

Psychopathic Characters on the Stage

1905-1906, Sigmund Freud

舞台上的病理性角色

Lecture outline by

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I. Summary of the article

1. Aristotle:

The purpose of tragedy is to arouse “fear and **pity**”

Pity: sympathetic suffering 感同身受

*¹Catharsis²: 洗滌作用

It opens up sources of pleasure or enjoyment because of 1) the relief produced by a thorough discharge 釋放; 2) an accompanying sexual excitation (a raising of the potential of one’s psychical state) 亢奮.

2. *Schau-spiel* (spectacle-play/game; dramatic performance):

Drama allows the spectator to identify himself with a hero. He acquires vicarious satisfaction without pains and sufferings and acute fears. His enjoyment is based on an illusion. He enjoys being a “great man,” and may give way to such suppressed impulses as a craving for freedom in religious, political, social and sexual matters. Drama seeks to explore emotional possibilities more deeply.

*Creativity is play or playfulness.

*Ex. Oscar Wilde

3. Precondition of drama:

1) It should not cause suffering to the audience.

2) It should compensate for the pity which is aroused.

(Modern writers often failed to obey this rule.)

3) Physical suffering is soon restricted to mental suffering.

*Ex. Laura in *The Glass Menagerie*

¹ 所有以星號*標示的部分，為演講者補充、延伸 Freud 原文的概念。

² The feeling of release at the end of a tragedy experienced by audience members who have undergone feelings of fear and pity, shared in the troubles of the play’s protagonist, and now are set free from the emotional grasp of the action.

4. Greek tragedies & modern drama:

Conflict: effort of will + resistance

Five types classified according to the terrain on which the action that leads to the suffering is fought out:

- 1) *religious* drama: rebellion against gods
- 2) *social* drama: struggle against human society (in Ibsen)
- 3) *character* drama: struggle between individual men
- 4) *psychological* drama: struggle between two almost equal conscious impulses; it must end in the extinction of one of the impulses; it must end in a renunciation.

*Ex. *Anthony and Cleopatra* (code of honor vs. love 江山 vs.美人)

*We act out such a drama every morning, "To get up or not to get up."

5) *psychopathological drama*:

Conflict between a conscious impulse and a repressed one.

Precondition of enjoyment: spectator should be a neurotic; he can derive pleasure from the revelation and recognition of a repressed impulse.

In a non-neurotic this recognition will meet aversion and will call up a readiness to repeat the act of repression which has earlier been successfully brought to bear on the impulse.

But in neurotics the repression is on the brink of failing: it is unstable and needs a constant renewal of expenditure. The dramatist provides an enjoyment of the liberation (of the repressed) and a resistance.

5. *Hamlet*

- 1) The hero is becoming psychopathic in the course of the action of the play.
- 2) The repressed impulse: Oedipus complex 戀母情結, 伊底帕斯情節
- 3) The impulse, struggling into consciousness, is never given a name. Diversion of attention: The spectator is in the grip of his emotions instead of examining what is happening.

The conflict in *Hamlet* is so effectively concealed that it was left for me [Freud] to unearth it.

How we gain insight into a neurosis

The dramatist is to induce the same illness in us, if we are made to follow the development of the illness along with the sufferer. *類似打疫苗以獲得免疫力

*Enjoy drama as a source of psychological insight.

II. Examples of Psychopathic Characters

1. Melancholy or melancholia

Hamlet. O that this too too sullied flesh would melt,

Thaw and resolve itself into a dew,
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon'gainst self-slaughter. O God! God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!

[.....]

Frailty, thy name is woman (*Hamlet* 1.2.129-46)

啊，願這身齷齪透頂的肉體能溶解、
消蝕、讓自己化成一滴露水！
或者說上帝的律法沒有
禁止自殺！啊上帝啊上帝，
這世間的種種在我看來
多麼無聊、陳腐、乏味、沒有意義！

[.....]

弱者啊，你的名字就叫女人！³

To be, or not to be . . . lose the name of action.

(3.1.56-163)

Antonio. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad.

It wearies me, you may say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me
That I have much ado to know myself.

(*The Merchant of Venice* 1.1.1-7)

說真的，不知道為什麼，我憂愁。
它使我鬱鬱寡歡；你們說，你們也跟著我發愁。
可是我怎麼感染、找到、或碰上它，
它是什麼樣的材質，它從何來，

³ 引自彭鏡禧教授譯註《哈姆雷》的譯文。(台北：聯經，2001)。

我還需琢磨。
這憂愁，把我整得像個呆瓜
我煞費心思，還是不瞭解自己。

2. **Othello syndrome** 奧賽羅症候群：懷疑自己的配偶或愛人不忠

Othello delusion; delusional jealousy (some of the patients suffering from the Othello delusion may present with hostility ranging from verbal threats to homicidal acts)

Iago. O, beware jealousy;

It is the green-eye'd monster, which doth mock
That meat it feeds on. That cuckold lives in bliss,
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger;
But O, what damned minutes tells he o'er
Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves!

(*Othello* 3.3.169-74)

您要提防嫉妒！
這個綠眼睛的怪獸，它一邊吞吃人，一邊玩弄人。
有一種男人算是運氣好，明知自己
戴了綠帽子，好在並不愛那紅杏出牆的人。
可是，唉，另外一種男人真叫活受罪，
他是又疼，又猜，又疑，卻偏偏愛得要命！

Othello. I pray you in your letters,

When you shall these unlucky deeds relate
[.....] then you must speak
Of one that lov'd not wisely, but too well:
Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought,
Perplex'd in the extreme (5.2. 341-47)

請您在上呈的報告
如此說這不幸的案情：此人
愛得不智，卻愛得太痴
此人不輕易嫉妒，可是一旦被操弄
就狂亂到極端。

3. 當代的憂鬱診斷⁴

哀愁的哲學：美麗與哀愁，人生與哀愁，智慧與哀愁，行動與哀愁

⁴ 參考蔡茂堂牧師（台大醫學系第一名畢業，曾任台大精神科醫師）演講錄影：www.hoping.org.tw-->和平熱門-->蔡牧師專欄「如何幫助憂鬱症的朋友 1.2」

哀愁的表現兩大必要症狀--心情低落，興趣喪失--兩週持續時間
哀愁的種類