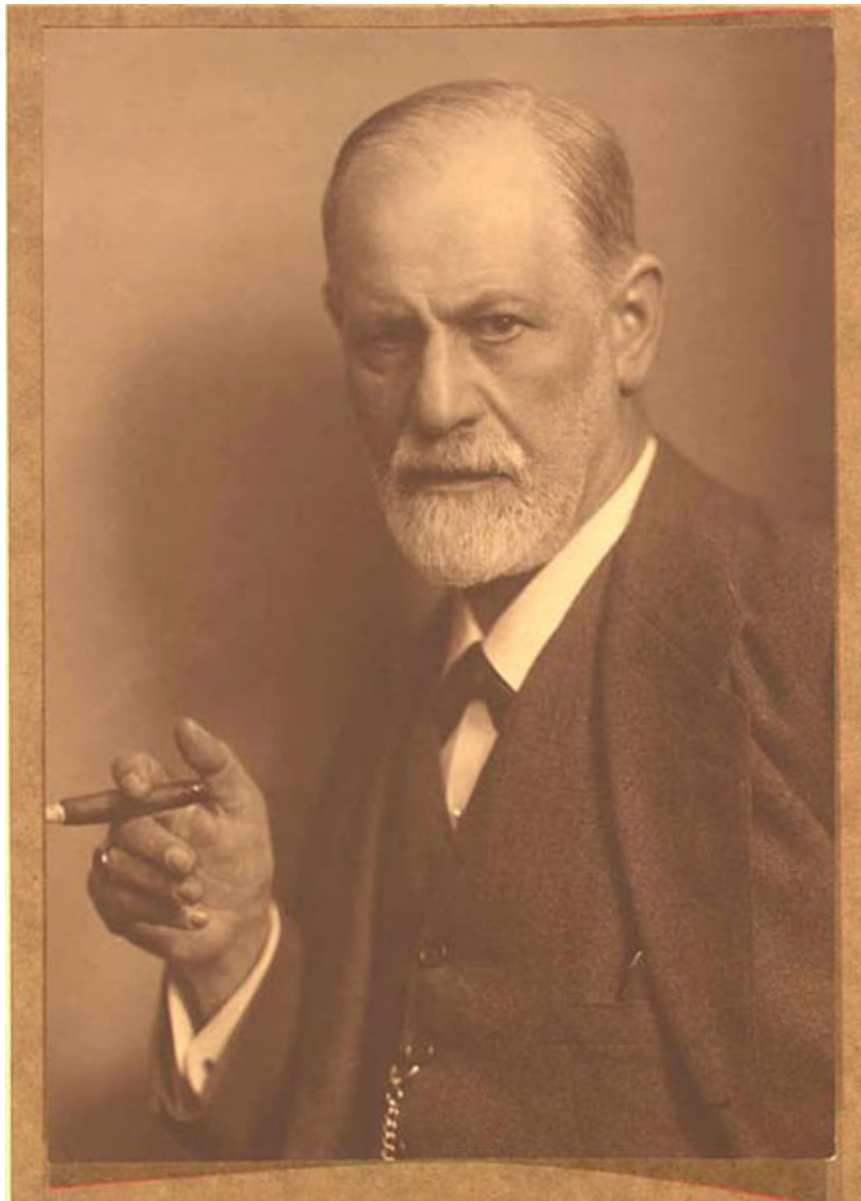
Researching further, Freud discovered that the system of free association of ideas worked also when the patients were not put under hypnosis. Focusing on this technique, he allowed the analyzed person to say freely whatever came to their minds, regardless of its relevancy or logic. If it appeared to be difficult for a person to construct free associations, it meant that particular painful experiences were repressed, or hidden in the unconscious. Freud believed that in most cases the reason of repression was a distressful experience from the patient’s sexual life. This repressed energy was called libido. These repressions transpired later as defence mechanisms having different psychological symptoms. Freud formulated his own concept of anxiety which involved feelings of fear, guilt, and shame resulting in imaginative visions of aggression. This process seeded fear of solitude into the sufferer’s psyche, which had its causes in

¹⁰ <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/481586/psychoanalysis>

separation from somebody to whom the patient is subject. The mechanisms of defence are acquired from social and cultural life patterns which we learn.

I shall now focus on the biographies and basic theories of the great Sigmund Freud and his follower, Carl Gustav Jung whose point of view appeals to me more accurately and seems more interesting in general.

Sigmund Freud



<http://www.freud-sigmund.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/Portrait-of-Sigmund-Freud..jpg>

Just as we cannot speak about psychology without mentioning psychoanalysis, it would be unprofessional to speak about psychoanalysis and its impact without presenting its founder, Sigmund Freud, called The Father Of Psychoanalysis.

He was born on 6 May 1856 in Freiberg in Moravia, where a small Jewish community lived, and his original real family name was Sigismund Schlomo. He changed his first names later during school times. His family situation was quite unusual as his mother Amalie was already the third wife to his father Jacob who already had two children from the previous marriages. His untypical childhood was probably the first impulse for young Sigmund to his interest in psychological analysis, which he proves himself in the work *Interpretation of Dreams*¹¹ where he writes about self-investigation, dwelling into his own memories. In 1859 the Freud family moved to Vienna.

Freud's education started at home when his mother was reading the bible and history books to him before he started to attend the gymnasium. His family expected much from him and simultaneously he was very intelligent and had a strong thirst for knowledge, which made him the best student among his peers. "*As a young man I knew no longing other than for philosophical knowledge*"¹² he indicated. Freud was matriculated at Vienna University's Faculty of Medicine in 1873¹³. At that time, the city's scientific environment was already well established and was developing rapidly with many renowned doctors working in the field. Sigmund met liberal intellectuals who inspired him for further development and his own research. New discoveries in medicine and progress in science seemed to prove that no illnesses were impossible to explain and this attitude went along together with purely biological view on human beings. This gave a new direction to scientific and medical research, which meant hard times for psychiatry, as any suspected reason for illnesses, other than typically physiological, seemed highly speculative and did not attract enough researchers' interest. During the first years of studies, Sigmund was interested in philosophy and read the books carefully, even though it was not an obligatory school subject for the students of medicine. It is important to mention here that psychology, the science of

¹¹ Sternthal, Barbara *Sigmund Freud Life and Work 1856-1939*, Vienna: Christian Brandstätter Verlag, 2006, p. 11-12.

¹² Op. Cit. p. 13.

¹³ Op. Cit. p. 28.

mind, was then perceived as a partial discipline of philosophy. In 1874 Freud began to work in chemical laboratory and, two years later, he moved to the Institute for Comparative Anatomy¹⁴. Thanks to his friend, a scholar Carl Claus, he became interested in zoology and made his first research in this discipline. A huge step forward on a way to his career was to become an assistant to Ernst von Brücke's physiological laboratory. Together the researchers confirmed Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, that there is continuity between nervous systems of lower forms of life and other further developed creatures.¹⁵ Freud began to experiment on the effects of cocaine, which was almost unheard of before. He also gained popularity by publishing scientific works on neurology and brain anatomy. Working on hysteria and hypnosis started straight after his appointment as a Professor with Jean-Martin Charcot from the Parisian Clinic for Nervous Disorders. Charcot as originally convinced that only women were suffering from hysteria, while Freud assumed that these people were simply acting. The great achievement of Charcot was his series of demonstrations during which he proved that symptoms of hysteria could be artificially induced and removed via hypnosis. Freud learned a lot about hypnosis and started to use it in a broader sense as a form of treatment. Neuroses, neurasthenia and hysteria were not commonly known in the 1880s and their symptoms were usually misunderstood and misdiagnosed. No difference between mental and physical illnesses was recognised. Freud and his workmate managed to cross the field of medical no-man's land reaching for a new source of knowledge, psychology, understood as the scientific research of mental disorders.¹⁶

There is no doubt that private life situation had much impact on the direction of Freud's further research. He was long time separated from Martha Bernays while they were still engaged as her mother did not want to approve this marriage due to social status differences between the families. When finally opportunity arose to get marry, Sigmund Freud declaring openly to be an atheist, had to recite the wedding vows in a church, as without this ceremony their marriage would not have been valid in Austria. Throughout his life he had two influential conversational partners: Wilhelm Fließ and Josef Breuer. The first female patient of the second doctor was Bertha Pappenheim

¹⁵ Sternthal, Barbara *Sigmund Freud Life and Work 1856-1939*, Vienna: Christian Brandstätter Verlag, 2006, p. 30.

¹⁶ Op. Cit. p. 36.

(known also as Anna O.), suffering from hysteria and paralysis, whom he treated with exceptional care, using a method of a 'talking cure'¹⁷. The aim of this treatment was to re-experience traumatic memories from the past in order to eliminate them. When she was dying of thirst but at the same time was unable to drink one drop of water, it was necessary to use hypnosis to free her mind from limitations and to discover the reason of her hysteria. Her case showed that there are resistances in subconscious connected with unpleasant suppressed memories. This was the background of a breaking discovery as until that time supposed physiological symptoms of hysteria were treated with typically somatic forms of therapy, such as baths, hydro- and electro therapies. Since then the doctors began to search for causes on a mental level. Breuer provided Freud with all knowledge supporting his revolutionary method, they also started to work together on its further development. Later on Freud came to another breaking conclusion stating that neurasthenia is a frequent consequence of abnormal sexual life and is a type of sexual neurosis.¹⁸

The end of the XIXth century was a historical moment for women. This was the beginning of emancipation, they started to break free from stereotypical roles given by male so far. This enacted search for deep psychological problems and many women became Freud and Breuer's patients.

This was the time when the passionate doctor came to a revolutionary conclusion, which further developed into the basis of psychoanalysis, that suppressed emotions are transformed into physical symptoms. Also, together with Breuer, they came to a reflection that what also causes some resistance in a patient's mind is a form of wishful thinking which does not go along with other wishes or with moral norms. The wishful thinking was driven out but the suppressed feelings still had impact on the patient, so it was obvious that they must exist somewhere. This indicated that there must be two different kinds of psychological process: the conscious and the unconscious.

The term 'psychoanalysis' first appears in 1896 in a French article about Freud entitled *The Aetiology of the Neuroses*. In the beginning it was used interchangeably

¹⁷ Op. Cit. p. 54.

¹⁸ Sternthal, Barbara *Sigmund Freud Life and Work 1856-1939*, Vienna: Christian Brandstätter Verlag, 2006, p. 55.

with terms of hypnotic treatment or psychiatric treatment, but psychoanalysis demands work on the part of a patient.¹⁹

His theories were received as controversial already at that time, when he suggested that causes of neuroses may be found in a marital bed, furthermore, he supposed they may even reach early childhood sexuality. Since Freud, stating that puberty is the beginning of sexuality in human is wrong. It reaches the beginning of extra-uterine time, and it has its first highest point around the age of five years ("early period"), then it becomes hindered or interrupted ("latency period") till the puberty period, its second culmination. This distinction is characteristic for human beings. Early childhood experiences are extremely important in the process of one's proper sexual development. Along with the inherited sexual constitution, they create background for the further occurrence of character or disease. Another false belief is that sexuality expands together with genital development as the sexual instincts evolution is a complex process. Before the development is over, many pre-genital arrangements of the libido structures may be fixed in a wrong way, which will result in subsequent repression in adulthood. The infantile fixations constitute many libido-based neuroses.

Dealing with problems of childhood sexuality, Freud discovered that the most common conflict forms in a child's relation to his or her parents, and this he called the "**Oedipus complex**". Named after a mythological character, it is a natural stage of sexual development, which consists in a sexual desire for the parent of the opposite sex coinciding with treating the parent of the same sex as a rival.²⁰

In general, it was clear to Freud that experiences from the early childhood are causes of psychological problems in mature life. But later he dwelled into even more suspect field, the dream, which was actually perceived as more controversial scientifically and socially. Among scientists interpretations of dreams were seen as nothing but pure fantasy. At that time Freud developed his idea of exploring the unconscious and discovered that dreams are motivated by wish fulfilment. He referred to the hidden meaning of a dream as latent dream thoughts. These conclusions were published in his well-known book *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

¹⁹ Op. Cit. p. 56.

²⁰ <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/425451/Oedipus-complex>

In 1901 another important book was published, *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*²¹, in which the author analyses the issue of so called “parapraxes”, or “Freudian slips”, meaning something between errors of memory, action, reading and writing. The focus of attention here was given to things which seem to have been forgotten but they coincidentally intrude their way into current experiences. According to Freud, coincidence is not a matter here, but repression. A thing we want to remember is being unconsciously replaced with something we wish to forget. This rule applies for all parapraxes, especially for errors of speech.

Another field of Freud’s interest was dedicated to jokes (he was a collector of Jewish jokes and anecdotes) which he compared with dreams, whereas he recognized dreams as a way of avoiding a lack of pleasure and jokes have the same function for a yield of pleasure. These mechanisms are the same, the only difference lies in the process occurring in the unconscious for dreams and in the conscious for jokes.

These replacements are particularly important as they further developed into analysis of obsessive compulsive neurosis the doctor dealt with. One special case of research was the “*Rat Man*”²², his patient Ernst Lanzer, who suffered from a fear that a woman he was in love with and his own father, despite being already dead, could be tortured by a pot with live rats being strapped to their posteriors. According to Freud’s interpretation, it was Lanzer’s hidden death wish against his father, by whom he was beaten, which was blocking his sexual development. It took just three months to cure the obsession.

In 1910 the Berlin Psychoanalytic Society was founded, which was another big step forward in Freud’s career. One of the members was Carl Gustav Jung with whom he had been already corresponding since 1906. During the same year the Viennese Psychoanalytic Society turned into International Psychoanalytic Association and Jung was elected President of it. For Freud it meant psychoanalysis started to become a full-fledged serious discipline forever, also because Jung was a non-Jew. However, despite having a sort of father-son relationship the two great men soon encountered a series of conflicts. The first one, mentioned by Jung, took place during their travel to America.

²¹ Sternthal, Barbara *Sigmund Freud Life and Work 1856-1939*, Vienna: Christian Brandstätter Verlag, 2006, p. 57.

²² Sternthal, Barbara *Sigmund Freud Life and Work 1856-1939*, Vienna: Christian Brandstätter Verlag, 2006, p. 81.

Jung was supposed to interpret Freud's dream but he was unable to do it professionally without knowing the details of the other one's personal past. Freud was afraid to lose his authority thus he did not want to reveal any details about his personal experiences.²³ Still they both attempted to find ways of solving their conflicts. The most significant misunderstandings appeared when Jung began to explore the fields of religion and mystery, which was unacceptable for Freud, the atheist. Finally, in 1914 the publication of his assertions in the book *On the History of the Psychoanalytical Movement*²⁴ sealed their definite break.

Meanwhile continuing his psychoanalytical studies he became deeply interested in cultural theory as he wanted to incorporate art and culture into the analysis process as an opposite to medical monopoly. This led him to write the first psychoanalytic biography in *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood*²⁵. Soon an important position on cultural theory saw the light of day, titled *Totem and Taboo*²⁶. There Freud compared lives of savages and neurotic patients on the basis of psychopathological and ethnological terms. Furthermore, he wrote a collection of his scientific conclusions gathered in *Advice for the Doctor in Psychoanalytical Treatment*²⁷ in 1912 and just three years later rearranged these matters in *The Unconscious*²⁸. Finally, there appeared *Ways of Psychoanalytical Treatment*²⁹, which the author himself found as his most important publication.

I must not omit mentioning the importance of Freud's daughter Anna (called "Annatochter" or "Antigone, Oedipus' daughter") who was extremely intelligent, well-educated and whom he trained to be a psychoanalyst and who was his great companion in scientific research and career. She managed to keep her independent path dwelling into problems of childhood and mechanisms of defence, which later resulted in giving her father an unusual present for his 80th birthday, being her book *The Ego and the*

²³ Sternthal, Barbara *Sigmund Freud Life and Work 1856-1939*, Vienna: Christian Brandstätter Verlag, 2006, p. 84.

²⁴ Sternthal, Barbara *Sigmund Freud Life and Work 1856-1939*, Vienna: Christian Brandstätter Verlag, 2006, p. 85.

²⁵ Op. Cit. p. 86.

²⁶ Op. Cit. p. 86.

²⁷ Op. Cit. p. 86.

²⁸ Op. Cit. p. 86.

²⁹ Op. Cit. p. 86.

*Mechanisms of Defence*³⁰ with the inscription “Writing books as defence against danger from inside and outside”.

Freud always lived in a house full of women and they played important roles in his life, starting from his beloved wife, Martha, Minna Bernays, Martha’s sister who was Sigmund’s partner in conversations and travels, and Anna Freud whom I have mentioned before. Nevertheless, apart from the family members, Freud’s attitude towards women was much reserved, especially in case of homosexual women whom he examined and those analytical results appeared as failures. He gave evidence to it describing such cases in *The Psychogenesis of a Case of Homosexuality in a Woman*³¹ by leaving the characters nameless. Significant women started to surround him later, around 1920s, to begin with Anna’s friend Eva Rosenfeld and Freud’s pupil. He also made friends with Lou Andreas-Salomé whom he treated as his muse and shared his secret thoughts with, a writer and a young psychoanalyst who had already knew Friedrich Nietzsche and Rainer Maria Rilke.

The most renowned works of Freud were published by the end of his life, with *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*³² exploring the issue of death drive and in 1923 his probably most famous theoretical work *The Ego and the Id* which contained his structural model of human psyche, still applied today. He distinguished the three agencies “**Id**”, “**Ego**” and “**Superego**” referring to what he first mentioned in *Interpretation of Dreams*³³ – “unconscious”, “preconscious” and “conscious”. These were the tools he used to explain the conflicts existing in the psyche and its ambivalent perceptions.³⁴ To bring closer this distinction, the encyclopaedic definition explains that “the id is the unconscious reservoir of drives and impulses derived from the genetic background and concerned with the preservation and propagation of life. The ego, according to Freud, operates in conscious and preconscious levels of awareness. It is the portion of the personality concerned with the tasks of reality: perception, cognition, and executive actions. In the superego lie the individual’s environmentally derived

³⁰ Op. Cit. p. 89.

³¹ Sternthal, Barbara *Sigmund Freud Life and Work 1856-1939*, Vienna: Christian Brandstätter Verlag, 2006, p. 129.

³² Op. Cit. p. 131.

³³ Op. Cit. p. 131.

³⁴ Op. Cit. p. 131.

ideals and values and the mores of his family and society; the superego serves as a censor on the ego functions.”³⁵

Freud observed unpleasant dreams and symptoms of wish fulfilment and he concluded that during compulsive dreams id may wish for something else than the ego does and the wishes of punitive superego may cause pain. Thus a nightmare can be a result of wishes of the id struggling with wishes of the superego, or the conscience. The borders between these three levels are marked by conflict and this helps to comprehend why the human psyche is self-contradictory. According to Freud, there are two dominant drives in human life: the sex instinct and the death instinct (Eros and Thanatos). Beyond the pleasure principle there appears compulsion to repeat, the striving to uncover the past experiences, even the unpleasant ones. This happens because human psyche wants to change from passive into active state. Finally, the constant dominance of the death drive over the life drive leads directly to the death of the organism.

When it comes to interpretation of dreams, according to Freud, dreams protect the ego by turning the unsatisfactory wish into satisfactory imaginative representation, so that sleep can continue. “*All dreams are in a sense dreams of convenience,*” he concluded in *The Interpretation of Dreams*³⁶:

*“They serve the purpose of prolonging sleep instead of waking up. Dreams are the GUARDIANS of sleep and not its disturbers”. The unit inside the mind, which is in charge of regulating this process is called the **censor** or **super-ego**, its role is to disguise the forbidden wish in such acceptable form which will not harm the ego and allow dreaming. We may summarize that “the dream itself is thus the manifest content of the disguised.”*³⁷

Then he focused on the formation of masses and its impact on the disconnection of the personal conscience in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*³⁸. Psychoanalysis was always a question of public debate whether it can stand for a pure

³⁵ <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/481586/psychoanalysis>

³⁶ Freud, Sigmund *The Interpretation of Dreams*, New York: Basic Books, 1955, p. 233.

³⁷ Stevens, Anthony *Jung: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 102.

³⁸ Sternthal, Barbara *Sigmund Freud Life and Work 1856-1939*, Vienna: Christian Brandstätter Verlag, 2006, p. 123.

medical therapy. In Germany when Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor in 1933, there started public books burning among which Freud's books were being destroyed with the words "*Stop the soul destroying overemphasis on sexual life – bring back the nobility of the human soul*".³⁹ For his 80th birthday, Freud received international acknowledgement written by his friends Thomas Mann and Stefan Zweig⁴⁰, which was signed by the world's famous artist and writers, including James Joyce, Salvador Dali, Pablo Picasso and Virginia Woolf.

After years suffering from cancer, Freud could not bear the pain anymore so he asked his personal doctor to release him from torture. On 23rd September 1939 he was given a sufficient dose of morphine to let him die peacefully.

³⁹ Op. Cit. p. 123.

⁴⁰ Op. Cit. p. 123.

Carl Gustav Jung



http://mythosandlogos.com/Carl_Jung.jpeg

*He looked at his own Soul
with a Telescope. What seemed
all irregular, he saw and
shewed to be beautiful
Constellations; and he added
to the Consciousness hidden
worlds within worlds.*

COLERIDGE, *Notebooks*⁴¹

⁴¹ Jung, Carl G. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc. 1989, Introduction p. V.

Jung was an eccentric individualist man, full of contradictions. But he was also an example of a universal man. Throughout his life he struggled to realize fullness of his human capability, meanwhile, he strove to live in a unique way. This included upsetting others at times, but he explained that “*being normal is the ideal aim of the unsuccessful*”.⁴² Although as a researcher he was very reasonable, he wilfully traced subjects having a common opinion as esoteric or irrational and many times these matters threw him into a state of agitated confusion on a scientific field. From his point of view human psychology was such a discipline which cannot be closed in rational frames. He had to believe his own truth as he felt it and often crossed prejudices and topics which were inconsistent with general convictions of the time.

He was born on the 26th July 1875 in a small Swiss village of Kesswil as a son of a pastor, the Reverend Paul Achilles Jung and Emilie Jung. His times at school were not the easiest as he was extremely introverted and had a strong sense of personal peculiarity. He carried along with a feeling of solitude during his adolescence, when he became interested in alchemy and, already then, in psychic transformations. He used to cultivate a dream of a perfect world in which everything was better than in his sense of reality.

According to Jung, while a person develops through his/her lifetime to attain maturity, he or she must pass a natural set of stages. Each stage of life is regulated by what he calls archetypal imperatives that aim to realize in an individual's personality and behaviour. Since the archetypes are our remnants of the evolution, they do not always suffice for conditions of a current urban life as in the past people dealt mostly with hunting and gathering. Thus the archetypal provides us with codes for the basic behaviours and regulates such basic aspects of our life as being brought up by parents, getting to know the environment, distinguishing between friends and enemies or strangers, language and communication skills, living in a group community along with all rules and beliefs, then founding the family and finally obsolescence as time to prepare for dying. Those stages function and have functioned in all ever known human

⁴² Stevens, Anthony *Jung: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 1.

communities and thus comply with the same psychological rules. A psychic unit which regulates this whole system is what Jung named the Self.⁴³

Jung introduced many ideas to modern depth psychology, which still function in modern science: archetype, persona, anima and animus, shadow, new 16 types of personality, individuation, and many more. I shall now present some brief definitions of the most important ones as I find it crucial for the process of analyzing works of art and literature.

The archetypes.

What he formally called “primary imprint” was an image inscribed into human psyche primarily. Later on, he described it as “*the predisposition to form a coherent image in an emotionally aroused state, something he called a ‘situational pattern’.*”⁴⁴ We can experience archetypes as factors or motifs through their effects in images and motifs.

Instinct.

It is an involuntary drive toward certain activities, so it includes all the psychic processes which are beyond regular control.

*“An instinct is always and inevitably coupled with something like a philosophy of life, however archaic, unclear, and hazy this may be. Instinct stimulates thought, and if a man does not think of his own free will, then you get compulsive thinking, for the two poles of the psyche, the physiological and the mental, are indissolubly connected.”*⁴⁵

Jung named four basic types of instinctive forces: creativity, reflection, activity, sexuality and hunger. The most primitive one, based on self-preservation, is hunger. Another strong one is a sexual instinct which may transform biological energy into other energetic channels. It can manifest itself in desire of travelling, frequent changes,

⁴³ Op. cit. p. 60.

⁴⁴ Young-Eisendrath, Polly *Gender and Desire*, Texas: A&M University Press, 1997, p. 15-17.

⁴⁵ Jung, Carl *The Practice of Psychotherapy: Essays on the Psychology of the Transference and Other Subjects*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1976, p. 81.

playfulness. Jung used to mention two other types of instincts, which are the religious urge and the search for meaning. The most specific instinct is the creative instinct, the impelling force to create art, which had special meaning to Jung and he put much attention to investigate this idea. His opinion was that “*Creative power is mightier than its possessor*”⁴⁶ and if it isn’t, it means the work is not the true form of art.

Persona.

The “I” is usually ideal aspects of ourselves, that we reveal in contacts with other people. It may happen that the psyche gets overspiritualised, then it launches an automatic strive for the balance and there appears a search for the instinctive powers. Jung believed that it had reflection in dreams with animal symbols, especially snakes.

*“The snake is the representative of the world of instinct, especially of those vital processes which are psychologically the least accessible of all. Snake dreams always indicate a discrepancy between the attitude of the conscious mind and instinct, the snake being a personification of the threatening aspect of that conflict.”*⁴⁷

Anima.

This means the feminine side of a human psyche. It also includes the archetypal image of a woman in man’s psyche. Each male child has this component inborn in the unconscious, it regulates mechanisms of projection. It is first identified in the figure of the mother, and further on during the development process the anima finds reflection in other women but it shows as a dominant factor in the life of a male.

*“The anima is the archetype of life itself.”*⁴⁸

The anima can appear in dreams as an image of a woman, in many of its forms, as an evil witch or spiritual goddess. A man’s attitude towards women is the reflection of his anima development because in the male psyche the anima functions as the soul,

⁴⁶ Jacobi, Jolande *The Way of Individuation*, New York: New American Library, 1983, p. 30.

⁴⁷ Jung, Carl *Symbols of Transformation*, New York: Pantheon Books Inc., 1967, p. 396.

⁴⁸ Jung, Carl *The Archetypes and The Collective Unconscious*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981, p.32.

the inner personality, and is related to the emotional level. The anima represents the ideal image a man has of himself. When the man puts effort to realize his persona and is strongly attached to it, thus in an outside world he acts as a strong man, at the same time his persona functions and he becomes inwardly a woman. Struggling inside the enigmatic inner world, he often identifies himself too strongly to the persona keeping his anima in the dark at the same time.

“The tyrant tormented by bad dreams, gloomy forebodings, and inner fears is a typical figure. Outwardly ruthless, harsh, and unapproachable, he jumps inwardly at every shadow, is at the mercy of every mood, as though he were the feeblest and most impressionable of men. Thus his anima contains all those fallible human qualities his persona lacks. If the persona is intellectual, the anima will certainly be sentimental.”⁴⁹

This means, the conscious identification with the persona coincides with the unconscious identification with the anima.

Animus.

The animus is described as inner masculine side of a woman. It is the counterpart of the anima in a man, it is understood as a personal complex and involves the archetypal image as well.

“Woman is compensated by a masculine element and therefore her unconscious has, so to speak, a masculine imprint. This results in a considerable psychological difference between men and women, and accordingly I have called the projection-making factor in women the animus, which means mind or spirit. The animus corresponds to the paternal Logos just as the anima corresponds to the maternal Eros.”⁵⁰

Just like in case of a man the anima is his inner soul, in a woman's psyche the animus is like the unconscious mind. It may manifest in fixed ideas and beliefs, or repeating social schemes. It distracts a woman's attention from the truth and is connected with shallow thinking. If the animus takes a positive form, it informs about

⁴⁹ Sharp, Daryl, Jung, Carl, *Jung Lexicon: A Primer of Terms & Concepts*, Toronto: Inner City Books, 1991, p. 7.

⁵⁰ Op. cit.

what stands for general conventional opinion and it is the abode of spiritual ideas, of philosophical or religious character, and sometimes the attitude which is a resulting of those. The animus is a representation of the unconscious being at the same time its link to the conscious.

Soul.

Contrary to the common understanding, Jung saw it as a functional complex of the psyche and differentiated the two. Thus soul is devoid of its strict theological sense in favour of its psychological meaning. By psyche he understood all psychic processes, both conscious and unconscious, while as soul he meant a functional complex which is called personality.⁵¹

Shadow.

These are deep aspects of ourselves which we are unaware of, both positive and negative, stored in the unconscious, as a result of being repressed or not known by the ego.

“The shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real.”⁵²

Before the person is aware of the shadow, it covers everything unconscious that his or her psyche includes. The shadow is often reflected in dreams in form of a person of the same sex representing the dreamer. The content of the shadow layer include repressed desires, wishes, instincts, resentments seeded in childhood, generally all these aspects of ourselves which we do not want to admit and accept and which the society usually finds morally inappropriate. They may get unconsciously revealed via the mechanism of projection.

It is only the persona that can recognize the shadow. As long as an individual identifies with his or her positive persona, the shadow remains inactive. The two may

⁵¹ Jung, Carl *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung: The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972, p. 309.

⁵² Op. cit. p. 208.

sometimes be in conflict and cause neurosis, which results in depression. It is a signal to look deeper into our personality for maybe we are not fully the person we pretend to be. Taming the shadow is really difficult and confrontation with it puts everything into doubt and creates a moral revolution. We should put much attention to our moods, fantasies and instinctive drives. Sometimes this requires long process of the analyst's professional assistance. Yet it is often equally difficult to open the positive supplies hidden in the subconscious, long time buried, never realized, or repressed if they did not fit a current social convention.

*"The shadow is merely somewhat inferior, primitive, unadapted, and awkward; not wholly bad. It even contains childish or primitive qualities which would in a way vitalize and embellish human existence, but-convention forbids!"*⁵³

Projection.

Another notion which frequently appears in Jung's explications is projection. It may happen, unconsciously, that an individual notices hidden contents of his or her own psyche in another person believes them to be an aspect of his or her personality.

*"Just as we tend to assume that the world is as we see it, we naïvely suppose that people are as we imagine them to be. . . . All the contents of our unconscious are constantly being projected into our surroundings, and it is only by recognizing certain properties of the objects as projections or imagos that we are able to distinguish them from the real properties of the objects. . . ."*⁵⁴

The individual unconscious content needs to be expressed and thus it is projected on another person. In this way the individual frees him- or herself from painful accumulation, uncongenial subjects in their psyche. One cannot make the projection consciously.

⁵³ Jung, Carl *Collected Works of C. G. Jung: Psychology and Religion* , Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, p.134.

⁵⁴ Jung, Carl *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung: Dreams*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982, p. 52.

It is possible that projection makes people have many imaginary relationships which are unreal in the outer world.

“The effect of projection is to isolate the subject from his environment, since instead of a real relation to it there is now only an illusory one. Projections change the world into the replica of one's own unknown face. In the last analysis, therefore, they lead to an autoerotic or autistic condition in which one dreams a world whose reality remains forever unattainable.”⁵⁵

Projection can also influence one's interpersonal relations in a positive way. Being aware of what projection is can bring us much experience and can be turned into a positive motivating force in the process of gaining self-knowledge.

Collective unconscious.

It is a structure where the psyche hides the inherited elements of the whole humanity's legacy. This is different from one's unconscious and beyond the borders of individual experience. As Jung defined it, *“The collective unconscious contains the whole spiritual heritage of mankind's evolution, born anew in the brain structure of every individual.”⁵⁶* There are two different categories, individual and collective, in which such ideas as fantasies and dreams may exist. Certain images appear to be of universal, mythological character, not merely individual. The same phenomenon takes place so often and everywhere on Earth that it was no doubt to Jung that there must exist a form of a collective psychic ground. This is what he called the Collective Unconscious.

“The collective unconscious-so far as we can say anything about it at all-appears to consist of mythological motifs or primordial images, for which reason the myths of all nations are its real exponents. In fact, the whole of mythology could be taken as a sort of projection of the collective unconscious. . . . We can therefore study the collective unconscious in two ways, either in mythology or in the analysis of the individual.”⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Jung, Carl *Aspects of the Feminine*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982, p. 166.

⁵⁶ Weiten, Waine *Psychology: Themes and variations*, Andover: Cengage Learning, 2010, p. 386.

⁵⁷ Jung, Carl *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung: The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972, p. 152.

The individual can use treasures of vivid motifs hidden in the Collective Unconscious for self-development, but he or she can also derive inspiration from them for any artistic activity.

Active imagination.

This is an extremely important idea for it deals with art interpretation. Jung named it a technique of gathering and incorporating dreams or fantasies from the unconscious into a form of self-expression. The aim of this method is to reveal and activate those personality aspects which are usually staying in the shadow. The only way to do this is moving them from the unconscious to the conscious and realizing them. This process was used not only for artistic purposes.

Active imagination resembles dreaming with the opened eyes and it sometimes happens spontaneously or, if we want to use it as a technique, it is possible to activate it in the artificial way.

“In the latter case you choose a dream, or some other fantasy-image, and concentrate on it by simply catching hold of it and looking at it. You can also use a bad mood as a starting-point, and then try to find out what sort of fantasy-image it will produce, or what image expresses this mood. You then fix this image in the mind by concentrating your attention. Usually it will alter, as the mere fact of contemplating it animates it. The alterations must be carefully noted down all the time, for they reflect the psychic processes in the unconscious background, which appear in the form of images consisting of conscious memory material. In this way conscious and unconscious are united, just as a waterfall connects above and below.”⁵⁸

Further on, we must carefully observe the resultant pictures, try to investigate them consciously, think carefully of whatever they may say about ourselves, and put effort to engage our morality and intelligence to influence on the insight. With this technique we are able to transform purely artistic attitudes into conscious judgments.

⁵⁸ Rossi, Ernest *Dreams and the growth of personality*, New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1985, p. 186.

Symbol.

A symbol is the best means of expression for a thing or phenomenon which is beyond typical human comprehension and which, According to Jung, crosses present knowledge in a given time and indicates some other thing or idea beside itself. It must be noticed, however, how a symbol is distinguished from a sign. If we take into account concepts existing in the unconscious, such as fantasies or dreams, it is possible to find meaningful interpretations from the images. These are not merely signs but they either indicate some existing facts or something symbolic, impossible to express simply or openly. To explain this difference, Jung used the example of the sign of the cross.

“The interpretation of the cross as a symbol of divine love is semiotic, because "divine love" describes the fact to be expressed better and more aptly than a cross, which can have many other meanings. On the other hand, an interpretation of the cross is symbolic when it puts the cross beyond all conceivable explanations, regarding it as expressing an as yet unknown and incomprehensible fact of a mystical or transcendent, i.e., psychological, nature, which simply finds itself most appropriately represented in the cross.”⁵⁹

The viewer himself may sometimes decide whether to interpret something as a symbol or just a sign. Jung claimed that one’s personality could not be developed without the role of the symbol, the mere will is not enough to activate this process. But before we want to reveal higher energies and reach for the symbol’s power, it is fundamental to focus on the elementary facts at first.

The Image in psychoanalysis.

There is an inner need in each of us to search for explanation of such notions as sublimation, which in Freudian psychology means “the diversion of psychic energy derived from sexual impulses into nonsexual activities, especially of a creative

⁵⁹ Jung, Carl *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung: Psychological types*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1953, p. 474.

nature’⁶⁰, and furthermore the emotions of fascination, delusion, anxiety, desire, pleasure, their connections with creative power being a cradle of various images of art, whether it is sculpture, painting, or works of literature. The definition of the image in psychoanalytic terms goes far beyond merely visual representation. *Imago* is the Latin word from which the word *image* derives.. The image is a cluster of meaning, architected through a series of the psychological process, being their means of transferring affection, figments of imagination, metaphorical meanings. The image may be fictitious as it can be a product of human creativity illustrating objects via visual arts or written literary forms. To understand it as purely visual is not relevant, it requires a wider act of perceiving.⁶¹

Focusing particularly on how to comprehend psychology of art, I must mention Freud once more and his definition of the **archeological metaphor**. He described it in a letter to Wilhelm Fliess written on December 6 1896:

*“I am working on the assumption that our psychical mechanism has come into being by a process of stratification: the material present in the form of memory traces being subject from time to time to a re-arrangement in accordance with fresh circumstances - to a re-transcription. Thus what is essentially new about my theory is the thesis that memory is present not once but several times over, that it is laid down in various species of indications... I should like to emphasize the fact that the successive registrations represent the psychical achievement of successive epochs of life.”*⁶²

With these words Freud seems to mean that a memory of an experience is collected and accumulated inside the brain in a set of different recordings of senses, such as images, words, feelings of touch, etc. So a memory is not constructed as a single unit. What the quote reveals as well is that during a person’s growth and psychological developmental memories pass through different phases and are being rearranged in such a way that particular memories correspond each time to the same experience. That is, in future stage, particular experience’ may become conjoined with unpleasant emotions,

⁶⁰ Collins English Dictionary – Complete and Unabridged, HarperCollins Publishers, 2003.

⁶¹ Pollock, Griselda *Psychoanalysis and the Image. Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2006, p. 4.

⁶² A letter to Wilhelm Fliess, December 6 1896
<http://www.freud.org.uk/education/topic/40037/subtopic/40038/>

while it has been recognized as pleasurable at the early stage, and so it works the other way round. This may be caused by new experiences pending the development process in human psyche. Even when only one of these states is conscious, they both function in the person's mind. In this context, the analyst is like an architect – he discovers and excavates various deep layers of a patient's psyche, remains of past experiences. Collection of such memories enables reconstruction of the stories, opens new fields for interpretation, thus here memories are the images themselves. Following Griselda Pollock's inference: "*The formative phases and events of human childhood, archaic memories, and feelings are preserved, like artifacts in the tombs of ancient civilizations, but by the mechanism of repression.*"⁶³ The aim of psychoanalysis is to activate a change in the patient's locked mind, to free them from anxieties and traumas rooted in early years of their lives, to finally let them unblock and develop personalities. Using psychoanalysis in artistic and historical studies has its source in the discernment of memorizing and analyzing. Both psychoanalysis and archeology seek to find the ideals, fantasies, heroes and myths so that we could understand deeper and better the structures behind creating art and cultural behaviours, which all lead to gaining knowledge about human intricacy.

Symbols and art.

There is an ancient philosophical tree-model created by a logician Porphyry, which consists of two scales: vertical and horizontal.⁶⁴ Their vertical part constitutes a trunk starting from sense experiences up to higher universals, while the horizontal one sets branches representing levels of concreteness and abstractness. We can examine the symbol and what it represents according to one of these two scales. On the vertical axis the symbol and its referent belong to a different branch of abstractness and their relation is like a species and genus. This can be exemplified by a house symbolizing shelter. The second relation is different and it includes Freudian symbols. One of them is pictured by a relation between a pottery vessel and a womb. They are both at the concrete branch, both are containers and are different by characteristic attributes, the vessel is made of

⁶³ Pollock, Griselda *Psychoanalysis and the Image. Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2006, p. 10.

⁶⁴ Arnheim, Rudolf *Toward a psychology of art*, Collected Essays, Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966, p. 217.

clay and the womb of organic tissues. In this relation the piece of pottery symbolizes the womb and this relation is irreversible. The purpose of using symbols in art is of course to hide its referent in order to evoke some contemplation but it is also to attire the ideas in perceptible forms. They enhance and give representation to universality of human existence. A work of art is specific as we can look at the particulars and notice the universals and, respectively, we can see abstraction through viewing the concreteness. Moreover, the most abstract ideas are most directly perceived by the viewer. We distinguish such ideas as size, height, whether something is active or passive, far or near through the sensory mechanisms, while some more concrete matter requires specific knowledge to be engulfed.

Jacques Lacan



<http://hilobrow.com/2011/04/13/jacques-lacan/>

Lacan (1901-1981) was a French psychoanalyst internationally renowned for his interpretation of Sigmund Freud's works, although, he opposed their strictness. Being deeply interested in human speech, he believed in primacy of language as constitutive of the unconscious.⁶⁵ One of his scientific achievements was involving structural linguistics, poetics and philosophy into the psychoanalytic process. He saw creation and development of human subject as always opened, incomplete and in progress, thus making any strict boundaries in the field of human psyche is irrelevant due to its complexity. He believed, like Jung, that archetypes function throughout centuries and cultures. Lacanian psychology stressed that all human creatures are united through having mothers and father and through having to pass the same stages of development in order to gain social and cultural status. During these phases the perception and meanings of the world change and vary. This attitude made a background for new interpretations in art and literature.

Interpreting Freud's works, Lacan came with an idea of the **mirror stage** as a phase of human development.⁶⁶ Lacan's view is that there is a stage in children's early life when an outer image of the body, which they see in a mirror or in the figure of the mother, instils a mental representation of an "I" within the young psyche. The child makes an identification with this reflection which gives them a complete image of what a developed self should look and be like. At this stage of course the image of the exemplary body is not the same as the infant's one, still not developed, so there sets up an ideal "I" functioning as a model to achieve throughout the lifetime. This brings about grounds for interpretation representations of human postures in art. For Lacan, the mirror stage generates the ego as dependent on the external "Other". As the individual develops, they form their shape among cultural relations through the use of language. This "Other", the external object, presented on the background of social and linguistic discourse, gives the individual foundation for his or her personality.

Analyzing any branch of art always puts the question: to what extent does a given work express the personality of its creator? And does art generally apply to psychological processes? It is impossible to analyze the mere work as the product is a representation of somebody's inner thoughts, feelings and intuition. Thus knowing the

⁶⁵ <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/327112/Jacques-Lacan>

⁶⁶ Pollock, Griselda *Psychoanalysis and the Image. Transdisciplinary Perspectives*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2006, p. 4

basis of psychoanalysis, its fundamental concerns and key notions is crucial for the course of contemplation and interpretation.

I shall now trace and compare two different branches of creative activity from the point of view of psychoanalytic approach. I shall present how psychoanalytic ideas are found in Robert Fry's painting and Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* novel.

Chapter 3

Psychological depth of Robert Fry's works.

The aim of this chapter is to trace the ideas presented in the previous chapter concerning the history of psychoanalysis in a form of artistic creation. Robert Fry's output is exceptionally bursting with psychological inspirations, so my choice of this particular artist was not accidental. I shall now bring forward his biography and analyse how psychology influences the interpretation of his intricate works.



http://www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/artists/robert_fry.htm?section_name=new_britannia

Robert Fry is a very contemporary artist, he was born in London in 1980 as a son of Lynda Devenish and Anthony Fry, a renowned psychiatrist who has worked with Prince Charles on Holistic and Alternative medicine. Robert Fry lives and works in London. He had his first solo exhibitions in 2009 in London and Moscow, then next year in Los Angeles, and in 2011 in London again. However, his works were exhibited together with many artists in form of group exhibitions since 2008, in many galleries in London, Moscow, Budapest, Los Angeles.

He does mainly painting and etching indicating that both the theme and the material is equally important in his works: *"I try to create a relationship between the physicality of materials and psychological terrains,"* Fry says. *"I'm interested in*

conveying a slightly brutal picture of the human condition.”⁶⁷ The techniques used on canvas vary and are often a combination of acrylic, oil, enamel and marker pen, as it is in case of the *Drawing Room Studies* series, adding gloss paint in *Purple Series* of paintings, limiting to just acrylic and oil in *Red Series* (except *Red 7* where enamel is also used). In the latest works, *Related* series he uses acrylic, oil, pencil and enamel.

His earliest series, *The Drawing Room Studies*, consists of ten works on canvas, on which he pictured himself as a model. These series developed gradually from his etchings made three years before. In *Drawing Room Study 7* two figures constitute a mirror image connected by an intimate link of their mutual relation. This sight gives an impression of being filled with riddles, paradoxes and tautness, which are indicated by the use of many contrastive hues, accumulation of rough lines and stripes, geometrical outlines.



Drawing Room Study 7 2008 Acrylic and oil on canvas 198 x 163 cms 78 x 64 1/8 ins
<http://www.robertfrystudio.com/index.php?page=drawing-room-studies>

The figures are bathed in purple which enhances their crude and visceral character, suggesting, according to Patricia Ellis, “both a physical and emotional energy”. Fry is a very self-aware artist, he himself best explains what happens in his works, he emphasizes the importance of the materials used:

⁶⁷ Ellis, Patricia Essay for Saatchi Gallery [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia Ellis on Robert Fry.pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia%20Ellis%20on%20Robert%20Fry.pdf)

“Etching can involve a vast amount of precision and technique and has its constraints. The immediacy of painting is very different; these works express a kind of freeness and looseness in the way paint is applied and attempt to embrace the versatility and multitude of ways in which it can be used. I’m fascinated by the spectrum of paint as a medium, its vastness and its complexity. Drawing Room Study 4 repeatedly engages different materials within the composition. It attempts to achieve meaning through their varied application, and create relationships between the properties of the materials that construct the work. The Drawing Room Study series are equally concerned with the way they’re made as the themes the pictures explore; it’s perhaps indistinguishable as to which is of greater importance.”⁶⁸

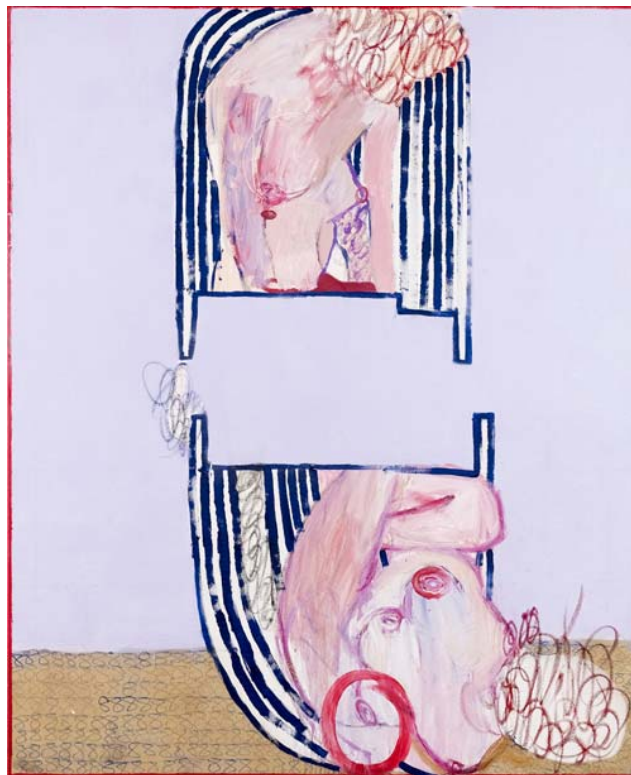


Drawing Room Study 4 2008 Acrylic, oil and marker pen on canvas 198 x 163 cms 78 x 64 1/8 ins

<http://www.robertfrystudio.com/index.php?page=drawing-room-studies>

⁶⁸ Ellis, Patricia Essay for Saatchi Gallery [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia Ellis on Robert Fry.pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia%20Ellis%20on%20Robert%20Fry.pdf)

Robert Fry's works reveal his prominent interest in psychology, which is noticeable via the subject and creation process. In this series of works etching makes a metaphorical, unconscious field later explored in details with the use of paint. Thus, the mirror effect here is readable by two means, firstly through positioning the subjects and secondly through impact of the materials. This brings up an idea of parallel existence of the internal and external state. A reflected figure painted in *Drawing Room Study 5* is embraced by misshapen geometrical framing. Both parts of the figure here are deliberately malformed, as if they were unravelling from a ball of yarn. Their existence is not certain, not unequivocal. This feel is fortified with repeatedly scrawled symbol eight ("8") at the undermost part of the painting, indicating both infinity and perfection. This tendency to obsession seems to have either tormented and motivating the painter during his work.



Drawing Room Study 5, 2008 Acrylic, oil, enamel and marker pen on canvas 198x163 cms 78 x 64 1/8 ins

<http://www.robertfrystudio.com/index.php?page=drawing-room-studies>

The series of *Purple Study* evolved as a natural continuation of *The Drawing Room Study*, however, as Patricia Ellis rightly notices: “in these newer pieces he was thinking about figuration and painting in different ways.”⁶⁹ The coloration is very non-accidental, the purple timbre symbolizes mysticism, ceremony, and also – loss. The deeper interpretation of the purple broadens its commonly noted meaning as follows:

*“Purple is derived from the combination of RED and BLUE, it unites red's fiery masculinity with blue's cool femininity. Purple is often used to represent royalty, imperial power, justice, and/or truth. Christian references to the colour link it with God the Father and royal power. Dried blood has a purple hue to it, and bruises on the flesh are often purple, in this respect it can be a sign of physical injury.”*⁷⁰

All these ideas must have been extremely intriguing for Fry, together with the carried sense of duality, which he had been exploring already in his previous series of works. Also, purple hue is very difficult in application because it consists of a blend of two utmost primary colours existing in nature – red and blue. In *Purple Study 2* the figures are bathed with purple out of which their shape emerges, being more just a suggestion of existence than actual appearance. Again the lines are not well-fixed and the bodies' forms are incomplete, fused with the whole canvas background as if they were liquid. Their existence is unsure and symbolic and this is easily readable through the used technique, colours, application. In the whole *Purple series* the two figures' presence is only symbolic, they seem to exist only in the viewer's mind or perception. This effect is achieved via high level of abstraction, where the subjects almost disappear in the background.

⁶⁹ Ellis, Patricia Essay for Saatchi Gallery [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia Ellis on Robert Fry.pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia%20Ellis%20on%20Robert%20Fry.pdf)

⁷⁰ <http://www.umich.edu/~umfandsf/symbolismproject/symbolism.html/P/purple.html>



Purple Study 2 2009 Acrylic, oil, enamel, gloss paint and marker pen on canvas 198 x 163 cms 78 x 64
1/8 ins

<http://www.robertfrystudio.com/index.php?page=purple-serie>

In *Purple Study 3* the central character is barely possible to retrieve from the background, however, on the basis of the whole series typology we are aware that it is still a figurative composition. The figures remain in the symbolic dialogue in which between the frames of abstraction and figuration there is space for the spectators thoughts which in this process metaphorically become a part of the whole concept, they co-create the painting. Robert Fry himself develops this idea in the best way:

“Here the space under the suspended torso is like a broken down body. The two circles that sit on either side of the vertical lines describe nipples. I’m interested in reducing and removing key elements of the figure, forcing the viewer into a position of including their imagination into the incomplete image of the human form.”⁷¹

In *Purple Studies* Fry’s interest and focus on psychology expanded. His artistic output always appears as a result of inner investigation. Structural forms so strong in

⁷¹ Ellis, Patricia Essay for Saatchi Gallery [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia Ellis on Robert Fry.pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia%20Ellis%20on%20Robert%20Fry.pdf)

previous works, here undergo a process of simplification and vagueness. In work number 3 the structural components of the body, such as nipples, faces, genitals look extremely abstract. The author uses this means to make the identity uncertain and put the individual existence into doubt.



Purple Study 3 2009 Acrylic, oil, enamel, gloss paint and marker pen on canvas 198 x 163 cms 78 x 64

1/8 ins

<http://www.robertfrystudio.com/index.php?page=purple-serie>

One more work of this series is worth special attention. To compose *Purple Study 5* the artist used various types of materials. The oval top part of the painting is drawn with the use of marker pen, the letters on it are written with enamel, the red frame of the whole is painted with oil.

“These all communicate with the viewer in different ways, as well as with one another within the composition”, Fry says.

“Through their quality as a raw material, they’re application and form, I’m attempting to encompass a plethora of media in my practice as a painter. At the heart of this is a concentrated engagement with the scope of painting. The

*self-deconstruction of painting is of huge importance to my work. **Purple Study 5** is about paint, painting, scale and colour.”⁷²*

The composition presents a man with his face dripping down the canvas as if his existence or personality were melting down.



Purple Study 5 2009 Acrylic, oil, enamel, gloss paint and marker pen on canvas 198 x 163 cms 78 x 64
1/8 ins

<http://www.robertfrystudio.com/index.php?page=purple-serie>

In **Purple Study 9** the artist depicts a man and a woman. As Gair Burton describes:

“Naked and archetypal, they are side by side holding hands, their figures described through shape rather than modulated form, in graceful outline or densely blocked colour against a backdrop of vivid purple.”⁷³

It is a captivating work in which the couple of figures is starkly outlined. The postures are anonymous, they might represent anybody and the viewer is confronted by this natural size image which may evoke a feeling of standing in front of a

⁷² Ellis, Patricia Essay for Saatchi Gallery [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia Ellis on Robert Fry.pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia%20Ellis%20on%20Robert%20Fry.pdf)

⁷³ [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Gair Burton \(A Purple Patch\).pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Gair%20Burton%20(A%20Purple%20Patch).pdf)

psychological mirror. The female figure is strongly accentuated with red paint in place of her legs, then it becomes lighter as we move our sight upwards to the scrawl of her shoulders. The male shape is devoid of colouring at all his parts except the leg and the symbolic merging of cool and warm contrastive shades in his intimate areas. Their sexual features have been indicated by specific application of paint resembling graffiti. Yet the most arresting characteristic of this painting is the artist's choice to hide the faces of his protagonists' faces with coarse black covers of thick gloss paint flowing down the borders of rectangular shapes. In this way the creator stripped of these characters of their personalities and the spectator might think he made his artistry indistinct on purpose. The message of this work lies inscribed in the repeated stream of letters 'FREEMINDNOCHANCEFREEMINDNOCHANCE...' which we read down the canvas. As Gair Burton infers, this manipulation "*is a denial of the possibility of mental autonomy*".⁷⁴ According to his interpretation, the couple represents surrendering of the self coinciding inevitably with losing sense of freedom. Fry explores this theme throughout most of his works using various means of expression.



Purple Study 9 2009 Acrylic, oil, enamel, gloss paint and marker pen on canvas 198 x 163 cms 78 x 64
1/8 ins

<http://www.robertfrystudio.com/index.php?page=purple-serie>

⁷⁴ [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Gair Burton \(A Purple Patch\).pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Gair_Burton_(A_Purple_Patch).pdf)

According to Burton's opinion, *The Purple Series* are

*"brave and uncompromising. With them Fry completely leaves behind the drawing room, that place of retreat and bourgeois refinement, forgoing its artefacts, trappings and comforts, leaving momentarily too the observation-based practice that the room's name entails to face something dark and threatening, submitting the psyche to the primordial, represented here as a life-enabling, self-subsuming sea of purple."*⁷⁵

The significance and ambiguity of purple is highlighted once again by the reviewer.

The most breathtaking work by Fry, however, is *Red I*, which stands out from the rest of his paintings. It is physically a canvas of large size, so when the spectator stands just in front of it, he or she confronts with representations of strange faceless figures of human scale. The resultant image emerges with effect of a blazing vividness. The use of red tones, a palette of the strongest colour existing in nature, and the technique of ample strokes of the brush, altogether forms a spellbinding view. When the spectator moves back a few steps, he or she will receive an effect of burning flames. The characters are of the natural human size, nevertheless, they do not resemble realistic humans, they rather bring about connotations with some mythological heroes, ghosts, some unreal or spiritual beings, more of conceptual category.

According to Patricia Ellis:

*"Fry conceives them not as separate individuals, but aspects of one single person. The words 'brain lock' are repeated along the bottom of the painting; it's a psychological term used to describe an obsessive or compulsive way of thinking."*⁷⁶

Although in his works Fry pictures himself as a secluded person, such as he does in *Self Etching*, some sense of duality is piercing through. He portrays himself sitting on a chair, without clothes and full of vulnerability. However, Gair Burton notices that *"he stares intently out, not at the viewer but at the mirrored image of himself from which he*

⁷⁵ [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Gair Burton \(A Purple Patch\).pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Gair%20Burton%20(A%20Purple%20Patch).pdf)

⁷⁶ Ellis, Patricia Essay for Saatchi Gallery [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia Ellis on Robert Fry.pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Patricia%20Ellis%20on%20Robert%20Fry.pdf)

*works, a multiplication through reflection that is played out also in the double of the plate and the image, the one an inversion of the other.”*⁷⁷

This duality is not physical but psychological. The inner persona of the author can be perceived via deeper thinking.

All the artist's works are bursting with messages indicating explicitly his process of self-reflection. As an introvert and having strong interest in psychology he explores vast fields of his own personality, which is reflected in his artwork. Besides the mentioned sense of doubleness, we may spot that many objects reappear, among which there are armchairs or patterns. These objects constitute a peculiar alphabet of signs, perhaps even symbols. The motives from his earliest etchings reoccur in *The Drawing Room Series*. Following Gair Burton:

“Whilst his 2005 etchings throb with magic narrative — the designs of rugs resemble starry night skies and continue through Fry’s figures, keys tumble from laptops and space misbehaves as though the scene were being looked at through a fractured mirror — in the Drawing Room paintings many of these elements return, assuming a more sensuous air.”

For instance, armchairs provide the setting for the characters, the form in which they are moored. The inscriptions added to his works are of great importance and are influential for the process of interpretation. In the etchings multiple obsessive repetitions of the word ‘DAYS’ appear, scratched solicitously, in reverse, into the metal plate, which was certainly not an easy process. It suggests how intense the artist's thoughts must have been to make him choose such a complicated energy- and time-consuming technique and it is amazing to realise how much effort he put into transforming the psychological substance into matter, how he enclosed something which was, at least partly, unconscious in his mind, into a form of visual art.

In *The Drawing Room* works in exchange we find captivating symbols of ‘8’, which most obviously bears the metaphoric notion of infinity. It can be understood as infinity of art, creation in general, or interminable possibilities. It provokes a whole

⁷⁷ [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Gair Burton \(A Purple Patch\).pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Gair%20Burton%20(A%20Purple%20Patch).pdf)

chain of associations in the spectator's mind, which seems obvious as, according to the psychoanalysts, the symbol functions in deep unconscious levels of human psyche. Watchwords of letters are still present to prey on our imagination. One of the works has a very controversial inscription 'HEADFUCKER' above the head of the figure. Both in this series of symmetrical paintings and the etchings that preceded them, the artist uses allegory as a device for visual symbolic representation. As Gair Burton sums up, he is

"investigating the shape of relationships as though mapping them from above, applying to the lessens of Cubism emotional expression. Mind and body are shackled together in Fry's output, the former impossible without the latter, but do not necessarily get on. Thoughts swell and spiral, always ready to swoop off into the distance, impatient at the body's obedience to the snags and tendrils of the here and now."

Fry's works are simply stuffed with psychology. The relation between mind and body corresponds with his equal attention put towards the subject of the work and the materials used. Very often the effect is much dependent on the properties of the materials.

During the Renaissance a kind of portrait has arisen called "*speaking likeness*", which constituted the evidence of the real encounter of the artist and his model. The painter was believed to metaphorically capture the sitter's soul and imprinted it on the canvas like remnants in an amber, achieving a sort of immortality this way. Morgan Falconer, who is a renowned journalist, art historian and modern art critic, in his essay compared Fry's depictions to that old style in order to obtain the contrast between the two.

*"Robert Fry isn't attempting to effect any mystical transports with his depictions, nor is he hoping to make his sitters speak to us - not because he doubts his facility, but simply because he's a modern: for him, the soul's vital spirit and the image's power as a sign are two different things which have no connection."*⁷⁸

⁷⁸

http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Morgan_Falconer.pdf

Falconer believes that scrawls present in the paintings are allusions to the time passing and they appeared on the work concurrently with the artists thoughts swirling. Thus they are not accidental. As he continues *"It isn't the spirit that Fry stresses, but the flesh; essences won't be trapped in instants of grace."* However, this does not mean that the relation between the painter and the model is without importance. It actually bears a psychological imprint from the very beginning for we must not forget that the artist's father is a neuropsychiatrist and his mother is a psychotherapist. Growing up in such a family, the young talented man had a perfect background to open his mind to various encounters and seed his interest in interpersonal relations. As the critic concludes,

"For them, the encounter of artist and sitter could never be a question of communicating spirits; instead it is a matter of chemical, behavioural interchange, a material question of cause and effect." That is, in my view, the physical meeting is of equal importance as meeting of the souls.

Falconer draws the attention back to *The Drawing Room Studies* and he focuses on the point of view, the unusual perspective from which the subjects and their relation are presented. The slightly flattened figure of the sitter meets the sight of the viewer directly in the front while the artist is moved aside to the bottom part of the canvas. They are both looked at from some kind of above position, as if somebody were standing at theatrical balcony and looking at them and their mysterious play of thoughts and act of creation, or *"perhaps Fry's own spirit has loosed itself from his body, risen up and started to look down, just as the sick have sometimes described when they have flown close to death and returned."* In *Untitled 3* Fry placed himself untypically on the same level as the sitter, giving himself equal amount of space to exist in the work. As the author notices, it was not only the breaking point for abandoning the distance on the canvas, but it was also the moment since when Fry started to paint. Moreover, it was more than simply finding a new media, henceforth the artist began to examine his portraiture in a different light and discourse. Falconer claims that the etchings had a character of literary anecdotal English art from the time before World War I, however, they still have a frenetic feel which makes them modern. Painting opens a field for a meeting of symbol and image. Beside a visual talent, a good painting requires outstanding intelligence. That is why on Fry's canvases we find distorted figures which

are results of exploring their psychological positions, shifting them from the equal level to the dominant and subordinate.

Echoes of the past – the influence of Cubism on Robert Fry’s works.

Morgan Falconer spotted a noticeable reference to cubistic art: *“passages in some of Fry’s pictures are reminiscent of the studied and analytical approach that Picasso and Braque adopted when they first evolved the style in the early years of the last century.”*⁷⁹ Cubism was an artistic movement which dates from around 1910. On art it had as revolutionary impact as Freud’s discoveries had on psychology for it changed and converted principles that had ruled the field for hundreds of years. Since then the artists no longer simply distinguished a solid form and space around, instead, *“fusion of mass and void”*⁸⁰ appeared. Cubism opposed ideas of beauty typical for classical art. This style included indefinite subjects and positions in space, so much present on Fry’s canvases as well.

As Robert Rosenblum points out,

“Instead of assuming that the work of art was an illusion of a reality that lay beyond it, Cubism proposed that the work of art was itself a reality that represented the very process by which nature is transformed into art.”

This corresponds well with Fry’s own words paying attention to the materials used and the process of creation itself. There is no doubt about the strong influence of cubism on the contemporary painter. When it comes to shapes, nothing remains absolute and unquestionable. Cubistic works are full of uncertain, twisted, often geometrical shapes turning suddenly into half-transparent forms, just as it happens in Fry’s paintings described above. What is more, another similarity can be found in uncertain limitation between the foreground and the background. It was an artistic movement which necessitated interest in psychology and knowledge of it in order to approach these works of art with not the eyes merely, but with an open mind, thinking and awareness. Rosenblum further concludes that

⁷⁹ http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Morgan_Falconer.pdf

⁸⁰ Rosenblum, Robert *Cubism and Twentieth-Century Art*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1966, p. 9.

“Cubism created an artistic language of intentional ambiguity. In front of a Cubist work of art, the spectator was to realize that no single interpretation of the fluctuating shapes, textures, spaces, and objects could be complete in itself.”

Forms and spaces are blended here resembling imaginary passage of consciousness in a dream. However, whereas for Picasso for instance, the nude body was a reference to tradition and means of depicting themes of sexuality and gender difference, then for Fry it gains more value and much more symbolic dimension in which a naked body is not merely an image indicating the subject’s male or female sex. What my opinion is and what Falconer confirms in his essay, the artist seems to picture women as signs and the nude becomes a kind of genre by the use of which women become signs. On the canvas the sexuality of these figures is exaggerated on purpose with breasts and genitalia marked by simply round lines, which makes the characters depersonalised. This process is enhanced later by picturing the figures as mirror images where one is thought to be the physical body and the second is a reflection of it, even if it is rather impossible to say which one is the base. These reflections, having in mind all the psychological background, may bring to the mind of interpreter associations with representing various levels of consciousness or images of the self functioning in the psyche. As Falconer claims,

“Fry’s new work is about the problem of staging the nude at the end of a long tradition. He often leaves us with nothing but an abstraction of the body in an abstraction of a seat – maybe a body on a chaise longue, or in a bath-chair, or on wicker armchair in the light of a conservatory, with just a suggestion of light in the warm hues of the paint. Sometimes he strips away context altogether and shows only an isolated figure, like a body naked under a spotlight, gesturing, while time passes. But all of the pictures, as the titles tell us, are Studies.”⁸¹

Then, finally, he concludes with what I fully agree with – that these are attempts to make an overall picture that can never be made, as nothing is still in the Universe,

⁸¹ <http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Morgan Falconer.pdf>

everything comes under a process of constant change, including single atoms, not to mention the most complicated existing structure – human mind.

The Self emerging out of the canvas.

The first critic who noticed and named an element of self-portraiture in Fry's compositions was Seline Johns. In her essay from 2008 she wrote:

“(...) in Fry's etchings (...) an element of self-portraiture may be understood although no works are formally titled as such; amidst lines describing the or perhaps 'an' artist in the process of 'making work' and without explicit statement Fry's audience is invited to redefine where one begins and the other ends.”⁸²

Here the process of painterly creation resembles what has been called projection by the psychoanalysts – ascribing one's thoughts, fears, feelings to the outside world. In this context the artist leads a psychological dialogue with himself, the painting and with a potential spectator. With relation to the painting, its author may achieve, via various attempts and rehearsals throughout the whole process of creation, some recognition about possible projections and thus painting may have a therapeutic function in providing vast field for self-knowledge and psychic development.

The same psychological process may be enacted in the viewer's mind as well. When the work of art is stimulating one's inner thoughts and feelings in order to make him or her realize the repressed fears, it moves them up to the level of consciousness and, by this means, provides a tool of reinventing the Self.

Sexuality is as much important for Fry as an element of (discovering) the Self as it was for Freud in his scientific research. Seline Johns marks it out best in her essay:

“As whirling armchairs align, pause and lock horns, we witness the internal dialogue of one who questions just how compelling personal sexual perspective is, in the context of discourse. Fry's paintings seek a resolution to such concerns; a preoccupation with this search finds a new manner of expression, canvas upon canvas,

⁸² [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Seline Johns on Robert Fry.pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Seline%20Johns%20on%20Robert%20Fry.pdf)

each like the very next sentence in a soliloquy, a cogent example of the psychological rigors of an Obsessive Compulsive existence."⁸³

I shall now focus on a different form of artistic creation, that is writing. In order to be able to compare the psychoanalytic tools and ideas appearing in art and literature, in the next chapter I will analyse Virginia Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse*.

⁸³ [http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Seline Johns on Robert Fry.pdf](http://www.robertfrystudio.com/uploads/Essays/Seline%20Johns%20on%20Robert%20Fry.pdf)

Chapter 4.

The inward labyrinth of Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*.

The aim of this chapter is to find elements of psychoanalysis in Virginia Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse* and consider it an example of the creative force reflected in literature as a form of art. It is necessary to bring close the author's personal information and a brief story of her life.

Virginia Woolf.

It is important to present a short biography of Virginia Woolf as there are many personal motifs in her works, found by the critics. In order to understand her writing, complex and experimental, filled with a range of emotions, one must be aware of the author's background and life.



http://si.wsj.net/public/resources/images/RV-AE896_WOOLF_G_20111111022210.jpg

Adeline Virginia Stephen, a renowned modern British writer and feminist, was born on January 25, 1882 in London as a daughter of Leslie Stephen and Julia Duckworth. She is especially known for the use of experimental writing technique

called *stream of consciousness*.⁸⁴ *To the Lighthouse* (1927) is believed to be the most outstanding of her novels. She is also the author of such works as *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *Orlando: a Biography* (1928) or *The Waves* (1932). Beside the novels, she is famous for her essays and literary critiques, as well as writing letters and diaries. She inherited her literary talent after her father, who had a great historical and philosophical knowledge, and who was an editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Julia Duckworth was perceived as an ideal of feminine softness and beauty of her times. It were them, Virginia Woolf's parents, who were used as frames for the characters of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse*. Starting from her mother's and her sister's death, and for the whole time during her life, Virginia suffered from depression, and nervous breakdown resulting finally in mental illness. She was well educated at home and even in times of the illness she spent much time in her father's library reading continuously. In 1904, she moved from Kensington, where she was brought up, to London and became a participant of active discussions called "Thursday Evenings" founded by her brother, which later turned into "Bloomsbury Group".⁸⁵ The members of the group opposed typically Victorian attitudes towards art and life in general, in favour of modernist thought. Virginia was actively involved in feminist movements and she admitted in her letters that she was greatly influenced by the Post-Impressionist art: "*Human character changed on or about December, 1910.*"⁸⁶ Two years later she married Leonard Woolf, a writer and a politician. During World War I the condition of her mental health started to get seriously weak, so her husband's family made her a present in the form of the Hogarth Press, where she could publish her books. At first she held on to the traditional style of writing, however, in *Monday or Tuesday* (1921), inspired by modernist art, she already attempted experimental techniques, criticizing traditional literature for abandoning its essence:

⁸⁴ Coudert, Carolyn *Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse*, Piscataway: Research & Education Association, 1996, p.1.

⁸⁵ Op. cit., p.2.

⁸⁶ Op. cit., p.2.

*“Whether we call it life or spirit, truth or reality, this, the essential thing, has moved off, or on, and refuses to be contained any longer in such ill-fitting vestments as we provide.”*⁸⁷

Therefore, in her later works, Woolf focused on providing the essential force in her fiction instead of developing plot or conventions. Her desire was to move the reader into action.

The phrase *stream of consciousness* was first used and explained by William James in *The Principles of Psychology* as “*ceaseless, chaotic, multi-levelled flow that characterizes human mental activity.*”⁸⁸ By the use of this particular technique, Woolf wished to picture what a character’s mind fully embraced, not merely rational thoughts, but all the flowing images, associations, ideas and words that merge in the vessel of consciousness before the speech act is done.

She continued writing despite her health condition was worsening. In 1941 she finished the last work entitled *Between the Acts* which reflected all of her literary experience and interests. The beginning of World War II sealed Woolf’s mental breakdown. She left farewell letters to her husband and her sister and committed suicide drowning herself in the River Ouse on March 28, 1941.

To the Lighthouse.

This short novel is believed to be much autobiographical, recalling memories of the Stephens’ summers spent in Cornwall.⁸⁹ Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay (based on Woolf’s parents as mentioned before) and their children are spending their summer holidays on the Scottish Isle of Skye. Although the author does not focus on the plot much, we know that it takes place between 1910 and 1920. The Lighthouse from which the title was taken actually exists: it is located in north-west St. Ives Bay in Cornwall, and it is

⁸⁷ Woolf, Virginia *Modern Fiction*
<http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/w/woolf/virginia/w91c/chapter13.html>

⁸⁸ Coudert, Carolyn *Virginia Woolf’s To the Lighthouse*, Piscataway: Research & Education Association, 1996, p.3.

⁸⁹ Kermode, Frank *Biographical Preface* in Woolf, Virginia *To the Lighthouse*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. xxvii.

called The Godrevy Lighthouse. Below I am placing a picture of it taken in 1890, in times of the Stephens' family visits.



<http://www.woolfonline.com/files/images/Godrevy Lighthouse 1890.jpg>

The novel is composed of three parts: *The Window*, *Time Passes* and *The Lighthouse*. The first one is the window through which the reader is introduced into the Ramsay family. One of the sons, James, dreams of going to a nearby lighthouse, but his father makes him aware that this visit cannot be due to difficult weather conditions. This harsh decision causes a perceptible tension between Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay. This apparently simple situation reveals little James's nature and the relations among the family members. In this part, Virginia Woolf also presents a character, Lily Briscoe, a young painter starting a portrait of Mrs. Ramsay and James. This character was probably based on Vanessa Stephen, the author's sister, who was a painter herself.

The second part, not written with stream of consciousness but introduced by an omniscient narrator, is more poetic and focuses mainly on the time passing fast and, at

the end, leaving the summer house empty and abandoned. This experiment was meant to provide a sense of the past ten years, thus the events in the Ramsays' life are given in brackets.

Finally, in part three, the family turns back to the Isle of Skye after Mrs. Ramsay's death and one of the son's fall at war. The father organizes the long-awaited expedition to the Lighthouse with his son James and his daughter Cam. This is supposed to be a reconciliation with the children and a sort of event commemorating the mother. This is marked by the usually restrained Mr. Ramsay praising James for keeping the boat on the right course. In the meantime, Lily decides to finalize the painting she had started ten years ago. For her this becomes the grounds for bringing back memories of Mrs. Ramsay in an attempt to find some essential truth about the woman, and life in general. Finishing the work surprisingly becomes more important to herself than leaving a legacy in the form of her art.

In the introduction to Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* Carolyn Coudert writes about the relation of psychology to Woolf's literature and its strong influence:

*"The writings of Carl Marx and Sigmund Freud opened up new ways of viewing human nature. In art, a move away from the representational and toward the communicative power of form over content occurred. The sense of a predictable world, anchored in tradition, disappeared."*⁹⁰

However, it must be noticed that in this case the impact was caused and intensified by the war and social changes, and not simply born from personal interest. During her life Virginia Woolf experienced a huge change in the whole of cultural life, starting from inventions and fashion, ending with attitudes and ideas. Along with art, the styles of impressionism and symbolism became popular in literature, but Woolf still searched for her own experimental style and forms of expression. Her father was an example of a Victorian man, whom she admired and opposed at the same time, which is pictured well as a central theme of the novel referring to the relations between Mr. Ramsay and his children in *To the Lighthouse*. Moreover, via writing the novel, the

⁹⁰ Coudert, Carolyn *Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse*, Piscataway: Research & Education Association, 1996, p. 4.

author found a means to examine her own feelings and thoughts about social male and female roles in order to:

“select what out of her early experience living in a Victorian world was worth keeping and what must be discarded, and to find her voice as an artist – as Lily Briscoe finally does in her painting.”⁹¹

The creative force.

Memories of childhood evoke in the mind of the sensitive writer an exploration of her own creative process, as well as help to construct the character of Lily Briscoe, driven both by Woolf's own artistic endeavours and her sister's .

*“Obviously emotionally weighted, these and other childhood memories involving sound, smell, visual, tactile and thermal modalities are also highly sensual, ‘make’ her ‘feel warm as if everything were ripe, humming gummy’”.*⁹²

Shirley Panken also deduces that the writer desired to share Vanessa's artistic actions. As a feminist and an open-minded person, Woolf continuously searched to give evidence of women's power of creation.

Thanks to the use of *stream of consciousness* technique, the writer achieves the whole spectrum of particular characters. The critic Louis Kronenberger qualifies this as *“strikingly individual”* but *“liberated from its usual chaos”*.⁹³ The flow of the stream is strictly controlled by the author and the solicitously selected words constitute a deliberate order which serves to draw outlines of the characters' traits from various points of view.

None of the figures is simply perceived from the perspective of their bestowed thoughts. Panken calls it a *“many-levelled approach wherein she explores her*

⁹¹ Op. cit., p.5.

⁹² Panken, Shirley *Virginia Woolf and the „Lust of Creation”: A Psychoanalytic Exploration*, New York: State University of New York Press, p. 142.

⁹³ Kronenberger, Louis *Virginia Woolf Explores an English Country Home* in New York Times, May 8, 1925 <http://www.nytimes.com/books/97/06/08/reviews/woolf-lighthouse.html>

characters from multiple angles of vision.”⁹⁴ In another study we find information that *“instead of sketching us a stiffly realistic portrait of her characters, Woolf goes for the emotional impact of their internal landscapes.”*⁹⁵

Lily is a distinguished character, with whom Virginia Woolf noticeably identifies. She is the person around whom the whole lives of Ramsay family and other people concentrate.

To the lighthouse is studded with symbols. The lighthouse is metaphorically a beacon, a high strong structure that guides a way to those who are lost. In this case, it symbolizes stability; however, its light moving off /on may stand for changes. The stable lighthouse is personalized in the novel in the character of Mrs. Ramsay. In the “Window” part, she spends time with her family, encourages them to continue artistic work, talks to them and has fun with them. One of the articles read informs us that after Virginia Woolf’s sister, Vanessa Bell, had read the novel, the character of Mrs. Ramsay recalled so much the memory of her mother, Mrs Stephen, that it was *“almost painful to see her so raised from the dead”*.⁹⁶ Mrs. Ramsay is a beautiful, charming and intelligent lady, she *“is a little anxious to have a hand in things, a little anxious to be liked, a little anxious to keep her illusions and have others keep theirs”*⁹⁷. She is loved by her children, although they believe that she sometimes uses her charm when she wants them to do something. Her favourite place in the house is the window which symbolically illustrates an eye on the whole family matters and a distant position.

Furthermore, James and Mr. Ramsay have to compete for Mrs. Ramsay’s attention as we can read in the novel: *“most of all he hated the twang and twitter of his father’s emotion which, vibrating round them, disturbed the perfect simplicity and good sense of his relations with his mother.”*⁹⁸ This situation brings to mind associations with Freudian Oedipus Complex.

⁹⁴ Panken, Shirley *Virginia Woolf and the „Lust of Creation”: A Psychoanalytic Exploration*, New York: State University of New York Press, p. 143.

⁹⁵ Shmoop, collective study *To the Lighthouse: Shmoop Literature Guide*, Shmoop University, Inc., 2010, p. 1.

⁹⁶ Merkin, Daphne *To The Lighthouse And Beyond* in New York Times, September 12, 2004 <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9D02E6D91231F931A2575AC0A9629C8B63&sec=travel&spn=&pagewanted=all>

⁹⁷ Op. cit.

⁹⁸ Woolf, Virginia *To the Lighthouse*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 33.

Mr. Ramsay is not so thoroughly described in the novel, however, we can infer that he is not as much admired and loved as his wife is. Moreover, his children are afraid of him even though they admire his solid character. He represents a typical male role model of the Victorian society. The characters of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay function in a contraposition to each other, whereas their mutual relationship constitute their existence: the balance between them changes according to whose thoughts are flowing through the stream of consciousness in a particular moments. These points of view are like changing cards of their story creating a series of images in the reader's mind.

Virginia Woolf seems to be using words as a sketching tool to mark out the characters and the flow of time, the changes, but her technique leaves the reader some space of free interpretation and, through implicating his or her thoughts, making them a part of the process of creation, and finally a work of art, which is literature in this case. When Lily was painting the portrait, she suggested Mrs. Ramsay's figure using a few geometrical lines and a blur of purple hue.

*"What did she wish to indicate by the triangular purple shape (...)? Why indeed – except that if there, in that corner, it was bright, here, in this, she felt the need of darkness. Simple, obvious, commonplace, as it was, Mr Bankes was interested. Mother and child then—objects of universal veneration, and in this case the mother was famous for her beauty—might be reduced, he pondered, to a purple shadow without irreverence."*⁹⁹

As we read, likeness was not the point here, but some truthful essence, or soul. We receive a double psychological portrait, the first one painted by fictional Lily with her brushes, and the second one – pictured with words by Virginia Woolf, whereas each of them may be a shadow or an image reflection of the other. We have already explained in the previous chapter that the colour purple was used in history to represent truth and justice, but also physical weakness or injury, which in this context may deliberately be associated with female subversion, fighting for the place in social and cultural hierarchy. Furthermore, by choosing not to focus on the physical form, Lily/Woolf attempted to picture the content of the unconscious, something that is inexpressible, at least by traditional means. Thus, she decided to reach for

⁹⁹ Woolf, Virginia *To the Lighthouse*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 45.

unconventional writing techniques, which leave the reader with a sense of abstraction and mystery.

The final part of the novel is the most obscure, a bit ironic, it resembles reaching the centre of a perplexing psychological labyrinth in which the paths are beaten by tracing each character's psyche. As the whole story evolves in time, different psychological landscapes are revealed to the reader. As Kronenberger marks out:

*"The long opening portion seems to be carrying you ahead toward something which will be magnificently expressive, and then this final portion becomes obscure, a matter of arcs, of fractions, of uncoordinated notes. By comparison with the rest this final portion seems pale and weak."*¹⁰⁰

The whole book is very consciously written, solicitously sketched, with different layers added with the flow of time and the Stream. A sense of emptiness in the last portion seems to indicate that without his wife alive, Ramsay is devoid of full existence. In my view, metaphorically, he is no longer a complete whole without his *anima*. Moreover, without being in correlation with Mrs. Ramsay, after her death he lacks interest, his traits turn pale, as pictured when drifting in the boat. It is his son who must take the helm. Furthermore, even when they finally manage to reach the lighthouse, the long-awaited happening appears not to have any significance any more. Though the mood of mystery is the strongest at the end, the expressiveness and picturesqueness fade out. It fades out because the real Lighthouse, which was Mrs. Ramsay's spirit, is gone. It was her character that the author highlighted deliberately to shine over the other figures turning them into shadows or mere reflections. Kronenberger puts it well in this remarks:

"The other characters are not fully alive because they are not whole enough. Most of them are one-dimensional fragments that have been created with great insight but insufficient vitality. They have minds, moods, emotions-- but they get all three through creative intellect. For passion Mrs. Woolf has no

¹⁰⁰ Kronenberger, Louis *Virginia Woolf Explores an English Country Home* in New York Times, May 8, 1925 <http://www.nytimes.com/books/97/06/08/reviews/woolf-lighthouse.html>

gift--her people never invade the field of elementary emotions: they are hardly animal at all.”¹⁰¹

The house in which all the characters spend their time functions as a cube of prescribed social order that isolates the household members and guests from the external world of nature, where the wild forces dominate. Inside the domestic space people must apply to a certain hierarchy, fulfil their roles: for instance, Mrs. Ramsay must read to her son and the guests must be polite. When anyone fails, they immediately face a negative reaction of other inmates, just as Mr. Tansley is rejected when others disagree with him and find him impolite.

Such a distinction between two worlds, the inner and the outer, can be interpreted via a phenomenon that Lacan called the *Symbolic* or the *Symbolic order*. It is a dimension in which the two counterparts do not exist in reality but they can be perceived only through their different features. The Symbolic describes the radical alterity, called the Other.

“The Unconscious is the discourse of this Other, and thus belongs wholly to the symbolic order. The symbolic is the realm of the Law which regulates desire in the Oedipus complex. It is the realm of culture as opposed to the imaginary order of nature.”¹⁰²

The mentioned realm of culture is herein represented by the domestic place and nature is all wilderness outside it. Virginia Woolf wanted to mark that the world of nature is more powerful, thus in part one the weather conditions make the sail to the lighthouse impossible, in part two the passing of time and seasons turn the house into an abandoned and neglected place, or in part three the ocean waves carry the drifting boat.

Lacan mentioned as well that the symbolic order is a habitat of absence. This psychological absence is visible in Lily (therefore – Woolf) feeling alienated and different from all the other inmates. Moreover, Lily senses absence or distance reigning among the family members and she manages to enclose this nuance in her canvas. With a use of abstract forms, the painter examines the relationships among the people, all the

¹⁰¹ Op. cit.

¹⁰² Evans, Dylan *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, London: Routledge, 1996, p. 202.

imperceptible space and atmosphere between them, sometimes cubistically geometrical. She chooses the technique of abstraction because she is aware it is impossible to render the complexity of human; what is more, we only perceive others through our own thoughts, emotions, and senses. Pure objectivity is beyond human powers. Cubist style is also perceptible in *To the Lighthouse* via the use of pieces of thoughts and words conjoined together in one flow of the stream. When Lily penetrates the depth of her own painting, she gets lost among the blurs and complexity, it is difficult for her to finish the painting as she is unsure what to do with the remaining empty space at the centre, just as she felt the absence in her surrounding.

*“She looked at the steps; they were empty; she looked at her canvas; it was blurred. With sudden intensity, as if she saw clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was finished.”*¹⁰³

This line marks the completion of the artistic creation, and it has been interpreted by the critics as the lighthouse, for Virginia Woolf herself used the same term to explain the title of her novel. She confessed that she did not mean anything by the lighthouse but simply needed a line that would link everything together, to hold the whole concept of her work.¹⁰⁴ The line Lily draws may symbolically represent a linking solution to conjoin the omnipresent duality together, the opposite forces, as well as the two contrasting worlds of nature and domesticity, or finally the form and spirit of universal human existence. This linkage is an identical technique to which Woolf used to join the parts of the novel itself with choosing to write the middle part in a different manner.

In this chapter I have analysed Virginia Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse* from the perspective of psychoanalytical approach and in the context of the author's personal experience. I have focused on the techniques used and the meaning of the painting described in the story, in order to provide myself materials for a further comparison with Robert Fry's artistic works, which I have examined in the previous chapter. I shall now compare *To the Lighthouse* as an example of literature with Fry's paintings as examples of art with regard to the psychoanalytical background.

¹⁰³ Woolf, Virginia *To the Lighthouse*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 170.

¹⁰⁴ Harrington, Henry *The Central Line down the Middle of “To the Lighthouse”* in *Contemporary Literature*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1980, vol. 21, no. 3.

Chapter 5.

Psychoanalytical comparison.

This chapter shall focus particularly on the comparison of Robert Fry's artistic output and Virginia Woolf's writing of *To the Lighthouse*. After having dedicated my attention to both of them separately in the previous chapter I can now draw conclusions from what had been written so far on their works by the critics and what I have noticed myself in the process of analysis.

Although Fry and Woolf represent two different genres of art – painting and literature, there is still much noticeable similarity in their style, inspirations, techniques, artistic expression and biographical influence, which is deliberately psychological in both cases.

First and foremost, in case of both of the analysed, the personal history and family background is highly influential. Fry's paintings would certainly not be so loaded with psychology if he did not have parents occupied with psychiatry. Not only must he had an easy access to his father's research materials and books but being brought up in the environment of intellectuals directed his mind onto the exploratory paths from the very beginning. Similarly, Adeline Stephen grew up in the house full of complicated personalities, twisted family roots, with one sister being mentally ill and another one being a lesbian artist. Her family relationships and event are vividly penned in the novel, just like Fry reflects his psychological intricacy seeded in his mind in the family home. The inscription *brain lock* at the bottom of his canvases seems to come directly from his father's bookshelf. In case of Woolf, the whole structure and plot were designed to investigate her own family, where the characters of Mr. And Mrs. Ramsay are representations of her parents and the character of Lily Briscoe merges the author herself and her sister Vanessa, the painter.

The motif of duality plays an important role in both compared branches of art. First it appears in distinction between the form and the content. As I have mentioned in Chapter 3, Robert Fry underlined himself in the interview that the materials he uses in his artistic creation, as well as the combined techniques are equally important to the

presented themes which the paintings explore. Moreover, most of his works present two figures, understood either as representations of the artist himself and the model, or the doubleness of human psyche in general, such as the discernment between the anima and the animus, the conscious and the unconscious. In comparison, Woolf's character of Lily encompasses the personality of the author herself and her sister. Besides, the differentiation of the double form is visible in the division of the inner world of the Ramsay's domestic environment and the outside one, the wild nature highlighted by the weather changes, the seasons passing and strong waves, all beyond human control.

Although these are extremely complex ideas, this dual pattern functions in the human brain and it can be related to many aspects of comprehension, what is more, there has always functioned a strong sense of contrast between such ideas like: good and evil, life and death, woman and man, heaven and hell, soul and body, etc. The duality exists in our perception and nature because it is rooted in the collective unconscious. Indeed, the nonmaterial notions and ideas are processed with physical fleshly brain, thus, if the idea of creation is universal and it functions on the same rules as the whole world is based on, then the process of artistic realisation gives an artist a demiurgic power to transfer the spiritual strata into the material fields. For this reason, the comparison of two different forms of art makes sense and it is important in order to draw general conclusions on the existence and the driving force of creation.

Furthermore, the noticeable resemblance of the compared works consist in the way of presenting the figures. The characters of Woolf's novel are sketched with literary means, they are not directly and openly described by the narrator but the reader comprehends them from various points of view through the use of *stream of consciousness* technique merging the flows of other characters emotions and thoughts. Likewise, Fry portrays his figures by merely indicating their uncertain existence with strokes of the brush or covering their faces with black dripping gloss paint, enclosing them in geometrical shapes. Such a techniques involves the reader into the process of creation via the use of his/her imagination and thought process to make the characters complete. This makes the work of art forever opened and alive for the limits of interpretation are not finite by intention.

The use of experimental forms is important for the final effect in case of painting as well as in literature as they make the bond between physicality of materials and psychological terrains. Thus, Fry crosses the oil paint with enamel, acrylic, marker pen and Woolf intertwines her stream of consciousness with narrative in order to focus the recipient's attention on the sense of process and change. Without having extensive knowledge of psychological fields and notions, it would be impossible to make use of artistic tools in such deliberate and well-composed manner. Accordingly, my opinion is that such works of art are incomprehensible for recipients who do not have appropriate information, education and attitude towards art. For this reason, the basic foundations of psychoanalysis were necessary to present at the beginning of this thesis before the actual works could be examined as the examples.

Filling the works with so much depth and many symbols results from the authors' search for perfect essence and escape from fleshly, material prisons into the world of imagination and spirit. The material existence is not flawless and invariable, therefore, the figures and characters, especially secondary, are portrayed in somewhat unfinished way, with blurs and shades, whether it concerns the use of paint or words.

The painting described in *To the Lighthouse* resembles Fry's works in many aspects, the *Purple Series* in particular. It is not merely a puzzle of colours but it serves as a collage of the Ramsay family psychological portrait. Its intention does is not pleasing the eye but realising and materialising the creator's inner feelings, thoughts, images, and, what is important, reaching dwelling into the deepest contents hidden in shadow of the psyche in order to visualise them, make them conscious and perhaps release from their burden. The painting in the book as well as the paintings on the canvas are constructed on the basis of abstract techniques which serve to illustrate the parallel existence of two worlds: the visual and non-visual, the inner and outer, the psychological and physical state.

Symbols are used to enhance the presence of what is incomprehensible by the basic senses, of what is beyond the limited earthly existence. Thus, Fry inserts the symbolic "8" for perfection and infinity among his lines and shapes, or places his male and female figures in positions of the mirror image. Woolf draws the symbolic line at the centre of Lily's painting to mark the bond between the omnipresent duality, without

which the whole work and its concept would not be complete. The lighthouse itself functions as a metaphor of the light side of human nature personalised in the character of Mrs. Ramsay in such features as kindness, care and attention, family love. Woolf used the same technique to mark such a bond in the material field via the use of the different narrative technique in her middle chapter to conjoin the framing chapters.

The purple hue used in both disciplines is not accidental either. As I have mentioned in chapter 3 of this thesis, the critics interpret it as a representation of the two opposite poles such as masculinity and femininity, for it is obtained from the combination of two utmost colours appearing in nature perceptible by the human eye, red and blue. In Fry's *Purple Series* it is used as a background field to bathe the figures, as a metaphorical cytoplasm where their personalities can cross within, their spirits can reveal, and keeping their physical form is no longer necessary. In *To the Lighthouse* the model masculine and feminine traits are represented by Mr. And Mrs. Ramsay being contrasted to the highest extent. In *Purple Study 5* the man's painted face drips down the canvas as if his personality was melting, and the purple blurs in Briscoe's painting are used to inform us that we can never see the truth about others as it is shadowed by our personal impressions. Fry is also aware that we do not possess the mental autonomy, which he demonstrates through placing the inscription "*free mind no chance*" in *Purple Study 9*. This conviction results either in depriving the figures of their faces. Another caption, used in *Red I* painting, saying "*brain lock*" is understood as compulsive obsessive way of thinking and it resembles much Woolf's writing technique of the *stream of consciousness* which consists of accumulation of the characters' loose thoughts and emotions.

Both Fry and Woolf are introverts putting much attention to self-investigation of their personas. They explore psychological terrains and their artistic works serve them as forms of putting out their spiritual substance into matter. It is stunning how Virginia Woolf managed to capture the essence she wanted to express in her work on a double level – herself composing the novel on the basis of the same rule as her protagonist, Lily, equipped with the brush. Alike her, Robert Fry chose the extremely difficult technique of engraving the word "*DAYS*" on the metal plate. They are intelligent people who are not satisfied with easy means.

The motif of time passing is indicated in the painter's works by scrawls of lines which coincide with complexity of his weaving thoughts. In the writer's case it is shown in the middle chapter by depicting the house in a changed way. The breaking-point events, such as Mrs. Ramsay's death, are taken by the author in a sort of metaphorical brackets, as if they were tagged into a different dimensional form of timeline, for they are not perceived from the point of view of any character. Drawing attention to the flesh and matter serves to make the recipient aware of subjectivity of perception and life in general. That is why both of the compared artists put so much effort in the composition, tools and techniques to create the work. Creativity gives them power to open the fields of meeting of the symbol and the image. Neither artistic nor literary talent can function solely without the outstanding intelligence and conscientiousness.

Fry and Woolf derive inspiration from cubistic movement, which is visible in their strive for fusion between mass and void. Their sophisticated works decline the rigid distinction between form and content, thus on the canvases we find indefinite subjects suspended in vague positions in stretched space, and the novel lacks typical plot or action in favour of the flow of the characters personalities. In this context, the work of art is no longer just a illusory representation of reality, but it turns itself into a reality of the nature's transformation. In accordance with cubistic foundations, nothing remains certain and absolute, which the presented works comply with. The shapes are geometrical and the figures half-transparent, both on Fry's canvases and the description featured by Briscoe.

The conclusion emerging from the analysed works is that the most complicated structure existing in the Universe, which consumes the artists' attention, is human mind. Therefore, they lead psychological dialogues with themselves and their works are the means of deep introspection. This should, and it does, in my opinion, enact the parallel process of self-recognition and psychological development in the viewer/reader's mind. That is why I find the achievements of Fry and Woolf so particularly fascinating and absorbing.

I shall now summarize the taken subject matter of my thesis and encapsulate the conclusions in order to give it a coherent shape, as well as to underline the importance of the preceding comparison.

Conclusion.

The aim of this part of my research paper is to gather the whole psychological sphere and ideas presented in the preceding chapters. In my analysis I have discussed the paintings of Robert Fry and the novel by Virginia Woolf entitled *To the Lighthouse*. I have chosen to analyse these two particular individuals because I find their artistic output extremely interesting and filled with psychological essence.

I have started from presenting the theory of Comparative Literature in my chapter 1 in order to explain the tools I use for my analysis. It is necessary for full awareness of the examined issues, as well as for understanding the purpose of this thesis. I have first explained the definitions and functions of Comparative Literature focusing on the notion of comparison in general, as well as on basic principles of the comparatist's activity. What is more, I have explained the relation between literature and psychology. Comparative Literature basically deals with the relation between the text and the reader. Consequently, the artists which I have analysed both lead a psychological dialogue with themselves and with the recipients. They both use deliberate techniques to involve their readers/viewers in the process of creation by capturing their thoughts and imagination.

I have introduced the history of psychoanalysis and its foundations as it was necessary for the psychological examination of the works of art. From among the immense field of knowledge which psychology is I have chosen to bring forward the biographies of its founders and most significant figures. The terminology I have used was introduced and described by Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Jung and Jacques Lacan.

There are plenty of symbols used in the works of Fry and Woolf which would be impossible to comprehend without the basic knowledge of psychoanalytic terms. For them the artistic creation is a means of transforming the spiritual strata into matter and realisation of their own inward contents of the persona. Although they have chosen different means of expression – branches of art and literature, they both share the same interest into the psychological depth of human nature and mind. Moreover, they oppose the traditional distinction between form and content finding their inspiration in cubistic

movement. Fry and Woolf are much aware of subjectivity of perception, as well as limitations of the world, and through their works they attempt to depict the impossibility to regard the effect of the creation as finished. I have described Fry's variety of artistic materials and Woolf's complex technique of *stream of consciousness* in order to show their purposefulness.

The motif of duality is crucial for investigation of these paintings and the novel, thus without being aware of the human psyche structure discovered and detailed by the psychoanalysts it would be impossible to notice these dependences.

I have paid special attention to the painting described in *To the Lighthouse* for much resemblance can be found between it and Robert Fry's *Purple Study* paintings. The use of purple hue is intentional to embrace the fusion and communication between the contrastive poles. Just as obtaining the purple colour is the most difficult for a painter, so is the masculine and feminine interrelation shown in the novel, referring rather to the anima and animus of the persona than actual sexual difference between the characters.

Fry and Woolf take delight in crossing the areas of psychological terrains, they surprise with sophistication of their detailed works and are both very self-aware individuals with broad knowledge of psychoanalytical terms. They are engaged in deep exploration of the mind, spiritual contents of the collective unconscious communicated by the use of symbols, images and psychological metaphors. Creating art seems to be their fuel for life and their pursuit of constant self-development.

Gathering all points, the development of psychoanalysis significantly changes our point of view and understanding of works. With psychoanalytic tools we are able to interpret vastness of artistic creation and detect the intricate details of it, as well as answer the fundamental question of whether art is needed at all and what is the spark of the creative outburst.

Summary.

The aim of this thesis was to analyse and compare the works of Robert Fry and the novel by Virginia Woolf entitled *To the Lighthouse* on the basis of psychoanalysis with use of tools provided by Comparative Literature.

The first two chapters deal with definitions and basic historical background of Comparative Literature and Psychoanalysis in order to explain the tools of the research analysis.

The next chapters provide detailed information about the compared artists and their works, including biographical information, styles, inspiration and psychological interpretation. All gathered materials are my own opinions and conclusions supported by professional literary critics' opinions found in books and essays.

The final part describes the connection between painting and writing on the examples of the chosen artists, as well as the importance of psychoanalysis for interpretation of art and literature.

Streszczenie.

Celem tej rozprawy jest analiza i porównanie prac Roberta Fry'a oraz powieści Virginii Woolf zatytułowanej *Do latarni morskiej* w oparciu o psychoanalizę z wykorzystaniem narzędzi jakie zapewnia Literatura Porównawcza.

Pierwsze dwa rozdziały dotyczą definicji oraz podstawowych informacji historycznych na temat Literatury Porównawczej i Psychoanalizy w celu objaśnienia narzędzi służących do zrealizowania tej analizy badawczej.

Kolejne rozdziały zawierają szczegółowe informacje o porównywanych twórcach i ich dziełach, włącznie z informacją biograficzną, stylami, inspiracjami a także interpretację psychologiczną. Wszystkie zgromadzone materiały stanowią moje osobiste opinie i wnioski poparte zdaniem profesjonalnych krytyków literackich umieszczonym w książkach i esejach.

Część końcowa opisuje związek pomiędzy malarstwem i pisaniem na przykładach wybranych twórców, a także znaczenie psychoanalizy w interpretacji sztuki i literatury.

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Illustrations:

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