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**Exploring the Concept of « Coconut » in
Matlwa Kopano's *Coconut* (2007)**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of
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Dedication

To our beloved ones who have truly believed in us

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Abstract

This paper gives a psychoanalytic examination of Kopano Matlwa's novel *Coconut*. The analysis, which draws on Freudian psychoanalytic theories, investigates the complex dynamics of human psyche and the impact of personal and social experiences on finding the individual's identity. This dissertation deals with the topic of identity and belonging and delves into the interplay between the conscious and unconscious impulses of the characters' novel by analyzing their psychological conflicts. The protagonists go on a journey of identity-search, facing belonging issues and repressed identity, and also deal with their cultural placement and delve into their defense mechanisms.

Key words: Coconut, Identity, Culture, Psyche, Race, Post-apartheid

Table of Contents

Dedication	I
Acknowledgement... ..	II
Abstract... ..	III
Table of Contents.....	IV
General Introduction	1
Chapter I: Unrevealing Identities: Psychoanalysis of <i>Coconut</i> in Post-Apartheid Africa	
Introduction	8
I-1 The Issue of Identity and Belonging in Post-Apartheid Africa	8
I-1-1 Historical Context.....	9
I-1-2 Social Context	10
I-1-3 Impact on Teenagers	10
I-2 The Importance of Psychoanalysis in Literary Studies.....	11
I-2-1 The Rise of Psychoanalysis in Literature	12
I-2-2 Prominent Contribution to Literary Studies	13
I-2-3 The Relevance of Psychoanalysis to Literature.....	14
I-3 Psychoanalytic Freudian Theory Relevant to Identity.....	15
I-3-1 Freud’s Concept (the Id, Ego, Superego)	16
I-3-1-1 Id	16
I-3-1-2 Ego	17
I-3-1-3 Superego.....	17
I-4 The Concept of “Coconut” in post-apartheid Africa	18
Conclusion.....	19
Chapter II: The Freudian Psychoanalysis of <i>Coconut</i> in Terms of Identity and Belonging	
Introduction	20

II-1 Synopsis.....	21
II-2 Freudian Analysis of Ofilwe, Fikile, and Fikile’s Uncle	22
II-2-1 Ofilwe’s Analysis.....	22
II-2-1-1 Ofilwe’s Id.....	22
II-2-1-2 Ofilwe’s Ego.....	23
II-2-1-3 Ofilwe’s Superego	24
II-2-2 Fikile’s Analysis	25
II-2-2-1 Fikil’s Id.....	25
II-2-2-2 Fikile’s Ego.....	26
II-2-2-3 Fikile’s Superego	27
II-2-3 Silas Nyoni’s Analysis	28
II-2-3-1 Silas Nyoni’s Id	28
II-2-3-2 Silas Nyoni’s Ego	28
II-2-3-3 Silas Nyoni’s Superego.....	29
II-3 Cultural Displacement.....	29
II-3-1 Yearning for Whiteness.....	30
II-3-2 Double Consciousness	31
II-3-3 Generational Divide	32
II-4 Defense Mechanisms.....	33
II-4-1 Repression and Denial	33
Conclusion.....	35
General Conclusion	37
Works Cited List	39

Résumé

General Introduction

General Introduction

General introduction

Background

Identity and belonging are portrayed in Kopano Matlwa's novel *Coconut* in order to explain how young black South Africans live in the newly-proclaimed democracy in post-apartheid South Africa facing the challenge of dealing with the gap between the external or projected image and the inner self. The title of the novel is also symbolic of such conflict as we see characters who are black on the outside and white on the inside. South Africans still struggle with cultural identity after Apartheid. These issues are well depicted through *Coconut* as they affect the characters perfectly mirroring continued societal phenomena.

The aim of the study

In this study we seek to explain such complex issues as well as their potential explanation through the psychoanalytic theories for the characters' situations. The objective of this study is to discuss identity and belonging in relation to the post-colonial South Africa with the case study *Coconut*. By applying psychoanalytic theories, mainly that of Freud, this research seeks to understand the psychological dimensions of the characters' experiences and the novel's social commentary.

Statement of the Problem

The issue central to this research paper is the absence of a sufficient amount of scholarly studies on the psychological aspects of the post-apartheid South African novels, especially concerning the process of identity construction and identity crises in the works of the novels' authors. As with many novels from this period, such aspects are routinely omitted, but in turning to Kopano Matlwa's *Coconut*, we are able to examine these subjects. As this research analyzes how *Coconut* shows the South African postcolonial subject in a context that undermines even the very category of race and, as such, consequently endeavors to

General Introduction

make use of Freudian psychoanalysis to understand the psychological processes undergone by the characters in the novel, this piece of research gives a disparate and missing psychological reading of the novel and brings a new perspective in the analysis of post-apartheid South African literatures.

We can clearly see that post-apartheid South African novels do not mainly deal with the identity formation and the belonging struggles and also lack psychological perspective. Coconut novel on the other hand is a recent unique post-apartheid South African novel that deals with identity and belonging issues and is not psychologically explored. In our research paper, we will give the psychological analysis needed of Kopano Matlwa's Coconut by answering these questions, and this is what makes our work an original one.

Research Questions

1. How does Coconut novel depict the various complexities of identity and belonging within a post-colonial South African context?
2. What role do psychoanalytic theories and concepts play in understanding the challenges of identity and belonging as experienced by the characters in Coconut?

Literature Review

Disgrace, one of the most famous South African novels, written by J. M. Coetzee in which he explores themes of power, shame, and retribution in the post-apartheid South Africa. The author narrates the story of David Lurie, Coetzee has well defended power relations and struggle of forgiveness in his narrative. His novel clearly deals with themes of power, shame, and forgiveness and there is no light shed on identity and belonging issues in his famous work. He does not depict identity struggle and it is not a major theme in one of the prominent Post- Apartheid South-African literature. (Stratton, 2002)

Another famous work, where the main theme is power, and politics rather than identity

General Introduction

formation and belonging issues is *None to Accompany Me* (1994) by Nadine Gordimer. Taking place during the political transformation in South Africa from apartheid to a post- apartheid democracy, the novel centers on a white lawyer, Vera Stark, and Didymus Maqoma, a black freedom fighter, and his wife experiencing changes in the political sphere and the tension in their marriage. The novel deals with the issues of the personal and the political life of the characters. Nadine Gordimer in her novel focuses on the political transformation between apartheid and democratic South Africa. Through this perspective, we can see that identity formation and belonging issues are not a common theme in the post-apartheid South African novels, it is not a common theme as politics and power are. (Head, Dominic)

After the colonization in South Africa, “literary productivity in South Africa increased dramatically with the political change from apartheid to multi-racial democracy in 1994. This surge has attracted much interest, with critics trying to map the changes observable on the post- apartheid literary landscape using race and gender” (Adetunji Kazeem Adebisi,8). The focus and the main interest of the critical studies in the post-apartheid era of South African literature is not about identity struggle, but are much more about race and gender, which is a result of the influence of the multi-racial democracy.

Sofia Kostelac sees that “ current South African literature as not being as preoccupied with the ethical problems of racial and cultural difference as earlier writing was” (Sofia Kostelac,10). In the article of *Conceptualizing Post-Transitional South African Literature in English*, written by Ronit Frenkel and Craig Mackenzie and published by Routledge in 2012, The author Sofia argues that in the last few years, the transitional years that followed democracy in South Africa, south African literature is not focusing on the colonialism and the identity themes and the authors are enjoying a greater freedom creating a significant change between them and their context which results in tackling new themes as race, gender

General Introduction

and sexuality.

According to Derek Hook, a lecturer in Psychosocial Studies at Birkbeck College London, and as he stated in his book *A Critical Psychology in Postcolonial (The Mind of Apartheid)*, published by Routledge in 2012, explicit psychology is a neglected element in the postcolonial novel of south Africa and the psychological study approach on the post-apartheid south African novel is not commonly applied. He argued that the apartheid was not only a social and political system but also a psychological one. Derek Hook in his book provides a deep understanding of the complex relation between psychology and systemic oppression and emphasizes the need for a critical psychological approach to address historical injustices in South Africa. In this context, Derek provides a psychological framework to analyze Apartheid South Africa psychologically, and has suggested the psychology of embodiment to understand the identity formation and the belonging issue.

One of the few works that analyzed Kopano Matlwa's novels, and precisely her novel *Coconut* we find the dissertation master of Pule Seabi, a student of English in Limpopo university, who has conducted a study of selected novels of Kopano Matlwa in which analyzed *Coconut*, *Split Milk*, and *Evening Remorse* novels through a theoretical textual analysis of identity formation that is based on feminism theory, post-colonial theory, and Afro centricity. The psychological lens of her novels is neglected which makes the identity and belonging issue's themes of her novels under examined.

Among the very few researches of identity of Kopano Matlwa's *Coconut* that we may find, there is a critique study conducted by Peter Moopi and Rodwell Makombe, in the scope of contemporary fiction, analyzing the identity issue in *Coconut*, published by Routledge in 31 July, 2020. They examined the struggle of belonging through a purely colonial perspective that is only based on the coloniality of power, of being, of knowledge. Psychology is again neglected in one of the few works examining identity formation in

General Introduction

Coconut.

The fact that the literary focus of post-apartheid South African literature has changed in the past few years and is no longer majored about identity issues, it makes the recent work *Coconut* by Kopano Matlwa, published recently in 2007 a different unique novel because of its identity theme. Kopano Matlwa has not changed the focus of theme and has tackled the identity formation problem. The critics also praised the originality of her work, “that she finely wroth, so cleverly revealed and uncomfortably familiar, Matlwa tackles an unspoken realm of personal identity in a world where traditional boundaries between black and white are as clear as chocolate milkshake” (Bobby Jordan, *Sunday Times Lifestyle*)

The Significance of the Study

This research tends to represent a clear applicability of psychoanalytical theories in analyzing literary texts and giving some deeper psychological explanations regarding the characters’ issues of self and identity and the question of belonging. Our research is restricted to the application of the Freudian psychoanalytic theories on the analysis of *Coconut*.

Structure of the Research

Our study is divided into two chapters the first chapter which is theoretical provides context for the remainder of the text, which focuses on the issue of culture of identity and belonging in post-apartheid South Africa as well as Freud concepts of psychoanalysis. The second chapter, which is analytical, outlines the plot of the novel, psychological construction of the main characters, as well as notions of cultural displacement and defense mechanisms. This structure helps provide a step-by step explanation of how the novel *Coconut* depicts the issue of identity and belonging in contemporary post-apartheid South Africa.

General Introduction

Limitation of the study

This study could be richer in terms of theories and characters choice, however we are limited by the number of pages that can restrict the depth of analysis and interpretation of our findings in addition to time.

**Chapter I: Unrevealing Identities:
Psychoanalysis of *Coconut* in Post-
Apartheid Africa**

Introduction

Identity, Culture and their relationship is going to explore the mirrored picture of interactions between identity culture and psychoanalysis during the time of post-apartheid Africa. This exploration, comprising of several layers of identity formation, with the 'coconut' concept being the central stereotype, uncovers the political dynamics within its societal context. This chapter endeavors to uncover the inner works of the human psyche using the lens of psychoanalysis, profile the dynamic processes of identity crafting and add a new dimension to how readers view identity formation in rapidly transforming society. In other words the postcolonial literature encompasses the multifaceted view of the subject along with the minutest details of the issue to draw light to the enduring effects of colonialism and apartheid in today's African society.

I-1 The Issue of Identity and Belonging in Post-Apartheid Africa

The issues of identity and belonging in post-apartheid Africa are complex and multi-layered, influenced by history, colonial remains and present socio-political realities. The end of apartheid in South Africa in 1994 was a historical turning point and a new era of equality, democracy and transformation for a united nation began. In spite of this, the problem of how to deal with identity and belonging in the system of a deep-rooted apartheid proves to be a challenging task.

"The dismantling of apartheid did not lead to a singular, unified black subjectivity," as Posel (2001) aptly observes. Identity matters are not all about race but it involves other issues like ethnicity, language, culture, and nationality. Africa is very diverse with over thousands of ethnic groups, languages and cultural practices. After apartheid, there was a will to represent and recognize this variety as the basis of national identity. On the other hand, this has sometimes resulted in tensions and clashes between people, especially in the cases of ethnic conflict and

violence.

Overall, identity issues in the post-apartheid Africa are complex and include race, ethnicity, culture, nationality. Many attempts have been made to foster inclusive nation-building and celebrate diversity, and yet, challenges remain along the way due to the historical background and the socio-economic disparities as well as the political conflicts. Addressing these challenges requires a social approach to develop a society that is inclusive, equal and respectful of the diverse identities of the people who constitute it.

I-1-1 Historical Context

The year 1994 marked the transition from the apartheid regime to the post-apartheid South Africa, signifying the end of the system of ethnic segregation and the beginning of a new era of democracy and equity. The dismantling of apartheid in 1994 marked a watershed moment in South Africa's history as stated by Nelson Mandela, it was “ushering in an era of democracy and dismantling a system of racial segregation that had defined the country for decades” (2011). However, despite this significant achievement, apartheid is still recorded in history, creating lasting effects on the country's economy, society, and political life. 'Despite the legal dismantling of apartheid,' its legacy continues to cast a long shadow, with its social, economic, and psychological consequences persisting and affecting the lives of South Africans, particularly the marginalized” (Tutu, 1994). Although the dismantling of apartheid laws through the legal system was a landmark moment for the nation, the aftermath of the exclusion period still resonates in the system, defining lives, particularly those who are vulnerable. Such feelings, so evocatively portrayed in the literature of that time, emphasize the depth of complexity of transition period, and at the same time, it demonstrates the strength of human spirit in the face of historical injustices. Therefore, like the fading echoes of apartheid, the difficulty of this journey towards establishing a truly democratic society becomes more and more visible.

I-1-2 Social Context

Following the breakdown of the apartheid system, South Africa was in the course of building a nation that would comprise the citizens of the country, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, and previous social groupings, pull together in unison. It is as F. W. de Klerk stated that: "Post-apartheid South Africa embarked on a complex journey of reconciliation and nation-building, striving to heal the deep divisions of the past and forge a unified future for its diverse citizenry"(1990). Whilst the choice to transition to democracy was made, the process has been turbulent, with the state grappling with the messiness of a multicultural identity, socio-economic divisions as well as the ramifications of colonialism and apartheid. "The transition to democracy has been fraught with challenges, as South Africa grapples with its multicultural identity, entrenched socioeconomic inequalities, and the lingering effects of colonialism and apartheid" (Albie Sachs)

The youth have to face the same transforming South Africa, but under the presence of these conditions, and have to learn to work for their places, keep up with modernity and define their roles in the heritage that will be built. Hence, they become heir to both the difficulties proceeding from their historical nation's occurrences and worldwide challenges as well as emerging technologies. Moreover, today's youth are not only the subject of the influence of social networks, through which they have an opportunity to express themselves, but also for their relationship and social dynamics.

I-1-3 Impact on Teenagers

"The youth in post-apartheid South Africa face the dual challenge of navigating their own identities within a transforming society and confronting the historical burdens of their nation." (PumlaGqola, 2001). This poignant observation from Pumla Gqola encapsulates the complex journey of young South Africans. Those young people in the post-apartheid South Africa are navigating roads of self-discovery while their struggle is deeply rooted in the social

agenda for justice and equality accompanied by the bigger struggle of their nation.

They do have to grapple with different complexities such as generational recurrence of trauma experiencing and the survivorship of unequal structures that keep them away from education, job or any other means to enhance their standard of living. While the clearing up of being marginalized teenagers is a huge problem, undoubtedly, the intersection of other reasons including race, class, and any other form of discrimination make their sense of acceptance and identity much more complex.

Despite those difficulties, the youth show great motivation in social activism and change-making endeavors, sparking hope to work hand in hand to stop injustice in society and positively transform it. The role of education becomes gradually significant considering it affects an individual's power, mentality, and ability to maneuver through the hurdles of the systemic racial injustices. Establishment of support circles and mentorship come to completion as the youth need such settings to foster belief and fortitude, the closing journey of adolescence in Post- apartheid South Africa is vibrant with resilience, endurance, and the quest for a more fair, inclusive tomorrow.

I-2 Importance of Psychoanalysis in Literary Studies

The influence of psychological studies in general, including psychoanalysis, has been too great it has been the basis of the entire psychology, and has affected other sections of science. Freud's psychoanalysis, for example, is centered on the unconscious mind exploration with regards to the role of early childhood in building personality and behavior later. In contrast to its previous predominance, twenty first century psychology is made up of more eclectic approaches; although some psychoanalysts regard Freud's theories to be outdated. (R Holt, 1989)

Literature is sometimes used as just entertainment. However it serves as a deeper purpose, revealing hidden desires and conflicts within the human psyche, "Psychoanalysis has

shown us that literature is not merely an entertainment or a collection of beautiful lies, but that it is a great storehouse of unconscious desires and conflicts." (Leon Edel, 1975) Specifically not only psychoanalysis influences literature and cultural studies but also the mental health awareness making it difficult to set the limits of its applicability, as we see its interdisciplinary potential. (McLeod, 2017) Vitalization of psychoanalysis involves use of evidence-based practice and neuroscience as the core under theme of psychoanalytic therapy.

The fact that its fame used to be huge in academic psychology and that it was really important, development of different theories in the whole psychological field is unquestionable. Although its prominence decreased, psychoanalysis remains a fundamental concept that continues to affect greatly the understanding of human behavior and the treatment of mental disturbances. (Eagelman, 2011)

I-2-1 The Rise of Psychoanalysis in Literature

The beginning of modern psychology appeared in the early 20th century, it is a new method of psychological analysis that uses new psychological concepts developed by different psychologists such as Carl Gustav Jung, Alfred Adler, and Otto Rank but especially by the prominent psychologist of all the time Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis field. His theories and its concepts such as Oedipus complex, id, ego and superego, and the unconscious served as a new psychological approach to analyze literature. It has also moved psychology from a purely medical environment into a different environment which is a literary one. (Hossain)

What marked the rise of this approach to literary theories was not only the appearance of the Freudian theories and its concepts but also the use of Sigmund Freud himself of his own theories to explain art, creativity, and literary works because 'Freud first presented his theory on the structure of the literary work and made a psychoanalytic inquiry into the nature of literature' (Hossain,4) .He used his psychoanalysis studies in the field of literature to make

sense of what he came up with as science and to clearly unmask the different layers literature has psychologically. As an example of the application of Freud of his theories to literature we can look at his work *The Interpretation of Dreams*, in which he analyzed Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* for their oedipal elements. And as a result, "we can begin to perceive that there is a mutual fascination between the field of Psychoanalysis and Literature" (Hossain,2) And this resulted also in an influence on authors, writers, and psychologists being interested in the internal psyche of the literary personas and having more focus on their inner worlds.

I-2-2 Prominent Contributions to Literary Studies

The concept of Freud, who developed the theory of psychoanalysis and emphasized the role of the unconscious mind, had a great influence on literature, and it definitely changed its focus. Freud's ideas provided a new lens for analyzing and interpreting literary works.

The psychodynamic theory of Freud allows us to uncover the subconscious internal traits, which can sometimes show themselves in actions silently or not obvious at all. At the same time literary critics adopted the trend to search for hidden fears, conflicts, and recreation of internal characters' worlds, which before was simply tacit or even forbidden for looks.

Psychoanalysis offered a new way of understanding the human mind, emphasizing the unconscious and its influence on our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. This new perspective had a profound impact on literary theory and criticism, as it provided a framework for analyzing the hidden meanings and motivations of characters, as well as the symbolic language and imagery often employed in literature." (1986)

The analytical schools which came to be called psychoanalysis helped a great deal in development of psychological realism of literature. Authors started to journey into the essential inner lives of characters, demonstrating the complicated process of the connection between conscious and unconscious thoughts, feelings, agonies, and dysfunctions of minds. "A

psychological novel reveals the inner workings of a character's mind it explores the character's motivations, desires, and conflicts" (Terry Eagleton, 1984).

In general, strict assimilation of Freudians' theory in an attempt to understand the meaning of the story leads to stereotypical thinking and to interpret everything as an elementary character. Although the interpretation usually results in tensions among those who read it in numerous ways, that situation will ultimately produce simplistic story lines. As stated in *Literary Theory: An Introduction*: "While psychoanalysis can illuminate some aspects of literature, it can also be a reductive tool, imposing a single interpretive framework on works that are rich in ambiguity and open to multiple readings." (Terry Eagleton, 1984).

Freud's theories are widely accepted by the community because he based them on observing social behavior of the Viennese people during the early 20th century. The fact that cultural judgments and historical accuracy depend on the allocation makes them a target for criticism. "The unconscious is a part of the psychological equipment of human beings the dream is a universal phenomenon" (Sigmund Freud, 1913).

It is necessary that there should be due recognition of the effect of Freud's analysis, but this should not lose sight thereby over the fact that the author is trying to achieve in this fantasy. We are as much to benefit from its education purposes as it begets concerns of it taking the place of traditional education.

Freud's psychoanalysis has led to the development of a range of character observation, which has made it more in-depth. Despite the fact that it was not so perfect, it also had its impact on the narrative by giving the chance to manifest the more complex nature of the characters which is usually left in the fictional literature.

I-2-3 The Relevance of Psychoanalysis to Literature

The relevance of psychoanalysis to literature is a result of the existence of the unconscious mind because "Psychoanalytic theories assume the existence of unconscious

internal states that motivate an individual's overt actions". (Beneath The Mask, 8).

According to Freud, literature is an analogue to daydreams, and the unconscious mind is a crucial element to understand literature. He believes that literary works have the fantasy of fulfillment of human desires as exactly as daydreams because the dissatisfaction of reality gives birth to the production of specific literary plots and specific literary characters with a certain complex inner psyche. But the psychoanalysis study on literature doesn't only allow to understand the inner state of the characters of the literary product but also to understand the inner state of the writer itself because "The authors and writers are influenced by the psychoanalytic concepts which are reflected in the characters of their works and also in their mind". (Hossain, 4)

The relevance of psychoanalysis to literature appears through applying the psychological approach on literary productions as a result of the comprehension of the interior monologue of the author and their characters because "the study of poetry must convince us that what happens even at that deeper level is not independent of the experience and distinctive strivings of the individual" (Bodkin et Bodkin, 447)

This relevance doesn't stop here but it appears through the sense it made in both psychoanalysis field and literary field as it is a sense of the objection and the subjection of literature in relation to psychoanalysis, and "when we look at literature as an object of psychoanalysis, psychoanalysis becomes a component of theoretical literary studies as a research method. On the contrary, psychoanalysis appears as an object of literary studies." (Musayeva Dilsuz Tychiyevna, 2)

I-3 Psychoanalytic Freudian Theory Relevant to Identity

Psychoanalysis is one of the key theories that have contributed to understanding the psychological processes of the formation of identity and structure of personality. The Very Similar yet also very high logical division of the human conscience made by Sigmund Freud

plays a major role in functioning of human behavior.

The ego-superego model's constitution can be understood as the sense of consciousness of Freud and the internalized moral standards and ideals that are found in the unconscious (Freud, 1933). This idea has come under heavy criticism, and there are those who claim that it is not based on scientific evidence while also failing to pass the rigor of empirical research.

I-3-1 Freud's Concept (The Id, ego-superego)

Freud's theory posits a fascinating structure of the mind with three key players: the id, ego, and superego. These are the internal forces that keep rolling them over all the time, being responsible for our self-esteem and sense of identity. Freud supposes that the human being has a mind, which is struggling with itself and such struggling is the cause of the human's sorrow and concern, and this is actually a fight against itself that can explain why the human feels sad and worried. Therefore, establishing such an umbrella to point out the needs of the human bring in both cheeriest and roughest time.

I-3-1-1 Id

This so-called 'unconscious lizard' level awards our wishes and needs as basic as possible, fast or even right now. It functions by the "pleasure principle," together with which it tries to correspond to our biological instincts. The id is the dark, inaccessible part of the personality. It contains everything that is inherited, that is present at birth, that is a laid down in the constitution—including, above all, those powerful instincts which eventually seek expression as passions. (Sigmund Freud) we may find a quote by Stevenson that explain it: "If a baby is starving, he will cry so that the mother comprehends the desire of her baby and feeds him through her breast. In fact, the baby will directly create a memory in his mind that he can only satisfy his desire and hunger over his mother's breast." (Stevenson)

I-3-1-2 Ego

The ego stands as an arbitrator between id's harmful primitive desires and the sound rational reality of the external world. It rejects universality for "reality principle" which demands a balance, to be achieved between scoring and society's expectations. "The ego's attempts to restrict the id's unsuitable desires build more memories and skills that help the individual be more aware. Simply, the creation of the ego helps the individual to become a self rather than urges and needs" (Stevenson)

Ego is the intermediate, conscious part of the personality which mediates between id and reality. It is based predominantly on the "reality principle," where fantasy in the form of dreams works to find a balance between a fulfillment of needs and society's demanded expectations.

I-3-1-3 Superego

We express our personal moral standard including values of society, and parental teachings so "It inclines to oppose the ego and the id and make the world according to the ideal conception of the society and relies on a social characterization of the nearby events." (Stevenson)

Historical events have a profound effect on the development of literature, shaping the themes, styles, and forms of artistic expression that emerge often as a reflection of the times. It has own aesthetic dictations and we become its victims when we violate them. It is the conflict between the unconscious and conscious components of our internal system and how they act together that determines our notion of the self.

The Id wants immediate pleasure, while the super ego enforces strict rules, and the ego balances these forces, shaping our identity and behavior.

I-4 The concept of “Coconut” in post-apartheid Africa

In Kopano Matlwa’s novel, “Coconut” is a term that refers to those black individuals who are believed to be white on the inside. This is a derogatory term which brings into light that these individuals have abandoned or suppressed their African identity and culture in order to be —white in their customs, values and in the roles they play. In this context, it becomes a feeling of betrayal or denying one's racial and cultural heritage because the personality demonstrated are in two parallel worlds, the outer world where the character exhibits "brown on the outside"(black), but "white on the inside" (Manuel Padilla..JR). It is used for unpacking these identity troubles and the pressures of black South Africans to emulate the Europeans in terms of beauty, success and general behavior in the post-apartheid society's backdrop.

The concept “coconut”, is a metaphorical expression in the post-apartheid Africa that has become recognized for highlighting the intricate web of culture, identity and societal expectations. In most cases, intentionally or not, some people are labeled and in some pressuring situations called "coconuts" by the outside world, who are seen as "black skin, white heart", that is, a sort of backstabbing of one's racial or cultural identity. The idea of 'colonially inherited apartheid' points out that the long haul of colonialism and ingrained racism remains prevalent in numerous African States today.

Coconut is a loaded term in South Africa. It refers to black people who are seen as acting white or trying to be better than their own race." (Fumba, 2021) This gives the essence of the impact of colonialism which has always resulted in the imposition of the European cultural norms in African societies as we know them today. The "white inside" shows an urge for the purported benefits linked to whiteness, infused via a process of colonization based on a social hierarchy and education system. The metaphor of the coconut speaks to the internalized racism that persists in post-apartheid South Africa. Blackness is still seen as inferior in some ways, leading to a desire to distance oneself from one's heritage. The opposition in black and white

contradictions amongst internal issues rather intensifies the complicated imagery, which in return allows the milky coconut effect to emphasize the complexity.

As stated by (Fumba, 2001) in her dissertation The concept of “coconut”, which gained its currency in post- apartheid South Africa, is often used to refer to black youths who in most cases can neither speak their home language or identify with and practice black cultures. “The term has marked them out as cultural deviants, often questioning their authenticity, and at times used to isolate these black individuals, as well as ridiculing them for acting ‘white’ while their skin is black” (Sekhotho, 2015 and Belle, 2020)

Conclusion

In this chapter we aimed at illuminating the question of the identities in post-apartheid South Africa and described the meaning of the term ‘coconut’, which can be a synonym of the precise juxtaposition of external appearance and inner identity. This concept emphasizes that we look at the daily challenges faced by individuals as far as their race, ethnicity, and overall existence in post-apartheid society. The theories of psychoanalysis offer important insights on the above-mentioned identity concerns. Using Freudian models – id, ego, and superego – we can compare these internal struggles of the primal self. It is possible to view the so-called —coconut phenomenon from the perspective of the juxtaposition between true self and the external environment. As literature is explored by psychoanalytic strategies, it gives people a deeper access in understanding identity. Through such literature we can vicariously come to understand the psychoanalytic frame of identity, belonging, and cultural mixture in post-apartheid Africa. In general, this chapter showed how practices and concepts from psychoanalysis help in establishing perspectives on the consequences of identity and belonging in a fractured society that is still recovering from the injustices of apartheid.

**Chapter II: The Freudian
Psychoanalysis of *Coconut* in Terms
of Identity and Belonging**

Introduction

In this chapter we will apply Freudian psychoanalysis to Kopano Matlwa's novel "Coconut". The chosen theories of Freud to analyze the protagonist's identity issue (Id, ego, and super-ego) are crucial to explore the lives of the two young black women, Ofilwe and Fikile, and to deeply understand their internal psyche as they navigate cultural and racial complexities.

By using Freud's concepts, we will understand the different inner stages of the characters and how their consciousness and unconsciousness are intertwined during their search of identity.

The characters chosen to be analyzed go through three stages (Id, ego, super-ego) to finally find who they are. The personality change of Ofilwe, Fikile, and Fikile's uncle is effected by their environment, their past, and their personal experiences. This analysis reveals how their identities are influenced by unconscious desires and societal pressures and provides with the defense mechanisms they develop as repression and denial.

II-1 Synopsis

Coconut, a novel written by Kopano Matlwa in 2007, is a post-colonial novel of South Africa in which the author tells the story of two young girls. Ofilwe and Fikile, and describe their journey of self-discovery and identity as black girls from the outside and white girls from the inside. Ofilwe, the oldest daughter of a Tlou family living in Johannesburg faces issues of racial discrimination in her environment, surrounded by her family and friends ,in a journey full of emotions, beliefs, twisted thoughts of identity and belonging struggling to fit herself in the white society and finding troubles in identifying herself.

Unlike Ofilwe who comes from a privileged background, Fikile lives in the townships and faces the challenges of poverty navigating a difficult life while yearning for a better future.

At the heart of the events, Fikile is a person who cannot stop striving to get out of current social conditions. While working as a waitress in a café where she meets mostly white people, she dreams of escaping poverty and living a life similar to Ofilwe's and that of privileged white people in Johannesburg. However, she grapples with the realization that wealth often comes at the cost of losing one's identity.

II-2 Freudian Analysis of Ofilwe, Fikile and Fikile's Uncle

II-2-1 Ofilwe's Analysis

II-2-1-1 Ofilwe's Id

Through a psychological lens of Freudian concept of psychoanalysis, we can see how the Id concept in Ofilwe's persona is formed. It is through understanding her innate instinctive controls and the traditional inherited beliefs that we can get to comprehend it.

Ofilwe Tlou is a black Christian African teenage girl who does not get to know the religion of her ancestors and has never been introduced to it, yet she is convinced about her Christianity. Her religious beliefs are the very first primitive instinct idea that she has about her identity. She thinks that "the whole social system is built on Christianity: calendar, holidays, laws" (Coconut, p4), in her unconsciousness it is the correct religion that everything in society stands on. It is an innate belief inherited from her black African parents that gives her the feeling of family membership pleasure and fulfills her need to belong to her parents and to the society she lives in, and as a result she perceives that everything socially relies on Christianity. At a young age this belief is incarnated in her unconscious mind and the fact that she doesn't get any answer about the mother religion of her ancestors does not erase the solid belief of Christianity that she has, which makes this first Id shaper a strong compulsive idea in Ofilwe's psyche.

The English language is also an innate instinctive thought that she gains unselfconsciously and a fulfilled wish as a member of a black African family that lives in a

post-apartheid era. Ofilwe believes that she is “smart and speaks perfect English” (p73). When a black African child of a father who speaks English perfectly and in an environment of white people, one will surely acquire this skill and will believe that it is the definition of being smart. And that is what happens with Ofilwe. She unselfconsciously believes that as a black African girl growing in a white environment that speaks English perfectly, it is such a smart thing and a privilege. This feeling of being smart is a satisfaction to her that she gained unintentionally when living with the whites surrounding her because it reinforces her position and gives her a feeling of identity. It is an innate idea that has shown up because of the pleasure principle, forming her id.

On the other hand, her ancestral language Sepedi is not as important as English. What makes Ofilwe at ease with the Id part of her psyche is not only the fulfillment wish of speaking English perfectly, but also the pleasure of not being misled. Because she “knew from a very young age that Sepedi would not take her far” (p73). As Ofilwe grows, she develops the thought that Sepedi is not a useful language, that it is not a privilege to have, even though it is her ancestral language, but the environment she lives in and the English language has both built the instinctive thought that there is no need to speak it nor to learn it. Her psyche accepts the whites’ language as part of her Id, which is a primitive impulsive thought and a crucial component of her personality.

II-2-1-2 Ofilwe’s Ego

The belonging issue in Ofilwe’s story can be shown through her ego struggle between the identity she unselfconsciously accepts and the identity she consciously desires.

The awareness of reality Ofilwe achieves as she grows up makes her question what she hears in her daily life from her parents as the “Sepedi” language, wondering “Where does an unused language go?” (p44). A clear shift in Ofilwe’s psyche happens. She has had a stable opinion about Sepedi that it has no meaning and it leads to anything, then she

gets the curiosity about it. It is the reality principle that has made her question her surroundings. Ofilwe triggered by her ego, she “tries to use the debates to collect words for her Sepedi vocabulary list” (p44). And it even leads her to think that “if she achieves nothing else, at least someday she will be able to argue in Sepedi” (p44). Ofilwe is aware that the language exists for a reason and she consciously believes that it will at least serve her to argue, as her black African ancestors do.

What raises her ego and her level of consciousness is the problems between her parents and her friend Belinda. The suggested divorce of her parents makes her question her identity. She “would have turned out to be nothing” (p5). A sense of separation from her parents’ identity starts to appear in Ofilwe’s self. As an attached black African teenager to her parents in a white community, the separation of her parents triggers her to question her identity in terms of the relation she has with her parents and their type of relationships. She feels threatened on the identity level and her ego caused by the events of everyday life reality leads her to feel that she would be nothing without her parents.

The type of relationship she had with her friend also triggers her in a specific way. It makes her feel that “after a while it’s agony playing a role you would never dream of auditioning for” (p74). Ofilwe gets tired of explaining to Belinda what it is like to be black living in a white community, stating that is a kind of dilemma that she is playing in order from her friend to accept her. Existing becomes tiring when she is next to her friend and a shift in Ofilwe’s perspective of identity is starting to appear as a result of the awareness she reaches and her egoistic belief that she has to explain her blackness to her friend.

II-2-1-3 Ofilwe’s Super-Ego

After her conflict between her id and ego, Ofilwe has come to a conclusion of her identity and belonging. The struggle caused by the ego has resulted in keeping the Id with its instinctive innate thoughts and inherited beliefs and has adjusted her identity in a peaceful way

with society and cultural norms.

Ofilwe is now learning Sepedi and has come to the belief that it is essential to learn her ancestors' language and has become bilingual. She "decided not so long ago to take a word at a time. The plan was that in every spoken sentence she would try to use a single word of Sepedi" (Coconut, p44).

She also agrees with having a contradictory opinion about her physical appearance. That she "could give her nose a name, then it would be easier to combat". (p44) and that she "wanted every last tiny weenie curl straight" (p7). Ofilwe has accepted that she can change what she does not like into what she desired to have, and that she can peacefully live with what she cannot change. She is tired of trying to change what she cannot and she acquired a lifestyle that suits a dual black and white life. She is "done with doing calculations" and "for now it is no longer a goal to find answers. It is what it is. Why try and understand it?" (p44) and that's how Ofilwe fails to identify herself not being able to fully fit in the black African community nor to fully fit in the white community and gives up to the complexity of this duality choosing not to understand it.

II-2-2 Fikile's Analysis

II-2-2-1 Fikile Id

Contrary to Ofilwe, Fikile's absent parents creates the first component primitive instinct of her personality. When a child, Fikile's mother commits suicide, and she doesn't get to know her father because he leaves her pregnant mother, and the only person she finds by her side is her uncle. For her, he was "the only real family she had" (p33). Fikile's life with her uncle makes her close to him and as a child, she finds comfort and safety with him, which is the sensation she is supposed to receive from her parents. Her uncle is the source of fulfilling her emotional needs as a kid, the reason Fikile unintentionally feels close to him and considers him her real family. It gives her the pleasure life instinct that makes her a sociable person and

later puts her in touch with reality.

In her uncle's house she finds herself dealing with the depression of the lazy unsuccessful parent figure who always complains about life and the injustice of the white people. She "hated that Uncle was such a sorry and pathetic and weak man" (p34) because he repeats his complaints on a regular basis and Fikile finds herself obliged to deal with it and she "would try to cheer him up. She would try to cheer him up with all her might" (p34). Even though she is just a child who cannot understand the reason of her uncle's grieving, she tries her best to cheer him up and to create a nice atmosphere at their house. Fikile's relation with her uncle evokes feelings of satisfaction and pleasure but also feelings of making efforts and of being in a dilemma as she constantly cheers him without understanding the source of his emotions. Fikile's Id is fueled by the instinctive primitive pleasure she has and is also triggered because of her uncle's emotional state, which creates issues and leads her to self-discovery as she grows up.

II-2-2-2 Fikile Ego

The more Fikile grows up the more she believes that she "was clever, more clever than Uncle would ever be and more grateful" and that "if she was given half the chance Uncle had been given, she would never have turned out to be a disappointment" (p47). After cheering her uncle and making efforts in doing so and without even understanding his sadness, Fikile comes to touch with reality and has understood that her uncle has wasted so many chances in life, and that he can do better and succeed, but he chooses to complain about his employment in the white people's company. Her rational part of the psyche is now functioning and she starts to gain some ego that is arising from her Id sense due to the reality she is facing.

When Fikile is now aware of her realities, she comes up with the conclusion that she cannot trust "black people to complain when white people don't do anything to help them and then complain when they do and then complain when they don't help them again after they've

screwed it up” (p44). Her conclusion is a result of her uncle’s academic failure because he does not have enough discipline and intelligence to succeed. Fikile’s uncle, as a black man who wastes an opportunity given to him by the white, always blames his failure for not getting enough help from those whites. And this results in Fikile developing a hate towards black people and choosing the color of whom she wants to encounter after she “was very young, she actually sort of liked Uncle” (p34). But the reality she faces and the level of consciousness she reaches has started to shape her beliefs.

II-2-2-3 Fikile Super-Ego

Fikile’s ego and her level of consciousness have created in her new desires and new life decisions. Fikile “is now certain of where she is going and know exactly what it is she wants out of life” (p57). The trust issues she now has because of her lazy ungrateful uncle, along with the sad environment full of grieving have opened her eyes and have made her a person with plans and visions. Fikile decides that “she would not give up. She would not allow his regretful state to discourage me” (p37). Her uncle’s emotional and financial state has turned her to work hard in order not to be in his place. She drops out of school, starts to work at Silver Spoon coffee shop and trace her way up to what she called —Project Infinity.

In this way her super-ego appears to operate on the morality principle and motivates her to behave in a socially acceptable manner. Fikile starts to work for her project which “is only a matter of time until I’m out of this hole as she is now certain of what she wants to be, which is to be —gone and gone for good, never to return again.” (p34) She starts to physically look like the whites as she “makes sure that she tops up any nail-polish chips or cracks that may have developed overnight because she has come to know the great importance of presentation.” (p34). The appearance transformation she does is a response to her future plan to get out of where she lives and enjoy a white life far from the black people whom she developed a hate for. Fikile’s unconscious desire of being white (super-ego) which is caused by her

consciousness (Id and ego) is the voice that made the plans and is the motivation behind her physical change that reflects the societal morals of the society she wants to fit in. At the end she has solved the conflict and has come to the conclusion that she “will be white if she wants to be white” and she “doesn’t care what anybody thinks.” (100)

II-2-3 Silas Nyoni’s Analysis

II-2-3-1 Silas Nyoni’s Id

Silas Nyoni, Fikile’s uncle, has been with his niece since her mother passed away. In his psyche, she is the one who comforts him and he relies on her to emotionally open up to her because he “struggles each day to keep a free and open nature.” (p43) The uncle is still living in the past, grieving over what he went through during the colonization time and is expressing the discrimination he believes is still present in Johannesburg. The Id part of his unconsciousness has unintentionally believed that as a black African man, he will always suffer from the white’s injustice, it has become an innate impulsive thought in his psyche which is why he always begins his complaints to his niece with “Oh, Fikile, why must life be so hard?” which would be followed by a “what did we do, Fikile, to deserve such pain?” (p34). His black African nature and the harsh history of his roots created this notion in his Id and it is his Id that is controlling him in acting the way he does with Fikile.

II-2-3-2 Silas Nyoni’s Ego

His academic failure also marks him and contributes to his psyche; it makes him feel sadder blaming the Kinsleys, the white family that adopted him and financed his studies, for his failure. According to Fikile, her uncle believed that financing his studies is not enough, but they should have also helped him through his academic journey of learning so he would succeed in the medicine faculty and become a doctor. As Fikile states through the lines of her story “uncle failed dismally and was excluded from the medical school at the University of Cape Town because he was an idiot.” (p47). Silas cannot bear the fact that he has wasted a

chance to change his life, and this burden pushes him to face the reality every day because he is not a successful man and is conscious of what happened to him and aware that he has destroyed his future. His consciousness is touched with such reality and he is constantly trying to deal with his ego.

The uncle also suffers from his ego when he is hired as a security guard in Lentso Communications, and is represented as a regular important worker at the company. And this has given him the feeling of being discriminated and has reminded him of the history his black African ancestors went through, which is why he always keeps believing that “there’s things about him those white men do not know. “He just thinks sometimes that maybe if he spoke up, said something profound or gave an insightful suggestion, then maybe they’d see that there’s more to the security officer than black skin” (p34). His past and his present crush in his psyche and appear on his consciousness level which makes the ego appear.

II-2-3-2 Silas Nyoni’s Super-Ego

The uncle ends the psychological issue in his mind by his super-ego taking the surface. In the end, he becomes just a black poor man who keeps grieving and blaming the company and the white people for the failure of his financial life, it is an unconscious result that takes the lead over his personality, trying to fit in the society by using sympathy and gaining emotions of other people for him, as he always does with Fikile believing that “in his mind’s eye, he is Silas Nyoni.” (p34), “but they see nothing.” (p34)

II-3 Cultural Displacement

Kopano Matlwa's *Coconut* plumbs the treacherous life of teenage girls during post-apartheid South Africa. The novel explores the theme of cultural displacement. The latter is a complex in which characters try to become westernized, while deep down in their souls they are Africans. The tale of Ofilwe and Fikile is the one the writer uses to portray the picture of this displacement, its roots and consequences.

II-3-1 Yearning for Whiteness

It refers to the internal struggle faced by young black Africans who often feel compelled to whitewash themselves in order to be accepted by white society. Like Fikile, many youths are profoundly influenced by this idealization and romanticization of other cities. When Fikile has to start working as a waitress at Silver Spoon Coffee Shop, she dreams of seemingly being free from the monotony of being raised in her poor neighborhood. She aspires for such things as the politeness in commercial relationships and immaculately tidy houses. For instance, she is fond of imported clothes and prefers them, being unwilling to wear the traditional clothes of Africans worn by her classmates. With this decision she paves the way to her appearance, pointing to her ambitious aim of becoming part of a society of a different class. "I drag my box from under the bed and take out my work clothes, our uniform is plain and indistinct and so I have painted my fingernails a cherry red to set me apart as I seat customers, collect plates, pour glasses of sparkling water and delicately run my fingers along the top of chairs every morning I make sure that I top up any nail-polish chips or cracks that may have developed overnight because I have come to know the great importance of presentation" (p78) she always shows through her strong admiration for everything western, as she proudly thinks it was her job's uniform she admired it over her own. Additionally, Fikile could code-switch mainly township slang and predominantly English that is more formal used in mostly white spaces. By that, she wrote of her own process of learning through which she expressed her aspiration to. If they can cope with social relationships and possibly even develop good standing with them. Synonymous mastering English becomes a microcosm of how she sees herself in relation to her classmates and teachers.

This choice leads to an outward pronouncement of Fikile being quite disoriented from her cultural background.

II-3-2 Double Consciousness

It explains how the protagonists grapple with a sense of duality as Fikile and Ofilwe who have lost their cultural roots and found themselves caught between embracing foreign culture and their own heritage as Ofilwe who believes that she belongs to no world, her family which was financially endowed, cope with different dimensions of displacement. Educated in a predominantly white school, Ofilwe internalizes societal expectations, leading to a double consciousness where she feels black on the outside even though she went to a university at home and had an opportunity to study abroad, Ofilwe still meets people who are so provincial, and they immediately judge her just by her skin color. Despite Belinda claiming she's her close friend, she always belittles her or sees her as different, especially when she was trying to teach her how to pronounce the word (oven) say “_uh-vin‘Fifi. You bake a cake in an _uh-vin‘, not an _oh-vin‘_uh-vin.” (p34). The same incident occurred when white men from the school governing board came to classify the different types of boys and girls by asking the students about the language they speak when she replies (English), her teacher Mrs. Kumalo asked her to put her hand down and clearly repeated about the language she speaks with her parents. She also responded (English) so they punished her that was a reminder that no matter how well-spoken or educated she was, she would always be seen as different.

Ofilwe is also uncertain on the inside. Her inability to embrace her African culture as profoundly as she has wished is rooted between the limited exposure and inauthentic feelings that she often experiences. Consequently, this constant internal struggle causes to feel out of place and disconnected from people The "Coconut" Symbol is a duality of conscience mirroring the inner struggle of these two characters, as the smart use of this term here as a symbol of the uprooted and marginalized reflects the roots of the lost culture. The contrast of black outer shell with white inner flesh embodies the identity of the characters; there is an exterior blackness but a longing to be accepted as a "white" person. It represents a world that seems to present pious

opportunities and more welcome. While the "coconut" stereotype seems to describe a person who can pursue both worlds and ethnicities at the same time, it can also be a pun, carrying a more terrible meaning, a denial of their authentic selves and a potential loss of identity. The intrusion of one family in another household is very clear in the novel through the pursuit of assimilation that create tensions within families and communities especially Generational Divide

II-3-3 Generational Divide

Younger people could be mistaken for having the wish to alienate themselves from the folkways of their forefathers and could lead to misunderstanding from the older generation. Parents may be still using the habits which their children view as traditional values, preventing the mobility to upward. "But Mama and I do not hold hands. It is not something we do" (p37). The relationship between Ofilwe and her mother was not so good, same with Fikile and her grandmother as her grandmother asked her to go outside, to play with children and to make friends but Fikile thinks that they are stupid and they don't speak English. She believes deeply that Gogo her grandmother hates her because she used to bake cupcakes for Madam's children but never for her. Individuals aspiring for assimilation might deflect themselves from the people and families that stay close to their own culture, leading to feelings of loneliness and alienation. The phenomenon of individualism strengthens and the common identity erodes over time. The story wouldn't end by just being a despondent narrative. The migration entails the dislocation for Ofilwe and Fikile but the displacement does not impede them from being resilient as they try different methods of creating new self-identities where they will integrate diverse elements of Western culture and African heritage to build hybrid new identities as shown in this quote "I don't know how to make it pretty. I don't know how to mask it." It is not a piece of literary genius. It is our story "and Sometimes what you think is your greatest obstacle turns out to be the last" (p132)

II-4 Defense Mechanisms

Kopano Matlwa's *Coconut* introduces aspects of identity establishment. This happens to young black people in the post-apartheid dispensation. The characters Ofilwe and Fikile, navigate a world that remains racially biased and socially stratified, hence making social mobility the driver of all their decision-making. This demonstrates how these characters use defense functions, as explained by Sigmund Freud, to respond to their turmoil and traverse through the divide of self.

II-4-1 Repression and Denial

Ofilwe is conformed to patterns prevalent in an entity where her life was formed. Worse yet, she gets into the habit of glossing out more or less the subtle racism she faces or even forgets them. This way she keeps herself from the distress and pain these racist episodes would inflict. This denial could manifest in selective Memory where she just simply would ignore, or in other words; avoid ridicules, and that is the reason her racial thoughts would be forgotten or ignored. As her brother tries to explain to her "when will it be enough? When you realize that they only invite you when Tamara and Candice cannot make it? When there is an extra seat." (p29) She always knew that he's right; however, she "denies stop it, Tshepo. These are my friends you're talking about" (p30)

Also, her focus on positive experiences, she decides to just emphasize friendly conversations with white peers without addressing deeper racial injustice issues, as she is not used to hate. She clearly says it in the following quote: "I am not used to hating hate sits heavy on my heart. It reeks, I can smell it rotting my insides and I taste it on my tongue" (p34) While Fikile tends to use a different effective strategy (denial), she yearns for accommodation into those of European ancestry and she might denounce the things that characterize her African culture. She believes that one day she'll become white, rich and happy instead of black, dirty and poor his denial might be evident in disparaging traditional practices

as Fikile criticizes and overlook traditional African customs or clothes choices, which leads her to step away from her mother culture. She can be seen as someone who believes that the white culture and the lifestyle are higher than hers, adopting the two as a means of being seen as something else from her blackness.

Both Ofilwe and Fikile behave in the projection way because they raise the same problems that they are obsessed with. Ofilwe's struggle in defining her own racial identity may be transferred to black people around her, seeing them too lazy to be determined or advanced. All the venting from her mother could be a sort of an escape from her own doubts and concerns about college and university. Fikile, on the other hand, may not knowingly hide her own feeling of inferiority toward those who choose being Africans from the inside.

While passing her judgment on other people's decisions, she indirectly makes herself the supreme by hiding her own fears about her social rank and racial personality "I am not one of you. You are poor and black and I am rich and brown." (p95). Both young girls want to feel at home and stay within the comfort zone of what they are accustomed to. But in the face of adverse circumstances, Ofilwe tends to escape the reality through fantasy where she could probably build an insulated universe of daydreams or stories, she used also to writes her diaries, but these temporal escapes would not hide the true essence of her complex life from her. Different from Ofilwe, Fikile may lose herself into a more performative person as she tries to fit in when submitting to white ones. She might adopt stereotypical behaviors. Fikile could decide to become loud and unapologetically herself or just engage in other bold behaviors that might reflect the negative stereotypes that usually white people have about black women whom they believe are messy and illogical when it comes to pursuing acceptance or attention from white peers. Also, through her overemphasize material possessions. She could be obsessed with getting fashionable clothes which she might use to draw attention as social status sign and to be distinctive in the social-white circles.

The defense mechanisms are only emergency exits out of internal conflicts and Coconut doesn't show them as a permanent way out. Matlwa evokes a necessity to find alternative methods, not relying on this crutch any more to reach an expanse of individuality. There may come a time in due course after Ofilwe has overcome her emotions of loss and denial that she would be left with only one way to address the core of all the past issues and those that have left in her —imprisonment, exploring her own cultural heritage before it's too late “you will find, Ofilwe, that the people you strive so hard to be like will one day reject you because as much as you may pretend, you are not one of their own. Then you will turn back, but there too you will find no acceptance, for those you once rejected will no longer recognize the thing you have become. So far too far to return. So much, too much you have changed. Stuck between two worlds, shunned by both.” (p64)

This could thus culminate into an identity that is well- integrated and mentally affirmed regarding her black origins as well as being in a white -dominated society. The old Fikile gives way to the new one that pushes her away from denial and encourages her to think critically about the future. Through fight against her insecurities and awareness that she is an African and not one of those who adapt herself to others rather of solving her identity crisis.

Conclusion

Freudian psychoanalysis when applied to Kopano Matlwa's “Coconut” affords greater insight into the multiple personality issues as well as belonging crises that Ofilwe, Fikile and Fikile's uncle undergo. Analyzing the concepts of the id, ego, and superego by Freud, we reveal the impulses and the psychological struggles underlying the characters' narratives in post-apartheid South Africa. This analysis shows how social factors and cultural factors affect their psychological processes and perceived identity and how the characters react to the identical struggle they are facing.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This thesis has delineated the multidimensional interface of identity and belonging within the context of post-apartheid Africa, its intricacies through "coconut" idea and the crucial role of psychoanalysis. Although a broad review of psychoanalytic conceptions has been concerned with the dynamics between individual psychological features and societal systems in constructing identity and belonging, this study has attempted to point out that these two constructs are quite interdependent.

The key characters like Ofilwe, Fikile and Ofilwe's parents and uncle, were analyzed well and this has given us a lot of insights into the issues of identity struggles and cultural displacement. It is known that Freud treats each person as an individual with a unique set of motives and defenses. Taking into consideration this supposition, in this study, the author has identified the relevance of psychoanalytic constructs such as "the id," "the ego," "the super-ego" - all of the above are in the process of identity formation.

Moreover, architecture felt has become the key factor in unraveling the ways people cope with cultural turmoil and protect themselves from being negatively affected. In conclusion, this thesis has helped to discover the complex structure of the identity and belonging in post-apartheid Africa, highlighting the importance of psychoanalytic approaches in the process of unraveling these phenomena.

Although close analysis of central figures as experimental subjects and deep psychology of the character dynamics studied led to the findings revealing the perplexities of cultural identity and the resulting dynamics of identity formation in a situation where social environment is rapidly changing.

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Résumé

Cet article donne un examen psychanalytique du roman de Kopano Matlwa *Coconut*. L'analyse, qui s'appuie sur les théories psychanalytiques freudiennes, examine la dynamique complexe de la psyché humaine et l'impact des expériences personnelles et sociales sur la recherche de l'identité de l'individu. Cette thèse aborde le sujet de l'identité et de l'appartenance et explore l'interaction entre les impulsions conscientes et inconscientes du roman des personnages en analysant leurs conflits psychologiques. Les protagonistes font un voyage de recherche identitaire, face à des problèmes d'appartenance et d'identité réprimée, et traitent également de leur placement culturel et explorent leurs mécanismes de défense.

Mots-clés: Noix de Coco, Identité, Culture, Psychisme, Race, Post-apartheid

ملخص

يقدم هذا البحث فحصاً تحليلياً نفسياً لرواية "جوز الهند" لكوبانو ماتلوا. يستند التحليل إلى نظريات التحليل النفسي الفرويدي، ويدرس الديناميات المعقدة للنفس البشرية وتأثير التجارب الشخصية والاجتماعية على اكتشاف هوية الفرد. تتناول هذه الرسالة موضوع الهوية والانتماء وتكشف التفاعل بين الدوافع الواعية واللاواعية في شخصيات الرواية من خلال تحليل صراعاتهم النفسية. يخوض الأبطال رحلة بحث عن الهوية، حيث يواجهون مشكلات الانتماء والهوية المكبوتة، ويتعاملون أيضاً مع وضعهم الثقافي كما يغوصون في آليات دفاعهم النفسية.

كلمات مفتاحية: جوز الهند، الهوية، الثقافة، النفس، العرق، بعد الإقطاعية.

